



Why Do We Gossip?, by Krishnamurti

I wonder why we gossip? Is it because it reveals others to us? And why should others be revealed to us? Why do you want to know others? Why this extraordinary concern about others? First of all, why do we gossip? It is a form of restlessness, is it not? Like worry, it is an indication of a restless mind. Why this desire to interfere with others, to know what others are doing, saying? It is a very superficial mind that gossips, isn't it? - an inquisitive mind which is wrongly directed. The questioner seems to think that others are revealed to him by his being concerned with them - with their doings, with their thoughts, with their opinions. But do we know others if we don't know ourselves? Can we judge others, if we do not know the way of our own thinking, the way we act, the way we behave? Why this extraordinary concern over others? Is it not an escape, really, this desire to find out what others are thinking and feeling and gossiping about? Doesn't it offer an escape from ourselves? Is there not in it also the desire to interfere with others' lives? Isn't our own life sufficiently difficult, sufficiently complex, sufficiently painful, without dealing with others, interfering with others? Is there time to think about others in that gossipy, cruel, ugly manner? Why do we do this? You know, everybody does it. Practically everybody gossips about somebody else. Why? I think, first of all, we gossip about others because we are not sufficiently interested in the process of our own thinking and of our own action. We want to see what others are doing and perhaps, to put it kindly, to imitate others. Generally, when we gossip it is to condemn others, but, stretching it charitably, it is perhaps to imitate others. Why do we want to imitate others? Doesn't it all indicate an extraordinary shallowness on our own part? It is an extraordinarily dull mind that wants excitement, and goes outside itself to get it. In other words gossip is a form of sensation, isn't it?, in which we indulge. It may be a different kind of sensation, but there is always this desire to find excitement, distraction. If one really goes into this question deeply, one comes back to oneself, which shows that one is really extraordinarily shallow and seeking excitement from outside by talking about others. Catch yourself the next time you are gossiping about somebody; if you are aware of it, it will indicate an awful lot to you about yourself. Don't cover it up by saying that you are merely inquisitive about others. It indicates restlessness, a sense of excitement, a shallowness, a lack of real, profound interest in people which has nothing to do with gossip. -- J. Krishnamurti