

What is our internal attitude, with regard to comforts? Often life is like a game of musical chairs, with few positions available and many seeking them. Do I feel the comfortable position should be mine? Do I walk a little faster in order to get it first before somebody else? In a lot of little things the self-centre shows itself if one watches. When we are indifferent, and do not feel moved by the pity of the world's condition, it is also selfishness. The Buddha advised that we should realize sorrow as the first truth; it referred to the movement of compassion from within, a release from one's self-centeredness.

Let us not be too easily satisfied. Let us not think that there are nice people in this world. Of course there are a lot of nice people, even in this unpleasant world. But being nice is different from being free of self-centeredness, self-preoccupation, the self in its varied manifestations. The fundamental change has to do with rooting out the self completely - not necessarily in one day. It means really working for *nirvana*, for *nirvana* is 'putting an end' to the egotistic self.

We make words like 'unity', 'brotherhood', 'harmony', 'compassion' into weak terms. These words have a profound, revolutionary significance, if we understand them rightly. It means seeing the inner nature of everything that exists; to see that everything in Nature has a purpose, value and meaning in itself, not what we attribute to it. Most of us unconsciously tend to think that values are according to our prejudices, wants and ideas. The person one considers to be of value is somebody who pleases us in some way – physically, psychologically, or whatever. As for other people, one may not dislike them, or be against them, but a deep sense of respect, a sense of their ineradicable value may not be felt. Brotherhood means something different from what we generally think it does. It implies learning to see that the one unitary life everywhere is wonderful beyond our imagination, subtle, profound, sacred. Wherever it is – and there is no place where it is not – there is something to be respected, studied, something with which we have to feel in harmony, because that harmony is the only way of really knowing.

So the fundamental change we are talking about is from selfishness to unity. Selfishness, whether positive or negative, even if it seems to be no more than indifference or laziness, must end utterly. This change to realization of unity is revolutionary, fundamental. If selfishness were eradicated, one would never feel anger or bitterness, or get into frictions; our life would be one