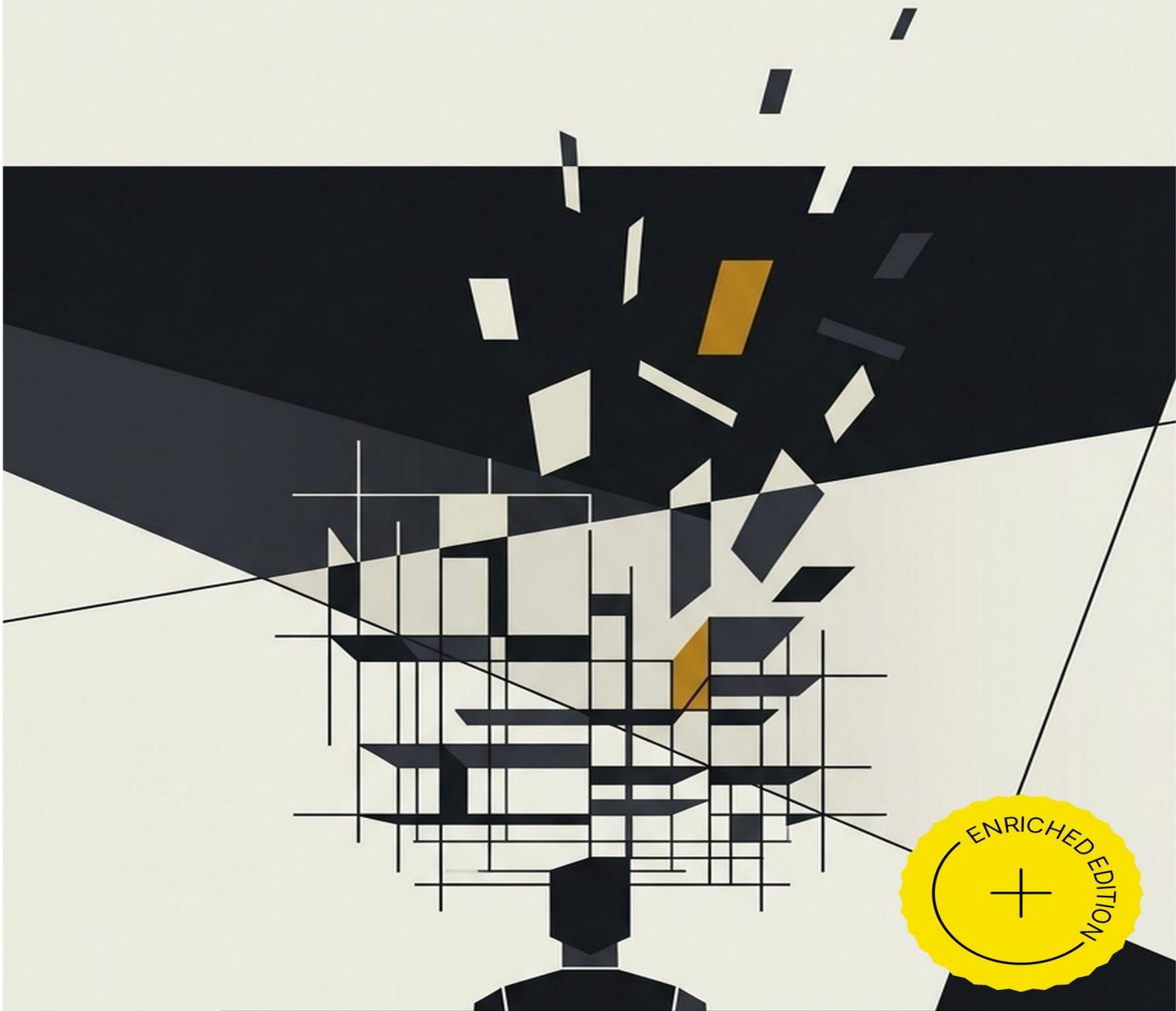
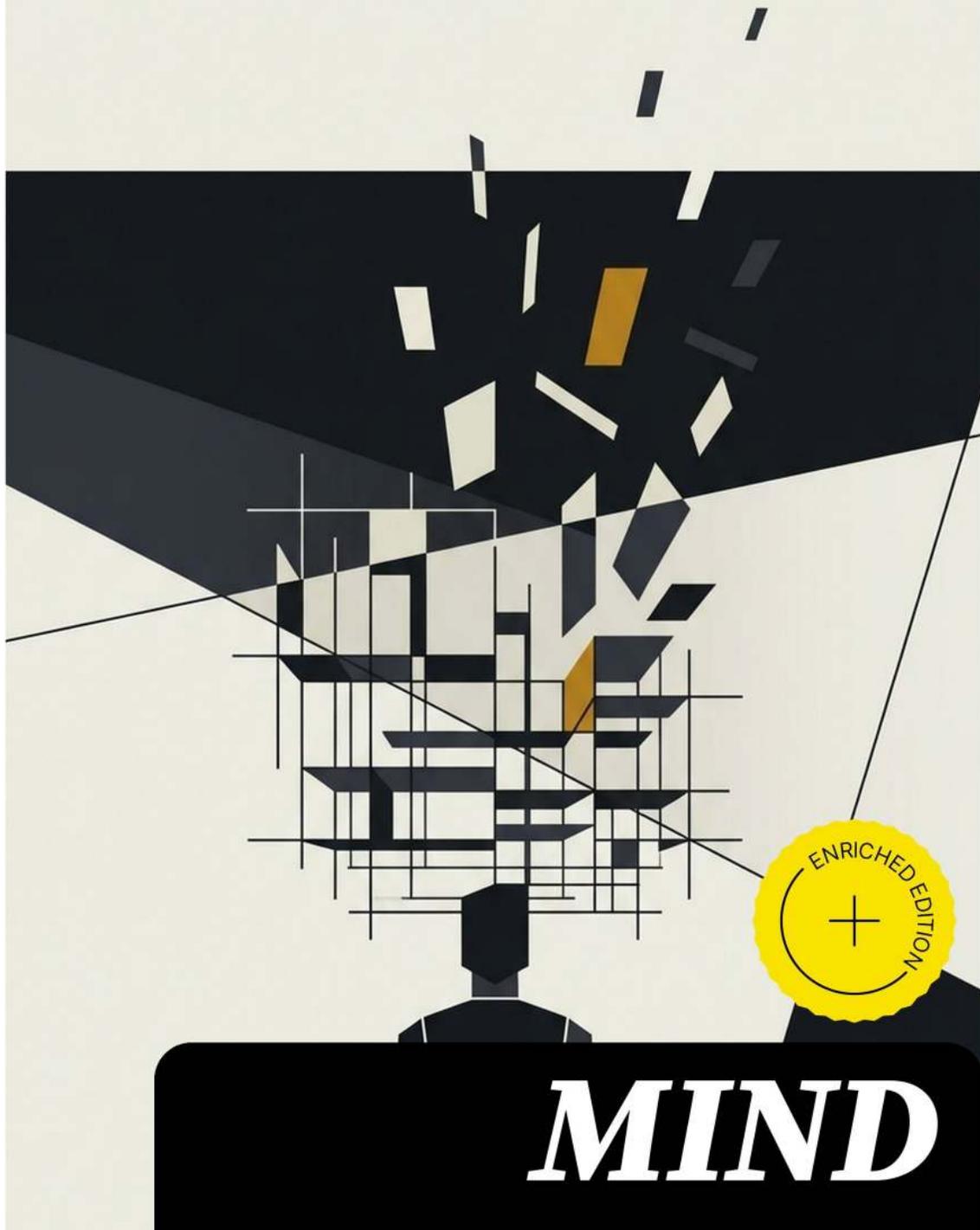


***U. G. KRISHNAMURTI***



***MIND  
IS A MYTH***

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**MIND**

ENRICHED EDITION  
+

***IS A MYTH***

**U. G. Krishnamurti**

# **Mind is a Myth**

**Enriched edition.**

*Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Kendall Pierce*

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# Introduction

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This book stages a relentless collision between humanity's craving for a final, redeeming explanation and the unnerving possibility that our cherished self, our meanings, and even the consolations of thought might be no more than habits masquerading as truth, questioning whether the mind clarifies reality or only perpetuates its own continuity, whether the search for enlightenment eases suffering or amplifies it, and whether what we call experience is guided discovery or conditioned reflex, so that the reader is confronted not with a new system to adopt but with an uncompromising demand to examine the very impulse that asks for systems in the first place.

*Mind is a Myth*, by U. G. Krishnamurti, is a work of philosophical and spiritual non-fiction drawn from conversations that circulated in the late twentieth century, presented as dialogues rather than as a formal treatise. Krishnamurti (1918-2007), an Indian speaker known for rejecting the mantle of guru, appears here in unscripted exchanges that have been transcribed and arranged for readers. The book's setting is the encounter itself: a room, a voice, and persistent questions about consciousness, freedom, and suffering. Emerging from decades of discussion, it belongs to the era when tape-recorded talks and informal interviews reshaped how radical ideas reached a global audience.

In place of plot or doctrine, the premise is stark: someone asks, and Krishnamurti refuses to supply consoling answers, pulling apart the assumptions hidden inside the questions. The voice is spare, blunt, and sometimes abrasive, favoring direct statements over metaphor and

method. The style feels conversational yet exacting, with rhythms that circle back over the same ground until what seemed solid grows porous. The tone is unsentimental and skeptical, but the pacing invites reflection rather than shock. Readers encounter an experience of thought under pressure, where the goal is not agreement or inspiration, but clarity about what thought can and cannot do.

Across its pages, the book interrogates several interlocking themes: the authority granted to ideas about enlightenment, the cultural conditioning that shapes the sense of self, and the role of language in reinforcing the very problems it tries to resolve. It challenges the compulsion to seek transformation through practices and promises, examining how the search itself might entrench dependence. It also questions the division between body and mind, and the prestige of memory as a guide to the present. Rather than announcing a replacement creed, the conversations track the dismantling of certainty, emphasizing observation without motive and attention unburdened by borrowed conclusions.

For contemporary readers navigating wellness industries, self-optimization programs, and online cultures that reward confident answers, *Mind is a Myth* remains pertinent because it asks what cost is paid for comforting narratives about progress and identity. Its critique of spiritual authority resonates amid proliferating experts and curated wisdom, urging caution about turning inquiry into belief. The book's skepticism challenges the commodification of attention, suggesting that techniques can become distractions when the instrument doing the improving is itself under question. In an age of accelerating advice, its refusal to offer a method functions as a safeguard against quick fixes and subtle coercions.

Krishnamurti's stance is paradoxically engaging: he speaks at length yet disavows any incentive to persuade, and his replies often dismantle the premises offered to him

instead of replacing them with better ones. The cumulative effect is rigorous rather than cynical, closer to philosophical unmasking than to consolation or revolt. Readers may feel provoked by the absence of prescriptions, but that absence is the point, since importing a procedure would restore the patterns under examination. The book invites a form of attention that is immediate, unheroic, and practical, attentive to what thinking does as it happens rather than to what it promises.

Approached in this light, *Mind is a Myth* offers a compact, searching encounter with the limits of explanatory systems and the seductions of psychological continuity, a challenge that does not end in mere negation but in the possibility of seeing without the scaffolding of borrowed meaning. It rewards slow reading, readiness to stop when familiar interpretive reflexes appear, and willingness to leave questions open. That stance matters today because it equips readers to distinguish inquiry from consumption, seriousness from spectacle, and attention from technique, keeping alive a difficult but necessary freedom: to look for oneself without turning looking into another myth.

# Synopsis

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Mind is a Myth presents U. G. Krishnamurti's stark dismantling of spiritual and psychological certainties through conversations recorded over several years. Rather than offering doctrines, he subjects cherished ideas about consciousness, transformation, and enlightenment to relentless scrutiny. The book's dialogic format lets questions from visitors trigger terse, uncompromising responses that circle back to a central thesis: what people call the mind is a convenient fiction sustained by memory and culture. The narrative develops not as a linear argument but as recurring probes that unsettle assumptions, exposing the reader to an austere view of human functioning stripped of metaphysical consolations or instructional promise.

Threaded through these dialogues is a spare autobiographical arc that gives context to his iconoclasm. He recounts a long period of seeking, exposure to philosophy and religion, and disillusionment with authorities and methods. The book traces how conventional spiritual goals, however lofty, are, in his account, fueled by the same desire for continuity and certainty. Without rehearsing institutional histories, the discussions portray his distancing from discipleship and the marketplace of wisdom. This background situates his later pronouncements, not as counter-teachings, but as a refusal to validate the very enterprise of inner improvement, leaving interlocutors to examine the motivations behind their questions.

A pivotal development is his description of a dramatic physiological upheaval he later called a calamity. Presented without mystique, it is framed as a strictly bodily event that severed the dominance of thought without creating a new

spiritual state. He insists it cannot be pursued, reproduced, or taught, undermining the infrastructure of practice-based paths. This account modifies the tone of the dialogues: they become reports from a life in which psychological continuity no longer organizes experience. The emphasis turns to the organism's intelligence operating independently of will or belief, and to the limits of language when asked to capture such functioning.

From this vantage, the book advances its core contention: the mind, as an entity overseeing life, is an abstraction built from memory and social conditioning. Thinking has utilitarian value, yet when it tries to regulate feeling or secure identity, it breeds conflict. The self, he argues, is not a hidden essence but a network of acquired demands, striving to perpetuate itself through ideas of progress, morality, and purpose. The narrative returns to how words divide seamless sensory activity into problems, and how the search for meaning is itself an extension of anxiety, keeping individuals tied to patterns they hope to escape.

Consequences of this view ripple across familiar concerns. Love, compassion, and relationship are stripped of idealized meanings and returned to the body's immediate responses, unmediated by psychological agendas. Social institutions—religious, therapeutic, political—are treated as coordinated expressions of the same appetite for security, offering frameworks that promise resolution while reinforcing dependence. The book neither prescribes cynicism nor optimism; it simply denies that the instruments of thought can abolish the friction they generate. Readers encounter an uncomfortable neutrality: there is no hidden path, and consolation is regarded as another product. This refusal reframes suffering as a misapplication of thought to life.

Stylistically, the work alternates between terse pronouncements and probing exchanges, often returning to

earlier themes from different angles. The continuity comes from the steadiness of his refusal to systematize. Occasional everyday observations and travel episodes ground the abstraction, but they function as illustrations rather than proofs. The editorial arrangement preserves the spontaneity of conversation, including the abruptness with which he dismisses speculative questions. Throughout, the body remains the reference point: sensation, hunger, fatigue, and energy changes are treated as facts, while metaphysical explanations are declined. The result is an austere tapestry that challenges readers to notice their interpretive reflexes.

The broader significance of *Mind* lies in its unflinching challenge to the modern project of self-betterment and to traditional spiritual narratives. Without offering a replacement creed, it leaves a residue of inquiry about how much of one's inner life is inherited, and whether freedom is compatible with the machinery of intention. The book endures less as a doctrine than as a disturbance: it asks whether the drive to know oneself is indistinguishable from the unrest it seeks to end. That question, left open, is why the conversations continue to resonate with readers across differing backgrounds and eras.

# Historical Context

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Uppaluri Gopala Krishnamurti (1918–2007) was born in British-ruled India and grew up amid Theosophical Society influences in Madras (now Chennai), particularly its Adyar headquarters. The Society, founded in the late nineteenth century, promoted a syncretic spiritual modernism and sponsored figures such as Jiddu Krishnamurti, whose talks and institutional networks (from Adyar to Ojai) shaped global discourse on ‘self-knowledge.’ UG’s early exposure to these institutions, lectures, and study circles situates *Mind is a Myth* in a milieu where organized outreach, public talks, and printed tracts framed spiritual inquiry. The book’s conversations implicitly reckon with that institutional legacy and its promises.

After Indian independence in 1947, debates about secularism, scientific temper, and reform intersected with revived interest in traditional philosophy. Urban centers such as Bombay, Bangalore, and Madras hosted lecture series, study groups, and cross-cultural salons. UG moved through these settings while questioning metaphysical claims and the authority structures sustaining them. He met Jiddu Krishnamurti on several occasions, a fact that anchors his later, sharp differentiations from J. Krishnamurti’s schools and platforms. *Mind is a Myth* emerges from this postcolonial conversation, where modern education, print culture, and international travel made Indian philosophical vocabulary visible to global audiences—and vulnerable to commercialization.

In the 1960s, transnational interest in Asian teachings accelerated, from Zen and Vedanta to Transcendental Meditation. Universities, publishing houses, and retreat

circuits in Europe and North America amplified these currents. UG traveled frequently through Europe; in 1967, while in Switzerland—often identified with Geneva—he underwent what he later called a ‘calamity,’ a turning point described in interviews that inform the book’s stance. That period also coincided with Western counterculture’s embrace of gurus, therapy, and psychedelics. *Mind is a Myth* situates itself against that demand for transformative techniques, rejecting method and authority at the very moment when ‘paths’ were becoming a global marketplace.

Through the 1970s and 1980s, UG kept an informal, peripatetic schedule, staying with friends in European towns, the United States, and Indian cities. He declined formal roles, refused to found an organization, and discouraged public programs, preferring small conversations in private homes. This stance contrasted with institutionalized spiritual movements that developed infrastructures of ashrams, foundations, and schools. While Jiddu Krishnamurti established centers such as Brockwood Park (1969) to host dialogues, UG rejected even that degree of structure. *Mind is a Myth* records exchanges from living rooms and cafés, retaining the immediacy and contrarian tone of unsponsored talk rather than platformed discourse.

*Mind is a Myth* is not a treatise drafted at a desk but a compilation of dialogues recorded over years by friends and visitors. The text circulated initially in typescripts and small-run editions before appearing widely as a freely shareable document; UG consistently opposed copyrights and royalties on his words. Indian filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt, among others, helped introduce his conversations to broader audiences through interviews and publications. This provenance matters historically: the book belongs to a late twentieth-century ecosystem of cassette tapes, photocopies, and early internet files, where alternative thinkers reached readers outside conventional academic or ashram channels.

In India during the 1970s and 1980s, charismatic movements gained international footprints—Transcendental Meditation marketed stress relief, ISKCON popularized devotional practice, and Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (Osho) built communes and a media presence. Corporate publishers launched large spirituality lists, and Western seekers visited Indian centers in growing numbers. UG's remarks in *Mind is a Myth* directly contest the premises that underwrote this expansion: the promise of techniques, transmission, and progress toward enlightenment. His refusal to prescribe practice or accept disciples situates the book as a critique of the guru economy that linked lecture halls, retreats, and a burgeoning global spiritual marketplace.

Concurrently, the Western human potential movement, group therapies, and popular psychology promoted self-improvement through workshops and literature. From Esalen-style encounter groups to bestsellers promising cognitive or emotional mastery, a therapeutic vocabulary saturated public life. UG's dialogues push back against those assumptions, questioning the efficacy of will, method, and introspective narratives. He also dismisses metaphysical consolations often blended with psychological language. *Mind is a Myth* thus engages the late twentieth century's convergence of therapy and spirituality without adopting its techniques, positioning itself alongside skeptical currents that challenged both religious authority and the commodification of inner life in mass media.

By arising from transcribed conversations across India, Europe, and America, *Mind is a Myth* mirrors the era's cross-border circulation of ideas while repudiating its institutional forms. It references well-known figures and organizations only to undo the expectations they fostered: belief in progress, teachers, and systems. The book's informal origin, noncommercial distribution, and adversarial stance toward doctrine reflect a broader late modern skepticism about

authority—religious, therapeutic, and academic. As such, it functions less as a program than as a historical counterpoint to movements that sought to standardize spiritual experience, registering the tensions that shaped global discourse on enlightenment.

# **Mind is a Myth**

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# Chapter 1

## The Certainty That Blasts Everything

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U.G.: I can never sit on a platform and talk. It is too artificial. It is a waste of time to sit and discuss things in hypothetical or abstract terms. An angry man does not sit and talk and converse pleasantly about anger; he is too angry. So don't tell me that you are in crisis, that you are angry. Why talk of anger? You live and die in the hope that someday, somehow, you will no longer be angry. You are burdened with hope, and if this life seems hopeless, you invent the next life. There are no lives to come [\[1q\]](#).

**Q: Well, it certainly cannot be said that your talking gives hope to anyone. Why do you talk if not to console or instruct?**

U.G.: What am I to do? You come, I talk. Do you want me to criticize you, to throw stones? It is useless, for you are affected by nothing, having erected an impenetrable armor around yourself. You feel nothing. Unable to understand your situation, you react through thought, which is your ideas and mentations. Reaction is thought. The pain you are going through there is clearly reflected without having to experience the pain here. Here there is no experience at all. That is all. In this natural state you feel the pain of others, whether you personally know them or not. Recently my eldest son was dying of cancer in a hospital nearby. I was in the area and visited him often. Friends said that I was in intense pain during the whole time, until he died. I cannot

do anything. It (pain) is an expression of life. They wanted me to attempt some kind of healing for his cancer. If I touch that tumor it will grow, for I am adding life to it. Cancer is a multiplication of cells, another expression of life, and anything I might do only strengthens it.

**Q: So you can appreciate the suffering of others and yet are free of it yourself, is that it?**

U.G.: Suffering is an experience, and there is no experience here. You are not one thing, and life another. It is one unitary movement and anything I say about it is misleading, confusing. You are not a "person", not a "thing", not a discrete entity surrounded by "other" things. The unitary movement is not something which you can experience.

**Q: But to talk of living without experiencing sounds irrational to our minds.**

U.G.: What I am saying conflicts with your logical framework. You are using logic to continue that separative structure, that is all. Your questions are again thoughts and therefore reactive. All thought is reactive[2q]. You are desperately protecting this armour, this shield of thought, and are frightened that the movement of life might smash your frontiers. Life is like a river in spate, lashing at the banks, threatening the limits that have been placed around it. Your thought structure and your actual physiological framework are limited, but life itself is not. That is why life in freedom is painful to the body; the tremendous outburst of energy that takes place here is a painful thing to the body, blasting every cell as it goes. You cannot imagine how it is in your wildest dreams. This is why it is misleading no matter how I put it.