

The Koan of Relationship

THE BEST KOAN THERE IS IS LOVE, is relationship. That's how it is being used here. A relationship is a puzzle with no clue to it. Howsoever you try to manage it, you will never be able to manage it. Nobody has ever been able to manage it. It is made in such a way that it simply remains puzzling. The more you try to demystify it, the more mysterious it becomes. The more you try to understand it, the more elusive it is.

It is a greater koan than any koan that Zen masters give to their disciples, because their koans are meditative -- one is alone. When I give you the koan of relationship it is far more complicated, because you are two -- differently made, differently conditioned, polar opposites to each other, pulling in different directions, manipulating each other, trying to possess, dominate... there are a thousand and one problems.

While meditating, the only problem is how to be silent, how not to be caught in thoughts. In relationship there are a thousand and one problems. If you are silent, there is a problem. Just sit silently by the side of your wife and you will see -- she will immediately jump upon you: "Why are you silent? What do you mean?" Or speak, and you will be in trouble -- whatsoever you say, you are always misunderstood.

No relationship can ever come to a point where it is not a problem. Or if sometimes you see a relationship coming to a point where it is no more a problem, that simply means it is not a relationship any more. The relationship has disappeared -- the fighters are tired, they have started accepting things as they are. They are bored; they don't want to fight anymore. They have accepted it, they don't want to improve upon it.

Or, in the past, people tried to create a kind of harmony forcibly. That's why, down the ages, women were repressed -- that was one way of sorting things out. Just force the woman to follow the man, then there is no problem. But it is not a relationship either. When the woman is no more an independent person the problem disappears. But the woman has also disappeared. Then she is just a thing to be used; then there is no joy, and the man starts looking for some other woman.

If you ever come across a happy marriage, don't trust it on the surface. Just go a little deeper and you will be surprised. I have heard about one happy marriage...

A hillbilly farmer decided it was time to get married, so he saddled his mule and set off for the city to find a wife. In time, he met a woman and they were married. So they both climbed up on the mule and started back for the farm. After a while, the mule balked and refused to move. The farmer got down, found a big stick, and beat the mule until it again began to move.

"That's once," the farmer said.

A few miles later, the mule balked again, and the entire scene was repeated. After the beating, when the mule was moving again, the farmer said, "That's twice."

A few miles later, the mule balked for a third time. The farmer got down, got his wife down, and then took out a pistol and shot the mule in the eye, killing it instantly.

"That was a stupid thing to do!" the wife shouted. "That was a valuable animal and just because he annoyed you, you killed him! That was stupid, criminal..." and she went on like this for some time. As she stopped for breath, the farmer said, "That's once."

And it is said, after that they lived forever in married happiness!

That is one way of solving things, that's how it has been done in the past. In the future, the reverse is going to be tried -- the husband has to follow the wife. But it is the same thing.

A relationship is a koan. And unless you have solved a more fundamental thing about yourself, you cannot solve it. The problem of love can be solved only when the problem of meditation has been solved, not before it. Because it is really two non-meditative persons who are creating the problem. Two persons who are in confusion, who don't know who they are -- naturally they multiply each other's confusion, they magnify it.

Unless meditation is achieved, love remains a misery. Once you have learnt how to live alone, once you have learnt how to enjoy your simple existence, for no reason at all, then there is a possibility of solving the second, more complicated problem of two persons being together. Only two meditators can live in love -- and then love will not be a koan. But then it will not be a relationship either, in the sense that you understand it. It will be simply a state of love, not a state of relationship.

So, Madhuri, I understand your trouble. But I tell people to go into these troubles because these troubles will make you aware of the fundamental problem, that you, deep inside your being, are a riddle. And the other simply is a mirror. It is difficult to know your own troubles directly, it is very easy to know them in a relationship. A mirror becomes available: you can see your face in the mirror, and the other can see his face in your mirror. And both are angry, because both see ugly faces. And naturally both shout at each other, because their natural logic is, "It is YOU, this mirror, which is making me look so ugly. Otherwise I am such a beautiful person."

That's the problem that lovers go on trying to solve, and cannot solve. What they are saying again and again is this: "I am such a beautiful person, but you make me look so ugly."

Nobody is making you look ugly -- you ARE ugly. Sorry, but that's how it is. Be thankful to the other, be grateful to the other, because he helps you to see your face. Don't be angry.

And go deeper into yourself, go deeper into meditation. But what happens is that whenever a person is in love he forgets all about meditation. I go on looking at you --

whenever I see a few persons missing, I know what has happened to them. Love has happened to them. Now they don't think that they are needed here. They will come only when love creates much trouble and it becomes impossible for them to solve it. Then they will come and ask, "Osho, what to do?"

When you are in love, don't forget meditation. Love is not going to solve anything. Love is only going to show you who you are, where you are. And it is good that love makes you alert -- alert of the whole confusion and the chaos within you. Now is the time to meditate! If love and meditation go together, you will have both the wings, you will have a balance.

And the vice-versa also happens. Whenever a person starts moving deep in meditation, he starts avoiding love, because he thinks if he goes into love his meditation will be disturbed. That too is wrong. Meditation will not be disturbed, meditation will be helped. Why will it be helped? Because love will go on showing you where there are still problems, where they are. Without love, you will become unconscious of your problems. But becoming unconscious does not mean that you have solved them. If there is no mirror, that does not mean that you don't have any face.

Love and meditation should go hand in hand. That is one of the most essential messages that I would like to share with you: Love and meditation should go hand in hand. Love and meditate, meditate and love -- and slowly slowly you will see a new harmony arising in you. Only that harmony will make you contented.