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Why I'm Always Thinking of Society

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We give consideration to society because whatever we are doing is usually for the sake of society. What you call as your personal actions, the horrible fact is that even they are social actions. We may think that when we are alone in our house, let's say, in the kitchen or in the study room, then what we are doing over there is a personal action, but it is not a personal action at all because it is still being dictated by the society.

There is a student who is in her study room preparing for an engineering entrance examination, but she is preparing only because of social pressure; now, is this preparation - when she is alone in her study - a personal action or a social action?

It is a social action even though society does not appear to be present. The society is not physically present, but it is very much present - where? In the mind!

So, even when we are doing something very personal, we are still being guided by the society.Marriage, you would say, is something totally personal—marriage and love; but are we not guided by the society in all these matters?

So, are our marriages personal? Is our love personal? No, it is totally social. Society, religion, class - all these things are guiding even our most private and intimate matters; and when our matters are all social, it is but obvious that we will have to care for the society.

You look at all these matrimonial portals. People who want to marry put their profiles there. And you are putting up your profile, and the form there, the electronic form, has space for your religion, for your caste, for your gotra (lineage). It asks how much salary you expect from your would-be spouse, what kind of height, what kind of complexion, whether he should be living in a joint family or a nuclear family.

Now, are all these things not social? Now, is love then personal or social? It is all social; you are not present in this. It is a crowd!

Society has taught us what kind of features to look for in people. Now, because of years of colonisation - decades, in fact, of colonisation, I may say centuries - in India, you have a great emphasis on fair skin.

There are all these companies that are selling fairness products in India, and believe me, they cannot do that in any other country of the world. No country of the world is so mentally enslaved that you can sell a fairness cream, and people will also buy it. Elsewhere, people will say, "Fine,

I am dark, and being dark is alright."

But you go on a date, and you meet a guy who has very fair skin. You have not chosen him; it is the society that has chosen him for you.

So, it is not actually you who is dating him. You are not dating him; an entire crowd is dating that guy. So, it appears as if two persons are meeting, but two persons are not meeting; two crowds are meeting. One crowd from this side coming on a truck, another crowd from that side coming on another tractor, and these two crowds are dating each other. Where are you?

We are afraid of the society because we are not at all ourselves; we are just the society.

We need to ask, "Is there anything that I am doing which is coming from my own free will? Is there anything that is arising out of understanding? Actions, thoughts, beliefs that I have considered normal, are they really normal or are they just conditioned? Are they really normal?"

When you will do something which is not social at all, believe me, in that moment you will not be afraid of the society. Whenever you will find something which is not social, which is not corrupted, which is entirely yours, in that moment there will be no fear; in that moment you would be the most fearless person. Even the thought of others will not come to your mind.

Thought of others comes to our mind because the very action is for others, influenced by others, and for the sake of others. So, don't be puzzled when you find that you are all the time afraid of society; it is obvious, it would happen. A slave will all the time be afraid of the master.

Till the time you are a slave, you are bound to be afraid. And in the moment when you are not a slave, you will not even ask this question. Because there will be no fear, so no question to ask.

Think of these things. You said 'personal', 'individual'. Think of what you call as the most central elements of life, and ask yourself: are they really individual, or are they social products, social influences?

You spend your individual life in the pursuit of a social goal. Is that not stupid? You are spending your individual life pursuing a social goal, a goal given by society. Whose life? Yours! And whose goal? Society's! Is that not a wastage of life? "My life is being spent in pursuing a goal given by others. Whose life is being wasted? My own life!"

Have you asked yourself, “What is the meaning of work? What is the relation of work to life? Why must one work? What is the relation of work to money?" If not, then ask!