

J. KRISHNAMURTI on NATURE

ON NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

“Because we do not love the earth and the things of the earth but merely utilize them...we have lost touch with life...We have lost the sense of tenderness, that sensitivity, that response to things of beauty; and it is only in the renewal of that sensitivity that we can have understanding of what is true relationship.”

.....‘true relationship’ is brought about by knowing how our inner world of thoughts and emotions is inextricably linked to the outer world of humanity and the environment.

HIS LAST JOURNAL

It is odd that we have so little relationship with **nature**, with the insects and the leaping frog and the owl that hoots among the hills calling for its mate. We never seem to have a feeling for all living things on the earth. If we could establish a deep abiding relationship with nature, we would never kill an animal for our appetite, we would never harm, vivisect, a monkey, a dog, a guinea pig for our benefit. We would find other ways to heal our wounds, heal our bodies. But the healing of the mind is something totally different. That healing gradually takes place if you are with nature, with that orange on the tree, and the blade of grass that pushes through the cement, and the hills covered, hidden, by the clouds.

A FEELING FOR ALL LIVING THINGS

There is a tree by the river and we have been watching it day after day for several weeks when the sun is about to rise. As the sun rises slowly over the horizon, over the trees, this particular tree becomes all of a sudden golden. All the leaves are bright with life and as you watch it as the hours pass by, that tree whose name does not matter — what matters is that beautiful tree — an extraordinary quality seems to spread all over the land, over the river. And as the sun rises a little higher, the leaves begin to flutter, to dance. And each hour seems to give to that tree a different quality. Before the sun rises, it has a sombre feeling, quiet, far away, full of dignity. And as the day begins, the leaves with the light on them dance and give it that peculiar feeling that one has of great beauty. By midday its shadow has deepened and you can sit there protected from the sun, never feeling lonely, with the tree as your companion. As you sit there, there is a relationship of deep, abiding security and a freedom that only trees can know.

Towards the evening when the western skies are lit up by the setting sun, the tree gradually becomes sombre, dark, closing in on itself. The sky has become red, yellow, green, but the tree remains quiet, hidden, and is resting for the night.

If you establish a relationship with it, then you have relationship with mankind. You are responsible then for that tree and for the trees of the world. But if you have no relationship with the living things on this earth, you may lose whatever relationship you have with humanity, with human beings. We never look deeply into the quality of a tree; we never really touch it, feel its solidity, its rough bark, and hear the sound that is part of the tree. Not the sound of wind through the leaves, not the breeze of a morning that flutters the leaves, but its own sound, the sound of the trunk and the silent sound of the roots. You must be extraordinarily sensitive to hear the sound. This sound is not the noise of the world, not the noise of the chattering of the mind, not the vulgarity of human quarrels and human warfare but sound as part of the universe.

THE WHOLE MOVEMENT OF LIFE IS LEARNING

What is education doing actually? Is it really helping mankind, our children, to become more concerned, more gentle, generous, not to go back to the old pattern, the old ugliness and naughtiness of this world? If the educator is really concerned, as he must be, then he has to help the student to find out his relationship to the world, not to the world of imagination or romantic sentimentality, but to the actual world in which all things are taking place; and also to the world of nature, to the desert, the jungle or the few trees that surround him, and to the animals of the world. (Animals, fortunately, are not nationalistic; they hunt only to survive.) If the educator and the student lose their relationship to nature, to the trees, to the rolling sea, each will certainly lose his relationship with humanity.

What is nature? There is a great deal of talk about and endeavor to protect nature, the animals, the birds, the whales and dolphins, to clean the polluted rivers, the lakes, the green fields and so on. Nature is not put together by thought, as religion is, as belief is. Nature is the tiger, that extraordinary animal with its energy, its great sense of power. Nature is the solitary tree in the field, the meadows and the grove; it is that squirrel shyly hiding behind a bough. Nature is the ant and the bee and all the living things of the earth. Nature is the river, not a particular river, whether the Ganges, the Thames or the Mississippi. Nature is all those mountains, snow-clad, with dark blue valleys and ranges of hills meeting the seas. The universe is part of this world. One must have a feeling for all this, not destroy it, not kill for one's pleasure, not kill animals for food. We do kill the vegetables that we eat, but one must draw the line somewhere. If you do not eat vegetables, then how will you live? So one must intelligently discern.

Nature is part of our life. We grew out of the seed, the earth, and we are part of all that, but we are rapidly losing the sense that we are animals like the others. Can you have a feeling for a tree, look at it, see the beauty of it, listen to the sound it makes; be sensitive to the little plant, to the little weed, to the creeper that is growing up the wall, to the light on the leaves and the many shadows? You must be aware of all this and have that sense of communion with nature around you. You may live in a town, but you do have trees here and there. The next-door garden may be ill-kept, crowded with weeds, but look at the flower in it, and feel that you are part of all that, part of all living things. If you hurt nature you are hurting yourself.

QUOTE

If you lose touch with nature you lose touch with humanity. If there's no relationship with nature then you become a killer; then you kill baby seals, whales, dolphins, and man either for gain, for "sport," for food, or for knowledge. Then nature is frightened of you, withdrawing its beauty. You may take long walks in the woods or camp in lovely places but you are a killer and so lose their friendship. You probably are not related to anything to your wife or your husband.