



A Loving Entry Into The Unknown

*Beloved Osho,
You have recently
said that most of
humanity is
vegetating, not
living. Please explain
to us the art of living
so that death may
become also a
celebration.*

Man is born to achieve life, but it all depends on him. He can miss it. He can go on breathing, he can go on eating, he can go on growing old, he can go on moving towards the grave -- but this is not life. This is gradual death from the cradle to the grave, a seventy-year-long gradual death.

And because millions of people around you are dying in this gradual, slow death, you also start imitating them. Children learn everything from those who are around them, and we are surrounded by the dead.

So first we have to understand what I mean by 'life'.

It must not be simply growing old.

It must be growing up.

And these are two different things.

Growing old, any animal is capable of. Growing up is the prerogative of human beings.

Only a few claim the right.

Growing up means moving every moment deeper into the

principle of life; it means going further away from death -- not towards death. The deeper you go into life, the more you understand the immortality within you. You are moving away from death; a moment comes when you can see that death is nothing but changing clothes, or changing houses, changing forms -- nothing dies, nothing can die.

Death is the greatest illusion there is. For growing up, just watch a tree. As the tree grows up, its roots are growing down, deeper. There is a balance: the higher the tree goes, the deeper the roots will go. You cannot have a tree one hundred and fifty feet high with small roots; they could not support such a huge tree. In life, growing up means growing deep within yourself -- that's where your roots are.

To me, the first principle of life is meditation. Everything else comes second. And childhood is the best time. As you grow older, it means you are coming closer to death, and it becomes more and more difficult to go into meditation.

Meditation means going into your immortality, going into your eternity, going into your godliness.

And the child is the most qualified person because he is still unburdened by knowledge, unburdened by religion, unburdened by education, unburdened by all kinds of rubbish. He is innocent.

But unfortunately his innocence is being condemned as ignorance. Ignorance and innocence have a similarity, but they are not the same. Ignorance is also a state of not knowing, just as innocence is. But there is a great difference too, which has been overlooked by the whole of humanity up to now. Innocence is not knowledgeable -- but it is not desirous of being knowledgeable either. It is utterly content, fulfilled. A small child has no ambitions, he has no desires. He is so absorbed in the moment -- a bird on the wing catches

his eye so totally; just a butterfly, its beautiful colours, and he is enchanted; the rainbow in the sky... and he cannot conceive that there can be anything more significant, richer than this rainbow. And the night full of stars, stars beyond stars....

Innocence is rich, it is full, it is pure.

Ignorance is poor, it is a beggar -- it wants this, it wants that, it wants to be knowledgeable, it wants to be respectable, it wants to be wealthy, it wants to be powerful.

Ignorance moves on the path of desire.

Innocence is a state of desirelessness.

But because they are both without knowledge, we have remained confused about their natures. We have taken it for granted that they are both the same.

The first step in the art of living will be to create a demarcation line between ignorance and innocence. Innocence has to be supported, protected -- because the child has brought with him the greatest treasure, the treasure that sages find after arduous effort. Sages have said that they become children again, that they are reborn. In India the real Brahmin, the real knower, has called himself *dwij*, twice born. Why twice born? What happened to the first birth? What is the need of the second birth? And what is he going to gain in the second birth? In the second birth he is going to gain what was available in the first birth but the society, the parents, the people surrounding him crushed it, destroyed it.

Every child is being stuffed with knowledge. His simplicity has to be somehow removed, because simplicity is not going to help him in this competitive world. His simplicity will look to the world as if he is a simpleton; his innocence will be exploited in every possible way. Afraid of the society, afraid of the world we have created ourselves, we try to make every child

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