

LETTERS TO SCHOOLS VOLUME ONE 15TH NOVEMBER, 1979

We ought to consider very seriously, not only in these schools but also as human beings, the capacity to work together; to work together with nature, the living things of the earth, and also with other human beings. As social beings we exist for ourselves. Our laws, our governments, our religions all emphasize the separateness of man which during the centuries has developed into man against man. It is becoming more and more important, if we are to survive, that there be a spirit of co-operation with the universe, with all the things of the sea and earth.

One can see in all social structures the destructive effect of fragmentation taking place - nation against nation, one group against another group, one family against another family, one individual against another. It is the same religiously, socially and economically. Each one is striving for himself, for his class or his particular interest in the community. This division of beliefs, ideals, conclusions and prejudices is preventing the spirit of co-operation from flowering.

We are human beings, not tribal identities, exclusive, separate. We are human beings caught in conclusions, theories, faiths. We are living creatures, not labels. It is our human circumstance that makes us search for food, clothes and shelter at the expense of others. Our very thinking is separative and all action springing from this limited thought must prevent co-operation. The economic and social structure, as it is now, including organized religions, intensifies exclusiveness, separateness. This lack of co-operation ultimately brings about wars and the destruction of man. It is only during crises or disasters, that we seem to come together, and when they are over we are back to our old condition.

We seem to be incapable of living and working together harmoniously. Is it because our brain, which is the centre of our thought, our feeling, has from ancient days become through necessity so conditioned to seek its own personal survival that this isolating, aggressive process has come about? Is it because this isolating process identifies itself with the family, with the tribe, and becomes glorified nationalism? Is not all isolation linked to a need for identification and fulfilment? Has not the importance of the self been cultivated through evolution by the opposition of the me and you, the we and they? Have not all religions emphasized personal salvation, personal enlightenment, personal achievement, both religiously and in the world? Has co-operation become impossible because we have given such importance to talent, to specialization, to achievement, to success - all emphasizing separateness? Is it because human co-operation has centred on some kind of authority of government or religion, around some ideology or conclusion, which then inevitably brings about its own destructive opposite?

What does it mean to co-operate - not the word but the spirit of it? You cannot possibly co-operate with another, with the earth and its waters, unless you in yourself are harmonious, not broken up, non-contradictory; you cannot co-operate if you yourself are under strain, pressure, conflict. How can you co-operate with the universe if you are concerned with yourself, your problems, your ambitions? There can be no co-operation if all your activities are self-centred and you are occupied with your own selfishness, with your own secret desires and pleasures. As long as the intellect with its thoughts dominates all your actions, obviously there can be no co-operation, for thought is partial, narrow and everlastingly divisive. Co-operation demands great honesty.

Honesty has no motive. Honesty is not some ideal, some faith. Honesty is clarity - the clear perception of things as they are. Perception is attention. That very attention throws light, with all its energy, on that which is being observed. This light of perception brings about a transformation of the thing observed.

There is no system through which you learn to co-operate. It is not to be structured and classified.

Its very nature demands that there be love and that love is not measureable, for when you compare - which is the essence of measurement - thought has entered. Where thought is, love is not.

Now can this be conveyed to the student and can co-operation exist among educators in these schools? These schools are centres of a new generation with a new outlook, with a new sense of being citizens of the world, concerned with all the living things of this world. It is your grave responsibility to bring about this spirit of co-operation.