

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS: Conference Proceedings **J. Krishnamurti and the Contemporary World Crises**

Scholars' Panel One **Session Three¹**

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Fostering Basic Awareness **Jack Miller**

This paper begins with my first introduction to Krishnamurti's writings when I was a doctoral student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. His book *Education and the Significance of Life* (1953) was very influential as I was beginning my work in humanistic/holistic education. In this paper I identify some of the key ideas from that book and how they are still relevant today.

For example, Krishnamurti (1953) wrote "We have divided life into so many departments that education has very little meaning" (p. 11). Fragmentation is still a huge problem in education and one which holistic education attempts to address. One way is seeing life as a whole, requiring our awareness to see things as they are. Krishnamurti (1953) wrote, "The function of education is to create human beings who are integrated and therefore intelligent. Intelligence is the capacity to perceive the essential, the what is; and to awaken this capacity in oneself and in others is education" (p. 14).

My paper then focuses on my teaching and how I have asked students to engage in meditation since 1988 in two of my classes. Students are offered several different approaches to meditative practice and they chose one to do for five to six weeks and keep a journal. This practice allows students to engage in a basic awareness that lies behind thought. Excerpts from student journals are cited in my talk as examples of how this awareness can manifest.

This awareness can lead to love and compassion. Krishnamurti wrote about the importance of love. He says education is helping the individual to "flower greatly in love and goodness. Where there is love there is instantaneous communion with the other" (p. 23).

¹ Scholars' Panel I Dr. Jack Miller, Dr. Kathryn Jefferies, and Morgan Selvanathan (Session Three)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DsJZ8koe8ME&list=PLfvjDB_dQhEpYnHf6l8WMJ_XrT-Oln7CL&index=3&t=4s

Through basic awareness we see how we are all connected and so love and compassion arise naturally.

Beyond the *Intellect* to Non-conceptual *Intelligence*

Kathryn Jefferies

I will share here how I came to learn about Krishnamurti, what impacted me so profoundly about his insights, and how I have attempted to live out his teachings in the ensuing twenty-five years.

In this context, I will then discuss the current crises that face humanity (if indeed there are any) and how I see them as, at cause, the same, single crisis that humanity has always faced, put under the spotlight and augmented by the pandemic: identification with mind.

Indeed, with the shuttering of habitual activities and the subsequent throwing back of many of us upon ourselves, we are offered a tremendous opportunity to perceive the nature of the mind in its clinging, fearfulness—to what (concepts), why (an attempt to secure psychological security), and how (by the absorption of all of our consciousness into the logical, left brain)—and, in that seeing, move beyond the intellect into an experience other than that of the conceptual mind. It is the opportunity to, finally, learn from oneself. What Krishnamurti calls true “intelligence” can arise and we can begin to actually see reality rather than only be in relationship with our (almost always erroneous) beliefs about reality.

It is our inability to use thought as a tool but rather our conditioning to be used by thought that we a) see crises to begin with, and b) enhance those crises through attempts at control. First, the mind needs to be understood so that perception and action is not coming from the root of fear. Only then can intelligent action be taken. An inward transformation of consciousness is the way forward to address any apparent external situation causing any kind of suffering. It is not a way to feel better (even if it does that); it is something much more important, much more powerful, and, ultimately, has nothing to do with the self.

The Relevance of Krishnamurti’s Ideas for Shaping and Influencing Leadership:

Exploring the Nature of Educational Leadership in Krishnamurti Schools

Morgan Selvanathan

In the context of the impending world crises that implicate not one but many systems simultaneously, the need for leadership that takes an integrative and systemic outlook across institutional and national boundaries has become very pertinent. For instance, the pandemic has affected the health systems across the world but also drastically affected economics, trade, travel, employment and political systems globally. From the perspective of leadership, the fundamental source of transforming society lies in Krishnamurti’s explication that “the world is me and I am the world; my consciousness is the consciousness of the world, and the consciousness of the world is me. So, when there is order in the human being then there is order in the world” (Krishnamurti, cited in Lutyens, 1983, p. 189).

In light of the above statement, I explore the concept of leadership that stems from the question on how does one organize the educational intentions of Krishnamurti schools in a systemic way? What are the elements that distinguish a Krishnamurti school culturally and structurally from any other school? Are there commonalities amidst what Herzberger calls

pluralistic ways where each school and its teachers and administrators are free to design and organize the educational intentions as outlined by Krishnamurti (Herzberger, 2018)? In light of contemporary leadership theories, such as values-based leadership, contemplative leadership, being-centered leadership, existential leadership, to name a few, these are compared with Krishnamurti's ideas to draw out differences and alignments, if any. In addition, the unique ways educational leaders' understanding of Krishnamurti's educational intentions enabled them to create distinctive school cultures of Krishnamurti schools aligns very much with the holistic democratic model that encourages staff and students to grow as whole people (Woods & Woods, 2012).

References

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Kathryn Jefferies has been teaching in the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University since 2013, while also leading workshops and counselling in private practice. Her doctoral dissertation was turned into a book called *Awake: Education for Enlightenment* and focuses on Krishnamurti's philosophy of education. Her new endeavour is the creation of the Institute for Well-being in Education (iWE) which offers certificate programs in self-inquiry for mental health to Bachelor of Education students and in-service teachers. Her research interests focus on right-brain experiential learning, ontological & social-emotional intelligence, and meditation/self-inquiry. She lives in Orillia, Ontario with her daughter. Email address: kejeffer@lakeheadu.ca Website: <http://www.kathrynjefferies.com/>

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has pursued exploring Krishnamurti's work for over two decades and has experience as a teacher in both Krishnamurti and other school contexts. With work experience in the government, non-profit, schools and higher education sectors, Morgan was also involved in leadership development programs in India. His interests relate to curriculum leadership in school contexts, leadership development and research, and systemic and holistic approaches to transforming educational systems. He can be reached at mseivanathan@yahoo.com



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