



Uchil Binitha

Unknowing the known: A heuristic study of J Krishnamurti's notion of insight
to explore the purpose of education from a nondual philosophical perspective

Master's thesis
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
Education and Globalization
2023

University of Oulu
Faculty of Education

Unknowing the known: A heuristic study of J Krishnamurti's notion of insight to explore the purpose of education from a nondual philosophical perspective (Binitha Uchil)

Master's thesis, 111 pages, 1 appendix

May 2023

This study explores J Krishnamurti's notion of insight, based on his personal inquiry into the nature of the human mind. Since this conceptualization of insight was explored by the physicist David Bohm, this study includes Bohm's inquiry into the system of thought to understand insight. Clark Moustakas' heuristic inquiry to explore the phenomenon of insight was found to be an appropriate methodology for this study, as this methodology does not place the researcher outside of the process unfolding but rather as an integral part of the investigation. Through the course of the inquiry, the understanding of insight underwent gradual change until a connection was formed between what Krishnamurti referred to as total insight into the human mind and the notion of nonduality. Nonduality is a concept that has been mentioned in religious and spiritual texts but is also considered by both ancient and contemporary thinkers to be the fundamental essence of human existence. It considers all beings to be interconnected and part of a larger whole, further claiming that the boundaries between self and the world are illusory. It sees the divisive nature of thought to be that which makes the illusions appear to be real and is epistemologically rooted in direct experience in order to see reality for what it is. Finding this notion to be a reflection of Krishnamurti's insight and seeing how this philosophical orientation could have an impact on one's way of being and relating to what is experienced, this study focuses on understanding the implications of this worldview on educational practices. Bohmian Dialogue was employed as a means of data generation and dialogues with five teachers from the Krishnamurti schools were included for this study. The understanding of the notion of total insight was initially explored, followed by a further inquiry into how the coresearchers' understanding of nonduality has influenced their views on the purpose of education. Five themes were identified from the dialogues and various other paradoxes were drawn out from the themes in order to explore what a curriculum based on nonduality as a philosophical orientation would entail.

Keywords: Bohmian Dialogue, conditioning, heuristic inquiry, insight, J Krishnamurti, nonduality

Acknowledgements

I cannot help but remember the day when I was told that in a country with more than a million schools, I was lucky to have found my way to one of the few Krishnamurti schools. Barely scratching the surface of the teachings four years ago, this study reflects how the understanding of Krishnamurti's philosophy of education/life led me to discover a self that would otherwise have been oblivious to a world other than the one in my head. So, from head and heart, I would like to express my gratitude:

To the coresearchers, for words that reflect the incredible depth of self-understanding of a philosophy that requires intense attention. I feel lucky that I had the chance to have these dialogues with each of you. Thank you for making the time despite having schools to run!

To Magda, I believe our paths had to cross, even had we been walking backwards. The talks with you made me feel like I could explore this topic without coming off as delusional in this scientific, outcome-driven world. Thank you for being just the kind of supervisor I needed for this writing to happen.

To Audrey, I still do not know how you do everything you do! I am grateful to have had you as a teacher and friend. And I'm truly glad for our mutual 'need' to see the non-metaphorical road ahead and for the conversations that resulted from it.

To mum and dad for showing me that aiming for the stars did not have to come at the expense of being grounded. I seem to have found the in-between, on most days at least!

To Rumzie, Epti and Eva for honestly and openly engaging in endless hours of conversation about 'nothing.' I am going back on our deal of four pages each of acknowledgement in return for listening to me talk about the self as an illusion. Thank you for humouring me!

To Medha, where at the end of every great conversation we feel grateful to have met the way we did. For two quiet people, we sure do talk a lot!

To Giacomo, the metaphor of the mirror in relationship is a reflection of the depth of understanding that has come from your calm. I hope we keep at the nondual jokes, because, why not?

And finally, to my writing sanctum; my tiny 'green' house with a view; and what a view! The infinite hours looking through the glass have not been for nothing!

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Key elements of the study

This study aims to understand J Krishnamurti's notion of insight and further explores the purpose of education according to educators of the Krishnamurti schools based on their understanding of nonduality. This thesis does not follow the conventional structure of having a distinct introduction, theoretical framework and methodology, but rather finds the three to be closely intertwined and therefore presents them as such. However, for the sake of clarity, a brief introduction of the concepts that are central to the study is presented below in the hopes of providing the reader with a basic understanding of the core people and ideas that frame this thesis.

J Krishnamurti

Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895–1986) was a thinker, writer and philosopher, who explored the relationship between the nature of consciousness, the human mind and the current problems in society (Krishnamurti, 2023). At a young age, Krishnamurti was adopted by theosophists Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater, who claimed him to be the next 'World Teacher' (Krishnamurti, 2023). Based on this prediction decreed by the theosophists, Krishnamurti was educated in theosophy and philosophy and an organization called the 'Order of the Star in the East' was established, with him appointed as its head (Krishnamurti, 2023). He, however, renounced this title and the role it offered and in 1929 disbanded the Order, resigning as its leader (Krishnamurti, 2023). He claimed that there was no need of any external teacher or source of authority and what human beings needed to learn was the "real Self" (Martins, 2018, p. 39), which no teacher or master could teach. This, he said, was something that had to be learnt by each one on their own through observation and in relationship, both with oneself and with one's environment (p. 39).

Krishnamurti gave a number of talks, worldwide, urging for a radical change in the psyche of humankind through observing the structure of thought, which, he claimed, was the only way in which a fundamental regeneration of the mind could be brought about (Krishnamurti, 1978). Education, he believed, had a role to play in the transformation of the mind and he emphasized its importance in helping children become aware of their own thoughts and patterns of conditioning—the experiences and knowledge that forms the background of each individual (Krishnamurti, 2010a, pp. 3-6). Seeing the need for self-awareness, inquiry and a holistic dimension

in education, schools have been established worldwide, where his teachings, including his philosophy of education and life, are explored.

David Bohm

David Bohm (1917–1992) was a theoretical physicist and philosopher, who built his theories of thought from various fields of knowledge, including quantum mechanics, philosophy and psychology (Pari Centre, 2022). Bohm became familiar with Krishnamurti's ideas in 1959 when he read his book 'The First and Last Freedom' in which Krishnamurti questioned the relationship between the observer and the observed (Krishnamurti Foundation Trust, n.d.a; Peltola, 2020, pp. 30-51). Bohm's interest in quantum theory reflected Krishnamurti's view that the separateness between the observer and the observed could not be viewed independently and his sustained interest in this phenomenon led him to meet Krishnamurti personally, following which they continued to meet regularly and have dialogues on related ideas (Krishnamurti Foundation Trust, n.d.a). He suggested that reality is fundamentally interconnected and that the visible world of matter and energy is an expression of a deeper, more fundamental order that could not be fully understood or measured through traditional scientific methods and this is one of the key concepts in his exploration of the system of thought (Bohm, 1980, pp. 16-26; Krishnamurti Foundation Trust, n.d.a). He argued that our perception of reality is limited by our cultural conditioning and that we must expand our consciousness and awareness to access the deeper levels of reality (Bohm, 1980, pp. 3-26). Bohm's philosophy offers a new way of understanding the nature of reality, suggesting that everything is ultimately interconnected and that our perceptions are limited by our conditioning.

Bohm's system of thought also emphasizes the importance of dialogue, which he believed was essential for understanding the interconnectedness of reality (Bohm, 1994, pp. 187-189). His method of dialogue involves the "suspending" (Bohm, 1996, p. 7) of opinions to arrive at what he refers to as a "participatory consciousness" (p. 7), where differing opinions and assumptions on a topic are laid out for observation without the intention of arriving at one common inference but rather to create new meaning through the understanding of the multiple assumptions without rating one as truer than the other (pp. 6-8). Bohm (1996) argued that forms of communication, such as debate and argument, tend to reinforce separation and division, whereas dialogue promotes understanding and unity (p. 2). He believed that by expanding our consciousness and awareness through dialogue, the deeper levels of reality could be accessed (p. 18).

(Total) insight

The accumulation of knowledge, whether through experience or education, results in the storing of information (Krishnamurti, 1989, pp. 3-5). This accumulated and stored information, in turn, becomes the source of further responses and reactions to situations and according to Krishnamurti (1989), it was this mechanical tendency of the mind that acted as an obstruction to seeing and listening clearly. Thus, this default manner of functioning dominates the way we humans operate in daily life and it is these images that form an obstruction to pure observation (Krishnamurti Foundation Trust, n.d.a). Some experiences deviate from the usual and provoke responses that are original and lay outside of the “field of the known” (Bohm, 1980, as cited in Pylkkänen, 2017, p. 5). Due to them not being immediately recognized by the mind, they are not classified into separate compartments based on prior experiences. Instead, they reflect clarity that is not obscured by conditioning (Bohm, 1980, pp. 60-61). It was the knowing that came from this place of clarity that Krishnamurti referred to as insight. Both Krishnamurti and Bohm draw attention to the difference that exists between insight and the kind of ‘knowing’ that comes from conditioned thought and assert how they are not to be misinterpreted to be the same (Krishnamurti, 1980a; Pylkkänen, 2017, pp. 5-6).

Krishnamurti emphasized the importance of insight as a key element in understanding the nature of the self and the world. He made a distinction between partial and total insight, where partial insight was when identification with knowledge and thought were questioned, leading to new knowledge in the system of thought (Claris, 2011). In this case, however, there is still the separate individual who is engaged in the process of questioning. In total insight, this separateness dissolves as the individual is in a state of awareness where the mind is free from the limitations of thought and this allows one to perceive reality directly without the filter of concepts, beliefs and opinions (Krishnamurti, 1954, pp. 16-37). Krishnamurti saw insight as a natural process that cannot be acquired through intellectual or analytical means, but rather emerges when the mind is attentive and completely present in the moment (Peltola, 2020, p. 26) and he said that self-awareness and self-inquiry were essential to the cultivation of insight (p. 35). By observing one's thoughts, emotions, and behaviour without judgment or evaluation, one can become aware of the conditioning and psychological patterns that limit one's perception of reality (Krishnamurti, 1989, pp. 73-76). Krishnamurti also stressed the importance of undivided attention to the world as a way of cultivating a state of awareness that allows for insight to arise naturally (Krishnamurti, 1989, pp. 1-4) and advocated for an education that would cultivate the right kind of awareness for insight to take place.

Language: Limitations and use in the study

Throughout this study, language has posed a challenge to describe both the state of insight and the state leading up to insight. Additionally, expressing the state of no separation—nonduality—through language and words often results in paradoxical statements (Josipovic, 2016, p. 7). The challenge in using words like *leading to*, *happens during*, *occurs in*, *takes place*, *in the moment*—all of which imply an element of time—to describe what ‘happens’ during insight may seem like a discrepancy in this study. Acknowledging this shortcoming may be helpful in moments where one finds themselves trying to navigate the paradoxes that this study will inevitably invoke if one is trying to logically make sense of the timeless phenomenon of insight.

Additionally, the use of the pronoun ‘one’ will be used as much as possible in the place of personal pronouns such as you, he, she or they. While this may seem impersonal to a new reader, the underlying purpose is to move away from identification with the self as a separate entity, a concept that may become clearer as the reader progresses through the study.

Heuristic inquiry

The etymology of the word heuristic can be traced back to its roots in the Greek word *heuriskein*, which means to find out or to discover (Moustakas, 1990, p. 9). Etymological searches for the word ‘heuristic’ also mention the word *heureka* or *eureka*, meaning to be in a state of having discovered something—the ‘aha’ moment of realization that is often referenced through the Greek mathematician Archimedes in the moment of his discovery of what later became known as buoyancy (Laukkonen et al., 2021, p. 3; Moustakas, 1990, p. 9). The modern use of the word in scientific inquiry involves processes of searching and investigation through self-immersion in the experience or phenomenon to know and understand the nature of that which is being studied. Heuristic inquiry as a research methodology was first developed by psychologist Clark Moustakas (1923–2012), who was influenced by the works of Abraham Maslow and his reference to self-actualization, Michael Polanyi’s tacit dimension of knowledge, Martin Buber’s dialogue, Carl Rogers’ concept of unconditional positive regard in psychotherapy, among many others (Moustakas, 1990, p. 9). It is these ideas that collectively provide the structure to the heuristic methodology. As the researcher involved in heuristic inquiry is required to have either first-hand experience or an experience closely related to the phenomenon being explored,

complete immersion and presence in the research become part of the ongoing search for knowing and are not seen as separate to the act of conducting research as an outsider looking in (Campbell, 2010, p. 213).

While heuristic inquiry has its central concepts and phases, it does not restrict the researcher to any one method of obtaining data and advocates for the researcher's inner knowing of the most suitable method that is relevant for the investigation of the question (Moustakas, 1990, pp. 41-43). Considered an autobiographical technique, heuristic inquiry involves six phases: initial engagement, immersion, incubation, illumination, explication and creative synthesis (Campbell, 2010, p. 18; Moustakas, 1990, pp. 27-32). Neither linear, nor independent of each other, these phases have both their collective and distinct roles in a process of inquiry that includes "self-reflection, self-discovery and self-transformation," (Sultan, 2019, p. 2) both of the primary researcher and the participants, who in heuristic inquiry are referred to as coresearchers (Sultan, 2019). This thesis is structured based on the six phases of heuristic research. Each phase finds itself weaving in and around the various processes of thought and the subsequent construction of written matter that come together to form this inquiry. Since many of the central concepts of heuristic inquiry were found to coincide with the main topic of this study, the use of this structure also reduces the challenges involved in drawing distinct divisions between theory and methodology.

Chapter 1: Initial engagement

The first phase of heuristic enquiry is the phase of initial engagement (Moustakas, 1990, p. 27). This entails the time leading up to the formulation of the research question, which, in the case of this study, is a journey into how this topic came to become a calling for me. Heuristic inquiry involves the search for something that has been a central theme of a researcher's want of knowing; the topic stemming from the curiosity built through direct experiences of the researcher, which then expands to become the central theme of the inquiry (Moustakas, 1990, p. 27). Polanyi (1983) states that what drives a discovery may begin with a tentative question, of which not much is initially known, but that slowly becomes a "personal obsession" (p. 75). Heuristic inquiry encourages further engagement in tentative questions to allow for an "unknown current" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 13) to take precedence in the search. And this, according to Kleining and Witt (2000) is what sets heuristic inquiry apart from other more conventional forms of scientific research (pp. 1-7). Heuristic inquiry suggests embracing the unknown despite it being beyond the recognition of cognition by believing in the "calling" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 13) with which the inquiry began, thus enabling self-transformation through the course of the inquiry.

In heuristic inquiry, there is a chance that the topic of the research may change as the inquiry progresses to include new perspectives on the phenomenon, with this change often regarded as something positive in itself—a trust in the process (Kleining & Witt, 2000, p. 3). While the initial question of heuristic inquiry stems from representations and experiences that are personal and seemingly concerned with the self, the search for multiple perceptions and beliefs for further engagement with the question becomes, what Moustakas saw as, a question of "universal significance" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 15). Similarly, Polanyi (1983) states that even though the discovery may seem to be driven by personal interest, "self-will" (p. 77) is transcended by the greater sense of responsibility for finding the truth. The process of discovery, which becomes more meaningful as it progresses, can lead to a new kind of existence for the researcher; where one is transformed by what is discovered, with this discovery forming the basis of a new aspect of reality (Polanyi, 1983, p. 80). Polanyi (1983) also states that this discovery further influences one's existential choices, leading to a path to help further develop the discovery.

1.1 To think or not to think?

Looking back, I consider three significant experiences that have had a meaningful influence on what has now framed this study of thought and consciousness. The first one was a two-year

intensive Master's programme in Counselling Psychology that I completed almost ten years ago. It was during this time that questions of identity and the self began to take form. It was also at this time that I started paying attention to thought patterns and the various effects of childhood experiences and conditioning on adult behaviour. In hindsight, I recognise my time spent as a psychological counsellor to be a period of heightened cognitive activity, mostly stemming from the need to make connections between past experiences and their probable impact on current modes of functioning.

The second experience that I consider significant for this study was my time spent as a teacher at a remotely located Tibetan-Buddhist community five years ago, where I had my first real encounter with silence. It was the external silence of a remote mountain village and the internal silence of the mind. In the midst of nature and away from the frenzied pace of city life, there began a call to question the need to 'make sense of everything', which in turn brought about a relaxed pace of activity, both of the body and the mind. Once again, it is only in hindsight that I see what this slowing down allowed for; something that a mind and body on overdrive could not have had the space to let in. This is also when questions regarding the purpose of education started to take shape, for I wondered whether current education practices could look beyond academic outcomes to make space for the learning that silence and stillness could bring.

This wonder is perhaps what led me to the third and most intense experience that I had, which was the subsequent finding of my way to the teachings of J Krishnamurti and his philosophy of education, when I participated in a residential teacher education programme at one of the Krishnamurti schools in 2019. It was here that the decade-long questions of self and identity turned into questioning the validity of this self and identity, for according to Krishnamurti, these are but illusions of a conditioned mind. Here, I would like to clarify that suggesting that the self is an illusion does not mean to say that it does not exist, but rather that it is not what it seems to be (Spira, 2014). With this clarification of the use of the word illusion, both for myself and for the reader, I wish to proceed towards how, in attempts to understand the self as an illusion, I was led to Krishnamurti's notion of total insight. And this journey has formed the basis of the topic for this study.

What I wish to use as a starting point for the purpose of this thesis is the unlearning that I was faced with when I started my deeper inquiry into Krishnamurti's philosophy. It was this philosophy that changed the course of my life to start questioning structures that were, until then, taken for granted. Krishnamurti, known for his fundamentally distinct views that questioned

the workings of the human mind, focused on bringing to attention the role of conditioning in human thought by pointing out the relationship between patterns of thought and their effects on society (Krishnamurti, 1989, pp. 3-9). He believed that the disorder we see in the world around us is a mere expression of what lies within our minds—our conditioning—and the first step towards bringing about change in the world outside is to bring about internal order (Peltola, 2020, p. 9). He said that only through inner transformation could there be any radical change in society (Krishnamurti, 1948). He strongly affirmed that awareness of conditioning could be brought about through education and education was not just a mere instrument to impart knowledge but a means of transforming human consciousness (Krishnamurti, 1989, pp. 1-9).

Being in an environment of constant self-reflection in the Krishnamurti school, led me to see common, everyday interactions through a new lens; an alternative world view that, I observed, was slowly shifting my mode of “relating and being” (Peltola, 2020, p. 12). Words like freedom and ambition, fear and the future, that were thrown about unmindfully and more as conditioned vocabulary until then, were revisited in lieu of their etymological conceptions to consider the different meanings that they could hold. Expecting that a teacher education programme would equip me with pedagogical tools and techniques needed to teach in a classroom, I was not prepared for the tools that I was instead met with—questioning, observation, listening and the intellectual unlearning of conditioned thinking. Dwelling on these notions in the way that Krishnamurti meant them—observation not being the mere watching or monitoring of something but rather the kind of observation that is without the observer, without the ‘me’ (Krishnamurti, 1970a) and listening, not with the intention to respond, but to listen with a mind that is silent (Krishnamurti, 1974)—led to a curiosity that very quickly gathered a momentum of its own in understanding how these practices could be possible. In the midst of all these questions, I started to see a change in how I viewed the purpose of education; my focus gradually shifting from ‘education for social change’ to educating for ‘self-knowledge and transformation’ (Thapan, 2018, p. 3).

A key learning during my time in the programme, which I now see as a source of what began my inquiry into thought and the ruminating mind, was the realisation of an almost unconscious identification with thought and thinking. Similar to Peltola’s (2020) own experiences of believing in the “power of thinking” (p. 14) to construct a strong identity, I also used to believe in the importance of thought and its resulting ideas in framing a strong personality for myself. Two questions that I asked the Krishnamurti school educators during the 2019 programme distinctly stand out as beacons in what is now my all-encompassing inquiry into understanding thought.

The first one was, ‘How is it possible to build a strong sense of identity but at the same time to keep oneself grounded?’ This question was met with more than one of the educators shaking their heads until one of them finally mentioned how the question was contradictory in itself. Not understanding where the contradiction in this question seemed to be, I assumed that it was, perhaps, not understood the way I had intended it to be, not for a second considering the fact that there could indeed be a contradiction in what I was looking to know.

The second question that I had during the teacher education programme, which shaped my further understanding of this topic, was, ‘Are we constantly thinking even when we are not aware of it?’ While this may seem obvious to anyone who has ever stopped to observe their thoughts, for me, it was a valid question that I did not have the answer to at that point in time. And, it was one day after posing this question, in what seemed to be a gap between thoughts, that I suddenly became aware that I had in fact been thinking, even though I was not aware of it when it had been happening. Moreover, in the instant after this awareness, on attempting to trace back the thoughts, I realised that it was, in fact, a series of rather disconnected thoughts that had been playing out without any cue; one following the other in a rather mechanical manner “through association determined by habit and conditioning” (Bohm, 1980, p. 13). Another realization was that the thoughts that had been playing out had not been the ones that *I* had chosen to think about. What happened in that moment of awareness or where it came from, I have not been able to accurately place or describe but I do believe that it created a shift in how I became aware of unconscious thinking. In the days following that moment of timelessness, I found myself circling back to the fact that there *was*, and mostly *is*, a continuous stream of thought in play that often operates just under the radar of conscious awareness; a stream of thought that is made up of fragmented pieces of information, but put together to create an illusion of continuity (Krishnamurti, 1983). And this led to a further curiosity in attempting to deconstruct thought and the thinking process.

Following the end of the teacher education programme and having recognized the tendency of the mind to identify with thought, what followed was the observation of conditioned talk and habit, both in myself and in others. Seeing that there was a way of being that did not involve being constantly consumed by thought also brought with it the need to explore what lies beyond obsessive thinking. Finding that, in the midst of my identification with thought, there was the possibility of bringing myself back to the present and away from thinking was a practice that got strengthened through my continued engagement with authors like Eckhart Tolle and Rupert Spira. What I noticed, however, through this practice of mindfulness, was the appearance of an

observer—an entity that watched the thinking from the side lines, albeit in hindsight. And, while I saw the value in the mindful act of coming back to the present time and time again, it was the statement of Krishnamurti’s, “the observer is the observed” (Krishnamurti Foundation Trust, n.d.b), which implied an essence of nondual observation, that continued to remain just beyond the grasp of my cognitive understanding. It was in attempts at trying to decipher this statement that I was further led to Krishnamurti’s notion of total insight.

1.2 Preliminary research questions

Considering how Krishnamurti’s philosophy is about understanding the self and one’s conditioning, using a technique that did not include the researcher experience as an integral part of the study seemed counterproductive to the process of inquiry. Coming across Moustakas’ heuristic inquiry as a research methodology seemed to conclude my search for the kind of methodology I wished to employ for this study. Heuristic inquiry requires that the researcher’s personal experience of the phenomenon presenting itself as a thought, sensation or intuition incites a yearning for its further exploration, thus making the inquiry an active and ever-evolving process through the extension of what is considered known (Moustakas, 1990, p. 11).

Moustakas (1990) says that in the initial formulation of the research question, the researcher senses that there is yet unseen knowledge in the very question itself and through passion and engagement in the question, it will become clearer in time (p. 40). Based on my initial understanding of insight as a kind of knowing that was not mechanistic, my preliminary research questions regarding insight and education formed at this point in the study were:

- Do silence and stillness form the prerequisites for insight?
- What place do silence and stillness have in formal education spaces that are dominated by cognitive outcomes?
- What is the role of self-inquiry in insight?

The more I engaged with these questions, however, the more I felt like there were still gaps in my own thinking—in what I was really trying to ask. According to Moustakas (1990), the question(s) may at times be plagued with vagueness and as more tangential themes develop, the further one goes in exploring the idea (p. 41). He says that while this may place the researcher in an uneasy position, it is nonetheless an important phase in the development of the question and it is essential to let this period of ambiguity pass to let the final question, central to the

researcher's being, unveil. Sensing my own apprehension of making these questions to be the final ones to explore through this study, I felt that there was a fundamental question that needed to be asked *before* these questions on silence, stillness and self-inquiry could be explored; a question that I needed to ask more of myself than of my coresearchers—the question of why insight needed to be given any importance at all—or, to step further back—what is insight?

1.3 Total insight

Understanding thought is central to understanding what Krishnamurti was referring to when he spoke about insight. He says that thought is never complete because thought is a “response of memory,” (Krishnamurti, 2013, 6:57) which is accumulated knowledge that is based on experience and stored in the brain (Peltola, 2020, pp. 94-97). Since any experience leads only to partial knowledge, thought is, hence, limited. Krishnamurti spoke about insight being glimpses into these limitations of thought. Insight, according to him, is “to see into things” (Krishnamurti, 2013, 1:41) this *seeing* being perception that is not through the analysis of past knowledge stored in memory or through reasoning; something that happens instantaneously, with time and knowledge having no part in this seeing (Krishnamurti, 2013). He says that action that comes from such insight leads to the dissolving of the very *thing* and this happens instantly and not through calculated effort. It is in moments when pure observation takes place that the duality of thinker and thought, observer and the observed, and experiencer and the experience will dissolve (Krishnamurti, 2013). To take it a step forward, however, Krishnamurti (2013) added that this action of seeing into the “whole movement” of thought (Krishnamurti, 2013, 15:41) is also to see that any image created of oneself is a creation of thought and is hence an illusion, implying that the self is an illusion; a projection of thought. Seeing the truth of this is what he calls having total insight.

Krishnamurti's notion of total insight seems like a jump from what can be understood intellectually, through logical reasoning, to something that seems incomprehensible to the same logical mind. But, perhaps, what he is talking about is not in the realm of logic and this is where the logical, thinking mind begins to pose resistance. In my case, the resistance was in the form of disregard for something not understood. This resistance to what was inconceivable is perhaps what prevented me from making the connection between what Krishnamurti was talking about when he said ‘the observer is the observed’ to the many platforms, talks and articles that I came across that mentioned the word ‘nonduality’. But when the connection was made, the question,

‘What is insight?’ started forming its own shadow of an answer and Krishnamurti’s notion of total insight became a little clearer to my conditioned, cognitive mind.

1.4 The word is not the thing

Having formed an idea of what nonduality means or (at least what it can be conceptualized to mean) and further forming the link between what Krishnamurti referred to as total insight being his ‘experience’ of nonduality, brought about a sense of relief at having an answer to now fall back on as a point of further exploration. Seeing how the ‘apparent’ arriving at a conclusion—the conclusion being that Krishnamurti’s experience was one of nondual awareness—led to what was, until then, an active inquiry into understanding Krishnamurti to lose some of its momentum. Realizing what the security of ‘knowing’ brought to the mind, I stayed with that feeling of satisfaction of having made, what I considered to be, the crucial connection until it gave way to words in the form of a statement that I had come across many times before—“The word is not the thing” (Krishnamurti, 2016, 13:37). Much like Krishnamurti asserts that the word is not the thing—for the word indicates just the content of the past, the known, —Moffit’s (1971) poem ‘To Look at Any Thing’ reflects how the urge to name something stops the very inquiry into the thing and the ability to see it beyond the image that language has assigned to it.

To look at this green and say

“I have seen spring in these

Woods,” will not do—you must

Be the thing you see:...

..You must take your time

And touch the very place

They issue from (p. 149).

Moustakas’ (1990) description of the “unqualified interest” (p. 11) in the heuristic investigation draws parallels with what Krishnamurti likens to choiceless awareness—the pure observation of a problem that has no reason to arrive at a conclusion (Krishnamurti, 1980a). Through this way of observing, what has been known before is open to be challenged and doubted without being limited by its previously assigned meaning, thus illuminating the gap between the two

realities—ours and what really exists out there (Moustakas, 1990, p. 12). I noticed how the notion of staying with the unknown rather than coming to a conclusion was and continues to remain, for me, a challenge for two main reasons—the first being my own attachment to the sense of security in the known, and second, to have reached, even if partially, a sort of conclusion for the sake of presenting a more traditional ‘finding’ at the end of this study. It was, however, in the realisation of what these limitations were placing on the process of inquiry that the constant back and forth between myself as researcher and myself as a mere inquirer (trying not to actively seek any answers) met at some point in the middle to allow for further inquiry.

Heuristic inquiry, along with offering a form of a structure through which the foundational theory of the topic could be expressed, also offers space for the different internal processes of thought to be represented through self-dialogue and other forms of expression (Kleining & Witt, 2000). This led to the next step of processing my own uncertainty towards using the word nondual in this ‘scientific’ study, my primary apprehension being the use of the word nonduality as it is also used in many of the spiritual texts. What formed an interesting question that I felt I had to look into at this stage was, ‘What did I associate with the word nonduality?’ and ‘Why did I assume and accept nonduality as something real and not just another projection of thought?’ and more fundamentally, ‘Given how dominant certain patterns of thinking are and how we identify so strongly with thought, why would we choose to believe that there is another way of functioning that is not dominated by thinking?’

1.5 Self-dialogue

Moustakas (1990) asserts that a researcher’s self-dialogue is an essential element of coming to settle on the research question pertaining to the topic of interest (p. 16). In the spirit of inquiry, the researcher is aware of their own inner questioning to understand its role in leading to the formation of the research question. Self-dialogue leads to an openness to both inner and external illumination by allowing for intuition from tacit knowing to ultimately give rise to the research question (Moustakas, 1990, p. 27). Self-dialogue in heuristic inquiry shares the same purpose as Bohm’s group dialogue, which is to unearth the many perspectives of a single phenomenon. It requires the researcher to remain with the question through back-and-forth examination that ultimately produces the realization that different views lead to different beliefs thus leading to the unfolding of these numerous meanings (Bohm, 1996, p. 7; Moustakas, 1990, p. 16). The other kind of movement that is emphasized in heuristic inquiry is one of moving “from the

feeling to the word and back to the feeling, from the experience to the concept and back to the experience” (Craig, 1978, p. 57). Self-disclosure is also given importance in heuristic enquiry and involves the honest revelation of the self in regard to the phenomenon being explored, through journaling dialogues with oneself (Moustakas, 1990, p. 17).

A self-dialogue on these questions led to yet another curious discovery:

Me 1: *So, it seems like we finally need to talk about nonduality?*

Me 2: *Yes, I can't believe I didn't see it before. It's like a part of my brain had refused to believe that what Krishnamurti was talking about had anything to do with spirituality. I was aware of nonduality as a concept gaining popularity these days, just like mindfulness did a few years ago, but I did not quite connect all of this to Krishnamurti because Krishnamurti, very firmly, mentions how there is no practice that can lead to insight and how the very association with a practice can lead to yet another form of identification with thought.*

Me 1: *So, does that mean you associate nonduality with spirituality?*

Me 2: *I guess I see it that way.*

Me 1: *And what's wrong in spirituality?*

Me 2: *Hmm, there's nothing wrong in spirituality but I cannot believe that this inquiry is heading towards spirituality. I never saw myself as a spiritual person, I guess. But, of course, I'm not too surprised, considering the turn the past few years have taken. Being in alternative schools did have its own influence, although I didn't realize it at that time. What I'm only now realizing is how the idea of alternative schooling is largely to move away from a colonized way of thinking. And a decolonised form of education cannot, perhaps, be apart from spirituality, because alternative schools are mostly about holistic education and holistic education does have a spiritual dimension to it. So, while I saw this spiritual aspect in some of the schools I was in, I didn't associate the Krishnamurti schools as spiritual in any way because Krishnamurti rarely uses the word spirituality and what he talks about seems more to do with the mind and not so much to do with anything spiritual.*

Me 1: *Hmmm. It seems like it is not so much about the Krishnamurti schools being spiritual or not, but rather what your relationship with spirituality is. You seem confused about what you associate it with. What does the word spirituality bring up for you?*

Me 2: *Well, there is an element of mystery to it. And practice—the doing of something— brings up other words like tradition and ritual. Also, a sort of belief, I suppose. What I mostly thought for many years was that there is something out there... a greater something... I still use the word universe and say things like, 'I'll leave it to the universe to decide...' but at the same time, the past few years have seen the shift from 'out there' to 'within', and a lot of this change is from being in alternative schools, the Buddhist and other non-sectarian philosophies that they follow. And I guess that is also part of looking at spirituality not from a purely Western lens but rather from a decolonised lens.*

Me 1: *So, it is a jump from one lens to another?*

Me 2: *In some way, yes. But in another way, it seems to be that the looking inwards is more than just a Hindu or Buddhist asking. And if you then begin to see religion as a product of thought, it seems that we're going around asking questions that are not really the right questions to be asking in the first place.*

Me 1: *Ok, let's go back to nonduality then. Why are you hesitant to use the word?*

Me 2: *I guess a large part of it has to do with how I associate spirituality to not being 'scientific'. Although, in many ways, knowing about the existence of platforms that now acknowledge the limitations of scientific knowledge, by itself, has broken down the tight distinction between the two and has granted a sort of (unasked) consent to go ahead and explore a topic like nonduality, scientifically. It is quite revealing for me—to come to this realization and see how strongly I feel against spirituality. I guess I still see notions of 'Western knowledge' and 'scientific knowledge' as superior to other forms of what is known. Maybe it also relates to the kind of education I had that did not focus on anything that was not predominantly Western knowledge. So, anything that was traditional was not really appreciated. And I guess nonduality, since it was spoken about in the traditional texts, was considered in some way not to be valid. To then see nonduality as something true would be to remove the lens of colonized thinking...*

There is, however, another aspect to why I'm hesitant to use the word nonduality. It's more to do with the 'why' of it.

Why, when I see that I so clearly exist as a separate entity, would I then choose to believe in a different reality than what I experience in this current state; in the idea of no separate self?

Me 1: Yes, maybe we are looking at it as an either/or state and perhaps in that is the difficulty. Let's let it be for now and come back to it another time...

1.6 Framing the final research questions

Moustakas' (1990) heuristic inquiry sees the culmination of thought, emotion and essence to provide a deeper and more holistic understanding of the phenomenon being studied (p. 25). Through the process of focusing, with the elimination of surrounding noise, the underlying purpose of the study is revealed through the final research question. With the recent association of Krishnamurti's notion of total insight with nonduality, many other concepts that I had previously thought to only be possible in theory and not practically, seemed suddenly conceivable as states of nondual awareness. Concepts like choiceless awareness, which is the awareness that is free of conditioning (Krishnamurti, 1948), and active listening, which is listening that is without intellectually interpreting the words being heard (Krishnamurti, 1974), now became accepted more as possibilities after nondual awakening. This realization was accompanied with a sense of relief; a break for the identified mind that was constantly looking for a means to 'achieve' these states. More importantly, however, I began to understand why my experience at the Krishnamurti schools had been so different; why the nature of the conversations I had had there stood out as being distinctly unlike others. Seeing how a nondual philosophical orientation can lead to a radical shift in how one relates others and the surrounding environment, it was the influence of this orientation on education that I wanted to explore.

Field (1976) asserts the importance of the right usage of words in formulating a question so that the question becomes a valid and accurate question that is clearly stated and in a coherent order (pp. 24-26). As Peltola (2020) makes allusions to how we waste time looking for the answers to wrong questions (p. 25), I was careful in seeing that the final questions that I was asking were not ones that would use up the coresearchers' time and energy ineffectually. I felt the need to revisit pre-existing questions that have been the driving force behind my own search for finding some meaning in what was currently being practiced in the field of education. Further questions like, 'Is there a purpose of education that is more than the mere reinforcing of mechanistic patterns of conditioning?' and 'Considering how being conditioned is an inevitable process of the human form, can education provide the kind of conditioning that allows one to see through the very problems of this conditioning?' began to take shape. Understanding, now, the passion

with which Krishnamurti questioned the purpose of education—seeing how instead of questioning our identification with thought it seemed to rather strengthen and reaffirm this identification—led to two final research questions that I wished to explore through this study:

- When viewed from a nondual perspective, what is the purpose of education according to educators affiliated with the J Krishnamurti schools?
- Based on the understanding of J Krishnamurti’s notion of insight, what is the nature of the *effort* that is involved in insight?

To address the assumption in the final question—that the educators were in fact influenced by their understanding of nonduality—there were sub themes that were asked to the coresearchers:

- What do you understand by Krishnamurti’s notion of (total) insight?
- Does this understanding influence the way you approach teaching/education? How?
- What is the role of practice in insight?

This chapter concludes in having arrived at the research questions for the study. While notions of insight, the thinking process and an initial engagement with nonduality have already been presented in this chapter, they will be further explored in chapter 2. The immersion phase will encompass most of the theoretical underpinnings of this study, hence constituting what research studies usually classify as the theoretical framework.

Chapter 2: Immersion

This chapter begins with an exploration of nonduality. Attempting to break down Krishnamurti's notion of insight in order to understand the self as an illusion is further explored through an analysis of Bohm's system of thought and through seeing the role of thought in the sustenance of a sense of separateness. As Peltola (2020) suggests, uncovering the "real role of thought in this play we call life" (p. 13) is the first step towards freedom from what is already known. Additionally, Bohmian Dialogue, which was used for the generation of data with the coresearchers, is also introduced in the later parts of this chapter. Based on the research questions formed, education and its purpose, as mentioned by Krishnamurti and those who have inquired into the nature of knowledge, have been included in the final parts of the theoretical framework.

2.1 Oneness as innate nature

The ontology of nondualism posits a fundamental unity or oneness of all things and emphasizes the illusory nature of dualistic separation. According to the nondual perspective, there is no fundamental separation between the self and the world or between the individual and the one-consciousness (Josipovic, 2016, p. 65; Loy, 1988, p. 2). This idea has been explored through philosophical and spiritual traditions of the East like Buddhism, Taoism and Sufism, among a few others (Loy, 1988, p. 3). Advaita Vedanta, a school of Hindu philosophy dating back to the eighth century CE, advocates the view that ultimate reality, which it refers to as Brahman, is nondual. This means that it is not divided into subject and object, self and the other (Marsh, 2020, p. 130). The self, referred to as atman, is also nondual, and is ultimately identical to Brahman, despite the appearance of separation between individual beings (Marsh, 2020, pp. 130-133). In each of these traditions that address nonduality, the basic tenets of nondualism are similar, with an emphasis on the unity of all things and the illusory nature of dualism.

Loy (1988) argues that nonduality is not just a philosophical or religious concept, but is rather a way of understanding reality that is grounded in experience (p. 4). He further states that the concept of nonduality cannot be attributed to Hinduism or Buddhism because it is a universal aspect of human experience that has been expressed in various ways across cultures and throughout history, including through religion (pp. 1-5). According to Spira (2017), nonduality is not a doctrine associated with any spiritual practice (pp. 7-28). Instead, it is a universal truth

that transcends all traditions. The idea of nonduality has also been expressed through Western philosophy, particularly in the works of thinkers like Plotinus, Spinoza and Hegel (Copleston, 1993, pp. 1-80). These philosophers have explored the nature of reality beyond the dualistic categories of subject and object, mind and matter and God and the world.

According to nondualism, the human condition of fragmenting experiences is not in its innate nature (Josipovic, 2016, p. 65). Spira (2017) claims that our true nature is awareness itself and states that “we are not the body, the mind, or the world, but pure, unchanging awareness” (p. 1). He says that the self, which we typically identify with—the individual person with a unique personality, history, and physical body—is not the true self but is instead a limited and illusory construct. Everything that we perceive, including our thoughts and emotions, are not separate from awareness but are manifestations of awareness. According to Bohm (1980), to accurately define what the stream of awareness is can be a challenge, but it is clear that it underlies and precedes the formation and dissolution of thoughts and ideas (p. 11). He also says that it can only be implicitly known through the forms and shapes that are abstracted from it (p. 11). And this awareness is not something we need to strive towards because it is always ever-present and only needs to be recognized, as it is the fundamental reality of our experience (Spira, 2017, pp. 1-3).

According to Josipovic (2016) nonduality encompasses all aspects of experience, including both the absolute and relative aspects, which are distinct but inseparable (p. 66). He says that the awareness in the nondual perspective perceives various mental and emotional phenomena, like thoughts and emotions, as its contents and this forms the relative experience. This same awareness also appears as an empty and spacious context that surrounds and encompasses the relative experiences and this creates the absolute experience. The separation between the two becomes distinct due to “conceptual reifications” (Josipovic, 2016, p. 66) through memory, thus creating the apparent experiencer who is separate from their experiences (Bohm, 1994, pp. 160-164). When we engage in dualistic thinking, we create a separation between ourselves and the world, which results in a sense of being a subject that perceives an objective world (Singer, 2007, pp. 39-83).

Loy (1988) suggests that there is a basic way of experiencing the world that is not dualistic, meaning that there is no sense of a separate self observing an objective reality (pp. 3-9). This experience is characterized by an immediate and inseparable awareness of the world. According to Spira (2017), this experience results in a shift in our perspective from identifying with the

separate self to recognizing our true nature as awareness or consciousness (pp. 1-7). Krishnamurti (1969) posited that the illusory separation between the self and the world was brought about by the workings of the human mind. He argued that the self is a construct as a result of thought and is kept alive by the continuous movement of thought, which includes past memory and conditioned habits. It is the whole system of thought that creates all dualities and divisions. He believed that only by observing this movement of thought without judgment or identification can one transcend duality and experience the state of nonduality (pp. 13-60), and this is the central idea that is explored through this study.

2.2 Reality beyond the known

The epistemological perspective of this study is that of direct experience of nondual awareness through the observation of thought (Krishnamurti, 1969, pp. 1-13; Loy, 1988, pp. 1-9). At its core, the ontoepistemology of nonduality explores the nature of knowledge and reality, and how they are interconnected in the experience of unity and oneness. Bohm (1980) says that wholeness is the true nature of things (p. 7). The fragmentation that we see as reality is a reaction of this wholeness to human behaviour, which is influenced by “illusory perceptions shaped by incomplete and fragmented thought” (p. 7) and because the human approach to this wholeness is fragmentary, it is met with a “correspondingly fragmentary response” (p. 7). Although the fragmented self-world view has been the mode through which we have operated for centuries, there has been a search for wholeness throughout this time, through religion and spirituality, indicating the recognition of an insufficiency caused by the process of fragmentation (Bohm, 1980, pp. 2-6). What Krishnamurti and Bohm propose is that we become aware of our fragmentary thought, which is the only way in which reality can then be seen as a whole.

Krishnamurti and Bohm (1985) argue that the nature of reality is not something that can be understood through the use of the human mind (pp. 1-90). Instead, they suggest that it is only through a direct experience of reality, beyond the limitations of the mind, that one can come to an understanding of the true nature of reality. There is a particular “state of mind” (Bohm, 1994, p. 183) needed for the mind to see truth; to see beyond the incoherence caused by thought. Bohm (1994) suggests that the ending of time is the key to unlocking our true potential as human beings. He says that insight into truth is timeless because truth is “changing all the time” (p. 186) and what was seen in “one moment would not necessarily hold for the next” (p. 186). So, it would not be possible for thought to make sense of truth because thought, operating

through its reflexes, is based on time (memory). Thus, by transcending our fragmented perception of time and the self, we can awaken to a deeper level of consciousness and realize our inherent interconnectedness with all things.

Noting that truth is ever-changing further leads to the implication that there exists multiple possibilities of experiencing truth. The various Zen, Dzogchen and Tao practices employ other meditative techniques in their path towards the transcendence of dualism (Loy, 1988, pp. 23-48). According to Advaita Vedanta, the ultimate reality cannot be grasped through sensory experience or intellectual inquiry alone, but can only be realized through spiritual practices such as meditation and self-inquiry (Loy, 1988, pp. 10-23). In this case, the nondual epistemology emphasizes the role of meditative practices in attaining direct experiential knowledge of ultimate reality through the withdrawal of attention from external objects and turning it inward to focus on the pure awareness that underlies all experiences. While this study primarily focuses on the practice of self-inquiry to move beyond identification with the ego or self, it also explores the role of meditative practices in the process towards self-transcendence.

2.3 Unpacking insight

Krishnamurti's notion of total insight is characterized by a state of awareness where there is no fundamental separation between the self and the world; where one is able to see things as they truly are without the screen of conditioning (Krishnamurti, 1980a). Conditioning, he said, is the "background of every human being" (Krishnamurti, 1984, para. 1)—the culture, tradition and education which influences how one responds to the world. Conditioning is of the past and thought is a product of past conditioning. It is conditioning, which gets stored as memory, that prompts thought (Krishnamurti, 1984). Seeing unconscious thought as an obstruction to insight, both Krishnamurti and Bohm advocated for an understanding of how the system of thought creates the illusion of separation, which in turn influences how one experiences the world. The following paragraphs explore the cycle of thought, which initiates and sustains conditioned patterns of thinking.

2.4 The system of thought

Becoming aware of conditioned thought in the process of thinking is an important step towards insight. Bohm makes a distinction between thinking and thought and says that thinking is the act that is happening in the present, while 'thought' is past conditioning that gets stored as the

recorded product of thinking (Bohm, 1994, p. 13). He says that there is an almost automatic slide between (present) thinking and (past) thought, with this back-and-forth shift between the two most often going unnoticed. To make this idea clearer, he also introduces the word “felts” (p. 13) as feelings that become recorded and stored in memory, which then play a role in how a feeling in the present is experienced, as the (present) feeling quickly becomes intertwined with the (past) felts. Bohm (1994) sees thought, feeling and perception as “one process” (p. 13), much like a system—one in which all its parts are connected. He says that while these various parts that make up the system of thought can exist individually, they would not mean anything substantial when divided and isolated from the rest of the parts (pp. 9-14). However, because of the divisive nature of thought, these parts are seen as wholes in themselves (p. 14).

Thought divides into fragments those components which do not need to be seen as separate and this is the source of our problems, as we do not recognize the limitations that the divisive tendency of thought imposes on how we see reality (Bohm, 1994, pp. 9-15). We do not notice that everything we experience is a result of our thoughts. Often, we think that it is ‘me’ who is ‘experiencing’ something and that thought is just guiding ‘me’ in this experience, when, in fact, it is thought that determines the kind of ‘experiencing’ that takes place (p. 17). This implies that thought is not a mere observer of what we experience, but is, in fact, influencing what is experienced through the senses. However, this does not become evident to us because thought implies that what we are seeing is real, even though it may be a product of a mere projection of thought itself. “Although thought presents itself as separate from perception” (Bohm, 1994, p. 133), it “highly affects” (p. 135) perception. So, it is not just that what we perceive affects what we think, but rather, what we think affects how something is perceived, which then affects how we feel (p. 148).

Bohm (1994) says that *seeing* into the process of thought—that it affects perception—brings about a change in understanding at a deeper level (p. 151). He says that the present act of thinking is healthy, it realises its limitation and is open to something seen in a different way. The process of (present) thinking, if not completely influenced by conditioning, has the ability to “look at the situation and change the thought if necessary” (Bohm, 1994, p. 100). Through the inquiry into how the entire system of thought works, a space may perhaps be opened up through which what remains unconditioned can begin to see the conditioned (p. 123). However, this space cannot be from a place of thought and would require the system of thought being in “equilibrium” (p. 123) and not in constant operation. This does happen occasionally, which is when we “see something” (p. 123) that brings about some kind of change. The change, however,

is so rapid that one is not able to *see* it. Nevertheless, in the moments after it has occurred, one begins to make sense of what was *seen*. This *seeing* is what is referred to as insight by Krishnamurti (1980) and it alters the course of thought, beginning its movement in a new direction (Bohm, 1994, p. 151). The act of insight reveals the role of perception in thought, which allows for the *seeing* of what truly is. Becoming aware of how everything that is *seen* is seen through the lens of past experiences (conditioning) is crucial to understanding the process of thought.

2.5 The separate self

Bohm (1994) proposes the question, “If thought has to be aware and watchful of itself, who is the one that is watching? ... Is the ‘I’ that is watching separate from thought itself?” (p. 145). The self-image consists of the subject ‘I’—the ‘doer’ of the action—and the object ‘me’—to whom the action is done. These are the “two sides of myself” (p. 163) and that constitutes the ‘self’. The ‘I’ and the ‘me’ that form the identity is thus a product of the system of thought, which creates an image, and then sustains it through society and its structures (p. 169). The very perception that a self exists is what makes it seem real, which in actuality is a collection of thoughts (p. 175). Rather than choosing to see the self as something that is known and real, Bohm (1994) suggests looking at it as something that is unknown and “constantly revealing itself, through each person or through nature or through various other ways” (p. 175). Tolle (2004) provides a similar suggestion, where he says that nothing that is seen is real (pp. 93-111). He says that by reminding oneself of the limitations of perception in daily life, the truth may begin to reveal itself.

Bohm (1994) says that the very thought—I am separate from everyone and everything else—makes ‘me’ perceive ‘myself’ as separate and that culture and society sustain this separateness through the legitimacy it gives to individuality (p. 211). From a very young age, an image of ourselves is created starting from a name and followed by qualities that are descriptive of us—what we are and what we are not and who we should be. An image of us is built up, both by society and by ourselves, and is then “perceived as real” (p. 216). If ‘I am a generous person’ is an image that has come to describe me, then I will act in a way that that image is sustained because ‘I would like to hear people say that’. Based on the culture and society that we are part of, we form attachments to certain images and repel others, often not consciously. These attachments strengthen the sense of separateness, as it is based on what is believed to fit the

identity that is created. All of this—the identity, the I and the sense of separateness—Bohm says, are illusions supported by thinking and thought (Bohm, 1994, pp. 19-218).

Operating, then, from this frame of reference, Bohm (1994) says that there is no separate ‘my’ thought or ‘your’ thought, as it is one thought that is shared by all (p. 19). Hence, since it is universal in nature, there is no new thought that can bring about a solution to an old problem because the new thought, perhaps in a different form, is the same thought that brought about the old problem (Bohm, 1994, p. 20), which ultimately is all part of the same system. He maintains that thought is not recognized as the creator of problems because it is thought itself that is then used to solve the very problems it creates (p. 20). The system of thought is not the entirety of reality but because everything that is comprehensible largely operates within this system, it may seem that it is all there is (p. 24). The inability to see beyond this cycle of thought is what eventually leads to the concretising of illusionary boundaries, which then become accepted as reality—the illusions further sustained by additional, divisive thinking—thus keeping us stuck within this cycle of thought.

Had these divisions not been formed by thought, but rather if thought could be aware of itself as it was happening, there would be no conflict as there would be no separate image of oneself (Bohm, 1994, p. 215). We cannot be ‘free’ if we are operating from the system of thought (Krishnamurti, 1948). Freedom implies the choice to do what one wants, but the very fact that what one ‘wants’ means that one is tied to an assumption of necessity—the idea that ‘it cannot be otherwise’ (Bohm, 1994, p. 70)—keeps one bound to the system. Hence, one is not really free. True freedom is the “creative perception of a new order of necessity” (Bohm, 1994, p. 222) that is not stuck in old patterns of thought and the limiting identity. The effort in trying to build and hold on to a strong identity, its wants and opinions, poses a block to the creative energy (p. 172) that is otherwise constantly in flow. To have insight would be to access the creative energy; to be in a state of harmony both within and without; a state that Krishnamurti (1948) referred to as choiceless awareness.

2.6 Choiceless awareness and active listening

Krishnamurti described choiceless awareness as a state of ‘non-doing,’ in which one simply observes without the need to judge or control one's experiences (Krishnamurti, 1948). He called for deep introspection or choiceless awareness as a means to end inner, psychological time, further stating that the cessation of identification of the inner with the outer would lead to the

dissolution of the separateness between our inner and outer worlds (Vrobel, 2017, p. 168). This would lead to a timeless dimension where “time is transcended only in the stillness of the present” (Krishnamurti, 2012, p. 12). He clearly states that this stillness is different from the act of becoming still in order to achieve this state. In this stillness, there is no ‘becoming’ because there is no ‘time’ in which one is looking ‘to become.’ It is the becoming that is tiresome; an endless process ridden with conflict of the need to constantly escape from the current state of being (Vrobel, 2017, p. 163). The state of choiceless awareness is also characterised by what Krishnamurti referred to as ‘active listening’ which involves a profound level of attention and awareness to what is being said or observed, without the interference of one’s own biases or judgments (Krishnamurti, 2010a, p. 34). In these states of awareness, there is a sense of freedom and spontaneity, in which one is able to respond to the world in a natural and creative way.

While active listening is a state that is experienced through total insight into the divisive nature of the self and its wants, it is also suggested as a means by which one can gain a deeper understanding of one’s own thought processes and beliefs, as well as a greater appreciation for the perspectives of others (Krishnamurti, 2010a, p. 35). Listening through the screen of our opinions and biases prevents us from truly hearing what is being said. True listening and learning only occur when we are in a state of attention and silence; when the background noise is quiet (Krishnamurti, 1949). Krishnamurti (1949) said that through putting in effort, understanding cannot be achieved. Understanding takes place when there is silent observation. When the mind is quiet, it is free from resistance and prejudice and it is then that the act of listening can take place without any deliberate effort to understand (Krishnamurti, 1949). Through deep listening, Tolle (2016) suggests that we can access a higher state of consciousness, one that is free from the limitations of the egoic mind and connected to a deeper, more expansive sense of being (p. 139). To realise the nature of the kind of effort involved in listening, a distinction is made between the states of attention and concentration.

Tolle (2016) states that true listening involves a receptive state of attention rather than the active concentration that is often associated with hearing (p. 140). According to Krishnamurti (1954), attention and concentration are two distinct states of mind that are often confused with one another (p. 25). He says that attention is an effortless state of awareness in which the mind is fully present and engaged with the present moment allowing for greater awareness, creativity and insight (p. 26). In this state of presence, the mind is not preoccupied with thoughts of the past or future, nor is it attempting to impose its own opinions or beliefs onto the speaker. Rather,

it is simply receptive to what is being conveyed in the present moment (Krishnamurti, 1954, p. 27; Tolle, 2016, p. 138). In contrast, concentration involves a focused effort to exclude all distractions and maintain a narrow focus on a particular task or object (Krishnamurti, 1954, p. 25). Krishnamurti (1954) argues that while concentration is necessary for certain activities, it can also lead to a state of tension and rigidity in which the mind becomes closed off to new experiences and ideas (p. 26). He says that education, rather than cultivating in students the quality of attention, encourages concentration instead. And this further sustains fragmentary patterns of thinking (Krishnamurti, 2010a, pp. 11-19).

2.7 True education

For Krishnamurti, education was to understand the whole movement of thought and to see beyond the divisions that it creates. He argued that education must not be limited to academic or technical skills, but should encompass all aspects of life and develop an integrated human being (Krishnamurti, 2000, p. 31). True education must lead to self-discovery and the realization of one's potential as a human being; where learning should be a process of self-discovery, in which the student learns to understand themselves and their relationship to the world (Krishnamurti, 1970b, p.15). He argues that contemporary education is engaged in means of achieving social and economic success and is not fulfilling its purpose of developing holistic individuals capable of understanding and transforming society (Krishnamurti, 2010a, pp. 15-29).

Contemporary education is overly engaged in the process of thought where students are encouraged to find solutions to problems by thinking and imagining utopic scenarios in order to find solutions to future problems (Krishnamurti, 2010a, pp. 3-15). Education becomes fixated on the idea of what people should do and what society expects of them rather than accepting them for who they are with all their complexities. When, through education, there is a movement towards an ideal or a vision of the future, there is a tendency to mould individuals based on the predetermined concept of that future. This is a “denial of the freedom and integration of the individual” (Krishnamurti, 2010a, p. 13) and is yet another means of integrating individuals into an already mechanistic society. The present values of society cannot be altered by ideals alone; efforts to create a flawless utopia through ideals and plans will not lead to the necessary transformation of society that is needed to end war and universal devastation (Krishnamurti, 2010a, p. 12). Bohm (1994) says that teaching a student to become integrated and liberated through any particular approach or system is not the right form of education (p. 35).

Krishnamurti (2010a) states that to truly understand individuals, education must focus on them directly, without imposing societal expectations on them. This means helping them understand themselves without any personal agenda. The aim should not be to transform individuals into something else but rather to support their self-discovery through intelligence (pp. 6-15). He also stated that “intelligence is the capacity to perceive the essential, the what is; and to awaken this capacity, in oneself and in others, is education” (p. 15). It is only when we fully comprehend what exists in the present, without struggling after what we are not, can we be liberated from it (pp. 9-13). Spira (2023) maintains that the focus of science and education needs to be turned around from exploring external phenomena towards looking inwards at the “nature of the knower” (3:24).

Bohm (1994) questions the very possibility of what can be ‘known’ and says that “learning implies the unknown [because] if you are learning, you cannot know” (p. 176). He sees this way of being—being open to learning—as more creative than a way of being in which one is limited to one’s identity, which is secured in what is ‘known’. He talks about the tendency of thought to move away from the unpleasantness of being in a state of not knowing and says that it is a combination of factors, including the education system, that has played a role in the conditioning that has educated one “to have an answer” (p. 36), in order to escape the discomfort of uncertainty (p. 34). He further adds that if the purpose of education is supported by its claim of absolute knowledge, then it can never know the unknown. The unknown cannot be known through knowledge because knowledge is limited as it is the product of thought, which, in itself, is limited (Bohm, 1994, p. 176).

To see reality for what it is, one needs to see for themselves the role of thought and the havoc that is continuously being reinforced as a result of unconscious habits of thought (Peltola, 2020, pp. 17-29). Peltola (2020) believes that the most important concern we, as humankind, currently have is to free ourselves from the “tyranny of thought” (p. 8) so that we can see the world without the images formed by thought. Both Krishnamurti and Bohm suggest that the root of all problems is due to thinking— “not in what we think, but in how we think” (Peltola, 2020, p. 25) and emphasize the need to become aware of this process of thinking. Remaining preoccupied with principles and techniques will not facilitate the individual's journey towards freedom from their own egocentric tendencies, including their anxieties and contradictions. To experience something truly new in life, it is important to let go of the past and rid ourselves of cluttered thoughts, fears and pleasures. Only then can we create space for new ideas to emerge (Krishnamurti Foundation Trust, n.d.c); for insight.

The aspect of space was also mentioned by Bohm (1980), where he referred to it as openness to perception. Bohm maintains that the nature of this kind of space involved perception that could not be precisely described, but which was similar to “artistic perception” (p. 13). It is where one is open to the process of unfolding without letting what is already known interpret the flow, thus allowing for new ways of knowing. Insight, then, is seen as “undivided wholeness in flowing movement” (p. 11), where the unfolding in each moment is not seen as “permanently existing” (p. 14) but as something that will “ultimately dissolve back into this movement” (p. 14). Thus, ever-changing insights are a glimpse into an ever-changing and unfolding reality. This leaves us open to the many possibilities of having new insights at different points in time through embodiment of the older insights (Bohm, 1980, pp. 4-6). Bohm (1980) thus sees insight as a “way of looking at the world” (p. 4) rather than having “absolutely true knowledge of how things are” (p. 5).

2.8 Tacit knowledge

Questioning absolute knowledge, Polanyi (1983) challenges the notion that science claims to have objective knowledge. According to him, “we can know more than we can tell” (p. 4) and this is what he referred to as tacit, or implicit, knowledge. It is described in terms of the kind of knowledge that “cannot be put into words” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 20) but is known nonetheless. Polanyi (1983) said that since there was no knowledge that was purely explicit, there could be no grounds to prove a scientific truth (p. 23). The quest of trying to theoretically ‘know what’ and practically ‘know how’ involves a “higher creative power” (p. 7) that makes the knowing possible, although what it is that brings about the unified ‘knowing’ is something that cannot precisely be identified (pp. 6-9). According to Polanyi (1983), “prior tacit knowing” (p. 21) was involved in any new knowing. By acknowledging the tacit dimension in knowing, a shift is created in the pursuit of knowledge—one that is “guided by sensing the presence of a hidden reality...which may yet reveal itself to future eyes in an indefinite range of unexpected manifestations” (p. 24).

Polanyi (1983) stated that tacit knowing is, in most cases, not in our control and we only become aware of the “processes inside our body in the perception of objects outside” (p. 14), thus implying some kind of internal projection onto the external entities that are perceived. A further extension of this idea suggests how we attend “from our bodies” (p. 16) to objects outside, incorporating, in the process, the external entity such that “we come to dwell in it” (p. 16).

Indwelling includes consciously turning the focus inward with an intensity that stems from the need of pure understanding of the wholeness of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1990, p. 24). While it is a conscious act, it does not have a preconceived plan or structure to follow. Indwelling, Polanyi (1983) proposes, is widely used in the way we try to understand something by identifying with the basic theory and many characteristics that support its understanding (p. 17), an example being how in order to learn a language we have to first accept its rules of grammar.

Many thinkers (Moustakas, 1990; Polanyi, 1983) saw indwelling as the true means of understanding humanity and the many works of art by “dwelling in the mind of the creator” (Polanyi, 1983, p. 17). Polanyi (1983) also acknowledged the role that indwelling played in tacit knowing—in how the awareness in knowing the whole through the particulars was supported by dwelling in the entirety of what the particulars together represent, thus leading to the consolidated understanding of a phenomenon (p. 18). He considers it to be the “attending from unspecified particulars” (p. 24) to envision the whole in ways that cannot be specified. He further states how it is important to be in a similar state of indwelling as the presenter of knowledge in order to receive the meaning of what is being conveyed (p. 61). This involves entrusting oneself completely to the other’s authority during the moments when one is trying to understand the other (p. 64), thus supporting Krishnamurti’s (1974) proposal of active listening to see beyond the known. Polanyi’s tacit knowledge plays a key role both in the notion of indwelling in Moustakas’ heuristic inquiry as well as in Bohm’s Dialogue.

2.9 Bohmian Dialogue

Dialogue, according to Bohm (1996), is one way by which the system of thought could be brought into the realm of awareness. The word dialogue is derived from two Greek words, *dia*, which means ‘through’ and *logos*, which in Bohm’s dialogue is understood to be “the meaning of the word” (p. 2). What this proposes is a form of dialogue that involves the “flow of meaning” (p. 2) through and between people, which leads to the unfolding of something creative and new. In dialogue, what is communicated by an individual is usually something that is considered to be of value or meaning to that individual (Bohm, 1994, p. 200) and each individual typically considers different things to be meaningful to them. By looking into how meaning is created, it can be seen that meaning is influenced by perception. To understand the root of where meanings come from is to look into the role of thought and perception in the creation and sustenance of meanings in memory. This, Bohm (1994) says, is what dialogue is—bringing to awareness how

meanings, opinions and assumptions are formed (p. 200), followed by the questioning of our subsequent identification with them.

Bohm (1996) says that any dialogue must begin by talking about what dialogue is rather than getting straight into it (p. 17). This would also involve bringing up the notions of necessity and contingency and seeing the role of thought in assumptions and opinions (Bohm, 1994, pp. 70-72). Necessity is the idea that “it cannot be otherwise” (p. 70) and contingency suggests “what can be otherwise” (p. 70). Everything that passes through thought is assessed based on whether it is one of the two, necessity bringing the assumption that “it really has to be that way [or] it’s always necessary” (p. 71) and cannot be “put aside” (p. 71), which Bohm says leads to why ideas are defended with such intensity. The spirit of dialogue is one in which “we are not playing a game against each other but with each other” (Bohm, 1996, p. 2) through the “questioning of fundamental assumptions” (p. 2). Bohmian Dialogue makes explicit the various “assumptions of necessity” (p. 3) that each individual has and traces these assumptions to their roots. In dialogue, one sees how one defends one’s own assumptions when they are questioned, because very often these assumptions are thought to be ‘truths’. The act of defending an opinion is more than just a verbal or emotional response. It points to one’s attachment and identification with the opinion. By observing one’s often “unconscious” (Bohm, 1996, p. 3) attachment and identification with these opinions, through dialogue, one can discover the various patterns by which one operates.

2.10 Dialogue for participatory consciousness

Bohmian Dialogue involves the suspension of assumptions without judging them to be good or bad, no matter how much one may disagree or oppose another’s opinion. In this process, coresearchers realize the similarities and differences between what they say and how it is interpreted by others and how one thing could mean different things to different people (Bohm, 1994, pp. 203-209). In this kind of sharing, where opinions and assumptions are laid bare without being judged as right or wrong, there is “one mind” (p. 206) that is created as everybody has “the same content—...opinions, ...assumptions” (p. 206). Through dialogue, a “participatory consciousness” (Bohm, 1996, p. 7) is created, where members become aware that opinions are just assumptions. Bohm (1994, pp. 206-210) points out that the power of shared collective thought is greater than that of individual thought and it is this collective thought, if generated through coherent movement, that could bring about effective communication.

Unlike in discussions that seek effective solutions to concerns raised, Bohmian Dialogue does not have any summarization at the end of its sessions because the purpose is not to reach a conclusion of what was spoken about. Additionally, there is no purpose or agenda because that could lead to more assumptions regarding the usefulness of the purpose (Bohm, 1996, p. 6). The feeling of not having come to any tangible understanding at the end of a dialogue is not a concern in this process, although, in most cases, it may seem to bring up uncertainty among members, as the common expectation of many meetings usually involves an agenda (Bohm, 1996, p. 13). The idea of a dialogue having no purpose is also not fixed, in the sense that there can be a relative purpose from time to time. It is the probability of a purpose becoming absolute that members need to be aware of, as that can lead to the reliance on a path to one truth and the stability that that provides.

The primary motive of dialogue is to discover truth that is not a result of conditioning (Bohm, 1996, pp. 7-9). Bohm (1996) says that by defending an opinion, one is defending oneself and by doing this there is no space for the truth to emerge (p. 10). The role of opinions in seeing the truth is to see that opinions *cannot* be the truth as they are ultimately rigid in nature (p. 11). “Truth does not emerge from opinions...but perhaps from a more free movement of the tacit mind” (p. 10). Bohm (1996) states that here is no ‘road’ to truth and through dialogue, “we see the meaning of all the roads, ... and eventually come to the no road” (p. 11). It is the power of collective thought that provides coherence to thinking, which is the aim of dialogue. Coherence is also felt at the tacit level of thought and this can lead to a fundamental shift in thinking through collective communication (Bohm, 1996, p. 5). By withholding rather than defending one’s opinion, there is a movement in a direction that is creative; that is of truth. A common consciousness arises out of contradictions yet one is well aware of them; a consciousness that is held in the unknown and not based on any agreement of a single truth (p. 9). This new consciousness is inclusive of every member and moves “between the individual and the collective” (p. 7) mind in a coherent manner. Bohm (1996) says that there is power in the “collective dimension of the human being” (p. 18) and this can bring about a change in consciousness.

Through consciousness, what is initially sensed through the senses is then formed into meaning. However, if one is of the opinion that one meaning is more valid than the other, then the spirit of dialogue is affected as there will not be any shared meaning (Bohm, 1996, p. 12). The different opinions that each of us carry prevents the forming of shared meaning and this, according to Bohm (1996), is creating an incoherence in society. He says that any sort of action in society, whether it is environmental or social, has to be accompanied with this form of dialogue, in

addition to the awareness of the system of thought, because action in isolation will not bring about the change that is sought (p. 11). Dialogue is about “opening up the mind” (p. 17), collectively. It is an “empty space” (p. 13), where when something new comes in, there is space for it to be received. The purposeful act of non-concluding, in this form of dialogue, leads to what could appear from the tacit dimension and although it cannot be explicitly grasped, Bohm suggests that it is important that this form of dialogue be attempted.

To conclude this section of the study, this chapter looked at how understanding the role of thought in sustaining the illusion of separateness is essential to understanding insight. Krishnamurti’s notion of insight is also found to have similarities with perspectives of nondual thinkers, who claim that the separate self is an illusion and it is only through direct experience that reality can be seen for what it is beyond the fragmentation created by divisive thinking. Contemporary education is seen to strengthen illusions of separateness because of its failure to question thought and the resulting identity. And in seeking a means to bring the system of thought into the realm of awareness, Bohmian Dialogue is considered a useful and necessary form of communication. A further elaboration of Bohmian Dialogue and its use in the generation of data for this study will be given in chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Incubation

In heuristic inquiry, the period of incubation is where the researcher takes a step back from all engagement with the topic, which until then had been intensely pursued. While there is a disconnection from the inquiry on the surface, it is seen as a necessity to allow for the “expansion of knowledge” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 28) on a different dimension. The expansion of tacit knowing and intuition during this period of stepping back allows for what occurs outside the realm of conscious awareness to be integrated with what is consciously known. This chapter details the various thoughts that surfaced during my periods of incubation, followed by descriptions on the purpose of the study, data generation methods and the design and organization of the study.

3.1 Intuition, focusing and disorientation

According to Moustakas (1990), intuition is the dimension that lies between the two knowledges of the tacit and the explicit (p. 23). It is the “internal capacity” (p. 23) of meaning making that bypasses the otherwise requisite steps of logic and reasoning to get to the point of knowing. Clues have a role to play in intuition and the process of intuitive knowing is not seen as something mysterious. Rather, it is a skill that can be developed with practice through the back-and-forth observation of and movement between clues (p. 23). In heuristic inquiry, intuition makes possible the seeing of the whole through the back and forth between the various pieces of information that function as clues to the phenomenon being studied. And it is considered an essential component to get at the essence of the phenomenon.

Another essential element of heuristic inquiry is focusing (Moustakas, 1990, p. 25). In contrast to how it is usually perceived as demanding more intense concentration, focusing, in heuristic inquiry, hints towards the emptying out of inessential elements that are not of importance for the topic being explored. This is done in order to create enough space that is required to clearly engage with the data without being occupied by a constant stream of thought. It involves decluttering the mind to allow for intuitive insight to emerge (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 51). Like the other processes of heuristic inquiry, focusing also requires staying with the phenomenon long enough for an “internal shift” (p. 51) to take place.

In the course of this study, the periods of incubation were not conscious decisions to step back from engagement with the study. They came in the form of an academic exchange programme

that had to be pursued in the midst of the study. This provided, in its own way, a surface disconnection from the topic of inquiry. In these periods of what I consider to be my time of incubation, I was transported from the tranquillity of the conducive environment of my room that supported my writing to places that were bursting with activity, where I was surrounded by people at all times. In what seemed to be the ‘real world’ outside of my little bubble, I was once again met with apprehensions from the past of whether the world of Krishnamurti and nonduality were mere abstractions and ideas. Was the self an illusion after all or was I getting the whole thing wrong?

These thoughts were not new for me, having experienced similar ones in the period immediately after I finished my course at the Krishnamurti school, fresh from new insights. Finding a journal entry from that time that read, ‘The conditioning of the world today is strong. If you don’t find the balance, it can just as easily pull you in’ (personal journal, 2019) was a reminder of the initial disorientation one can face when stuck in between the two worlds—the one of illusions and the one of not knowing. It was choosing to stay stuck in the middle that allowed for embracing what had to be. And from that place I reached out, once again, to the people that had told me, four years ago, that it was ok to not know.

3.2 Selection of coresearchers

For this study, six educators from five different schools that were based on the philosophy of Krishnamurti were selected. Four of the teachers were personally known to me through the teacher education programme. The remaining two teachers were included as coresearchers following a brief interaction with them during a visit to the school where they were teaching. Each of these teachers have been in one or the other Krishnamurti school for at least 20 years and have actively engaged with his teachings.

My prior associations with the educators served as easier starting points for the data generation phase as, in many ways, the dialogues seemed to be a continuation of the inquiry that had already begun some years ago. Having completed the teacher education programme just before the pandemic, the restrictive years of Covid-19 lockdowns served, for me, as a period of incubation for the teachings of Krishnamurti to be truly, yet only partially, understood. It was only in the years after I completed the course that I began to see the value of what his vision of education called for—a radical change in thought that could, in turn, change education from its current trajectory. This study, thus, gave me the opportunity to reconnect with the teachers of

these schools and to engage, through my own new understanding of Krishnamurti's philosophy, with their perceptions or experiences of total insight and how it had influenced their approach to education.

3.3 Data generation

The co-researchers who were selected for the study were given a letter (see Appendix) that outlined the study's purpose. To participate in the study, the co-researchers were required to sign an informed consent form following which emails were exchanged regarding scheduling time for the dialogues. Although Bohmian Dialogue is often conducted with a group of people (Bohm, 1996, p. 2), I chose to have one-on-one dialogues with each of the coresearchers.

The study initially included six coresearchers, although data from one of the coresearchers was not included in the final presentation. This was mainly due to my original intention of having unstructured dialogues and bringing up the question of insight without any prior questions suggested to the coresearchers. I learnt, however, that despite all the coresearchers being well aware of Krishnamurti's notion of insight, it was not a topic that was engaged in often in the schools.

Upon receiving the signed informed consent forms, a following email was sent to the coresearchers with the following questions as a means of being a starting point for dialogue:

- What do you understand by Krishnamurti's notion of (total) insight?
- Does this understanding influence the way you approach teaching/education? How?
- What is the role of practice in insight?

Once a suitable time had been agreed upon, online sessions were scheduled for the dialogues. In heuristic research, data is typically collected through dialogues between the primary researcher and the coresearchers. These dialogues have no fixed time schedules and may continue until both parties, through presence and awareness, feel like it is time for them to naturally end (Moustakas, 1990, pp. 36-39). In this study, the dialogues were carried out online through applications like Zoom and Microsoft Teams and each dialogue lasted between 1 to 2 hours.

While the nature of the study was explained to the coresearchers, one consideration that was taken into account was to not make the assumption that these educators' understanding of total insight did in fact have an influence on their approach to education, despite personally believing

that to be the case. Hence, in the initial dialogue, care was taken to first talk about their understanding of insight, from where the dialogue was further carried on towards exploring the influence of this understanding on their educational practice. The dialogues involved questions that provided a structure but did not restrict the responses of the coresearchers.

Bohmian Dialogue is a common occurrence in the Krishnamurti schools and the time that I spent at the schools gave me the opportunity to be part of many dialogues. As the coresearchers were already familiar with Bohmian Dialogue, this was explicitly mentioned as a method of inquiry and data generation at the beginning of the study to prevent any hierarchical roles that could develop in the course of the data generation process. This also inevitably helped to set the atmosphere that encouraged open sharing and creating a space for the holding of ideas rather than seeking to reach a final inference. Self-disclosure and empathic listening are essential elements of Bohmian Dialogue and were engaged in actively through all the phases of data generation.

3.4 Design and organization of the data

Based on Moustakas' (1990) heuristic methodology, the first step is to collect all the data on the coresearchers' lived experiences regarding the phenomenon and to arrange it in a way that a personal depiction of their experiences is produced, while preserving their voices in the description (pp. 49-51). This is done for individual coresearcher's of their experiences, with a constant movement between the processes of immersion and incubation in the data. Themes that develop from this deep engagement with the material are also included in the depictions (p. 51).

Once the individual depictions of the coresearcher experiences have been developed, the researcher once again engages in the processes of immersion and incubation to finally create a composite depiction based on the common themes identified in the individual depictions (Moustakas, 1990, p. 51). This composite depiction contains the core themes of the experiences and can include verbatim excerpts, illustrations, stories or any other material from coresearchers that seem accurate for this depiction (p. 51).

The next step involves the researcher going back to the raw data and drawing out two or three coresearchers whose experiences represent the lived experiences of the entire group (Moustakas, 1990, pp. 51-52). Individual portraits of these coresearchers are created, which can include any material that was shared with the researcher.

The final step in the presentation of data is a creative synthesis of the phenomenon that is created by the researcher based on the experience of the inquiry (Moustakas, 1990, p. 52). This process involves awareness from the tacit and intuitive dimensions along with illuminations from periods of rest and engagement with the data. The essence of the experienced phenomenon is articulated and themes that emerged are portrayed (pp. 49-52). This final work can be in the form of any creative expression. The kind of inquiry the heuristic research engages in leaves the researcher with wonder on how new meanings emerge when a question is completely engaged with. As Polanyi (1983) states, "...having made a discovery, I shall never see the world again as before. My eyes have become different..." (p. 143).

Although Moustakas (1990) proposes the above-mentioned steps as central to the process of inquiry, the organization and analysis of the data in this study were carried out with slight modifications. Details of these modifications are further outlined in chapter 5. In conclusion, stemming from my own search of the deeper purpose of education, through this heuristic inquiry, I have explored how the Krishnamurti school teachers' understanding of his notion of (total) insight and nonduality has influenced their own approach to education. Additionally, the study aims to explore what an education with nonduality as the underlying orientation of relating to the world would translate to in more practical aspects. The following chapter includes the individual depictions of coresearcher experiences in exploring the phenomenon of insight and its influence on educational practices, concluding in the development of five common themes from the coresearchers' depictions.

Chapter 4: Illumination

Moustakas (1990) referred to illumination as the “breakthrough into conscious awareness” (p. 29) of themes in the study that come up from the previous phases of the research process. During this phase, concepts that might have previously been unclear might be seen through a new lens and a new way of knowing may occur. An important aspect of this phase is that insight comes about through no conscious effort on the part of the researcher other than them being open to receive the knowledge that seems to appear from the tacit dimension (pp. 29-30). The illumination phase brings to the front those elements of the phenomenon that probably always existed but were missed because they previously bypassed the immediate attention of the researcher. According to Moustakas (1990), it is important to exercise the tacit dimension of knowing to allow for ‘illumination’, because this could provide a new way of knowing (p. 31).

This chapter begins with the individual depiction of each coresearcher, which was created through and after complete immersion in the transcripts of the dialogues. Understanding that what exists as meaning to each coresearcher stems from their experiences and their perception of these experiences was an essential part of the awareness that framed the writing process at this stage. Seeing that the validity of experience rests with the experiencer was also key to the development of the depictions. Upon the creation of the individual depictions, themes that emerged from immersion in the lived experiences of the coresearchers were developed and have been presented in this chapter.

The individual depictions have been written in the form of a narrative that I imagine voices the experience of each coresearcher. The narrative, thus, unfolds as if narrated by each of the coresearchers. To enhance readability, the parts of the depictions that are not in block quotations are summarizations of the dialogues, whereas those parts that are in block quotations are direct verbatim extracts of the dialogues.

4.1 Individual depictions

4.1.1 Ved

When I think about insight, two things come to mind. So, I will start with the first one, which, I feel, has something to do within the realm of knowledge. It is the kind of knowing where there is some prior information or knowledge and then out of that, you see something new and add it

to your existing knowledge. This, I think, is how most of us understand insight—like ‘a deeper comprehension’.

Then, there is the insight that Krishnamurti was talking about. One of the difficulties with Krishnamurti's teachings is that he uses ordinary words and gives them a different meaning. The insight that he was referring to is a little more complex to understand so maybe I can start by saying what it is not and through that get to what it is. Insight is not information that you memorize, record and then repeat in order to get some deeper understanding. When Krishnamurti talks about insight, he says that it comes in a flash. It is the sudden seeing of how the brain is deeply conditioned.

When Krishnamurti uses the words total insight, I feel that he's referring to something much more fundamental in human beings, which is the whole idea of the self. There is this idea that I'm a separate human being...separate from others...there is me and there is you...and I relate to the rest of the world through my needs and my wants. Society is built on this idea...and as human beings, we operate from self-interest.

And one of the factors in this separate sense of self is psychological time, which involves the becoming; what I am not today, I will become in the future. For example, if I say ‘I am an angry person. But, from today I'm making an effort not to be angry and then in the future I hope to be a better human being,’ there is a sense of time in this...psychological time...yet another block to seeing what is really true.

What Krishnamurti is talking about is the end of phenomena like the self and time. He is saying that this possibility exists in human beings—the possibility of total insight, where there is no separate self. And this possibility exists if there is sufficient investigation, looking and examining. He says that a totally different way of living exists for human beings. But for that to happen, we need to have ‘insight into the functioning of our own minds.’

For most of us here in the Krishnamurti schools, we have had partial insights. I have seen through the fact of the self...that the self is an illusion; that psychological time is an illusion. But then our conditioning is so strong that it surfaces up again and we are drawn back to operating from our individual needs.

Krishnamurti says that insight is not something that comes about through previous knowledge, time or effort. But for many of us, there is a certain amount of preparation for insight. It is all quite paradoxical—these notions of time and effort in insight. Insight may come in a flash but

there is a certain amount of questioning and exploring that happens prior to it. And, when we start to question the various accumulations that the brain has made over its lifetime, we start to see the default lens through which we view the world and experience everything. It is only then that we start seeing things for what they actually are and not what they are supposed or imagined to be.

Through my own experiences of observation, I have seen that ideas like security and fear stem from notions of the self. In my case, 'I became aware of the suffering that comes with the self and how the emphasis on 'me' and 'mine' was bringing about suffering'. That's how I got interested in what Krishnamurti was saying. I was also interested in the chattering of the mind even when there was no stimulation from outside. There was a kind of inner conversation going on at all times and when I started out, 'I wanted this inner noise to stop.' But it took some years, many years, I would say, to realize that trying to stop this inner noise actually makes it stronger, makes it much more potent. What I learnt just through observing is that it is important is to understand what this noise is about; what this inner dialogue is that is going on all the time. It was in seeing the pattern of the inner dialogue that I started to question the thoughts.

It's not just a matter of changing one's way of thinking or thought...but what is important is the very seeing of this thinking...when we actually perceive that the path of thought that we've been going on is taking us nowhere. I saw how the self was so insecure and how the very seeking of certainty or security was creating insecurity. And, once I saw this, something began to change...I started seeing the beauty in just watching what was going on within me...

I was learning so much...I thought that if I came to one of these schools I could learn in the process...by working with young people...with other educators who are also interested in this...who have also seen this different world...

I think education needs to explore this area of human behaviour. Our role as educators must be to become 'alert to the phenomena of conditioning' because once we become aware of this, our behaviour and actions will be very different. We will not be conditioning children in the usual way. We will not keep reinforcing old patterns of conditioning or form new conditioning that can become problematic at a later stage. The teachers have to be interested in 'unconditioning' themselves first. I feel that the interest in insight and conditioning has to be more with the adult than with young children because it is the teachers and parents who condition the children.

The human mind, from a very young age, develops the notion of the separate self. It is part of human thought. It is how thinking works. This has become the natural order that we continue to sustain through our thinking. This division in thinking leads to ideas of comparison, which further leads to insecurities as a result of this comparison.

For example, let's say I am building a house. I need to have some idea of measurement...of how big each room is going to be...and the different material I will have to use for the floor, the doors...So, in this case, some comparison is necessary. But what becomes problematic is that I also tend to take the same comparison inwardly. When I say, 'I'm not as good as you' or 'I am slower than you,' the pressure and anxiety begin. This kind of psychological comparison...is what society is driven by. And we don't see what it is doing to us.

So, as educators, the question we need to ask is, 'Can we function in this world with intelligence and without getting too drawn into believing the structures in society to be the final truth?'

There are relative truths and people are operating from what they know to be true. But then, knowing that there is something beyond all this...that, in human beings there is a possibility to live in a different way...that is what we need to uncover through education.

We understand that the individual has to function in society and hence needs to develop fundamental skills. And those skills are taught in most schools. But here, we cannot just stop at that. We ask the children to question the way things are. We ask them to question the way they think. This questioning can also be in the form of a pause, where we ask them to reflect on their own actions.

We create spaces where there's no activity...where there is silence...and we talk about the importance of silence. But it's really left up to the individual to see what it brings up for them. Is it possible to sit in silence and do nothing? Sometimes the children are asked to just sit and look around them, quietly. We then talk about what came up during those moments of not 'doing' anything. So, if they see the value of it, the importance of it, then they can create that in their own lives.

We bring up the importance of being alone. And by alone, I don't mean being isolated. To be alone psychologically also means not letting your emotions depend on others...What can this dependence do? What happens when I'm alone? What kind of

thoughts come to my mind? Why is it difficult to be alone? The school creates space, for these questions. We have quiet assemblies...study centre sessions...where these questions are explored through dialogue.

Every dialogue is a learning experience for the teachers and the children. Through dialogue we begin to see that the kind of issues we have are not personal. Others also go through similar experiences. We sit in a circle and discuss whatever comes up. At least in a school like this, children have the freedom to talk to their teacher or to some adult or their friends about what they are going through. Here, 'the inner life is given importance' and spaces are created formally as well as informally where sharing can happen. And the child is 'free to discuss, to open up and find out what kind of inner questions are forming.'

And I think, this is all part of bringing in some kind of order. This can be considered bringing about some sort of 'outer order,' which in turn brings in the inner order that Krishnamurti was talking about—the kind of order where 'there is no irrationality in thinking, there is no illusion, there is no fear or antagonism towards anybody.'

Nobody from the outside can create this inner order for an individual... I feel that the demand to have this inner order has to come from within...the feeling that 'I want to live this kind of life' has to be an inner urge. As educators, we can only facilitate these kinds of activities and this kind of questioning in school. But it's something that the children have to see for themselves and get interested in to then bring that sort of order into their own lives...the teachers can give them a fragrance of silence or of being alone, for example...but the individual has to see the importance of this for themselves. If they do, if they engage with these questions, they can begin to see what's really true...The silence...the slowing down...these are important, because if the mind is too busy or too engrossed in thoughts and feelings, it cannot have any insight. You have to slow down and allow it to happen.

4.1.2 Neel

It is very trying to match one's experience with the descriptions of what Krishnamurti has said. Krishnamurti is an extremely demanding teacher, and for him, there is nothing which is partial. He rejects the partial completely. Now, I can understand some of it but not wholly.

When I think of understanding something, it mostly happens in bits and pieces. I understand a bit today and a little bit more tomorrow and eventually the whole thing. This is the kind of understanding that I am used to. It proceeds through logic, where you understand the basis of something and then you gradually uncover the assumptions and then uncover the whole picture.

But what Krishnamurti says is that understanding does not come in an accumulative fashion. Instead, you see in a flash...the nature of something...the essence of something...and you get a sense of the whole picture. Even though it may lack some of the details...you still have a sense of the whole. Maybe...later...you try to understand by using logic...by using your own interrogation of what you have experienced. You try to connect the dots...and wonder how it could have formed like that.

But that initial seeing happens in an unguarded moment. It's not a planned thing. And when you have seen it...that experience of having glimpsed the whole...you cannot lose it. It doesn't go away. It's not like an experience which you try to hold on to or it might slip away from you. It doesn't happen like that. Once you have seen an aspect of yourself, it's an aspect of self-understanding...and then you have understood yourself in a slightly different way. It begins to have an effect on your action...and certain habits which you may have had slowly...loosen. It's not a conscious thing.

But often, what happens is that we do not give enough space or time to ourselves to fully understand these things that we glimpse.

I should add to what I said before...I said you cannot lose it...but I think the necessary part...after the seeing...is that you have to work with it. You have to...understand what you have seen. It's as if...suddenly...a light was switched on and just for a brief moment you saw something...and then the moment is gone...but you have to make sense of what you saw. You have to see in what way those parts make sense. Unless you do that, it loses its...its hold on you. It's a rather odd thing to describe, but it is a real experience. I'm speaking out of something which is real for me...some of the moments that I have had.

However, I should also add that Krishnamurti...as I said...is very demanding teacher...and he may not fully accept what I have just said. He may demand something much more than this. For example, if a person were to say to him, 'I'm going to try my best.' He would discard that altogether. These words... 'try, best' ...he would just reject

them completely because insight cannot come in that manner. It comes, if at all, in an unguarded moment.

But I do think a certain kind of preparation is necessary for insight to happen. And I think that preparation is a certain blankness; a certain lack of occupation. Insight may not happen if you are too busy doing a task or if all your energy and attention is going into doing something. It may not happen in those moments when you are actively thinking.

And that is not always easy to come by, because often, even when you sit without doing anything, you have thoughts and ideas and plans which occupy you. Your mind is working at something or the other. When the mind is busy calculating or anticipating or working on something or the other, there is no space for anything else to come. So, a necessary condition seems to be a kind of blankness.

I think the metaphor which Krishnamurti uses is...keeping the window open... He also adds that you can keep the window open, but you can't make the breeze come in...you can't direct the breeze, but it may come in on its own. I think that captures the reality of insight very accurately. You have to do the necessary work but after that it...can happen on its own. You can't invite it. You can't make it happen. There is no knowing when it will happen.

But to have that unguarded moment is essential; to be vulnerable. There is a certain kind of mystery in vulnerability. There is an unguarded quality to it. You cannot, of course, consciously become vulnerable. You can, on the other hand, question your own tendency to defend yourself or explain things away all the time. There is a chance of allowing insight to happen when you are not constantly protecting yourself; when you are not too invested in your own future, thinking and planning and anticipating events. The thinking is what acts like a wall because it then becomes a very self-centred kind of life. Taking a break from the thinking is important.

In these schools, we try to create spaces where you can pause...where you're not rushed, where you're not so invested in some of these notions of self all the time...defending yourself, justifying yourself, explaining yourself...not caught up in all of that too much...or too driven by your own desires. There are some moments of quiet. I think we try to create it, but it seems to me that it is becoming more and more difficult in the current world because of the general nature of the conversations.

The reality in today's life...today's world...is that issues of anxiety are very much on the increase, and that means there's an excessive consciousness of oneself. An excessive consciousness of what you are and what you are not and what somebody else is...this kind of comparison. There is this very strong need to defend oneself, to protect oneself from imagined dangers. So, vulnerability...it's not exactly there. In fact, you find the very strong tendency...an attempt...to try to be invulnerable. But, of course, that never actually works, because in attempting to become invulnerable, you leave yourself open to different kinds of wounds...panic...hurt in different forms.

In many ways the task has become far more complicated today because we seem to be getting stuck at that initial stage itself...where we're not even able to clear the ground to be able to talk about something...to be able to see oneself...in an atmosphere of calmness. To be able to clear the ground just enough so that there is some degree of vulnerability has itself become a challenge.

Children come in very strongly conditioned by family...by the kinds of things which are being said on the media, for example... ideas of success or ideas of what they're supposed to do with their lives, what they're supposed to do in the world and where they're supposed to get to. Identity has become a very, very strong issue. The identity that children are pressured into having these days is stronger than it was before. And they are so consciously aware of their own identity. So, you know, the childhood aspect of it seems to be just knocked out completely. It's not a healthy kind of conditioning.

All we can do in a school is raise questions. I think that remains the important task of education so that there is a kind of innocence that still remains in children. Innocence in the sense that there is no sense of manipulating the world. Where one is not defensive all the time and in the process of defending oneself, manipulating others.

The word innocence has a nondual nature to it...where you're not separate and trying to do something to the world to maximize your own benefit. Instead, you're open...you're curious...you're, you're just looking...There's an innocence in which you ask questions...in which you relate to the world. This is something we need to bring about which is, of course, a great challenge...for you can't...I mean, there's a contradiction because you can't bring about innocence and yet...we need to nurture it in some way. And perhaps it can happen only if you slow down the process of growing up. We don't try to rush the children into growing up...into adulthood. There is play. There are pauses.

All that we are doing here in these schools continues to be very much a work in progress. Personally, I try my hardest to break these strong patterns of conditioning in the children...to break them through conversation...through exploration...questions. But I can see that I am running up against a wall which is...which is perhaps stronger than it was earlier. This is the feeling that I often get...because the conditioning the world has laid down is very solid. And every now and then I get this feeling that...that I have worked in these schools now for so many years...and I get the feeling that I have done nothing at all. I do get that feeling. I feel as if I'm starting again on square one. But anyway, that's part of it. I think that's the nature of education itself. It's the nature of inquiry...there is no sense that you're climbing some ladder...because there is no ladder.

It's important to see that there is no real ladder. To see this...to be able to see through the illusions that seem so real to us...our constructions of the world...the divisions...the identities...to see through all this deception...is also insight. We live in illusion, but we don't see it as illusion. It seems like our desires make something real. And it's only when we begin to see that it is...just something which we have made up...it has become important because we have made it important...and to be able to see this...it begins to then stop...it starts to dissolve. The illusions begin to drop. This is what Krishnamurti called total insight. To be able to see this...to understand the kind of prison that we may be living in...that we are prisoners of desire, prisoners of our own wants, prisoners of our own ambition. And in order to see this... we have to each explore it for ourselves.

To me, engaging in the quest to understand ourselves, to understand how we have shaped the world and how the world is shaping us, I consider that to be of the greatest importance. So, I take this statement very seriously, that 'self-understanding is both the beginning and the end of education.' And I do pursue this particular line with a fair bit of energy and commitment, with children and with teachers as well. I have done this for years now. It matters to me immensely because, to me, this is the most central part of education.

And unless we really pay heed to it...give our lives to it...education in the technical sense of the word, will have lesser and lesser value. This whole business of mastering a subject and rising higher and getting a good job based on your degrees...it matters...but it is not all there is. And that is one of the most important insights one can have...to see that we create our own illusions and we don't realize the apparent flaw in all of this.

4.1.3 Jai

Insight is when you see something clearly just as it is, where the seeing is not clouded by thought. I know that this might sound strange to somebody listening to it for the first time because, generally speaking, insight seems to imply a deeper sort of understanding that is based on further introspection. And this process usually involves additional thinking. But the word insight is understood slightly differently for those familiar with Krishnamurti and his teachings.

Generally, when we look at something, we don't really see it as it is. We operate through thought...through thinking...through the past. Because everything that we think about is a product of our past experiences. So, the seeing is clouded by the past...by thought. But when there is a sudden cessation of that movement of thought that is based on the past...when the mind is able to take a back seat and when it's not interfering with the seeing...the insight comes in flashes and it sort of lightens you up...there's a certain lightness through which you see things...and this is a different kind of seeing.

The action that comes from this kind of seeing is effortless. It is different from the kind of action you take when you set a goal and then plan a set of practices to reach it. By effortless, I do not mean that you just sit back and expect things to happen. That is not what I am talking about. What I mean by effortless action is that it is immediate; not born of incessant thinking. It is not previously thought out. It emerges from the clarity of the seeing. And I cannot predict beforehand the kind of action that emerges because it is emerging as a result of my being fully present in that moment.

I'm fully alert to the situation. And from that seeing...in that moment, whatever action is required comes through. The insight in that moment results in the action. It's instantaneous action without any gap between the seeing and the doing. So, really, insight and action are not two different things.

We can have these moments of clarity in everyday life, if we are attentive to it. To be attentive is to be fully present in the moment. And if we are, then we can have some small, partial insights, where we see certain things and we act. Sometimes, it is through these partial insights that the bigger insights may come in. But real insight is to see the structure of the self and the mind and how it is operating. And this is what Krishnamurti meant by total insight—when you see the very structure of the self; this seeing being so pure that the distance between the observer and the observed disappears; where the 'I' ceases to exist.

I cannot claim to have reached that point where I have seen this. Yes, I have had a few moments of clarity, I would say. Although it's not that this clarity has stayed with me constantly. But it is these moments that sort of tell you that, you know, there is work to be done in this area...you have to really dig deeper...you have to really inquire and be more watchful in this space because you've seen or tasted a little bit of it. And you know that there is something more to all of this...

Here, the effort that is going into this kind of inquiry is different. The starting point in this inquiry is from the inner conflict I am feeling. I can see the pain and resistance through which I operate in daily life. And I start from saying that where I am operating from is always within this zone of creating conflict and resistance and it is tiring. Operating with the baggage of my past conditioning is tiring. So, then I begin to ask, 'Is there another way to go about this?' It becomes an open-ended search. It is not a seeking because seeking implies already having a particular thing in mind. But this is a search that is open to whatever comes along the way. In this search, there is no fixed approach. There is no set pattern or particular steps that you follow. It is based entirely on self-inquiry.

Questioning becomes the instrument for this inquiry. There is an art to questioning because it is so important to ask the right questions and not get caught up in the wrong ones. So, how do we ask the right questions? How do we ask the questions that can break down the blurriness so that we can begin to see clearly? Asking the right questions themselves will begin that movement. The questioning brings in the 'looking' and this becomes a way of life—where you are looking at everything anew. And at some point, the questioning stops and you are just watching, observing and living. It brings in a kind of internal order by freeing up the mind of its clutter.

In some sense then, there is a certain amount of work...a kind of effort that is going into this whole inquiry but it is not the kind of effort that involves a fixed practice. It cannot become a mechanical task because insight can only come in when there is no pattern that you're operating from. It's when this pattern is suspended...when the whole of you is suspended...when there is some kind of order...that there is space for something else to come in. But again, you cannot do it wilfully. And that's the paradox of the whole thing.

This idea of effort is perhaps different from other traditional practices, some of which say that you have to do a series of steps and exercises or that you have to have a certain amount of control over your mind before you can get to a certain state. But Krishnamurti says that this

kind of effort is not required for insight. Personally, I do think that some practices can be helpful but the problem arises when these practices end up becoming the final product of the search. I think any practice that helps you become aware of pure action in your daily life can be useful. But sitting in a quiet room and closing yourself away from the rest of the world is not really the answer. There can be too much deception in that and it might create all kinds of illusions. The real proof of your inner work is in your relationships when you are working with people and the little insights that you have in the process of everyday living.

I think the purpose of education in the Krishnamurti schools is fundamentally to understand the significance of life. And we do this by building self-understanding in the children through continuous questioning. Understanding oneself is crucial, I think, because it is only 'when you really understand yourself and see things as they are that you are then able to free yourself.' Younger children are freer in that sense. They seem more open to shifting their views and their identity seems more fluid. But as they grow up, we notice how their sense of self starts getting stronger; it starts to become more fixed.

The idea is to push those fixed boundaries and keep them loose so that the sense of self doesn't get too crystallized. Because when the sense of self is so crystallized, the inquiry becomes difficult...and when we're faced with uncomfortable questions, our whole foundation starts shaking and that creates a lot of insecurity. So here, we try to keep that sense of self fluid for as long as possible so that at some point in their lives when the inquiry begins...it becomes easier for the children to question identity and everything that it brings. We try to sow the seeds to these questions of the self...so that there's space for them to come back to these questions themselves, as adults or whenever they feel ready.

This inquiry is as much for the adults as it is for the children. We come to teach in these schools because we ourselves are interested in these questions. And working with children helps in this inquiry. It is easier to see ourselves and our conditioning when we interact with children rather than when we are with other adults. With children, I feel like we are more accommodating; we do not feel so threatened. So, if we allow it, we can begin to see ourselves more clearly. But when we are working with adults, there is the tendency to put on a mask and to show a different face. It takes more time to open up. There is a greater chance of being judged and that just brings up more of our defences. This, somehow, seems to be the nature of our human condition.

We talk about these different masks we wear—the layers of our identity—in our dialogue sessions. These are spaces where we are very conscious of the judgment that comes up in us. Because you cannot expect people to open up if they feel they are being judged. So, we create spaces that support this intense inquiry and what comes about is a certain nurturing, affectionate environment. I think it is important that we have such spaces in the school, especially because of the kind of questioning that we have here. These dialogues and the questions that come up here help us get reenergized and not get very caught up in the mechanical routine of existence. We are reminded that there is another way of being. But we need to find this out for ourselves and not get caught up in ideas of a utopic, ideal way of being. We need to question these ideologies and not merely accept them. And the questions have to start from ourselves.

This is where our education systems need re-examining. There's a whole narrative that we've created about what will make us happy. We define success and failure based on jobs we think will make us happy. It's so much about material comforts and the idea that we'll be satisfied with that. We have created a world order based entirely on a theory that the future will bring us happiness...success. And then we spend our whole lives putting in effort to get those things we imagine we need in order to be happy. But, you know, with this way of living...we don't pause and see the problem with it. This future-driven way of life is not being fundamentally questioned.

The fundamental flaw in all of this is the self, but we don't see it. We need to start from the self...from our relationships with people...from where we are right now. And the questions have to come from there rather than positing an imaginary utopic future...which is the opposite of the current mess we are in. The insight has to be on the structure of the self. Anything else is just positing and strengthening the self. But we are always looking outside of us. We are so busy finding solutions to the problems we have created. Like the problem of greenhouse gases...we think that if we find scientific solutions to remove these gases, that would take care of the problem. But that's the wrong approach. We're missing the point. We're not looking at the mind...the self...the ego...and what the driving force behind our compulsive behaviours and habits is...that has led to where we are today...and the current state of the environment. And this is where education is failing. It's just working towards these problems rather than questioning them. It's only the inquiry...the search...that can perhaps bring about some insight into all of this...thought...time...psychological time. For me, there's no going

back, you know. Once you've had these little insights, it's so straightforward. There is no other way.

4.1.4 Mira

I'm quite hesitant to talk about this word insight but I will tell you how I understand it cognitively, at least. For me, it is a 'non-verbal, non-conceptual leap' that happens quite suddenly and not through any prior practice or preparation. But it is not a thought or feeling. It is also not a sentiment or emotion because sometimes you can have a rush of sentiment and that can also be nonverbal or nonconceptual. But my understanding of insight is that it is not made of any of this. It is something else that I cannot really explain. Sometimes I may have an insight into the way I am behaving and in that moment I kind of suddenly understand why I am doing what I am doing, but it is in a nonconceptual way. It is not that I can make sense of it entirely in that moment. But one thing I do know is that it does not last. It is only in that moment. The insight does not last but there is some kind of understanding that happens through that insight and that understanding may last.

For me, it was the moment when I just realized that I don't believe in God anymore. I was quite a bit invested in it before that. But just like that...One day I did. The next day I didn't believe anymore. I didn't argue myself out of it...and that, I've never gone back on. And there's nothing more to think about it. I guess, that's how insight works. There is no confused thought that takes you back and forth. You just know.

Because insight is such a tricky thing to conceptualize, I do not know if we can base a whole system of education entirely on such a notion. But we definitely try to question thought and the whole process of thinking in everyday life here in the school.

I find that we are doing this on two parallel streams. On one stream we are teaching so that learning happens in an accumulative, additive way. We are setting goals and following those goals. We are using concentration, narrow attention and all of that. We are ending up with a certification. We are encouraging the children to pursue the next thing that they want to do. We are doing all of that.

But, at the same time on the parallel stream, we are questioning all that. So yeah, we do tell the children, 'You are in this river of becoming, experiencing, motivation, effort and so on. But can you see it? Can you see where it is appropriate and where it is not?'

With this second part, we are very clear about how important it is to ask these questions. We never tell a child that they need to become a better person and if they try hard, they will become better. We know that it does not work that way because that is merely a psychological projection in the future, which can be harmful—children set up these expectations for themselves and then feel inadequate when they do not meet these expectations; they do not realise that these are mere imaginary targets and are not as real as they make them seem. But if a child is having a lot of psychological blocks, then we may sometimes offer some rather basic advice along the lines of, ‘Just try harder’, although we know very well that it does not really make any sense. I think we straddle these two paths somehow in the best way we know possible. I do not know how else to do it.

We try to bring in this balance even in other areas that we think are important to be questioned—the need for identification, self-esteem or for being unique as an individual. You see these needs coming up in the children. These are very powerful hooks through which you can get kids to do things and you may genuinely believe it is for their own good. But we just do not do them in the school. We do not have competitions and there is no praise that happens at the cost of somebody else. If there is an activity, everyone participates. If there is a play, there are no auditions. If there is a singing event, there is no choir. Everybody is involved in everything.

The individualized education plan, which in many places is touted as a good thing...we don't have that here. While we are individually attentive to each child's needs, we haven't made that the be-all and end-all of the curriculum. To me that seems individualistic. It's like each one is on their own path, because that is seen as what's best for the individual. And we don't consider that to be the priority.

Here, we don't build up the individual identity. We don't harness or encourage it. But, nevertheless, in spite of all this, identity is building...the self is building. It was building even before they came to school. And it'll keep building. It's very powerful as a force.

We use dialogue to question identity. We know how important it is to have these dialogues with them. We know that once they go out of here, the children are going to immediately encounter a very political world because everything is politicized.

Today, identity has become so important. It is seen as a way to redress all kinds of ills and injustices. And suddenly, they may feel like, ‘Why was I being asked to question it when it is so important?’ So, I feel we need to equip them, to engage with this in a

critical way so that they know that while identity and identity politics are all very important in the world and while they can care about these issues, they can still question the notion of identity.

These are questions not just for the children but for us as teachers too. And they are important questions. We need to see what these identities mean to us. If I am a well-liked teacher, I need to see what that thought is also doing to me and how it is affecting my other actions. So, we talk about these things here and we reflect on them ourselves. It can be a beautiful thing to ask these questions of ourselves if we are not afraid to look deeper.

We usually bring up these questions in the dialogue sessions that we have once every two weeks. These are not like meetings where you have to make a decision at the end of it. They are different. We talk about topics that the children bring up—relationship, honesty, hurt. We also talk about identity and identification, although for some of us who have been around for a long time, it can often feel like we are going over the same ground. But I am under no illusion that I have understood these notions just because I have heard these things before. I welcome these conversations and find something new in them each time. And although there is a possibility that these conversations can become conceptual or just remain abstract ideas, there is also beauty in them because there are so many dynamics to it.

All the normal human impediments to dialogue come up...some people talking too much or interrupting. Some people switching off. Anything can happen. But we commit our presence and openness to what comes up usually. And, if somebody brings up a question...very quickly, it doesn't remain their question only. It has to become our question. It's not like we go on interrogating that person who brought it up. It becomes a shared question. Almost immediately.

We also have something called quiet time twice a week, where we do not engage in any talk. We just try and see what comes up in the moments when we are not doing anything. Some of the kids write or draw or just take walks. These are just some of the things that have become part of the learning here.

While quiet time is nice in its own way and has its own purpose, I know that silence is not the answer. Sometimes the quiet only allows for the inner voice to become dominant. As much as I like quiet time, I do realise that it is limited—it is just that there is no outer sound, but the inner stimulus is going on. Of course, there is the other side to

silence once the inner chatter reduces. There is the increased attention that comes in and then I wonder if I can have the same kind of attention when I'm not in a quiet space. Just because things are happening on the outside doesn't mean the attention has to go away, although in most cases it does. That's why I know that I can't become dependent on silent time for my reflective practice. It's what Krishnamurti also said about meditation. It can't be only about retreat and quietness. You have to be able to meditate in daily life amidst all the surrounding noise.

In my journey, there has not been a personal seeking, unlike others I know. I have not been a seeker of truth in the way that I imagine it to be for some others. I really feel like there are only few people in the world who make that their primary aim in life—seeking the truth. And I admire it in them. I always have. But, for me, that is not how I got into this—teaching and being here in one of the Krishnamurti schools. So, I do wonder then what my engagement is with all this. Because I have not felt frustrated that I have not got anywhere. I have not felt like I want to break free in that pure way. Sometimes when I am miserable, I want to be free of my misery. But I have not felt the need that I should be free from the self or anything like that.

I don't believe I'll ever be personally free before I die. I don't think so, but. But yeah, I still see it as being central—this search for truth. There's nothing else that's more important than this. That is true. And I wish that the world could see it...that more people could see it. But unfortunately, this is not the case.

So then, I have asked myself what my engagement is—if it is just some casual thing. But I think for me it's very much tied up with the kids. It is all about bringing these questions that I find very beautiful—bringing these questions to myself, to my life—and involving them in this inquiry in whatever way is appropriate. For me, this is what the school is about.

...A place where these questions can be opened out and dusted and cleaned and kept shiny. The questions are kept here, you know. And anybody who wants to look at these questions, whatever impact they may have on them, that's great. I just want to support that...support a place where these questions are central.

Most people come here and they see the features of the school and they say, 'Oh, wow, lovely school, lovely campus.' They don't see the questions beneath that. They're not really interested in these deeper questions. It's a bit disheartening. But sometimes it's nice when the questions catch for somebody who comes in...and you can see that. They

may be just visiting or they may be here as parents. And it's just so nice to see that—that it catches, even for a while. They may get lost again when they go back to their world. But for me that is what feels good—that we introduced somebody to this way of asking.

I think that this is all part of the order that Krishnamurti was talking about. He used to ask this question, 'Just like looking after the body, is there a way one can look after the brain so that it can have these insights?' Maybe, it can begin from these kinds of questions about the self and identity and from there you go on to apply what you understand in other areas of your life. The questions may allow for those tiny glimpses into something else—some insight perhaps into how we are mostly unaware that we are caught up in this cycle of thought.

And if more and more people have those glimpses, there is the hope that some transformation of the human race can take place...that we realise there is more to life than what we know now. It just kind of gives some weight and momentum to this whole thing that Krishnamurti was talking about. And if this were indeed the default future of humanity, we would not be waging wars and doing a million other things.

4.1.5 Deven

In the Krishnamurti world, we do not usually talk about our understanding of insight too much because it then seems like we have tried to analyse it intellectually. And insight is something that cannot be cognitively understood. Krishnamurti also says that it is beyond words. So, even if I try to talk about it now, it will be coming from a place of how I have understood it to be; the way my mind has made sense of it. So, whatever I say about it is just a tentative way of putting it down in words and that, of course, is limited. Having said this, though, my first contact with all of this was through words. Had I not heard someone, in this case, Krishnamurti, talk about it, I would not have known that there could be any other way of being. I would not have questioned ambition or achievement or any of the other things that I now see as unquestioned patterns of deep conditioning. None of this would have come up on its own, or at least that is what I think.

About insight, I have to admit that there have been attempts at trying to understand what I think it could be. I tried searching for a conceptual model of insight. For example, just like imagining what tomorrow may be like, I have also, in the past, tried to have a map of what insight could

be. I imagined that insight would be ‘a state where I am observing myself freely without any choice.’ But I know now that this is yet another projection of thought based on what I already know insight to be.

One thing I have felt, through my own experiences of having had these partial moments of what I would call insight, is that it is not about having a better or complete understanding of something. It is much like seeing something simple in the moment, just a glimpse of something.

Suppose I glimpse that my thought is driving me in a particular direction...I just have that little glimpse in that moment. I think that's all there is, really. There's nothing more I can do. I can't glimpse better. I can't develop that capacity because it's not in my control. But for that instant, it may be a perfect glimpse. And that is all there is because I've seen what is happening and that is it. I mean, in the next moment I may not see or I may see it. I don't know.

But after having had this little glimpse, there might be the insistence that I should repeatedly see it. And when this happens, I know that it is part of the noise; that the thinking has kicked in and the cognitive mind wants more; it wants to have something more to do all the time. This noise is what Krishnamurti called conditioning. And he said that insight happens one step before this noise comes in. It is more like seeing where the noise is coming from; seeing how it emerges and subsides.

In the Krishnamurti schools, I think we try to question this noise. We question the very foundation from where this noise arises—the identity and the self. We do bring up these topics, although it is not necessarily that young people are plunging into questions of self and identity at all. Of course, asking adolescents the question, ‘Who am I?’ does not make any sense at their age. And we also cannot explicitly state that there is no self because that, of course, would be yet another idea that we are putting into their heads without asking them to explore it for themselves.

The notion that the self is an illusion can just become another hook to debate about, especially through speech, because speech seems to provoke the need to either accept or reject the idea of there being no self. And that is one of the limitations of speech with this kind of questioning...There is also the fact that this can all become just a cognitive kind of exercise, but it need not. It may give some kids security to know that, you know, this kind of questioning is itself a basis of a way of living or a way of being secure.

Of course, there are other challenges with asking these questions. Sometimes, the question, ‘Why are you angry?’ is interpreted as, ‘You shouldn't be angry.’ That is another challenge that can come up with this kind of questioning and we need to be really careful that we do not leave the children feeling helpless by constantly asking them to question everything. We cannot go on asking them the same things over and over again.

The subtle danger is that it becomes interpreted as a moral code and many kids feel that they are being asked to become better and better all the time. The question, ‘Why are we afraid?’ has turned into, ‘We shouldn't be afraid.’ In such instances, we tell them that we don't mean they shouldn't be afraid. We're asking, ‘What is fear and why are you afraid?’ And always, we ask the question of who. ‘Who is this person that is feeling afraid?’ Even with topics of sorrow, insecurity, ambition and becoming, we ask, ‘Who is it that is striving all the time to get, you know, to get somewhere or the other?’ That is how we eventually get to questions of the self and identity.

But it has been getting harder to ask these questions, especially in the past few years. Nowadays, when someone declares an identity, what is expected is that everyone else is supposed to say, ‘OK, you know, that's beautiful and I respect that.’ So, questioning the very emerging of this identity is met with a backlash.

There's a new language now that very easily and quickly blocks questions around identity—the language of oppression, abuse and respect. I'm not saying that one shouldn't respect another. I'm not saying that. But I would say that this puts a stop to self-inquiry of what the mystics call the core identity that transcends all these other identities or the core emptiness...however you want to call it. I don't think the words will capture it either way. So, the very nature of identity...the divisive nature of identity...is something that you can't really get to. How do you even bring this up anymore? I don't know.

So, we tell the children that once they go out of here, they are going to be met with many questions regarding identity. But we ask them, ‘In the midst of all that, can you just pause and ask the question, ‘What is this identity?’’ That is the most we can tell them and it is the most we can ask of them. It has been a real challenge. But, in some way, because the custom of questioning has been established so strongly in the school, we still manage to address these questions as part of the daily conversations that happen here. It has become part of the overall curriculum—questioning the self and identity.

The curriculum is built in such a way that self-inquiry becomes the core of the learning and we often use dialogue in this inquiry. I have seen how dialogue brings up so much of our conditioning that we otherwise might not have paid much attention to. Many of our filters come up once we begin dialogue and I have realized how it is not easy once we pay attention to what comes up in ourselves. Often, in a group, we are not just responding to each other but also to each other's perceptions of ourselves and each other. It is not like a math class, where you are engaging with a problem. In dialogue, there is no pre-established problem and so there is no goal that we have to set and then try to reach.

It's actually like a blank mirror. And I feel like a person's conditioning really comes out in such situations. For example, I've seen people come into this space...and here, there's no boss, there's no clear hierarchy or clear goal. But there's this message that you can sort of grow and you can do your thing. So, the new people especially, they think that this organization is a bit of a blank slate... and they feel like they can put their own stamp on it. And I have noticed that in all that, the person's conditioning just massively emerges...people may discover aspects of themselves that they themselves can be quite surprised by... it could be anything... it could be ambitions or it could be the other human emotions that come out. And it generally takes over... it's not conscious, but that's the way it is. When there are no clear lines of authority, no clear goals, no clear whatever..., to hold oneself in balance is quite difficult because we have become so used to rules and fixed goals or targets. And it takes a lot of, for lack of a better word, maturity to see that the personality is acting out in this way...the conditioning is coming to the surface.

Then, to dialogue about all this requires a lot of honesty and sensitivity. Also, to acknowledge that, without making more excuses about why what I did was good or not, is not easy. And since this is how the whole organization is sort of built around, daily life is like this. Dialogue is part of this daily living. It's very much like living with your mom all the time...being required to dialogue with your mom all the time. Like, I mean, she's coming with all the stuff, the past conditioning and this is what has formed you. You may reject it. You may dislike it. But it has formed who you are in some sense and you know you're required to work with her and talk with her around all this...despite the irritation or sudden, irrational affection or avoidance or whatever. That's quite challenging. It's really not easy.

The adults here are much more aware of these patterns of conditioning and of the many layers of dialogue. It is the same with the older kids in the school because it has been a part of what they have grown up with since they have been here. And, since they have known each other so many years, you would think that they would be used to each other by now, but even that is not always guaranteed. So, sometimes dialogue works, sometimes there is some resistance. Sometimes there might be a fear of being vulnerable in front of so many others and other times there are groups that really get into the questions that come up. And of course, there are kids who have decided that dialogue is just talk and they do not want to be part of it. There are so many challenges with it. But we still keep at it. I do not know if we are expecting anything from it. We just do it anyway.

A lot of times you can't really see any result of what we do in these schools. The kind of causality you can see in daily life, for example, where you exercise and you feel healthier...that kind of causality doesn't seem to apply in this case. We have activities like quiet time and dialogue and programs that are oriented around questions of the self...but it's not like the kids are particularly fired up about them. To me, it's just an open question to invite young people into something different—a different way of viewing the self and life. It's just an invitation. You can't force anybody. Who knows, at some moment, something may flash for somebody, something may just click...perhaps just an interest, a curiosity. And maybe that is all there is to it.

4.2 Development of themes

Moustakas (1990) describes the process of theme development in heuristic inquiry as a “creative and intuitive process of discovery” (p. 113). Through complete immersion and an openness to what was unfolding from the data, common "patterns of meaning that reflect the essence of the phenomenon being explored" (p. 114) were identified. Key words and phrases that were frequently referred to in the coresearcher dialogues were recognized and formed into themes that reflected coresearcher accounts. The following section consists of the five themes that were developed in this study, along with a brief expansion of each theme to include coresearcher data that constitutes it. The five themes were:

- Theme 1: Insight is beyond intellectual comprehension
- Theme 2: Insight *is* action
- Theme 3: Order precedes insight

- Theme 4: Education *is* to inquire into the self
- Theme 5: Practice can be limiting

4.2.1 Theme 1: Insight is beyond intellectual comprehension

All the coresearchers expressed their hesitancy in attempting to describe insight as a concept to be cognitively examined. Deven acknowledged that despite knowing that insight lay outside the realm of thought, it did not stop him from trying to imagine what the state of insight may feel like if he had to experience it.

For many years I was trying to find the right conceptual model of what insight is. I thought it would be...a state where, you know, I am observing myself freely without any choice or some such formulation. But at the same time, I know that this is not it...

Neel mentioned that all he could do was describe insight the way he understood it—which was partially—and stated that his explanation of insight would hence be limited. According to him, insight is ‘a curious thing that you experience.’

Insight is...where you see something...you see the entire shape of it...you get a sense of the whole...very suddenly...you cannot plan it...and it cannot be led up to...but...it's not a conscious thing...

Jai stated that he has had moments of clarity which have left him knowing that there is more than just the limited self that we function as.

The clarity has come in small moments...It has happened in bits and pieces and that sort of tells you that, you know, there is work to be done in this area where you have to really dig deeper...

According to Mira, insight is a leap which is not from a place of thought.

It's like a non-verbal, non-conceptual leap. It's more like a perception than a cognition. It's not sentiment or emotion...Insight is really...not made of any of this stuff, not made of thought...it's not made of feeling either. It's some direct perception and it's of...a different faculty of the brain, I think...

In addition to the complexity of describing it in words, Ved stated that Krishnamurti used ordinary words but attributed a different meaning to them. He also mentioned that when Krishnamurti was referring to total insight, he meant 'seeing into the fundamental nature of the self' and the possibility of 'no separate self.' He stated that while he realises that the notions of the self and psychological time are illusions, his conditioning 'is so strong that it's surfacing up again' preventing him from moving beyond cognitive functioning.

4.2.2 Theme 2: Insight *is* action

Four coresearchers connected insight to action that was transformational.

Neel mentioned how insight, although fleeting in nature, brings about change that is lasting.

Once you have seen an aspect of yourself, it's an aspect of self-understanding. It doesn't go away. It's not as if it's there one moment and then you've lost it the next moment...and when you've seen it, you've understood yourself in a slightly different way. And...it begins to have an effect on your action...on everything else that you do...

Ved stated how the very act of seeing was freedom.

The very seeing is the action. There is no further thing to practice or to repeat and once you have had this insight, then any time a new illusion arises...you are able to see through it...you will see that a totally different way of living exists in human beings...without getting too drawn into believing the structures in society to be the final truth.

According to Jai, seeing through the structure of the self 'makes the "I" recede into the background.'

...And when the 'I' is no longer acting, there is no me...there is no gap...there is no distance between the observer and the observed at that point in time...there's no gap between me and what I'm seeing...I'm fully alert to the situation...I'm not separate from the situation...and this will produce a particular kind of action...that is not thought out, in that sense... it's immediate...there's no effort...but what action emerges and what I do, I cannot tell right at the beginning. It's emerging because I'm fully there...and the action that is required comes through.

Mira mentioned how the essence of action that insight brings is different from what we usually associate with the word action. She narrated how having an insight changed her previous belief in God and how this change has had a tremendous effect on her worldview.

I was quite a bit invested in it before that...the idea that God existed...And I don't know how to explain what changed...But just like that...One day I did. The next day I didn't believe anymore. I didn't argue myself out of it...and that is something I've never gone back on. There's nothing more to think about it. I guess, that's how insight works. There is no confused thought that takes you back and forth. You just know.

4.2.3 Theme 3: Order precedes insight

All the coresearchers mentioned how a certain state of order was essential to allow for insight, although the paradox of effort in bringing about this order was also pointed out.

According to Jai, questioning was the beginning of bringing in internal order.

Through questioning, order starts coming in. It's only when there is order that insight can come. If, you know, the order is not there...if the mind is cluttered...you're not really going to be able to see anything beyond the clutter...So, on one level, there is a certain amount of work that is being done. But it's not the kind of effort of practice...it's not mechanical.

Both Jai and Neel referred to the metaphor of keeping the window open.

Neel stated,

You can keep the window open, but you can't make the breeze come in...the breeze may come in on its own...but you can't direct it. I think that captures the reality of insight very accurately...You have to do the necessary work and that involves bringing about some order...but after that, the insight...it can either happen on its own...or it may not...You can't invite it. You can't make it come.

Jai reflected the same idea,

If you are searching for it and trying to grab at it...it doesn't work... there's a certain open mindedness to all this...it's an open-ended search...

Neel also mentioned how a state of blankness is vital for insight, where thought is not constantly in operation.

I think the preparation (for insight) is...a certain blankness...a certain lack of occupation. There's a sense of being unguarded and not occupied with anything.

And Ved referred to silence as another precondition for insight.

The silence...the slowing down...these are important, because if the mind is too busy or too engrossed in thoughts and feelings, it cannot have any insight. Insight comes in a flash, and it cannot be planned or premeditated. You have to slow down and allow it to happen.

Two coresearchers used the word vulnerability and expressed how being vulnerable had its own place in insight.

According to Neel,

We're always looking for ways to move out of the state of vulnerability...and then in that process, we are strengthening the identity and strengthening the ego...But to instead allow yourself to be vulnerable and not defend yourself all the time...in that, you can see how the ego is constantly at work...constantly struggling to do something or the other...there is no space for anything else at that point...

Deven stated that vulnerability, rather than being seen as a weakness, was an indicator to turn towards the self and start asking the difficult questions.

This is when we need to ask the questions, 'Who is the I that is getting hurt?'... 'Who is the I that is afraid?'... We need to be asking these questions...If we don't...it's just another mechanical life...

Ved claimed that the activities of questioning and dialogue were the first steps towards bringing in internal order.

We have these spaces here in school, you know...we have dialogues...and ask the children to ask these important questions...this outer order that we're trying to engage in...it has a place...but then, internal order is something that individuals have to bring into their own lives...inner order is where there is no irrationality in thinking, there is no illusion, there is no fear or antagonism towards anybody. Nobody from the outside can

create this inner order for an individual... I feel that the demand to have this inner order has to come from within...the feeling that 'I want to live this kind of life' has to be an inner urge.

4.2.4 Theme 4: Education *is* to inquire into the self

The primary purpose of education was considered to be self-inquiry and this idea was strongly echoed by each of the coresearchers.

Ved mentioned that 'education is to have insight into one's own functioning of the mind.' He said that self-inquiry unravels conditioning and the purpose of education was to begin the process of self-inquiry.

Neel quoted Krishnamurti and said that 'the understanding of oneself is both the beginning and the end of education.' He further stated that,

... to be able to see the nature of the reality we have, the world that we have constructed...where divisions and identities seem so real... to be able to see these constructions for what they really are...that is the most central part of education

For Jai, the purpose of education was to understand the significance of life.

To help children understand the significance of life...in some ways...is really the purpose of education. And that only comes through understanding oneself. So, when you really understand yourself...when you see things as they are...then you are able to free yourself.

Neel brought in the importance of quiet in the process of self-inquiry.

...we try to create spaces where you can pause...where you're able to take a step back from everything...where you're able to see yourself...just be with yourself...there's some moment of quiet that we have...schools need these spaces of quiet...you can't always be doing something...

Ved pointed out that the 'inner life is given importance' in the Krishnamurti schools.

At least some spaces are created...where the child is free to discuss...to open up and look at inner questions they are having...We go to a spot, sit quietly and do nothing...there is great beauty in that. Education is about learning how to be alone...how to

be in silence...and what you learn from this has...its own role...in how you then relate to others.

Mira referred to the notions of being and becoming and how they were simultaneously carried out in the school.

On one stream we are teaching so that learning happens in an accumulative, additive way...and in that process I'm sure we are also on the road of becoming...setting goals and following those goals...and all of that.

But, at the same time on the parallel stream, we are questioning all that. We are questioning the need to always work towards the future...because, you know, what about being in the present? We have quiet assemblies, we go for walks on our own...we find out why doing nothing makes us feel restless...why we are scared to be alone...we question the need to constantly be doing something or the other...So we do things and then we question why we do them...we watch our thoughts and see what is at the root of these thoughts...we question our views, our opinions, we have dialogues...

Jai identifies the value of a curriculum that includes questioning.

The only instrument we have for self-inquiry are our questions. So how do we ask questions? How do we ask the right questions to ourselves? That becomes important. Questioning slowly breaks down all the things that are blurry...things that you're not seeing through...the blocks of conditioning...the self...

He also addressed the need for education to question identity.

I think keeping the sense of self fluid is probably one of the main goals of present education. And I don't mean that we need to focus on dissolving the sense of self in schools...that is not our priority...but to question this identity and individuality enough so that at some point children can pick it up and look at these questions much more easily. To begin the inquiry...that's what we can all do.

Deven mentions how education in the Krishnamurti schools is 'just an invitation' to see that a different way of living exists.

You can't force anybody to ask these questions...especially kids at this age. But the Krishnamurti schools are oriented around these questions...quiet time...dialogue...nature... I can only say it's like an invitation...to experiment with all of this.

4.2.5 Theme 5: Practice can be limiting

The daily practice of contemplative techniques like yoga and meditation were seen as partial helpers in bringing in order. While all the coresearchers acknowledged the importance of practice, they cautioned against the dependence that it could create.

Deven stated that it is not the practice that is the problem. The problem is the 'conviction that the practice is going to take us somewhere.'

Rather than saying, 'I'm going to practice and become better at meditation and then have certain experiences'...rather than saying that, can we instead just experiment with the whole thing? Can we just see what the mind is doing at each moment? I would prefer this to a practice...This sense of play and curiosity rather than any attachment...

Neel said that it was important to ask oneself the question, 'What is my relationship to the practices I do?'

It's good to do certain things...exercises, yoga, being in contact with nature...but they cannot become a refuge...You have to watch yourself very carefully because the moment...the moment one starts to get attached to a method, is the moment when one gets lost...the practices create a kind of security...they create a kind of dependence and that has its own way of creating an invulnerability. I think that's when illusion takes over...And that's a very frequent trap for human beings...

Jai stated that the only way to understand oneself was by observing one's action in relationship with others and not by isolating oneself in practice.

By cloistering yourself in a room and sitting quietly, there is too much room for deception. Inquiry has to happen in the process of living...Insight has to be in the process of living...in the process of, you know, your day-to-day relationship...The very operation of a practice or setting a pattern...doesn't allow insight to come. It's when the whole thing suspends...it's when the whole of you...with your thoughts, your opinions...when all that is suspended...there is space for something else. You cannot do it wilfully...

Mira brought up the aspect of ‘doing’ in the process of discovery.

I think there definitely is a ‘doing’...there is a practical aspect to this whole thing...meditation does many things to the mind...it slows it down...it calms you down. You become really good at emotion regulation and all that. There are benefits...certainly...there's no doubting that anymore...But sitting for hours meditating...I don't know...I see the fallacy of that...It doesn't make sense to me...I wouldn't substitute it for these beautiful questions that Krishnamurti has given us...

Ved addressed the difference between traditional approaches to nonduality and Krishnamurti's approach of self-discovery through inquiry.

When I'm making an effort to make the mind quiet...there is the duality of the observer and the observed or the experiencer and experienced...and the observer separates itself from the noise and says, ‘I want to make this noise go away’ or ‘I want to be quiet.’ Krishnamurti says that separating oneself from the experience is the wrong approach...because that itself creates a duality. He says that there is no permanent entity in me which can separate itself and say, ‘I'll do something about it.’ So, in this case, the duality is kind of taken care of at the very first step by what he calls choiceless awareness...

Whereas in the traditional approaches there is a kind of duality...in mindfulness practices, for example...there is a separate observer that is becoming aware of itself in the initial stages...and the duality is dissolved only at a later stage...in the Samadhi stage...these are, of course, different approaches altogether...

Jai also addressed the difference in Krishnamurti's approach to inquiry.

Krishnamurti says that controlling the mind...sitting still for hours...watching something...then slowing down...he says that all of this is not required. That kind of effort is not required. Insight can happen in the little, day-to-day events and does not have to take years of practice...it's just an open-ended search...and that starts from self-inquiry.

To conclude, chapter 4 presented the individual depictions of each coresearcher. Based on periods of incubation and immersion and through indwelling in the individual coresearcher experiences, the common themes that were present in each of the depictions were drawn out and collectively presented in the latter half of the chapter. A deeper investigation into the themes is

carried out in the following chapter, along with attempts to answer the final research questions from understandings developed during the process of explication.

Chapter 5: Explication

In this phase of heuristic inquiry, themes existing in the data are brought to the front through the elements of focusing, indwelling and self-disclosure (Moustakas, 1990, p. 31). Previously undefined themes are further refined and core essences of experiences are prepared to be integrated into a comprehensive whole. This chapter begins with a presentation of the findings of the study, followed by a discussion which attempts bring to a close my inquiry into insight. As a conclusion to the study, the final parts of this chapter include the limitations of the study, ethical considerations and reflections on validity and transferability. Suggestions for further research will also be presented.

5.1 Presentation of findings

This study explored the phenomenon of insight and sought to understand the purpose of education as viewed by educators of the J Krishnamurti schools based on their understanding of non-duality. Five themes emerged from coresearcher dialogues based on their understanding of insight and its influence on their approach to education. The five themes that developed from the individual depictions were:

- Theme 1: Insight is beyond intellectual comprehension
- Theme 2: Insight *is* action
- Theme 3: Order precedes insight
- Theme 4: Education *is* to inquire into the self
- Theme 5: Practice can be limiting

The coresearchers understood total insight to be a glimpse into the true nature of the self, although they clearly mentioned that their understanding stemmed from the ability to cognise a phenomenon that was fundamentally beyond the realm of intellectual comprehension. Nonetheless, insight was seen as action that was without effort or prior preparation, this action a result of having seen something differently. While a certain amount of internal order was considered to be a precondition for insight, attachment to a practice in order to bring about certain physical and mental states was seen as unnecessary to bring about order. With this understanding of insight serving as the foundation, the coresearchers all saw the main purpose of education to be self-inquiry and further discussed how it could be brought about in schools through dialogue, questioning and activities that involved turning the focus inward.

The study looked to answer the following research questions:

- When viewed from a nondual perspective, what is the purpose of education according to educators affiliated with the J Krishnamurti schools? and
- Based on the understanding of J Krishnamurti's notion of insight, what is the nature of the *effort* that is involved in insight?

While the first research question in this study addresses education and its purpose, what needs mention in this context is that Krishnamurti did not see education as just a phase in life but as a way to “understand the meaning of life as a whole” (Krishnamurti, 2010a, p. 6). Thus, although the purpose of education is only mentioned in theme 4, the findings from the other themes are as much a part of what contributes to an overall understanding of a way of life that is purposeful.

In the following section, the themes 1 and 2 will be discussed collectively followed by themes 3, 5 and 4 as they involve concepts that flow into each other. The paradoxes that arise at each stage will also be presented in relevance with the data and literature. Then, the second research question, ‘Based on the understanding of J Krishnamurti's notion of insight, what is the nature of the *effort* that is involved in insight?’ will be addressed through the paradox that underlies theme 3 and theme 5. And finally, the first research question, ‘When viewed from a nondual perspective, what is the purpose of education according to educators affiliated with the J Krishnamurti schools?’ will be addressed in the explication of theme 4.

5.1.1 Explication of themes 1 and 2

Theme 1: Total insight is beyond intellectual comprehension, and

Theme 2: Insight *is* action

In this section, the exploration of the notion of insight is carried out using the approach of the “principle of the exclusion of the other” (Vrobel, 2017, p. 169) where a term can be attempted to be understood by looking at everything that it is not. Insight was stated by the coresearchers as not being a thought or feeling. Although the closest that one could come to describing insight was as some kind of a perception, it was also claimed not to be a perception. Further, insight was referred to as something that was not in the realm of anything that could be consciously understood. Krishnamurti (1980a) mentioned that insight does not happen as a result of memory and does not involve the movement of thought or conditioning. This implies that insight does

not involve past, accumulated knowledge. According to Bohm (1994), insight is not the mechanical process of thinking, as thinking is the movement of thought—this movement involving time (p. 242). Hence, insight is also not in the realm of time. Neel stated that insight is not something that can be planned and hence can ‘not be led up to.’ He also said that insight involved ‘no doing.’ Therefore, in addition to insight not being of time and knowledge, it also does not involve effort.

Thus, if insight is not a thought, feeling or perception and does not involve time, effort or past knowledge, what does it involve?

According to Krishnamurti (1980a), insight is the ceasing of the movement of thought. It is when the movement of thought ceases, that observation starts. As this observation is not of thought (past experiences, knowledge), it is pure observation that is without any purpose. Through this pure observation that is without the self, one gets, as Neel mentioned, ‘a sense of the whole.’ It is a flash of understanding that leads to the perception of each aspect as part of a single whole, where all parts are interconnected to form a totality (Bohm, 1980, p. 9). As Neel stated,

It's as if...suddenly...a light was switched on and just for a brief moment you saw something...and then the moment is gone...but you have to make sense of what you saw. You have to see in what way those parts make sense.

This is where the first paradox in understanding the notion of insight comes in. While most of the paradoxes may at initial glance seem to contradict each other (which is what paradoxes do), the contradictions seem to disappear on further exploration of the concepts. In this study, however, the *seemingly* contradictory notions will be referred to as paradoxes.

Paradox 1: Insight is not of time, knowledge or effort, but making sense of an insight involves time, knowledge and effort.

All of the coresearchers mentioned the fleeting nature of insight. Insight was seen as something that ‘happens in a flash; a leap in which time does not exist.’ It was also seen as a ‘nonverbal, non-conceptual leap’ that could only be imagined because what occurs within that leap is not in the realm of cognition or time. According to Krishnamurti (1993), the phenomenon of insight involves some kind of restructuring in the brain, which in that instant is without the buildup of past conditioning and is in turn disentangled momentarily from time (p. 34).

Because time as a reality is created by thought, without thought time would not exist (Bohm, 1994, p. 230). And in the moment of insight, there is no thought. It is only in the moments after the insight that thought begins to draw conclusions from what was seen (Krishnamurti, 1993, p. 34). This tendency of thought to create understanding from the insight leads to a further paradox. While, on one hand, this process of using thought to draw conclusions from an insight is important, it can also be a hurdle to ‘gaining’ additional insight because we inevitably tend to revert to thought processes that are once again bound by time (Vrobel, 2017, p. 163). However, in the moments after an insight, if we fail to recognise it for what it was, as Neel says, ‘if we don’t give enough space or time...to fully understand these things that we glimpse... it loses its hold on you.’

Insight was also described as *seeing* with a sense of lightness. Thought was posited as that which formed the obstacle to this quality of lightness in seeing. Jai mentioned how,

...it’s your past, your thoughts that make you heavy all the time...and insight is *seeing* that is without thought...

Spira (2023b) says that anything that is seen through the faculties of thought or perception is inevitably distorted and fragmented by thought and perception and is hence fragmentary in nature. He compares this kind of seeing, through the senses, to looking at white snow through orange tinted glasses, thus making the snow appear to be orange. He says that it is the layers of conditioning that form the tinted glasses and the viewing of reality through these layers of past knowledge or thought limits one from seeing what lies underneath the layers of conditioning. This inability to look beyond thought is what Ved noted was limiting him from total insight,

I mean, I see through the factor of say, the self...that the self is an illusion...or that psychological time is an illusion. But then my conditioning is so strong that it's surfacing up again. And all I can have are these partial insights.

However, even the partial insights were mentioned as having the ability to bring about a transformation. The partial insights can themselves act as starting points for further insights. But this was only if the insights were grasped. Hence, the role of thought in insight is also crucial, as it is thought that helps in fitting together the pieces that insight provides a peek into. According to Bohm (1994), the impact of an insight, when grasped, was said to bring about change that in most cases had lasting effect (p. 151). The coresearchers mentioned how partial insights into

the nature of thought and conditioned habits had led to them seeing that there was a ‘totally different way of living.’

Krishnamurti and Bohm (1985) propose that there is indeed a different way of living if one is able to transcend thought and access a deeper dimension of reality that is not bound by time. They suggest that this can be achieved through awareness, which is not a product of thought, but rather a direct perception of the present moment (pp. 36-27). By quieting the mind and observing one's thoughts and perceptions, one can come to a deeper understanding of the nature of reality and the mind. “Truth is a perception, and is simultaneously an action” (Bohm, 1994, p. 183), and it is the action of truth that allows one to see “that which is” (p. 184). Jai mentions how through direct perception, the structure of thought begins to reveal itself and the ‘I’ eventually starts to ‘recede into the background’ until the moment when the ‘distance between the observer and the observed’ collapses. This whole ‘process’ happens without any effort and the action that emanates from it is also action without effort. The essence of this kind of action is different from the action that is planned and executed. The action that emerges as a result of insight is said to be without effort but in the process of slowing down and getting the mind to a state of quiet, there is a certain kind of effort that is implied, and this will be further explored in the following sections.

From this initial detailed analysis of the theme on the nature of insight, it is clear that the coresearchers were aware of the nondual inferences in what Krishnamurti called total insight. While the concept of effort is an important inclusion in theme 1, it will be further discussed under theme 3. In the following sections, the paradox of effort and practice will be explored through focusing on the aspects of *seeking* and *doing* that are involved in insight. The following sections will also address the question, ‘Based on the understanding of J Krishnamurti’s notion of insight, what is the nature of the *effort* that is involved in insight?’

5.1.2 Explication of theme 3

Theme 3: Order precedes insight

According to Krishnamurti (2000), order was a natural flow of harmony within oneself and was not a thing that you could pursue. He also emphasized that true order cannot be achieved through the use of willpower or effort (pp. 35-39). In the discussions with the coresearchers, order was seen as certain acts that could form as preconditions for insight, although a distinction

was made between these acts classifying as external order and thus being of a slightly different nature than what Krishnamurti was referring to when he spoke about true or inner order. This theme will be further discussed under the paradox that arises in trying to understand order and the nature of the effort that it involves.

Paradox 2: Order does not involve effort, but a certain amount of work is needed to bring about order.

The thing we tell of can never be found by seeking, yet only seekers find it - Bayazid Bastami (as quoted in Spira, 2023b, 3:50)

Despite Krishnamurti (2000) claiming that the whole process of insight and order involves no effort, Spira (2023b) sees the importance of *seeking* in insight. Questions, he says, have a role in the answers revealing themselves and it is hence important to ask the questions. He uses the metaphor of entering a dark room, where at first, one is not able to see anything within it. It is only when we “acclimatize to the darkness” (1:58) that the shapes become visible. Acknowledging that insight cannot be grasped by the intellect and it is not something that can be ‘found’, he recommends acclimatizing to the state of not immediately knowing or finding the answers to the questions asked, but nonetheless to keep asking the questions. Spira (2023b) further mentions that the answers to the questions asked may appear in forms that are not expected and it is in those moments that the space to allow for their emergence is needed. The ‘space’ is what all the coresearchers considered to be a certain kind of order.

The paradox of ‘no effort’ yet ‘seeking’ in the above paragraph was also reflected in the words of two of the coresearchers when they referred to the metaphor used by Krishnamurti on the aspect of the *doing* that was involved in insight,

...you can keep the window open, but you can't make the breeze come in...you can't direct the breeze, but it may come in on its own. I think that captures the reality of insight very accurately. You have to do the necessary work but after that it...can happen on its own. You can't invite it. You can't make it happen. There is no knowing when it will happen.

This implies that one cannot be prepared for insight but, at the same time, a certain kind of preparation is needed for it to happen. This preparation was what was referred to as order by most of the coresearchers. For Neel, order involved, ‘a certain blankness...a sense of being unguarded and not occupied with anything’ while for Ved, it was silence and slowing down

long enough to allow for insight to happen. The process of self-inquiry begins through seeing differently what society has labelled as negative emotions that need to be eliminated (Bohm, 1994, p. 38). Bohm (1994) also considered these negative emotions to be the “clues to what we need to learn” (p. 38). The sense of being vulnerable was also seen as an important form of order, where moments of vulnerability were seen as opportunities when ‘the difficult questions could be asked,’ as, in those moments, there was no sense of ego that was defending itself. For Jai, it was questioning that brought in order.

If the order is not there, the mind is cluttered...and you're not really going to be able to see anything beyond the clutter...So, on one level, there is a certain amount of work that is being done. But it's not the kind of effort of practice, you know...it's not mechanical.

Krishnamurti (1980a) says that order is essential but he does not see it as criteria for insight. A certain external order is essential merely because our current habits are leading to the destruction of the world around us. And by looking at the disorder around us, it is only logical that we would take some action to minimize the damage we are causing. Although Bohm believed that bringing about some form of order in our lives was significant in itself, Krishnamurti (1980a) maintains that merely bringing about this kind of external order is a trivial concern. He considers it as man-made order that is brought about as a response to man-made disorder. He mentions that it will eventually, if a great number of people bring in this order in their lives, lead to a better society but that too will have its limitations as sooner or later the human tendency to be bored or to want more will once again arise if the root cause of human desire is not discovered. This difference between external and inner order was also mentioned by Mira,

...it would be great if we were self-regulating individuals...if that sense of order and discipline were coming from within...but for most of us, we try to bring order by, you know, practising Yoga or meditating...there's no doubt in what they bring...but I know that there is a different kind of order...order of the mind...

By order, Krishnamurti meant the state of the mind once it has had an insight into the whole movement of thought (1980a). He says that attempts to bring about order with no insight into why this order is needed will be of no use. Krishnamurti (n.d.c) believed that true order was not just following a routine or conforming to norms and rules. True order can only come from understanding oneself and the world around, rather than through imposing and following external rules and regulations (Krishnamurti, 2000). True order was seeing that we live in a state of

constant confusion and disorder, with contradictory thoughts, words, and actions and it is only inevitable that this leads to conflict. Through inquiry and examination of ourselves, we can reach a stage where we are capable of instilling order in our lives. Krishnamurti and Bohm (1985) suggest that insight can only arise when there is an intense desire to see things clearly (pp. 1-85). They maintain that this desire cannot be manufactured or imposed externally but can only be brought about through a deep understanding of oneself. As Ved mentioned,

...inner order is where there is no irrationality in thinking, there is no illusion, there is no fear or antagonism towards anybody...but the demand to have this inner order has to come from within...nobody from the outside can create this inner order for an individual

As a seemingly contradictory view of the above, the imposition of external order through practice was further explored through theme 5.

5.1.3 Explication of theme 5

Theme 5: Practice can be limiting

The word practice, according to Packer (2015), implies effort and an attempt by the self at reaching a certain state through a mechanical process. At first glance of the teachings of Krishnamurti, it may seem like he strongly advocated against any kind of contemplative practice. But on deeper inquiry, it becomes clear that he was critical of the attachment to a practice for the purpose of achieving a motive. According to Krishnamurti (1970c), meditation is not something that needs to be 'done'. So, a practice that involved controlling the mind to get to a certain physical or mental state of consciousness would be an avoidance of the present and thus, according to him, an escape from the 'now.' Rather than escaping the present, he called for an increased awareness of the present moment without any judgment, analysis, or comparison of what was observed (Krishnamurti, 1970c). He referred to this as choiceless awareness—a state of mind in which the observer simply watches and observes the reality as it is, without any preconceived ideas or attachments (Krishnamurti, 1948). For Ved, choiceless awareness involved the dissolution of the duality between the subject and the experience and according to him, this is what made Krishnamurti's approach different from other contemplative practices.

In practices such as mindfulness and some of the breathing meditations like pranayama, there is an observer that watches the experience from the outside. According to Ved, this separation 'creates a duality in the initial stages...which is only dissolved in the later stages of Samadhi'.

He said that Krishnamurti addresses the duality right from the beginning by questioning whether the perceived separateness truly exists. It is the limited self that is seeking the beyond. Through practice, the common assumption is that one is getting nearer to what is being sought. Krishnamurti (1980b) says that there is no relation between the mind that is doing the seeking and what is being sought. This is because what it is seeking is an illusion that it has created and it will, hence, remain unknown, as it is not in the realm of what could be known by the limited mind. Often, the purpose of techniques like meditation are measures taken to achieve a state of mind where there is no longer a sense of separation between oneself and the whole of reality, which is the immeasurable. However, this idea is contradictory because the immeasurable is that which cannot be known by human knowledge and reason.

Josipovic (2016) provides a clearer explanation of the differences between the two approaches. He says that for those who are accustomed to gradual meditation practices like mindfulness, the nondual perspective can pose a challenge as the two have both similarities and significant differences. Traditionally, the underlying belief behind the practice of meditation and mindfulness is that the state of subject-object duality is only dissolved at advanced levels of practice, which initially begin with dualistic approaches. However, the nondual perspective suggests that what is being sought through meditation and other practices is innately present within us at all times and hence need only be grasped. This implies that intensive practice to ‘attain’ states of nondual awareness are not necessary (Josipovic, pp. 65-67). The purpose of meditation is merely to recognize this awareness, although here the word recognize implies a separate subject that is recognizing, which is one of the limitations of subject-object specific language in describing nonduality.

According to Krishnamurti (1980b), meditation is dying to the known. He stated that meditation is not about sitting in a particular posture or being still. It is not about seeking mystical experiences through practice. Rather, true meditation is to be completely in the now, which means to be free of the past. A mind that is free from the past, its entanglements and attachments, does not seek an experience to hold on to. True meditation, thus, is to be in the present and relationship is key to understanding oneself in the present. This point regarding relationship was brought up by four of the coresearchers. Neel mentioned how,

Relationship has such extraordinary importance. The real significance of relationship is when it is self-revelatory, that is...when you allow the relationship to act as a mirror...to

function as a mirror...and if you do, it is the most accurate mirror possible because it can show you exactly what you are.

While all the coresearchers, from their personal experience, agreed with the notion that the dependence on practice could be limiting, they, however, did not agree with the complete rejection of practice. The shared belief was that practice was like a crutch that one could lean on in the initial stages of the exploration into the true nature of the self. But when, according to Neel, practice becomes a ‘refuge...that’s when illusion takes over.’

As Deven pointed out,

It is not the practice that is the problem. The problem is the conviction that the practice is going to take us somewhere.

Practice was seen to offer security and in turn not allow for the vulnerability that was needed for insight. It brought in the self, the doer, and in most instances had a prescribed path that was followed. In understanding practice and its tendency to become mechanical, Ved brought up the concept of measure. While the present-day use of the word is more often in comparison to an external unit, the early meanings of the word measure, however, were different and implied an internal harmony, which if not in proper balance resulted in fragmentation (Bohm, 1980, p. 20). Inner measure was considered to be important for external harmony.

Over the years, however, measure came to be used more in terms of external mechanical comparison rather than through internal knowing when something was off-balance (Bohm, 1980, pp. 20-22). In this way, the idea of measure shifted from being in-sight to becoming binding constructions of socially accepted norms. When measure, in the form of practices, begins to be imposed as a rule from outside and applied mechanically in various areas of life, it leads to these practices being seen as “absolute truths” (p. 22). Questioning them then becomes unacceptable. In this regard, Ved puts practice in perspective,

To know that primary reality is immeasurable is the most important thing...because with that understanding...we can see how practice is a secondary aspect of reality...practice can, of course, help bring order and harmony in our lives...but seeing practice as the essence of reality...now that is an illusion.

Thus, in response to the question regarding the nature of the *effort* that is involved in insight, a few significant paradoxes were revealed. Krishnamurti (n.d.d) said that “all effort implies motive” (para. 16) and was thus an obstacle to insight. Through this research question, a further question has been revealed, which will be left open to further inquiry—the question of whether there can not be motive when one is operating from the self.

There is, however, an essence of seeking and doing that becomes part of the search for ‘truth,’ although, the seeking is an open-ended search that has no fixed motive or idea of what is being sought. Practice was seen as something that can bring about measure, an element of inner and outer harmony. However, the risk of getting dependent on the various experiences that practice could incite in the body were brought up numerous times as something to be wary of. The very assumption of the existence of another state could lead the “other state” (Bohm, 1994, p. 51) to be projected by thought and that is what distorts the seeing. Self-inquiry, through open-ended seeking, and the ability to be aware of one’s thoughts in the present were seen as being of greater value than practice. Rather than the isolation that practice involves, relationships were seen as greater tools for self-understanding. And relationships were seen as mirrors through which one could understand oneself both in relation with people and things around oneself.

5.1.4 Explication of theme 4

Theme 4: Education *is* to inquire into the self

The primary purpose of education was seen as the inquiry into the nature of the self to ‘unravel conditioning.’ This was considered to be the ultimate goal of education and all the coresearchers mentioned the uniqueness of the Krishnamurti schools in terms of the openness of the spaces towards self-inquiry. Deven and Mira mentioned the phrase ‘curriculum of self-inquiry’ to refer to the activities that are designed as part of learning in the schools to further self-inquiry. As questioning the self and identity was considered to be key to self-inquiry, this aspect is an important inclusion in the curriculum of all the Krishnamurti schools.

Seeing how the tendency to form stronger identifications with ideas, beliefs and opinions in the years of adolescence can lead to more rigid patterns of thought in later years, Jai says,

In our school...we try to keep the sense of self fluid for as long as possible. Our aim is not to dissolve it...I mean, that’s not the purpose here. We can’t go into this with that purpose in mind...But what we can try to do is keep it fluid so that the children are easy

on themselves...so that at some point in their lives, they can come back to the question, 'Who am I?'

Deven reflects a similar point of view,

...adolescence is the time when the children are desperate to create their own identity and, you know, carve their own space in the world and all that...So, the question 'Who am I?' at this stage...it's not like many of them understand what we're really asking them to question...and we don't want this type of questioning to become yet another mechanical, cognitive exercise...

Addressing identity was mentioned as one of the most challenging topics in schools today because of the heavy influence of social media on identity, which constantly reinforces the need of a strong identity. Often, identity is not seen as a product of thought and schools fail to question what identity really is—the construction of reality that we have, through thought, built for ourselves by creating divisions of nations, religion, language, etc. But rather than questioning how thought forms these divisions both externally and in ourselves, the identity, with its many fragmentations, is strengthened through various activities that single out the individual and make their identity the most important part of themselves.

The Krishnamurti schools were seen to differ from conventional schools in their approach to individual attention. Krishnamurti (1954, pp. 1-45) identified the limited self as the root of conflict because the limited self only operates from self-interest. Hence, to strengthen individual identity is not seen as an important purpose of education. The views of Deven and Mira provide an idea in this regard. Mira mentioned how the individual identity is not given as much importance.

The individualized education plan, which in many places is touted as a good thing...we don't have that here. While we are individually attentive to each child's needs, we haven't made that the be all and end all of the curriculum. To me, doing that that seems individualistic. It's like each one is on their own path, because that is seen as what's best for the individual. And we don't consider that to be the priority.

Deven also echoed a similar sentiment regarding nurturing individual identity,

The atmosphere of the school is set up such that individuals are not encouraged in their individuality, whether we are teachers or students...everyone does more or less the same

kinds of things. And in that way, there's a kind of subtle questioning, I suppose, of, 'Who is the individual?'...

Spending time in nature was a practice that was noted to be part of everyday life at the schools. At times like these, the intention was to sit in silence and without actively engaging in an activity in order to see the response of the mind and the body to moments of inactivity, with the emphasis on the importance of living in the present moment and being aware of one's own thoughts and actions. Krishnamurti (2000, pp. 1-30) argued that being fully present in the moment was the key to living a fulfilling life. He believed that the mind was constantly distracted by thoughts of the past and the future, and that this distraction prevented individuals from fully experiencing the present moment.

According to Krishnamurti (2010b), "the desire to become something is a form of violence towards oneself" (p. 25). He believed that moving away from the present, the being, towards the becoming involved the constant striving for self-improvement and the desire to become someone else. This was seen as a way of rejecting one's true self, with this rejection leading to feelings of emptiness and dissatisfaction. The idea of being and becoming in education was mentioned by Mira.

On one stream we are teaching so that learning happens in an accumulative, additive way...and in that process I'm sure we are also on the road of becoming...setting goals and following those goals...and all of that...But, at the same time on the parallel stream, we are questioning all that. We are questioning the need to always work towards the future...because, you know, what about being in the present?

Dialogue, as a mode of communication was a common feature for all of the Krishnamurti schools. Study centres were mentioned as spaces where dialogues could be engaged in, both with the students and the adults of the school community. Through dialogue, an individual's concerns become the group's concern and soon people see that others face issues similar to what they experience. Questions brought up through dialogue soon become shared questions and the intention is not to find solutions at the end of each dialogue but to remain with the questions.

Thus, in addressing the research question, 'When viewed from a nondual perspective, what is the purpose of education according to educators affiliated with the J Krishnamurti schools?' theme 4 provides an overview of the educational practices in the Krishnamurti schools. As was

evident from the discussion of theme 1, despite being well aware of what the underlying purpose of the Krishnamurti schools was, the coresearchers mentioned that the word nonduality was not mentioned very often in the schools. The primary reason for this was to prevent the word from becoming yet another abstract concept that could be imagined in a certain, fixed way. Krishnamurti himself cautioned against getting caught up in words as this could lead to getting stuck in ideas that remain static.

What can primarily be gathered from theme 4 is that there is no fixed or direct approach to education from a nondual perspective. Understanding nonduality is to know that reality is ever changing and ever unfolding. It is this basic understanding that frames one's approach to education not being a mere transfer of knowledge or the building of skills. Quoting Krishnamurti (2010a), "the purpose of education is to understand the significance of life" (p. 24) and as he mentioned, life is more than the daily, mechanical functioning of society. The purpose of life is to become aware of the nature of the self; to see that the human mind is limited by its perception of reality, and that our understanding of reality is limited by the way in which we perceive it (Krishnamurti & Bohm, 1985, pp. 1-55). This, however, cannot be understood by the rational, cognitive mind and the only means to see the truth of the illusory nature of the self is through direct experience.

This is the understanding that forms the foundation of the Krishnamurti schools and this underlying philosophy is reflected in the pedagogical practices in these schools. While, on the surface, there seems to be nothing specific to *do* in terms of practices for a nondual education, it is evident that the Krishnamurti schools do function differently than most other education institutions. The most apparent difference is the how identity and individuality are explored through the process of questioning. While the notion of not prioritizing any individual or giving individual attention to students may leave many questioning the practice, it may start to become acceptable when one begins to understand the system of thought and how it creates the separate self. Questioning, dialogue, quiet assemblies and spending alone time in nature were considered to be important aspects that each school weaved into the curriculum with regard to their contexts.

5.2 Discussion

This study used the heuristic approach, engaging with the data at each stage to finally emerge at the creative composite depiction, which is presented at the end of this thesis. The data presented in the study includes the development of individual portraits, a presentation of common themes from the portraits and the final creative composite depiction. This final text is a representation of the themes that emerged from the dialogues. Although heuristic inquiry involves the creation of exemplary portraits of one of two of the coresearchers, this intermediary step was skipped in this study. This was due to the realization that the current data on coresearchers was limited as a result of having just one dialogue with each coresearcher. Creating an exemplary portrait based on the limited data seemed like an injustice to the coresearcher. Additionally, for the purpose of this study, the amount of data analysed was found to be sufficient. Data was collected through in-depth dialogues with the coresearchers. The various representations and interpretations of the data emerged from periods of complete immersion in the transcripts, alternated by periods of incubation, to allow for a richer unfolding of meaning from the dialogues. The following steps were carried out in the process of data analysis:

- In the initial phase of data generation and upon the completion of all the dialogues, each coresearcher was given a pseudonym in order to protect their privacy. Coresearcher dialogues were transcribed and an individual depiction of each coresearcher was developed. The use of the first person 'I' was a deliberate attempt to retain the voices of the coresearchers throughout the depictions, while at the same time also allowing the narrative I to be perceived as fluid by the reader.
- The next step involved drawing out common themes from the individual depictions, with inclusions of coresearchers' verbatim accounts to support the developed themes.
- The final stage involved the combination of two stages usually involved in the heuristic inquiry process, namely the development of a composite depiction based on the themes developed in the previous stage and a final creative synthesis. In this study, the two were jointly represented in the form of a creative composition that addressed the paradoxes and interpretations of the themes.

The purpose of this study was to explore the notion of insight as was mentioned by J Krishnamurti. Through the extension of this understanding, the study was designed to find out how a nondual philosophical orientation could influence teaching practices. This research idea was realized through dialogue with educators of the Krishnamurti schools in India to determine their

views on the purpose of education and how their understanding of nonduality has influenced this purpose. The process of this inquiry was challenging, not just because it involved constant questioning and checking in with one's own and others' lived experiences, but also because of the level of commitment to the processes of reflective and creative thinking. Furthermore, this research process involved a genuine effort of self-disclosure and honesty to understand and get immersed in both the obvious and nuanced aspects of lived human experiences, of myself, my immediate environment and the coresearchers of the study.

My absorption in the research process reminds me of the time I spent in the Krishnamurti schools—a period that I considered to be intensely therapeutic. Engaging, yet again, with the teachings of Krishnamurti, this time intensified with the additional theories of Bohm, brought back into renewed focus the concepts that I had only begun to engage with at the surface level four years ago. Reflecting deeply with these concepts through direct experience, this time not in the consciously created safe space of the Krishnamurti schools but in the outer world, was an experience that has once again raised innumerable questions on the limitations of what can be known by the human mind. To have an in-depth understanding of Bohm's system of thought and to see the practical applications of this understanding by the educators of the Krishnamurti schools, along with the fresh challenges it faces in the current identity-driven world has revealed the layers of complexities that the educators are faced with in trying to keep alive the questions that Krishnamurti posed.

As the coresearchers spoke about the challenges they faced, especially in regard to the questioning of identity, hope was still apparent in why they believed that the Krishnamurti education was of value. The schools were regarded as spaces where the educators said it seemed 'like they were asking for the impossible' in a world that needed to see immediate outcomes of any effort that was put in. In that sense, the existence of the schools itself was stated to be 'a bit of a paradox', as one coresearcher mentioned how there was no 'evident causality' of what this kind of an education was 'yielding.' Coresearchers mentioned how the questions they were asking of the students were as much for themselves as they were for the students; how the openness to constant learning and evolving was regarded 'as part of the search for truth...whatever truth may be.' The questions were 'just an open invitation' to begin to see what was beyond the known. That education is indeed and cannot be separated from everyday life was evident in the way the coresearchers described a typical day in the Krishnamurti schools, where attempts are continuously made to balance the 'being' and the 'becoming'—bringing into harmony the past,

present and future—in order to reach for the beyond, although without the motive of achievement of this ‘beyond.’

The various contradictions that language made apparent were paradoxically represented in the findings, though all of them were not expanded on in detail. It was, however, of interest to see them emerge and although many of them were priorly known, the act of writing them for the sake of the study began to highlight the paradox of human experience and how nonduality existed in the realm of paradox. Some of the paradoxes that emerged from the constructed themes were:

- Insight is not of time, knowledge or effort, but making sense of an insight involves time, knowledge and effort.
- Thought is important in making sense of what was seen through insight but can also be a hurdle to ‘gaining’ additional insight.
- Order does not involve effort, but a certain amount of work is needed to bring about order.
- Insight cannot be found, but involves an element of search.
- Insight is beyond words, yet language is what we use to talk about it.
- The idea of a separate self is an illusion, yet we use subjective experience to recognize the illusion of separation.

Thus, a few initial questions about the nature of insight led to the discovery of a number of interrelated concepts that have strangely, despite being unknowable, led to a certain sense of peace and acceptance of the limitations of what can be known. Theme 5, which was on practice and its limitations, gave me a new perspective of my own attachment to contemplative practices and the nature of ‘mystical’ experiences that arise through such practices. The balance of practice and questioning, which has become part of the learning curriculum in the Krishnamurti schools, is a calculated effort to stay with the ‘now,’ ushering yet another paradox of effort in this search of ‘truth.’ All the coresearchers expressed their own experiments with practice over the years since their initial introduction to the teachings of Krishnamurti and his questioning of the motive involved in practice. As someone who practises Yoga and Vipassana meditation, I have to admit that I see immense value in what these practices bring but I also believe that the effort involved in practice may be counterproductive to the purpose of practice. The idea of fun, as stated by one of the coresearchers, can be a crucial takeaway from this study. It is perhaps another paradoxical notion, as the search for truth often involves a seriousness that comes from

the realization of the absurdities of how humanity is blinded by constructions that have become absolute realities.

In answering the research questions, my experience of having spent time in the Krishnamurti schools has been vital for had I not had the chance to experience a different way of being in these spaces, I would not have understood the value of asking the right questions. Every dialogue with the coresearchers reinforced the importance of asking whether the questions being asked were indeed the right kind of questions. Much of our time and energy is spent in exploring the concepts that we ask through our questions. And dialogue was mentioned as a useful tool in checking the validity of our questions. Once again, my personal experience of dialogue in the many study centre sessions I attended during my time at the schools is what showed me a mode of communication that was indeed unique. Dialogue, through the (non) focus on the opinions of the self, has the tendency to bring out conditioning with a force that can take one off guard. These moments of vulnerability that are created through dialogue can be self-revelatory, if one is ready to feel the discomfort of the self not finding security in its own self.

Bohmian Dialogue, which involves Bohm's analysis of the system of thought was claimed by the coresearchers to be an efficient tool for the questioning of identity within a consciously-created safe space. The latter was deemed important, as this was what allowed one to sit with the emotions that come up from the process of being shaken from one's reverie of the imagined self. This point stands out for me, especially with my experience of higher education and how the various conversations that education involves has the tendency to incite many feelings, including anger, at the injustices of the world. To see that emotions are part of identification can allow for the pause that many of the coresearchers referred to; the pause from identification with the ego in order to engage with issue from a place that is not of thought but rather an acknowledgement of what the unconscious ego is capable of. In the current state of what humanity is faced with, regarding environmental degradation and the additional weight of conscious and unconscious human activity to this degradation, Bohmian Dialogue could indeed be an opportunity of taking the necessary steps back in a world that is constantly urging one to take (unconscious) steps forward. Peat's (2008) suggestion of gentle action can be seen as an extension of Bohmian Dialogue. This approach begins with the individual and focuses on personal transformation as a means of effecting change in the world (pp. 1-60). This is also a reflection of Krishnamurti's call for a radical transformation within as a means of creating change in the world outside. It is this shift in consciousness that Krishnamurti was asking for

that is being attempted in the Krishnamurti schools and what I was attempting to highlight through this study.

What was tempting for me was to attempt to paint a picture of what the implications of a non-dual understanding could have on education; to imagine an ideal education that comes from the recognition of wholeness. But, to subject to this ideal vision of nonduality would also be an escape into abstraction of what could be; which would be yet another projection of wishful thinking. Rather, staying with what is in the 'now' would mean rethinking the purpose of education; to see the value of a curriculum of self-inquiry; to start asking the difficult questions of oneself; and to be ok with not knowing. And that is where I stay.

The final part of this chapter is a conclusion of this study and will present the research gap that was exposed through the development of the conceptual framework. The limitations and ethical considerations, validity and transferability of the study will also be addressed, concluding with recommendations for further research.

5.3 Research gap

While nonduality is a topic that has been rising in importance in the fields of neuroscience and psychology lately (Josipovic, 2014; Josipovic & Miskovic, 2020), its place in the field of education is still uncertain, despite the existence of schools that are based on this philosophical orientation. Nonduality is not a commonly addressed topic in mainstream education institutions, as it is often considered to be a philosophical or spiritual concept rather than a subject of academic study. If discussed, it is implicitly done in courses on related topics such as philosophy of mind, consciousness studies and Eastern philosophy, mainly Buddhist studies (Wang, 2013). Since nonduality as a concept has its roots in ancient Hindu and Buddhist texts, the schools that are shaped by the philosophy of nonduality take the form of alternative education spaces that are aligned towards holistic education, with a spiritual dimension in their pedagogical practices.

The Krishnamurti schools, however, due to Krishnamurti's strong insistence on nonduality being the fundamental state of humanity rather than any experience associated with a specific religion, have their own unique approach to teaching. Nonduality as a non-practice, non-denominational education philosophy in schools has not been explored and this is where I wish to situate this study. While literature on various contemplative practices and spiritual education is being expanded to include lived nondual experiences, the studies are primarily focused on their

application in higher education learning (Manneh & Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2021) and not on education at the school level. Most of the studies (Manneh & Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2021; Wang, 2013) in nonduality also advocate the use of technique and practice, mainly meditation, and this study thus finds itself on the fringe of knowing whether practice has a role in nondual awakening because of Krishnamurti's insistence on there being no path to this entire notion.

What I found through my search of literature is that there has been a recent revival of both Krishnamurti's philosophy of education and Bohm's dialogue (Norton & Smith, 2020; Vrobel, 2017) in attempts to reintroduce these concepts in the face of current global and environmental threats. However, these are still relatively few in number. So, rather than closing gaps in existing research, this study perhaps situates itself in a rather isolated space in education. On the other hand, choosing to be optimistic, it could also be situated at the point of conjunction of education, philosophy, spirituality and psychology, opening up new possibilities for research towards holistically addressing global problems.

5.4 Limitations of the study

The primary limitation of the study was its sample size of five coresearchers, which is a small number of coresearchers for heuristic research. Moustakas (1990) recommends 10 to 15 coresearchers (p. 47) as an ideal number for this process of inquiry. He also recommends multiple interviews with each coresearcher until the researcher feels like they have a sufficient amount of data (p. 47). Due to time constraints, I had one online dialogue with each of the coresearchers, although these dialogues did continue until it was felt like they had reached a natural end.

The process of heuristic inquiry also requires that after each interview, the researcher alternates between periods of immersion and incubation with the data collected until an individual depiction is formed through intense engagement and indwelling in coresearcher experiences. It is only after this that the researcher moves on to the next coresearcher (Moustakas, 1990, p. 46). In this study, the first and second dialogues were carried out according to the above stated recommendations. However, due to the lack of time, the following three dialogues were engaged in through continuous immersion, without any periods of incubation. This may have impacted the coresearcher individual depictions, as the time to dwell completely in the individual coresearcher's lived experiences was limited.

An additional limitation in this study is the dual relationship I share with all of the coresearchers. Although I initially considered this to be an advantage for the study, I do see that my preference in selecting the five coresearchers was guided by how much I felt they could strengthen the study as a result of their time and experience with the school and the philosophy. Considering their investment in the process of self-learning, I assumed that these coresearchers would have had partial, if not total insight, into the patterns of thought and the nature of the self and this understanding influenced the selection of the coresearchers.

A fourth limitation was in the process of data generation. Although it was clearly mentioned to the coresearchers that the method of data generation would be through dialogue and not through the process of interview, the dialogues contained traces of the interview process. A large reason for this was my own lack of clarity of the dialogue process, especially since it was between two individuals and not a bigger group. Additionally, there was the underlying intention of adhering to the research question, even though I tried to engage as best as I could with the coresearchers as they were relating their experiences. What I realized is that Bohmian Dialogue requires an intense level of engagement and I saw that the dialogues I had in this study fell short of what could be considered unbiased engagement in the moment.

And finally, having been an active participant in my own journey of understanding Krishnamurti, I have seen that the stepping back from the whirlwind of mental concepts does in fact lead to new insights. Although there were moments of clarity that emerged during the process of this study, the lack of time led to many concepts being overlooked. Ironically, time as an illusion felt real, although more in terms of losing track of days and wishing I had enough time to carry out the heuristic process as I would have liked to.

In addition to these limitations, an assumption played a key role in the study—the idea that nondual awareness is a real phenomenon. This is an assumption that both I and the coresearchers subscribe to and its implications are clearly visible in the study.

5.5 Ethical considerations, validity and transferability

In heuristic research, ethics is concerned with identifying which actions align with moral goodness during the various phases of the study from the planning and execution to the aftermath of research findings for those who come in contact with the study (Sultan, 2019, p. 211). In this study, care was taken to provide all the coresearchers with details of the topic of discussion and

their role in the process of inquiry into the topic. An informed consent form was sent to the coresearchers requesting permission to record and use the information provided during the dialogues for purposes of the study. Maintaining coresearcher privacy was the primary consideration and coresearchers were made aware of their right to withdraw from the study if and when needed.

The first dialogue with a coresearcher, which was carried out in an unstructured format without any prior preparatory questions, revealed many gaps in the approach and thus led to guiding questions being provided to the remaining coresearchers before their dialogues. A primary ethical concern of this study was the use of Bohmian Dialogue, as it was felt that this form of dialogue required a certain level of practice and skill that I felt I lacked. The implications of my inexperience were not strongly felt in this study because of the familiarity and expertise of the coresearchers to navigate the dynamics of dialogue. However, for further research using Bohmian Dialogue, a certain level of practice of this form of dialogue would be recommended.

According to Moustakas (1990), the validity of a heuristic study is determined by whether the essences in the creative synthesis reflect the experiences of the coresearchers regarding the phenomenon (p. 34). This decision is for the primary researcher to make based on the personal experience of the various processes and phases that the self is put through in this intense inquiry. How validity can truly be checked in heuristic research is by taking the final synthesis back to the coresearchers and asking them if it reflects what they were trying to convey (Moustakas, 1990, p. 34). This study involved a constant checking-in with the coresearchers during the various stages of creating the individual and composite depictions to check if their experiences were being reflected in the final representations.

Additionally, the validity of a heuristic enquiry exists in alliance with the epistemological stance of the primary researcher (Moustakas, 1990, p. 34). Pushing the self to stay with the discomfort of not knowing while returning to the data multiple times during the various stages of the study led to many personal revelations. Seeing how one idea was understood differently at the different stages of inquiry made clearer the fallacy of thought in its quest for absolute knowledge, with this idea extending to the validity of this study and what it aims to convey; to see that it is only as relevant as what it was trying to uncover at the point of time it was written.

Finally, the personal nature of this study and its un conveyable parts of the subjective experiences of insight renders its transferability criteria rather weak. But this poses further questions about the need for validity of experiences rather than the openness to the new and unknown

through direct experience. Thus, this study encourages the reader to not merely accept what is presented to be true but rather to question, even reject, what is stated so that as Polanyi (1983) said, “a reality may yet manifest itself in the future in an indeterminate range of unsuspected results” (p. 61) based on what is being sought after.

5.6 Recommendations for further research

This study explored J Krishnamurti’s notion of insight and engaged with educators in the Krishnamurti schools to understand what they consider to be the purpose of education based on their knowledge nonduality. Many areas could serve as topics for further research, especially considering how the notion of nonduality has been sliding into scientific studies in recent years (Manneh & Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2021; Wang, 2013). But, more importantly, in the field of education, Krishnamurti’s philosophy, Bohm’s analysis of thought and nondual awareness can have a significant role in how knowledge is constructed and imparted in schools.

A nondualistic perspective implies a rejection of the egoic sense of self. This perspective challenges the traditional ethical framework that is based on individual rights and responsibilities and instead emphasizes the importance of compassion, empathy and nonviolence towards all beings (Josipovic, 2016, pp. 65-68). The nondualistic perspective also challenges the traditional political framework that is based on the separation of self and other and instead emphasizes the importance of recognizing the interdependence and interconnectedness of all beings (Spira, 2017, pp. 1-12). This implies a rejection of the idea of the nation-state as a bounded entity and the creation of national, religious, cultural and group identities, rather embracing global solidarity and cooperation. In this regard, Bohmian Dialogue and other forms of dialogue with similar views can be extended to discourses on peace and peace education and this study may be of relevance for research in peace building initiatives. Additionally, this study can also be extended to address religious identities and their formation in the field of religious education.

In the field of environmental education, Bohm’s system of thought can be used to provide a more holistic, interconnected understanding of the world as he suggests going to the source—thought—to better understand the ecological problems that we are currently facing (Norton & Smith, 2020, p. 153). They say that trying to find solutions to present problems from our current level of thinking may provide temporary answers, but these may not be enough in the long run, as the problem may arise in other forms if its source is not addressed (Norton & Smith, 2020, p. 156). Polanyi (1983) maintains that all new ‘solutions’ are but products of past conditioning;

old patterns of thought that sustain the old problems (p. 22). Both Krishnamurti and Bohm maintain that the source of our problems is the lack of understanding of how thought operates. This study could provide an alternative way of engaging with environmental problems—through silent reflection and gentle action (Peat, 2008, pp. 1-60).

In the field of psychology, the concepts used in this study could provide an alternative approach to psychological counselling. Krishnamurti says that psychology deals with problems by breaking them down into individual parts rather than seeing human suffering as a whole (Krishnamurti, 2014). He gives the example of how a psychologist would look to treat an individual who is depressed by finding out the individual problems that are causing the depression rather than looking to ask the question of why human beings, wherever they are in the world, are depressed. By seeing the problem as concerning that particular individual, Krishnamurti says that the problem is being sustained as an individual problem, thus maintaining the focus on the self as a separate entity, which he says is irrational. This perspective challenges the reductionistic and compartmentalized thinking that characterizes many current approaches to psychology.

Finally, although this study questioned the use of practice in reaching states that were beyond thought, further studies could explore the role of thought in the various altered mental states attained through practice. The various notions associated with the word ‘surrender’ can also be explored in regard to what can take place when effort ceases in the journey of self-inquiry.

In conclusion, this chapter presented the findings and discussion based on the themes that emerged from the process of coresearcher data generation. Additionally, attempts were made to provide, in some sense, ‘answers’ to the research questions that were developed in the earlier stages of the study. This chapter also included the limitations of the study, ethical considerations and reflections on validity and transferability and suggestions for further research. The following chapter presents the final phase of this heuristic inquiry, the creative synthesis, thus seeing the conclusion of the study.

Chapter 6: Creative synthesis

The final phase of the research process culminates in a creative synthesis of the themes that are developed in the previous phase (Moustakas, 1990, pp. 31-32). The researcher, who by now is well aware of the various meanings of the phenomenon, reaches into the tacit and intuitive dimensions to come up with a shared, comprehensive essence of the phenomenon as experienced by the coresearchers, including verbatim accounts from the data obtained. Moustakas (1990) identifies the role of “solitude and meditation” (p. 32) in engaging in tacit and intuitive knowing to stimulate the essences that form the creative synthesis.

Through the creation of the composite depiction, the various paradoxes in the themes were illuminated and will be further explored in the following section. Additionally, the educational practices that are unique to the Krishnamurti schools will be discussed in response to the research questions. When asked about their understanding of insight, all the coresearchers mentioned the complexity associated with the way the word was used by Krishnamurti and, by extension, the complexity in how they personally understood insight. While they referred to total insight as the realisation of the illusory nature of the self, the coresearchers mentioned that they themselves have only had partial insights into the limited nature of the self. But it was these little glimpses that began their process of inquiry, the curiosity further spilling onto the way in which they approach education and teaching.

6.1 Creative composite depiction

Insight,

Beyond the realm of cognition

Beyond what can be understood

by the rational mind

Not something you *can* convey through words

Insight is not a thought

neither is it a feeling

The closest you can come to describing it is that

Insight is a perception

But it is not entirely that either

To have an insight is to see clearly

‘with a certain kind of lightness’

without the screen of thought

because it is ‘thought that makes it heavy’

Insight ‘happens’ when thought takes a backseat

But it is not a conscious displacement of thought

You cannot *make* yourself stop thinking because

insight involves no effort

However, there *is* some kind of effort

Not effort in the sense of trying

More like an ‘open-ended search’

where you are not looking for something you already know

You have no knowledge

of what is to be found

And when you are ‘not looking’

it takes you by surprise

You may get a glimpse of something

A glimpse at yourself

An aspect of yourself

And it is 'an aspect of self-understanding'

It changes you

You see yourself in a 'slightly different way'

And the seeing *is* the action

There is no separate action that *you* need to take

As there is no gap between *you* and what you see

there is nothing *you* need to *do*

The 'action that is required comes through'

But for there to be no *you*

You first have to see what makes you *you*

What makes *you* seem so real?

What is the boundary between *you*

and everything that surrounds *you*?

To look closely is to look within

to ask the right questions

to inquire

And education *is* to inquire
to look into questions of the self

Questions—the ‘instruments’ for self-inquiry

Self-inquiry—it loosens the self

Untangles the layers of conditioning

To make fluid the identity

and let it stay flexible

Flexible enough to stay with the unknown

And ‘not defend opinions all the time’

Education *is* to have dialogue

To see that opinions are but residues of experiences

They do not have to become beliefs

Education *is* to be vulnerable

To stay with the discomfort of opinions that are not your own

To stay with the unease

And not try to ‘strengthening the ego’ all the time

Education *is* to ask the right questions

Where you are not caught up
in the process of becoming
Becoming something other than ‘what is’
in the ‘now’

Education *is* to balance the becoming
with questions
of what is driving the need to become better all the time

Education *is* learning to be in silence—
Not the silence of the lack of words,
but that of the mind
To allow for what can come in
when you step back from *you*

To step back is not to isolate
For it is through relationship
that you see yourself
Relationship not just with people
but with things around you
You watch your tendency, your need
To identify with ideas and practice

Insight does not need hours of practice
For practice can become yet another trap,
yet another construct of thought
The need to be 'doing' and 'becoming'
In order to feel in control

Insight *is* 'in the process of living'
And to be alert is to feel its essence
For it could just as easily be lost
if you are not present in the moment

Insight *is* 'in the present'
Only after
through thought
do you join the dots
In hindsight, in time, do you find
the parts to the whole

For *in* the moment of insight
there is no time

Time,
it only reveals new gaps

And you fill some

but you leave some alone

for gaps are the channels to new Insight

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Appendix: Informed consent form

Informed consent for participating in research

This informed consent form provides you as a research participant general information about the research, its purpose and your rights as a participant.

General information

I am a master's student in the Education and Globalization course at the Faculty of Education, University of Oulu. As a part of my studies, I am conducting research on the topic 'Unknowing the known: A heuristic study of J Krishnamurti's notion of insight to explore the purpose of education from a nondual philosophical perspective.' The purpose of my research is to explore J Krishnamurti's notion of insight and to further unravel how educator's experiences of insight influences their views on the purpose of education. I am also exploring the nature of the effort involved in insight whether it relates to the educational practices of the Krishnamurti schools. I kindly request your consent for collecting information from you for the research purpose through one of more of the following data collection methods: interviewing, listening to stories, reading documents, questionnaires, recordings, observations, drawings, photos, videos.

All information will be used anonymously, respecting your dignity. No personal details that enable identifying you will be included in the analyses and reporting. Systematic care in handling and storing the information will be ensured to avoid any kind of harm to you. After all the information leading to identification of a person has been removed, the information will be archived electronically, following the guidelines of the Finnish Social Sciences Data Archive.

Voluntary participation

Your participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time without any consequences. Observe that information collected before your withdrawal may be used. You have the right to get information about the research and may contact me if you have questions.

Confirming informed consent

- I am willing to participate in the research.
- I allow the use of recording of conversations for research purposes.

I allow the information that I have provided to be stored and archived for further research use.

Date: 11.01.2023

Researcher



BINITHA UCHIL

buchil21@student.oulu.fi

+91 98443 10894

Signature and name (in capital letters)

This thesis research is supervised by:

Magda Karjalainen

University Teacher, Faculty of Education

University of Oulu, Finland

Audrey Paradis

University Lecturer, Faculty of Education

University of Oulu, Finland

More information about research ethics and informed consent:

Finnish Board on Research Integrity

<http://www.tenk.fi/en/ethical-review-in-human-sciences>

Social Sciences Data Archive

<http://www.fsd.uta.fi/aineistonhallinta/en/informing-research-participants.html#partIV-examples-of-informing-research-participants>

<http://www.fsd.uta.fi/aineistonhallinta/en/anonymisation-and-identifiers.html>