

# A New Kind of Education System

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## INTRODUCTION

There is a questioning today of the basic postulates of the educational structure and its various systems in India and in the rest of the world. At all levels there is a growing realization that the existing models have failed and that there is a total lack of relevance between the human being and the complex, contemporary society. The ecological crisis and increasing poverty, hunger and violence, are forcing man inevitably to face the realities of the human situation. At a time like this, a completely new approach to the postulates of education is necessary.

Krishnamurti questions the roots of our culture. His challenge is addressed not only to the structure of education but to the nature and quality of man's mind and life. Unlike all other attempts to salvage or suggest alternatives to the educational system, Krishnamurti's approach breaks through frontiers of particular cultures and establishes an entirely new set of values, which in turn can create a new civilization and a new society.

Somebody is a great carpenter, somebody is a great shoemaker, somebody is a great scientist, somebody is a great money-maker -- they are all contributing whatever their potential allows them to life, with totality, not holding anything back. Naturally they should have equal opportunity to grow, and they should have equal respect. Just because a man is a president of a country does not mean that he should have respect and the man who makes perfect shoes should not. Both are fulfilling certain needs of the society; both should have the same honour and the same dignity.

Teaching should not be done in the old-fashioned way, because television or computers can do it in a far better way, can bring the latest information without any problems. The teacher has to appeal to our ears; television appeals directly to our eyes; and the impact is far greater, because the eyes absorb eighty percent of our life situations, they are the most alive part.

If we can see something there is no need to memorize it; but if we listen to something we have to memorize it. Almost ninety-eight percent of education can be delivered through television, and the questions that students will ask can be answered by computers. The teacher should be only a guide to show the students the right channel, to show how to use the computer, how to find the latest book. His function will be totally different. He is not imparting knowledge to you; he is making the students aware of the contemporary knowledge, of the latest knowledge. He is only a guide.

And for education to make all these changes, education will have to go through many changes itself.

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For example, examinations should be dissolved, because examinations emphasize people's memory, not their intelligence. Memory is not a great thing; particularly in the future it is not going to be of any importance. We can carry our small computer in our pocket which will have all the memories that we need, and any time...immediately the computer will supply. There is no need to fill our head with unnecessary rubbish.

There should not be any kind of examination as part of education, but every day, every hour observation by the teachers; their remarks throughout the year will decide whether the student move further or remain a little longer in the same class. Nobody fails, nobody passes -- it is just that a few people are speedy and a few people are a little bit lazy -- because the idea of failure creates a deep wound of inferiority, and the idea of being successful also creates a different kind of disease, that of superiority. So, examinations will not have any place. That will change the whole perspective from the future to the present. What we are doing right this moment will be decisive, not five or eight questions at the end of year. Thousands of things we will pass through during this year, each will be decisive; so the education will not be goal-oriented.

The computer is going to replace the whole system of education which has depended up to now on memory. Whoever can memorize comes first class, gets a gold medal, and tops the university. But have we ever thought about what happens to these gold medallists in the world? They don't show anywhere any genius. Somebody is just a head clerk, somebody is just a station master, and somebody is a postmaster -- what happened to their gold medals? What happened to the great respect that their university paid to them?

In fact the university paid respect to their memories and memories are of not much use in actual life. In actual life we need intelligence. And the difference should be made clear to us. Memory is a ready-made answer. But life goes on changing, it is never ready-made -- so all our ready-made answers are lagging behind life.

Life needs a living response...not a ready-made answer, but a spontaneous response this moment; it needs intelligence.

Up to now education systems have not been creating intelligence at all. Intelligence needs a totally different kind of structure. Examinations are for memory, they are a memory test of how much we can memorize. But if questions are asked which you have not memorized, you are at a loss. We don't have the intelligence to respond to a new question for which the answer has not been memorized before.

The whole system of examinations is futile. A different structure should be created: each student, every day, should get his credit marks from the teacher to show if he is behaving intelligently, if he is answering things intelligently -- not just a repetition of the textbooks, but something original.

And there is no need to wait for one year; if a student can get enough marks within six months, he should pass into a higher standard. There is no question of anybody failing or anybody passing. Just as we start getting closer to the standard beyond our standard...there is no examination. Just with our teachers watching our responses and our intelligence, we will be moving on. Somebody may come one month later, somebody may come a few months later, but there is no question of a fixed year program. I am a teacher and I know.... There were students who were so talented that they could have passed the whole course set for one year in two or three months; now nine or ten months are wasted. Who is responsible for that? And there were retarded students; even one year was not enough for them.

Each individual should be given credit for his own intelligence. There should not be any time limit, because that time limit wastes the more talented, the more genuinely intelligent, the geniuses, and waits for the retarded, for the idiotic and the stupid. It is an ugly system.

The classroom will have a totally different form. It will not be the classroom where the teacher teaches to the students; although teacher knows more and students know less. According to me, the library can be the only classroom. The teacher can only be a guide to help the students to find the latest, the recent most researches in every subject. In the library the students should be there, and the teacher should be there just to help them, because he is more acquainted with the library, he has been longer in the library, he knows about the new discoveries and the latest inventions which have arrived. His function should be that of a guide to lead the students to the up to date knowledge.

This can be facilitated very easily with computers, with television sets. In the twenty-first century we need not teach students geography with a map when computer or television can bring you exactly to the place we are learning about -- New York or London or Athens -- we need not bother ourself looking at maps, looking at pictures, descriptions. On the

computer screen we can be instantly in New York, and what is seen is remembered more easily than what is heard, than what is read.

**The future belongs to the televisions, to the computers, because they are the memory systems.**

The teacher will have a totally new function that will not be of teaching but only of guidance -- where the students can find the right book in the library, where they can find the right video in the library, where they can find the right information in the computer.

Teaching becomes more alive, more colourful, and more real. And the day is not far away when television will be three-dimensional. Then it will seem exactly as if people are walking and may come out of the television set any moment. Only two three-dimensional films were made, and then the idea was dropped because they were too costly. But they will come back. With better techniques they will not be that costly.

I have seen one of the films. It was a strange experience. A man throws a spear -- and the whole audience in the movie hall gives way, because it is as if that spear is going through the hall. It is three-dimensional; it is as realistic as any actual spear can be. A man comes running on his horse and people shriek and divide to give way to the horse...it is just entering into the hall. It never enters! Slowly they become accustomed, by the end of the film: "Don't be worried. Just sit tight in your seat. Nothing is coming out of the screen. It comes only up to the screen and stops."

When things can be taught in three-dimensional televisions and films, when everything that you need to memorize can be done by a small computer.... It can be connected with the national computer, which carries all the knowledge that has been found since man started coming down from the trees. You can get every information which will be very difficult to remember.

For example, if I ask you -- and you are all educated people here -- "On what day was Socrates married?" Now, how educated we are? We cannot remember the date Socrates was married; it was such a great date that he suffered his whole life, and we don't even have compassion enough to remember the date! But our computer can remember all that we want. It can contain whole libraries immediately at hand.

The future of education, if scientifically worked out, is going to be a tremendous adventure. Up to now it has been a kind of enforcement; students have to be forced, bribed.

Education can become so colourful, so actual, and so real that we will not need to say to the students, "Be attentive!" They will be attentive automatically.

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