

FRIEDRICH'S NEWSLETTER
2014



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Cover: View from Chalet Solitude onto Videmanette, Rougemont, Switzerland

Dear Friends,

During Krishnamurti's last talks at Saanen, in 1985, he said that the spirit had left the valley and had gone to Brockwood Park. Earlier this year, while walking at Brockwood with a mature student from China, Lu Jing, I told her what K had said, and when we arrived at the Grove, she said, "The spirit is here."

The grove and meditation

Brockwood Park, Hampshire

September 14, 1973

The other day, coming back from a good walk among the fields and trees, we passed through the grove near the big white house. Coming over the stile into the grove one felt immediately a great sense of peace and stillness. Not a thing was moving. It seemed sacrilegious to walk through it, to tread the ground; it was profane to talk, even to breathe. The great redwood trees were absolutely still; the American Indians call them the silent ones and now they were really silent. Even the dog didn't chase the rabbits. You stood still hardly daring to breathe; you felt you were an intruder, for you had been chatting and laughing, and to enter this grove not knowing what lay there was a surprise and a shock, the shock of an unexpected benediction. The heart was beating less fast, speechless with the wonder of it. It was the centre of this whole place. Every time you enter it now, there's that beauty, that stillness, that strange stillness. Come when you will and it will be there, full, rich and unnamable.

Any form of conscious meditation is not the real thing: it can never be. Deliberate attempt to meditate is not meditation. It must happen; it cannot be invited. Meditation is not the play of the mind nor of desire and pleasure. All attempt to meditate is the very denial of it. Only be aware of what you are thinking and doing and nothing else. The seeing, the hearing, is the doing, without reward and punishment. The skill in doing lies in the skill of seeing, hearing. Every form of meditation leads inevitably

to deception, to illusion, for desire blinds. It was a lovely evening and the soft light of spring covered the earth.

from Krishnamurti's Journal
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I'm writing this Newsletter in Rougemont, a picturesque mountain village in Switzerland next to, and in the same valley as, Saanen and also Gstaad. Friends who have spent time here, including the former Brockwood students who sometimes visit and help out, say that there is still a good feeling in this valley. They say there's also a nice feeling at Chalet Solitude, where I live. Construction of Solitude began in 1985, when K was still in the valley. He'd been very curious to know its location and why I was building it.

I spent all of last winter in Rougemont instead of travelling, and realised that I'd forgotten how beautiful the winter is up here. Snow covers everything in a dazzling and peaceful white, and the sun gleams on this white carpet giving so much beautiful light. So we didn't go to Ojai but are still in regular contact with all of our friends there at the Foundation, School and Retreat, which continue to flourish – as do their counterparts at Brockwood and in India. Just now the Teaching Academy is taking place in Ojai; later it will be held at Brockwood and in India.

The International Trustees Meetings, of representatives of all of the K Foundations, took place in Ojai in May 2014. The central theme was **The Foundations and Schools Are One Entity** – One Foundation, One School. Here is a note I subsequently wrote to all of the trustees:

Dear Trustees,

I was very pleased to learn that at the recent ITM there was a feeling and intention for all of the Schools and all of the Foundations to be one. As we know, K felt this very strongly and was often exasperated with the organisations. It is amazing and encouraging that almost 30 years after his death this 'oneness' was placed in the foreground. It seems to me that this flowering is due to all of the good people who are involved, including there being the right, capable people running the places.

With warm regards, Friedrich



In the Grove at Brockwood Park, England

This teaching covers the whole of human existence

I think this teaching covers the whole of human existence. I don't know if you have studied it. It will cover the whole of human life, from the physical to the most inward depth of human beings ... There is nothing in it that sets it apart as a cult; as something other. When you look into it, it is a marvellous thing – not because I have said it – something extraordinarily life-giving. And this life-giving river will never go dry.

speaking at Rishi Valley School, 7 December 1982

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For a few weeks in October 2013, KFT put up huge white **posters in 27 of London's underground train stations**, each poster bearing nothing but one of five short K quotes, without attribution even, except for a small “observe kft.org” at the bottom. The intention was to spark people's interest in the quotes, and then if they were intrigued enough they could find the KFT website. This project was covered in a Saturday edition of the *Financial Times*, in The Slow Lane column written by Harry Eyres, who previously wrote a positive article, Rare Retreat without Restrictions, about The Krishnamurti Centre at Brockwood after a visit there. (His nice recommendation of my book appears on the dusk jacket.) In his article on the posters, When Less Is More, he wonders how people viewing the quotes will be affected by the contrast between them and “the more familiar invitations to sip whisky, visit far-flung islands or take out cheaper car insurance.” He goes on to say that, for him: “One of the peculiar and unsettling aspects of Krishnamurti's teaching is that he seems to leave you with less than you thought you had, not more.” He concludes that “Krishnamurti's version of ‘less is more’ goes far beyond interior decoration or nouvelle cuisine and right into the heart of human longing and insecurity.” For the entire article, please go to ft.com and search for “Krishnamurti”, then click on When Less Is More.

Brockwood Park celebrated its 45th anniversary with a five-day alumni reunion in August 2014. Bill Taylor, the Development Manager, issued a press release beforehand, quoting from K's intentions for the school:



One of the many K posters on the London Underground.

Photo by Petter Goldstine

A totally different kind of human being

...we want to create a totally different kind of human being at Brockwood, who is neither English, French, German, Russian, who doesn't get caught in any belief, in any dogma, who moves only with 'what is', with the facts: and therefore to bring about a human being totally harmonious within himself – harmony between mind, heart and body...

Krishnamurti with Brockwood students and staff, 26 September 1972

© *Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd*

Bill goes on to say that the school “remains international, fully boarding and small by design (only 1,600 alumni after 45 years) ... students attend from over 24 countries and are all aged between 14 and 19. The school has a co-operative, familial feel to it, a focus on self-reflection and inquiry and it offers

an education that fosters a love of learning and eschews the current exam driven culture.”

It’s always interesting to hear from former Brockwood students about their lives now, and especially what effect they feel their time at Brockwood has had on them. Certainly most of them say it has had a major influence on their lives, often changing their way of living. Several students have even said that Brockwood saved them in some way. One student, Alice Duchatelle, now teaches at an international school, where she is dedicated to creating with her students the kind of school atmosphere that K talked about. She told us that some of her students had thanked her for bringing a new outlook into their lives.

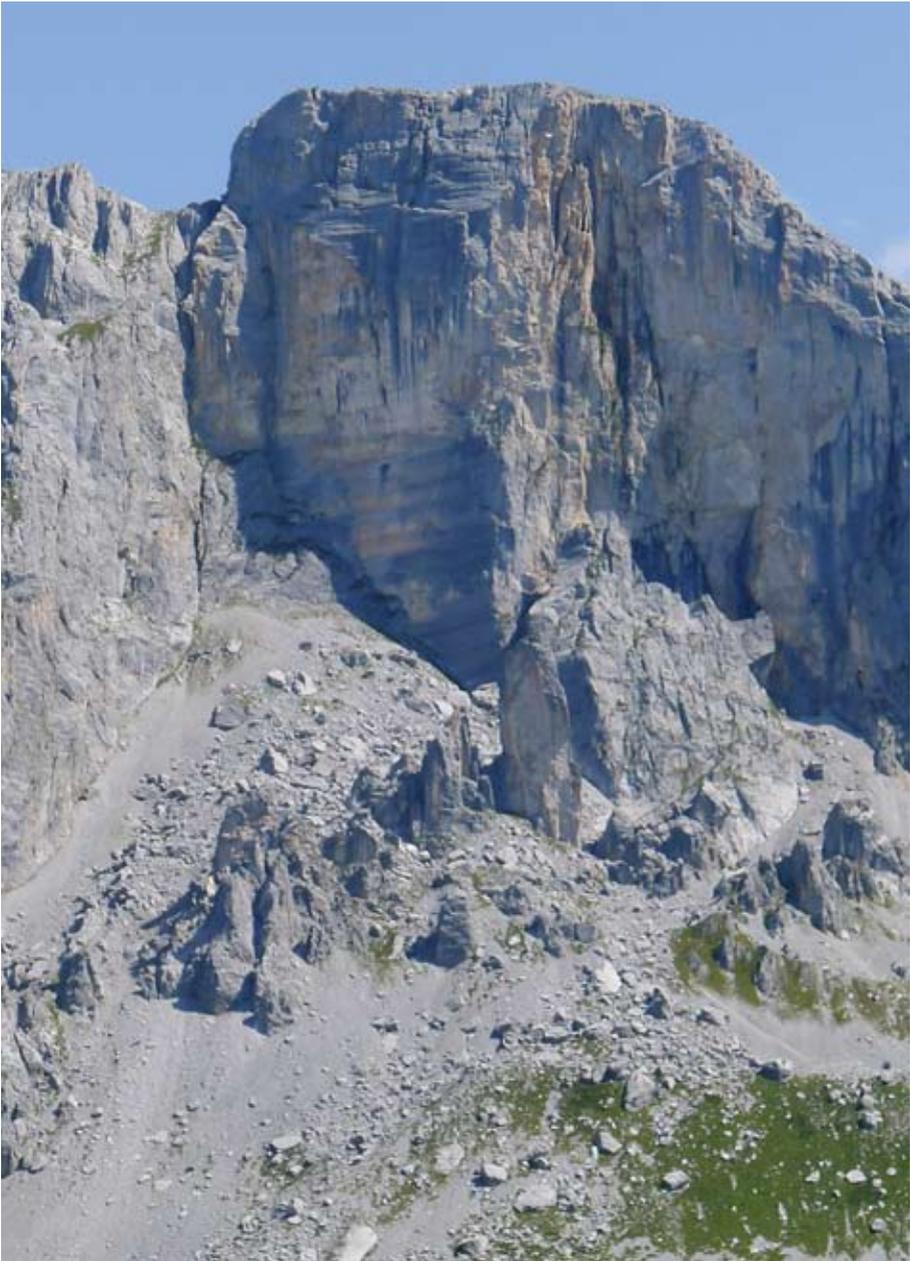
When the mind really wants to understand itself

Only the right kind of education will wipe away greed, fear, acquisitiveness, so that we can build a radically new culture, a different world altogether; and there can be the right kind of education only when the mind really wants to understand itself and be free of sorrow.

*from chapter XXIII in This Matter of Culture
© 1964 Krishnamurti Foundation of America*

For the past 30 years, since I’ve been involved with Brockwood, this question has come up again and again: Are Brockwood students prepared for the real world? And I’ve come to this conclusion: The best preparation for life after Brockwood is Brockwood itself. In response to this, Jürgen wrote, “Brockwood stands for the art of learning and questioning, and this is exactly the best preparation for life.” Nick replied, “That’s a good answer, in both senses: by understanding the teachings and seeing life at its deepest levels, and also because a student experiences just about everything he/she will run into in the post-Brockwood world within Brockwood itself. I’m talking ‘psychologically’, of course. It may be in smaller, gentler doses, but it’s all there.”

Jürgen and Nick were my first colleagues in what became known as the Link team. They joined me in 1992 and we are still working together along with our



The Sulzhütte with Schienfluh behind, in the Swiss Alps

friends Raman, Claudia, Javier and Rabindra, all of whom except Rabindra – who founded Kinfonet along with his brother and sister-in-law, Dev and Andrea, and is now a KFA trustee – are former Brockwood staff members (and a former Brockwood trustee, in Nick’s case). In all this time we cannot recall a single instance of conflict or disagreement within the group, although that may be due partly to our not living on top of each other. Each has his/her own particular role, as well as all having joint input on decisions, mostly through dialogue.

I see for myself that what he says is true

Say, I have heard of K for a number of years, have read his stuff and attended some of the gatherings. I have really moved away from the traditional way of life, traditional worship and all that business, and I see for myself that what he says is true, sane and common sense. I am very absorbed with it, it is my life and I want to talk about it. It isn’t that I keep it to myself; I want to write about it and if I have the capacity, the gift to write, I will do it. Or if I am a teacher, I say, “By Jove, this is a new way of looking”, and I will work at it as a teacher. I would want to collect a whole group of people who are going in that direction, not an organized group, or organized but not as a commune or community or some exclusive body. I will work at it, I will work my head off, because to me, that is my life. It is not that K tells me to do it, or that I must do it, it is because what he has said is so true and I am living it and I want to burst with it. That’s all.

*from Krishnamurti speaking during the 1984
International Trustees Meetings at Brockwood Park
© Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd*

At the beginning of June we printed the first **French edition of *The Beauty of the Mountain***. It was amazing for me to read it in French after seven editions in English. And several friends who speak both French and English have said the same – that it is such a different experience to read it in one’s first language. In fact, some friends received a copy before I did. I first heard it had been dispatched from the printer when an acquaintance of mine (the man who

looks after my chalet's solar heating system) said to me excitedly, "I got your book this morning!" He then reminded me of an earlier book by K I had given him, which he confessed had been very difficult to understand. I replied that I thought it was rather clear, and he answered, "But you are bathing in it!" Another response was from my cousin Alice by way of a phone message (here translated from the French): "Listen, I wanted to tell you that I received your book and that I devoured it! I read all night and I am coming to the end now. It is intriguing. I also learned much about you. It's fantastic!"

There have been enthusiastic responses from all over France, too, as free copies, together with a short covering note, were distributed to French Committee members. At the same time, we distributed 11,000 copies of the 7th English edition among the various Foundations, Schools and Centres. Michael Krohnen (author of *The Kitchen Chronicles – 1001 Lunches with J. Krishnamurti*) wrote from the KFA Library in Ojai: "The Beauty of the Mountain continues to be a raging success. I'm conveying to you now the heartfelt thanks and gratitude of many visitors to the Ojai K Center." Roser Tomas, an old friend from Spain who helps to run a K Information Centre on Gran Canaria, wrote this: "I read your book while still at the Krishnamurti Centre, and I would like to thank you very much for all that it conveys. It makes me feel at home and gives the sense of returning to a wave of joy and lightness. It makes me happy to know that K had such a gentle and easy relationship with you. The book is so 'simple' in the best sense of the word, like a child explaining 'little' things that are, in fact, big treasures – like homeopathic doses of friendship, happiness, beauty. Thank you very much, again. Thank Life very much for it. P.S. The sentence that most impressed me at first was that the teachings have their own protection. I needed to hear this so much."

And David Moody (author of *The Unconditioned Mind – J. Krishnamurti and the Oak Grove School*) wrote the following, which pleased me very much because he is such a good writer: "What a lovely book, so sweet, factual, and accurate. I got to page 60 or thereabouts, where Krishnaji is leaving Brockwood for his last trip to India, and it made me cry, so I had to stop. Maybe I will be able to pick it up again later. Thank you so much for writing such a beautiful book, and with such beautiful photographs."

The weekly online publication of *The Memoirs of Mary Zimbalist* – go to inthepresenceofk.org – edited by Scott Forbes from transcripts of tapes of Mary reading and discussing with him her diary entries covering the time dur-

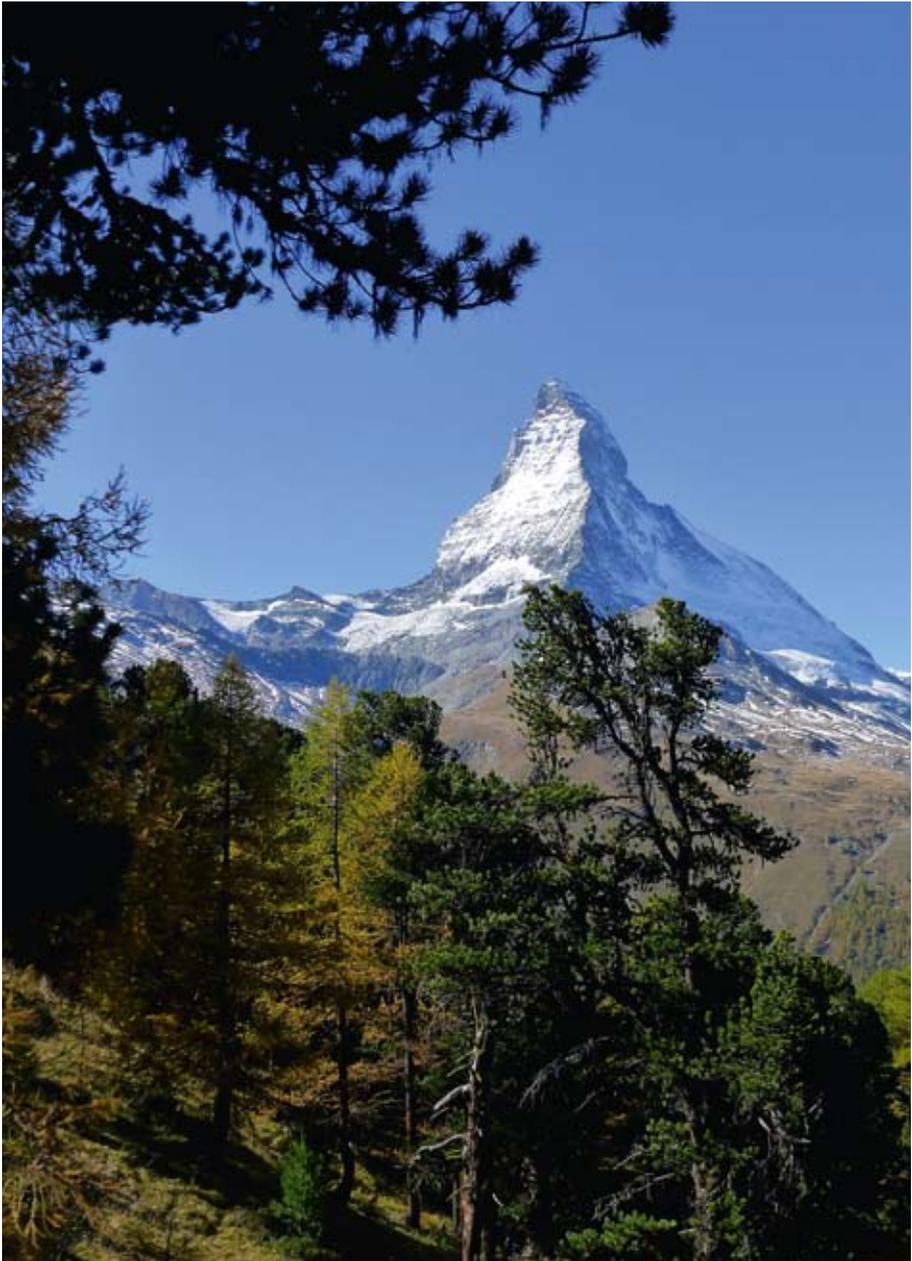
ing which she lived and worked with K, continues to provide fascinating passages. There was one in Issue 66, from the beginning of 1981, concerning what K had wanted Narayan, Rishi Valley principal at the time, to devote himself to at the school. The words not in quotation marks are Mary's.

Narayan is to create, at Rishi Valley, a place where the catalyst that changed Krishnaji as a boy can again take place. "The door is waiting to be opened." At Madras, too, someone must be there to provide the atmosphere, and it must be for students who are there for Krishnaji's teachings, and nothing else. There will be no education to become engineers, etcetera, but only a total involvement with Krishnaji's teachings. "If you do this, the door will open, something will take place. I say this with scientific clarity. This has not happened because I have not stayed in one place."... "If I stayed in one place, I would do it, but it is not my dharma. My job is different." There is no goal in this. "Either you are inviting something tremendous, or you invite the devil, like any little ashram."... "That is the devil, the real dangers—the Rajneesh, the Mahesh Yogi, etcetera." ... "If you ask heaven to bless you, it will bless this. The Foundation is nothing without this, and the Foundation has not done it. The door is there to be opened. It is not me. The thing is waiting, hoping. It needs brains, a global brain. Don't say, 'I haven't got it.' All that is gone. It is a child waiting to be born." He said to Narayan, to Sunanda, to Upasani, and to Krishnakutti, "You have said you would do it, and there is no going back. You must have a vital brain, global and dynamic. If you are a woman, you are not a woman anymore, even if you wear a woman's body. You may have been egotistic in the school, but not here. And if you are not here, you will not do all that there."

(February 1981) from Issue 66 of The Memoirs of Mary Zimbalist

© Scott H. Forbes

Rabindra read this to the KFA intern students over lunch one day, and they were fascinated, especially after having participated in an education seminar with Stephen Smith the previous month. Rabindra also read it out at a KFA trustee meeting.



The Matterhorn, from Riffelalp, Switzerland

Another interesting quote by K in *Mary's Memoirs*, in Issue 68 from entries made in mid-1981, has to do with David Bohm, with whom K had some of the most penetrating dialogues imaginable regarding the human condition. Mary wrote:

Krishnaji asked me what I would feel if he [K] died suddenly. He said he felt rather as if he already had. He didn't explain what he meant by this, but went on to describe what death usually means to most people, the average person, the state of shock that endures at being bereft, left, let down. He thought of all this last week when it was touch-and-go with David Bohm [who was undergoing heart surgery]. I asked him what had gone through his mind then, and he said, "I said to myself, he mustn't die because, first of all, he is a nice man, interested. There are very few of them like that. I said, if he lives, I am going to ask him to leave all that nonsense about the third dimension, the implicate order, wholeness, etcetera. You see, I think basically there must be a conflict in him of which he may be unaware. I would say to him, let's gather a group of serious people. Come and settle at Brockwood, don't travel. You can't travel anymore. Let's work together and create a nucleus of people who are intellectually tops and spiritually geniuses. I said I would tell him that."

(July 1981) from Issue 68 of The Memoirs of Mary Zimbalist
© Scott H. Forbes

A few years later, K told me that he couldn't dialogue with David any longer because when one has had a heart attack, something happens to the brain. But K asked David to keep coming to Brockwood to talk with the staff and students, which he did almost until his death, in 1992. For myself, I think that David did fully recover after the heart surgery and was effectively good old David again. In fact, he went on to give a lot of energy to the exploration of consciousness, through dialogue, and published excellent books on the subject.

But regarding the description in Issue 76 of my first meeting with K, I have some doubts. K had asked to see me at Chalet Tannegg on 1 August 1983, because former Brockwood teacher Gisèle Balleys and I were thinking of starting a school

in Switzerland, with K's work as its inspiration. (Gisèle is now a KFT trustee and organises the international gathering in Mürren each summer, as well as other K-related activities.) Issue 76 records Mary and Scott feeling that, for his first meeting with me, K had the intention of siphoning the money from the new school project to Brockwood. I myself never felt that, and it was only later in the year, when K and I met at Brockwood and he asked if Gisèle and I had the right students, the right teachers and the right parents – which we didn't – that I realised that starting a new school made no sense. (This was when I decided to get involved in Brockwood and soon all the schools and Foundations.) K also declared to me at some point that he was not interested at all in money. The *Memoirs* also say that after "planting the seeds" that the new school project should not go ahead, K left our first meeting happy. But I think he was happy because he saw, as he later declared, "There comes a friend who says, 'I want to help you.'" My version of this and other events are included in *The Beauty of the Mountain*. In any case, this probably goes to show that the viewer is, or at least helps to shape, the viewed.

A religious life is concerned with the whole

It is important not to make the distinction between the worldly and the so-called religious. Without the world of matter, the material world, we wouldn't be here. Without the beauty of the sky and the single tree on the hill, without that woman going by and that man riding the horse, life wouldn't be possible. We are concerned with the totality of life not a particular part of it which is considered religious in opposition to the rest. So one begins to see that a religious life is concerned with the whole and not with the particular.

from the chapter The Religious Life in The Urgency of Change
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My last Newsletter (autumn 2013) included my old friend **Bill Quinn's letter** regarding Radha Sloss's book *Lives in the Shadow with J. Krishnamurti*, a book that revealed that K had had an intimate, sexual relationship when he

was a young man, with the author's mother. Recently Pedro, a friend from Brockwood, made the following unusual comment after reading Bill Quinn's letter: "I actually read Mrs. Sloss's book and found it very interesting, not so much for all the gossip involved but for the account of those years living as a community in Ojai. Apart from everything he shared with humanity, Krishnamurti's life was really remarkable."

Here is Bill Quinn's letter again, because to me it is the most balanced picture available of the people and those times from someone who was there and knew them all. It is empathetic to a remarkable degree, humane, and, for me, the final word on the subject.

Dear Friedrich,

April 20, 1993

Through the years Radha sent her manuscript to various publishers, and by chance the readers of two publishers to whom the book was assigned for evaluation were friends of mine. I deliberately read it once in one continuous effort so as to get an overall impression. I have not read the version published in England, and it's likely that changes have been made and editing done. What follows is based on my recollection of my first and only reading.

I suspect that Radha is merely the spokesman for her parents. It has always seemed to me most unfortunate she was put in this position. She was not a direct witness to the alleged intimacy between K and Rosalind, but was told about it when she was a young woman by her mother. It is understandable that Radha, having been brought up in a seemingly magical world, should have been traumatized and embittered by Rosalind's claims. It's notable that early in the story it was K that Radha adored, like a father; yet she later is so condemnatory.

Having lived with the family during the period the affair was supposed to be taking place, I can attest there was a great intimacy between K and Rosalind, and I felt very much a part of a family which included them and Radha, and in which I was in daily close contact. It was an extraordinarily warm and simple life we had, extremely open so far as I could see, and so unconflicted I felt an absolute absence of self consciousness. Rosalind



On the Belchen, near Haus Sonne in the Black Forest, Germany

appeared to me to be utterly generous and loving, and I count her among the dearest friends of my life. I felt less at ease with Raja, somewhat intimidated by his force and brilliance, but he too was warm and outgoing to me. However, he was seldom at Arya Vihara in those years, spending most of his time in Hollywood as he did. With Radha and David, her cousin, children then, I had a simple affectionate rapport. I must point out that I was a very young man at the time.

Since I felt part of this family, its breakup and the alienation of Raja from Rosalind and both from K, and the mystery surrounding it through the years, had disturbed me greatly. I was deeply affected by the book, and among my responses was a grief for everybody involved – so much pain!

It seems to me, however, that one cannot form an opinion on the basis of the book about the allegations of an affair between K and Rosalind. The letters that are said to support this claim are unavailable [the affair was later confirmed by Krishnamurti himself]. It's hard to see how one can presume to know what goes on between any two people. When a relationship is conflicted, a third person can know only the statements of the two parties, which are inevitably biased.

I feel strongly that it is important to establish the truth about K's life, and to affirm his humanity. I deplore the widespread efforts to mythologize and deify him, because doing so makes it impossible for people to recognize their kinship with him, and puts him in an abstract sphere, as a sort of icon.

When I read the book it seemed to me possible that there had been such a relationship. Given the unworldliness of both K and Rosalind, their innocence, such a thing could have come about through simple proximity and affection, as such things often do. Honoring the Rosalind I had known in earlier days, I even felt glad for K that he might have had such a relationship. And if there were an affair, the secrecy is understandable, given the social climate of those days. It would not have been K's concern alone to be either open or discreet: the lives of others were involved: Rosalind, Raja and Radha. Also, they might have felt that it was no one else's business.

What is lamentable to me about the book is that its motivation seems to be vindictiveness. To me, unfortunately, the book makes Rosalind, not K, to appear shabby and small. In part this is the effect of objectifying and blaming K and not going into Rosalind's character in depth. I think she

was a much larger person, and for a long time I wanted to talk to Radha and try and dissuade her from publication for this reason. But I had not the courage; my old affection for her and her mother made the prospect of such an encounter too painful.

The book seems to me naive in many ways, and to reflect little self-knowledge on the part of the Rajagopals. If there was such an affair in which Rosalind suffered so much, she was certainly also responsible. She was an adult. She was moreover a strong person and rather dominated K, to my mind, when I lived with them. The tone suggests a jilted lover. And through the years after their breakup, I had many hours-long conversations with Rosalind in which she poured out her hurt and rage. She was simply obsessed.

I also talked to K about the breakup, and offered to be an intermediary. He said, however, “No! It is finished.”

It seems to me that Rosalind’s story, whether the allegations about K are true or not, is a common and doleful human tragedy, and my response is more compassionate than anything else. It’s a story of how possessiveness, jealousy, suspicion and selfrighteousness can destroy affection and lead to life long bitterness and a desire for revenge. It not only destroys affection, but the person.

So many people wanted to possess K! I knew well another woman who was remarkably close to K, and I happened to be with her during a time when she simply went to pieces and became bedridden for days, raging and torn. She later came to literally hate him for some years, and did some real mischief.

I think that when K went to India in 1947 a new life for him began when he met some wonderful minds, soon to include Pupul Jayakar and her family. Rosalind at that time stayed in California and was fully occupied with the newly formed Happy Valley School. At this time, I suspect, the Rajagopals began to lose control of K.

As for the allegations about Nandini, I don’t take them seriously. It’s well known that she and K had an extraordinary affinity, but to assume that this was sexually based seems unwarranted. K loved many people and was capable of a great intimacy with those who were open to him. I’m afraid Rosalind was overcome by suspicion.

Bill Quinn

Several readers wrote to me in 1993 after having read Bill's letter. Mumtaz Ali, Principal of Neel Bagh School near Rishi Valley, wrote: "Thank you very much for your newsletter. Quite a delightful little booklet I must say. I am especially thankful to you for publishing Bill Quinn's letter to you regarding *Lives in the Shadow*. I wish it gets more publicity." Prof. R. Linssen, Institute of New Sciences and Philosophies, Brussels, wrote that Bill's comments have been tremendously helpful, since many people were initially very disturbed by the book. And Nancy Clayton of Wellington, New Zealand wrote: "...It is a joy to communicate with our extended family which is how I feel about the newsletter. ...Bill Quinn's letter gladdened me. I have not read Radha's book, but from what I heard I questioned her motive for writing and publishing it. If the facts are correct who are we with our limited understanding to judge them. In no way did it alter my approach to the teachings as apparently it has done for some..."

Is marriage and sex excluded for a religious man?

K (*reading a question from the audience*): "Is marriage and sex excluded for a religious man? If so, why?"

Do you know? Are they excluded for you? You're supposed to be religious, aren't you?

From audience: We look to you.

K: Look to me? What for? (*laughter from audience*) To tell you – to tell you to marry or not to marry? To tell you that if you want to be a really religious man, you must not have sex? And if I did – if I was foolish enough to tell you, and you were foolish enough to accept it, would you be... (*audience responses*) ...follow it, sir, to the very end; follow it to the very end. Would you not have sexual feelings at all?

Questioner: Sorry Sir, I didn't mean that. What I meant was: once again we have a concept looking at you, that to be truly religious is to have no marriage, and then all the rest that follows.

K: Which is, therefore you have an authority who is going to tell you – who tells you, "Don't marry; don't have sexual feelings. And if you want to reach the highest enlightenment, etc., you must be celibate." Are you?

Haven't you all your desires, your sexual feelings? What do you mean by sexual feelings? Let's get at that, for god's sake. What do you mean by sexual feeling? To look at a woman? All the biological urges? And to look at a tree, is that not also sexuality? To look at a flower which has great beauty, that's a form of sensuality too, isn't it?

So if you deny – as most religions have denied – sexuality, then you must close your eyes, cut your tongue, put out your eyes, and never look at anything.

Don't laugh, sir, this is what you're doing anyhow, because you are not aware of beauty at all. And to you beauty is associated with a woman or with a man. Therefore, the Shankaras of the world have said, "Don't have anything to do with women, if you want to be spiritual." And so you deny the whole beauty of the earth.

Have you ever stopped – you, you in particular, each one of us – looked at a tree, looked at a flower? Have you ever looked at a woman or man who is beautiful, and not said, "Well, I want to get something out of her." Just to look at the beauty of something? Of the hills, the trees, the flowers, the faces, the smiles? You have not, and therefore, you don't know what love or beauty is. All that you know is: "You must not." And "You must." And so you have starved your heart and your mind. You are dehydrated human beings. And you smile and accept it and carry on.

So, sirs, the first thing is not to condemn, and then you will know what love is.

from 9 November 1967, Second Public Discussion at Rishi Valley
© Krishnamurti Foundation of America

My last Newsletter also quoted Prof. Kneupper's great statement about K. This time we have something from another professor of philosophy, Raymond Martin of the University of Maryland, editor of a 1997 anthology for universities titled *Krishnamurti: Reflections on the Self*. The following is an extract from the introduction to the book, also recently included in KFI's Vasanta Vihar Newsletter.

Krishnamurti was not a philosopher in the classical sense. He wasn't interested in presenting theories or in arguing for his views. Still what he was up to is continuous with philosophy. Like Socrates, who through his example and questioning encourages his audience to examine critically the assumptions on which their beliefs depend, Krishnamurti, through his example and questioning, encourages his audiences to examine critically the assumptions on which their very experience of themselves and the world depends. In other words, whereas Socrates encourages what today we would call critical thinking (or, simply, philosophy), Krishnamurti encourages what we might call critical looking (and what he sometimes called choiceless awareness).

... Krishnamurti was not the first to propose critical looking. Others, such as the Buddha, had already proposed it. But Krishnamurti's approach was different and perhaps better suited to skeptically minded philosophers and students of philosophy. For one thing, Krishnamurti was anti-authority to a degree that few thinkers have ever been. He had no use for creeds or theories. He discouraged people from examining themselves in an institutional setting or as part of a spiritual discipline. He taught that in examining oneself one should not rely even on what one has learned in previous examinations. The freedom we need to see what is true, he said, is freedom from the known. And because he spoke to us in a contemporary idiom, it may be easier for us to understand what he said.

Krishnamurti had little use for academic philosophy. Occasionally he dismissed it as a waste of time, or worse as a generator of theories that become obstacles in an individual's attempt to understand him or herself. Yet, as the writings in this volume will reveal to those who accept his invitation to examine their experience and behavior, much of what Krishnamurti said is deeply relevant to philosophy. Its relevance is not that he had theories to propose or critiques of extant theories. Krishnamurti's focus is on insights. His talent as a teacher is that he facilitates them.

... Rather than a theorist, Krishnamurti was a seer and a teacher. Among the things he thought he saw are certain inherently distorting psychological structures that bring about a division in almost everyone's consciousness between "the observer" and "the observed." This division, he believed, is a potent source of conflict – both internally for the individual, and

through the individual externalized for society as a whole. Krishnamurti also proposed a way to remove these damaging structures, or, more accurately, to facilitate their removal. That is what the writings in this volume are about: a radical transformation in human consciousness.

*Raymond Martin, from the Introduction to
Krishnamurti: Reflections on the Self
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Suprabha Seshan, known to us all as Supi, has been working in the front line of environmental conservation and restoration for over two decades. In her case this has been primarily at the Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary in the Western Ghats, in Kerala, India – work for which she and the Sanctuary have been recognised with major international awards. Supi writes regular blogs on her work at the Sanctuary as well as occasional articles in relevant magazines. The following are extracts from such an article, published in *Hardnews* in February 2014. Supi told us, “I wrote this one night at 3a.m. I’d been awakened by the sounds of the forest, and a powerful dream. A question arose: if I had only one chance to write something, what would it be? The peg this piece hangs on is the notion of human supremacy.” We can’t reprint the whole thing, but here are four sections to give a flavour of it. Please read the complete article, **From This Wounded Forest: A Dispatch**, at: hardnewsmedia.com/2014/02/6212

... What then of the machine, the greatest achievement of modern man, a globalised artifice that now runs the show? Is this not a part of that same intelligence? One of myriad intelligences? Do you wonder what supports the machine? Where do its fuel and form come from? What is its body made of? Who died so this computer could come into being (and what abuse of language, to call this, a body, a being!)? And what of the living world does this machine support? Does it support my life, or yours, my actual body, my flesh, my people, my land base; does this give rise to more intelligence? More life, more diversity? More possibilities for every member of this universe? What

do you eat? Food, or reconstituted petroleum? What do you breathe? Air, or toxic waste in a gaseous sewer? Whom do you love? A human, or a product? Where do you live? In the real world, or a digital world?

... Is a machine aware? Is a machine intelligent? Does a machine have will? Does a machine reproduce? Does a machine care? Does a machine attend to your life? Does your iPad love you? Does this petroleum guzzling non-sentient, non-aware, non-reproducing, non-supportive toxic product of modern industrial civilisation, in its multifarious forms, qualify as intelligent? Or is it a one-way system? Life goes in, and death by decimation, processing and packaging comes out. Thus, is it your agent in holocaust, destruction by proxy? Or is it just stupid? Without you or me, what is this machine? And, worse than stupid, is it just utterly mechanical, in the way machines are, and thus in the known history of the universe, rather unique?

... While scientists, armed by their technocratic henchmen, probe the secrets of the universe, and of every cell, through telescoping, magnification, extension, dissection, dislocation and isolation, and explain it all through mystifying equations (incomprehensible mantras of the dominant culture), actions that further devour the body of the world, I'm growing allegiances with non-humans and humans in my own community.

... Picture a world where trees, plants, frogs, tigers, humans, rivers, mountains, winds, waters, soils, communities coexist, each supporting the other, each in relation to the other, each conspiring to add beauty to the world, each giving life, so all may live in beauty. Before I die, and more important, before the forests are vanquished, I believe we are required to engage directly with the truly intelligent members of the universe, those who have figured out how life supports life, and how death supports life, how death doesn't lead to immiserated oceans, and toxified air, and collapsed forests, and extirpated tigers, and devastated humans; and how intelligence and life are to each other how the wave is to a particle, or a river to water molecules, or blood to every cell. And I believe that love, beauty, real life, and a vibrant planet are born from this, wholly.

*from the article From This Wounded Forest:
A Dispatch, by Suprabha Seshan
as printed in Hardnews, January 2014*

And along the same lines, the following was recently written to Javier by **Frode Steen**, a friend, former Brockwood Park student, KFA trustee and Associate Professor in Communication Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles.

eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/figures/projected-changes-in-water-limited suggests that Spain may be heavily affected by global warming, in line with your impressions traversing the country, though Galicia's coast is likely to fare better. A critical factor is going to be how the government and the people respond to a general decline in resources – do we get a peaceful devolution into smaller entities, a return to village life, so that communities and a decent life can be sustained? A gradual reduction in wealth need not be catastrophic; we have so much more than we really need for a good life.

The alternative dark vision is the warband (<http://thearchdruidreport.blogspot.de/2014/10/dark-age-america-hour-of-knife.html>) of young men tearing existing institutions apart, as is now happening with the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq; similar patterns emerged at the fall of the Roman Empire, and they took several hundred years to play out, decimating the population, emptying the cities, and laying waste the countryside. Once looting becomes a way of life, the productivity of the countryside drops, food becomes scarce, and people are pushed into further looting of what is left. The population can start dropping quite rapidly. The more imperious the leaders, the more likely becomes a descent into the warband scenario.

We're currently caught in a see-saw that tells us we're at the top of our resource use, wobbling before we start the downturn. As the cost of fossil fuels rise, the high price generates new supply of oil – fracking, Arctic, hard-to-get expensive oil. Yet consumers of oil suffer – profits decline and the economy begins to contract. The demand for oil falls, pushing the price down again – it's currently \$80 a barrel, down 25% from last year's top. At that price, most new oil prospects don't pay – more than half of the world's 163 biggest oil projects require at least a \$120 price for crude. It's a narrowing see-saw: if oil is too expensive, the economy suffers and people lose their jobs; if oil is too cheap, there's no incentive to drill. There's not much oil left at a price we can afford.

The likely trigger for the crisis is a debt implosion, and we're all seeing it coming. Debt levels are now much higher than they were at the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008. Much of this is debt that will never be repaid, and the markets are nervous because they know someone will be left holding the bag. By continually upping the stakes, we are preparing a vast and unstoppable tsunami of defaults. We should instead start scaling back, accepting that we are headed downstairs, so that we can walk leisurely rather than tumble.

The underlying problem is a level of consumption for a large number of people that is simply unsustainable, and thus will end. The complexity of the present situation is so high that it's really not possible to predict where the different areas will develop; in fact it would be interesting to create stories and maps of the future that examine the possible outcomes for the different parts of the world. You may recall for instance that during the Dark Ages of the Migrations in Europe, Ireland had its Golden Age of art and poetry.

The exploration of the possible is also essential for the next generation. I notice for instance that the temporal horizon of my 20-year-old students is something like one to three years when it comes to their own lives; anything beyond that and they shut down cognitively and emotionally. They're also very focused on their own agency and what they can do now, so it's important to have real alternatives that provide a way for their energies to express themselves. I'm looking for some way to make the present crisis visible and actionable for them, of course while they are being constantly bombarded by messages telling them all they should be aspiring towards is to be part of the 1%.

Frode Steen

Lastly, I've always been intrigued with K's writing that "Colour was god." I've so far found it five times within wonderful descriptions of nature in *Krishnamurti's Notebook*: in his entries for 26 October and 17 November 1961 at Rishi Valley, 29 November 1961 at Madras, 30 December 1961 at Rajghat/Benares and 28 February 1962 at Bombay. The 17 November 1961 entry is included in *The Beauty of the Mountain*. Here are the lines from one of the other entries:

Colour was god

That rice field was enchanted; it was so amazingly green, so rich and wondrous; it was incredible, it took your mind and heart away. You looked and you disappeared, never to be again the same. That colour was god, was music, was the love of the earth; the heavens came to the palms and covered the earth. But that rice field was the bliss of eternity.

from the entry of 29 November 1961, Madras, in Krishnamurti's Notebook
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Of course it's better to read the whole chapter. Each one is beautiful and conveys not only K's deep engagement with nature but also far-reaching psychological insight and the 'meditation' about which he spoke with such passion.

Friedrich Grohe, July-September 2014



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New rice fields near Rishi Valley, India

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