

J. Krishnamurti's concepts of
freedom, meditation, love and truth - a philosophical study

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Submitted by

SushamaKarve

Under the guidance of

Dr. VaijayantiBelsare

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the present thesis titled as “J. Krishnamurti’s concepts of freedom, meditation, love and truth-a philosophical study”, is a result of an original research done by **Sushama A. Karve** and it is completed under my supervision for the fulfillment of the degree of Ph.D. at the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune. Such material as has been obtained from outside sources has been duly acknowledged.

Place:

Date:

Dr. Vaijayanti Belsare
Research Guide

DECLARATON

I hereby affirm that the research work titled as J. Krishnamurti's concepts of freedom, meditation, love and truth-a philosophical study, is an original work carried out by me. It does not contain any work for which a degree or diploma has been awarded by any other university.

Place:

Date:

Sushama Karve
Research Student

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Place:

Date:

Sushama Karve
Research Student

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Introduction:

The prominent philosophical quests that have engaged man since ancient times – besides knowing the world around him – are attainment of **Freedom/Liberation/Moksha** and **understanding** the **Truth**. Many great thinkers, spiritual leaders, religious heads, gurus and various texts have discussed these at length in many ways.

Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895-1986) has also discussed these in his unique way; the characteristic feature of his dialogues, discussions and writings is a universal appeal. Whatever he said was not confined to a particular class, group or society or to followers of a particular school of philosophy. He urged his listeners to understand the facts, the ground reality of life before entering into any kind of serious contemplation. Facts and thoughts merge beautifully in his reflections.

What is the present day condition of man and the world? On the individual level his life is filled with stress, feeling of insecurity, fears of various kinds, constant rush, anxiety, fierce competition etc. and these are some of the marks of modern times. These, of course, are followed by a deep desire to free him from these tense conditions.

On the social level we are facing fundamentalism, terrorism, violence, ideological tensions. Also, environmental issues, energy crisis, crunch of natural resources and grave economic conditions are shadowing our lives. Along with these, globalization is knocking at the doors and we have to prepare for the possible changes that will come with it. The whole world is coming together in some ways but the differences/chasms created due to class, caste, race, religion, nationalism etc are still strong.

On this background, we need to understand man and the world in a different light. J Krishnamurti provides this understanding which is holistic in nature and not one sided or fragmentary. He has discussed various concepts like freedom, love, truth, hatred, death, mind, consciousness, meditation, time etc. His dialogues and writings show that it is impossible to study one of them in isolation since they are all interconnected. But, keeping in mind the limitations of a thesis and the need of the hour, I have chosen only four of them, namely, **Freedom, Meditation, love and Truth**. According to him you can be free, meditation helps you there, and then there is love and understanding of truth.

RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE

J. Krishnamurti's teachings are studied in many parts of the world. A lot of research is also undertaken by students and by authors who write on J. Krishnamurti.

His views on education and nature or environment have received a widespread attention from scholars and academicians. You come across books, articles and a few theses dealing with these topics. His teachings are also studied from the point of view of psychology. But, the key concepts in his teachings namely those of freedom, meditation, love and truth are not studied from a philosophical perspective.

These concepts are key concepts from the philosophical point of view because understanding man is a task of philosophy and these concepts provide a more comprehensive understanding of man.

Also, by juxtaposing his concepts with those of Mahatma Gandhi, Plato, Rousseau and Sartre we stand to gain a clearer understanding of J. Krishnamurti's teachings. These four philosophers/ thinkers are selected because of their contribution to philosophy and specially to the concepts of freedom, love and truth. For the concept of meditation Yoga and Buddhist views are presented for a better understanding of J. Krishnamurti's concept of meditation.

Thus philosophies from the ancient Indian Yoga Darshan to the existentialist J. P. Sartre are considered in the thesis. This will also bring to light the link that runs through all these and binds them together.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This study aims at an objective understanding and analysis of J. Krishnamurti's concepts of freedom, meditation, truth, love etc. Possibilities of application of these concepts will also be examined in this study.

One objective of this study is to find out the relevance and significance of J. Krishnamurti's insights for a common man in his daily battles and confusions as regards his very existence.

J. Krishnamurti toured most of the countries of the world. A great number of people always gathered for his lectures. It means that whatever he offered appealed to different people across

the world. One aim of this study is to find out the universal, humane and fundamental aspects of J. Krishnamurti's teachings that attracted such diverse people to his thoughts.

REASONS FOR SELECTING THESE CONCEPTS

1. Man seeks freedom from both internal and external constraints. The traditional moksha requires lots of preparations-both physical and mental-whereas J. Krishnamurti's concept has no such preconditions. He only talks about freedom and his freedom is not reserved for a particular people, it is open for all. This is very much in keeping with the open thinking of the day. A modern, democratic and global form of liberation or Moksha needs to be studied on the philosophical level. Therefore it is included in this study.
2. Internal and external fears play an important role in man's life and it is necessary to understand it for being free. Fear of various kinds-including that of death and resulting emotions like feeling of insecurity etc are a hindrance to freedom and love. J. Krishnamurti's concept of fear with its varied aspects will be studied in this study.
3. Volumes have been written on meditation and the ways to achieve this state. J. Krishnamurti does not agree with the traditional Patanjali yoga views of meditation. A brief sketch of Patanjali yoga will be presented to understand J.Krishnamurti's departure from this traditional view. This will also help in understanding his views more clearly.
4. Truth and love –freedom, mediation, fear, truth and love are interconnected in J. Krishnamurti's thoughts. It is essential to bring out this interconnection for an overall understanding of his views.

HYPOTHESES

- 1) Earlier, religions tried to answer man's basic questions like who am I, what should be the ideal way of life etc. Later on, with the advancement of scientific knowledge, people turned to science for the answers. But it was found to be inadequate. J. Krishnamurti goes beyond both religion and science and points out answers that are not antagonistic to reason and do not put on blinkers of blind faith. Such answers are the need of the times. J.Krishnamurti gives us a universal religion which is quite relevant as we are talking about globalization.

- 2) In the Indian tradition, Shadripus are looked upon as obstacles in the path of moksha. J. Krishnamurti talks about anger, fear, conditioning of the mind etc.as obstacles to freedom. We have to understand them and then freedom will be there via meditation. This has a universal appeal and application.
This study will bring to light the new meaning and importance of freedom and meditation in the changed contexts and circumstances.
- 3) J. Krishnamurti's teachings on freedom, meditation, love and truth are not merely conceptual. Though he does not give a readymade answer to the question as to how to arrive at them, he has given us a very strong guideline by way of his "Art of Living" which comprises of the art of Seeing, Listening and Learning.

METHODOLOGY AND TECHNIQUES TO BE USED

Description, analysis, argumentation and evaluation will be the methods and techniques used in this study. J. Krishnamurti's concepts will be described; followed by analysis wherever necessary. Argumentation will be used to prove the hypothesis. The conclusion will contain evaluation of the research.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The research will undertake only a few, but key concepts of J. Krishnamurti because studying all his concepts will be a huge task, much beyond the scope of a Ph.D. thesis.
2. J Krishnamurti always rejected having studied various philosophies and texts – including Indian ones. But, if very striking similarities are found between his thoughts and Indian Darshanas, they will be pointed out.

3. In order to understand his concept of meditation, a brief account of Patanjali Yoga meditation will be given. This will clarify J.Krishnamurti's exact departure from the traditional concept of meditation.

PLAN OF RESEARCH

The plan of the thesis is as follows –

Introduction: Rationale and significance of the study, scope and limitations of the thesis, aims and objectives of the study, hypotheses, methodology and review of literature is given in the introduction.

The five chapters of the thesis are as follows-

Chapter 1: J Krishnamurti's views on **Freedom** will be discussed in this chapter. Commonsense understanding of the very term 'freedom' will be given first and then J Krishnamurti's meaning will be explored by giving quotations from his books. Also, the concept of Moksha from the Indian tradition will be discussed in this chapter. J.J.Rousseau and J.P.Sartre's thoughts on 'freedom' are included in this chapter. Rousseau was the one who talked about freedom, fraternity and equality and this made a huge impact on the French Revolution. Therefore his thoughts on freedom are quite important and should be considered while understanding the concept of freedom.

Sartre's existential philosophy has made an impact on the 20th century philosophical thought as well as literature. He views on human freedom have a unique angle. Therefore his philosophy of freedom is also considered along with J.Krishnamurti's concept of freedom.

This will enhance understanding of J.Krishnamurti's concept of freedom and how his views differ from the rest.

Chapter 2: Commonsense understanding of the very term '**meditation**' is considered in the beginning. Then J.Krishnamurti's concept of meditation is discussed along with proper citations from his teachings. Then the concept of meditation in Yoga will be presented. Patanjali Yoga

talks of meditation as a step towards Samadhi therefore the concept of meditation in Yoga is taken into account. Buddhism and meditation have a strong connection; the Buddhist concept of meditation is included in this chapter. Study of these two will help understand J. Krishnamurti's outstanding views on meditation.

Chapter 3: Commonsense understanding of the very term '**love**' is looked into at the beginning of the chapter. J. Krishnamurti's reflections on love are put forth in this chapter. Plato has discussed love in his dialogues and his understanding of love is studied in this chapter.

Mahatma Gandhi, a great thinker of the past century, talked about love in his own special way; his views on love are taken up for consideration in this chapter in order to enhance our understanding of J. Krishnamurti's meaning of love in a deeper way.

Chapter 4: The chapter opens with the commonsense understanding of the term '**truth**'. Thereafter, J. Krishnamurti's thoughts on truth and their significance will be presented. Again, Mahatma Gandhi's views on truth are included in this chapter because Mahatma Gandhi was a great follower of the path of truth; his movements are known as 'Satyagraha' i.e. insistence on truth. He was also a contemporary of J. Krishnamurti and his views add to the understanding of J. Krishnamurti's concept of truth.

Views of Rousseau, Sartre on freedom, Plato and Mahatma Gandhi of love and again Mahatma Gandhi on truth are included not for comparison but for understanding J. Krishnamurti's concepts clearly and to know how his views differ from the others.

Chapter 5: Based on the study so far, a conclusion adhering to the hypotheses is presented in this chapter. The universal element in J. Krishnamurti's teachings, hurdles to freedom, which are called as Shadripu in the Indian tradition, are given. His Art of Living presents a very good direction as far as having freedom, mediation, love and truth are concerned. This is discussed in the conclusion. Some points of criticism of J. Krishnamurti's teachings are also included in the conclusion.

There is an appendix at the end wherein JK's views on nature are briefly presented. This is important because JK's teachings invariably include examples and description of nature; nature, so to say, is the backdrop of his teachings. Therefore this appendix is given.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

J.Krishnamurti's teachings are studied and discussed all over the world. A large number of books of his teachings and his biographies are available. Though he himself wrote few books like *Commentaries on living*, (three volumes), *Krishnamurti Journal* etc most of his dialogues and discussions with thinkers and dignitaries across the world are now available in book form. Krishnamurti Foundation Trusts of America, England and India keep on publishing this material in various combinations in book form. Also, there are video and audio tapes of his lectures and dialogues. These tapes give us a chance not just to listen but also to watch him in person and help understand his teachings more.

The concepts of J.Krishnamurti's taken in to consideration in this thesis and other concepts of his like death are interconnected and it is not really possible to separate one from another. And then, his teachings and his life were also inseparably connected; you can say that he lived his teachings. Therefore it was important to know his life and Mary Lutyen's biography, 'The Life and Death of J.Krishnamurti' was of immense help. The author has also given J.Krishnamurti's teachings at various places and shown the interconnection of them to his life.

In spite of being such a widely discussed thinker of the past century, there seem to be very few Ph. D. theses on his teachings in departments of philosophy, at least in India. His teachings are studied from the point of view of education, environment and psychology more than a philosophical point of view. On the internet, I have come across a mention of a thesis written by Dr. Bina Isaac, HOD philosophy at the University of Kerala, Trivandrum. The title of her thesis is "Tradition and Modernism in J Krishnamurti's teachings". Beyond this I have no more information or details of the thesis.

It is practically impossible to take a review of all his books or books written on him. Here I have taken into account a few of them which helped me in my research and are widely read. They are-

Primary sources

1. **Freedom from the Known-** First published in 1969, this book nicely covers the major topics like freedom, consciousness, fear, relationship, time and thought, death, beauty, meditation etc. in J. Krishnamurti's teachings. The matter is taken from over a hundred talks that J. Krishnamurti delivered to varied audiences all over the world. This is also considered to be a premier to J. Krishnamurti's teachings. Religious mind, art, self-transformation are also discussed in this book along with truth and reality. This seems to be a very popular book of J. Krishnamurti. In his usual style, J. Krishnamurti unveils the interconnections between different topics like violence and anger, action and ideas etc.
2. **The First and Last Freedom-** This is a comprehensive book on J. Krishnamurti's teachings in two parts and the specialty is the masterly forward by Aldous Huxley in which he says that you find a statement of the fundamental human problems and the only way to solve is by and for man himself. The second part of the book contains questions by the audience and J. Krishnamurti's answers. Both the questions and answers cover a wide range of topics. According to Huxley, the fundamental theme in the book is 'to understand the misery and confusion that exists within ourselves'. This can come only with right thinking and right thinking comes not with cultivation of intelligence but with knowledge of the self. How this theme is related to organized religion, symbols and the importance given to them in one's life, rituals, dogmas etc. is seen through J. Krishnamurti's teachings in the book. In the question-answer section J. Krishnamurti has talked on various topics from god to sex.
3. **Truth and Actuality-** There are both talks and dialogues by J. Krishnamurti in this book. Some portion from his dialogues with Dr David Bohm, an eminent physicist, is taken in this book and we find both of discussing truth along with the actuality and

reality as it appears to our senses. J. Krishnamurti says in this book that there is the world that is given to man, not manmade world, then there is reality meaning world created by man or everything that is put together by thought. And there is actuality or 'what is'; truth is beyond both reality and actuality. He also explores the relationship between truth and reality, truth and actuality. Both of them also discuss the nature of the 'I' or consciousness and the conditioning that goes with it, emptying the contents of consciousness etc. In this book J. Krishnamurti clearly says that you cannot go through reality and come to truth. Understanding the limitations of reality which means understanding the whole process of thought is to come upon truth. Other topics like religion, meditation, death, suffering, and right action are also discussed. This book proved to be very helpful in an overall understanding of J. Krishnamurti's concept of truth.

4. **The Krishnamurti Reader-** Mary Lutyens was the editor of this book. This is quite a comprehensive book of J. Krishnamurti's teachings. Beginning with what man seeks it discusses problems of living like relationship between an individual and society, problems posed by desire, fear effort etc. J. Krishnamurti beautifully points out the functioning of the mind, how our thinking is fragmentary and separative. How one thinks from the centre i.e. the 'I' and how that actually becomes a hindrance to our understanding is also talked upon by J. Krishnamurti. There are some questions from the audience and J. Krishnamurti's response to them. The questions are varied like what is happiness, what is the right kind of education etc. J. Krishnamurti answers in his typical frank and open manner and also raises counter questions so that the questioner starts thinking, looking at his own living. This is a good book for the beginners.
5. **On Freedom-** This is a wonderful compilation of J. Krishnamurti's views on freedom; there are also questions and answers. The dialogues and talks included in this book cover a vast time span; right from March 1948 to 31 August 1985. The places are Pune, Mumbai, Chennai, Rome, Saanen, Brockwood Park, England. The consistency in his teachings and the appeal to different types of audience is clearly seen in this

book. He has presented an in-depth view on freedom. He differentiates between true freedom and other kind of freedom like political freedom etc. Thus we find that for him freedom was not 'for' or 'of' something, it was freedom *per se*. A question is put to him about the gains by having true freedom and he says that if you think this way in terms of utility, there can be no freedom. He has also talked about the computers and a mechanical mind in this book. He also urges the audience to actually observe their lives and not be engaged in a mere verbal discussion or understanding.

6. **On Love and Loneliness-** This is one book from the 'theme book' series. J. Krishnamurti talks about what love is taken to be generally and then unfolds that love is not an emotion, pleasure, jealousy, that love cannot be limited to a particular person. People usually tend to think of love in a limited framework of man-woman relationship but J. Krishnamurti shows us that it is much wider than such a relationship or sexual relationship. Questions like what is the necessity of love, is love based on attraction etc. are raised by the listeners. While responding to a question J. Krishnamurti talks about the difference between being alone and being lonely and points out that being alone is not isolation. A mind that is alone no longer seeks happiness and there is creativity in such a mind; which means there is also love. How love is absent when there is fear, psychological dependency, competition, comparison is also discussed.

7. **The Ending of Time-** This is a book on the dialogues between J. Krishnamurti and Dr. David Bohm, a leading physicist, that took place in America and England in 1980. It is quite an example of two great brains and minds being in conversation and having dialogue about metaphysical topics like Time, death, the cosmic order, the ground of Being. Both of them discuss the nature of human mind and transformation of it, mutation of brain cells and transformation. They had very profound dialogues and that is apparent even if we glance through the topics of their dialogues, for example, 'Cleansing of the mind of the Accumulation of Time', 'Can insight be awakened in another?' It is a kind of intellectual feast to go through these dialogues and to observe how both of them examine the nuances of the topic in its various aspects. As J.

Krishnamurti would say, it appears that both of them were 'thinking together'. With these dialogues one is really taken to the depth of J. Krishnamurti's teachings. Both of them talk about truth and its nature; we get two different perspectives leading to or indicating 'truth' from two standpoints- one of J. Krishnamurti's which is metaphysical/ spiritual and the other of Dr. Bohm which is a physicist's view. This book helped me greatly in understanding J. Krishnamurti's teachings in a different light.

8. **The limits of thought-** With a preface by Dr. Bohm, this is another book of the conversations between J. Krishnamurti and Dr. Bohm. Dr. Bohm's words throw light on what J. Krishnamurti means by 'observation of the structure and process of thought'. He says that it is like being attentive to the meaning of the content of a book when you are reading it and at the same time you are aware of the constitution of the book, the print, the fabric of the paper used in the book itself. And that happens through meditation i. e. to ponder and reflect while giving close attention to what is actually going on. This helps in understanding J. Krishnamurti's concepts of meditation, awareness, observation. Then the mind becomes silent and in that silence something new and creative happens. Dr. Bohm points out in the preface that J. Krishnamurti's teachings are permeated by the scientific approach. Coming from a great physicist who held discussions with Einstein, it speaks a lot about the kind of view that J. Krishnamurti had of the world and man. According to him J. Krishnamurti proposed that the root cause of the wide spread sorrow and misery is the confusion and disorder in the consciousness; this disorder does not allow us to observe the activity of thinking. This further leads to more confusion and right action does not take place.

9. **Beyond Violence-** As it is given at the beginning of the book, it is 'an authentic report of talks and discussions in Santa Monica, San Diego, London, Brookwood Park and Rome'. In these talks and discussions we find J. Krishnamurti discussing the nature of violence and some of the psychological factors like fear, hurt, insecurity etc that are closely related to violence. J. Krishnamurti says that violence is a fact and we should

look at it without suppressing or judging it or even analyzing it. That is the only way we can understand what violence is and that is how one can get rid of it. This kind of observation is an important point in J. Krishnamurti's teaching. Time and again we find him saying that observation which is non-judgmental, non-analytical, not infested with personal likes/ dislikes, emotions etc. brings real understanding of a thing, be it a tree or the self or any situation in its totality. When there is clear and real understanding, action follows out of that understanding. And, that is right action. Also, while talking about man's existence J. Krishnamurti has talked about technological advancement and man's life in this book.

10. **Total Freedom-** In the forward Dr. Ralph Buultjens, professor of Social sciences at the New York University, tells us that J. Krishnamurti declared that people do not need guidance, they need awakening. This shows a high confidence in man's potential to go beyond the shackles of conditioning and free himself. The most important event in J. Krishnamurti's life when he dissolved the *Order of the Star* at Ommen, Holland in 1929 and made his famous speech 'Truth is a Pathless Land' is given in this book. In this talk, J. Krishnamurti says that there is no fixed path to truth, no pre-decided system or order or discipline can take one to truth. He also announced that the key to the Kingdom of Happiness does not lie with certain people, no one has the authority to hold such a key; the key is your own self. We look for external help, depend on others for your own happiness and create absurd structures and organizations around it. Categorically he states that organizations cannot make you free. He says that he wants man 'to rejoice as the bird in the clear sky, unburdened, independent, and ecstatic in that freedom' and at the end declares, "My only concern is to set man absolutely, unconditionally free." With this he defined his lifelong mission. This speech proved to be of great help in understanding J. Krishnamurti's concept of freedom and truth as well. Our basic problem, problems of living, fear, creating a new culture, relationship with the world, ending of sorrow are some of the other topics presented in the book. The core of his teaching is also included. Overall, an important book for understanding J. Krishnamurti's concepts of freedom, truth etc.

11. **On Relationship-** This is one of a series of theme books put together from the talks and writings of J. Krishnamurti. He says that life is relationship and action. If you are concerned with, if you want to understand life you have to understand our relationship with others, not just with other human beings but with everything else that is there around us. He talks about internal relationship or our relationship with our own thoughts, ideologies, ideas, images etc. In his simple but direct manner he shows us how our 'personal' problems are linked to the problems of all. We find him taking a global view of relationship in this book. This helps us understand the meaning of his famous quote 'you are the world.' The talks and question-answers cover his teachings from 1940 to 1982. All through he has maintained a freshness that draws one to his teachings.
12. **The Awakening of Intelligence-** Besides some talks this book contains some conversations between J. Krishnamurti and some noted thinkers. In his conversation with Swami Venkateshanand, J. Krishnamurti examines traditional thoughts like the importance of a guru, schools of Yoga, four 'Mahavakyas' from the Upanishads, Vedanta and ending of knowledge. His conversation with Alan Naude, a musician closely associated with J. Krishnamurti, who also worked as J. Krishnamurti's secretary and assistant for a few years, cover topics like man's struggle, good & evil, freedom, love, order etc. There is also a conversation between JK and Dr. Bohm on intelligence, relationship between thought and intelligence, and more importantly, awakening of intelligence. Brain and its functioning is also considered here which goes to show that J. Krishnamurti took note of the latest research in physiology as well. Both of them agree that matter, thought and intelligence have a common source, they are one energy and then discuss how division occurred. Deeply philosophical and engaging conversation. A hefty volume, this book brings to notice J. Krishnamurti's views on Indian tradition as well.
13. **On Self-Knowledge-** This is the first volume in a series titled 'Selections from the Decades'. The talks included in the book are all taken from J. Krishnamurti's talks in India in the late 40's. India had just become independent and a lot was being said about

a social change. J. Krishnamurti through his teachings emphasized that social change or regeneration is possible only when there is radical change in the consciousness of the individual. According to him such a change is possible only through self-knowledge. What are the difficulties in having this knowledge is also discussed here and topics related to it like meditation, religious practices, ritualism etc are examined. This book proved to be of invaluable help in understanding J. Krishnamurti's concept of meditation and his views on related concepts like worship, prayer etc. The prominent place of self-knowledge when it comes to freedom, truth gets disclosed beautifully as we flow along with the contents of the book.

14. **The First Step is the Last step-** The book consists of the talks given by J. Krishnamurti in India between December 1970 and February 1971. The title of the book actually sums up J. Krishnamurti's view that right observation or perception of everything within and without you is knowing the truth, that is also being free. According to J. Krishnamurti there is no step-by-step process involved in such perception and truth cannot be arrived at with a gradual prefixed method; right perception is the only and therefore the first and the last step. Here we find J. Krishnamurti saying that philosophy means the love of truth, philosophy is not love of theories or speculation or beliefs; this shows his practical approach to both life and philosophy. He also examines truth being dynamic, emptying of the mind, awareness etc. One talk is on love wherein he looks at the various facets of love.

15. **Commentaries On Living (three volumes)-** This book is based on J. Krishnamurti's interactions and dialogues with a number of ordinary people from all over the world. Aldous Huxley encouraged J. Krishnamurti to write these commentaries. Besides the intense philosophical content there is the lucid, picturesque description of nature by J. Krishnamurti in every topic. Almost all the topics in J. Krishnamurti's teachings are found here in concise forms which introduce the reader to his teachings in a general way. Strewn with small stories or anecdotes, all the three volumes make a good and interesting reading. Varied topics like politics, love, knowledge, beauty, virtue, meditation, time and even *karma* are found here.

16. **On Truth-** J. Krishnamurti here talks about truth, seeking truth, possibility of coming upon truth, dynamicity of truth, can authority bring one to truth, importance of quiet mind and many more related points. He says that truth is not there in the distance but it is very near to everyone, it is there in every smile, in every tear, but it is covered up and one has to uncover it. According to him truth is something that is living from moment to moment and it is to be discovered and not to be believed in or formulated. This book presents his views on truth as well and that is an invaluable help in a deeper understanding his concept of truth.

Secondary sources

17. **J.Krishnamurti, Great Liberator or Failed Messiah-** Luis S. R. Vas is the author of this book. As the title suggests it is a critical book on J. Krishnamurti's teachings. The author has discussed the 'process' in J. Krishnamurti's life. In August 1921 and onwards J. Krishnamurti underwent some extraordinary experiences and gained some kind of mystical perception which is beyond the scope of normal human reasoning or understanding. Some described it as awakening of the Kundalini. But J. Krishnamurti himself never discussed it publically. Barring a few references in passing he hardly ever mentioned it. The author mentions that J. Krishnamurti is said to have some spiritual/ intellectual upliftment because of the process. To those who are interested in this kind of information on J. Krishnamurti, this book satisfies the curiosity to a great extent.

18. **Krishnamurti- the man, the mystery and the message-** Stuart Holroyd has penned a biographical volume that includes main concepts in J. Krishnamurti's teachings like human bondage, human mind, consciousness and self, the psychological revolution etc. Dialogues between J. Krishnamurti and Dr. Bohm are also included in the book. The author has quoted T.S.Eliot's lines that perfectly describe J. Krishnamurti's ideal of human condition and the lines are-

A condition of complete simplicity

Costing not less than everything

These nicely sum up J. Krishnamurti's holistic view of total awareness and simplicity in life.

19. **Star in the East, Krishnamurti- the Invention of a Messiah-** .A very comprehensive biography by Ronald Vernon. Right from the time of the discovery of J. Krishnamurti by Leadbeater at Adyar this book documents a lot of personal, biographical details in J. Krishnamurti's life, some of which were controversial. As is mentioned earlier, it is important to know J. Krishnamurti's life in order to understand his teachings and this book is helpful in that direction.

Besides these there are many other books of J. Krishnamurti's teachings; during this research I have gone through a number of them. But the ones mentioned here are some remarkable and helpful ones for the research. Various audio and video cassettes of J. Krishnamurti's talks and dialogues were very helpful in understanding his teachings.

Introduction

Philosophy is a continuous search, an inquiry into all that is around us and all that is inside one's mind and thought. It is an earnest quest about the very meaning of life, purpose of life and the end of life. Philosophy is also our guide that helps us in finding ways out of difficulties that one faces while living. As we can obviously see, man is going through various crises like economic, environmental etc. Also, there are acts of violence, shoot-outs, killing –of animals and humans-, threat of war looming large over our heads. Internally, man is feeling alienated, uprooted, insecure, lonely and stressed out in the daily battle of survival. He also feels caged and wants to be free. He looks for some way-which is/ could be **meditation**- to this **freedom**. Man is also looking for the **truth** that is behind this ever changing world and his impermanent existence. Interpersonal relations and man- nature relationship are strained; hatred jealousy and enmity seems to have spread all over. Therefore, he is looking for **love**. These four concepts i.e. freedom, meditation, love and truth are very basic, core concepts of philosophical thought about man. That is why these four concepts are taken up for this research. Their significance and interconnections will be brought to light in this thesis.

So far it was thought that there are two kinds of worlds, a world that is given to us consisting of rivers, trees, mountains, animals etc; the other being the man-made world consisting of man-made objects, monuments (cathedrals, temples, mosques etc), bridges, railways, planes, weapons, medicines et al. Philosophy, ethics, art also belong to this world. But additionally nowadays we have to take into account the 'virtual world'. With the advent of computers and the progress of related technology, speedier means of communication are available to us and an ocean of information is literally there at our fingertips or at the click of the mouse. This has given rise to a 'virtual world', a world that exists not factually but in computers. Face book, blog, twitter are an integral part of most of our lives. Youngsters, adults and seniors all seem to be visiting this world very often. For some this world has overtaken, overpowered their relationships. Rather than physically going to a forest and watching nature, people visit various sites and enjoy pictures of nature. It is said that in the present lingo, 'let us meet' means 'let us meet on face book, twitter etc.' No need to meet another in person! There are e-books, e-literature; music is available on line. Thus now man has relationship with nature or the world

that is given to him, with the man-made world or everything that is created by man and the virtual world. And then there is his relationship with other humans. These seem to be strained now. All these relationships need proper understanding because understanding man includes understanding those.

This is also an era of globalization, the world is coming together. But, in spite of having great technology and faster means of communication alienation is also setting in bringing in anxiety, stress, tensions etc. Not just scientists and psychologist but philosophers are also taking note of these and trying to find out ways out of these haunting issues.

Man is trying to be free of these issues and other daily problems; he is searching for truth, looking for love. Meditation is usually believed to be a way to freedom, peace of mind, a stress-buster. That is why these four concepts are important.

JK* seems to have thought about and understood these peculiar problems and man's predicament. A study of his teachings on these four will be helpful in this because whatever the circumstances, man's quest for these four has continued since ancient times. Hence the thesis on the concepts of freedom, meditation, truth and love.

Exploration of JK as a philosopher

JK is not a 'philosopher' in the usual academic sense of the term i.e. he does not talk about epistemology, metaphysics, or a particular 'ism' like realism, idealism etc. He does not propound a theory; he does not use a particular methodology. Also, he never called his teachings as 'philosophy'. Therefore the obvious question is why are we studying him under philosophy?

*JK is the acronym of J. Krishnamurti and it will be used in this thesis hereafter for J. Krishnamurti.

The answer to this question is also obvious; philosophy is not just an armchair thinking, not just academics. Philosophy is not 'ivory tower' ponderings or mere speculation. Analysis, implementation of method, critical view etc. are all part of philosophy but philosophy is also an enquiry into the very nature of living, of the 'here and now'. JK talks only of living i.e. of 'here and now'. Also, philosophy is essentially 'love of wisdom' and this love of wisdom is not something separate from life / living. It is also known that one major pursuit of philosophy is the pursuit of truth. Though JK never called himself a philosopher, we find both these points- deep thinking on living and pursuit of truth- have a predominant place in his teachings. He has also said that rather than 'love of wisdom' philosophy is 'the love of truth'. His exact words are, "Philosophy means the love of truth, not the love of theories, not the love of speculations, not the love of belief, but the love of truth." (The First Step is the Last Step, KFI, 2004, p 26)

What he means that constructing or following theories/ systems/ ideologies is playing in the field of thought. If philosophy is about understanding life and how to live it, how to act then understanding of truth is essential because, according to JK, right action comes out of the understanding of truth and then love is also there.

Man is not just the body or just the mind or the brain. Philosophy takes a holistic view of man. Rather than studying the physical, psychological, intellectual etc aspects of man separately, philosophy takes into account the totality of these aspects. We find such holistic or non-fragmentary view of man in JK's teachings. He did not overlook or neglect the scientific view. References to the latest scientific and technological discoveries and inventions are frequent in his teachings. Right from the function of brain to modern war equipments – he was aware of such developments and thought about their impact on man and nature. This is also a distinctive feature his teachings.

Metaphysics

Then there is the pursuit of truth- a perennial pursuit since ancient times. Philosophy- metaphysics to be more precise- is concerned about truth about and behind the universe, truth about human soul, life after death, rebirth, the Ultimate Truth. Man has been running after truth for ages. Various methods, rigorous disciplines, penance, renunciation, retreating to forests or

remote places without contact with other humans, different kinds of tapas are given by great philosophers, spiritual leaders and gurus all over the world. And still, truth seems to be an evading, illusive objective of mankind. JK has contributed in this field in a very original way by pointing out that truth is not something that one can arrive at by following a method. “Truth is a pathless land” is his famous saying and it has set many a minds/ brains thinking in a different manner. He also says that truth is not something objective, something that is the same for all or stagnant; truth is dynamic like life/ living and therefore everyone has to find it on his own. A system, method, guru may be of help only in pointing at it, but the actual journey has to be taken by each one on his own. He meant that no one can find your truth for you; you have to find it for yourself. Thus there is metaphysics in his teachings and that is why we are going into his teachings from the philosophical point of view.

Ethics

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that basically discusses human actions and the rightness or wrongness of those actions, concept of duty, social and individual aspects of an action, human ends, moral ends. Questions like what is good or evil also form a part of ethics. We have great thinkers like Kant that put forth theories like ‘duty for the sake of duty’. In Indian philosophy we have theories of *Purushartha* and *Karmasiddhanta*, concepts of *Shreyas*, *Preyas* and *Nihshreyas* etc. Moksha is said to be the end in Indian philosophy. These all take into account human actions. Coming to the present, ‘environmental ethics’ is much discussed especially in connection with environmental issues and problems; so much so that some environmentalists like Al Gore have stated that environmental issues are basically ethical issues. JK has talked about action, right action etc at length though from a different standpoint. As far as environmental issues are concerned, he has talked about man- nature relationship going into the finer aspects of it and showed how nature is utilized or worshipped by man for his own gains without giving due respect to the environment. Evidently we shall take into consideration these views.

Freedom of action- Whether man is free to act on his own free will or not- is another area of ethics and JK has talked about freedom of man and also freedom per se. In Indian philosophy the Darshanas present varied views as regards bondage and liberation – Bandha and Moksha- of

man and various methods to achieve Moksha. JK's dialogues and talks reveal these two in a different light. The feeling that I am in bondage and the desire for Moksha or total, ultimate freedom seems to be a constitutive part of being a human and therefore these two are important topics as far as living is concerned. JK has provided some pointers in this area as well. Without putting forth ethical theories as such, JK has discussed basic ethical issues and has brought to notice some finer aspects of them in his unique manner.

Religion

Religion is another area of human interest and there is philosophy of religion. How various religions emerged right since ancient times, various stages of the development a religion, what are the basic principles of a religion, humanism as world religion- all these topics are discussed in philosophy of religion. What is the meaning of the very word 'religion', what is being truly religious, do worships and rituals form an integral part of being truly religious- all these topics have a prominent place in JK's teachings. He has pointed out that the root meaning of the word 'religion' is to bind together, but, right now, all over the world; we find that instead of coming together people are divided in the name of religion. And the rift seems to be increasing/widening. Out of this rift emerge social tensions and terrorism. JK has shown us how this kind of division is dangerous to the individual and to the society. Rising above this division, going beyond a particular religion and still be totally religious in the true sense of the term is something that is brought about by JK in his teachings.

Another current burning issue is of violence or acts of violence. Ending of violence, being on the path of nonviolence seems to be the dream of mankind but violence in general seems to be on the rise. Wars, shootout for no reason, murders, cruelty, child abuse and various other violent acts have become a part of every culture. JK has discussed violence and non-violence in the context of the human as well as the rest of the living world. He has gone into the roots of these two terms/ concepts and showed us that non-violence as a reaction to violence is really not non-violence because this non-violence has emerged out of violence; it provides critique of the notions of violence and nonviolence. When we say that we need to transcend violence a division is created between that which is transcended and what we have after transcendence; with this view we are still in the framework of divides.

Philosophy is concern for total mankind and this concern for mankind is reflected in JK's teachings. Whatever he had understood was never limited for himself only; he wanted everyone to have that understanding, he wanted to take all along with him, or rather, he wanted everyone to try for the same kind of understanding. Of course, one's belonging to a particular caste, religion, nation or race was no barrier for this. He traveled across the world and had dialogues with a number of artists, actors, scientists, philosophers, monks, psychologists, religious leaders, politicians, Noble laureates, authors from various countries. This must have contributed to the open and very wide perspective that he had of man. The communication with such a wide variety of people exposed him to the problems that people face while living all over the world. And that is why we find JK talking about problems of man, not a particular problem of a particular individual at a particular time and place. To put it differently, JK talks about some basic concerns faced by all. He also discusses many aspects of a man's life- right from food to sex to spirituality- in his special way i.e. not being judgmental or authoritative.- so that his dialogues have a universal appeal.

Two levels of problems

These basic problems or questions or concerns can be looked at from two levels, personal and social. On the personal level, besides deeper questions like who am I, what is the purpose of life, is there life after death, is there a permanent soul etc., the one question that really haunts all the humanity is- how do I live. Life appears to be a series of problems or difficult situations, how to act so that the problems are solved, the difficulties are overcome? Connected with this question is one more question and that is how to interact with others; in other words, what is my relationship with others? It means that the meaning of life, purpose of life and related questions like is the meaning of life given to me or do I have to create it are great concerns for man. JK discusses all these.

On the social level we all are witnessing disturbing events like cruelty to other humans and animals, destructive weapons, battles and their long-lasting evil effects on humans and the environment. On the one hand we talk of globalization and on the other there is strife and division in the name of religion, race, and caste, creed resulting in social tensions between two nations or communities. Terrorism has become a perpetual threat to all. How to end this on the

social level so that man can live in peace? This is a challenge faced across the world. To put it in a nutshell, how to bring about transformation in the society is of great concern to all thinkers, scientists, social workers, philosophers. Various theories or ideologies are put to test e.g. socialism, democracy etc. But, as yet, transformation of humanity seems to be a dream- perhaps a far away dream. JK provides a different and fresh perspective to this with his famous saying, “You are the world.” He meant that if the world is to be transformed, it has to begin from the individual. Questions of what is good and what is bad etc. go along with the concept of transformation. Can there be simple answers to these questions and others like what is the nature of man? JK makes us aware of these by pointing out that these are the facts of life and it is important to confront them rather than finding an escape in some readymade answer.

JK has put before us some pointers as far as understanding of problems or questions is concerned. His perspectives of inter-personal relationship, individual-social relationship are unique in many ways; they throw light on the finer aspects of these problems and make us think deeply and fundamentally. He addresses various problems through his talks and dialogues; he calls it as a ‘together journey’. This is a kind of self-discovery and we can look at freedom, meditation, love and truth as pointers in the journey. The end of this journey will be the realization that the questioner and the answer are not different. At the end of the journey freedom, meditation, truth and love will co-exist, rather, existence of any one of these means existence of the rest three.

In the western thought we find that Socrates and Plato- founders, stalwarts of philosophy- also gave some direction to human thinking and human life. Socrates believed that truth is there in each one and tried to help bring out this truth through his conversations, debates or dialogues. Plato showed the way from opinion to knowledge. Both of them employed the method of debate or dialogue to bring home their points or to make the listener ‘understand’ correctly. This method of dialogue is not just a method; if it is truly intense the questioner and the answerer become one and see the problem in a different light. The whole process of dialogue brings a different quality to it, touching the hearts of the participants. JK, too, used dialogue as a means of reaching out to every one of the audience; it was a kind of ‘search within’ for truth. His

words touched the hearts of thousand and thousand all around the world and many embarked on the journey of true knowledge.

The Upanishads also have questions and answers, questions by Nachiketa, Shwetaketu are quite well-known. This method is a two-way communication and both take part in the process. A lecture may turn out to be a one-way path; the listener may not be totally involved in it. JK used this question- answer form of communication quite often and very effectively too. People asked him questions on a lot of topics from interpersonal relationship to spirituality and he answered them in a thought provoking way, urging the questioner to look at the question or problem clearly and deeply so that the answer reveals itself.

Sometimes it is said that JK denied all the ancient wisdom. Actually he did not deny such wisdom, he only pointed out that such wisdom- something given by a guru, a text, religious leader- or a theory becomes a burden and one is likely to carry it unnecessarily, uselessly for one's whole life. For example we often quote from some text or someone's saying; but, where is my life situation in that? It only remains 'X said this' or 'X said this to Y on this occasion'. The 'I' and the particular problem of the 'I' is left out. It becomes mere parroting of words; how can this help anyone in either understanding one's problem or finding an answer to it? Such knowledge is mere accumulation of words uttered by someone. Such accumulation becomes stagnant and can't help 'my' life which is dynamic and ever changing. Also, only I can have a true understanding of my situation or of the problem that I am facing; how can someone else, an outsider understand it and find a way out of it or a solution to it? That is why, according to JK, such borrowed wisdom is of no real help. And the question remains- what am I to do?

How to end suffering

Right from ancient times various philosophies or Darshanas, ideologies have tried to answer this question; JK says that the very fact that man is still suffering, still struggling to put an end to the suffering shows that these thoughts or systems are not adequate for ending the suffering. A characteristic of JK is that he did not present a system of his own while pointing out the inadequacy of the prevalent systems. He did not oppose 'a' system but the very concept of

utility of a system, conformity to a particular ideology when it comes to solving human problems. He points out the limitations of this.

The Upanishdic dialogues or Buddha's teachings also provide individuals with the space to interpret their situations. The sutras in the Upanishads thus give man directions/ directives or pointers without details, Buddha's teachings provide guidelines. This space makes possible freedom of interpretation and therefore the Upanishads and Buddha's teachings are relevant even today. These teachings are not the remains of the thoughts in the past, thoughts of some other person; they become the present of you. That is their beauty as well.

JK attracts our attention to another fact. He says that thought, logic, science, scientific study, technology are very much there and are trying to help man out of his difficulties, but again, all these have limitations and because of that they have failed to solve human problems permanently. The major limitation is that all these are very much within the field of 'thought' ('thought' according to him is all the knowledge that one gathers, all the accumulation of likes/ dislikes, prejudices etc, all that one has learnt in the past) and, thought is rooted in memory/ past. That is why systems, ideologies become stagnant and are not much of use. Life/ living is dynamic, the problems of life are also dynamic, any pre-set formula cannot tackle them satisfactorily. His view of life is not static, it is dynamic and therefore his teachings are also not stagnant but are dynamic.

JK and transformation

Transformation of man and of the world is discussed in philosophy; ways are suggested for it like adhering to a particular thought, school of philosophy. Actually it is the quest of man to search for a new, better way of living gives rise to philosophizing. JK frequently talked about transformation of man. That is one more reason to study him under philosophy.

JK was a witness to the impact of great upheavals like World War II, various revolutions like the Russian Revolution and freedom movements like the Indian freedom movement of man. He had also seen the rise and fall of ideologies like communism in China and Russia. Different regime changes occurred during his life time like the ones in Cuba (1953-59), Libya (1969), Uganda (1962 to 71), Iraq (1958), Iran (1979) etc.

He had also seen the rise of scientific, technological progress and nuclear era. Computers and faster means of communication were already there in the form of internet or supersonic jets connecting faraway places on the earth in a magically low time. All this has already started showing its effect on man and environment in his life time and he had taken serious note of it. This is clearly seen in his teachings, especially when he talks about nature. Therefore we can say that his teachings were not just words or musings or day dreams, they were rooted in ground reality i.e. whatever was happening in the world in the social, political, cultural, environmental etc aspects of the human life. He was abreast of the latest in science and technology and research in various fields like medicine and defence machinery. Perhaps that is the reason why his teachings are very much relevant and fresh, very much connected with life.

All these revolutions or struggles tell us that people in various parts of the world wanted some kind of change or transformation in their countries or societies so that man can live in peace. JK has a lot to offer as far as transformation is concerned- irrespective of the barriers of caste, religion or nation. He talked about human transformation and said “You are the world”. He pointed out that unless there is transformation on the individual level there can be no social transformation because society comprises of individuals. In this context he has discussed functioning of the human brain and mutation of the brain cells with eminent persons in the field of science and medicine.

Taking into consideration all these points i.e. his concept of man, basic concerns of human life, nature of truth, knowledge etc, it is obvious that though JK never included himself in the class of philosophers, what he talked about is the subject matter of philosophy. Therefore it is quite appropriate- even essential- to study his teachings under ‘philosophy’.

Why the concepts of freedom, meditation, truth and love from JK’s teachings-

As one starts going deeper into JK’s teaching, it becomes clear that all the points/ topics/ concepts that he talked about are distinguishable but not separable. For him they coexist and cannot be separated from each other actually; we can think about them separately only on the thought level. His view was holistic and therefore there is a close interconnection among all the topics. Freedom, meditation, truth, love, death, fear, awareness, consciousness, thought, time,

memory, knowledge- all are connected. His teachings unfold like a beautiful, intricately woven and shining cloth; the designs or patterns on it captivate us. Then we try to understand the design bit by bit, thread by thread and herein lies the danger of our getting lost and feeling that the design is not very clear. Later on in this thesis the interconnection among freedom, meditation, truth and love will be discussed and will be brought to light. In my opinion this kind of obscurity sets in because we do not have a total or holistic view of the whole cloth. (Here I do not mean to say that there is a whole cloth or a preexisting design or that JK was viewing such a cloth.) I only want to point out our understanding of his teachings. But, then, taking into account all his teachings, with all the topics will be a far bigger project than a thesis for Ph.D. It was necessary to pick and highlight some topics- without ignoring the interconnection- for the thesis. After a deep and long deliberation, these four topics were finalized only so that the volume of the thesis becomes manageable to the researcher as well as to the reader.

Also, these four concepts are discussed in philosophy all over the world though in different ways. For example instead of freedom we find 'moksha' or ultimate freedom discussed at length in Indian philosophy whereas Existentialism discusses freedom as a necessary characteristic of being human; a lot of thrust is given on 'freedom of choice'. Then there are various ways discussed by Indian Darshanas to achieve this moksha or Nirvana or Kaivalya. Paths of knowledge (Dnyana Marga), path of faith/ devotion (Bhakti Marga), path of action (Karma Marga) are there available to all for attaining freedom. There are also difficult paths like Tantra, Hathayoga etc. Besides these, the ancient Indian path of Yoga is quite popular in many parts of the world. Meditation is an integral part of Yoga and it is practiced in a variety of forms like Transcendental Meditation. Generally we can say that there is the desire for freedom and meditation is looked upon as the means to achieve this end. In JK's teachings both freedom and meditation mean something different than the traditional meanings attached to them and that will be discussed later in this thesis. Suffice it to say here that the feeling of bondage and the struggle to break away from it is universal and so is the search for the path to freedom.

'Truth' has occupied the interest of great thinkers all over the world. Understanding, realization, knowledge of truth was an endeavour for stalwarts like Socrates, Plato and others. We have '*Satyameva Jayate*' (Truth is the only/ ultimate winner) in the Indian tradition. All the Darshanas

are trying to find out the truth about man and the world/ universe. In the recent past Mahatma Gandhi talked elaborately on truth and its nature and the important place it has in man's life. Science is also engaged in the same activity of finding the truth about man and the world; the HiggsBoson partical experiment is the latest example of this. That is why the concept of truth was chosen for the thesis.

There are discussions and debates everywhere about brotherhood, unity of all, treating others as you want them to treat you etc. Despite racial, national, religious, linguistic difference man is also looking for a peaceful and harmonious coexistence. Love provides a strong foundation for this. Now the world is coming together and love can be the binding force for all. In the Indian tradition we have Karuna, compassion for all which springs out of love for all. Not only for fellow human beings but love for the entire animate and inanimate world is important for all. Mahatma Gandhi talked about love and its importance. JK says that when you understand life and truth, when you are free only love is there for all. I think it is necessary to explore this concept hence the concept of love was chosen. Also, as JK has said, when you understand truth, when you are free only love prevails. Therefore this concept is explored.

Here I must make it clear that I do not make any claim that my understanding of these four concepts is THE right or the final interpretation of JK's teachings.

Let us now go into these concepts one by one.

CHAPTER 1

JK'S CONCEPT OF FREEDOM

In this chapter we are going to look into the concept of freedom as per JK's teachings and the concept of Moksha in Indian philosophy. Thereafter views of J. J. Rousseau and J. P. Sartre will also be discussed.

As is said earlier in the introduction, JK's teachings are like a complex pattern with intricate designs. All the concepts are interconnected in some ways. As you start reading JK you are likely to get a little confused or lost in the beginning. But gradually as the concepts start getting clearer, the whole design gets unfolded and a fascinating world of understanding of a different type is presented to you. It is perhaps a life-time project to understand all the facets of each of the concept that he talks about. This thesis is an attempt at understanding and reproducing some of the concepts with as many facets as possible.

The concept of freedom has an important place in JK's teachings. On August 2, 1929, the opening day of the annual Star Camp at Ommen, Holland, JK dissolved the Order of the Star of the East (an organization set up by the Theosophical Society for preparations in order to welcome the Jagatguru and JK was projected as the Jagatguru), and openly denied being a world teacher. The text of his talk on that occasion brings out not just the importance of freedom in his teaching but also exhibits his concern that *every body* should have freedom. In the same talk he declared that his only concern was "...to set man absolutely and unconditionally free."¹

This speech of his provides a good outline of his concept of freedom and the barriers to freedom. Here JK clearly says that freedom and happiness are not two separate states, they co-exist. He makes his famous statement that Truth is a pathless land and shows that truth and freedom also co-exist. By 'pathless' he means that no pre-set method, organization etc. can take one to freedom or happiness. Hence the dissolution of the Order of the Star.

Thus according to him freedom, truth and happiness are all together. In the same speech he points out that man looks for a readymade path to freedom or truth and depends on someone else for his freedom/ spirituality/ enlightenment/ happiness. Various gods and religions and god-men are created; instead of the old ones new forms of worship are adopted. Then you become accustomed to authority. “You think that another can, by his extraordinary powers -or a miracle-transport you to the realm of eternal freedom which is happiness.”² But these are all crutches that one hangs on to and they become barriers to freedom. No man or organization from without can make you free; one has to look within for that. In the same speech he says that no one holds the key to the kingdom of happiness. According to him instead of relying on all the methods, gurus’ etc one has to face life, facts as they are.

With this talk JK himself became free from the limitations and bondages of heading an organization and being caged.

Thereafter, till the end, he went on with this task and toured the world telling all about what he means by freedom and why it is important for *everyone* to be free. The freedom that he talks of does not require one to belong to any particular caste, creed, religion or organization at all. In fact, he was of the opinion that any organization- religious or otherwise- is an impediment to freedom.

With his announcement ‘Truth is a pathless land’ JK actually started a very long dialogue with the whole of mankind. ‘Freedom’ forms an integral part of his overall teachings. By pointing out that there is no pre-established path to truth or freedom, he also pointed out that everybody can pursue freedom or truth on an individual level- nationality, religion, culture etc. being no barriers. The understanding of Truth also brings in freedom; actually both go hand in hand according to him. (More will be discussed on this point in the chapter on Truth.)

His concept of freedom is also connected with other concepts of his like pleasure-pain, thought, time, desire, authority etc. For example in his book ‘Freedom from the Known’ he raises questions like does freedom mean to be free from various emotions like jealousy etc. or from authority? Is it being free from painful memories, unhappy experiences? In the same book he

says that one must be completely free in order to come upon truth. Unless this happens there will be no truth, love and meditation. Thus it seems that freedom is quite the central concept in his teachings. Now let us go into this concept deeply and cautiously.

Importance and relevance of the concept

Freedom is perhaps the most sought after idea or goal of man since ancient times. Man has also been thinking about the very awareness of freedom, about the distinction between being free and not being free. Generally speaking, man has been experiencing bondage of some kind and is trying to get out of it. This bondage could be in the form of sorrow/ pain, evil, unfortunate events, cruel rulers, natural calamities and other disasters. In such situations man wishes that he could get away from them i.e. he could get rid of sorrow/ pain, unfortunate events etc.; in other words he could be 'free' from them. These can be called as outward or external bondages. Man wants to escape from them or wants to find a permanent solution to such problems. However much he would try he cannot run away. Then he starts thinking about freedom as such. Freedom of action, freedom of making a decision, freedom of choice, the very possibility of freedom and the means to achieve it- all these have been serious issues thought over by great thinkers all over the world.

In the traditional Indian framework we have the notions of bondage and liberation- Bandha and Moksha. In modern times, in the political framework, we talk about freedom from and freedom of- freedom from tyranny, social injustice etc; and freedom of expression, of speech etc. In the Existential framework freedom of choice forms an integral part of being human. Existentialism holds man to be free to choose what he wants to become.

Inwardly, the bondage could be of various fears- of death, illness, parting with dear ones, anger, conditioning, image building etc. For those who believe in rebirth, the cycle of birth and death is bondage. Salvation, liberation, Moksha or Mukti are some of the terms used for freedom in various philosophies and by various thinkers, spiritual gurus in the past and in the present. Whatever the name, the basic feeling is the same, there is some kind of a sorrowful situation

and man feels that he is imprisoned in the situation; then he tries to get out of the situation and that is freedom or the ultimate freedom for him.

‘Freedom’ is also one of the keywords of the modern times. It is much discussed on various levels and in many contexts like individual freedom, political freedom, spiritual freedom etc. There is perhaps no human being who has never desired to be free from some kind of bondage-physical or psychological. As Dr. SundaraRajan has pointed out in one of his articles, this desire for freedom is a constituent of being a human.³

Erich Fromm, the well-known psychoanalyst, has said this- “What is freedom as a human experience? Is the desire for freedom something inherent in the human nature? Is it an identical experience regardless of what kind of culture a person lives in, or is it something different according to the degree of individualism reached in a particular society? Is freedom only the absence of external pressure or is it also the presence of something- and if so, of what? ... Can freedom become a burden, too heavy for man to bear, something he tries to escape from?”⁴ Though the word ‘freedom’ is much used, there are many shades of meaning that go with it. JK has made it quite clear that he is not talking about any of these kinds of freedom, for him freedom is not ‘from’ or ‘to’. ‘Freedom *per se*’ is what he talks about in his lectures and dialogues.

Commonsense understanding of the term

‘Freedom’ is usually used as ‘freedom from’ or ‘freedom to’. ‘Freedom from’ means getting rid of something, from something. (This includes physical freedom or freedom to move around freely.) Freedom from sorrow or suffering- either physical or psychological- has been a constant quest of mankind. This is evident from the thoughts or teachings of great saints, thinkers all over the world. For example Gautama Buddha showed the way to attaining freedom from suffering by giving us his famous Four Noble Truths (AryaSatya) and AshtangaMarga. He declared that there is suffering, there is a cause of suffering, and if you remove the cause you can be free from suffering. This state of being ‘free’ will be Nirvana according to him.

It could be freedom from a particular ideology, set of beliefs, or set of rules if one belongs to a particular organization or sect. Man also seeks freedom from tyrants, dictators. History of every nation is full of freedom fights and struggles. Besides these there are many other things like bad habits, evil thoughts etc. that man wants to be free from; this is a commonplace experience.

‘Freedom to’ means to do what one wishes to do. Freedom of expression, freedom to write, paint, present one’s art all these fall under ‘freedom to’. Everyone wants freedom to do what he/she wishes, to be free to move about without any restriction. One may want freedom for self development. It also means freedom of choice which was not acceptable to JK. (This will be discussed later in this chapter).

Thus the commonsense understanding of freedom includes freedom ‘from’ and freedom ‘to’.

JK’s concept of freedom

Freedom as an ideal

JK says that many times freedom is looked upon as an ideal, a goal, something that each one should achieve. But freedom is not an ideal according to JK. He points out that people cling to the ideal of freedom because they are in a prison; the prison being one’s daily life which is full of struggle and strife, sorrow, where one is in the grip of desires and his mind is conditioned from all sides. Living in such conditions is like living in a prison where your conditioning does not allow you to get out of the boundaries set by the conditioning. Once you become aware of this you try to get out of it, to escape. You try to seek freedom by way of penance etc. But JK says that freedom cannot be sought as a goal because the moment you set it as a goal, you are distanced from it, there is division between you and freedom. Then there is struggle for achieving it; different methods or systems are pursued and followed. “You create or invent that ideal of freedom because you cannot escape from your prison.”⁵ This prison is man-made and it is full of suffering and conflict. In order to put an end to the suffering etc. an ideal god, an ideal freedom, an ideal truth is created by man, but this is nothing but an emotional or mental escape. He further says, “If you become conscious of that prison, if you become aware of the fact that you are trying to escape, then that awareness destroys the prison; then, instead of pursuing freedom, you will know freedom.”⁶ And this freedom does not come to him who seeks freedom,

meaning if you make efforts by way of penance, following very rigid physical and mental discipline or follow a guru or text, when you set freedom as a goal and strive for it in a particular direction, it will not happen to you because such pursuit is full of division and therefore conflict. The division would be in the form of goal and path, end and means. Thus freedom cannot be set as a goal or objective.

Freedom as an idea

JK says, “**freedom is not an idea**; a philosophy written about freedom is not freedom.”⁷ According to him freedom is something ‘actual’ and not a topic of verbal discussion or intellectual understanding alone. It is something that can be experienced and not something that is on the thought level. Freedom is something that is in the ‘living active present in daily life’. Freedom is firmly rooted in experience; it does not hang in the air. He always says that a word is not the object that is indicated by the word. The actual object and the word/ name of the object are two different things. Similarly the word ‘freedom’ and the actual experience/ the state of freedom are two different things. Meaning, you can use as many words as you want to describe freedom but actual freedom is not to be found in those words; freedom cannot be contained in words. Words are static, frozen; freedom is not so.

Also, if you create an image of what this freedom is, it is not going to help. Image is not the actual thing and unless you know the actual thing, you cannot experience it.

JK says that only a fresh mind, ‘unclouded by memories or by habitual responses’ is able to grasp what *is*. That is understanding truth and only truth liberates, not our desire to be free. This very desire and efforts made in that direction are hindrances to freedom. Because freedom is not something in the future, it is very much there in the present in the ‘now’. You cannot understand what *is* when you meet it with the past, memories. Memories come from the past; they are accumulation from the past. Knowledge, beliefs, experiences all are accumulation from the past and when it comes to understanding what *is*, this accumulation doesn’t help at all; it actually prevents freedom.

Freedom- Thought- Time

“To come upon it (freedom), the mind has to learn to look at life which is a vast movement, without the bondage of time, for freedom lies beyond the field of consciousness.”⁸ For JK ‘consciousness’ is all of one’s thoughts. Thought is a human construct and it is always rooted in the past and therefore not free. There can be no freedom when thought is thus clinging on to the past. Therefore he says that freedom lies beyond thought and thought is the field of consciousness. He says that freedom is a **state of mind** but it is not a state of mind that is caught in thought. Any ideology, ideal, system is a product of thought, a human construct. Thought is rooted in memory, in the past and is limited to memory so you are rooted in the past and are limited. That is not being free.

JK shows how ultimately every form of human construct leads towards divisions. In the initial stage of a new construct man is aware of the roots, basis, foundations but gradually when there is advancement the connection with the roots, foundations get lost, forgetting that the human world is created out of the natural world. Human world is the world of thought i.e. thoughts, ideas, images, traditions etc. and freedom is not any of these.

He means that thought is the response of memory, knowledge and experience, and therefore it is always the product of the past; it cannot possibly bring about freedom because freedom is something that is in the living active present, in daily life. Also, the ‘I’ or ego which is a product of thought according to him, creates division like me and the rest of the world. But there is no division in freedom.

It is said that if you want freedom, you strive for it, take efforts, work upon it and you have freedom in the end; but according to JK it cannot be achieved gradually through time. He brings it to our notice that freedom is not at the end. There is only one step to freedom and that is also the last step. He means that freedom is not something that can be planned for in advance like a project say of a building. In that case you work before the materialization of the building on a paper; there are elaborate preparations, collection of various materials, manpower etc. Then, after working on all these for a particular period the building is built and can be put to use. This does not apply to freedom. It is instantaneous, immediate. When you observe what *is* without

the obstacles of your conditioning, prejudices, without the burden of the past, there is understanding. This understanding is not something theoretical or verbal. Then right action follows automatically/ naturally. “They (understanding what is, right action and freedom) are all at the same moment, not learn and then act.”⁹ This observation without past/ prejudices is also freedom to observe.

‘Freedom from’ and ‘freedom to’

While talking about ‘freedom from’ and ‘freedom to’ JK has pointed out that in order to achieve *freedom from* something- suffering, sorrow, pain etc. man takes recourse in something- like some religious / political ideology or joining some cult but this does not really help because this means discarding the present set of beliefs/ system/ principles and accepting newer set of beliefs/ system/ principles and so on. Thereby you depend on the new system and you start conforming to it. JK calls this as slavery. What he means is that you give up one method and accept a new one to have freedom but actually you just change the garb, the inner core remains the same. Earlier you were busy following one method now you are busy following another method. Then you will still be equally suffering, feel bonded.

This will also hamper your ability to question or to doubt. For instance, when you accept the words of your guru/ teacher/ leader you put on blinkers , your vision becomes limited, you behave according to him. You succumb to someone and isn’t that slavery? Where is freedom in such acceptance of another’s words?

Then all your actions will be just imitation of the guru/ teacher/ leader, actions that will be carried out in order to ‘conform’ to some system. And that is putting fences around you; freedom cannot be there in an enclosure.

He says- “freedom is *not freedom from* something- freedom *from* something is merely a reaction.”¹⁰ For example, you are suffering and you want to get rid of it, you want to be free from the suffering. Here you want freedom as a reaction to the state of suffering, you are negating something and thereby you want freedom but freedom is not any kind of reaction. Freedom is freedom per se and not freedom *from, of* or *to*. When you are thinking about freedom ‘from’ or ‘of’ it has some fixed, determined reference but according to him real freedom transcends all such reference points.

Freedom and ‘I’

Be it ‘freedom from’ or ‘freedom to’, **who is it which is seeking freedom?** It is the ‘I’ in every one of us that experiences bondage and seeks freedom. This ‘I’ is also the foundation of everyone’s problems, including that of how to achieve freedom. JK says that it is extremely essential that we first understand the nature of this ‘I’ if we want to understand the nature/ meaning of freedom.

The ‘I’ is a result of a lot of conditioning. Right from birth a child is given many ideas and identities. Social, cultural, political, religious atmosphere and ideology in which it grows make an enormous impact on the child and gradually, as it grows up, this centre called as ‘I’ or ‘me’ takes shape. ‘I’ am a Hindu/ Muslim/ Christian; ‘I’ am an Indian/ European/ American etc, ‘I’ am from this or that family, ‘I’ am a socialist/ communist etc. This process of identification continues and along with that process, the feeling of belongingness takes root. But, this very identification and feeling of belongingness puts fences around man in the form of duties, obligations, responsibilities, expectations etc. JK says that this kind of identification comes out of thought; it is bound to be limited because thought is always limited. Freedom cannot be there with such limitations. Therefore, as one can see, freedom and ‘I’ do not go together. Understanding of this “I” thus becomes essential for freedom.

Freedom and understanding the structure of ‘I’

Freedom, according to JK consists in **understanding the whole structure of *what is this ‘I’***. The very identity is the result of the human world or human construct. There is a lot of conditioning of likes- dislikes, images, identifications to particular ideology. Due to the conditioning one is not in a state of seeing or understanding the distinction between the natural and human world. I am conditioned to view things in a particular manner with a particular pattern. The conditioning can be thought of on three levels. The first one will be the human world of various thoughts, ideas. The second level could be the level of tradition; our traditions shape the way we think and the way we view everything- including myself. The third could be that of ideologies or religions that come out of the first two.

JK says that once I am free from these conditionings of human construct that is real freedom from the 'I' itself. Once you realize that these are human constrains and not necessary or binding, you deny them. To realize the whole structure of the 'I' is to understand and to live with what we really are without being judgmental, critical. Living with all the bundle of ideas, thoughts etc. means neither accepting it or denying it, but just observing it without being morbid, depressed or elated about it. We are not to justify or condemn whatever is there in the 'I', but we should just observe it. As you really understand it you are free from it.

Freedom and choice

While answering the question what is freedom, JK says that we often talk of freedom in context with freedom to have a job we like, to do what we like, to choose our partner, generally to do whatever we like; this way life is becoming more and more permissive. We also think that freedom is to have multiple choices. But, does choice give freedom? Why do we have to choose? "If you are very clear, perceive purely, there is no choice."¹¹

According to him having choice points not to freedom but to inner confusion, doubt and uncertainty. You do not know what option to select and that is why you ponder over all the choices that are available. Thought enters here creating time and then action is hindered, suspended. When you perceive clearly or understand fully a situation, problem etc. action immediately follows. There is no gap- which is time- between that clear perception and action. This is right action. Quite often while explaining this point JK gives the example of one's action when his house is on fire or when one is confronted with a snake. In such a situation one does not stop and think about the causes of fire or the colour of the snake or different options of action, the right action follows. Pouring water over the fire or running away from the place are the actions that follow immediately. Here there is no 'choice' as such because the danger of the situation is completely taken in instantaneously. The action is not based on choice. Thus JK says that having choices is not freedom at all.

Freedom, choice and desire are also connected. JK says that as long as the mind is caught up in want or desire, there must be emptiness. The very fact that you are seeking something suggests that there is emptiness within, there is vacant space. As you become aware of this inner emptiness, you look for things, ideas, and persons to fill the emptiness. This wanting creates a choice. “When there is craving there must be choice, and choice precipitates you into the conflict of experiences. You have the capacity to choose and thereby you limit yourself by your choice. Only when the mind is free from choice is there liberation.”¹² According to him choice actually prevents freedom.

Freedom and getting trapped

According to JK freedom exists when one is not psychologically and religiously **caught in a trap**. He explains that gurus, saviors, preachers, excellent books, religious texts, psychologists and psychoanalysts- all these are psychological and religious traps. People try to seek peace, freedom/ moksha through these means and start following these blindly. This is getting trapped. Rather than bringing freedom and peace, these means- not to forget religious and political ideologies- breed more inner confusion and disorder. One guru/ book/ ideology says one thing another says something different. One prescribes meditation, another advocates penance. Which is the correct way? Man is confused and either tries many of the means or sticks to one hoping to ‘achieve’ freedom and peace one day. But, JK says that freedom is not something to be achieved by following a certain method. When you follow or imitate a method/ ideal/ principle you are busy doing just that; following becomes more important than actually being free. ‘Imitation as a means to freedom is the very denial of freedom, for the means is the end; copy makes more copy, not for freedom.’¹³ And this leads to confusion and disorder. Unless this disorder and confusion is cleared freedom cannot be.

Freedom and discipline

Then again, JK says, “freedom is not licentiousness, doing what you like. Freedom demands tremendous discipline, not the discipline of the soldier, not the discipline of suppression, of conformity.”¹⁴ Not having checks on your behaviour or actions is perhaps the most commonly

understood meaning of freedom. Here JK has referred to 'discipline'. His meaning of discipline is different from the commonly understood meaning of the word. Usually discipline is taken to mean something very rigorous, strict code of conduct, something that is imposed. And it is believed that such external imposition will bring order in one's life. JK shows that the root meaning of the word discipline is 'to learn'- it doesn't matter what. Actually learning and discipline are interdependent. Learning demands discipline and the very learning is discipline; it is not that you discipline yourself first and then learn. This very act of learning *is* discipline, he says that this learning which is discipline brings about freedom from all suppression, from all limitation.

Discipline if exercised as an external coercion causes suppression though outwardly there may be a certain pattern that is mistaken for order. Wherever there is suppression there is conflict and there is no conflict in freedom.

So, discipline, learning and freedom go hand in hand. They are together in the sense that without any one of them the rest two can't be present.

Freedom and authority

JK denies authority because according to him the gurus tell you what to think, what to do, what to practice, everything. But how can someone else think or decide for you, instead of you? Your life is *your* life, not of the guru and so you have to think on your own, understand on your own. "All authority of any kind, especially in the field of thought and understanding, is the most destructive, evil thing... You have to be your own teacher and your own disciple." ¹⁵

Another point that comes out prominently in JK's dialogues about authority and freedom is very important. He says that the gurus or leaders think that they are dealing with ignorant people and they really want to help those ignorant people. Then they assume authority and that in fact is denial of freedom because freedom cannot be given to one from someone else. But here JK cautions that such a denial of external authority could be tricky. One may deny the authority of a guru, of an idea, of a priest etc. and may establish his/ her own authority. You give up a guru and you start with '*I* know what is right, *I* know what I am saying, it is *my* experience; in the

process the 'I' becomes the guru or the priest. This is also to be avoided with reference to freedom.

Here it seems that on the one hand JK accepts the limitations, finitude associated with human existence and human traits, emotions and moods that result from those and on the other he believes that these can be overcome. This can be looked upon as his positivity or optimism. Some may like it to call as a utopian thought of Socrates and Plato. Or, is it the Aristotelian weakness of will? Whatever the name, JK held his views of 'be a light unto yourself'.

Freedom and suffering

Man is in pain, is suffering and wants to be free of it. According to JK, in such a case freedom becomes a reaction to the suffering. Freedom is not a reaction like this. Also, man thinks that suffering is a problem and freedom is a solution to the problem. But such thoughts of problem-solution are still in the field of thought and therefore limited. Freedom lies beyond the field of thought. True freedom is freedom from reaction originated in thought. Suffering, pain, pleasure all are the members of the world of thought, when you look for solution to suffering you are still moving in the field of thought.

Sometimes the daily routine life with all the struggles, pains, conflicts is taken to be a suffering in itself. Monks, *sanyasis* in order to be free, abandon this life and start living in a remote place, in seclusion with the hope of ending the suffering. JK says that such seclusion is not freedom because when you seclude yourself, you are creating a division between what life is and what you want to be. There cannot be freedom when there is division. Actually, JK says, "the very pain, the very suffering demands that we go beyond them and that is freedom."¹⁶ Freedom is not physically distancing yourself from life, from fact, the present situation; facing life and the present as it is, and observing it without allowing your conditioning interfering in the observation is freedom.

Freedom- experience- memory

JK says that if the mind is caught in the past or the future, it cannot understand the significance of the present experience. When the mind is preoccupied with the past, with what happened earlier etc. it is not in the present, it is looking at the present with the past. Similarly, when the mind is preoccupied with the future, meaning instead of looking at what is the mind is busy with what should be or will be, future gain or loss it is not in the present completely and cannot understand the present. And, because you don't understand the present, which is experience, it leaves its scar and the experience remaining incomplete you are not free from the experience. Some residue is left behind, you carry it forward. It is an addition to your bundle of memories and it becomes a burden. Also, such addition to the memory is an addition to the 'I' or the self or the consciousness. If you try to look to memory for freedom or for happiness, you are actually increasing the already existing and accumulated store of memory. And that can never bring freedom or happiness.

Possibility of freedom

JK considers yet another aspect of freedom. In one of the dialogues he raised the question whether there is freedom at all. The answer given by tradition is yes, there is moksha. But then what is the instrument to deal with this question? Rationalization is the instrument and rationalization is intellect. Intellect means the field of the known or the field of thought. So "the intellect can only know freedom within the field, like a man who knows freedom within a prison."¹⁷ Then is there a possibility of freedom at all? He holds that the intellect itself rejects the possibility that there can be no freedom because it is inconceivable that there is no way out of this prison once the limitations of the prison are understood.

Again, if there is no freedom is the mind everlastingly condemned to live within this field of the known? If this is not freedom- the question remains what is freedom? The mind says 'I don't know'. But in the very saying of this, there is an expectation to know, the mind is really waiting for something to happen. At this point JK says, "So I really do not know; I am not waiting, I am not hoping that some answer will come through some outside agency. I am not expecting a thing. There it is. There is the clue."¹⁸ Man revolts against the idea that he can not be free, ever,

that he is condemned to live in this world. “It is not intellect which revolts, but the whole organism, the whole perception. Therefore he says ‘*I really do not know.*’ That not- knowing is freedom; knowing is prison. “Knowledge of the field is prison; absence of the knowledge of the field is also prison. So the mind that lives in a state of not-knowing is a free mind.”¹⁹ when the mind says *I do not know* the yesterday has ended. For it is the knowledge of the continuity, which is the prison.

In short there are a few points about freedom that strike us in JK’s discussions on freedom.

They are-

1. There is no fixed path or a prescribed method that takes one to freedom. You have to keep the windows open to let the wind in. Similarly you have to keep yourself open, and then freedom may happen to you.
2. Coercion cannot bring freedom. External imposition of any kind of system is actually a hindrance to freedom.
3. Imitation of a guru, conforming to a particular ideology or a book does not lead to freedom.
4. Freedom is freedom, there is no freedom *from* or *to* or *for*. Freedom *per se* is real freedom.
5. Having multiple choices is not freedom, it actually means confusion.
6. Freedom is not accumulation of more and more knowledge. Freedom is actually freedom from the known. Knowledge- being rooted in memory- is always limited. Freedom has no boundaries or limits.

Let us now go in to the concept of Moksha in the Indian philosophy.

Moksha in Indian philosophy

A concept parallel to JK’s concept of freedom is that of Moksha in Indian philosophy. The root meaning of the Sanskrit word ‘Moksha’ is ‘to set free’. So basically Moksha means freedom. If we look back, in the Indian context, the concept of Moksha has played an important role in all the Darshanas (except for CharvakaDarshan). The goal for a philosophical endeavor or the

ultimate goal for everyone was supposed to be **Moksha** or the **ultimate liberation** or the **ultimate freedom**. It was considered to be the highest pursuit of life. Be it Nirvana in Buddhism, or the knowledge of the unity of Brahman and Atman in Advaita Vedanta; the basic concept is the same- some kind of total, permanent freedom, a state where there will be no trace of suffering/ sorrow or pain. This state is also said to be a blissful state by some Darshanas like Advaita Vedanta.

From the commonsense point of view it is obvious that man finds himself in some kind of bondage and therefore seeks freedom. Usually this bondage is that of suffering. Various paths or practices- like varieties of meditation, strict physical discipline, chanting of particular mantras, renunciation etc.- are suggested for the achievement of this freedom. Let us take an overview of the concept of Moksha as found in the various Indian Darshanas.

Concept of Moksha as found in various Indian Darshanas-

If we take an over view of the rest of the Darshanas this is what we find as regards Moksha or the ultimate liberation-

There are two aspects of Moksha or the ultimate liberation. One is getting rid of one's suffering or sorrow or pain and the other aspect is knowing the ultimate truth. Actually, it is said in various Darshanas that knowledge of the ultimate truth automatically ends all the suffering. Great thinkers, philosophers and saints express the same view. Once you know the truth, the futility, temporariness, pettiness of this world is realized and bliss is also experienced. Hence the urge to come upon the ultimate reality.

Suffering is said to be of three kinds in the Samkhya Darshana-

1. Adhyatmika Dukkha i.e. Metaphysical suffering- this is related with one's own body or mind like a headache or hunger that one experiences.
2. Adhibhautika Dukkha i.e. Material suffering- pain or suffering caused by some external factor like prick of a thorn or destruction of crop by wild animals etc.
3. Adhidaivika Dukkha i.e. theological suffering- pain or suffering caused by some extraneous, extraordinary causes like the impact of the celestial bodies on one's life.

Moksha means getting rid of all these sufferings and pains and sorrows.

Generally, the Indian tradition believes in pre-birth and rebirth. Rhythmically, cyclically the soul is supposed to be born again, death of the body is not the End. Bringing this cycle of birth and death to a stop, a permanent stop is also looked upon as Moksha.

Man naturally seeks to get rid of these kinds of sufferings. Some temporary solution may be found like taking medicine if you have fever. But all such measures are inadequate in the sense that they do not offer a permanent solution to one's sorrow. The pain may keep on recurring. In short we can say that the traditional concept of Moksha includes ending of suffering not just in this birth but actually putting an end to this very cycle of birth and death. And therefore Moksha is said to be the ultimate *Purushartha*.

According to the various Darshanas, atman/ soul is different from the body, senses and mind. Because of ignorance this difference is not noticed and the 'I' wrongly identifies itself with the body, senses and mind. This wrong identification is the real bondage and getting rid of it is the ultimate freedom or Moksha.

What do we factually see in our life or around us? Man has been struggling all the while to find out an everlasting remedy for his suffering; and suffering seems to have continued till this date in spite of so many methods and ways and disciplines.

The Nyaya Darshana uses the term '*Apavarga*' for Moksha. *Apavarga* means freeing of the Atman from the bondages of the body and the senses; it is complete annihilation of suffering. When the Atman unites with the body, senses and mind there is birth. If there is no union of this type there will be no suffering because suffering is experienced only through the body, senses and mind. According to this Darshana, Moksha is such a state in which not just the suffering but even happiness/ pleasure also ends. In this state the Atman goes back to its original state, there is no knowledge or consciousness/ awareness in this state; it is beyond knowledge/ awareness. This state is described as '*abhayam*' or free from fear, '*ajaram*' or free from decay and change and '*amrityupadam*' or free from death.

Thus we find that Moksha predominantly means freedom of the 'I' from all suffering, from all bondages- including that of the past and the future births.

Now let us see how JK's concept of freedom is different and how it is relevant.

Difference between JK's concept of freedom and the concept of Moksha

The foremost point of difference is that according to JK freedom is not 'from' or 'of'; it is freedom per se.

In the Indian tradition the 'I' or atman is the one that attains Moksha or the one that takes birth again. Barring Charvaka and Buddhism the rest of the Darshanas consider atman to be a permanent entity that continues even after death or that travels from birth to birth. JK differs here. According to him the 'I' is a bundle of consciousness which is made up of all thought, memories, feelings, prejudices etc of man. Realizing that there is no 'I' over and above or besides this bundle and burden of all the storage is being free from the bundle, from the burden; that in itself is freedom. Once you understand this, realize this then naturally the idea of pre-birth and rebirth does not carry any weight. Then the question of putting an end to the cycle of birth- death does not arise.

Once this is realized, once it is realized that there is no sufferer, suffering will also come to an end. Thus freedom from suffering also consists of this understanding. This is the truth and arriving at this truth is nothing else but being free.

From the ancient concept of Moksha let us now move on to the concepts of two great thinkers from the comparatively recent past, namely J. J. Rousseau and J.P.Sartre.

J. J. Rousseau and J.P. Sartre on Freedom

For this concept two great thinkers/ philosophers are taken into consideration. **Jean Jacques Rousseau** (1712-1788) and **Jean-Paul Sartre**(1905-1980) in the modern period are the two stalwarts that have made original contributions to philosophy and especially to the concept of freedom. Both JK and Sartre belong to the 20th century. This also shows us that the concept of freedom was under consideration for a very long time in Western philosophy.

First let us turn to Rousseau.

Importance of Rousseau's concept of freedom

Rousseau, who was not atypical philosopher and who called himself as a 'seeker of truth', brought the concepts of freedom, equality and brotherhood to the fore; these turned out to be the foundation stones for the French Revolution. It will be appropriate to go into his impactful concept of freedom at this juncture. It is also quite interesting to see how his ideas come close to JK's in spite of about a two hundred year gap. Also, his description of 'modern man' of those days is still fresh and applicable to the modern man of today.

Rousseau's concept of freedom

At the very beginning of his *Social Contract* he says that man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains imposed externally by civilization, culture etc. This indicates that freedom is a prominent theme in his philosophy. He looked at freedom from different standpoints and presented different nuances of the meaning of the term. Usually his concept of freedom is analyzed into natural, civil, moral etc but here an overview is taken.

Freedom and choice

Rousseau says that both man and animal are mechanisms programmed to a fixed behavioural pattern based on some natural instincts. But, the distinguishing point between a man and an animal is that a man has the ability to act contrary to this mechanism of senses and this is his freedom. His power of willing and choosing distinguishes him from the animal. Rousseau finds this power to be something that is outside the laws of the physical world, not subject to scientific explanation. This power is also the basis of all moral action so

there is a connection between freedom and morality. He also says that giving up freedom is contrary to human nature.

Freedom and 'state of nature'

Rousseau has talked about 'state of nature'. According to him this 'state of nature' is where man is free to move about and not dependent on others for his livelihood. He says that man has total freedom in the state of nature for two reasons – a) He is physically free because he is not restrained by any state apparatus or by other fellow men. b) Such a man in the state of nature is psychologically free because he has not become slave to any of the artificial needs that the modern society has created. For example at present we have various gadgets given by technology like the cell phone; we cannot even imagine our life without it. This is an artificial need and we have become slaves to it. Here freedom is freedom from the need that is not natural at all. He also points out that this kind of slavery gives rise to a lot of social evils like depression, exploitation, domination etc. His words are befitting today. He said then that no one lives in the state of nature, all are living in a complex civil society but freedom is essential to all. No doubt this complex nature of the modern society will give rise to certain constraints but the government should safeguard the freedom of the subjects. This idea of freedom is a very significant one and needs to be investigated carefully today when all of us are surrendering to such 'needs' like various gadgets, internet etc.

Freedom- relationships- images

According to Rousseau ideas like property, law, moral inequality etc. have no basis in nature; they are imposed on man over the centuries and 'true man' is concealed by these ideas. Peel off these ideas and you will find the natural man. But then would this man be like an animal given to sense experience? Rousseau clarifies that this will not happen because of the original freedom of choice that each man enjoys. Also, in order to rise above this animal state, man has to become sociable, come out of the state of nature and use his freedom. His passion, conscience and reason will develop only in a social relationship. He says that we cannot go back to the state of nature but the understanding of that state is essential for a fuller realization of the natural goodness in man. Thus relationship with others or social relationship is very important.

JK says that life is relationship- with others, with nature. According to him this relationship is like a mirror in which one can observe oneself. Such an observation is essential for self-knowledge which in turn leads to freedom.

Freedom- Being yourself- Becoming

His discussion of state of nature and externally imposed ideas reaches a new level when he says that a man in the state of nature could simply 'be' himself whereas the modern man takes up 'appearances' for the satisfaction of the so-called or artificial needs. Freedom is being yourself; appearances or images are the walls built around you and you are robbed off your real freedom. Appearances conceal man's original nature and give rise to an inner contradiction in man. As you grow up, the social process or the process of becoming sociable gathers momentum, then more and more appearances are added and the contradiction between the real man and his appearance also intensifies. This further leads to the 'corruption' of the original nature of man. Rousseau says that it is like the rust that hides and corrodes at the same time. Because of this the individuality is lost and men are turned into puppets- uniform puppets at that! Then alienation sets in creating an inner conflict. Having lost his true nature, his feelings in veil, man becomes ill at ease. His moral freedom is lost through not having choice. This results into a devastating effect- man is constantly at war with himself.

Rousseau's thoughts are beautifully expressed in the following words-

"Let us begin by again being ourselves, by concentrating ourselves within ourselves, by circumscribing our soul within the same limits as nature has given to our being; let us begin, in a word, by gathering ourselves together where we are, in order that, as we seek to know ourselves, all that constitutes us may come and present itself to us at the same time."²⁰

Here we find striking similarity between Rousseau and JK. Two points from JK's teachings are remembered- JK says that we live in images and have relation with images of others. No true relation exists amongst men because images are not the true self. Another point is- image/appearance and the real 'me' means there is division and according to him division gives rise to nothing else but conflict. This conflict consumes a lot of energy and has a devastating effect of creating confusion. JK says that you have to be stripped of the images if you want have true

relationship or if you want to know the real nature of your 'self'. Getting rid of the images is freedom.

Freedom and Law

In 'Letters from the Mountain' Rousseau says that freedom consists less in doing one's will than in not being subject to that of another. This can be misinterpreted that freedom is not to bow down to anyone else and do whatever one wants to do. Looking carefully into his thoughts on state of nature, natural man and true freedom that man enjoyed then, we understand that Rousseau also accepts that we cannot go back to that state; we live in a moral society where 'law' has an important place in the well-being of the society and for this following the law is extremely essential. In his view this law has to be universal in two ways- one, it has to be applicable to all; and two, it has to be derived from all. It means that a genuine law will be the embodiment of the general will which is possessed by all. If there is no universality of this nature that law will not be a part of the general will and will not be a law. Thus obedience of law is not giving up your freedom when the law is genuine. This shows that freedom does not mean licentiousness; freedom means having order. He says that laws should exist to protect individual freedom or autonomy. This character of a law will guarantee people's loyalty to the law and thereby to the state. This is the connection that he has pointed out. Usually it is thought that law or authority is opposed to individual freedom but Rousseau shows us that when the law emerges out of moral freedom, it does not curtail individual freedom and there is no opposition between the two.

JK does not discuss law as such but he is not against obedience to law. He clearly says that there are laws in a society and one has to abide by them, for example traffic laws.

Freedom and State/ Society

According to Rousseau the individual and the state are not two watertight compartments; fulfillment or development of moral life is possible only through one's active participation in society. Also, the unity and the permanence of the state depend on the moral integrity of the citizens. So they are not two rivals but together they lead to a stable society wherein one can

have his own freedom because that freedom will be genuine and one's life in a society will also be genuine. Then there will be fraternity and equality as well. Thus, freedom provides the base, so to say, to the other two principles.

Freedom and conscience

Throughout, Rousseau presents his views on all the above mentioned points on the basis of reason. But he also talks about the inner conscience, voice of the soul, divine instinct. According to him this forms the basis of man's moral existence. He has summed this in a beautiful sentence by saying that God gave man conscience to love the good, reason to know it and freedom to choose it. Thus consciousness, reason and freedom are the basic elements that are endowed to man and it is his right as well as duty to develop them. Not just reason, but the other two are also equally important. In fact, he says, that conscience is all the more important when reason becomes inadequate or impotent. In man, all these faculties, when fully developed, will bring about a full understanding of himself and his god-given place in the universal order. This implies that there is rational order and unity in the world and in understanding these, not just the brain but the promptings of the heart are extremely important. So much so that neglecting these promptings could have devastating effects on humanity. His view is unifying as far as reason and the inner voice are concerned.

JK does not talk about 'inner voice' or voice of the soul or divine instinct like Rousseau did but he says that reason or thought is not adequate to understand freedom.

Rousseau was greatly concerned with finding out the original and the artificial elements of man's being. For this purpose he does not restrict himself to a purely intellectual framework or discipline. For example freedom is one of the original elements and freedom cannot be explained in physical terms. For Rousseau, its existence presupposes the presence of an immaterial principle in human nature meaning the soul. From this he also argues that the soul is immortal. He says that the immaterial is independent of the physical world- which is subject to destruction- and capable of surviving the dissolution of the body to which it remains attached

during the earthly life. Here JK's views differ from Rousseau's in that JK does not talk about an immortal soul that is there in man.

We find that Rousseau goes far beyond the classification of freedom as civil, natural, moral etc. He points out that though freedom is the basic principle, it is also a connection between the body, the earthly life and that which lies beyond the body or the physical world. Taking into account the social welfare, law and stability, caring for individual freedom and not losing sight of this connection- all this is wonderfully woven in his writings.

In JK's concept of freedom there is no classification of freedom like civil, natural, moral etc; his concept of freedom is freedom *per se*. Though he does not talk about social welfare, law, stability in the society etc. he certainly says that once you are free, right action will follow out of that freedom and there will be order in one's relationship. Society is made up of relationships and orderly relationship will certainly go into making a stable society and welfare of all.

Also, both Rousseau and JK seem to agree on one point there is something beyond the body or the physical world. For Rousseau freedom is the connection between this body or the world and that which is beyond. For JK coming upon freedom is going beyond.

So far we have seen Rousseau's concept of freedom. Next, J. P. Sartre's concept of freedom will be discussed.

Sartre on Freedom

Importance of Sartre's concept of freedom

Existentialism has a very wide span beginning from Kierkegaard and enriched by philosophers like Husserl, Heidegger, Nietzsche etc. till Sartre and it became a powerful movement that left its mark in the field of literature and art and theatre. Especially during the time of Sartre, World War I and II had churned human life and various aspects of life like morality were studied in a critical light. Basic questions were raised about existence, humanness, meaning of life, essence of life, values of life and, more importantly about human freedom and the meaning of freedom etc. Many of the accepted principle and notions were re-studied or interpreted with the then prevalent times.

One such principle was that the essence comes first and then comes existence, as we find it in Plato's philosophy that the universal comes first and then the particular. Sartre, an eminent existentialist, simply said that 'existence precedes essence' i.e. man comes into existence first and then fills the existence with essence or meaning. This gave a completely new dimension and direction to philosophical thought about human life. In his magnum opus *Being and Nothingness* Sartre has discussed this at length and in great details. In this book he has discussed many aspects of freedom. According to him, man is free to choose what he wants to become and pursue his choice, he is free to act. He has this freedom of choice and his humanness lies in this freedom. Thus being free and being human are equivalents. Without this freedom man becomes just a thing in-itself. Therefore freedom has a prominent place in Sartre's philosophy.

Sartre's concept of freedom

According to him this freedom is necessarily connected to action and it is essential to understand this connection. He has discussed this in the 4th section of *Being and Nothingness* under the heading of 'Freedom: the First Condition of Action'. He begins by saying that whether you talk about freedom from the determinist point of view or the 'free will' point of view, first and foremost, you have to consider the structure of action. For him, to act is to modify the shape of the world, to arrange means in view of an end, or to produce a series of connections wherein if one of the links is affected, the whole series is affected. Also, action

necessarily includes intention; you consciously choose an end/ a project and intentionally act upon it. The cause or motive of action, the act and the end are all constituted into a single 'upsurge'. Each one has the other two as its meaning. In short, they go together.

Then he points out that the fundamental condition of this is freedom and explores the meaning of freedom by a description. He says that usually we describe something by explaining its structure of essence but freedom has no such structure of essence. Freedom is difficult to describe. He says, "The very use of the term freedom is dangerous if it is to imply that the word refers to a concept as words ordinarily do. Indefinable and unnamable, is freedom also indescribable?"²¹

Freedom and becoming

However, Sartre tries to reach the heart of freedom through some of his own concepts. He says, "For the for-itself, to be is to nihilate the in-itself, which it is."²² He means that man is not just an object or in-itself. He is a particular person, in particular circumstances, particular situations. But he is not satisfied with these and he is trying to change them; he is negating or nihilating what 'is' and he wants to become, to be something different, something other than what he is. This negation is nothing else but freedom. This is also the consciousness of being less than what he can be. Thus it seems that man is perpetually 'becoming', it is like an ongoing process- a process from what he 'is' to what he wants to be. (JK calls this as the 'movement of the I'.) This in itself constitutes his humanness and this is also his freedom. Then Sartre goes one step further and makes his famous statement that man is condemned to be free. He means that man has no control over this freedom, he has to be free in order to become a for-itself because according to him man is nothing else but what he makes of himself. Freedom is inevitable, unavoidable for a human being. Though he tries man cannot escape it; hence Sartre says that man is condemned to be free.

Freedom and the past

Sartre has made a very significant observation about freedom that goes very near to JK's teaching. He says that our act has motives/ causes; we take them to be constants, as *things*.

Meaning is given to them in the past and I “extrapolate from it a character fixed still in the present.”²³ I try to persuade myself that the cause *is* as it *was*; thus it would pass from my past consciousness to my present consciousness. This is trying to give essence to the for-itself. The past is carried forward in the present and taken to the future- future meaning what I want to become. JK has said something similar in that JK says that usually we take the past to the future, neglecting the present, so in fact we are always in the past. The arriving moment is new and we encapsulate it in the past and that is how we fail to meet the present afresh, anew. This actually stifles the present. According to JK freedom from the past i.e. freedom from the known is the only freedom wherein we meet every moment afresh.

Freedom and nothingness

Sartre has also shown the connection between his idea of nothingness and freedom. According to him nothingness is at the heart of human reality and human reality is free because it is not enough. He means that there is something lacking, something inadequate in the in-itself and using freedom man tries to fill it up. Man is not satisfied with whatever is given to him, he longs for something more, something different. In order to have this something more, he has to have freedom, thus freedom becomes the ground for this. This freedom forces man to ‘make’ rather than just be. Freedom in this nothingness or whatever-is-not is actually the ‘being’ of man. (JK says that desire means there is something lacking.) Sartre adds that if we think of man as a plenum (of cause, act and end) and try to look for regions later on where he would be free, it would be absurd like looking for emptiness in a container that is already filled to the brim! That is why Sartre says that man cannot be sometimes free; either he is wholly and forever free or he is not free at all. Without being free forever the process of becoming will be impossible; or we will have to accept that man is sometimes in-itself and sometimes for-itself!

Time and again Sartre emphasizes the importance of freedom and says that freedom is identical with one’s existence and it is the foundation of the ends that one tries to attain. Without freedom the very process of becoming, of putting meaning into one’s existence will not be possible. Action, too, presupposes freedom. He calls freedom as an ‘un-analyzable totality’ of causes, motives, ends and their apprehension because these are organized in a unity within the

framework of freedom. Thus it seems that for Sartre freedom is the canvas or backdrop on which the picture of for-itself is painted.

Sartre's notion of freedom has an element of paradox; he says that freedom itself is not free. Humans are compelled to act freely, they cannot but be free. It means that though man has freedom of choice, he has no choice of having or not having freedom. Hence according to Sartre man is condemned to be free.

In an effort to describe freedom he makes it clear that freedom is generally taken to mean the ability to obtain the ends chosen. But, technically and philosophically he takes freedom to mean 'the autonomy of choice'.²⁴The *given* or the *situation* or *facticity* seems to be putting limitations on freedom; freedom is actually trying to overcome or negate the given.* Sartre says that this kind of obstacle is indispensable to freedom; it is also obvious that freedom cannot *be* without the given.

Freedom and responsibility

Discussion of Sartre's notion of freedom will not be complete without taking into account his concept of 'responsibility'. Let us now see how he connects the two. He says, "... man being condemned to be free carries the weight of the whole world on his shoulders; he is responsible for the world and for himself as a way of being."²⁵This is a very profound statement. By responsibility he means consciousness about being the author of an event or of an object. The for-itself – in whatever situation he is- has to take up wholly whatever adversities come his way. He further clarifies that this does not mean bowing down to or giving in to the situation; this is simply the logical requirement of the consequences of our freedom. Everything that happens to *me* is *mine*; *I* am responsible to everything because *I* am the author of everything that happens in *my* life. This authorship or responsibility is not limited to one's personal life only. He points out that the most terrible situation like war is not something non-made by man, it is very much a *human* situation, a situation made by man and therefore it has come out of choice and as a man

*The *given* here means the factual conditions in which a man lives like his nation, socio-political surroundings etc.

every 'I' is responsible for it. Such is the burden of responsibility. Finding the burden unbearable, man tries to escape it through fear, via bad faith and tries to pretend that it is not his doing- but the fact of freedom and responsibility is there unshaken, un-negated. He has to own it up.

JK also says that you are the author of the book of your life. It is obvious that with the authorship comes the responsibility; you are the maker of your life. Both Sartre and JK seem to be agreeing that with the freedom of being the author you stand to shoulder the responsibility. JK quite often said that you are the world and the world is you. The world here means everything that is man-made in the world, including wars. This way understanding and accepting freedom will necessarily mean accepting this responsibility without putting the blame for it on anything else.

After going through JK and Sartre's concepts of freedom these are the points that come to notice –

1. Sartre has made it quite clear that for him freedom means the autonomy of choice. For Sartre the 'I' or the actor and action form an integral part of freedom, motive/ cause and the end are simultaneously present over there. For JK that is not the case. His notion of freedom lies beyond such constituents, his freedom is unattached, unconditioned, and unconditional; it has no content of motive, cause, act, end etc. To put it in JK's words, freedom has no content from the world of the known. All the duality like the actor and the act or the observer and the observed is not there in freedom at all.

2. According to Sartre freedom means being human and man has this freedom; it is something that he exercises and becomes for-itself. So in a way freedom is already given to man. According to JK freedom is something that happens to you. His freedom is the freedom from the world of the known which is made of one's thought, knowledge, conditioning, emotions, memory, past etc. Sartre says that the chain of motive/cause and act/ end functions due to and on the foundation of freedom; for JK moving away from this chain, by dissolution of this chain freedom will arrive. Thus Sartre's concept of freedom is very much within the field of the known whereas JK's concept of freedom goes beyond the boundaries of the known. But Sartre

seems to be close to the meaning of freedom that JK talks about when he says that freedom is not a word that ordinarily implies a concept. Hence he says that freedom is indefinable and asks a question whether it is indescribable as well. Here, obviously Sartre's words are pointing to that aspect of freedom that lies beyond words. JK too says that freedom cannot be confined to the limits of word. The difference between the two is that for Sartre freedom is the starting point whereas for JK that is not the case.

3. Both of them connect act or action with freedom but in different ways. For Sartre freedom is the ground for action, the rightness or wrongness of action is not considered here. According to JK when there is freedom, only right action will follow because with freedom comes beauty, order, inner peace, love and meditation. With all these, your act cannot go wrong.

In conclusion we can say that both of them give tremendous importance to freedom, each in his own separate way, each from his own standpoint. But, as has been pointed out Sartre seems to be very near at times to JK's concept of freedom.

It will not be out of place at this point to mention some other points from Sartre's philosophy that bear some resemblance to JK's teachings. They are-

'For-itself' is an important concept in Sartre's philosophy. This for-itself is not static or stagnant, it is dynamic, moving all the time because it is in the process of becoming. JK does not use the term 'for-itself' but he talks about the 'I' which is a bundle of consciousness meaning a bundle of all the thoughts, emotions, likes-dislikes, prejudices, and all the conditioning that is accumulated right since childhood. Since thought is always moving, this 'I' is also moving. He clearly says that there is no fixed, permanent 'I' beyond this bundle. Thus an element of similarity is noticed in Sartre's for-itself and JK's consciousness. The difference is- JK questions the very existence of this 'I', Sartre does not.

JK's teachings include abundant references to nature, natural phenomena and he seems to be pointing that man is a part of nature. His relationship with nature is something vital in his life.

This is not found in Sartre's philosophy. He gives examples of battles, wars, prison, prisoner etc.

Relevance of JK's concept of freedom

The two major characteristics of the present era are 'globalization' and 'modernity'. Now let us see how JK's concept of freedom is related to them. These days it is often said that the whole world is coming together and very soon we will be living in a global village. But the winds of globalization are going to bring in a lot of changes in one's social, cultural, personal life; this is quite obvious. What kind of changes do we see round the corner? Does globalization mean bridging all the religious, cultural, political gaps between any two individuals? This seems to be an 'ideal' thought. Everyone takes pride in his/ her culture, religion, ideology, nation etc. Are we going to retain all the diversity in these matters and become united, is such unity possible, will that bring in peace and happiness in the world, will man be free then- these and such other questions surface when we talk about globalization.

'Modernity' as is understood today seems to be comprising of discarding the old lifestyle and utilizing more and more advanced technology- various kinds of electrical and electronic gadgets, computers, internet, faster means of transportation etc. Again the same question arises- are we really happy, peaceful, free with these? Or, as it is said in *Alice in Wonderland* we have to run faster and faster in order to be in one place? Information technology has made quite an impact on our lives. But this has given rise to a peculiar dependency especially on the computer and the internet. Whatever you want to do- study, research, construction, shopping, cooking, communication- you cannot move a step without a computer and the net. Some serious problems have emerged out of this. One is that we have created a virtual world of images on the net. For example one creates an image of oneself on the face book and connects with others through that image and others are doing the same. Eventually it is not a connection or communication between two individuals but it is a connection between two images. We live in the world of images, we hide behind images; the real self is lost and loneliness and alienation sets in.

Another problem is that we carry something from the human world to this virtual world like crime. Cyber crimes are increasing, cyber privacy, and privacy of e-mail accounts, hacking of accounts, stealing information etc. is happening all over the world. So now we talk about cyber safety and making national and international laws for that. Looks like along with the actual world, we now have a virtual world and are caught up in the 'net'. Where is 'freedom' in all this? Entering into this virtual world has become quite an addiction for many- the first thing to do in the morning as you wake up is to switch on the computer and log on to the net! This clearly indicates that rather than becoming free we have become slaves to the technology. Along with being citizens, we have become 'netizens' of the virtual world now. Children do not play on the real ground, they enjoy virtual games. There is a surge of information at the click of the mouse; this plays havoc. Right from the 'recipe' of a bomb to pornography, everything is available to all and not all make a good or positive use of the information. Terrorist activities are carried out with the help of advanced information and technology. We are caught in a net!

In short you are bound by modernity and technology and freedom becomes all the more important. Cut-throat competition, stress, tensions are experienced by all and all want freedom from them. 'What am I to do?' looms large, fear becomes unbearable and people turn to various gurus or shrinks for answer or escape into drinks, drugs, sex, spirituality or into the virtual world again.

JK says that the answer lies within you. Only you know what is going on in your mind and your thought; observe that, confront the questions, the fears and you will be rid of them, then there will be no need for escape. And that will be freedom.

Let us now move on to the next concept i.e. 'meditation' as discussed by JK in the next chapter.

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* KFI stands for Krishnamurti Foundation India.

CHAPTER 2

JK'S CONCEPT OF MEDITATION

“Where there is ‘me’ there must be disorder. And if I look at the world through the ‘me’, the world outside or the world inside, there is not only division, but that brings about conflict, that division creates chaos and disorder in the world. Now to observe all that totally, in which there is no division, such observation is meditation. For that you don’t have to practice, all that you have to do is to be aware of what exactly is going on inside and outside, just to be aware.”¹

The object of all the philosophical/ metaphysical inquiry is to end human suffering or to attain Moksha / ultimate freedom. Various ways have been prescribed by various thinkers all over the world. Meditation is the prominent one among them. Meditation is a topic discussed all over the world and there are people who regularly practice meditation. Especially in the present age where human life is full of various tensions arising out of the very struggle for existence, the ancient science of Yoga/ Patanjali Yoga is invoked in order to find a remedy for the psychosomatic disorders caused by these tensions and stresses. The Yoga system prescribes various bodily postures and control over one’s breathing to keep the body fit. Only With a fit body one can go beyond and attain Moksha- that is the general view. Is meditation a kind of rigorous physical and psychological exercise? What is the true meaning of meditation? What is the importance of mediation? Such questions arise and JK’s teaching on mediation throws light on them.

In the previous chapter we have gone through JK’s concept of freedom. As mentioned earlier, freedom and meditation are closely connected, they coexist according to JK. In this chapter a study of JK’s understanding of meditation will be presented. As the chapter progresses, the interconnection will become clear.

Commonsense understanding of ‘meditation’- Sitting still, adoption of particular bodily postures, concentration, rigorous physical discipline, strict dietary rules, chanting of mantras, prayers, following a particular system of meditation, discipleship of a guru and lots of ‘do’s’ and ‘don’ts’ are considered to be the integral parts of meditation. Some particular time is set aside for meditation; a particular place is also arranged for daily meditation. The objective of

the exercise is freedom from the worldly sufferings, having a peaceful, steady mind, attainment of bliss, achieving Moksha etc. JK talks about meditation at length in his dialogues; of course his understanding of meditation is quite different from the usual understanding of the word. But he has placed a lot of importance on meditation; it is seen clearly when he says, “If you have this extraordinary thing (meditation) going in your life, then it is everything; then you become the teacher, the disciple, the neighbour, the beauty of the cloud- you are all that, and that is love.”²

Meditation according to JK

JK says that we must understand right at the beginning, before we meditate, the meaning of meditation. Is it that my guru or tradition says ‘meditate’ and so I sit and meditate? Surely we have to understand the meaning of meditation before we begin meditating. JK does not talk about ‘how’ to meditate or meditation according to a particular system at all. He says that rather than finding a system or method or a prescribed format and following it, we must understand what meditation is; not a system ‘for’ meditation but meditation itself is important. He has also said , “If one can find out, very deeply, the significance, the necessity and the importance of meditation for oneself, then one puts aside all the systems, methods, gurus, together with all the peculiar things that are involved in the Eastern type of meditation.”³

In the commonsense understanding of the term several things like chanting, prayer, concentration, the search for truth, or what we call understanding, the desire to seek consolation, the need for a guru etc. are involved. Let us now see what JK has to say about these one by one. JK’s review of the commonsense understanding will show the limits of these and why these fail to lead to real meditation.

Chanting of mantras

Very commonly, chanting/ repeating of a mantra or mantras is considered to be a part of meditation. JK gives us two etymological meanings of the word and shows how far removed we are from the real meaning of ‘mantra’. One meaning of the word is ‘to ponder over not-becoming’, another is ‘to absolve, put aside all self-centered activity.’

According to JK we are always busy with ‘becoming’ something. In the process we neglect the fact, the present which is life. Rather than ‘becoming’ something one should pay attention to what *is*. Thus pondering over ‘not becoming’ will be existing in the present and that is meditation. This observation of the present will bring about real self knowledge i.e. knowledge of the non-existence of the self. With this realization all self-centered activity will come to an end and that is mediation.

He says that we forget these meanings and go on repeating a mantra and this activity is carried out with self- interest, with our egoistic ways. All the time we are trying to become something which turns out to be futile. The self is very much there and this is a conscious activity, can this be real meditation? Here one is meditating consciously in order to achieve mental stillness or peace of mind. Using stern words, JK says that there is no difference between this meditator and a man who says, ‘I want money, so I will work for it’. One is called as spiritual achievement and the other is a mundane achievement but still both are in the line of achievement. Meditation does not have any goal as per JK. “Any conscious, deliberate, active desire with its will is not meditation.”⁴

Sometimes, chanting is a part of some ritual. JK has talked about performance of rituals, idol/ image worship. According to him, performance of a ritual without thinking, without understanding the meaning is being insane; chanting some words without a referent, without meaning is a state of unbalance because you are doing something without knowing it. Whereas in meditation, “you have something extraordinary going in your life, it is like you become the teacher, the disciple, the beauty of nature- everything.”⁵there is no place for insanity or imbalance. He also says that when this happens, love also exists there.

Prayer- JK simply says that “prayer is a form of supplication.”⁶When someone is in some difficulty, he or she looks for some help, somebody to help out. Thousands of people pray and they believe that their prayers are answered. They would not pray if they did not receive an answer to their prayers. Out of praying they receive a certain consolation. The question that arises here is- does the answer come from God, a superior entity, or does the answer come from somewhere else? Also we have to look into what is actually involved in prayer. First you repeat

certain words or mantra over and over again. This repetition induces quietness in the mind because when such repetition takes place the mind is made dull and quiet; and when the conscious mind is quiet, then it receives an answer. Does this answer come from God or from somewhere else i. e. your mind itself?

According to JK, this is what actually happens in praying- the superficial mind becomes quiet, it is in an inactive state and then the unconscious projects itself and you have an answer. Or you sleep over a problem and have an answer in the morning. Here, the conscious mind goes over the problem, struggles to find an answer and then puts it aside. Then the unconscious is able to project itself into the conscious and you get an answer. JK says that this can be called as the small voice in you or the voice of God or whatever. It is obvious that the unconscious that gives the intimation gives an answer to the problem. And, “prayer is merely a trick to make the conscious mind quiet so that it can receive the answer.”⁷ The important point to be noted here is that the conscious mind receives an answer according to its conscious desire. As long as the mind is conditioned, its answer will inevitably be conditioned.

Concentration- It is also said that concentration is extremely important in meditation. But it is noticed that concentration is not easy, it is a problem. So, what is meant by concentration? JK says that concentration is mostly taken to mean exclusion. While concentrating one tries to focus totally on some idea, object, image; it means that you resist all the thoughts that are coming to you. Then you are engaged in a kind of battle in forcing your mind to dwell upon only one idea/ object etc and to resist the flow of other ideas. In this process you concentrate on one idea/ object etc. and exclude all others. So this concentration is nothing but exclusion. Not just exclusion, it becomes a constant conflict of resistance because you resist all but one thought in order to concentrate. Such concentration creates more disturbances in the mind and the resistance, conflict consumes one’s energy. Thus concentration is not meditation according to JK.

Also, in choosing one thought over the others, you are giving more importance to that particular thought; the others automatically become ‘lesser’ ones. Again there is a battle between the important and the less important thought. JK says that instead of going through this, if

you follow and understand each thought as it arises- no thought is of 'lesser' importance- then there is no need for focusing on one thought. This concentration is more comprehensive, creative and strengthening.

Regarding this point, JK has made an interesting observation. He has said, "The man who makes an effort for concentration has no interest in what he is doing. If he is interested, concentration is no effort at all."⁸ It means that meditation is not something that is externally imposed upon you. If you force yourself to meditate then it is an effort; your thoughts are moving around and you are forcing yourself to meditate. In such a situation the mind is divided, is struggling to concentrate on a particular thing but actually there is no division or struggle in meditation.

Meditation, Understanding and Self- knowledge- At one place JK says that understanding is the very basis, the fundamental process of meditation. Mere concentration or prayer cannot bring about this understanding because in prayer there is supplication and petition; you are asking for something and you expect your demand to be fulfilled. The understanding that he is talking about here is that which will liberate you from what you understand. Therein lies peace and freedom and these are important in meditation.

He has further explained what he means by 'understanding'. According to him 'understanding' means giving right significance, right valuation to everything. Ignorance is to give wrong values. The question here is how to establish right value – of property, relationship, ideas. If right values are to come about, the nature of the thinker has to be understood; without the understanding of the thinker or the self, one's actions, choice, thought etc. have no foundation at all. "Therefore self-knowledge is the beginning of meditation."⁹ If I don't know myself i.e. my motives, desires, demands, my pursuit of patterns of action, there is no foundation for my thinking. And then the thinker who merely asks, prays or excludes, without understanding himself, is bound to end in confusion, in illusion. Thus understanding is self-knowledge.

What is this self-knowledge? According to JK it means being aware of every movement of thought and feeling, knowing all the layers- the superficial and the deeper- of one's

consciousness, the deeply concealed activities, the hidden motives, responses. This requires tranquility in the conscious mind; then only it can receive the projection of the unconscious. The conscious/ superficial mind is always engaged with the daily activities- earning livelihood, tackling problems- or activities of our existence. That mind must understand the right significance of its activities so that tranquility is brought in. This tranquility or stillness cannot be brought about by compulsion, coercion or by drugs. Observation of these activities is the only way to bring tranquility so that the self is understood.

JK says that before we go into the really complex and intricate question of what is meditation; we have to be very clear about what we are looking for or seeking. Everybody is seeking something. As we start 'seeking' meditation, these are the questions that arise- the nature of meditation, why one should meditate at all, what is its use and where does it get you. According to him the word 'seek' implies that 'we already know, more or less, what we are after'; be it God, truth or a perfect life. When we are seeking we have an idea or image in our mind about that which is sought. It is like you are looking for something familiar that is lost and you will be able to recognize it when you find it. It means that we already know it. JK clearly states that the first thing to realize about meditation is that it is no use to seek because what is sought is predetermined by what you wish. For example, if you are unhappy or lonely you will search for, seek hope or companionship etc. that will sustain you. You will find it eventually. But this kind of search will not help you in meditation. So seeking is of no use.

Foundation of meditation

He points out that one has to lay the foundation of meditation. This foundation is the foundation of order which is righteousness. It means that one must be extremely, extraordinarily moral. Here morality is not an effect or outcome but a constitutive element as the foundation. And what is morality? He says, "...morality is only the bringing of order both within oneself and also without oneself."¹⁰ JK also tells us that the morality must be in action, morality is not mere ideation or conceptualization. It is moral behaviour.

This **bringing of order** – which is disciplining oneself- has to happen without any suppression,

control or escape. In his peculiar style, he points out that the root meaning of the word ‘discipline’ is ‘to learn’, not to conform or become a disciple of someone; no imitation or suppression is involved here. The act of learning demands discipline which is not an imposition like the harsh austerity of a monk. But without austerity our daily life leads only to disorder. JK says that the order that he is talking about is like ‘mathematical order, not relative, not comparative, not brought about by environmental influence.’ This order comes with the understanding of disorder. But if you try to bring in order with control, then “...there are all the implications of the duality and the contradiction which arises between the observer and the observed.”¹¹ Because when you try to control there is the division between the controller and the controlled.

JK has given an example to explain his meaning of order. He says that one is angry and is trying to get rid of the anger; when he actually sees that he is anger itself, order comes in. Without this understanding you cannot really know what meditation is. He has also pointed out that the mind has to be in order for meditation. And, he says that righteous behaviour is to be established so that the mind is in complete order. “A mind that is tortured, frustrated, shaped by environment, conforming to social morality, must in itself be confused; and a confused mind cannot discover what is true.”¹² In meditation, truth exists.

Love* also forms a part of this foundation. By love JK does not mean pleasure or happiness, desire, etc. but love that does not divide. He says that there is order in love and order means harmony between the mind, brain and emotions. Otherwise meditation could be self-hypnosis. Enmity, hatred jealousy, violence has no place in such a mind and that is love, and truth exists in love.

JK also warns that for meditation you have to observe the activities and functioning of your mind which is self-centered and this is quite arduous. This demands great discipline and you must also know about the tricks that the ‘mind plays upon itself, the illusions and delusions, the imagery and the imagining of all the romantic ideas that one has.’ According to him a mind capable of sentimentality is incapable of love, sentiment which is attachment breeds brutality,

*This concept will be discussed later in a separate chapter.

cruelty and violence, not love. Another requirement for meditation is that the mind should be able to stand completely alone. He means that a mind that is holding on to the crutches of rituals, methods etc. for meditation cannot meditate; it has to be on its own.

Only after laying this deep foundation can the mind proceed to find out what meditation is. If righteousness is absent from one's action and life then meditation has very little meaning for him. JK tells us that this foundation has to be laid happily, not compulsively but with ease and felicity, without any hope of reaching anything.

JK on various schools of meditation

While talking about the various schools, systems and methods of meditation like the Zen and Yoga JK says that these schools suggest that through a method or a system or through conforming to a particular pattern or tradition, the mind can come upon that ultimate truth, Moksha, bliss etc. JK does not agree with this. According to him method implies conformity, repetition; method implies that someone who has reached a certain enlightenment and he gives you the do's and don'ts. We are eager and we practice it mechanically, day after day, blindly, without being critical. This actually makes the mind duller by the day. Such a mind will be in a position to experience only that which is in the field of its own conditioning. This of course is not meditation. JK explores the state/ conditions of mind or nature and mode of mental states of different schools of meditation.

Especially in the East, there exists a whole tradition of meditation. Volumes are written on meditation even today. But any form of tradition, according to JK, is a carryover from the past. This way the mind carries the burden of the past and is not free at all. In meditation the mind has to be completely free of every form of spiritual tradition and sanction. What happens due to meditation is completely different, new from any of these things that the brain or the mind carries. In order that the new sets in, the old has to go says JK.

So meditation is not tradition, conforming to a method, no one can teach you and there is no particular path to follow. Then what is meditation? JK says that "The whole meaning of

meditation is in the mind becoming completely quiet; not only at the conscious level but also at the deep, secret, hidden levels of consciousness; so completely and utterly quiet that thought is silent and does not wander all over the place.”¹³

Meditation and Guru- In the East tradition tells us that you require a guru for meditation. The West has its own form of tradition, prayer, contemplation and confession. But the basic principle is that you do not know and someone else knows; this implies authority. The guru tells you to follow and you follow his system. In the process you are actually engaged day after day in following, in conforming to his method. Here you are fighting with yourself in trying to follow and you are suppressing your own desires, appetites, envy, jealousies, ambitions etc. Thus there is conflict between what you are and what you should be as per the guru’s method. The mind is making effort and such a mind can never be quiet. Without a quiet mind, meditation is not possible. The guru may ask you to get rid or suppress desire and if you force yourself to be desire-less, there will be conflict because desires will arise and you will try to be rid of them or suppress them. Your mind will be a battle ground, there will be no quietness.

JK says, “It is extremely essential to uncover for oneself what one actually is, not according to the theories and the assertions and experiences of psychologists, philosophers and the gurus, but rather by investigating the whole nature and movement of oneself; by seeing what one actually is.”¹⁴ Thus he makes it clear that a guru cannot help when it comes to observation of the whole process of the ‘I’.

Here it can be said that because of his teachings JK also became a guru. But calling him a guru will not be correct because he never declared himself to be a guru and he never said that he knows the truth and therefore others should follow him, he never said that he is the messiah and lead others on a certain path. On the contrary he always insisted that everyone thinks on his/ her own, find out on his/ her own about living, freedom, meditation, love and truth. Therefore though he may appear as guru to some, he was not.

So far we have seen JK’s views on the foundation or preparatory conditions for meditation. Now lets us see what he offers as far as the **nature** of meditation is concerned.

Nature of meditation according to JK

Meditation is the emptying of the content of consciousness- If you want to see what you actually are, freedom has to be there. This freedom is not a freedom from particular ideology etc. According to JK, it is freedom from the whole content of one's consciousness. This content is nothing else but all the things put together by thought. "Freedom from the content of one's consciousness, from one's angers and brutalities, from one's vanities and arrogance, from all the things that one is caught up in, is meditation."¹⁵ This very seeing of what one actually is, is also the beginning of transformation. He further says that meditation implies the ending of all strife, of all conflict, inwardly and therefore outwardly.

What he means here is one lives with all the conditioning that one gathers right from childhood. There are opinions, prejudices, likes- dislikes, judgments, assertions, denials etc. This is the content of one's consciousness. The society in which one is brought up, in which one lives influences and shape thoughts. Usually we think according to some ideology, book, guru etc. and take the gathered material as our own thoughts, opinions etc. During this process the true nature of the self is lost. Divisions arise and conflict comes from the divisions. For example if I am selfish/ greedy and a book/ guru tells me not to be selfish so I decide to become unselfish. A division is created between what I actually am and what I want to become. These divisions give rise to conflict, struggle follows, and all my efforts then are concentrated on trying to become unselfish. Neither the real nature of the 'I' nor the nature of selfishness is understood. The result of this kind of struggle is confusion and loss of energy. In meditation there is no confusion or struggle. When you observe, uncover for yourself the true nature of 'I' - not according to some guru etc. - that is emptying the content of consciousness and that is meditation. Hence the importance of emptying the content of consciousness.

Meditation and 'I don't know'- JK has pointed out that the usual approach to meditation is 'how to meditate'. He says that the question should be 'what is meditation'. When you ask for 'how' you are looking for a pre-set method or system but that is not of help because then you will be engaged in following the method; that is not meditation. And one has to approach it with an open mind. If you want to understand what meditation is, you have to come to it with a fresh

mind. Unless you know what meditation is how can you meditate? And, that point is- I don't know. So you begin with 'I don't know' what meditation is; this way your mind is not occupied with how to meditate. We hope and desire that Yoga practices, breathing techniques, bodily postures etc will lead us to something, a certain state. But that state can be illusory, a projection of your mind, a reaction from the daily existence of misery. In very clear words JK say, "The issue of how to meditate is completely false. Rather, can I find out what meditation is, that is the real question."¹⁶

According to JK when you ask for a 'how' you are seeking a definite, fixed path or a method. Then you engage in following that particular method. In the process the content of meditation is neglected. Observation of everything within and without is the content of meditation ; in a way that is the form of meditation and therefore there is actually no distinction between the form and the content or between the 'how' and the 'what' of meditation.

Various Techniques of Meditation

Various **traditions, methods** tell us how to meditate, give us techniques, skills. But for what are these given? Then meditation becomes a means. Meditation is not a means for some end, achievement or goal. JK denies this means-end concept with regard to meditation. Then, what *is* meditation? I don't know what meditation is but I blindly follow a particular tradition or method that tells me 'you do these things and you will get it'. Obviously that leads to nowhere. The question here is, can I eliminate this demand for a method and find out what meditation is? JK says that the very going into all this is meditation. I am meditating the moment I begin to inquire what meditation is. The moment I begin to find out for myself what meditation is, my mind must reject everything that it knows including the desire to meditate. According to him such desire is the root for the search for a method. What I already know, what I have already experienced are just a few moments of peace, quietness, a sense of 'otherness'. I want to achieve that again and I want to make it a permanent state. In this case, I already know what I am going to achieve, what the state will be. JK says that if you know that already, then it is just a projection of your own desire; not the truth. When you are actually meditating, this desire to achieve is understood and so you become free from it. And thus you are in the state of 'I don't

know'. There is no concentration, no prayer, no chanting, and no accumulation. The mind is burden-less and therefore free. When this is done I have found out what meditation is. And then, "There is no struggle, no conflict; there is a sense of not accumulating- at all times, not at any particular time."¹⁷

Telling us about what meditation is he further says, "Meditation is the process of complete denudation of the mind, the purgation of all sense of accumulation and achievement- that sense which is the very nature of the self, the 'me'."¹⁸ Practicing a method only adds to the me, strengthens the me. So **'meditation is also the uncovering of the ways of the self'**. Such uncovering of the ways of the self will show the nature of 'I' and it will drop. That will be purgation or purification that is required for meditation.

Mediation and Thought

Is meditation something that is **put together by thought**? JK has clearly stated that meditation is not something put together by thought. If it is a deliberate action to achieve a result, you are caught in the cycle of cause and effect- the effect becoming the cause and this is the field of thought. So is it beyond thought? To understand this, he says that you have to understand the functioning of the brain. The brain is conditioned and limited; and it is trying to comprehend the limitless, the immeasurable, the timeless. The brain is conditioned in the sense that it is trained to think in a particular way, respond in a particular way. For example- to think in terms of cause and effect; this is its limitation. Meditation is actually crossing the boundaries of conditioning and going beyond the limits of thought. Therefore it can never be something put together by thought.

JK's concept of meditation is quite significant in his teachings because according to him you come upon freedom in meditation. There is the total understanding of the 'I' and this brings about not just freedom but love as well. Because the 'I' is absent, the observer is nonexistent; there is no division between the 'I' and others and therefore there is no hatred, jealousy etc, there is only love. Meditation, according to him, seems to be the gateway to freedom, love and truth. This is the importance of meditation in his teachings.

So far we have seen what JK says about meditation. His concept of meditation is quite different from what it is generally taken to mean. Firstly, mediation is an all-time, continuous process, not reserved for a particular time of the day. Secondly, it does not require a particular setting or pre-preparation. And thirdly, JK does not talk about Samadhi or the ultimate transcendental state wherein one is supposed to enter via Yoga practices.

Now we will go into Yoga meditation and Buddhist meditation.

Importance of Yoga and Buddhist meditation

The origin of meditation is found in the Yoga Darshana. Therefore it is quite apt to know Yoga meditation in order to understand JK's concept of meditation. That will also throw light on how JK's concept of meditation differs from the traditional Yoga concept. Meditation is also found in Buddhism. Buddhist monks practiced Yoga ; they were called as Yogachari. Along with the Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist meditation also reached various parts of the world like China and Japan. Therefore it is necessary to go into the Buddhist concept of meditation. This will be done later on in this chapter.

Let us first see what is meditation according to Yoga Darshana.

Meditation in Yoga Darshana

Yoga Darshana has an important place in the Indian philosophical thought in that, generally it is agreed that Yoga describes the actual path to the ultimate freedom or Moksha of man. Rather than a theoretical discussion a concrete, action oriented, step-by-step method for the attainment of the ultimate freedom is given here. In the end knowledge dawns and one attains Moksha. The objective is to put an end to human suffering.

The Darshanas that are in opposition on many points agree on the importance of Yoga. For example Advaita and Buddhism; Nyaya and Mimamsa.¹⁹

This ancient method of mediation is quite popular and is practiced all over the world in various forms. We have Yogachara Buddhism and Zen Buddhism that have developed meditation

techniques of their own and they are taught in monasteries. Then there are some modern meditation techniques like transcendental meditation which have huge following in the West as well. A regular practice of Yoga, especially of Pranayama is said to be quite effective for good health in the current life style full of various tensions. Thus the importance of Yoga is accepted in many parts of the world.

According to Yoga philosophy, *Purusha* and *Prakriti*- though completely different and separate from each other- are the root of creation. The universe is created out of *Prakriti* which is the material cause of the universe. The proximity of *Prakriti* with *Purush*, which is pure consciousness, disturbs the balance/ equilibrium of the three *gunas* of *prakriti*- *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. This is the beginning of the universe. This universe functions on the principle of 'Parinama' i.e. nothing is destroyed and nothing new is created; only the proportions of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* in everything keep changing giving rise to different things. There are three types of Parinamas- 1. *DharanaParinama*- water is mixed with soil, then it is kneaded, shaped etc and a pot comes into existence. 2. *LakshanaParinama*- The pot was non-existent, unknown earlier, now it is manifest, later on it will be dissolved/ destroyed. 3. *AvasthaParinama*- This is change in the stage or condition of a thing. In the manifest form everything goes through three stages; it is new now, it gets old and then it is worn out. Our body also goes through three stages- childhood, youth and old age.

Yoga Darshana recognizes that a man is not just a body, he also has 'chitta' or mind. This chitta too goes through three *Parinamas*- *Nirodha*, *Samadhi* and *Ekagrataparinama*. In the flow of the Parinamas, some of the Dharma's of the chitta are dropped and some others arise. All the experiences in these Parinamas are the root of *Dukkha* or suffering; they arise out of Avidya or ignorance which is the assumption that *Purusha* and *Prakriti* are one, united.

Unless this Avidya gets removed or destroyed, suffering persists. In order to end Avidya, the chitta has to be purified by washing away the defilements or *Kleshas*; then only the chitta will attain its original equilibrium of trigunas and there will be freedom from suffering.

The key thought in Yoga for ending suffering seems to be this- Chitta is the ground for the *Samskaras* of Karma carried forward through past births, for the desires that cause the *samskaras*, for the dispositions that arise out of those desires. Chitta is also the ground for the *kleshas* like *Avidya*. Chitta comes into contact with the external world/ objects through the senses. The result of this contact is the various dispositions or chittavrittis. So long as there are the *Kleshas* in the *chitta*, action is motivated. Action gives rise to *Samskaras* that are accumulated in the chitta. Then, later on, depending on and differing from condition to condition new dispositions emerge. This is the continuous cycle of dispositions and *smskaras* – which is called as *Samsara*.

In order to break this cycle the emergence of chittavrittis needs to be controlled. Here comes the fundamental principle of Yoga, “Chittavrittinirodhasccha” which means control of the chittavrittis. Yoga prescribes two ways for this control-

1. *Abhyasa*- It means the efforts that go into bringing a halt to the flow of chittavrittis.
2. *Vairagya*- With *Abhyasa*, the inclination of the chitta towards external objects slows down and gradually comes to a halt.

After this, one has a stable, quiet chitta. According to Yoga this is the state in which one realizes that *Purush* is completely different from *Prakriti* which consists of trigunas and their various combinations. This is called as ‘Kaivalya’ or being totally independent of and free from *Prakriti* eternally. This is the ideal of Yoga and this is Moksha or the ultimate freedom.

In order to attain this Kaivalya, Yoga has given the *AshtangaMarga* or the Eightfold path of Discipline. Our body as well as our mind/ chitta are constantly distracted by the sensual attachments and passions. If we follow the Eightfold Path we can conquer over these distractions and achieve Kaivalya. The Eightfold Path is as follows-

1. Five *yamas* or vows/ abstentions. They are *Ahimsa* i.e. non-violence of thought, word and deed, *Satya* or adherence to truth, *Asteya* or non-stealing, *Aparigraha* or abstention from avarice, and *Brahmacharya* or abstention from passion or lust.
2. Five *Niyamas*. They are *Shaucha*- internal and external purification, *Santosha*- contentment, *Tapas*- austerity, *Swadhyaya*- study and *Ishvarapranidhana*- devotion to god.

3. *Asana*- means bodily posture. Comfortable bodily posture should be adopted because it helps in meditation.
4. *Pranayama*- means control of breath. This is conducive to both physical health and concentration of mind. Sound body and sound mind both are necessary for the attainment Kaivalya. At this stage expert advice i.e. guru's guidance is required.
5. *Pratyahara*- it means control of senses and withdrawing them from their subjects. Senses naturally tend to reach for external objects and this tendency needs to be controlled.
6. *Dharana*- here the mind is fully focused and fixed on the object of meditation like the tip of your nose, the midpoint of the eyebrows, lotus of the heart or the image of a deity. This is practiced so that the mind becomes stable, steadfast like the un-flickering flame of a lamp.
7. *Dhyana*- means meditation and consists of an undisturbed flow of thought around the object of meditation; it is contemplation without any break. But here at this stage the duality of the act of meditation and the object of meditation is still there.
8. *Samadhi*- it is the final state or step. Etymologically 'Samadhi' means concentration. Here, the act of meditation and the object of meditation become one. All the mental modifications or chittavrittis come to a cessation; connection with the external world is broken. This also has two steps. One is *Sampradnyat* or conscious Samadhi and the other is the *Asampradnyat* or supra-conscious Samadhi. *Asmpradnyat* Samadhi is the ultimate stage; here the meditator and the object of meditation become one or are fused together. No new mental modification arises here. This is the highest form of Yoga.

Thus we find that Yoga Darshana gives a step-by-step programme for the attainment of Kaivalya and Dhyana or meditation is the 7th step of this programme. Control of the senses and mind through *Pranayama* or breath control and breathing exercises is emphasized. Taking into account the body, mind, mental processes and mental modifications Yoga Darshana presents a way that is said to be leading beyond the body and mind.

Now let us turn to meditation in Buddhism

Importance of meditation in Buddhism

Ancient Buddhist texts contain meditation techniques. There are various schools and sub-schools in Buddhism that have incorporated meditation and meditational techniques as a way to attain Enlightenment or Nirvana. There are diverse, school-specific techniques and practices; Theravada has more than 50 methods of developing 'mindfulness' or awareness and about 40 for developing concentration. Yogachara Buddhism has adopted Yoga practices for the realization of Pure Knowledge or Bodhi. The Tibetan tradition has *Vipassana* or visualization meditation. There is Zen Buddhism that gives high importance to meditation. The very word Zen is derived from the Sanskrit *Dhyan* which means meditation. Tradition says that Bodhidharma (460-534 A D) introduced meditation to China which later on spread to Japan. In China there is Ch'an – derived from Dhyan- Buddhism; Tien-t'ai and Hua-yen are the two prominent schools of Ch'an Buddhism. In Japan we have different schools like the Renzai and Soto. The differences between the schools are those of techniques of meditation and objects of meditation. Zen Buddhism emphasizes certain kind of spiritual discipline which helps in bringing about sudden illumination. Some Zen writings ascribe the origin of Zen to the Buddha himself. Zen Buddhism contains Buddhist doctrines like rebirth, Sangha or monastic order and the need for the attainment of release and the possibility of one's attaining Bodhihood.

Meditation in Buddhism

In Yoga, individual efforts for the control over mind and body are emphasized; importance of detachment from one's environment is emphasized. Zen Buddhism emphasizes the 'spontaneity of illumination' and the rapport between the individual and the nature. In Zen Buddhism meditation is used as a technique to defuse the source of all the trouble- the illusion of the self and the other. It is said that originally the mind is pure, there is no attachment; therefore there is clear understanding without attachment. Gradually attachments and anger, greed etc. enter into it and clear understanding is obstructed. Meditation is the only way to attain that originally pure state. It means attainment of a state of mind that does not think of right/wrong, good/ bad, self/ other. Such a non-dwelling mind is the mind of Buddha. There is no past or future here, only the present is grasped. This is the original nature of mind.²⁰

The role of Roshi, the spiritual instructor in the Japanese Zen schools, and Zen Master is important in Buddhist mediation. Respect for the master and total obedience to him is expected of the aspirant. In other words, Zen is not something to learn on a 'do-it-yourself' basis.

Now let us see how JK's concept of meditation differs from these two.

-JK does not give any step-by-step programme for/ of meditation. He does not believe that meditation can be thus put into a framework of set rules and practices at all. According to JK meditation is not a goal to attain; it is not a destination that one can reach by following a given path.

-All the efforts, rigorous bodily and mental discipline, strict control of the mind-thought-senses by force is not acceptable to JK because this kind of external imposition only intensifies the internal conflict and struggle leading to more disturbances in the mind. He talks about the importance of effortlessness, an ease a kind of naturalness in meditation. Any imposition is a hindrance according to him because imposition means resistance to it, which is conflict.

-JK says that adopting certain Asanas or bodily postures is not a *necessary* condition for meditation. At best these Asanas will help one in keeping the body in good health/ condition. They could be an aid as far as the body is concerned but other than that, even if you master the postures to perfection, you will not be in meditation.

-JK clearly says that meditation is a continuous process. It is not something that you practice for a specific period of time and be out of it, resume your routine life, resume your old ways thereafter. The observation that he talks about is an ongoing process- wherever you are whatever you are doing you are constantly watching all that is happening in your mind. This kind of observation and attention does not require any specific time. Time-bound meditation is no meditation according to him.

-Both Yoga and Zen give enormous importance to concentration. We have seen that JK does not agree with it for two reasons. First, he says that when you concentrate on one thought you

exclude the rest of the flow of thought. This creates division in the flow and, whenever there is division, there is conflict which consumes a lot of energy. The meditation that he talks about requires tremendous energy from the body and the brain. If it is wasted in conflicts meditation will not be possible. Therefore, according to him, forced concentration does not help. Such a concentration is no meditation at all.

Secondly, this kind of concentration on one thought or object may become an escape from one's life. He points out that many times your daily, routine life stops being interesting to you and you try to escape into meditation- besides other ways like entertainment. You try to escape completely by concentrating totally on one particular thought or object. But, meditation is not an escape. And, rather than meditation, it becomes a constant battlefield of resistance to thoughts. You are forcing yourself into one thought by excluding the others. Also, it is giving one thought more importance than the rest. The total thought process is missed when you cling to one thought. This is giving fragmentary treatment to the process. In meditation you are looking at the process in its entirety.

He also maintains that if you need to be forced into meditation perhaps even that does not really interest you. You wouldn't need to be forced into something that you really want to do. You would get completely and effortlessly absorbed into it had your interest been genuine like a child is absorbed in his toy. Coercion implies your unwillingness to go into meditation.

Thus JK seems to be in complete disagreement when it comes to forced concentration in meditation or a step by step programme for meditation..

-An important difference between Yoga meditation and JK's meditation is this- in Yoga, meditation or Dhyana is not the final state or step that one is supposed to achieve; it is the 7th step in the Eightfold Path of Yoga. *Samadhi* is the 8th and the final destination. On the Dhyana step, the duality of the act of meditation and object of meditation is still there. It is only in the *Samadhi* state that this duality is completely absent, no *chittavrittis* or mental modifications arise here and connection with the external world is broken. In JK's meditation there is no such hierarchy; meditation is *the* step, there is nothing beyond that. Like freedom there is either

meditation or there is no meditation, no state in-between the two. Absence of the duality of observer and the observed is there, so is complete tranquility of mind. JK says that there is total alertness as well. So no question of being cut off from the rest of the world.

-In Yoga meditation 'Ishvarapranidhana' or full faith in god is important (2nd step). This is absent in JK's concept of meditation. The reasons are quite obvious. JK says that God is a creation of thought; if you concentrate on that you are very much in the field of thought. The duality of the 'I' and others, the rest of the world persists. Meditation is emptying the contents of your thought; it will not be possible to do so if you cling to the thought of god. Also, the moment you start concentrating on God- or any other thought for that matter- you go away from meditation because all your efforts are directed at god, meditation takes a back seat!

-One more point of difference is that of guru. In the eastern tradition guru is essential in the process of meditation. According to JK when you accept the word of guru as authority, you are actually engaged in following his word and conforming to his words day after day. Your own thoughts, desires, appetites etc. are all suppressed. This creates a conflict between what you are and what you want to become as per the guru's words. The mind is busy conforming to the guru's method. Such a mind is not a quiet mind and without a quiet mind meditation is impossible. 'Be a light unto yourself' is his motto. But, it must be noted here that a guru as a sign-post, seems to be acceptable to JK. In very clear words he says that rather than asking someone 'how to meditate' one should ask oneself 'what is meditation' and find out for oneself. If the answer to 'what is meditation?' is 'I don't know', that should be the real beginning of the search within, real meditation.

Thus we have seen how JK's concept of meditation takes a departure from the traditional Yoga concept of meditation.

Now let us explore his teachings on love in the next chapter so that the interconnection between freedom, meditation and love becomes clear. Plato and Mahatma Gandhi's views on love will also be considered in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 3

JK'S CONCEPT OF LOVE

'Love' is perhaps the most sought after and talked about word these days. That is evident if we look around us in literature, theatre, movies etc. But, such an engaging concept has not gained that prominent a place in philosophy as it has in the human mind right since ancient times. We do not find a philosophical discussion of the concept of love in the Indian or the western tradition except for Plato. Love is discussed in other fields like psychology to a great extent; philosophical enumeration of love is scarcely to be found. In the Indian tradition *Karuna* or compassion is discussed in Buddhism but love is absent.

JK talked on this topic frequently with the young generation and with the older generation. As is his style, he often raises the question of what love is and urges the listeners to ponder over it, try to understand the 'meaning' rather than the word. According to him, when there is love, there is freedom, peace of mind and there is meditation. All these go together. Before going further into JK's understanding of love, let us first see the commonsense understanding of it.

Commonsense understanding of love- usually- like freedom- love is attached with/ to something else; it is 'love of' or 'love for' someone or something, meaning love takes an object. There is the love for one's spouse, child, nation; love for a particular art; love for various objects; and there is Love of God. In all these, there is attachment, involvement, belongingness, possession, great liking. There is expectation that if I love someone and therefore I expect him or her to behave in a particular way. More important, the idea of love is very closely associated with pleasure; especially pleasure of the senses. Literatures all over the world have great 'love' stories, for example, Heer and Ranza, Romeo and Juliet, Paris and Helen etc. But, there is also the concept of Platonic love or love sans the physical aspect; it is sometimes called as pure love. Overall it can be said that even in the commonsense understanding of love there is the idea of love as something beyond the senses or sensual pleasure. Love for all and for everything is also mentioned by various saints and thinkers. Now a days we see that the scope of love is not limited to humans only; these days we have various groups or institutions of animal lovers,

nature lovers etc. Love as a positive feeling is also supposed to be a great contributing factor in one's wellbeing and even longevity of life.

JK's understanding of love-

JK goes beyond all these emotions and thoughts that usually go with the very word love. According to him, love is something that is necessarily all inclusive, not limited to a particular object, person, country, religion or God. Let us now try and understand what he means by love.

Raising questions and using the method of negation are noticed prominently in JK's teachings. So he raises the question- 'what is love?' And, later on, by using the method of negation he tries to show the real meaning of love.

Love and dependency

He has pointed out that dependence is involved in what we generally call 'love'. This dependency could be the result of the sense of attachment that comes from loneliness, insufficiency in oneself, not being able to stand alone therefore leaning on somebody. We also depend on the postman, milkman etc, but this dependence is of a different kind. JK calls it as 'psychological dependence' and this dependence comes with all the problems that go with it; there is the problem of image- of your own and of another- in relationship, the attachment to this image as well as denial and creation of new image. We call this together as love. There is also the love of God. God is an image, an idea, a symbol put together by hand and thought and this love is much easier to understand or to practice than finding out what love is in relationship. Then we depend on this image to help us solve our problems .We also talk of romantic or physical love which carries the feelings of possession, dominance, jealousy; people consider these to be quite naturally present in love and even justify these on the basis of love.

Love- identification- sentiments

We talk about the **love of for one's country** for which you are willing to kill, maim, destroy yourself. JK says that out of a great/ noble sentiment of patriotism “we identify ourselves with national flag or some other symbol and kill each other and call it as love of your country”¹. According to JK this identification is an emotional and sentimental factor and where sentiment and emotion come in, love is not. Because, according to him, emotion and sentiment breed the cruelty of like and dislike; for example I like my country therefore I kill others. This is cruelty in the name of my ‘love’ for my country. But he points out that actually there is no place for cruelty in love. But this kind of identification seems to be bringing around this kind of cruelty and therefore that cannot be love.

Then there are sentiments like jealousy and envy and love does not go with them. I envy you or am jealous of you because you have better passions, better job, better looks etc; you may not actually say that you are jealous but you compete with him/ her and that is a form of jealousy, envy. In such instances the driving force is not love, competition or comparison is the driving force. So they are not love and have to be wiped out “as the rain washes the dust of many days off a leaf.”²

Love- pleasure- desire

Time and again JK has asked the question **Is love pleasure?** He says that our beliefs, faiths are all the result of the pursuit of pleasure. Usually I love something- be it an object, act, scene, emotion, relationship- because it gives me pleasure. He points out that consciously or unconsciously pleasure is what one is seeking while seeking love. Then it is a self-centered activity. But according to him there is no self-centeredness in love. “Our beliefs, our social structure... is the result of our pursuit of pleasure. And when we say, ‘I love somebody’, is it love? Love means: no division/separation, no domination, no self-centered activity. To find out what love is one must deny all this- deny it in the sense of seeing the falseness of it.”³ What is this ‘seeing falseness’? He explains. “... when you actually see that love is none of these things, feel it, observe it, chew it, live with it, are totally committed to it, then you will know what love

is...”⁴ In that you will understand that there is no place for self-centeredness in love. This understanding is ‘seeing the falseness’ and then that self-centeredness will drop. It means that the pursuit of pleasure will also drop. ‘Seeing the falseness’ is having clear perception. (This idea occurs repeatedly in his teachings.)

While discussing pleasure, sacrifice and love, JK has said this- “The word ‘love’ is a very heavily loaded word.”⁵ The word is uttered with varied emotions. We are also convinced that it is quite right to have all these loves in one’s life. JK calls this as an ‘encrustation’ of centuries that has gathered around the word ‘love’. Like I love my country, the book, the king, my spouse, a beautiful valley etc. Then he asks that can we free that word from all these ‘encrustations of centuries’? We can do that only when we go deeply into the question: Is love pleasure? Our conduct is based on the principle of pleasure; we behave in a particular way because it pleases us. So we must enquire whether I love because there is the feeling of pleasure involved in my love for whatever. JK says that even in sacrifice pleasure is involved. ‘I’ am happy to sacrifice for someone else, thus even in sacrifice the ‘I’ persists and gives pleasure. In love the ‘I’ is absent. Therefore sacrifice of this kind does not go with love. Thus pleasure is not love.

To understand this, we must first understand the nature and interconnection of pleasure and desire. Right from watching a beautiful scene to sexual enjoyment pleasure exists everywhere. And then the mind wants a repetition of that, I enjoyed the scene or the act yesterday, I want it today, tomorrow, day after and so on. This repetition is the beginning of desire; it is the looking for pleasure for tomorrow. Thought enters here and then ‘the pleasure of tomorrow’ gets built. Thought builds an image of the scene; thought is the memory of it all and there is the desire for repetition. This repetition is the continuity of desire strengthened by thought. Or, the product of thought is the continuity of desire as pleasure. “Thought has produced this pleasure by thinking about what was pleasurable yesterday, which I want repeated today.”⁶ Repetitive conduct breeds not only mechanical, repetitive relationship but it also breeds disorder due to the lack of freshness in it; then there is no love.

Love and thought

The question that arises here is – Is love a continuity of thought, or has thought nothing whatsoever to do with love? When you really understand the whole process of pleasure, desire, thought and time, then only you can authentically say that love has nothing whatsoever to do with pleasure.

According to JK desire and pleasure necessarily involve thought which is time; love is not limited or based on time. Has love roots in yesterday and tomorrow? JK says that thought –not love- has such roots because thought is the response of memory. Love is obviously not memory. I love someone because he/ she was nice to me yesterday, now I don't love him/ her because he/ she is not nice to me today- this cannot be love. This is only a form of thought that accepts or denies.

JK also asks can there be **love that has no emotion and no sentiment**. He says, “It (love) is like a flower that has perfume; you can smell it or you can pass it by. That flower is for everybody and, for the one who takes trouble to breathe it deeply and look at it, a great delight.”⁷ It means that the flower does not feel dejected by your neglect or elated by your attention. It is fresh and fragrant for all, in spite of neglect or attention. It does not say that it will not open up for a person because it hates that person. Or that it will open up for someone because it likes that person. Similarly, love is there for all, the same for all and therefore he says that love has no sentiment or emotion directed at something in particular/ someone in particular. Love is all encompassing.

Love and ending of ‘me’

“You will find out what love is; and what sorrow is, only when your mind has rejected all explanation and is no longer imagining, no longer seeking the cause, no longer indulging in words or going back in memory to its own pleasures and pains. Your mind must be completely quiet, without a word, without a symbol, without an idea. And then you will discover – there will come into being – that state in which what we have called love and what we have called

sorrow and what we have called death are all the same. There is no longer any division between love and sorrow and death; and there being no division, there is beauty. But to comprehend, to be in this state of ecstasy, there must be that passion that comes with the total abandonment of oneself.”⁸

In the above passage JK has pointed out that love is a state of ecstasy, it is actually a state where love, death, ending of sorrow all is on par; not just on par, there is no division in them at all. In order to understand- which is to experience *actually*, not verbally – this state, passion is necessary. And, he says, “There can be passion only when there is total self-abandonment. One is never passionate unless there is a complete absence of what we call thought.”⁹ Thus love is necessarily connected with the ending of ‘me’. The ‘me’ is made of thought and hence thought has to end for love to be.

But, JK also tells us that with such ending of me or thought sensitivity to everything around us must not be lost. A state where freedom, meditation, love and truth coexist cannot be a numb state. On the contrary in such a state you are extremely alert; there is total awareness of everything that is there. It is a peculiar state where there is no centre of awareness, there is only awareness; because there is no center as such there is total awareness.

Love is extraordinarily important for living. Without love all your activities become meaningless. JK says that if there is no love, do whatever you want to do- like seeking all the gods on the earth, social activities, helping the poor, trying to reform the poor, writing books, going into politics- you are missing out on the vastness of life because in all these the ‘I’ persists. Thus love is the essence of living, the meaning of life because it is through love that you realize the vastness of life.

Love and the method of negation

While talking about love JK employs the method of negation in order to uncover the meaning of love. He describes at length what love is not. Let us see in brief some of his negations.

He uses the method of negation by pointing out that love is something ‘in itself’ and not the opposite of hatred or jealousy; it is also not an end to these emotions. Love is closely connected with sorrow- ending of sorrow and death as well. This beautiful passage throws light on the connection between ending of sorrow, death, ecstasy, beauty and love-

“Love is not attachment, love is not the opposite of hate, love is not jealousy. And when one has finished with jealousy, with envy, with attachment, with all the conflicts and the agonies that one goes through, - thinking that one loves- when all that has come to an end , there still remains the question of what is love , and there still remains the question of what is sorrow.”¹⁰

According to JK love is not something that can be cultivated or learnt or practiced. He points out that love cannot be divided into divine and physical, spiritual and profane. Love is *only love* without any adjective. Also it is not limited to only one or a few or many persons or things; love is all inclusive. Therefore, he says, the question ‘do you love all’ is absurd. “A flower that has perfume is not concerned with who comes to smell it, or who turns his back upon it.”¹¹ Then, love is not memory; love is not a thing of the mind or intellect. Love is not something that can be imposed externally; it comes into being naturally as compassion. This happens when the whole problem of existence as fear, greed, envy, despair, hope has been understood and resolved. We have already seen that love is not pleasure.

JK says, “Out of the negation of what is not love, every moment of life, out of the putting aside of what is not love, comes the positive thing called love.”¹² This clearly brings out the method of negation that he employed while discussing the nature of love. Often he said that love is not the word ‘love’; the desire to be loved and to love is not love. When it comes to understanding of love, one has to use logic and reason but has to go beyond them because logic is not love and reason is not love. Thus, love is something that you have to understand, experience, feel and this understanding lies beyond reason, beyond words. Love transcends these.

Love and ambition

He also holds that an ambitious man cannot love because with ambition comes comparison and then the struggle to achieve whatever your object of ambition is. The 'I' is very strong and functioning while fulfilling one's ambition. This clearly leads to division i.e. the 'I' and the object of ambition. This is also an activity of thought because thought decides the ambition. There is no place for love on the thought level. Ambition may also arise out of attachment to family etc. A man who is attached to his family has no love because there is clearly the division between my family and others. Love cannot come into being under such conditions.

Love and suffering

Sometimes it is said that with love comes suffering or that suffering is a part of love.* JK does not agree with it. On the contrary, he says that where there is suffering you cannot possibly love, and that is a truth, a law. He explains why love and suffering cannot coexist. According to him the essence of suffering is the total expression, at that moment, of complete self-centered existence. It is the essence of the 'me' - the essence of the ego, the limited, enclosed, existence, which is called the 'me'. When the 'me' is awakened, it denies a complete understanding of the situation or incident. This 'me' or 'I' is the cause of suffering. He asks, "if there were no 'me' would there be suffering?"¹² He means that in love the 'me' is absent and therefore there can be no suffering.

Also, suffering as the expression of the 'me' can include self-pity, loneliness, an attempt to escape, trying to be with the other who is no more etc. This 'me' is an image and it is the knowledge, the remembrance of the past. So, how is this essence of me related to love? Or rather is there any relationship between love and suffering? There is not because love is not remembrance or the past. Another important point made by JK in this regard is- this me is put

*Here we are reminded of the great poet-thinker Khalil Gibran- who called JK as 'God of Love' when they met. In his famous poem 'The Prophet' Khalil Gibran says, 'For even as love crowns you, so shall he crucify you. Even as he is for your growth, so is he for your pruning. Even as he ascends to your height and caresses your tender branches that quiver in the sun, so shall he descend to your roots and shake them in their clinging to the earth.'

together by thought but love is not put together by thought. He says, “The memories of the pains, the delights and the pursuit of pleasure-sexual and otherwise- of the pleasure of possessing somebody and somebody liking to be possessed- all that is the structure of thought. The ‘me’ with its name, form, its memory is put together by thought.”¹⁴ Love is not put together by thought; therefore suffering has no relationship with love.

Love, suffering, thought and action

JK says that you have to have an insight if you want to understand the place of thought in relation to love and suffering. Having an insight means you are not escaping from the situation, or wanting comfort, frightened to be lonely, isolated. Only such a mind is free and that which is free is empty. If you have that emptiness you have an insight into suffering. Then suffering as ‘me’ disappears. When this happens, there is immediate action and that action is not from thought, it is from love. Otherwise, action from suffering is the action from ‘me’, me is the product of thought and that is why there is always conflict.

According to him thought is always fragmentary and limited. Thought cannot cultivate love because, you make abstractions in thought and making such abstractions is moving away from ‘what is’. This movement of abstraction becomes a condition according to which one lives. This is the way of thought; one will never know what love is, the enormous beauty, depth and significance involved in love if one takes this path of thought.

Love, religious mind, right action

He connects love with religious mind as well. What is a religious mind? Here are some indicators given by JK. He says, “A mind that is not in the state of love is not a truly religious mind.”¹⁵ A religious mind does not divide life into the outer and the inner, it is without any conflict like I am this- I want to become that, it is free of ideals, it is without any fear, it has an extraordinary stillness and, JK says that only then love can come by. So actually love and being truly religious go together. Freshness of mind, innocence are qualities of a religious mind and

they are there in love. Such a mind is able to meet every moment anew. Then the action is out of love and that according to JK is the right action.

Importance of love

JK brings out the importance of love in various ways. He says that love is something without which your problems will increase, multiply endlessly. “And with love, do what you will, there is no risk, there is no conflict.”¹⁶ If you have no love do what you will your problems will increase.

JK points out that we tend to separate death from life and life from love, and love from time.¹⁷ If we want to understand any one of these, we have to understand the rest, they are interconnected. Life is a whole unit; it is to be understood as a whole. We take a fragmentary view and then there is a problem because understanding a fragment is not understanding the whole. In order to understand this problem all your attention and passion are required. This passion comes out of the flame of sorrow. When you understand the depth and meaning of sorrow, you have the energy, vitality to investigate what love is.

Thus we find that JK’s concept of love is all inclusive in the sense that it is not limited to a particular person or object. It involves full sensitivity to everyone, everything. This love, like his concept of freedom, is outside the field of thought; it is love *per se*.

Next, we shall see what the very word love meant in ancient times. Then we shall go in to Plato’s views on love. Thereafter Mahatma Gandhi’s concept of love will be explored.

Concept of Love in ancient Greece

If we go back and track down the ancient Greek reference to love and the meaning of the very term as understood in those days we come upon some interesting information. With a view to understanding JK's meaning of the concept of love, let us go into the meaning of the very term love and then see how Plato, a Greek stalwart of philosophy, has discussed this concept of love.

In Greek *agapé*, *éros*, *philia* and *storge* are the four words that are used for love. Each one has a different shade of meaning to it. This is how they differ from each other-

Agapé- seems to be a wide term. It refers to the 'spiritual' sense in love. Though it also refers to general affection it is also used in a deeper sense of 'true unconditional love'. Unconditional in the sense that *agape* involves only giving without any expectation of any kind of return. Thus there is a sense of sacrifice attached to *agape*. It also denotes feelings for one's spouse, children, being content or holding one in high regard. This word was used by the Christians to express the unconditional love of god.

Éros- means the physical, passionate, romantic emotion where logic may not play any part. It is something more than a friendship as in *philia*. Plato says that at the initial stage *e*ros functions but with contemplation it turns into an appreciation of the inner beauty of a person or even beauty itself. According to him the physical part in love was not a necessary part of love. Hence 'Platonic love' means love without the physical aspect. In *Symposium* he says that *e*ros helps the soul to recall the knowledge of beauty and helps in understanding the spiritual truth or the ideal 'form' of beauty that gives rise to the erotic desire. Thus he means that finding the truth about sensual love leads to transcendence as it occurs with finding any truth. In other words *Éros* can be a means for seeking the truth.

Philia- It is a concept developed by Aristotle. It is a dispassionate, virtuous love. Loyalty to family and friends as well as the desire for enjoyment of an activity and love between two lovers- all these are denoted by the word *philia*.

Storge- means affection in general. It also expresses mere acceptance or putting up with a situation as in ‘loving’ the tyrant.

In literature various types of love between two individuals are described like conjugal and illicit love, normal and perverse love, sexual and idyllic love etc. Then there is the love of a person for himself or narcissism, love for one’s fellowmen, for one’s country. There is also love of god which is a great motivating factor for many in various religions.

And, not to forget, we also have ‘philosophy’ which means love for wisdom.

Whether history, poetry, literature or fiction, there are stories of love narrated or written in all times. Passion, affection, readiness to sacrifice, tenderness seem to be contained in ‘love’. Stories of Paris- Helen, Romeo- Juliet etc. exhibit this amply.

Plato’s concept of love

We are discussing love and it is befitting to see what a great philosopher like Plato has to say about it. He has discussed this concept using his famous dialogue method. In *Phaedrus* and especially in *Symposium* Plato put forth his views on love through dialogues between Socrates, Diotima and others.

In *Symposium* Aristophanes begins the discussion and says that everyone is only half in himself/herself and is looking for completion.* Though it begins with human love, Socrates takes it ahead from human to divine later on.

Then Agathon says, “Love, besides being in himself the loveliest and the best, is the author of virtues. Love brings peace upon the earth, the breathless calm that lulls the long tormented deep, rest to the winds, and that sweet balm and solace of our nature, sleep.”¹⁸ With this, Agathon

*The story is that gods punished us for our arrogance and divided us in two. Hence everyone is half so to say and looks for the other half for completion.

points out the importance of love when he says that love has the quality of bringing peace to one's life. Bringing rest to the winds can be taken to mean that love calms down the internal storms that go on in one's mind. He says that love has the capacity to bring us sleep which is the solace and sweet balm to man.

Socrates carries forward what was said in *Phaedrus* and says in *Symposium* that love is desire – and desire takes an object-for the perpetual possession of the good. It means that when we love anything we desire for, the object of our desire is the goodness that is there in the thing or the person. According to him everyone and everything seems to be striving for acquiring this good and therefore the whole universe is in a constant state of love, in fact, love makes the world function, nothing can exist without love. This goodness that is sought by all is beauty. Here we must understand Plato's view; for him the ultimate reality is Forms/ Ideas or essences. Everything in the world is a manifestation of the forms or essences. Also, he says that there is one, single world order and everything is a part of the order. Therefore there has to be a single good for which everything, everybody yearns. This is the highest Form, the Good or the Beautiful. Thus this good or beauty is present everywhere. A lover gets carried away in the beginning by the beauty of the beloved but true love brings the beauty that is there in everything to the fore of the mind. Thus true love is the un-concealment of the hidden harmony, beauty, essence present everywhere.

It seems that in Plato's concept of love, though the beginning is the physical or material attraction, ultimately one transcends it and partakes of the one, single world order and experiences the good and the beauty. This is very close to JK's concept of love. According to JK when there is love, beauty is also present there and to understand the compresence of them is to experience love. JK does not talk about the beginning of love or a step-by-step understanding of love like Plato but both seem to have the sense of all-inclusiveness and transcendence in love.

In the dialogues between Socrates and Diotima, Diotima says that to love is to bring forth upon the beautiful both in body and in soul. And, love is longing not for the beautiful itself but for the conception and generation that the beautiful effects.

Immortality and love

In the course of the dialogue this connection between immortality and love is also discussed. This refers to the common understanding of love i.e. man- woman love. Diotima tells Socrates that man longs for procreation and this is one ‘deathless and eternal’ element in our mortality.¹⁹ Thus man’s yearning for immortality is expressed through procreation, having children whereby even after his death something of him continues by way of his child and the process continues for ever. It is believed that man does not like to think of death as ‘the end’; that is how life after death, rebirth etc. are conceived by him. He is seeking immortality and, as per Diotima, having a child is being part of immortality. She points out that even animals and birds have this desire, they are fiercely protective of their young ones. She further explains that this actually indicates that ‘the mortal does all it can to put on immortality’.²⁰ Also, the divine is the same and it remains the same throughout eternity; man is changing all the time and dies one day. Therefore he leaves behind his child as a form of himself.

This is as far as the body is concerned. But, Diotima says that besides this kind of procreancy, there is also procreancy of the spirit; conceiving and bearing things of the spirit. And these things are wisdom* and her ‘sister virtues’. With this we find that Plato has introduced a totally different element to the commonly understood notion of love. The wise one who has these virtues looks for a soul mate and shares his wisdom. It is like delivering the entire burden i.e. wisdom/ knowledge when one discusses, imparts it with another who has the same kind of inclination, and that is how one’s wisdom does not die away. One’s existence is extended by way of sharing it with a soul mate; the soul mate shares it with someone else and so on. This is how a kind of perpetuity or immortality is brought in even in the context of one’s knowledge.

Be it physical or spiritual/ intellectual, this thought of immortality is quite special and interesting; it adds a different dimension to the concept of love as we understand it commonly. Here we see your own existence being carried ahead by others, merging with others. This perhaps is the ‘ending of me’ as JK calls it.

*It is further explained that this wisdom is the one that governs and orders the society. Meaning justice and moderation.

Love and beauty

One falls in love with the beauty of another body, which is a common phenomenon. From this one realizes that the beauty of one body is closely related to the beauty of another body and that, beauty of each body is the same. The next step is to understand that the beauties of the body are nothing to the beauty of the soul. Thus one encounters/ comes upon the beauty of the spirit or soul.

This understanding will reveal that the beauty of the soul is also the same in everyone. Thus one goes from the love of the body of one body to the love of the beauty of all bodies and souls. These are, in the words of Diotima, the ‘mysteries of love’. Once these are known, a wondrous vision bursts upon him and he sees ‘an everlasting loveliness which neither comes nor goes, neither flowers nor fades.’²¹ This loveliness or beauty is the same everywhere, at all times, and to everyone- the universal beauty. This is how love and beauty are related.

If we think of Plato’s theory of love as the ladder of love it is beautifully summed up as, “Starting from the individual beauties, the quest for the universal beauty must find him ever mounting the heavenly ladder stepping from rung to rung, from one to two and from two to every lovely body, from bodily beauty to the beauty of the institutions to learning and from learning in general to the special love that pertains to nothing but the beautiful itself- until at last he comes to know what beauty is.”²²

Diotima further adds that man’s life becomes worth living only when he attains this vision. Thereafter one can never be lured by the charm of gold, of lovely bodies. Then he will know the perfect, true virtue and will become ‘the friend of god.’

The description that Diotima gives of this vision or revelation is quite similar to what JK has said about love and beauty and the experience of love. Throughout his teachings JK maintains that love is something beyond man-woman love or something beyond the common understanding of love as love ‘of’ or ‘for’ something/ someone. While describing loveliness and beauty, he says that it is an experience beyond words. And, it is something that is not partial. Diotima says almost the same things- “it will be neither words nor knowledge nor something

that exists in something else, such as a living creature, or the earth, or the heavens or anything that is- but subsists of itself and by itself in an eternal oneness while every lovely thing partakes of it in such sort that however much the parts may wax and wane, it will neither be more nor less, but still the same inviolable whole.”²³ Love means love for the whole; love cannot be partial like love for one particular thing or person and not for others. JK seems to be airing the same view when he says that there are no fragments or divisions in love *per se*.

Importance of Mahatma Gandhi’s concept of love

Mahatma Gandhi, a multifaceted personality- a great thinker, an epoch making person, a strict follower of truth and non-violence and much more- believed in the strength of love. Though he does not seem to have discussed love academically, the concept of love is quite prominent in his philosophy. Therefore it is not out of place to delve into his meaning of love.

Gandhiji often quoted Napoleon who is believed to have said this- “Alexander, Charlemagne and I founded great empires. We founded them on force, where are they today? Jesus founded his on love and today millions would gladly die for him.” It means that force- which could be military strength- does not make a solid foundation for one’s thoughts to reign over the hearts of people. Love and only love will accomplish this.

Gandhiji said that when in despair he remembered that all through history the way of truth and love has always won; there have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time they can seem invincible, but in the end they always fall.

Mahatma Gandhi’s concept of love

-Fear and love are contradictory terms. Love is reckless in giving away, oblivious as to what it gets in return. Love wrestles with the world as with the self and ultimately gains mastery over all other feelings.

-For Gandhiji love is like a natural law. Therefore he said that the law of love will work, just as the law of gravitation will work, whether we accept it or not. He goes a step ahead and says that just as a scientist will work wonders out of various applications of the law of nature, even so a man who applies the law of love with scientific precision can work greater wonders. He seems to be very practical about everyone following this law and says that he does not know whether humanity will consciously follow the law of love or not. But that need not cause disturbance because the law will work just as the law of gravitation works, whether we accept it or not.

Gandhiji talked about the 'law of Love' that rules mankind. According to him the man who discovered the law of love for us was a far greater scientist than any modern scientist. It is only because the law of love rules us that we are here. We would have been extinct long ago had violence and hatred ruled us. We fall short of realizing this and behave as if the basis of society were violence.

Love and ahimsa

According to Mahatma Gandhi, non-violence is love- and love is god. For him love and non-violence are not two separate things at all. For example, he says, "And when you want to find Truth as god, the only inevitable means is love, i.e. non-violence, and since I believe that means and end are convertible terms I should not hesitate to say that God is Love."²⁴ For him truth, god, love and non-violence are all one, fused into one. He also equates God with truth, morality, ethics, fearlessness, source of light and life. So, actually, all these are not distinct from each other or unrelated to each other. There is a converging point and at that point they all are present; presence of one means the others are also present.

JK says something similar in that he holds that wherever there is freedom and truth, love and non-violence will also be there because inflicting pain on anyone is not there in love. And then one's action will be the right action. Thus ethics also has a place there.

He thinks that we do not explore love deep or far enough and that is why not everyone sees its full workings. For Gandhiji himself, as he went deeper and deeper into the workings of love, he found more and more delight in life and in the scheme of this universe. Not only delight but, "It gives me a peace and a meaning of the mysteries of Nature that I have no power to describe."

²⁵Thus peace too comes with love. He even goes to the extent of saying that an understanding of

Nature that reason cannot fathom is also possible because of love. This quote also shows that Gandhiji found love as something beyond words and it is an experience that brings peace to one.

Here we are reminded that in the *Symposium*, Agathon talks about love bringing peace and Diotima talks about the mysteries of love.

Gandhiji was very sure about the law of love governing us. So much so that he connected the Civil Disobedience movement with love. He has said, “Disobedience combined with love is the living water of life.”²⁶ Even while you are protesting or when you are in Satyagraha, love has to be there, that is what really makes the movement function. This is perhaps the reason why all his movements were non-violent because love and violence do not go together, be it your personal life or political life.

Thus, for Gandhiji, love is very much there for us to see but we do not understand this basic rule and go by the way of violence.

Gandhiji did not discuss the nature of love as such. JK talks about love as not being pleasure, sex, desire, possessiveness etc. Though JK does not say that the law of love rules us, he points out the importance of love in life in connection with freedom, meditation, truth.

Thus we find that Plato begins from the physical and takes love to the transcendental, that love is the governing force of the universe. Mahatma Gandhi says that love is like a law of nature that is there for all- for those who are aware of it and for those who are not aware of it.

A major point that is noticed in JK’s concept of love is the absence of ‘I’. In the various discussions of love, the existence of the ‘I’ is assumed and accepted but JK points out that love means the ending of the ‘I’. When he says this, it is clear that for him love is something that is beyond an ‘I’, love is something far more vast than the small, limited sphere of the ‘I’. But, characteristically, he points out that though this is the truth, love is not something that will always remain a mystery; it can and does come upon one in this very life. And as Diotima says, that is a beautiful vision.

JK says that with freedom and meditation comes love. Then there is truth as well. In the next chapter we will go into JK's concept of truth. Mahatma Gandhi's concept of truth will also be studied in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 4

JK'S CONCEPT OF TRUTH

Introduction

The quest for truth seems to be an integral part of human enquiry. It also seemstobe an ongoing process. In modern days truth is taken to mean the scientific truth like water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen, or the earth orbits the sun etc, truth is also taken to mean a fact-historical, geographical etc. But here we are not discussing that kind of truth. Besides these kinds of truth man has been looking for another kind of truth, the truth that lies behind/ beyond/ as the foundation of all the phenomena. This is also called as the ultimate truth. There is misery, chaos, darkness in the world, the question that is often asked is- is there something beyond all this miseryandconfusion? The world is transient, subject to change all the time; so the question that is asked is- is there something that is permanent, something beyond change, immovable? Everything is subject to life and decay/ death and therefore apparent; is there something that is beyond birth and death? Everything is short-lived; can it be called as true? And then what is it that is always there, omnipresent? Such questions are raised and discussed in metaphysics. Different schools of philosophy put forth different answers; for example Advaita Vedanta holds that Brahman is the only reality and atman is Brahman. Buddhism does not accept existence of soul or Brahman; for them Nirvana is the truth. For Plato form would be the truth.

In the routine life we always experience that things are interdependent, nothing is independent. If there is such an independent thing that would be truth- everything else being relative. So, it is held that before this world came into existence, there was something that was totally independent and out of that the whole world emerged. This is 'the' truth. The nature of this truth is a topic of enquiry for the scientists and philosophers alike all over the world.

A question related to this is- can man ever know this truth? Truth is looked upon as the basis of everything. It is also regarded as a value. Many thinkers place great value on this. In the last century, Mahatma Gandhi was one who gave a lot of thought to truth and has discussed it in

great details. For him truth was the highest value, so much so that initially he considered 'God is truth' but later on he was convinced that 'truth is God'. For him living a truthful life was to have harmony in one's thoughts, speech and action. He said that truth cannot be compromised and the path of truth is not easy but that is the only path to travel in spite of the difficulties.

Mundaka Upanishad has given us the famous prayer 'satyamevajayate....' (Mundaka, 3.1.6) This prayer tells us that truth alone triumphs; not falsehood. The sages, whose desires have been completely fulfilled, reach where the treasure of Truth resides. Right from this ancient prayer to the recent finding of Higgs- Boson particle, search for truth is a worldwide endeavor. Ancient seers to modern thinkers- all have contributed to this search in different ways.

What is truth? In epistemology sense perceptions and beliefs, guesses, hypotheses, opinions, judgments etc. are taken to be the sources of knowledge. But sense perceptions have limitations, for example man cannot see beyond a certain distance, also these perceptions could be deceptive, for example a person suffering from jaundice sees everything as yellow. Perceptions are not reliable or accurate in this sense. In case of beliefs, judgments etc. we find that some of them are so to say more true than others and these are affected by the circumstances, tradition, culture etc. in which one lives. Therefore they are not the final truth; they are subject to change; and, the question 'what is truth' remains unanswered. It is also known that things by themselves are not either true or false; they just are or are not and our propositions/ judgments about them are true or false.

So how do we decide what is true? In the field of philosophy- western philosophy- we have three tests or 'theories of truth' trying to answer this question. According to the Correspondence theory any statement that is in fidelity to fact/actuality is true and truth is the agreement between the statement about a fact and the actual fact. (Flaw in this theory- we cannot directly compare our ideas and judgments with the world as it is.) The Coherence theory maintains that a statement is true if it is in accordance with or in harmony with other statements that are accepted to be true. (Flaw in this theory- it is argument in circle.) The Pragmatic theory holds that an idea or a theory or a hypothesis is true if it works out in practice, if it leads to

satisfactory results; and there is no static or ultimate truth. (Flaw in this theory- 'satisfactory results' is something very vague or ambiguous.) Thus none of these theories is perfect. Each has certain flaws and cannot be accepted as the test. Also, these tests or theories could be useful in the scientific field or in our routine, daily life. But the truth that we are talking about is something besides this, something that is not subject to change.

Commonsense understanding of the word- In our daily life we generally equate truth with a fact; for example if I say that there is a table in the room and if it is actually there, my statement is true. This is the simplistic approach and this depends on my senses. Generally we assume that our sense perceptions are correct and they lead to the fact. It is also assumed that truth is something that is immovable and permanent. We also differentiate truths like the scientific, material, subjective and objective. Another commonsense understanding is that there is an ultimate or 'the' truth besides the truths in our daily life. This ultimate truth is believed to belong to the spiritual, intangible category; various gurus, religions talk of achieving this truth or of reaching this truth. So truth here is looked upon as an achievement or destination and the belief that goes with it is that if we follow certain method or authority, or travel along a given path we reach it. In our routine life we find that truth is sometimes taken to mean validity, consistency, non-contradiction.

JK's understanding of truth

"I maintain that Truth is a pathless land, and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect."¹ This is what JK said in his famous speech that he made when he dissolved the Order of the star in the East in 1929 and it is apt to take this as the beginning point of looking into his concept of truth. This in itself is a meaningfully loaded sentence and we find that JK developed this point throughout his later life. In this significant lecture, JK has made two points absolutely clear. One is that truth is limitless, unconditioned, and unapproachable by any fixed path. The other is that you have to look for truth on your own. The quest for truth is one's own; no one else can do that for you.

These two points considered together mean that truth is not something static or fixed; it is dynamic and therefore there is no laid out path that can take one to truth. And, there is no possibility of a path being made because a path will come into existence when a number of people travel on it. But in case of truth neither can I follow someone else's footprints nor can anyone else follow my footprints. Thus there can be no path to truth.

Another important point that he made in the same lecture is that Truth cannot be organized. But, all over the world, various religions, sects or organizations are trying to do exactly that and therefore truth becomes only an ideal or a pursuit.

He explains it further by saying that for example we use a vehicle to reach at a certain predetermined place; organizations etc cannot be used in this way to arrive at truth because Truth is not a fixed point or an immovable destination. Also, a sect, religion, a mechanism- like a vehicle is something physical and external and it has nothing to do with spirituality. An organization may sustain interest in Truth, but it will be awakening the interest from without. Such an interest awakened from outside and not born out of love for Truth itself is, according to him, of no value. Because, then a person will no longer strive for Truth but will take efforts to fit into the framework provided by the organization.

On truth being dynamic he says, "truth does not lie in any temple, in any mosque, in any church. And it has no path to it except through one's own understanding of oneself, inquiring, studying, and learning. Then there is that which is eternal." ²

Reason, logic and truth

JK holds that reason and logic alone will not discover truth. Up to a point we have to go by reason, logic, we have to enquire sanely and holistically; but beyond that point we shall be able to find a different state, a different quality of mind. Such a mind which is not bound by any belief, dogma etc. will be a free mind i.e. a mind that is free to observe 'what is'. Such observation is also seeing/ arriving at truth. Then the mind will be full of energy; will take a different approach to social, economic, and human problems of relationships; that will be important for solving these problems. Thus reason or logic is not to be abandoned, they are

useful, but one has to go beyond these. Truth lies beyond reason and logic. As to why thought is not able to come upon truth JK says that thought, being memory, past can take you only up to a certain point but truth is beyond that because truth has no boundaries and, being fresh, it cannot be met with memory or the past. ‘Thought in its desire to find what truth is, is always looking in terms of the past. That is the difficulty of search. When you seek, you must be able to recognize what you have found; and what you find in terms of your recognition is the past.’³

Reality, actuality and truth

In order to understand JK’s concept of truth it is essential to go into the distinction that he made between reality, actuality and truth. Truth lies beyond both reality and actuality.

Reality according to him is all the things put together by thought. He has pointed out that the word reality comes from the root ‘res’ which means ‘thing’. He further says that “... anything that thought operates on, or fabricates, or reflects about, is reality.”⁴ In his dialogue with Dr. Bohm he makes it clear that nature also comes under ‘reality’. We usually think of the world as given to us and then there is the man-made world of objects etc. But JK includes all the content of consciousness like desire, feeling, will etc. as belonging to reality. In the same dialogue Dr.Bohm pointed out that the root meaning of ‘thing’ is to condition, to set the conditions or determine. “And indeed we must agree that a thing is necessarily conditioned.”⁵ Then what is the relation of reality to truth? JK says that we are living in the world of reality and want to establish relation with truth where no ‘thing’ exists. It is not possible till we transcend/ go beyond the world of reality.

‘Actuality’, according to JK, means ‘what is’. The fact, what is happening, taking place at the present moment, not only in the external world but also within, is actuality. Thus actuality has a reference to the present. JK says, “Truth is not ‘what is’; but the understanding of ‘what is’ opens the door to truth.”⁶ That is how truth and actuality are related.

The word 'true' in Latin is 'verus' and means 'that which is'. The root meaning of 'true' in English is honest and faithful. To comprehend is to hold it all together. Thus comprehension of truth is to hold all of the present i.e. understanding truth is understanding the present.

Truth- Personal belief/ opinion and absolute and relative truth

The oft-asked question is- is truth something different from/ apart from personal belief/ opinion? JK says that one has to find it out for oneself. Personal opinions, perceptions, experiences etc. are always relative, is there a perception, a seeing which is absolute and not relative is to be looked into by one.

In answer to a question on truth being absolute or relative, he points out that the human mind wants permanency in everything- relationship, property, virtue etc. The mind is always looking for something that cannot be destroyed and that is how we say that truth is absolute or that God is permanent.

Then he also says that whether truth is absolute or timeless depends on the mind. When the mind wants something permanent to cling to, it creates the permanent, when the mind wants something beyond decay or death, it creates something absolute. But if the mind is aware of everything that is going on externally and internally and sees the truth of it, then it is a timeless mind and only such a mind can know, "... that which is beyond names, beyond the permanent and the impermanent." ⁷

Truth and illusion

How is one to find out if there is this kind of truth that is not relative, is absolute, complete and never changing? How does one's mind, thought, intellect find this out? During this investigation one has to put aside all that is false in daily life and that is the only way to proceed. It means investigation into an illusion, a fantasy, an image, a romantic concept because they are not facts; they are the barriers in the way of this investigation. How does an illusion come into existence that needs to be looked into. JK says that illusion is playing with something which is not actual. So in illusion etc. one is moving away from what is actually taking place. An illusion is created

when one is unwilling, incapable or afraid of facing a fact; avoidance of facing fact gives rise to illusion etc. and that is moving away from fact which means moving away from truth.

The next question is- can one avoid this escape or this moving away from fact? JK has said, “If one could look at what is actually taking place, then there would be complete avoidance of any form of illusion.”⁸ This looking at actuality would also involve looking at one’s dependency on a person, belief or ideal or a personal experience that has given one great excitement, happiness because dependence also creates illusion. By this he means that in order to come upon truth one’s mind must be devoid of creating illusion, hypotheses, and hallucinations. At the same time, JK points out, the mind must also be free from the want of grasping truth, it should not have the desire for truth. Such a mind, according to him, is a mind in order because there is no confusion coming out of illusion etc; the mind has lost its “capacity to create illusion.”⁹ Then only truth can be understood.

Search for truth by science

JK shows the difference between the search for truth by science and the search for truth by others. He maintains that the scientists, astrophysicists are also looking for truth and they are using thought to investigate the material world around them; they are trying to go beyond physics but only with the help of thought. Thought is matter, so is the ‘me’ that is there inside. If you start looking inwards, “if one starts moving from fact to fact, then one begins to discover that which is beyond matter. Then there is such a thing as absolute truth, if one goes through with it.”¹⁰

Knowledge and truth

Knowledge according to JK is a process like this- all our experiences are continuously recorded and stored by the brain. This is memory which is the past. Also every new experience is met with this storage of memory; you look at the new experience through the window of the past. When you meet with the present, the memory is invoked to understand the present. This we call as using knowledge. The recording, storing and invoking from the storage is called as

knowledge. That is why he says that knowledge being rooted in the past cannot meet the new moment which is fresh, not of the past.

Usually it is said that knowledge leads one to truth but according to JK knowledge is a hindrance when it comes to truth because, "... (knowledge) prevents the deep discovery of what is truth,"¹¹ Truth is the present which is the 'now' and cannot be known by the past. Further he explains that knowledge is cultivation of memory, you go on adding to it, using it and thereby adding to it repeatedly. This is of course useful at a certain level like carrying out daily chores, learning language or a skill, earning your living etc., but beyond that it becomes a detriment. He says, "To recognize the distinction- to see where knowledge is destructive and has to be put aside, and where it is essential and to be allowed to function with as much amplitude as possible- is the beginning of intelligence."¹² He means that realizing the limits of knowledge is real knowledge and then only there can be truth.

Nature of truth

He urges his listeners to think whether truth is, "some extraordinary mystery, something far away, unimaginable and abstract; or whether it is something which you discover from moment to moment, from day to day."¹³ According to him, truth cannot be accumulated or gathered through experience because a spirit of acquisitiveness lies behind the accumulation. Truth cannot be acquired. Truth is also not something far away, something that can be found through a system of meditation or through severe self discipline involving sacrifice and denial because that is also a process of acquisitiveness. Again, truth being timeless, the moment you capture it, it is no longer truth.

And then he says, "Truth is to be discovered and understood in every action, in every thought, in every feeling, however trivial or transient; it is to be observed at each moment of everyday... in the process of your own thinking. Your thinking may be false, it may be conditioned, limited; and to discover that your thinking is conditioned, limited is truth."¹⁴ Truth is not something to be stored up and then to be relied on as a guide because that is also another form of possession. But the mind functions in such a way that it is very difficult for the mind

not to acquire, accumulate or store up. Realization of the significance of this- not verbal but actual- is the finding out of what an extraordinary thing truth is.

Truth and the need for a guru

Mostly it is assumed that you need a teacher or a guru in order to know the truth; or it is also believed that only a guru can lead you to truth. JK goes deep into this and points out that you really do not need this kind of a guru at all. He says that obviously one does not need a guru for material purposes; one needs a guru for psychological purposes. You need him because you feel confused and do not know how to live in this world of decay, degeneration, misery, disintegration. You need him for advice, thus the need is psychological. Then JK explores the meaning of the very word 'need'. He asks that everyone needs food, shelter, clothes, sunshine etc; does one need a guru/ teacher in the same way? In order to come out of the confusion does one need a guru?

JK has always maintained, 'You are the world and the world is you'; he means that if the world around is full of confusion each one is responsible for that, I am responsible for that. And, therefore, I am the only one to clear it up. If I want to clear it up I must understand it myself. How can someone else 'understand' for me? So what is the point in going to someone else- teacher, guru whoever- to help you out of this mess? The teacher/guru could be someone great but the confusion exists in *my* life and life is relationship. Now, I have relationship with others, with society, property, ideas and so on; can someone else give me an understanding of my relationship with these?? I have to understand it myself, on my own. Such understanding is also knowing truth. You cannot go to a guru who has found truth to partake of it.

JK asks, can our inner problems, confusions etc. be understood by someone else? For example there is some confusion in your relationship. Then you need to understand the relationship, without running away from it or without avoiding it. This can be done only when you see the whole content of relationship. Only you can do that, how can an outsider have an access to your inner thoughts, feelings etc.? He means to say that everybody has to take stock of his/ her psychological world, of the contents of the world. Because that is the only way to actually know

the problem. And, knowing the problem is solving the problem. As he said, life is a book, you are the author and you are the reader. No one can read it for you.

Another important point made by JK here is – if you think that a guru can take you to truth it means that truth is something static and your guru can lead you to it. But this is false, JK repeatedly says that truth is not static, it is always dynamic. Therefore no one can lead you to it. And, something static can only gratify you because you know it and you can hold on to it and thus it becomes gratifying. Then, instead of truth, you are seeking gratification and the person who gives you the greatest gratification is your guru. He says that in the presence of the guru you feel at peace; feel that you are being understood. So, is it gratification rather than truth that you are looking for? “In other words you want a glorified father or mother who will help you overcome the difficulty.”¹⁵ Not just overcoming difficulties, but the guru who offers you an escape becomes your need, you start depending on him for solving all your problems. And dependency does not help when it comes to understanding truth.

JK holds that if a guru is worth his salt he will tell you to understand yourself in action, which is relationship; ‘yourself’ because it is your problem, misery, struggle etc. The guru could be a realized person or could be free but, JK asks, would that help you in your search? There are some who worship the guru and believe that the worship will solve their problem. JK says that such worship does not help; it is actually detrimental to your understanding of yourself.

He has pointed out another factor when it comes to revering or respecting or worshipping a guru. He says that when you start respecting one more and more it means that you start respecting others less and less. May be you salute your boss and ill-treat your subordinate; then your respect has very little significance. And he maintains that this is a fact of life, this is what actually happening. This is creating hierarchy, division and there is no place for hierarchy or division in truth.

JK tells us that we are in a state of confusion and we want a way out of the confusion, we want a guru to clear up the confusion. But can a guru clear up one’s confusion? Because, my confusion is a result of my own responses and therefore I am the one to clear it up; not an

outside person. He also points out that many times a way out of confusion is mistakenly called as truth. The confusion is created out of our own response and in order to clear it up, we have to understand ourselves first and foremost. Lack of understanding of our miseries, conflicts, responses is lack of understanding the self.

Then what place can a guru have? According to JK a guru is a kind of signpost. For example you are going from place x to place y. You see a signpost indicating the way like 'take left' or 'go ahead' etc. Thereafter you have to travel accordingly. When you stop and start worshipping the signpost you are not going to reach the destination place. When you keep on worshipping the guru something similar to this happens and you go nowhere. The guru can indicate, point out or point towards but *you* have to embark upon the journey leaving the signpost behind. Otherwise it will be like worshipping the signpost and not traveling. Then how to bring about this understanding? JK says that only when we are in relationship with the present can this understanding dawn. Very clearly JK says, "...that relationship is the guru, not someone outside."¹⁶ This relationship is nothing else but one's relationship/ attachment to one's property, to other people, to ideas and the relationship itself is the guru. Unless and until one understands this, the conflict within will continue- guru or no guru. If I want to know this relationship I have to be aware of myself in relationship and for this awareness no guru is required.

He also urges us to go in to the very need for a guru. You must examine whether you want a guru so that you can escape the hard work involved in the journey. You must also examine whether you are putting all the responsibility on the guru instead of shouldering it on your own.

Truth – living from moment to moment

"Truth is a thing that is living from moment to moment."¹⁷ JK tells us that in order to come upon it a very 'alert, pliable and swift' mind is required; unfortunately we want to be/ we like to be put to sleep by rituals or mantras. Total attention is of great importance and that kind of complete attention is possible when you are in trouble, when you are facing a problem that is quite intense.

The following words throw more light on what JK means by truth- “The truth is not in the distance, truth is near, truth is in under every leaf, in every smile, in every tear, in other words, it is in the feelings, thoughts that one has. But it is so covered up that we have to uncover to see. To uncover is to discover what is false; and the moment you know what is false, and when that drops away, the truth is there.”¹⁸ Here he has pointed out that the search for truth is not a journey over a long distance. Truth is not a ‘destination’ or a station that you arrive at when you take a vehicle and move from point A to point B. Truth is there everywhere, but it is covered up in such a way that we fail to see it. Uncovering of truth is understanding it; it means that we have to find or discover what is false. The moment you know what is false, it will drop away; and when the false drops away truth shall be there. And this is something that is to be discovered by one on his own, this truth is not something to be believed in or quoted or formulated. Also, you cannot force truth to dawn; all you should do is to keep the windows and doors of your mind open.

So far we have seen what JK means by truth. It is to understand life as it is, every moment, without bringing in your own conditioning, like-dislikes etc. This understanding is observing life every moment. Such observation is meditation; then there is coexistence of freedom, mediation, love and truth.

Now let us turn to Mahatma Gandhi’s thoughts on truth. From the last century Mahatma Gandhi is the one who talked about truth and love; he also practiced what he talked about. And therefore in order to understand JK’s concept of truth more clearly Mahatma Gandhi’s concept of truth is also presented here.

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) on truth

Importance of Mahatma Gandhi’s concept of truth

Gandhiji was not just a leader of the Indians in the Indian Freedom Movement but also a world leader who walked on the path of ahimsa; he has millions of followers all over the world. His contribution to the Indian Freedom is beyond question but he was also a great thinker, a philosopher, a saint, a person who had the courage to follow the dictates of his inner voice without any hesitation. He always preferred to walk hand in hand with truth. ‘Truth and nothing

else but the truth' was his motto and that is why it becomes important to go into his thoughts on truth while we try to understand JK's concept of truth. Also, both were contemporaries, both had actually seen the destructive results of war, both were respected by the then important personalities, and more important, both had a deep concern for the entire humanity. Their teachings and philosophy crossed the boundaries of nations.

Mahatma Gandhi's concept of truth

For Gandhiji Truth was the sovereign principle of life. (He is of course not talking about scientific truth.) When asked to define truth he said that the definition is very much there in your mind but it gets veiled or obscured due to greed, anger and especially Ahamkara or ego. If you want to unveil it, your ego has to drop or vanish. According to him a seeker of truth has to become smaller than a speck of dust; then only you can know the truth.

In order to explain his meaning, he referred to the Sanskrit word for truth 'satya'. The root word is 'sat' which means 'to exist' or 'to be'. He says, "Truth alone *is* in the world, nothing else *is*."¹⁹ Truth is the only thing that exists in the world all the time, all other things are transitory, short lived. Truth is a permanent thing which cannot be robbed from you. Truth gives you vitality; truth gives you perennial joy or *ananda*. Whether you are in a jail or suffering, this inner joy will always remain with you. Not just *ananda*, but along with truth you also have *chit* or true knowledge. He says that these three always go together. So truth is thus not just sat but a combination of sat, chit and *ananda*. Where there is true knowledge, there is bliss and sorrow has no place there. Truth is eternal, so is the bliss derived from it.

Gandhiji put truth above all the principles. So much so that he wrote, "Devotion to this truth is the sole justification for our existence. All our activities should be centered in truth. Truth should be the very breath of our life."²⁰ He further explains it by saying that once you understand this, all other rules of right living will fall in without effort and they will be obeyed naturally, instinctively. Without truth it is impossible to observe any rules or principles in life. Actually it is truth from which other principles, values or vows of life emerge. Ahimsa- non-violence, brahmacharya-chastity, asteya- non-stealing, aparigraha- non-hoarding will come automatically to the one who has known truth. Thus truth has a pivotal role in one's life. This

point of Gandhiji is very significant and goes very close to JK's concept of truth. According to JK truth is followed by right living. But JK insists that it should not be something imposed externally on you. Meaning, truth should dawn without coercion and then there is order in life, then your action will be right action and you will act not out of some force but out of natural- Gandhiji calls it instinctive- understanding of life. When this happens, everything will fall in line; there will be freedom, beauty, order, peace of mind and no conflict.

Gandhiji clearly distinguishes between truth and speaking truth. He says that generally people equate truth with speaking truth. But *satya* or truth has a much wider meaning or scope. He frequently talks about a harmony between thought, word and action; these three together, so to say, form truth. One who has realized truth will always have this harmony. This harmony exists because truth necessarily includes all knowledge in it. Without this knowledge there can be no inward peace. This inward peace is, in his words, a "never failing test of truth."²¹ Thus while pointing out the wide scope of truth he also points to a test of truth. He says that once you are able to apply this test, you will at once be able to find out what is worth doing and, worth seeing and the unworthy will be automatically discarded thereby making life light-weight and peaceful. This point of his is important because most of us are seeking just that- life without a burden, life full of peace.

Here, it can be said that Gandhiji throws light on the practical, positive and useful aspect of truth. Actually, an important aspect of philosophical investigation is just that- showing a way out of individual suffering, putting an end to human suffering, having peace, finding bliss. Everybody in this world is trying to end his suffering or grief. Following truth can help in this regard. Various thinkers since ancient times engaged themselves with this task. Gautama Buddha is a well known name in this regard.

How important truth was to Gandhiji is clear when he says that we are alive only to the extent that we are truthful. Thus though truth has a wider meaning one has to adhere to truth, be truthful because that is the only way to live. As a guiding principle, as the inner voice truth shows us a particular course of action and as humans it is our supreme duty to follow that

course even if it brings threat to one's life. Truth is the characteristic of living, of being human. It is the ability to determine truth for himself that separates man from brute, says Gandhiji.

Truth and god

Now we come to a significant point in Gandhiji's concept truth. As is known, Gandhiji was a theist. In the course of life he pondered over great values like satya, ahimsa etc and actually followed them steadfastly. His deep thinking revealed him that God is nothing else but truth. He did not stop there, later on he came to the conclusion that Truth is God. 'It is more correct to say that truth is God, than to say that God is Truth.' Truth became supreme; so much so that he said that sat or *satya* is the only correct and fully significant name for God.

The following words explain his meaning in a compact, precise manner- "It is That (Truth) which alone is, which alone constitutes the stuff of which all things are made, which subsists by virtue of its own power, which is not supported by anything else but supports everything that exists. Truth alone is eternal, everything else is momentary. It need not assume a shape or form. It is pure intelligence as well as pure bliss. We call it *Ishvara* (God) because everything is regulated by Its will. It and the law It promulgates are one. Therefore it is not a blind law. It governs the entire universe."²²

This small passage throws light on the deep conviction, the devotion that Gandhiji had towards Truth/God. For him Truth and God were not separate; the law and the law-maker were also one. The universe is governed by It which is intelligence and bliss. Clarifying his views he says that God is described by the seers as *Neti, Neti* (Not this, Not this) meaning God defies all description in words; the closest description of God would be Truth.

Then Gandhiji also points out that an atheist can deny the existence of God but he cannot deny the existence of Truth. That is the power of truth that cannot be surpassed by anyone.

We do not find this kind of devotion to truth as the governing principle of the universe in JK's teachings. But, as we have seen, JK placed supreme importance on truth.

Path to truth

Then comes the question of realization of truth or a path that leads to truth or a method of achieving it. Gandhiji refers to the Bhagvadgita- the ancient text that he revered throughout his life like his mother- and says that one can reach to truth by a single-minded devotion or *abhyasa* and indifference to all other interests in life or *vairagya*. But he also warns that by strictly following these two, what appears to be the truth to one person may appear to be untruth to another person. But that is no reason to worry for the seeker; his honest efforts will make him realize that the apparently different truths are like ‘the countless leaves of the same tree.’²³ He further says that it is like the knowledge of God. Everyone knows that He is one but appears to be different to different individuals in different aspects. What is more important is to follow Truth according to one’s light (here he means one’s religion), indeed it is one’s duty to do so.

Another thing required for the quest and subsequent achievement of truth according to Gandhiji is *tapas*, the efforts that go into it, penance. For him *tapas* means self-suffering, sometimes even unto death. But more importantly, this *tapas* includes, as the Geeta says, complete absence of self-interest. This is a search without any self-interest and Gandhiji believes that one cannot go wrong with such a search. The minute one takes a wrong turn, he will stumble, but, he will be redirected to the right path. On this path there is no place for cowardice and no place for defeat. There is also no fear of death. “It is the talisman by which death itself becomes the portal to life eternal.”²⁴

While describing the path to truth Gandhiji says that this path is straight, narrow, sharp, a razor’s edge. But, for him it is the quickest and easiest. He also says that he was saved from coming to grief only because he adhered to this path. Apparently it may seem to be the toughest path but ultimately it is the only path that actually saves you in life. On that path there is no self-interest or ego so automatically there can be no grief that arises out of various kinds of attachments (like ‘this is mine’) and fear that arises out of the thought of the attachments getting destroyed.

JK also says that there is no place for fear, including fear of death, when truth dawns. Also, Truth is like living every moment anew, afresh. But the major difference is that JK does not

believe in there being a path to truth. According to him, as is seen earlier, 'truth is a pathless land'. There is no prescribed formula or method for it. Everyone has to find his own path and observance of particular rules does not guarantee reaching or rather coming upon truth.

Truth and Ahimsa

Any discussion of Gandhiji's concept of truth will not be complete without looking into his thoughts on the interconnection between truth and ahimsa. It is said that he put a stamp of an idea on an epoch and that idea is ahimsa. According to him, truth and ahimsa are two sides of the same coin. You cannot search for truth without ahimsa; you cannot find truth without ahimsa. It is practically impossible to separate the two. But then, he says that between the two ahimsa is the means and truth is the end. He means that if you want to follow truth, you must practice ahimsa.

For Gandhiji ahimsa means not to hurt any living creature by thought, word or deed. So, not just your actions but even your words and thoughts must not contain any violence in them. In other words it means that you understand and treat everyone else as your equal, you are sensitive about other people. It means that your ego takes a complete back seat and then only truth can be found. But this ahimsa does not mean cowardice. It is the ahimsa of the brave because he is ready to suffer for his cause without any fear. In fact, ahimsa necessarily includes fearlessness and this fearlessness is essential for truth. In Gandhiji's words it becomes a better bulwark than the passion of armed men.

He named his peaceful resistance movement as 'Satyagraha', insistence on truth. This clearly shows that truth and ahimsa were intertwined in his mind. And that is how truth became his beacon, shield and buckler.

Along with ahimsa, truth also includes love according to Gandhiji. He calls it as the largest and universal love. This all inclusive love is such that 'one must love his enemy or a stranger as he would love his wrong-doing father or son.' Love brings forgiveness, humility, non-attachment and innocence. All these together provide enormous inner strength to the seeker of truth.

Difference between Gandhiji's and JK's concepts of truth

JK differentiates between truth, reality and actuality. Gandhiji does not make that distinction. He does not talk about the world that is given to man or the man-made world.

Gandhiji's concept of truth is harmony of thought, speech and action; JK's truth transcends thought.

Gandhiji says that the path to truth is ahimsa; JK holds that there is no path to truth, no programme for truth.

Gandhiji sees truth as god. According to JK god is something put together by thought. So there is no possible connection between truth and god.

Gandhiji talks about 'fearlessness' and not fear as such in connection with truth. JK goes deeper into the nature of fear. (This will be seen in the conclusion.)

JK says that truth is not an achievement, something that one can have. Truth dawns on you.

Gandhiji talks about pursuit of truth and practicing truth.

Next chapter is the concluding chapter. In the light of all that is studied in the earlier chapters the hypotheses will be discussed and established in the concluding chapter.

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CONCLUSION

Hypothesis 1-Earlier, religions and philosophy tried to answer man's basic questions like who am I, what should be the ideal way of life etc. Later on with the advancement of scientific knowledge, people turned to science for these answers. But, science could not adequately answer these questions. J Krishnamurti goes beyond both religion and science and points towards answers that are not antagonistic to reason and do not put on blinkers of blind faith. Such answers are the need of the times. We find that he is talking about a universal element- which lies beyond religion- in man's quest.

Along with 'what am I to do' come other questions like who am I, why me, what is good/ bad etc. Then there are questions about the world around us as regards its origin, purpose etc. Man has been asking these questions since ages. He tried to find answers to these questions through religion. Perhaps he turned to soothsayers in ancient times, then gradually to the head of the community and then, as religion became more organized, to the religious head or the seers. As philosophy developed, philosophers tried to answer these questions. The questions are put to Jesus Christ in the Bible and to Muhammad Paighambar in the Holy Quran. These questions are also found in the Upanishads. With the advent of science and scientific knowledge reason became prominent and people turned to science in order to find answers to their questions. In the light of scientific reasoning faith, beliefs, devotion, testimony were put under the scanner. Right from the structure of the human body to that of the far away stars various branches of science delved into these subjects. Science tried to answer the questions about the mind and the body, functioning of the brain, genetics etc. The inside story of an atom is being unfolded now. But with this journey newer and ethical questions arose. For example a sheep was 'created' out of a cell and the questions that arose were -is it right to intervene in the natural process, is it right to conduct the same experiment with humans or is it right to go for human cloning. Atom bomb was invented and the question arose- is it right to make use of atomic power for destructive purposes or for killing people. The point is -are the questions answered, the problems solved with the help of science?

There is the urge to understand the truth, something beyond science, beyond the senses is universal. Traditionally the concept of god as the ultimate knower, doer, the good etc. is there and religion is taken to be the vehicle that takes one to this ultimate understanding. Great thinkers like Swami Vivekananda tried to address this universal element and talked about universal religion. But, in spite of the propagation of the great thinkers the attempts to bring in universality amongst all seems to be unsuccessful; people have various deities/ gods/ symbols and they stick to those symbols. In this clinging the universality is lost and static symbols and rigid rituals are instated and they become an integral part of religion. Rather than the principles people go by these symbols. In order to preserve and maintain them institutions are formed and we have institutionalized religions. It is assumed that the concept of universality or universal religion is subtle and therefore difficult to understand; people want something concrete. Thus we have a particular flag or statue or way of worship or prayer representing a particular religion. Along with such concrete symbols people are given do's and don'ts which are expected to be followed by all belonging to that particular religion. This actually is the institutionalization of religion; the concept behind is lost or is obscured. Then religion is taken to be equivalent to following the rituals and accepting a specific god/ goddess etc.

Then, instead of universalization divisions are created as 'my' symbol against 'your' symbol, one ritualism as against another. Efforts are made to prove my symbols or ritual to be better than yours. Thus we find that inclusion of symbols and rituals is actually doing away with universality.

JK seems to be avoiding this very phenomenon. Therefore we find that his teachings do not provide any kind of symbol/ rituals or methods/ systems or ideology/ theory. He does not provide details of do's and don'ts. He had realized that once a word / symbol/ ritual is laid out men tend to follow it blindly. But according to him life is dynamic whereas these symbols are rigid and stagnant. Clinging on to them means putting on blinkers. He always urged everyone to think on his/ her own and find one's way because only *you* can understand *your* life. Therefore the details are left to the individual. This way he goes beyond the differences amongst religions and this is the universal appeal that is found in his teachings.

Currently an area of great concern is environmental issues/ problems. In order to fulfill his needs, comforts and luxuries man started consuming natural resources at a speed far greater than their creation. Indiscriminate felling of trees, mining, water consumption etc. have given rise to various environmental problems. Tampering with nature with the help of advanced technology is proving to be disastrous, unaffordable. For example building huge dams is said to be a threat to the ecosystem and to human habitat. Another example is making use of genetically modified seeds and chemical fertilizers for more, better and a specific agricultural yield. There are agitations against gm seeds and chemical fertilizers all over the world. The devastating effects of chemical fertilizers on birds, humans, animals are noticed and demand for organic products is increasing. We are now talking about sustainable agriculture. Again the point is can science and technology give solutions to these problems adequately? In order to deal with these problems one's life style needs to be changed and this change comes from within. So where do we turn to for this kind of internal change-science, technology, religion, psychology, or guru?

Whoever gives the answer and whatever the answer, it is obvious that in order to live a happy and healthy life, some change, some transformation is required in the external world and that change begins from a change within. JK says that you are the world; he means that everything that is there in the external world is brought about by man by using his reason, thought. So a change in the thought or internal change is inevitable for an external change. But thought is rooted in the memory which is the past so what is called as 'change' is actually continuation of the past. The past gets carried forward, nothing new happens i.e. no change occurs. For complete transformation- JK used the word 'mutation' very often rather than transformation- one has to break away from memory, thought. Does this mean that we have to totally do away with the past and memory and thought? JK clearly says that for our routine life thought has to be there, but then thought has to realize its own limitations and that will be real transformation, that will bring something 'new' in the real sense.

JK talked about such a change with proper understanding of functioning of the brain in detail. That is evidently seen through many of his dialogues. His long discussions with Dr. David Bohm, the renowned physicist, were published under the title 'Ending of Time' in 1985. Here JK basically discusses ending of thought which is ending of psychological time. This is nothing

else but freedom. And, he shows the possibility of this freedom whereby a mutation of the brain cells occurs. Later on David Bohm remarked that modern research into the functioning of the brain and the nervous system actually gives considerable support to JK's saying that insight may change the brain cells. The point is that what he said has a sound scientific basis. He does not show any antagonism towards science; he accepts the limits of science as far as man's inner aspirations are concerned but does not discard scientific investigation.

And, very importantly, for this to happen, you have to be a light unto yourself. According to JK there can be no external help for this – after all *your* brain cells will be changed and that is something only *you* can go through. Hence be a light unto yourself. Also, no blinkers of blind faith in a guru or text or ideology, rituals are required here.

Hypothesis 2- In the Indian tradition *Shadripus* are looked upon as obstacles in the path to Moksha. J Krishnamurti talks about anger, fear, conditioning of the mind etc. as the obstacles to freedom. This has a universal appeal and application.

***Shadripus* in the Indian tradition**

So far we have seen the importance of freedom or Moksha for putting an end to suffering or for transformation of man. The question that naturally arises here is- how to achieve it? Before we go into that let us see in brief what the Indian tradition says about that. The Indian tradition talks about '*shadripus*' or six foes/ enemies of man that actually keep man away from Moksha.

The Gita (6.21) tells us that without conquering these neither the individual nor the society can become good. Various saints like Tukarama and Kabir have also talked about them. These are the internal foes that are discussed in the Gita and the Dnyaneshwari, two prominent and popular texts. Therefore let us first see what these two texts offer us as regard with *shadripus* and then go in to JK's discussion about the hurdles to freedom.

We find that the Gita discusses three foes i.e. Kama or Desire, *Krodh* or Anger and *Lobha* or Greed in the beginning and says that these three are the gateways to hell and therefore must be

conquered or discarded or abandoned. No personal or social good can be brought about unless these three are completely conquered. Out of these three *Krodha* actually leads to total deterioration and destruction of man. Verses 62, 63 of chapter 2 of the Gita explain it this way- even memory of *Vishaya* or pleasure of the senses creates desire or *Kama* and one goes after the object of desire for satisfaction. Any obstacle to this satisfaction causes *Krodha* or anger. Reason does not function when one is angry. This causes confusion in the memory and this confusion is nothing but destruction of reason or intellect or *Buddhi*. And once the *Buddhi* is destroyed, total destruction of man occurs because ultimately it is the *Buddhi* that is behind man's actions, it is the *Buddhi* that prompts the senses through the mind. Therefore internal control over the senses is necessary.

Also, when one's mind is properly under control, there is no attachment of the soul to either the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the senses. This is the state of peace and stability of the soul and the *Buddhi*. When the *Buddhi*, soul and mind are detached you have no pleasure or displeasure caused by the senses. And, because there is no attachment your action does not become a binding (*Bandh*) on you. Verse 37, chapter 3 of the Geeta says that *Kama* and *Krodha* coming out of *rajas* (one of the three *guna's* of *Prakriti*) are the most greedy, the greatest sinners. They are our enemies. Verses 10 to 20 reiterate the same point. But here the other three enemies are introduced. It is said that those who have *Kama* also have *Dambha* or deceit, *Mada* or lustful passion and *Maana* or conceit. Those who have these have incorrect ideas and thoughts and they go for wrongdoings; they are the sinners. *Kama* is always unfulfilled, desire for money, enjoyment, pleasure is unending and therefore such people can never have true knowledge and proximity with god. Verse 26, chapter 5 tells us that only those who do not have *Kama*, *krodha*, those who have self control can attain *Moksha*. Thus the Geeta shows that *Kama*, *Krodha*, *Dambha*, *Mada* and *Maana* are the internal enemies of man because they keep *Moksha* away from man.

You find a poetic and lucid description of these *Shadripusin* the *Dnyaneshwari*. In the 7th chapter of *Dnyaneshwari*(verse 165- 167), *Dnyaneshwara*, the author of the book, says that when the body and the ego fall in love with each-other they give birth to their daughter, *Desire*. As *Desire* grows up she marries *Hatred* and *Dwandwamoha* or *Duality* is born. (*Desire* breeds

duality because the sense of possession arises out of desire that leads to ‘yours’ and ‘mine’ which is duality. Out of the feeling of possession one is led astray and is ready to go in even for bad, banned deeds.) Ego, the grandfather nurtures Duality with Hope which is the nourishment for Duality. This Duality spreads thorns of *Vikalpa* on the path of internal or psychological purification and opens the door to *Nishiddh* Karma or banned deeds. And then man is completely entangled in the *Samsara* and suffering. In the third chapter (verse 242- 255) Dnyaneshwar tells us that Kama and Krodha- both being very dear to *tamas* (one dark, negative *guna* of *Prakriti*) - are nourished by Avidya or ignorance they are actually the enemies of life as they enjoy a good status in the city of Death. Their destructive movements are observed/ controlled by Hope. They are respected by Avarice and the Ego transacts with them. They have brought forth *Dambha* or deceit in this world. They have disrobed Peace and have done away with Detachment and *Nigraha*. Thus beginning with bodily senses and ego one is led to devastation via desire, anger, duality etc. Body and Ego falling in love means identification of oneself with the body or the ego; desire comes in to existence out of this identification.

These are the internal enemies discussed in our tradition. JK does not use the term ‘shadripus’ but talks about the hurdles to freedom. Let us see what are the hurdles to freedom according to JK.

Hurdles to freedom according to JK

In an interview taken by Mr. Levin of the BBC, JK was asked how to achieve clarity of perception. JK replied that rather than asking ‘how’ we should ask what the things are that prevent clarity because the answer to ‘how’ brings in a framework and such a framework becomes rigid, closed in the course of time. The same applies for freedom and meditation. JK rejected/ denied this ‘how’ because when you ask for ‘how’ you look for a method, a set path; once you get that following that method, path, and system becomes your focus and you are engaged in following that rather than understanding the meaning of freedom, meditation etc. Then rigidity and mechanicalness sets in and freedom cannot be there. That is the reason why JK never put forth any system or method for freedom or meditation; his emphasis was always on one discovering the meaning of these on his own. Therefore he talks about the hurdles that

create obstacles or prevent one's understanding of these. He also says that seeing them clearly is getting rid of them. Traditionally it seems that it is assumed that human nature is such that the *shadripus* are inherent in it. If we accept it then the responsibility of the problems arising out of them goes to them and not to man. JK's views are different in that according to him even the hurdles are a human construct and ultimately only you are responsible for them, that responsibility cannot be avoided. Advaita Vedanta talks of Ignorance and Buddhism talks of *Trishna* as being the root cause of bondage. JK goes ahead of these and puts the responsibility squarely on the human shoulder.

Nevertheless, whether you call them as obstacles or internal enemies or *shadripus*; they are very much there. From whatever I could gather from JK's teachings, the hurdles to freedom according to him are fear, anger, conditioning and ego. These four and others like dependence on other, feeling of insecurity, public opinion, authority- of a religious head, a guru or a text- are all interconnected. Let us begin with fear because it is an abode of other hurdles like insecurity etc. and plays an important role in one's life. It is a topic that JK discussed frequently and at length.

Fear

'Fear' is an emotion/ feeling common to all creatures. Everybody experiences it many times in one's life; nobody seems to be able to escape it. We also know that fear can play havoc and ruin one's life. Psychology studies fear and various forms of fear are described in that science. 'Phobia' is an oft used word in clinical psychology. Phobia is fear of something like flying, birds, chickens, closed doors, heights... the list is very long. It shows how fear has taken deep roots in the mind of man and how it exhibits itself in many forms. Of course, JK is not talking about psychological/ clinical method or approach to fear. JK has delved really very deep into the nature of fear in many of his dialogues. He looks at fear from various angles; one of his DVD's is titled as 'Jewel of Fear'. In this DVD he has talked in his usual patient and profound way about this phenomenon, how it takes roots, what is its nature, the importance of understanding- thereby dropping of – fear.

Commonsense understanding- Before going into JK's understanding of fear, let us first look at the commonsense understanding of it. Usually, fear is associated with something; it is fear 'of' something or the other. There are various kinds of fears like fear of exams, darkness, relationship- entering into or breaking up- , the world coming to an end; and perhaps the biggest of all fears is the fear of death. The content may change, but 'fear' always takes an object. It is also generally believed that by removing the object, fear will be removed. For example you are afraid of the dark, you remove the darkness and the fear is gone. JK calls this as the fear of the known.

But not all kinds of fears can be removed this way. For example fear of death. You cannot remove death and therefore the fear continues. JK calls this as the fear of the unknown.

JK on fear

He says that fear exists only in relationship; it cannot exist by itself or in isolation. There is no such thing as abstract fear; it is always of the known or the unknown, past and future. He says that there are physical fears like danger to one's body and those results into immediate reaction; but this fear is fairly easy to understand and he discusses only the psychological fears, or the inner fears. He has also said that fear takes many forms; when you understand the root of fear or the nature, structure, quality of fear, it vanishes. Fear takes on many branches and if we only "... trim the branches, fear will continue."¹ So now onwards we will go into JK's understanding of the structure, nature of fear.

JK says that the fact of fear and the idea of fear or the abstraction of fear, both are running parallel all the time. Unless we discard the idea, we cannot deal with the fact of fear. When the two are running parallel, there is a conflict between the two i. e. one of them tries to dominate the other. And this prevents clear understanding of either of them; without clear understanding one cannot be free from fear.

Fear, Thought and Pleasure - So how do these various kinds of fears arise, what is their origin? That is the important issue. There is the fear of the past, of what took place in the past, the fear of the known and there is the fear of the future, of what might happen in the future, or

fear of the unknown. Whatever the case may be, JK points out that fear arises out of the structure of thought. We think about what happened or what will happen and fear arises. Thought breeds fear. “Thought, thinking about an incident, an experience, a state in which there has been disturbance, grief or pain brings about fear.”²

Thought, through its pattern, establishes a certain psychological security and does not want that security to be disturbed. Any disturbance or even the possibility of disturbance creates fear. Therefore even the memory of a fearful incident in the past gives rise to fear *now*. JK further says that thought is also responsible for pleasure. You have had a happy experience and thought wants to repeat it or perpetuate it. When this is not achieved there is resistance, anger, despair, and fear. JK has stated it very clearly that bliss and ecstasy cannot be equated with pleasure- “You come upon bliss or ecstasy only when you understand the nature of thought, which breeds both pleasure and fear.”³

Fear and time.- One of the very profound observations of JK is that fear is time or that fear is a movement in time. Going into the depths of the meanings of the both, he uncovers the meanings and the interconnection of the two in a very clear way. He maintains that ‘time’ is of two kinds. One is the physical or chronological time. For example the time taken to travel from one point to another, whether a few moments or hours. Also, when you are learning a skill or a language time is involved. You do not learn a language etc instantly, it takes ‘time’. That is the physical time.

Then there is ‘psychological time’. This ‘time’ is present when one is going through the process of ‘I am this, I will be that’. I am ignorant, one day I will be enlightened; I am a clerk, I will be a manager one day. This distance between being and becoming is the psychological time. Also, there is time as the past, present and future. I was happy yesterday, I may not be happy tomorrow. I have a broken relationship with someone now, but we will patch up and be happy again. I have a lucrative job now, I may lose it tomorrow. This is the way man relates to time i.e. past, present and future. These are all examples of the ‘psychological time’ and time as past, present and future. JK says that ‘in the now, all the past and future are contained’. Today’s ‘I’ is the result of the past, modifying itself in the present; in the present we think of future i.e. of

‘becoming’, that is how the future is in the present-the future is the present. Thus the present is the past and the future, contained in the now. That, according to JK, is time.

So the next question is what is the relationship of time with fear? He says that both time and thought are the constituents of fear. We have a memory of an incident that caused fear; the fear is recorded in the brain like a tape recorder records and stores whatever is recorded. I recognize fear from the past. Fear is ‘remembered’ because of this earlier recording in the brain. The brain is a storehouse of many such recordings; we call them as ‘knowledge’. Thus the brain has knowledge of fear. So “knowledge is fear.”⁴ When you begin to experience fear, memory of fear or the recorded knowledge steps in and fear is recognized or recollected, here knowledge becomes fear. Even the word fear may also cause fear, here the word becomes fear. Thus fear is the movement of knowledge as the past, and that knowledge is time. And thus fear is also part of thought. For example there is the thought ‘I might be deserted tomorrow’, ‘I might die soon’ ‘I will be this tomorrow’ – this tomorrow is time, which is thought.

According to JK, in order to be free of fear, you have to observe it. The question is can fear be observed without this movement of knowledge? Or to put it differently, can fear be not recorded at all? Because, if it is not recorded at all, there will be no chance of ever recollecting it. It means that can we do without carrying the memory of fear? Is it possible not to record psychologically? Our brain is recording all the time, can a halt be put to that recording? JK says that if you find it out for yourself, the brain will then see the fact of the whole thing and will be free from it, will be unconditioned from it, no recording will take place in the brain.

This movement of time and thought actually prevents us from seeing anything afresh or new. He says that if we can look at fear as it arises for the first time, you realize that it is a physical and psychological reaction. Thus the root of fear is the movement of time and thought. When you become completely familiar with this movement, you are completely attentive and, “... that very attention burns away fear.”⁵

Ending of Fear

He said that you should not run away from fear but should remain with the fact of fear. It is like holding a jewel and looking at the intricate pattern by the artist. You look at it, you don't condemn it, you don't say, 'how beautiful' and run away with words, but "... You turn it around, look at the various sides, the back and the front and the side and never let it go."⁶ Instead of getting nervous, apprehensive or saying 'I don't like it' just be with it. Then fear becomes an actual fact which is there, whether you are conscious of it or not, whether you like it or not. JK points out that this very fact of watching fear- without analyzing or dissecting it- you begin to discover the origin, the causation of fear. This close 'delicate' watching will reveal the beginning, the cause of fear. And, where there is a cause there is an end. The cause can never be different from the effect. JK said this not about a particular kind of fear, a branch of fear but about the whole tree of fear. Generally we tend to think and be concerned about ending a particular fear. But a close observation will be putting an end to the total phenomena of fear. In JK's teachings, effortlessness, non-imposition, non-coercion are the important ingredients if you have to 'know' or understand something. The same applies to observation and understanding of fear. He says that without striving to analyze, without forcing your mind to understand it, you have to observe. And then this very observation will show you the causation of fear as time and thought.

Dependence is one of the factors of fear. Dependence on the spouse, guru, priest, a book etc. for support, security and so on is found everywhere. Along with this dependence there is the fear of losing them or the fear of being rejected by them. The spouse turns away from me and I am lost and get angry, violent, jealous, brutal etc. Fear of loneliness is also attached with dependence. If the object or person of dependence moves away from me, I will be lonely and I am filled with the fear of loneliness.

Dependence and attachment go together; I am attached to something and I depend on it. This attachment could be of anything- furniture, belief, a book, family, god, drugs, drink etc. Then JK raises the question why are you attached. I am attached because I depend on these to give me prestige, comfort, social position. "So dependence is a form of attachment."⁷ According to JK one depends on something because that something fills one's internal emptiness. This

dependence not only fills the emptiness; it also covers the shallowness, stupidity, insufficiency, loneliness. For this covering up and filling emptiness, one depends on knowledge, book and then knowledge becomes extremely important. This is a fact and anybody can see it. He has explained this point beautifully in these words- “If I were not empty, if I were not insufficient, I wouldn’t care what you said or did. I wouldn’t depend on anything. Because I am empty and lonely I don’t know what to do with my life.”⁸ The act of filling up takes many forms like writing a book, painting a picture etc. You try to fill it with material things or with ideas, or with persons. He further says that I depend on something or someone means I am afraid of being lonely, I am afraid of that emptiness. Then the fear of losing the activities that fill the emptiness arises and one clings more and more to them and this clinging is attachment.

This, according to him, is fear coming out of dependence and attachment. But the matter doesn’t rest here. When you notice your emptiness, shallowness etc. you are frightened of it and you try to escape. You try to escape through another attachment; and you are back to square one! The whole circle begins again. And freedom cannot be there with attachment or dependency.

But, if you really discover this, the emptiness, dependency and attachment arising out of it what happens? You do not escape; then the question comes, who is aware of this emptiness? Here JK’s deep and subtle thinking is clearly visible. Who could be saying ‘I am lonely’, or ‘I am empty’? Is the mind aware of it? Then it would be saying that a part of the mind is aware of another part which is lonely. If a fragment of the mind says this, then there is division. Freedom is not there when there is division. As long as there is division between the ‘observer’ and the ‘observed’, there will be contradiction and therefore conflict. He urges the listener to see this for himself, realize it for himself. There is no readymade method for it.

While discussing fear- attachment- dependence, JK has distinguished between the physiological/ biological and the psychological dependence. You depend on food, clothes and shelter; this is biological and natural dependence arising out of biological necessity. But, an attachment arises out of this necessity. For example having a house is a biological necessity but a psychological attachment to the house also emerges. There is attachment to certain forms of food etc. Another important point here is you are easily aware of the physical dependencies like

smoking, drinking, physical stimulants. But the psychological dependencies are not easily identifiable because they are inter-related, JK says that they flow into each other. You are scared of losing that to which you are attached and fear arises.

Identification is an outcome of fear

Having one's own identity is considered to be very important for one's existence. Identification with one's country, religion, caste or some group seems to almost to be a precondition for a good life. Without identification there is the fear of social non-acceptance and one is afraid of being left out of the mainstream of life. But this is a kind of image building and strengthening of the 'I'. There can be no freedom with this kind of image building and the fear that goes along with it. Then there is a peculiar kind of identification invented by man- identification with God. But God is something invented by man, "God has not made man in His image, man has made God in his image."¹⁰ But this doesn't really take you anywhere. Thus identification with god is also something that one tries to hang on to and then there will be no freedom.

Simple approach to fear

He says that fear is a very complex problem and every complex problem must be approached very simply; the simpler the better. He says that 'simpler' means you don't know how to deal with the root of it; and because you don't know, you begin to discover. If you have already arrived at a conclusion about the root or cause of fear then you don't discover the root, you just look for your conclusion. He means that do not be prejudgmental or preconclusive and say that fear is xyz; go in to it 'yourself' and therein lies understanding of it.

According to JK, an important factor connected with fear is not, "...the mere observation, but bringing or having energy that will dissipate that fear, having such tremendous energy that fear doesn't exist."¹¹ Here he has raised more questions about fear and they are- Is fear a matter of lack of energy, lack of attention? He further says that if it is a matter of lack of energy, how to come upon this tremendous energy that will push away fear altogether? Of course, he points out that one has to come upon this energy 'naturally', that is no coercion or forcible ousting of fear

will work. Things happening ‘naturally’, ‘effortlessly’ was a great concern for JK. The same applies here in connection with fear. So if you want to be free of fear you will have to have a great energy that will easily drive away fear. Further he says that most of us are constantly occupied with something or the other and a lot of energy is consumed or wasted in that occupation. A businessman, a housewife or a common man- everyone is perpetually occupied. Some are occupied with meditation or God. According to him such occupation, worry, concern, is a waste of energy. A mind that is afraid will find something or the other to keep it occupied; but that will not be observation of fear, it will only be another kind of occupation or an escape. “It is only a mind that is free from occupation of any kind that has tremendous energy.”¹²

This point made by JK is extremely important. If we look closely we will find that yes, many times in order to get rid of fear we do engage ourselves in some activity that takes the mind away from fear. But, as he rightly points out, that is not freeing oneself from fear; it is only moving away from fear temporarily. And, this cannot be freedom from fear at all.

A mind that is fearful invents various symbols like god or different rituals and escapes into them to get over fear. That is why he says, “If you are not at all afraid psychologically, have no fear at all, you would have no gods, you would have no symbols to worship, no personalities to adore. Then you are psychologically, extraordinarily free.”¹³

Fear, action and thought

JK says that any sense of fear generates all kinds of mischievous activity, not only psychologically and neurotically, but outwardly. You are walking in a forest and you spot a snake or a bear; there is an instinctive action of running away from it or you sweat. This action is only instant physical reaction; it is a conditioned response, you are told to be careful with snakes. The brain, the nervous system, responds instinctively to protect itself. That is a natural intelligent response. “It is necessary to protect the organism, the snake is a danger and to respond to it in the sense of protection is an intelligent action.”¹⁴ Is it an action arising out of fear?

When we consider pain, it is obvious that you have had pain previously and you are afraid that it might return. This fear is caused by thought- something that happened in the past and it may

occur again in the future. Here fear is the product of thought. So we have two movements of thought- 1- the intelligent action of protection, of self preservation, the physical necessity to survive, which is a natural, intelligent response. 2. Thinking about something and the possibility of its occurring or not occurring in the future. This is the root of fear. And the question is: can this movement of thought, so immediate, so insistent, so persuasive, come to an end? When you oppose it or make an effort to end it, you are still in the realm of thought. That will not help in being free from fear.

Thus JK has clearly shown the havoc that fear plays in one's life and how it is a major hindrance to freedom because fear means being in the field of thought and time (psychological time). And, so long as you are in that field, freedom cannot be.

Anger

Another hurdle to freedom is anger. JK has shown how anger arises and how it is connected with other emotions like possessiveness etc. Anger is a common experience, we get angry many times. JK says that most of us do not mind being angry, in fact we find an excuse for it. Ill treatment given to me makes me angry and I feel 'righteously' angry. That is, we try to justify anger. JK observes that we do not stop at getting angry, an explanation or justification immediately follows. We go into the causes of it and try to prove that it was valid to get angry in that situation. The anger is thus sustained through justification. According to JK the elaborate justification, explanation, the verbalization- silent or spoken- sustains anger and gives it scope and depth. We hide behind the shield of explanations and such hiding is a hindrance in knowing one's true self. That is how anger is a hurdle to freedom because it stops self-knowledge which is freedom. Usually I get angry when someone utters bitter words about me, when my expectation to be praised is not fulfilled and I feel hurt. I put the blame for the hurt on the other person. But here, I am depending on the other person for my happiness. Out of this dependence arises possessiveness. JK says that disappointment, bitterness, jealousy, resentment etc. are the various forms of anger. Out of these, resentment is stored up anger and the antidote to it is forgiveness. If there is no anger or no accumulation of anger, forgiveness is not required.

One gets angry when one's self-importance is hurt. But then, JK asks, why is there self-importance? He says that you create an image of yourself- what I am, what I should be or should not be. If there is no such image, there will be no self-importance, no hurt and therefore no anger. This image is created because you never go into what you actually are. When the idea of what I am is attacked, I get angry. For example, if you are actually observing the fact that you are greedy and if you are told that, there is no hurt because the fact is that you are greedy. When you create an image of yourself as non-greedy and when you are told that you are greedy then you get angry. Thus image is a great cause of anger.

Anger also leads to violence; 'you hurt me so I hurt you back' this kind of attitude can get developed and this is nothing else but violence. Also, when you are angry and I too get angry the result is more anger, we just add to anger. Is this what one wants? You may feel righteous about it but your anger is only adding to the other's anger and to the violence that follows.

JK unfolds yet another facet of anger. He says that anger has the quality of isolation; it cuts one off from the rest and at least for the time being all relationships come to an end. Isolation is despair and so there is despair in anger.

People often talk about getting rid of anger, being free from anger. And one way is said to be by will. Your will can get rid of anger. But, JK says that anger cannot be gotten rid of by will because will is the outcome of desire, and desire by its very nature is aggressive and dominant. And therefore you have to understand the nature of desire. Then only you can understand anger.

Now we move on to the next hurdle to freedom as per JK and that is desire.

Desire

We have seen earlier that the Gita views anger to be the origin of one's total destruction. It is also said that if you will, you can get rid of anger. JK differs in that he says that will is the outcome of desire and desire by its very nature is aggressive and therefore can lead to violence.

(This is how desire, anger and violence are connected.) And so, if you want to be free of anger understanding the nature and process of desire is the key.

Thus from anger we come to understanding desire. According to JK the beginning of the process of desire is sense perception. You see, touch, contact something beautiful and there is sensation and thought. The thought creates an image of you owing that thing- a diamond, car, clothes, whatever. This image is the beginning of desire. Can that image come to an end or not arise at all? This image is created because of thought; then you engage yourself in possessing the thing for yourself. This requires/ involves some activity or effort. If the process is halted at the beginning i.e. at the point when thought enters into it, all the effort will not be there. It means that happiness in fulfilling desire and frustration upon not fulfilling it will not be there; when there is no frustration there will be no anger. This is how anger is related to desire. It may begin with irritation and turn into fury or rage which then can lead to violence. He says that if you are aware at the moment when desire arises, when thought starts creating an image you can be free of it because then thought will have no scope to create an image. Then all the activity, the effort to fulfill the desire will not arise.

Pleasure is also related to desire. You want to sustain your pleasant experience; for that you desire to possess various things- a beautiful house, car, wife/husband, money, power etc. All these are part of your image as well. So the key to stop anger is to watch the moment when thought starts interfering with sensation and creates images.

In the Indian tradition Kama or desire also includes sexual desire and its fulfillment. We know that unfulfilled sexual desire leads to anger. Therefore, it will not be out of place to see JK's views on sex. Unlike a lot of great thinkers, saints in the past, JK never advocated Brahmacharya or celibacy. According to him sex has its own place in one's life. It is something natural. But, when thought starts seeking more of it for the sustenance of pleasure there is a problem. He clearly says that the act, being something natural, is not the problem but thought about the act is the real problem. If you think about it all the time, then it becomes a problem. The cinema, magazine etc. add to the thought. But why does the mind think about it so much? There are more urgent issues that demand your attention, why do you give complete attention to

this thought over and above other thoughts? The simple reason is, "... it is a way of complete self-forgetfulness."¹⁵ At least for those moments you forget your self- your religion, god, business, leaders, activities- everything. It thus becomes the ultimate avenue of escape. The 'me' is not there at the moment and that is real happiness; that is why you seek it, cling to it more and more. The problem sets in when you become a slave to it and you want to be free of it. Ideas of chastity, celibacy through suppression follow. Then celibacy becomes a problem. The problem can be solved only when you observe the process of desire and the structure of 'me'. So long as the 'I' is fed with ambition, success, my-mine thoughts, self-forgetfulness will be sought and the problem will continue. "You are creating, feeding, and expanding your self on the one hand and on the other you are trying to forget your self."¹⁶ There is contradiction in this. Rather than sex this contradiction is the problem. Understanding the nature of the self can put an end to this problem of sex.

Something akin to JK's process of desire is found in the Dwadashanidan or the twelve Links of the Causal Wheel of Dependent Origination given by Gautama Buddha. The twelve links are – *Avidya* or ignorance, *Samskara* or impressions of Karmic forces, *Vidnyana* or initial consciousness of the embryo, *Nama-rupa* or psycho-physical organism, *Shadayatana* or the six sense organs including the mind, *Sparsh* or sense-object contact, *Vedana* or sense experience, *Trishna* or thirst for sense enjoyment, *Upadana* or clinging to this enjoyment, *Bhava* or the will to be born, *Jati* or birth/ rebirth, *Jara-marana* or old age and death. Here we see that *Trishna* arises out of sense experience and that is beginning of the whole cycle of birth and death.

But, *how* does it arise? JK says that after sense experience, thought enters there and then desire arises. So in a way, by introducing 'thought' as the origin of desire/ *Trishna* JK has made the process of desire clearer.

Activity based on desire is, JK says, rooted in 'thought' and as we have seen earlier thought is always limited, goes by memory and therefore cannot meet the new moment which is fresh and not of the past. Hence desire is a hurdle to freedom.

Conditioning

Another major hurdle to freedom is conditioning. What is conditioning? Man is born in a particular society and at a particular time. All the external forces/ factors like religion, nationality, culture, political ideology etc. act upon man right from birth. For example, I am not born a Hindu/ Muslim/ Christian but the society in which I am born gives me this identity and an image of myself as a Hindu etc is built up. I grow with that, I identify myself with that; all the symbols, rituals that go with it are accepted by me as sacred and I start looking at others through these. This is conditioning. It is like putting on blinkers. Then you measure everything, see everything through these windows. The *thought* that I am a Hindu etc. is rooted in me and I go by that *thought*. In short you go by thought that is past, memory. Freedom lies beyond the field of thought and thus conditioning which is a play of thought is a hurdle to freedom.

Also, man does not live in isolation; he lives in a society and is in relationship with others. JK says, “This relationship is one of use, need, comfort, gratification and it creates influences, values that bind us. The binding is our conditioning.”¹⁷ He further maintains that the social or environmental influences, the society in which we are born, the culture in which we have been raised, economic and political pressures etc. – all these make for conditioning. We live by ideas, beliefs, and ideologies and there is struggle and conflict amongst them. We are aware of the conflict, the pressure, the pain that is involved in it. But we are not aware of our conditioning. He says that in order to understand conditioning one has to be aware of it. According to him, conditioning is one’s attachment to all these. We should know the process of this attachment. We are attached to our work, tradition, ideas, nation, property, people etc. Through this attachment I identify myself as ‘someone’, giving rise to self-importance. But, he holds that attachment is a kind of escape which adds to the ‘I’ and strengthens conditioning. You start clinging to the identification- that is attachment. The ‘I’ becomes the conditioning factor. Without such attachment one feels empty and therefore one seeks attachment. Then the pushes and pulls of these factors start taking their toll and one starts escaping from them through work, religious ceremonies, knowledge, god, drink, amusement, etc. Sometimes you substitute one escape with another but still it is the same- an escape. Therefore, only by being aware of this whole process can one be free of conditioning. Again, he adds that instead of mere verbal or intellectual discussion, you have to try it *actually* and you will know what it is.

Security

This word is perhaps the most used key word at present. Everyone seems to be struggling, making efforts for various kinds of security- job security, financial security, health security, security in relationship, emotional security and so on. But, at the back of the mind everyone is aware that money, job, property, relationship- with spouse, child, friends, society- none of these is permanent and therefore not secure. Political upheavals, natural calamities, death can destroy these any time. Yet the mind, out of fear of losing these, clings to these and looks for permanency. We also cling to these because of conditioning and because we go by images. For example I am conditioned to think that to have property, money, name etc. is being successful. We go by the image that we have built up of being successful and we stick to it. Even in relationships we have our own image and that of the other and we go by those images. This clinging on is to look for security according to JK.

Physical and psychological security both are sought by all. The fear of insecurity drives man to no end. JK talks about both outward and inward security. Outward security can be brought in by reputation, money, fame etc. Inwardly one finds security with an ideal. I consider xyz to be an ideal and secured person and I feel that if I become like him/ her, I will be secure, I will have no problems. And the process of ‘I am this, I want to become that’ starts. Rather than looking into what I really am, I start to follow the ideal. This creates division and conflict between the real me and the ideal that I try to achieve. And, upon not becoming the ideal, sorrow, pain and suffering begins. The only way is to see the falseness of having the ideal and it will drop away. Observe yourself as you are without any interpretation, comparison, judgment or condemnation. JK says, “This will be arduous, but there is delight in it. Only to the free is there happiness, and freedom comes with the truth of what is.”¹⁸ Thus, according to JK both the outward and inward securities are ‘shallow’, not securities at all and there is no freedom if you go by them.

All these thoughts about security and the activity towards it actually take you away from what you truly are; you move away from the real nature of the ‘me’. Then it is a hurdle to freedom because freedom is to know the self.

It is clear that when you are thinking about security and acting accordingly, all your thought and action is from the centre i.e. the 'I' to the periphery i.e. the rest of the world, life. When this happens it creates division between this so-called 'I' and the rest. Freedom has no such division, it is not thinking from a centre to the periphery; freedom means understanding the whole process of thought. Therefore, thought from a centre to the periphery is a hurdle to freedom. JK also says that insecurity is the nature of all things. Then you try to build protective walls –like investing more in insurance schemes, having more property etc. But the fact is that there is nothing permanent so insecurity is always there in spite of all your possessions.

Thus we have seen *Shadripus* from the Indian tradition and hurdles like fear, anger, desire, conditioning and security as given by JK. Again, the aim is not to compare and find out plus and minus points from either; it is only an attempt at understanding JK's teachings in the light of the other. One major point of difference that is noticed here is that of conquering over or suppression of these. *Shadripus*, as per the Indian tradition that we have seen here, are the internal enemies and are to be conquered. The senses that are always seeking, desiring are to be controlled with concentration, great efforts or suppression- especially in case of Kama or desire. JK, on the contrary, never advocates any coercion or imposition or conquering over. He does not call them as 'enemies'; he simply says that rather than concentrating your efforts on winning them over, observe them and they will drop.

What we need to understand is that whether we call them as *Shadripus* or not, they are very much there and cannot be wished away. It is also a common experience that the more you try to suppress them the more they bounce back and one's energy goes just into the suppressing. So, it seems that JK is pointing at the right direction. Especially now when we are constantly bombarded with attractions and offers of various kinds of pleasures of the senses, entertainment through the media, saying 'no' to temptations or suppressing the desires is very difficult. Thus we come across techniques for controlling the mind or how to say 'no' in the same media. All in all, what JK says is extremely meaningful to all, applicable to all. You need not enroll yourself for some programme or workshops for doing away with these 'enemies'; observation as given by JK will suffice, though of course, as he says it is arduous. And with this observation of what

you actually are, without any conditioning, without any coercion- which is meditation- you will come upon freedom.

Hypothesis 3- “JK’s teachings on freedom, mediation, love and truth are not merely conceptual. Though he does not give a readymade answer to the question as to how to arrive at them, he has given us a very strong guideline by way of his ‘Art of Living’ which includes the art of seeing, listening and learning.”

JK’s teachings as regards freedom, meditation, love and truth are not merely concepts or theories. How to live is a universal question and man seeks answer to that. Though JK does not give a readymade answer to this question, he has certainly given a strong guideline by way of his three arts of living- the art of seeing or observation, the art of listening and the art of learning. These three are practical and are connected with living.

As we have seen all through this study, JK’s concepts of freedom, meditation, truth and love are meant for all. The oft-asked question is how to arrive at them. JK says that wherever you are, whichever your religion, nationality, caste or race, you can come upon these on your own; no preconditions are required for that, no guru is mandatory for that. As he mentioned in his famous speech ‘Truth is a pathless land’, the key to the kingdom of freedom, meditation, love and truth does not lie in the hands of a chosen few. Anyone can find the truth and the three arts of living can prove to be helpful in that direction.

Let us come back to the important question of how to live. In spite of all the scientific and technological advancement this question is nibbling our hearts for ages. Various thinkers and gurus of different times have given answers ranging from complete renunciation to a totally materialistic way of life. But the question still persists. We find JK looking at it from a very fresh perspective. He does not give us a method or a system or a readymade answer, but, most certainly he directs us and goes into the various aspects of the ‘Art of Living’. And, he has been talking about this since 1948. Now let us see what he has offered us.

JK's Art of Living

He begins at the very beginning i.e. the etymological meaning of the word 'art'. Art means to join, to adjust, to put things together, to put things in order. (He also mentions the Sanskrit word 'Kala' for art which means measure, manner, use.)

JK says that usually people associate 'art' with painting, sculpture, music, dancing etc. They visit museums all over the world to look at pieces of art made by artists; they go to the theatre for concerts or various performance. But, come to think of it, JK asks, is art limited to these few hours that one spends in museums or theatres? On the part of an artist, once the piece of art is completed, once the performance is over, what about the rest of his/ her life? JK always takes a holistic view of life so this is division or fragmentation of one's life into artful and non-artful life. But life cannot be divided in such a way; it is a one, unitary process. When one concentrates on one particular act/ activity for a certain period, only a little field of life is there and the rest of the life is disregarded. Therefore art should be something that includes the whole of life and not a few hours/ days/ months or only a painting, sculpture or a concert / performance.

According to JK an artist is the one who is skilled in action and life is action. Therefore the action is very much 'in' life and not outside of life. And so, skillful action cannot be limited to only one part of life. He says that living skillfully truly makes an artist. And if art is putting things together and in their proper places then living is continually placing things. This is order. Thus art means order as well. One cannot be orderly at some time and not so at other times; that will be contradiction. Then conflict will follow and there will be struggle, disturbance all over one's life. Surely this is not art.

Thus art of living is a continuous and holistic process. JK's art of living consists of three arts- the art of seeing, the art of listening and the art of learning. Let us now look into these three.

The art of seeing/ observation

JK says that the art of seeing is to see or observe without any distortion or disturbance. We look at something in order to understand it. Understanding will take place only when the seeing is free of disturbances or hurdles. Then only there will be great clarity and correct understanding will take place. The distortion or disturbance is nothing else but one's motive or purpose or direction while one is seeing anything. These interfere in the seeing and hide the truth, the true nature of the thing. Personal likes and dislikes, prejudices, judgments, feelings like jealousy etc hamper clarity of seeing and that is why they are hurdles in seeing. These are one's personal attachments so the seeing should be without any personal attachment. Then only you will see a thing 'as it is' and not as something which is a projection of your mind.

When one is watching something external like a tree, it is external seeing and when one is watching one's own thought process, it is internal seeing. For both these it is essential not to have any interference from personal attachments or like- dislikes etc. as mentioned above. This internal seeing is of great importance because that reveals the true nature of the 'I'. When the true nature of 'I' is understood, freedom, beauty, love, truth, peace will arrive along with that understanding.

We often look at external objects or nature- trees mountains, clouds, open skies, oceans etc. But, JK questions, do we really see a thing as it is? We always look with some attitude, some conclusion, likes- dislikes, and prejudices. Also, we look at a thing with some utilitarian view or motive. An attitude or a motive actually stops us from a clear seeing of a thing or a person. We look through the glasses of our thoughts, motives etc. and thus we miss the understanding of the real nature of a thing or person.

But then, why should I see things without any glasses? JK says, "Try it and see what actually takes place when you observe a tree with all your being, with the totality of your energy. In that intensity you will find that there is no observer at all, there is only the attention/ seeing."¹⁹ There is no 'I' in such seeing and, he further tells us that then only there will be beauty and

love. This he says is something to be experienced; no theoretical discussion or analysis can take you there. This also shows how his teachings are practical and not theoretical.

JK says that art is putting things together harmoniously. When we talk about internal observation what is it that we have to observe? Do we see harmony inside? He says that we have to observe the contradictions that are there inside. Observe all these without creating an opposite of each and that will bring about a life of melodious harmony. Also, watch your identities like a Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Indian etc. and see the causes of those identities. If you see that this kind of identity is one of the causes of unrest, strife, war- internal and external- the identities will drop. Because, then you will see the danger of division and conflict involved in these identities. And, once you see the danger, you act instantly- like you act instantly when you see a cobra in front of you. This seeing or perception also requires attention and care.

JK differentiates between the art of seeing and the art of perception. According to him, perception is not of time but the seeing and translating of it into action involves a certain period of time. The gap between seeing and doing is time. You see something and you want to do something. But then, you probe into it, analyze it; consider the positive and negative points of doing it- this is time. And this delays action. Perception is the seeing and doing without an interval between the seeing and doing. It is an instant action like when you act upon seeing a cobra in front of you.

What he means is that the art of seeing also implies action and the action will be the right action only when you see with full clarity, without the interference of personal interests etc. In other words 'to see clearly' is an answer to the question 'what am I to do'.

The art of listening

The art of listening is not merely hearing words. The process of hearing words is quite different from the art of listening. The art of listening is to listen to what the other is saying without any interpretation of the words or without agreeing/ disagreeing with them. JK says, "...you are not the translator of what is being said."²⁰ As in the art of seeing, you do not bring in your own judgments, conclusions, prejudices, opinions etc. while you are listening. This requires certain

attention and in this attention you as a listener disappear; only the listening is there. This also means that during such listening your senses are fully active, you are fully sensitive. Then only the listening is complete. According to JK this kind of listening is not like listening of one's words/ arguments as against another's- however reasonable or crooked or illusory it is. This is listening in which there is silence because there is no interference of your own judgments etc. JK says that this silence is the miracle of listening.

To listen attentively, intensely is to listen beyond words and it is difficult because your thoughts keep interfering in the listening. When both the speaker and the listener put these aside can they be on the same level and then there will be true communication between the two. This act of listening can bring about a change because here both the listener and the speaker are still/ quiet. JK gives a very simple and beautiful example to make his point clear. He says that it is like when you drop a stone in a very calm pool of water, waves are formed, if the water is not still, formation of waves is not possible. Similarly, when the mind is quiet in listening, the listening can be effective and can bring about some change in the listener. Thus without full attention and quiet mind, listening will be just hearing words. There will be no understanding involved there.

Once he narrated this story to his audience. It beautifully sums up what he means by listening. There was a religious teacher who gave a sermon to his disciples every morning. One morning he was about to begin and a bird perched itself on the window sill and started singing full heartedly. The teacher kept silent till the bird stopped singing and flew away. Then he turned to his disciples and said, "The sermon for this morning is over."²¹

The art of Learning

The third important art of living is the art of learning. It is not mere accumulation or acquisition of knowledge or information. JK, though, makes it very clear that such accumulation is necessary for your daily living and for the skillful actions involved in it. We are all familiar with this kind of learning but there is another kind of learning- learning without accumulation. Thus there are two types of learning. One is acquiring and accumulating knowledge through experience. This comes with education, reading books, going to school, college or university,

learning subjects like science, history, mathematics etc. We gather this knowledge and make use of it in our day-to-day living, for earning a living. Learning languages or various skills come under this type of learning. In this process of learning, the brain registers whatever is presented to it. Then the brain stores it and makes it available for use in the future. This is memory. This learning is essential for carrying out our day to day tasks so you have to have such knowledge. Without the storage or memory simple activities like going from one place to another, talking to others will not be possible. It must be noted that JK does not oppose this kind of memory. The brain is used to, trained to function in this way and that is necessary to a certain extent. But there is another form of learning wherein there is no registration, no accumulation, no storage but of the essentials. Only that which is absolutely necessary is registered.

According to JK the art of learning is to learn what to register and what not to register. Out of all the experiences you must learn to discern those which need to be stored up and those which should not be / need not be stored up. This way the mind and the brain are less cluttered up or burdened with knowledge and the movement of thought i.e. registering and storing of experiences. With the recording and registration you go on carrying that burden for a long time or forever unnecessarily; non-recording means that much less burden to carry.

Usually all that is stored in thought – except for the essentials like language or driving skill etc.- only adds to the ‘me’ because the ‘me’ is not different from this storage. The ‘me’ becomes stronger and stronger as you go on accumulating, adding to the storage. One’s name- fame, past experiences, opinions, judgments- all these build up the ‘me’. JK calls it as “the gathering up of the energy of the self.”²²

Our knowledge is a process of ‘accumulation- recollection- use- addition’ kind of process. We are quite used to this process. JK says that because of this we actually use a very small part of the brain. This kind of knowledge gathering is not the only function of the brain; its function is vast but we limit it to just this process. We make the brain function in one particular way only. By non-accumulation we allow the brain to have more scope or area to function in a different way. Accumulation of knowledge, thought is the ‘me’; so, in a way you tie down the brain to the ‘me’ and to the memory which is the past. Then all the time the brain is chattering with this

storage. Also, when one considers oneself as an artist, businessman etc, he is dividing the activity of the brain in many parts or fragments and you are not operating with the whole brain. JK says that when the whole brain is acting, that action is something totally different because then it is not an outcome of the storage or thought. And when the brain is allowed to function without the interference of thought, it finds its own natural rhythm. This rhythm actually rejuvenates the brain because then it is not under any pressure; as we know pressure brings deterioration.* This is freedom and then there is beauty, truth and love.

This is the deeper meaning of the art of learning wherein JK says that learning is to learn what to register and what not to register. He also calls it as awakening and actually all three arts contribute to or bring about this awakening. Then you are completely sensitive and completely free. Then your action will be the right action, then there will be peace, meditation, freedom, beauty, love and truth- all will be com-present. His art of living points out a way to arrive at truth.

*Fear is one factor that distorts the brain and fear is rooted in thought. We have discussed it under fear as a *ripu* or hurdle to freedom.

After having gone through JK's teachings on freedom, meditation, love and truth it seems pertinent that we also take into account some points of criticism. Here are the points on which JK is criticized.

Some points of criticism

So far we have seen the teachings of JK on freedom, meditation, truth and love. We have also seen that his teachings have a universal appeal and people from various walks of life are attracted to the teachings. But, along with great admirers he also had critics. He is usually criticized on the following points-

1. JK is criticized on the point that his teachings are too theoretical to practice. This does not really hold true for the basic reason that he did not present any theory as such of his own. Also, all through his teachings we find that he always emphasized that over and above or besides all the philosophies you have to observe and know your life on your own. Mere theoretical discussion of any philosophy- including his own teaching- was not meaningful to him. According to him unless you 'actually' understand your living and yourself any philosophy will be just words. Thus, to understand JK's teachings is not an academic or verbal activity; it is also not mere analysis or comparison of what one thinker says as against another thinker. Consistently and continually JK urged, coaxed, nudged his audience to look at their own lives. It can be clearly seen that he never side winked the actual, practical life. Rather he insisted on being with the present.

2. **Repetition** is one point on which he is criticized. They say that all through his life he talked about the same topics or themes like freedom, truth, meditation, time and thought, love, self-knowledge etc. It is true to say that he so to say sang the same song. But that is what his teachings are. He consistently talked about these topics for over 60 years without deviation, without trivialization. It is also said that repetition loses the quality of freshness or newness. In my view, his dialogues and talks were like concerts of classical singing. The singer presents the same *raga* in a number of concerts but each rendering of the *raga* is fresh and new to the listeners. The basics of a *raga* are well-defined and predetermined but that does not diminish the beauty of the presentation, of the singing. And, when the singer is superb, people are

magnetized to each concert. There were people, here in India, who traveled long distances to attend his talks regularly. This happened in other countries as well. Had there been no freshness, people wouldn't have followed him in this way.

'Repetition' suggests an element of mechanicalness, doing something over and over again out of habit and therefore a kind of dullness is noticed. But his talks were never mechanical; every time he talked he put his heart, mind and brain into it. His videos are proof enough for this. Every time he talked about a certain topic, he brought out a newer, finer nuance of it and/or pointed out interconnections between any two topics in a different way. For example he would talk about love in a *netineti* manner at one talk; in another talk he would point out how there is love when there is meditation or freedom. Thus, though repetition was inevitable it always had an element of freshness in it. Also, it was never a mechanical repetition of words because in any repetition *what* is repeated is very important.

3. Another criticism that was leveled against him was that **he never provided answers to questions** like how to meditate, how to reach Truth or how to observe etc. This criticism does not really hold because he never ever claimed that he was the one to provide you with readymade answers or to take on the right path. On the contrary, he always insisted that *you* have to find answers or the path *on your own* and that no external help is really useful to anyone in these matters. 'Be a light unto yourself' was an essential part of his teaching. He has talked about the futility of trying to gain readymade answers externally- from a text, a guru etc. A readymade answer, according to him, means following a certain method or system so you are engaged more in 'following' the method than understanding the problem and actually the answer or solution lies in understanding of the problem. Also, only you can know the inner process of your mind, your thought, chattering of the brain.

4. JK is also criticized on the point that he denied knowledge altogether. But if we carefully go through his concept of freedom we realize that it not the case. Freedom according to him is freedom **from the known** or from the field of thought. But he always says that in your daily, routine life you have to use thought, say for learning a skill or a language or for earning your livelihood. But *ultimately* knowledge, the whole process of knowledge, which includes the

storehouse of your memory, ends and you are free. Does this suggest two levels of living/existence? One of the daily routine or empirical life and another of a different dimension? How can one live with this kind of duality and division? This is a question that comes to mind. Another sub-question that follows is- does it mean that once you arrive at the other level everything becomes clear and all duality vanishes? Here we are at a problematic juncture. It is like till you are enlightened you will experience duality, suffering will continue; and how to be enlightened cannot be chalked out for you by anyone. You have to find it out for yourself. No belief, guru, system is of real help. The carpet under your feet is pulled and you stand suspended and alone! But understanding this is in itself realizing the limits of thought and transcending thought. At some point or the other this leap from the known to the unknown has to happen. Even after that leap thought will continue to exist and operate in its own field. So though an apparent duality seems to exist, there is in fact no duality as such. Reason or thought has to be employed all along but there comes a time when one has to let go of it this is what he means.

5. As Ronald Vernon has pointed out in his 'Star in the East, Krishnamurti, the invention of a Messiah' (Seateal Publications LLC, USA, 2002, p 214), it is also said that **nothing** JK taught was **new**. This is true to a certain extent in that a feeling of *déjà vu* comes to the mind at many places in his teachings. For example, living by the moment, denial of the self as a separate entity reminds you of Buddhism. His teachings on non-duality, dawning of freedom reminds you of Advaita Vedanta. His thoughts on modern technical society are also seen in those of Rousseau (as explained in the earlier chapter on freedom) and others. He does not give us a new logical, epistemological, metaphysical system. Nonetheless, his simple straightforward communication with the audience was something unique. Again, are we concerned with having new philosophical systems or are we concerned with what actually *is*? As he has pointed out, we have had a number of philosophers and systems of philosophy, but, where are we today?

His honesty and sincerity is almost tangible through even the videos. His communicative style was totally new and appealing, touching the hearts of the listeners. The impact of his lecture or talk is seen when, after he ended his talk, the audience used to be completely silent and still; in some videos we see JK himself breaking the silence and asking them, "May we get up?" in a very humble way. Whether new or not, his words held the listeners spell-bound and made them

think differently. His love and concern for the people is apparent and that really enthralled them, so did the content of his teachings. Thus more than giving a new philosophy he made his audience think for themselves about their lives and that is quite important.

6. Onemore point of criticism is that JK denied all tradition. But, in my view, he did not really deny tradition as such, more than denying any tradition he denied blind acceptance and blind following of any tradition. This is very important for any man. Also, such blind acceptance is carrying a kind of dead weight. JK seems to be against carrying any such dead weight in the name of tradition.

JK and psychology

It is true that some notions, issues of philosophy and psychology are closely connected; both take into account the ways of the human mind and human behavior and both are concerned with the well being of man. Some people see and describe **JK as a psychologist**. This could be because he delves deep in the nature and the functioning of the human mind. But, is it right to label him as a psychologist? During this research while studying his teachings from a philosophical perspective the following is what comes to notice.

1. What is psychology? As per the Oxford Dictionary, “Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind and its functions, especially those affecting behavior in a given context.” A psychologist, then, is a person who conducts such a scientific study and makes use of his findings in real life situations, applies his knowledge to solve problems of the mind. This gives us the scope of the study which is limited to human mind and its functions with reference to a particular context. Also, psychology studies particular cases and then to generalization and then universal psychological claims are made. This is not seen in JK’s teachings. Though JK talks about the human mind and its function at great lengths he does not talk about one specific mind in connection with a specific situation. His discussion takes in all of the human mind, not a mind at a particular time or place but at all times and places. Therefore he actually crosses the boundaries of psychology. And, JK does not stop at the functioning of the human mind he also talks about the functioning of the brain, a neurological topic.

2. Again, a ‘scientific’ study involves a method, analysis, experimentation, hypothesis, conclusions, theorization etc. JK never engages himself in any of these. He did not study the human mind from a laboratory perspective, nor did he apply his understanding of the mind to individuals in order to develop tools or techniques to solve their problems. He does not propose diagnostic methods, treatments or remedies for mental disorders. Therefore we cannot truly say that he was a psychologist.

JK and Buddhism

It is held by some that JK proposes nothing else but Buddhist philosophy in a different garb. In order to understand why this cannot be taken to be true, let us first see the basic tenets of Buddhism- of both Hinayana and Mahayana schools- thereupon the departure of JK from Buddhism will become clear. Also, we notice that great thinkers belonging to different schools of philosophy have some similar thoughts. Thus though we find similarities between Buddhism and JK’s teachings can we really say that he borrowed from Buddhism or talked Buddhism?

There are five fundamental principles that are accepted by every school of Buddhism. They are- 1.the doctrine of momentariness or that everything, every existence is momentary, 2.life is sorrowful, 3. There is no Atman or soul 4. the true nature of thing is ‘*tathata*’ or suchness; a thing is what it is, this is also called as ‘*swalakshana*’, 5. Nirvana is what one should seek. It is an extremely peaceful state where *Trishna* or desire is absent.

JK does not seem to be advocating these principles like Buddhism does. This is how the difference is quite apparent-

1. Buddhism holds that everything, every existence is momentary. According to Buddhism, a thing ‘exists’ means there is *Arthkriyakarakatva* i.e. potential to change/ to bring about a change in it. If there is no change the existence of the thing is tantamount to nonexistence; in a way change is the proof of the existence of the thing. There is a lot of logical, technical discussion about the doctrine of momentariness in Buddhism. JK does not go into any such discussion. He only says that every arriving moment is completely new and in order to meet with it one has to be free from the past and the future i.e. from the storage of memory and the thoughts of

'becoming'. Also, JK does not deny the existence – momentary or otherwise- of the external world; he does not deny the existence of the internal world of thoughts, ideas etc. of man. Mahayana Buddhism denies the existence of the external world.

2. Buddhism denies the existence of a permanent Atman that continues through all the change*. JK too does not talk about Atman and its being permanent. He only talks about the 'I' that everyone experiences and how it is formed. JK clearly states that the 'I' is a bundle of consciousness, there is no 'I' beyond this bundle.

3. Buddhism says that we do not know a thing as it actually is because of the name, form, quality, action and species (*nama, rupa, guna, kriya, jati*) that we give to it. These are all mental constructs and because of them we do not know the '*swalakshana*', or '*tathata*' i.e. the real nature of it. In connection with seeing or observation JK says that if you really want to see/ know anything you must put aside all your personal thoughts, likes- dislikes etc. and then only you can really see the thing as it is. Thus perhaps both are pointing at the same thing; the difference being Buddhism talks of five mental constructs that obstruct knowledge of a thing whereas JK says that the entire storage of your memory and your conditioning thwarts clear seeing/ knowledge of a thing.

4. According to Madhyamika Buddhism realization or experiencing of this 'tathata' is Nirvana. Nirvana is also taken to mean extinguishing the fire of sorrow that is there in every life. This is the ultimate state where there is complete peace as well. JK does not talk about Nirvana- or Moksha, Kaivalya etc for that matter. He only talks about freedom and the coexistence of it with meditation, love and truth. Again, Gautama Buddha stated the four Noble Truths and then proposed the AshtangaMarg for the annihilation of suffering and for the attainment of Nirvana. JK never proposes a fixed path, method or system for arriving at freedom or for putting an end to sorrow.

*Existence of a substance over and above various qualities is also not accepted by Buddhism.

5. Gautama Buddha gave different sets of rules for monks and for common people. JK does not give any such sets of rules for anybody. This is a major difference between them. Gautama Buddha was also called as a teacher; JK never became a teacher. Again, Buddha did not talk about or answered questions on topics like eternity/ non-eternity of the world, body and mind being one or separate etc. (These are called as 'Avyakritas' in Buddhism.) JK does not have any such topics in his teachings.

Now, after studying and presenting JK's teachings- his concepts of freedom, meditation, truth and love in particular- I would like to sum up the thesis with the following points-

As stated earlier, one of the major questions that haunts man is- what am I to do in a particular situation or in order to end suffering. In answer to the first half of the question, i.e. what am I to do, the Indian tradition has given the Varna and Ashram duties, and for the other half i.e. how to end suffering Moksha, Nirvana, Kaivalya are put forth by the various Darshanas. The Yoga Darshana is completely devoted to the path of Kaivalya and has given its eight-step programme for the attainment of it. JK does not provide us with an answer like any of these; he points out that one has to find the answer on his/her own. This leaves no scope for blindly following any system or method. He shakes up this type of intellectual complacency and dependency by going into the very nature of the 'I' that has this question. He says that the 'I' is the foundation of our questions and problems and the 'I' is nothing else but a bundle of thoughts, feelings etc. According to him as you understand the nature of the 'I' the problems will be understood and right action will follow out of that understanding. For him to know is to act. By pointing this out, he tries to drag us out of the habit of looking for readymade answers. This is very much in keeping with the scientific spirit and also with the spirit of enquiry that is undertaken in philosophy.

Another important point that strikes us is that he does not deny the world at all by saying that it is *Mithhya* or illusory. On the contrary, by questioning the very existence of the 'I' he seems to be denying the existence of the 'I'. But he also says that for all practical purposes the 'I' is very much there. Here we are reminded of Shankaracharya's *Sattatraya* where he says that the

world exists on the empirical level and from the ultimate standpoint it is *Mithhya*.

JK was not a verbal preacher only; he lived his teachings. For example, he did not believe in forming a cult, having rituals, building Ashrams, having a hierarchy of disciples and authority and being the head of it or being at the helm. And actually there is no cult, Ashram or discipleship that is carried out in his name- not during his lifetime nor after he passed away. He denied 'world teacher-ship', a very lucrative and tempting position, openly at the camp at Ommenn, Holland and returned all the donations including a castle and 5000 acres of land around it. This speaks volumes about his honesty, sincerity and simplicity- rare qualities especially now when we see some spiritual gurus and their followers, entourage, velvet thrones, expensive *Satsangs* etc. Anybody could meet him without the hurdles of hierarchy of disciples and irrespective of his/ her national, social, religious or financial status. To put it in other words, he did not make a 'business' of his teachings.

The 20th century was also the century of scientific and technological, and medical development. JK, having a holistic view of man, was abreast of the latest developments or findings in these fields. He was interested in psychology/ psychotherapy, functioning of the brain and was aware of latest research in these areas. Thus, for example, when he talked about transformation of man, he also talked about functioning of the brain and mutation of brain cells. Though JK always said that transformation of man has to happen from within, he was not overlooking the scientific aspect of it at all.

A speciality of JK's teaching is that he never ever quotes from any text or person. But without such quotations or references, he drives home his point very clearly. We are not used to reading or listening without any quotes/ references. Perhaps this is why there is freshness in his teachings because there is no clinging to the past even by way of a quotation.

There are no airs of self-importance in his teachings; he never says 'I know all'. His dialogues or talks do not exhibit any of his personal life. The 'I', 'me' and 'mine' are kept to the minimum all through his teachings. He allowed his biography to be written and published just to make the point that if a poor, unhealthy boy from a remote village in India can get transformed into a free man, can have love, meditation, truth etc. why not anybody else?

He is perhaps the only ‘world teacher’ who never sought Moksha, Ultimate Freedom, Liberation, Salvation etc. deliberately. He never aspired to be thus freed, i.e. he was never a *Mumukshu*. And yet, he did become free and wanted to spread the message of freedom all over the world- not so that he gets name or fame but so that mankind becomes free. This also proves a point that he often talked about- freedom is not something that can be gained by *Tapas* or penance or subjecting the body to hardships.

Some called him as a ‘Failed Messiah’, for some he was like a lighthouse emitting rays of light all around and guiding ships in troubled waters; some find his teachings difficult or impractical, some say he is speaking their minds. But then, it is up to the reader/ listener to embark on the journey that he directs and find out the meaning of his teachings by- as he often said- going beyond words.

JK maintained that even if one man is transformed, it affects or influences the whole of mankind. There have been many such transformed people before him and there will be many after him. All the realized ones talk about transformation within and without so that all can live in peace and happiness. And still human suffering, pain, violence has continued. So is this realization or transformation or freedom some kind of dream that man likes to pursue? Why the insensitivity and brutality continues in spite of having liberated souls? Once JK was asked this question. Dr. David Bohm* happened to be present there and JK asked him, “ How would you answer that question? Why don’t we see the change?” DrBohm thought for a few seconds and replied, “As a physicist I only know that 99% of all phenomena occurring in matter and energy are invisible.”²³

*Prof. David Bohm was a theoretical physicist and a pioneer of quantum mechanics and had also worked with Einstein and Oppenheimer. After 1960 he came into contact with JK and both of them shared a very special relationship with each other. It is said that both of them were quite excited with the ‘prospect of physics pointing a gateway to the transcendental’. Their dialogues are profound, passionate and intense, taking up topics like Time, Being and thought.

It is said at the beginning of the thesis that JK's concepts are interconnected. At this juncture let me try to put forth some such interconnections between freedom, meditation, love and truth.

The basis of all these concepts, as we commonly understand and assume, is the structure of the 'I'. JK draws our attention to the structure of the 'I'. according to him this 'I' is just a bundle of one's thoughts, feelings, emotions, likes- dislikes, prejudices, conditioning, memory and so on. Whether it is freedom, meditation, love or truth, if you want to know these you have to put aside this bundle. This putting aside of the bundle in itself is being free from it. Once this happens, along with freedom there will be meditation, love and truth. It is freedom from all the internal attachments in the form of identifications, images and that is realization that the 'I' is actually a construct of thought, of social- religious- political forces that shape it up. This is coming upon truth. Once this realization sets in the 'I' gets dissolved i.e. it merges with the rest of the world. And therefore, thereafter there is no love 'for' a particular person or object, sheer love exists there. Because, then there is no division between the 'I' and the rest; the particular feelings/ thoughts of love, jealousy, hatred, competition, liking etc. that go with the 'I' do not exist. According to JK, in this state there is no duality of the observer and the observed, there is only observation. This observation is meditation in which there is no duality of the thinker and the thought. You become one with the movement of life. This is also a state where there is beauty and order.

JK's art of living, is related to this as well. When he says that thought must be put aside, it is not that you become blank; you retain whatever is necessary for your daily life, for your earning bread and butter like some skills or language. Learning, according to him, is understanding the difference between retainable experience and non-retainable ones. Learning is to know the difference and get rid of the unnecessary, burdensome luggage that is carried for years in the form of memory. Then there can be no freedom. His art of listening is also related here because we always co-exist with others and it is important to have a peaceful co-existence. For such co-existence, understanding of the relationship between the 'I' and another is necessary. And the art of listening can bring this about. Art of seeing is also meditation. Thus all these concepts are interrelated and related to JK's other concepts as well.

JK says that truth is in the living, active present. It means that one has to meet every moment anew, without the burden of the past or the anxiety of the future. It means living by the moment and for that freedom, meditation, art of living all are together.

JK's concept of death

So far in this study JK's concept of death is not discussed and put forth. But, in my view, it would not be inappropriate to go in to it- though briefly- at this juncture because that concept is also connected with freedom, meditation, love and truth.

The general reaction to the very word 'death', JK says, is that of fear. Discussion of this topic is mostly avoided. But he questions us that if you have never experienced it, if you do not know what death is, how can you be afraid of it? And why should you be afraid of something that is unknown to you? He says that you must find out on your own whether it is the fear of the physical death i.e. the ending of the body or whether it is the fear of the ending of the 'I' which is psychological death. As with other concepts you meet with this concept with pre-conceived images and ideas and try to escape it. But the fact is that it is there walking everyday by your side. The ending of the 'I' or psychological death scares you and theories about life after death, existence of a permanent soul or atman etc. emerge out of that fear. All this is very much in the field of thought and if you want to be free you have to be free of the thoughts, feelings, emotions, pre-established notions or theories of death and understand that there is nothing permanent. Using his own words, "To discover that nothing is permanent is of tremendous importance for only then the mind is free, then you can look (observe) and in that there is great joy."²⁴ This is how his concept of death is related to freedom – and joy as well.

This is what he says about life after death, reincarnation etc. He says that we research, build theories like reincarnation, are scared of death or worry about death. But what about living? Isn't it ignoring the living present, the 'now' and think about something unknown? We live in the constant fear of death, under the shadow of death and the present is lost. The right approach according to him, would be to die every minute to all the psychological contents of the 'I' so that every new moment will be fresh, truly new to you; then life will stop being boring, insipid because the new moment will bring freshness to living that was not there earlier. In order to

know this, he says that one must inwardly die to the things that one loves or is bitter about. Then there will be transformation because then there will be freedom.

What he means can be summed up in his own words, “Death is a renewal, a mutation, in which thought does not function at all because thought is old. When there is death, there is something totally new. Freedom from the known is death and then you are living.”²⁵ Thus we find that transformation of man is also related to the psychological death. Again, dying this way is meditation which is pure observation. He also holds that a man who lives without any conflict, without any division, a man who lives with love and beauty is not frightened of death; according to him, to love is to die psychologically.

This is how death is related to freedom, mediation, love and truth.

Thus, according to JK freedom, meditation, love, truth and happiness are not just words or illusive dreams. It is up to us to find out for *ourselves* their meaning, to *experience* the meaning and not just go for their intellectual or verbal understanding. And, importantly, their interconnections are not to be overlooked.

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Appendix

JK and Nature

Any study or discussion of JK's teachings will be incomplete if we do not take into consideration JK's views on Nature. Actually, nature is a kind of a backdrop for his teachings. (That he was fond of nature and a natural, peaceful surrounding is very obvious; all the K foundations or centers are situated at beautiful places with lots of trees, open skies, water-bodies or hills close by.)

'Commentaries on Living (I,II,III)' and 'K's Notebook' contain wonderful descriptions of nature- trees, flowers, birds, skies, rain, clouds, sunset and sunrise, hills, mountains, rivers, streams, whispering waters, rustling leaves, sweet notes of birds, animals like monkeys, cats etc. are strewn all through his writings. In a very lucid language he paints the picture of a landscape and brings it to life. He talks about listening to a tree. His descriptions are not there for any informative purpose. He held that man is a part of nature and if he is cut off from her, he is lost. For him, observing nature without bringing in one's likes- dislikes, prejudices etc. is the true observation.

He highly valued man's relationship with nature which is love and respect for nature. He said that if you cannot have relationship with nature, you cannot have relationship with anybody, anything else. This is how he put it- "If you lose touch with nature, you lose touch with humanity." (Krishnamurti Journal, 39th, 14.04.1995) JK observed that man has lost this touch with nature; he goes to nature not out of love or respect but for some gain or entertainment or for hunting. Ruthless killing of animals or fish for food, for sport or for medical/ scientific experiments is taking place because man has lost this touch and has become selfish and greedy.

'Going to nature' is an activity that has picked up very fast in the recent past. Burdens and monotony of everyday life are put aside for a while and people go to the woods, sanctuaries for camps. According to JK man has built this corrupt society and he 'escapes' into nature in this way. Killing of animals for research purposes is accepted as inevitable and is justified. JK says

that we should in fact look for other options if we really love them. And, going by the human intellectual achievements, his question is quite apt. We have lost sensitivity to nature and we treat her harshly, and then we say that we have environmental problems! As he said in some other context, “To live in this world and yet not be of the world is our problem.” (The Collected Works of Krishnamurti, New Delhi, 1st Public talk, 1948) We live in nature and yet we are not *of* the nature and that is our problem. And it is high time we realized this.

Quite often JK draws our attention to nature and natural order. There is order in the universe, he points out, but man brings disorder to it. His greed and haste make him interfere with the natural order. Abundant, excessive and thoughtless use of the natural resources like water, wood, oars and minerals, of the flora and fauna, killing some species almost to extinction- the examples are ample and there for everyone to see.

What he means by natural order is seen in a beautifully narrated story in ‘Krishnamurti Journal’ (06.04.1975). He was staying at a house in Malibu. A picturesque description of the pacific is followed by what happened there during his stay. The house had a quiet garden, green lawns and flowers. Some rabbits started coming there in the mornings and evenings. In spite of a netted wire, they would eat up the flowers and the saplings. How to stop them and save the flowers and saplings was a big problem; killing them was out of question. But then one day a black cat arrived and started wandering around, a barn owl perched itself on a nearby tree. Soon the rabbits disappeared and order was restored to the garden. There was no need for human interference for the restoration of the natural order.

JK did not consider himself as different or separate from nature. This is how he puts it in words in Krishnamurti Journal, “He (JK refers himself in the third person in the journal) always had this strange lack of distance between himself and trees, rivers and mountains. It wasn’t cultivated; you can’t cultivate a thing like that. There was never a wall between him and another.... He was not withdrawn or aloof was like the waters of a river.” I think this beautifully sums up his meaning of ‘being of nature’.

This sense of naturalness, things happening on their own or taking care of themselves without exerting efforts, without imposition of an external pressure is seen when he says that freedom is something that *happens* to you, meditation cannot be enforced. Order is falling of things in place and that is something natural. This is also discipline that comes from within. 'Keep the windows and doors open and let the wind come in'- this is what he says about freedom, meditation and love. This reminds us of Plato's balance, rhythm and order in connection with beauty. Then there exists love because there is order, which means that there is no conflict and therefore no enemies. This is the state of love and also of peace. Thus we find that JK tells us that there is a lot that we can learn from nature and that will truly enrich our living.

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