

# Realities: Words, 'Minds', Institutions, Psychoanalysis and Cosmoanalysis: A Calculus-structural-heuristic Approach

## Chapter 1

General Semantics 'is' (exists as) a way of thinking: a way of thinking about the way we think about things based on explicitly stated principles we could apply to help us better manage our inner and outer realities. Except in the fields of science and mathematics, our present way of thinking based on "identification, allness, elementalism, and intensionality", has been institutionalized...accepted as the norm, and formally maintained, promoted, and protected by our institutions and societies at large. We can expect ongoing personal, societal, and international problem-creating problems when policies and actions based on these ways of thinking clash with outer realities.

For a start: Readers are invited to view all ideas expressed as "heuristic propositions" to be critically evaluated and conscious times-bindingly improved. I presently think of the word "reality" as referring to "all that exist": This include "dreams", "mirages", reflections, and so on – different dimensions-abstractions...but they do exist. So I use the words **"realities"**, **"goings-on"**, **"situations"**, or **"a reality"** as more accurately descriptive ways to acknowledge a world of multidimensional structures, diverse operations-relationships-happenings, etc. From all that's going on, with our limited nervous systems, **we create 'maps'** (what we see, hear, sense, our ideas, opinions, theories, generalizations, beliefs, imaginings, speculations, etc. – derivatives (experiences-selections representing relatively small bits of all that's going on). **Words, including "mystery, miracle, ignorance, uncertainty, non-allness, non-identity, consciousness of abstracting and others"** represent ways we tacitly acknowledge the limitations of our nervous systems, and correspondingly, our 'understanding', and 'knowledge'. Institutions as "multidimensional structures-operations" include "societies, nations (tribes), religions, governments, education systems, establishments, institutes, organizations, corporations, unions, professional associations, individuals, etc., with diverse goals, operational principles, traditional practices, etc. Words about institutions are not intended to be a polemic about all institutions but constitute a proposition that: **Institutions, to increase their effectiveness in a world of emerging and changing realities, have to become more creative, and with new paradigmatic bases, "radically change" their usual ways of addressing personal, societal, national and international problems.** Increasing numbers of uprisings, rebellions, and conflicts, provide ample indicators of intensifying dissatisfactions with 'leaders' (despotic, autocratic, and democratic). The worldwide effects of conflicts in one region on others provide ample evidence that for higher levels of security anywhere, it suits us all to **create institutions, support policies, and engage in actions that explicitly acknowledge and value our interrelationships and interdependencies.** Over seventy five years ago, Alfred Korzybski expressed the following concerns regarding institutions: **"Our rulers,....impose their own infantilism on our institutions, educational methods and doctrines.** This leads to nervous maladjustment of the incoming generations which, being born into, are forced to develop under the un-natural (for mankind) semantic conditions imposed on them. In turn, they produce leaders afflicted with the old animalistic limitations. The vicious circle is completed; it results in a general state of human un-sanity, reflected again in our institutions. And so it goes, on and on." (Science And Sanity, page 41.) And on page 727: **"If we live in a modern world, but keep the 'emotional attitudes' of primitive bygone days, then naturally we are bound to be semantically unbalanced, and cannot be adjusted to a fundamentally primitive 'civilization' in the midst of great technical achievements."**

**Although there are little "pockets of sanity" here and there -- The human race behaves as mainly 'unsane', and is bleeding from self-inflicted wounds. (A conscious times-binding on a dictionary's**

words on “sane” follows: “able to anticipate and appraise probable effects of one’s actions”). Although problems involve poor human relationships, misunderstandings, clashes of ideas, beliefs, values, opinions, ‘tribal’ traditions, practices, preferences and prejudices, etc.: And although ‘politicians’, and ‘leaders’ (individuals so labeled) claim no expertise in anthropology, history, psychology, philosophy, science, humanitarianism, or creativity...no national (tribal) or worldwide coordinated attempts have emerged to explore the possibilities of other more **satisfactory, less traditional, more up-to-date ways of dealing with realities involving human relationships at personal, institutional, social, national, and international levels**. As individuals and institutions, when we ignore our critical reflecting and evaluating abilities, when we pay little attention to the bigger picture and longer cycle of things, we tend to behave like animals (instinctive, automatic), and “machines” (input leading to programmed output). And so: **International, and sometimes national problems, are usually addressed in ‘primitive’ (earlier times-binding traditional ways): political, militaristic, economic, authoritative, elementalistic, and others, with no significant inputs from anthropologists, historians, etc.** The system “**general semantics**” (g.s.) offers a “**radically different approach**” to evaluating, understanding, and dealing with both our inner and outer realities: **Radical** in the sense of being “**significantly different from the usual and traditional**”. A radically different approach might be, for instance, “A member of the ‘United Nations’ making these unusual appeals: “Can we meet annually and explore what factors contribute to our ongoing disharmonies so we can work together to create a better world -- for all of us?” or, “Can we meet annually to explore the question “Where are we going as a species?” or “We humans create most of the problems we face (starvation, poverty, violence, etc.)...and the more of us the more problems: Can we meet annually to consider how we can peacefully slow down the exponentially increasingly unmanageable numbers of us?” The exponential increase in technologies has **multiplied and densified realities: Through times-binding societies have produced ‘smart phones’, ‘smart bombs’, and ‘smart self-driving cars’**: We do not find much valuing of “reflection, critical analysis, or general promotion of ‘smart people’ and ‘smart societies’ towards developing higher levels of evaluation and comprehension towards better human relationships. With the internet electronically linking millions of individuals, accelerating the frequency, and exponentially increasing the number of human interactions, we can expect a **rapid increase of natural times-binding** and anticipate human attitudes and behaviors (creative destructive, friendly, hostile, violent, etc.) amplified and expressed at global levels. More information without conscious critical evaluating principles and organizational skills will effectively contribute to more problem-creating problems when information is interpreted in the usual and traditional ways. Following this, we can predict **increasing levels of stress and other illnesses due to the increasing inability of our neuro-psycho-biological systems to adjust to an overload of information and demands**. (Re. “densifying realities”: more things and more different things happening in more places, in smaller spaces, and in less time: Compare a 1000cc motorcycle with G.P.S. and radio...with a scooter; or the size, power, range of 1950’s computers...with present day “smart phones”.)

**Alfred Korzybski, the creator of general semantics with a deep concern for the sanity of the race, as meta-anthropologist psychoanalyzing racial historical behaviors, generalized the methods and approach of science and mathematics (cosmoanalysis) as his model for exploring our inner and outer neuro-linguistic and neuro-semantic realities. Here are a few words about general semantics: A system of interrelated semantic tools (heuristic principles and critical evaluation standards) based on the methods and approach of science and mathematics: Using these tools to improve our understandings of realities we face, we become better (more satisfying, more effective) ‘managers’ in our relationships at personal, societal, professional, national, international, and ecological levels. We can apply g.s. principles to monitor, review, evaluate, and refine our ideas, opinions, beliefs, evaluations, ‘knowledge’, judgments and understandings. Applying g.s. principles as thinking standards helps us to think more clearly about our thinking...a way to improve our skills in making more informed problem resolving decisions. Briefly put: The system “general semantics’ offers us**

many ways to achieve higher levels of adjustments in a world of multidimensional realities...and much, much more.

**Words will have power over us -- if we do not use our power over words.** For better communication, less conflicts and more satisfying relationships, it suits us to remember that: Words automatically trigger different memories, feelings, ideas, images, prejudices, habitual reactions, etc. in each one of us...Consequently we will give different meanings and significance to words. We can train ourselves to react to words as **symbols to be consciously evaluated as to accuracy of “structural representational accuracy”**...not as **signals** evoking machine-like automatic unreflecting reactions. In that sense, we will use words and not allow words to use us. For instance: When we and our institutions forget that those we label **“terrorists” are firstly “humans” with corresponding levels of times-binding abilities, ingenuity, creative-destructiveness, resourcefulness, brutal, primitive, and savage behaviors, we allow ourselves to be used by the word “terrorist”**. We could be heading for some very trying and difficult times if we do not heed Korzybski’s words of warning: **“... mankind represents an interdependent time-binding class of life, and any group of people (I add “or anyone”) who posses physical means for destruction and still preserve infantile standards of evaluation become a menace to the culture of the whole race.”** (Science and Sanity, page 557) We can better adjust with realities that confront us at diverse levels when we recognize **“our attitudes and behaviors as a function of the way we define-label ourselves and others”**... $a,b = f(d,l)$  We can better adjust to realities when we recognize our tendency to **intensionally** identify and give words more importance than the structures and realities we use them to represent. International conflicts and negotiations can become more problematic when words such as **“We have to get them to, or make them do “X”, or “follow our lead”, “see things our way”, and others, are used: Such words are likely to arouse resentment from other humans concerned to maintain their self-image and self-importance, and fearing loss of respect and power if they appear to be following or surrendering to others. (Where you see the words “infantile”, “primitive” or “tribal”, I use them to represent “earlier times-binding”, "earlier times-binders", or “earlier stages of development”).**

On page 285 of “Science And Sanity”, we find these words: **“Under modern conditions, which change rather rapidly nowadays, obviously, some relations between humans alter, and so the institutions must be revised.”** Ways that usually hamper us (individuals and other institutions) include **old language habits, prevailing ‘tribal’ practices, intransigence, hostility, unexamined and unexplored beliefs, and ideas; elevating definitions, labels, names, and ‘primitive’ standards of evaluation over related non-verbal structures; hastily focusing on symptoms of problems (derivatives) rather than exploring sources, contributing factors (functions, variables) ...and more generally, “identifications”**. There is much concern and many actions taken against pollution in our outer environments – but comparatively less concern for **how, through identifications** and our wanton ways with words, **we semantically pollute aspects of our inner environments: We block and clog brain-mind channels of communication and interest in exploring more informed, up-to-date levels of evaluating realities. Our inner polluted environments make us psycho-biologically unhealthy...and reflexively, inner unhealthy environments usually create unhealthy outer environments...which in turn makes us even more unhealthy...**(**“Tribal practices”**, involve ignoring wider interrelationships and uncompromisingly promoting and defending “ones language, group, party, beliefs, religion, people, country, traditions, ways”, etc. as being better than all others.)

**“Non-identity”** in the field of general semantics is a proposition that **“No two things are the same in all respects.”** We live in (and are members of) a Universe of asymmetric relationships – A Universe

that operates based on differences. If we **think of non-identity in terms of “diversity” and “differences”**, probably the biggest challenge we face in our efforts to achieve racial harmony can be formulated this way: **We are different beings, in a world of differences, which we strive to cope with in our different ways!** Names, labels, definitions, categories, groups, tribes, societies, nations, belief systems, fields of activities, and so on, emerge as different ways we deal with diversity. Societies, to minimize the chaos that would emerge from unbridled individual expressions, create different systems, institutions, regulations and laws. Systems and institutions create different goals, policies, standard procedures, definitions and classifications. (Education systems for instance, generally ignore individual differences and classify-treat individuals as “students”). Religions deal with diversity through formalized beliefs, dogmas, doctrines and religious practices. Architects and artists envision, and when possible, create imagined structural configurations. Mathematicians deal with diversity through the notions of numbers, sets, integrations, differentiations, and incremental differences; scientists through operational definitions, and systematizations presented in the form of ‘natural laws’. **‘General Semantics’ acknowledges differences in emphasizing the principle of “non-identity”, and offers the principle of “non-elementalism” as a way to promote interconnections.** (We might find it worthwhile to consider that as ways of dealing with differences, “there is only one scientific approach and only one mathematics” – and so far, no wars based on different mathematics or scientific theories. )

**We identify by default. We are identifying if we are not conscious of abstracting, and aware that “if two things seem the same, we have not ‘looked’ enough”. In moments of identifying, we are not conscious of ourselves as subjects-abstractors-map makers”...we are one-with: In identifying, we do not recognize our “visions, dreams, imaginings, thoughts, beliefs, values, ideas, opinions, theories, explanations, generalizations, labels, definitions, meanings we give, memories, assumptions, speculations, expectations, judgments, prejudices, etc.,” as explorable objects-inner realities, and so, do not and cannot in those moments self-consciously distinguish between those inner realities and outer realities. As examples: We are identifying in moments when we ignore individuality and treat others based solely on our labels, definitions, and classifications (she-he is a “C.E.O., president, nurse, or untouchable, stupid, beautiful, a resource, a failure, a Westerner, an Asian, Moslem, Christian, unbeliever, etc.). We are identifying when we fail to recognize that we are not what others say about us; when we forget that the product or service is not the words or images of the advertisements; when we are unaware that what we are seeing is not all that’s there; when we believe and act on our belief that “A” caused “B”. (Applying the principle of “multi-causality” we could do better in thinking “contributing factors” instead of “cause”). In driving, catching ourselves identifying could be life saving if for instance at intersections, we do not treat the green light as a “signal” meaning “Step on the gas and go” but as a “symbol”-to be evaluated: “Check first...if it seems safe...Go”. Like bacteria, identifications support life and also do harm. Through conscious abstracting (being attentive, mindful -- in the moment) we can train ourselves to become more aware of our natural tendency to identify and ‘allness’, and over times, benefit in learning how harming identifications determine our experiences of, and our responses to our inner and outer realities.**

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**Realities: Words, ‘Minds’, Institutions, Psychoanalysis and Cosmoanalysis: A Calculus-structural-heuristic Approach**

## Chapter 2

General Semantics 'is' (exists as) a way of thinking: a way of thinking about the way we think about things: a way of thinking based on explicitly stated principles we could apply to help us better manage our inner and outer realities.

**Recognizing potentially harmful identifications poses a major challenge for each one of us:** Tools we can use to help us address this challenge include: “conscious abstracting, a calculus-structural approach, consciousness of abstracting, and the principle of non-identity”. Using these tools we can develop an approach that “If no two of us, groups, institutions, etc., are the same in all respects, if we are beings at different degrees of conscious times-binding development, we will ‘see’ things differently and see different things”: Our differences will involve different needs, fears, concerns, beliefs, prejudices, opinions, goals, concerns for stature, importance, leadership, and different responses to our differences. We can expect different proposed solutions, different approaches to dealing with problems, and different intensities of personal and institutional resistance -- a consequence of different interests, interpretations and understandings of situations. At international levels, a major obstacle for the race in recognizing and diminishing identifications towards achieving racial harmony includes “scapegoating”: Instead of recognizing our collective racial contributions to our international problems, **we elementalistically repress and suppress our individual and national contributions** – holding-identifying this or that group, tribe, ‘cans’, ‘ians’, ites, etc., as the responsible agents. Overall: Any proposed solution (including general semantics) for improving our human condition towards higher levels of sanity and intelligent behaviors, or even a suggestion that we have a problem deserving attention, will be met with a diversity of disagreements -- resulting in even more disharmony... There will be many ready to oppose proposals or suggestions for improvements simply to emphasize that they are different, and to be noticed: **“I think differently... Therefore I am”** (to paraphrase Descartes). And then there are some whom will oppose “just for the fun of it”. Considering the above, I presently imagine a goal to improve the sanity of the race a highly probable futile endeavor. But through conscious times-binding and conscious times-binding ethics, concerned individuals can expand **their** times-binding intelligences to better cope with what presently appears to be a period of intensifying racial disharmonies.

As brooms are not usually designed to clean themselves (but can clean other brooms), we are challenged in cleaning up our inner semantic realities: Our **‘minds’**, in not recognizing their different levels of representation-abstractions contribute to our personal and institutional difficulties in not recognizing and accepting responsibility for how we create a great deal of our human problems: Attributing the source of our problems solely to agencies other than our mind’-processes’ could be an origin of “scapegoating”. Some words about “mind-processes”: **‘Mind’ minds ‘mind’**. **‘Mind’ mines ‘mind’**. **‘Mind’ undermines ‘minds’**: Our ‘minds’ (as multidimensional processes active at conscious and non-conscious levels) take care of themselves -- to a certain degree. Our ‘minds’ store memories, information, associations, patterns, etc. -- treasures they can mine. We, at self-conscious levels (derivatives, functions of non-conscious ‘mind’-processes) can mine valuable information about ourselves by being aware that **“What we think, believe, imagine, say, about anyone or anything also say ‘somethings’ about ourselves”**...the range of our knowledge and understanding, values, concerns, interests, likes, dislikes, prejudices, etc. And we can mine important-to-know information about our ‘mind’-processes by being aware that “whenever we agree or disagree with anyone about anything, we are in effect agreeing/disagreeing with ourselves... We are agreeing or disagreeing with our own interpretations and understandings of words. Our **‘minds’**

as “**system managers**”, and multi-dimensional structures-operations, sometimes do not recognize how through “**natural automatic identifying, elementalistic processes**” one ‘department’-operation sometimes ‘selfishly’ undermines and wrecks the plans, efforts, and operations of other departments (origin of conflict of interest?). Our ‘minds’ undermine themselves and the whole organism through harboring “**semantic viruses**”: including clogging of critical processing channels through constantly disrupting memories of undesirable experiences; unproductive habitual patterns of thinking and imaginings; self-defensive learning restraining definitions, labels, attitudes and prejudices, to mention a few. Accepting that “The quality of our living (meanings we give, values we accept, our attitudes, feelings, beliefs, disappointments, distress, frustration, levels of satisfactions, what and how we do, etc.) depends on the quality and kind of ‘maps’ our ‘minds’ as ‘map’-making factories produce. Recognizing that the quality of ‘maps’ we produce depends on how we process-evaluate the raw materials received (words, what we see, hear, etc.), we can endeavor to create more accurately representative ‘maps’ through modifying our experiences-thinking-and feelings based on general semantics principles.

As a natural identifying ‘map’-making system, a ‘mind’ cannot ‘know’ itself...if ‘knowing’ is unreflectively assumed as “knowing all”. We might be more descriptively accurate thinking in terms of “knowing some things about” or “having some knowledge of”. The reasoning is based on g.s. principles including “**non-identity, non-allness, order, non-elementalism, and others**”. (1) In terms of “non-identity”: If ‘knowing’ involves “awareness of, re-presentations, mappings”, etc., a ‘knowing’ as a ‘map’ is not identical with the territory (whatever is inferred as ‘known’) mapped. (2) If ‘knowing’ is a subset of the set of all “‘mind’-processes”; if ‘knowing’ is an activity of a lower frequency than the higher frequencies activities of billions of interacting neurons, there will be some ‘mind’ processes that cannot be followed by a ‘knowing’ process’. In short ‘knowing’ cannot follow what all those neurons in their electrochemical and other operations are doing – a probable unbridgeable “asymmetric relationship”. (3) In terms of “**order**”, neuroscientists’ using f(mri) and other instruments have shown that ‘mind’ activities at psychological levels **occur after ‘mind’-activities at neuronal-unconscious levels...**So ‘knowing’ at times (2) involves representations of some earlier ‘mind’-activities at times (1) -- and this ‘semantic quantum jump’ presents an unavoidable uncertainty for ‘mind’ knowing ‘mind’. (In terms of “**structural similarity**” (‘this’, is in some ways like ‘that’), we don’t ‘know’ the state of a star immediately after light waves left it and traveled to us fifty light years away.) Notwithstanding these limitations, through **conscious abstracting, conscious times-binding, and a calculus-structural approach** (finely tuned self-observing guided by “**non-allness-non-identity paradigms**), our ‘minds’ can mine some ‘knowledge of’ themselves and use this information to improve their inner and outer environments. (Re. **asymmetric relationships**: Systems (structures: things, situations, etc. ) are evaluated as being **more than/less than** others in different dimensions – speed, weight, density, power, importance, values, etc. Examples: increasing human population and their products, and an earth that isn’t getting bigger; **geometric** population growth, **technological expansion**, and **arithmetic** job creation increase: in less euphemistic wording: No society can create jobs as fast as people can create babies.

Towards further understanding of ourselves, our institutions, and other everyday realities, the following audacious and “**heuristic operational ‘definition’**” (open to improvements) – derived from different fields of explorations are offered as a start: **Universe: “Indefinitely-extended-fractal-asymmetric-interactive-differentiating-integrating-multi-rhythmic-self maintaining-self-protecting-self-organizing-multidimensional energy systems.”** In other words: Through keen observations (direct and instrumental) we can notice that we live in a world of differences, interrelationships, repeating patterns of changes, movements at different frequencies, interdependence, creative-

destructive-interactive forces, emergents, growth-development-decay, and more. **We could succinctly describe Universe as “systems of waves or wavings”** which, being continuous, interacting and interpenetrating, we deal with by breaking down into smaller more manageable relatively static and convenient bits (abstractions) ...symbols, words, ideas, images, numbers, etc. Structuring “waves”: We can think of “Waves” as a word for a world of movement and ‘change’...**changing movements-locations as a function of times give us waves.** And since movement and waves involve something moving or ‘waving’, we could avoid wave/particle duality and think of light as “particles-waving”. For doing ourselves less stress and frustrations towards becoming better ‘managers’, we can mine the following as relatively invariant semantic treasures: Everything (structures) waves, undulates, moves, vibrates, operates according to their natural or human made structural frequencies: Watch individuals walking, movements of different parts of a tree, strings of a guitar; fill a page with intersecting lines (note that automatically, the undulations will be different); watch waves at the lake or sea shore, listen to the sounds of bells, watch your breathing –note the movements of your chest, and so on.”.. Since changing waves involves **changing structures, and vice versa – changes create disturbances and so we can expect varying levels of resistance.** Thinking in terms of waves helps us to anticipate and so deal better with “ups and downs, comings and goings, order and disorder, increase and decrease, inflation-expansion and deflation, growth and decay, advancement and retardation or retreat, progress and decline, emergence and extinction” as part of our realities.

Our human ‘tribes’ have been fighting each other for generations – arrogantly behaving as if we were completely in charge. We give little heed to the ‘Commander in Chief’, the ‘Rules Maker’, “Supervisor” and ‘Correctional Officer’ -- “Universe”: Architects and engineers respecting forces of Universe modify their visions, designs, and constructions...and their buildings, bridges, ships, and other structures usually perform as expected. As **tiny subsets of the totality of realities labelled “Universe”**, humans, human institutions, cultures, nations, etc., can be described as “**structural-and-functional “fractals”**”. As such, it could be worth our times to consider and value the proposition that “**We, our institutions, societies, nations, and our other creations, being parts of, and in relationships with other parts of Universe, will behave to varying degrees like other parts of Universe.**” (The word “fractal” is about “structural similarities”: Is there a word referring to “operational fractals” – **operational-behavioral similarities** between parts of a system -- where the system is “Universe, and the parts: “individuals, human and human systems, institutions, societies, nations, international systems, etc.?) We and our institutions create, and to some degree, respect restraining laws, regulations, beliefs, etc. as ways to help us play, work and live together. The greater Universe of interrelated structures also has ‘its’ ways of being -- some of which have been discovered and expressed by cosmoanalysts as “laws of nature”. Wherever we happen to be, we are influenced (inside and outside) by forces of Universe: So for less stressful and more satisfying relationships, doesn’t it make sense for us to learn from (consciously times-bind) some of the general operations, patterns, and forces of Universe as revealed through cosmoanalysis and other explorations, and enable ourselves to expand our understanding of ourselves as individuals and as a race, so we can pursue more **intelligent, saner ways of being human?**

In terms of “**structure-functional similarities**”: The more we understand of Universe (including ourselves) the more we will understand how we, the institutions, and societies we create, work. And vice versa, **the more we understand how we, our institutions and societies work, the more we will understand how Universe works.** On a smaller scale: **We get clues regarding how human ‘minds’ might work (at conscious and unconscious levels) by observing the structures and operations of the**

**institutions human ‘minds’ create...and vice versa:** For instance: Similar to functional areas-departments in institutions, in governments, and different sectors of a society, “mind-brain-nervous system” (mbns) as “multidimensional structures” do not always operate at maximum levels of organizational efficiency and effectiveness in terms of response times, anticipating, communicating, organizing, controlling, coordinating, planning, decision-making, judging, reflecting, self-reviewing, resolving conflicts, stress management, and so on. Different mbns areas at different times, exercise more power over others, and at other times malfunction in being hyperactive or under-active. We find conflicts of interest occurring in both institutions and ‘mind’-processes: Having difficulties choosing between alternative courses of action, what next to do, preferring to be somewhere else doing something else, are examples of ‘mind’-operations in conflicts of interest”. “Memory and forgetting” in mind-brains activities can be related to record-keeping and miss-filing in institutional record keeping. There are occasional hierarchical breakdowns and confusions in mind-brain areas requiring psychological help -- as there are occasional protests, rebellions, and breakdowns in institutions (requiring consultants) and in societies although not so easily recognized or helped. (For practice in recognizing functional fractals, readers are invited to compare other institutional and cultural operations, to mind-brain-nervous systems operations. And for more on mind-brain structures and operations: Read Klaus Grawe’s “Neuropsychotherapy: How the Neurosciences Inform Effective Psychotherapy”.)

Becoming acquainting with, and expanding our vocabularies to include cosmoanalytic, and general semantics terms, and more importantly, **exploring the structures of realities they are associated with**, we begin to ‘see’ and extend our understandings of ‘things’ from points of viewing not usually triggered by our everyday words: Wider perspective include recognizing times-binding contributions to our understandings from fields including “linguistic, biology, science, mathematics, psychology, history, anthropology, politics, sports, economics, the arts, religions, general semantics, and many others (professional and non-professional). More extensive points of viewing expand our horizons and allow us to create a wider more diverse range of ‘maps’ we can use to maneuver around many irresolvable arguments, and resolve many problems. We can improve our conversational skills and our personal and other relationships through exploring structures related to the following “**non-everyday words**”: “**order, variable, function, limits, differentiation, integration, asymmetric relations, structure-functional similarity (fractal), inertia, momentum, multidimensional structure, multi-ordinality, multi-causality, multi-meaning, consciousness of abstracting, consciousness of projecting, conscious times-binding, sets, fields, arithmetic and geometric progression, organism-as-a whole-in environments, conscious time-binding ethics, frame of reference, mechanism, entropy, probability, general uncertainty, heuristic, non-additivity, non-identity, non-allness, non-elementalism, waves, transference, countertransference, infinite, transcendence**”...and many others from diverse fields. (For more on general semantics, scientific, and mathematics terms, read “Science And Sanity” and “Practicing Conscious Times-binding” at <miltondawes.com>)

General Semantics principles can be thought of as **verbs: names for actions we can take (or become aware of)** to improve our intelligences towards healthier attitudes, less self-sabotaging and less self-harassing harmful behaviors. We can use the principles as guides and standards to help us become more aware of what and how we are doing what we do **so we can do what we do better**. (Students of general semantics can get a feel of **g.s. as a system** through exploring the structures related to any principle and discovering that the principles complement each other.) The following are some of my favorite ‘noun-verbs’: “**parallax, calculus, heuristic, dialectic, conscious times-binding, wave, entropy, and hope**”. Exploring semantic-and-physical structures related to these words (and others)



you might notice or make connections between different structures. The word “**parallax**” (from **astronomy**) has to do with a reality that **from different points of viewing, the appearance, distance and positional relationships between two objects will appear to be different. Generalizing “parallax” and applying ““structural similarity”**: Each one of us with different experiences, attitudes, training, and having ‘stood’ (being, living) in many different places, cannot but ‘see’ things from our different and individual points of viewing, and consequently will give different meanings, importance, values, etc. (Our two eyes, a few inches apart, see ‘things’ from different perspectives. How much more difficult for others to see things our way? )

Miltondawes/15

## **Realities: Words, ‘Minds’, Institutions, Psychoanalysis and Cosmoanalysis: A Calculus-structural-heuristic Approach Part 3**

General Semantics ‘is’ (exists as) a way of thinking: a way of thinking about the way we think about things: a way of thinking based on explicitly stated principles we could apply to help us better manage our inner and outer realities.

I presently see “a calculus approach” as both a mathematical and **psychological-semantic tool** applicable to any life situation -- an invaluable guide in our journey towards higher levels of understanding realities. I propose that **“A calculus-consciousness of abstracting-structural approach can be classified as “advanced self-critical thinking”**: a limit to self-conscious awareness, reflecting, reasoning, evaluating, speculating, deliberating, planning, theorizing, etc. (“Advanced” in the sense that whatever we are involved with, we cannot go beyond being conscious of abstracting. Readers are invited to invalidate this proposition...without abstracting.) In “Science And Sanity, 5<sup>th</sup>. Ed., page 574, wrote in relation with the calculus: “...*It is structurally and semantically the ‘logic of sanity...*” On page xcvi: The experimental development of science and civilization **invariably involves more and more refined discriminations. Each refinement means the elimination of some identifications some where, but many still remain...**” And on page 575, “**The present work is also to a large extent inspired by it...**” Our education systems might be radically improved if calculus was generalized and taught not just as “mathematics” but also as a “superb analytical tool for understanding structures of realities”. (I imagine that both ‘mathematicians’ and ‘psychologists’ might view this as “an intrusion”, and strongly resist.) In “Science and Sanity”, page 582, I find a working ‘definition’ of the calculus I like: **“The study of a *continuous function* by following its history by *indefinitely small steps*.”** (I was once told that this ‘definition’ of the calculus accurately describes the act of meditation.) The calculus involves **“differentiating, integrating, variables, and functions (changing relationships) -- all applicable to our personal, technological, social, national, international, and everyday realities...We put things together (build, create, anticipate) and take things apart (disassemble, destroy, analyze):** When we are being imaginative, creative, curious, and want to make sense of, give meanings to, and extend our understanding of ‘things’; when we have fears, beliefs and expectations; when through experimentation, analysis, and ‘reverse engineering’, etc. we seek to discover interactive factors contributing to a problem, situation, or issue; when we create theories, make predictions, eat, drink, breathe, play, and so on, we are involved in exploring interrelationships and interdependences...and we (our psychobiological-semantic systems) are actively and constantly engaged in ‘differentiating’ and ‘integrating’.

If we think of our personal, institutional, political and global situations as “derivatives”

(consequences), we might be motivated to explore the variables and functions (visions, ideas, beliefs, values, ways of thinking, practices, etc.) that have contributed to the present state of affairs. **A calculus structural heuristic approach can be used as “a very powerful conscious times-binding self-improvement learning tool – a tool we can use to teach ourselves how to do better whatever we choose”.** (The method: We do whatever we are doing paying close attention to how we are doing; compared with standards or values we create or accept from others, we note the results we get, and whether this brings us closer to or further from our goals...we make small (incremental) changes -- again paying close attention and noting whether we are getting closer to or further away from our goal and standards...and continue like that.) **In terms of a calculus approach the contents of consciousness can be thought of as “neuro-semantic ‘maps’...representations, summaries, symbolized derivatives of the very complex functioning of billions of neurons differentiating-and integrating information received from each other and from the outside world. We can imagine ‘mind’-processes as a continuous function involving ongoing differentiating-and integrating: And we can think of what comes up in conscious awareness as “variables”, “derivatives” that can be monitored and modified from moment to moment, and returned as “feedbacks” to our organisms and across generations (times-binding) to incrementally or sometimes dramatically ‘change’ some of the functions (unconscious operations) that constitute our inner realities...our attitudes, beliefs, fears, prejudices, and so on, which we act on...sometimes with grave global consequences.**

**In practicing a calculus structural approach (csa), we work at developing finely tuned awareness, attending to smaller and smaller details of both our inner and outer realities, so we can more accurately structure, (make better ‘maps’ through less identifying and ‘allnessing’) the diverse structures, operations and changing realities we experience (issues, conflicts, dissatisfactions, problems, etc.). With a “csa” we broaden the range of our attention, notice more, and gain more increments of information. With more increments of information we make more and better connections, recognize more patterns and interrelationships; expand the range of our understanding of issues, problems and puzzling situations, leading to more informed opinions and meanings towards making better judgments, and decisions. And we generally experience a more inclusive sense of ‘things’ and goings-on (realities)...The ‘world’ seems less and less strange to us. When we expand our range of understanding of issues, conflicts, and other realities, we present ourselves with higher levels of creative problem solving possibilities and become better equipped to take more appropriate actions (or inactions). With more information and more connections, we become better at anticipating emerging realities through noticing trends. Practicing a calculus-consciousness of abstracting approach, we get smarter at understanding about ‘understanding’ and ‘misunderstanding’, and smarter at ‘knowing’ about ‘knowing’. Recognizing the many details we keep missing, we realize we cannot understand all of anything (including ourselves), and with a sense of awe and excitement, we recognize how little we understand of so many ‘things’. With an inquiring ‘mind’, and having retained our natural curiosity to make sense of ‘things’, adopting a calculus approach keeps us stimulated to go beyond words and develop a “keen sense of structures and many dimensions of structures”:** When we keep looking to make more connections, we recognize more patterns and inter-relationships. **And when faced with a big, difficult project, task, or problem, we can energize ourselves through consciously thinking “calculus-heuristic-structuring”-- “one small step at a time, and breaking things down to more manageable bits”.** For more: (Read Bruce Kodish “Dare to Inquire”, Martin H. Levinson “More Sensible Thinking”, Korzybski’s “Semantics of The Differential Calculus” in “Science And Sanity”, other books-abstractions available from the “Institute of General Semantics” collection, and visit <miltondawes.com> for more on “a calculus approach”.)

With a **“heuristic-conscious times-binding-structural-let’s see what happens-experimental approach”**: We live our lives to learn about living. With conscious abstracting (awareness of doing while doing) a foundation for conscious times-binding, we approach situations to learn about situations: We do what we do to discover what we are doing, to learn about and learn from what we are doing...so we can become better at doing whatever we are doing. With a conscious heuristic approach, we ‘see’ our ideas, explanations, interpretations, beliefs, policies, regulations, solutions, etc., as ‘first draft’, not finalities, but **“semantic starting points”**. With **“a heuristic experimental approach”** there is no failure but an opportunity to do some conscious times-binding...a mistake is evaluated as **“an opportunity to learn and unlearn”**. When ‘things’ don’t go as we expected, we can playfully imagine **“a message from greater Universe”**: **“Humans, we don’t work that way: Feel free to try something else.”** Keeping ourselves in a constant inquiring learning mode we enable ourselves to discover, learn more, and do better at whatever we choose. Recognizing that we don’t ‘know’ all leads us to think not in terms of certainties, but in terms of **“non-allness”**, and **“probabilities”**. **“Dialectic”** involves not just seeing the other side, but **“seeing things from many points of viewing -- including an appreciation of seemingly opposing views.”** A calculus-structural-consciousness of abstracting approach complements a dialectic approach: with more increments of information we more easily ‘see’ the merits of other points of viewing and other ways of dealing with issues...we avoid unnecessary disagreeableness, and improve the quality of our communication and relationships. With a **“conscious times-binding ethical approach”** we do what we do with an aim to improve...and this includes our automatic natural times-binding behaviors. With natural times-binding (no ethics), we get better at doing whatever we have been doing and are ‘presently’ doing: In colloquial terms, we get better at doing ‘good’ and also better at doing ‘bad’. With natural times-binding, we have created ‘better’ (albeit more destructive), bombs and missiles...somethings we would not do when following a conscious times-binding ethic. **Without a conscious times-binding ethical approach to curb our natural times-binding excesses, harmful natural times-binding products will eventually do us in. A conscious time-binding ethical approach could be practiced singing “Anything I can do I can do better ...I can do anything better than me”** (a conscious times-binding modification from “Anne Get your Gun”).

Re. **“Entropy”**: ‘Things’, families, groups, societies, nations, the human race, will suffer breakdowns if there is no constant effort applied to maintain desired levels of order and harmony. Re. **Hope**: My pessimistic-self wavers around the idea that **“We will not globally reduce our undesired harmful ways of thinking-and behaving without introducing conscious times-binding ideas and practice at all levels of education (world-wide). My wavering is based on the factors of “diversity” and “emergent probability”...structural foundations of Universe: I recognize that there will be diverse ways of thinking about how to improve; I am aware that one cannot convincingly prove in advance that any one way is better than another: There will be many benefiting from ‘the way ‘things are’ -- and understandably, will self-servingly work to keep it that way: But then, in terms of a “general uncertainty principle”**: Who knows what catastrophe or other emerging structures-activities might make us drastically ‘change’ our ways? So this very big existential question arises for me: Can human harmony and diversity co-exist racially? Applying the general semantics principle of **“infinite valued maximum probability”** (not dismissing the possibility of emerging realities we do not presently imagine or foresee), we can apply the best (most effective and accepted) of our conscious times-binding ethical efforts, keep improving our ‘maps’, and hope that they work as accurate guides for dealing with on-going and emerging realities. (It’s worth our times remembering that: Feelings of hopelessness and not belonging; and that one’s existence makes no sense, can lead to despair, suicide, anger, rage, and violence...creating a semantic-opportunistic field for those ready to

exploit unwary ones with words skillfully delivered, promising and guaranteeing relief.)

With its basic principles of “consciousness of abstracting, non-allness, non-identity, non-elementalism, and others”, general semantics provides us with a clear set of interrelated semantic self-reflecting-self-reflexive tools anyone can use to evaluate, critique, modify or invalidate the system...an unusual system in that its principles point to its own limitations, and quite transparently indicate ways towards its own demolition. “Consciousness of abstracting” (a master principle) incorporating the principles of “non-allness”, “non-identity”, “non-elementalism” and other principles-abstractions, is about “remembering that whatever we imagine, think, feel, believe, understand, ‘know’, say, do, etc., qualify as abstractions, and as such, do not include everything. (A master principle in the sense that this principle proposes that “no principle, no system, no theory, no philosophy covers all about anything...including the principles and system “general semantics” itself.) The “non-allness” and “non-identity” principles are sometimes worded as “A map is not, the territory, and does not represent, all the territories (realities, structures) mapped: Our words are not the ‘things’, persons, or situations we use them to represent: And “a ‘map’ is also a ‘map’ of the map-maker”...In moments when we are conscious of abstracting, we remember our experiences, interests, beliefs, preferences, opinions, understandings, world-views, ‘knowledge’, etc. as our ‘maps’...semantic guides and representations. And we remember the asymmetric relation that “territories usually change faster than maps are updated. When things don’t go as we expected (imaginatively ‘mapped’), we might conscious times-bindingly do some structuring and think “Learn from this and “Make a ‘better’ ‘map’ next time”. When we are conscious of abstracting-and in a mode of “non-allness”, we might remember that others also make maps-selections-abstractions, have their opinions, beliefs, interpretations, give their meanings, and so on...abstractions-selections we might have ignored, missed, considered uninteresting, and so on. Resentments, anger, and sometimes violence occur when we identify and elevate our ‘maps’ as the only sensible or important ones, and exclude, dismiss or devalue others’ points of viewing and abstractions as “nonsensical, ridiculous, meaningless, stupid, dumb” and so on. When others identify our words (‘see’, take) as dismissive, insulting, etc., this will be felt not as just an attack on their ideas, opinions, beliefs, etc., but “an attack, a dismissal, and a threat to the whole person, group, or ‘tribe’”. We can train ourselves through practicing “consciousness of abstracting” towards becoming more cosmoanalytical, more extensional and less intensional (distinguishing between inner and outer realities), less elementalist (developing an attitude of interrelationships), and less identifying (remembering that no two ‘things’ are the same), by practicing a relatively simple exercise: We name what we see around us and say to ourselves: “I am not seeing all that’s there.” “This ‘thing’, is not its name.” “This ‘thing’ is not what I think or say about it, or what I think or say it is.” (This exercise can also be applied to our inner realities of experiences, beliefs, judgments, opinions, meanings, values, and so on, to distinguish them from outer realities.)

The word “non-elementalism” in the field of general semantics involves our remembering that we live in a world where as far as we know “everything is in relationships”. Practicing “non-elementalism” involves “remembering not to conceptually separate what in realities are not separate”...When we forget this and act accordingly we create problems for ourselves. Practicing non-elementalism, we review our words, actions, attitudes, etc., to discover the part we play...ways (however seemingly inconsequential or insignificant) we might have contributed to the dissatisfactions or problems we experience: We evaluate a disappointment as a function of our

expectations: We remember that “our words and actions infect-affect-change internal and external structures resulting in reactions...sometimes with desired and sometimes undesired consequences: We remember ‘change’ brings changes”. We are practicing non-elementalism when we remember ourselves as “constantly engaged map-makers”, and take responsibility for our words, ideas, beliefs, knowledge, values, opinions, expectations, theories, etc...seeing them as our creations, our ‘maps’, our re-presentations, our reactions to realities we imagine or experience. We can practice non-elementalism through thinking of words as “elements of human-linguistic structures-elements of neuro-semantic psychological structures-elements of-cultural-ecological-historic-anthropological structures-elements of evolutionary structures-elements of the multidimensional structural realities we call Universe. The “organism-as-a whole-in environments” principle represents for me a supreme example of the non-elementalism principle: We could create and experience more satisfying relationships, more satisfying ways of being when we remember and value our organism-as-a-whole...(in other words) “attending to and taking good care of “mind-body-spirit” however we are engaged... whatever we happen to be ‘doing’. And following this propose the “organism-as-a whole-in environments” principle as a general semantics paradigm for “healthy living”. (“Spirit” here refers to “a ‘sensing’ of infiniteness, transcendence, going beyond, wonderment, awe, inexplicability, inconceivability, etc.”)

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## Realities: Words, ‘Minds’, Institutions, Psychoanalysis and Cosmoanalysis: A Calculus-structural-heuristic Approach

### Chapter 4

General Semantics ‘is’ (exists as) a way of thinking: a way of thinking about the way we think about things: a way of thinking based on explicitly stated principles we could apply to help us better manage our inner and outer realities.

In the ‘beginning’ (but I don’t presently believe there was ever a beginning): There were no words or languages... Little babies point at things. Words do not create themselves: ‘Things’ structures were first. In “Science and Sanity”, page 59, Korzybski wrote “To achieve adjustment and sanity and the conditions which follow from them, we must study structural characteristics of this world first, and, then only, build languages of similar structure, instead of habitually ascribing to the world the primitive structure of our language”. When we reverse this order and intensionally give to verbal realities (words) more importance than what we use them to represent we create problem-creating problems for ourselves and for others. To the extent we are unaware of the part words play in our lives and fail to recognize how we create problems for ourselves through our non-conscious ways with words, we could consider ourselves not as sane as we might think, but to different degrees, might benefit from being more critical in our thinking through psychoanalytic and meta-psychoanalytic general semantics help. Using general semantics principles to review and critically evaluate older unexamined beliefs, we expand our semantic horizons: We generate new ideas and create more accurate, more up-to-date ‘maps’. From resulting attitudinal shifts, we might find it easier to consider radically new ways of thinking about things and be better able to deal with and adjust to our everyday realities.

Criticisms, opinions, judgments, beliefs, are closely related to the “non-allness, non-identity, and non-elementalism principles”. Being aware that knowing and understanding more about a situation affects the way we think-feel and talk about it. With words we criticize and judge someone, deny,

dismiss some 'thing', story, comment, etc., and in so doing we are likely to miss valuable information about outer realities: **"The person, thing, or situation we are criticizing or judging provides us with important examples of how Universe works"**: In the workplace we might find what we consider horrible bosses, terrible co-workers, awful working conditions, etc. Engrossed with our criticisms and judgments, we are likely to ignore the fact that **such situations do exist as part of our human realities** and as such, are not confined to one workplace. **(Korzybski went beyond his criticisms and dissatisfactions with human behaviors: He created "general semantics" out of his concern for the sanity of the human race.)** As individuals, we can also go beyond our judgments and criticisms and have fun creating theories (do some differentiating and integrating) explorations regarding how a situation came about (contributing factors), and what it would take, what we could do and (how) to make changes to the situations we are not satisfied with.

We combine words and think, talk, write, extend the range of our imaginings, and imagine possible realities and possibly impossible realities. **We promote, disagree, and sometimes fight over realities that exist only in the universes created in our imaginings.** We use words to advance our creative, communication, and problem solving skills. And through our indiscriminate use of words our 'minds' sometimes undermine themselves, and we unnecessarily confuse, harass ourselves, and create problems for ourselves and others. We can work at remembering that our language and words are in some ways like maps...they influence our attitudes and behavioral directions we take. **When we remember that words are not the realities, territories, or structures we generally use them to represent; when we remember that language constitutes grammatical structures, and that the world of realities do not operate following our grammar, we are not so easily confused...we do not so easily lose our way following our imagined and verbally created 'maps':** (Read Chapter 1V, Science And Sanity, "On Structure".) Using general semantics (generalized cosmoanalytic principles) we can do some of our own psychoanalysis: We can **become more transparent to ourselves--more conscious of our unconscious goings-on, and more awake to our contributions to problems we sometimes attribute solely to others.**

Using words to think, talk, write about, interpret and comment on words brings into play an important factor, **"context"**. Growing up in Jamaica, I sometimes heard the folk lore "horse dead, and cow fat": I much later on related this to "context shifting" – a blunt way of saying "Your response has nothing to do with what I am saying." Words we use will be interpreted and responded to from different context by different individuals, and sometimes 'seen' differently by an individual at different times. Contexts we bring to situations based on our experiences, beliefs, values, interests, etc., operate as "semantic filters" affecting our approach, and how we receive, interpret, understand, and respond in situations. In many situations, context shifting sometimes provides a quick deliberate-escape-route for those determined to avoid addressing a specific issue, or responding to a question. We can assume context shifting from endless verbalism – debates and discussions on whether the "murder of millions of humans" should be labeled "genocide, ethnic cleansing, or crimes against humanity". Examples of context shifting can be inferred when interviewees give lengthy responses to questions that were not asked. A great deal of what is advertised as 'news' could be more accurately classified as personal opinions, criticisms, commentaries, speculations, etc....a context shift from "reports on events". We could be shifting context and identifying when we 'take personally', feel angry, offended, insulted, victimized, etc....and react to words or actions related to an issue or situation, as deliberate put downs and criticisms directed at us. Dialectically: **We also shift context to engage in "higher levels of abstracting", to engage ourselves in seeing the bigger**

picture and longer cycle of 'things'. To improve our communication-relationships, we can train ourselves to remember that **"the meanings we give and judgments we make depend on contexts we usually non-consciously bring to situations"**. Practicing a **"consciousness of abstracting-calculus approach"** we can catch ourselves being ready to shift contexts: We can **coach ourselves to become better listeners, better observers, and more context-sensitive -- towards improving our attitudes, communicating skills and relationships.**

With a structural-calculus-consciousness of abstracting approach, we go beyond intensional identifying words, definitions, classifications, etc., as more important than the structures involved. We can **catch ourselves** judging, criticizing, dismissing, excluding, and so on, and **develop an extensional paradigm -- an attitude that "I can learn from anyone and anything"**: And we acknowledge the limits of our words, beliefs, our inferred truths, explanations, judgments, theories, knowledge, opinions, etc., by **adding indexing and dating terms** such as **"probably, possibly, as far as I know, to the best of my knowledge, at this time, in my opinion"**, to some degree, some, sometimes", and so on. Being less enthralled with words, thinking along lines based on **"non-identity, non-allness, general uncertainty, structure, changes, growth, uncertainties"**, etc.; and interpreting the word **"marriage"** as an over/under-defined term could lead to more satisfying experiences...if one (with great courage) modified the usual proposal **"Will you marry me?"** to the more realistic (albeit less romantic sounding) **"Would you consider being married to me?"**

Through combinations of words related with observations, ideas, insights, memories, 'dreams', etc., language helps us **create meanings, make sense of things**, formalize and reinforce our attitudes, beliefs, values, prejudices, judgments, decisions, plans, theories, the kind of institutions and societies we create, and so on. Through language, we also enhance our creativity, extend our intelligences, share information, resist learning, influence, manipulate others, and sometimes confuse ourselves and others. As words and language constitute the substructure and superstructure of our communication, interactions and relationships, (with ourselves, others, and our environments), for conscious times-binding self-improvements and more satisfying less stressful living, it suits us to awaken ourselves to how **with words, we create logical paradoxes** which often unnecessarily **complexify our experiences** of realities and retard our advancement towards saner ways of being human. **Except for humans, Universe exhibits no confusion, uncertainty, or paradox -- Our dependence on these characteristics of non-human Universe remaining invariant contributes to the rapid advance of cosmoanalysis and technologies.** To the extent we are unaware that-how we and our institutions through words create our own confusions and problems, we might consider ourselves **not as sane as we might think**, but to different degrees, in need of psychoanalytic and psychological help.

Words we use such as **"free, inequality, truth, best, good, right, wrong, understand, know "** and others, invariably result in irresolvable disagreements, conflicts, and sometimes violence, since in discussions one cannot be sure of a user's context, meanings they give, to what realities (imagined and-or outer) their words refer, and so on. Assuming that words trigger diverse meanings and values for users, to minimize possible disagreeableness, we might think of avoiding discussions involving certain words, but still **dialectically listen** to 'see' what we can learn from another's points of viewing. We can also do our own structural evaluating of these words from a general semantics frame of reference (context) and have fun conversing with our 'selves' along these lines: **"If by "free" we intend "unconnected and unrestrained"; and if we accept that everything is in relationships (as**

far as we know): How then can anything or anyone be “free”?” Re. **inequality**: Where can we find two things that are equal when from careful observations we recognize only asymmetric relationships: Aren’t differences and inequalities the norm? We might be better off thinking in terms of “inequalities” rather than “inequality”; and we might be more effective dealing with inequalities by specifying the type of inequalities (income, education, training, etc.). Re. **“the truth”**: If with limited nervous systems, we don’t know all about anything (including our ‘selves’); if we **can only evaluate-measure the subset of realities we encounter**; if **“the truth”** is understood as “being in accord with realities” -- **Can we ‘know’ the truth about anything without ‘knowing’ all about its origin, history, physical and other structures, its operations, functions and relationships, durations, and so on?** And how can **relatively static words** presented as “truths”, be in accord with **dynamic-changing realities**? Wouldn’t we be **better off thinking of words presented as “the truth” more as “propositions, probabilities, possibilities, metaphors”, and so on...and the notion of truth as an unachievable ideal, but dialectically worthwhile pursuing for what we can learn through our efforts?** If someone claims that some ‘thing’, situation, or action is **good, right, or best**: Can we assume **“good, best, or right” for everyone, for all times -- no matter where?** And what standards do we follow in making our judgments regarding what’s **“good, best, or right”?**

Our individual internal **semantic realities**—what we are ‘seeing’, hearing, experiencing, imagining, believing, desiring, meanings we give, our intentions, reasons, values, etc., are not directly available to others (and sometimes not even to ourselves) -- an unavoidable existential generator of communication-relationship problems. Based on our different experiences, training, skills, and other variables, we give words different meanings and values: Words as ‘signifiers’, **trigger different “semantic reactions-realities” in each of us**. In failing to recognize this, we relate to others as if they were ‘mind readers’ knowing exactly what we meant by the words we use. (And in attempting to clear up misunderstandings, more words sometimes create more misunderstandings (principle of **“non-additivity”: sometimes more explanations result in less clarification and more confusion.**) As mentioned earlier, our ways with words reflect our attitudes and behaviors, **contribute to our development -- and also retard our advancement** towards saner more intelligent ways of being and relating: For instance: If we believe we are already living in a democratic society, this belief will not trigger impulses towards improvements...more likely so if the word “democracy” triggered in us the idea “an ideal -- not yet achieved, but a goal to pursue”. The word “understand” and “know”, usually understood in “allness, identifying ways”, would probably trigger impulses towards further explorations if indexed with “to some degree”. When the words “gay” and “lesbian” trigger ideas only about sex, we retard or retreat from seeking to understanding more about two humans in a relationship. Korzybski recognized, as do psychoanalysts, the important part language and words play in creating goings-on at both conscious, unconscious, psychological and ‘behavioral’ levels. In *Science And Sanity*, page 90, Korzybski wrote: **“We do not realize what tremendous power the structure of an habitual language has, it enslaves us...”** And Korzybski as “meta-anthropologist and meta-psychoanalyst” reminds us that **“...we read unconsciously into the world (and I emphasize: “and interact with, based on”) the structure of the language we use.”** Recognizing and remembering that words infect-affect us in many different ways; applying g.s. principles as “ABMs” (attitudinal and behavioral modifiers) enable us to mitigate the power we non-consciously allow words to have over us...and give ourselves opportunities to ‘change’ self-sabotaging attitudes and unhealthy behaviors. (For more: Read “*Science And Sanity*”, especially pages 60, and 492) and read “*Practicing Conscious Times-binding*” at <miltondawes.com>)

The rapid times-binding advance and increase of technologies compared with the slower advance in



human relationships create many problems at societal, national, and international levels. This rapid advance could be attributed mainly to the speedier exchange of ideas facilitated by the **use of technical, mathematical language and words**. Technical words involve **demonstrable referents**: We minimize endless argumentations about meanings, and reduce the number of irresolvable controversies, time-consuming, conflicts, misunderstandings, etc., when we can point to a “distributor”, or a “3. 5-litre sequential multi-port electronic fuel-injected V6 engine” -- when referring to a car...Less so with the words “beautiful”, “mature”, “exciting”, and others. As our everyday communication with our ‘selves’ and others is usually based on words supporting our individual fantasies, beliefs, imaginings, etc., we cannot point to much of what we are talking about in our everyday conversations: From this perspective, in our communications we are in a sense, most times (without being aware of this) talking about different ‘things’ -- our individual realities. Remembering that our everyday **words are given different meanings by different users** ((multi-meaning principle); becoming acquainted with, and making technical, mathematical, and general semantics words (functions, variables, sets, general uncertainty, parallax, non-elementalism, structure, consciousness of abstracting, times-binding”, and others) part of our thinking vocabulary, are among ways to expand our semantic horizons, critically examine our self-harassing and self-confusing attitudes, and improve the realities we experience -- including relationships among our ‘selves’ and with others.

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## Realities: Words, ‘Minds’, Institutions, Psychoanalysis and Cosmoanalysis:

### A Calculus-structural-heuristic Approach Chapter 5

General Semantics ‘is’ (exists as) a way of thinking: a way of thinking about the way we think about things: a way of thinking based on explicitly stated principles we could apply to help us better manage our inner and outer realities.

Cosmoanalysts and psychoanalysts start from similar heuristic paradigms: Our everyday realities, including our experiences, imaginings, beliefs, hopes, understandings, knowledge, dreams, interactions with others, and so on, are semantics structures--**aspects of many other related realities including operations at unconscious levels**. In their work, psychoanalysts interpret words (including words about dreams) and other behaviors towards helping their patients come to **realize for themselves** how their non-conscious indiscriminate use of words create and contribute to their concerns, dissatisfactions, unwanted behaviors, and problems: Put in other words: **Psychoanalysts endeavor to help their patients become more transparent to themselves**. As individuals, we could also benefit from training ourselves to be aware that “What and how we say (the words we use) about anything, any situation, or anyone, will affect and determine to some degree the outcome of our interactions -- with ourselves and with others.” Cosmoanalysts using their instruments also realize there are realities beyond our everyday experiences and seek to better understand these realities. And similar to psychoanalysts, they recognize the importance of choosing words that clarify their understanding towards further explorations. Towards this end, cosmoanalysts **endeavor to create verbal-symbolic maps that most accurately represent their interpretations of realities (goings-on)** they uncover behind directly observed and experienced realities. To put this in scientist Niels Bohr’s

words: **“It is wrong to think that the task of physics is to find how Nature is. Physics concerns what we can say about Nature.”** (See **“The World Treasury of Physics, Astronomy And Mathematics”**, page 103, by Timothy Ferris.)

**“Transference” and “Countertransference”** in the field of psychoanalysis simply put is about **“relationships between psychoanalysts and their patients”**. Transference has to do with how patients relate or attempt to relate with their analysts (‘father’, ‘mother’, friend, the one who ‘knows’, etc.). **‘Countertransference’** is a word for how psychoanalysts relate with their patients; This includes **“what she-he brings to their work with patients”**: This includes their feelings towards their patients, their values, prejudices, ‘theories’, ‘knowledge’, professional skills and insufficiencies, and so on. Psychoanalysts recognize (or ‘ought’ to recognize) that **“what they bring to their work will infect and affect their explorations**, interpretations, and management of the psychoanalytic process.” In a similar manner, ‘cosmoanalysts’ in developing **“quantum theories”** with emphasis on **“observer-observed interaction”**, acknowledge that what investigators bring to their investigations -- their individual working paradigms, theories, ‘prejudices’, investigating equipments, and so on, will create uncertainties which have to be considered in evaluating results they get. In a similar manner, it suits us as individuals to recognize that **what we bring to situations**: our ideas, attitudes, expectations, hopes, values, beliefs, concerns, actions/inactions, etc.—**supported and reinforced by words**, affect our relationships with our ‘selves’ and others...and could be a source of many puzzling relationship problems we experience. (For more on **“countertransference”** read Bailly’s **“Lacan” A Beginners Guide**, page 188.)

If we are concerned to ‘change’ our attitudes and behaviors towards more satisfying experiences, it might help if we explore structures related to the word **“change”**. We live in a world of ‘changes’, so to be more realistic and less elementalistic (conceptually separating what in actuality is not separate) we remind ourselves that ‘change’ involves **changing our usual ways of changing, and that “changing anything brings on other changes”** (action-reactions principle). If changes bring success, success will bring changes which will ruin success if not recognized and skillfully managed...In other words **success sometimes breeds its own failure**. Departing from traditional ways and making conscious times-binding changes require us to be courageous in making sacrifices, and facing possibly aggravating self-monitoring, self-analyzing, and self-correcting efforts. But the more individuals ‘change’, the more chances there will be for individuals to bring changes to institutions. Individuals can work hard and continuously at doing some conscious times-binding modifications and **‘change’** habitual thinking-attitudes-and-behaviors: We can look at the words that ground our ideas and beliefs, see where they fit in terms of **imagined or demonstrable realities, and decide what changes we can make towards becoming more realistic**. Our institutions might not ‘change’ for a long time to come...But individually, **we can adopt a “generalized cosmoanalytical approach”** and apply general semantics principles -- especially **“a calculus-consciousness of abstracting conscious time-binding ethical heuristic approach”** to help ourselves deal more intelligently, more sanely with our ever changing human realities.

‘Change’ is also resisted since **leaving things alone usually involves less adjustments**, less effort, less demands, less energy, less unlearning, less new learning, less disruptions, less disorganization requiring less reorganizing, less sacrifices to make, less stress, and so on. A suggested ‘change’ is often resisted since usually, it cannot be convincingly shown in advance that such a ‘change’ will definitely make ‘things’ better (general principle of uncertainty). Disparaging labeling of those

reporting institutional indiscretions, and those attempting reforms, as “activists” and “whistle blowers” instead of say “concerned citizens” is another way many institutions (including ourselves) resist changes. We probably encounter the strongest, more violent resistance to ‘change’ when identification involves “religious beliefs, values, goals, ‘tribal’ loyalties and practices”: Attempts at changing any one of these semantic structures will automatically trigger **survival self-protecting impulses** and felt as an attack and a threat to the structure-functional integrity of the whole. **In an identifying state (being one with) no alternative ways of being will be envisioned as possible.**

**Institutions to a great extent influence our lives and our ways of dealing with realities. We create institutions...and to some degree, institutions create us. Based on words and other symbols, institutions emerged and function to organize, control, promote, manage, and stabilize (at least to some degree) some of our natural self-serving behaviors, diverse visions, values, goals, etc. We could not work in teams and build our ‘towers’, bridges, societies, nations, etc., without communicating through words and other symbols. Institutions provide us with sources of income, create conveniences, influence the ways we relate with ourselves and with others and enable us to interact reasonably comfortable with each other in societies. As words, languages, and institutions emerged and developed over earlier periods of human existence, institutions represent and promote ideas, beliefs, ‘knowledge’, understandings, fears, hopes, etc. -- aspects of times-binding intelligence of those earlier times. In effect, our social, economic, political, education, international systems and their supporting institutions, are grounded in identifications related to present and earlier times. Since non-human Universe does not operate according to our individual or institutional conceptions, we can expect repeating clashes between practices based on our inner realities, and outer actualities. If we want to bring ‘changes’ to institutions towards being more adaptable to changing realities, we have to ‘change’ ourselves first. The philosopher Voltaire, over two hundred years ago wisely recognized that “...when one tries to change institutions without having changed the nature of men, those unchanged nature will soon resurrect those institutions.” (I translate “change the nature” to “‘change’ some aspects of the nature”). (Read Will Durant’s “The Story of Philosophy”, page 248. And for more on how many institutions influence cultures and individuals, look up “Media Ecology”.)**

We might not be able to depend on institutions to radically or quickly ‘change’ their ways and adjust to new and changing realities for the following reasons, among others: **Our institutions, like other natural systems (including ourselves), to avoid disintegration by internal and external entropic forces, and for self-maintenance and survival have built in self-protecting resistance to changes. In general: Institutions, other human systems, and systems in general, as a matter of survival, will to varying degrees act in a self-protecting, self-promoting, and self-serving manner. Older ideas and ways of thinking about things, creating policies, and addressing problems based on old language habits-ideas-and attitudes (all involving individuals using words) constitute institutional foundations, pervade the operations of institutions, and will not be easily abandoned. We cannot ‘change’ just one ‘thing’ or operation: In an interrelated world, changing any structure-operation will affect the structure-operations of others to some degree and require further changes. Human operators in institutions will very likely find and resent efforts for ‘change’ as “disruptive impositions”; they might not support, and might even work against anyone suggesting ‘change’. Inertia and momentum are also powerful ‘change’ resisting factors: As individuals, we generally find changing a difficult and sometimes stressful exercise – even when we ourselves want the ‘change’: We can expect that much bigger institutions with more individuals, and more structures, operations, policies, etc. to**

preserve, will find it much more difficult changing course. In addition, we generally do not welcome radical institutional changes since this will require us as individuals to make some changes ourselves.

Probably one of the most important things to remember about institutional resistance to changes can be worded this way: **Institutions, as stabilizing forces, to be effective, have to at least appear to be paragons of stability themselves.** (A ruler, to be an effective standard has to remain unchanged in length from measurement to measurement.) But as stabilizing forces in a world of changes, institutions present a very challenging problem for reformers since **institutional operations generally involve preserving and promoting earlier times-binding ideas, attitudes, operational practices, etc.** – some of the very ‘things’ that need changing if institutions are to be effective in a world of changing realities. Following a principle of least action (least energy), many institutions (and ourselves) usually find it much easier **leaving things alone** than abandoning our traditional, more familiar, more convenient, less demanding and habitual ways. We can speculate that from a **non-elementalistic frame of reference:** There will be turbulence if institutions do not ‘change’ while individuals are changing...and vice versa. We might remember that institutions like our conscious ‘minds’ will sometimes lag behind changing realities. This introduces some difficulties: ‘Problem’ at times (1) will be creating more problems while we are having meetings, debates, planning sessions, and conferences. In effect, our solutions are usually less effective since they are not about the original problem.

As non-human Universe does not adjust for us...When things aren’t going well with us--It’s up to us go well with things. Our inner verbal, imagined realities can lead us to more creative approaches and accomplishments – and can also result in confusions and delusions if not distinguished from realities we could point at as “structures existing outside our nervous systems”. We, as individuals can apply general semantics principles and conscious time-binding ethic and start our own adventures and explorations towards higher levels of intelligent and sane behaviors (“intelligent” in terms of “more and more accurate refined representations towards learning to cope with new and trying situations”; “sane” in terms of “rigorous critical evaluating, anticipating consequences, and taking responsibility for one’s actions”). In terms of “infinite valued maximum probability” it’s possible that we and our institutions will eventually radically update our traditional approach to addressing realities through being more self-reflexive, more self-critical, and more self-correcting, instead of our mainly traditional self-protecting, self-maintaining, self-promoting ways. We can use general semantics principles and ethic as ‘heuristic evaluation standards’ to help us use our intelligences more intelligently towards saner-higher levels of being human. Global harmony based on a conscious time-binding ethic might not be possible for a race of humans with diverse beliefs, interests, concerns, and goals -- But whether achievable by the human race, institutions...or not, anyone can find in general semantics principles valuable guidelines for achieving higher levels of personal adjustment. In a world of constantly emerging technological and other realities resulting from accelerating times-binding activities...producing both useful and harmful products, each one of us through practicing conscious abstracting, can experience less stressful living and more satisfying relationships.

Some words on “conscious times-binding ethic”. I combine Bernard Lonergan’s words with Korzybski’s. In his “Insight A study of Human Understanding”, page 219, Bernard Lonergan S.J. writes: “...both taking care of oneself and contributing to the well-being of others have their legitimate place and necessary function”. In Korzybski’s “Manhood of Humanity”, page 199, we find

these words: “...the common aim, the unifying principle, the basis of co-operation, cannot be the welfare of a family nor that of a province or a state or a race, but must be the welfare of *all* mankind, the prosperity of humanity, the weal of the world—the peaceful production of Wealth without the destruction of War.” Respecting-and following an ethic requires us to be conscious of abstracting: Being aware that what and how we are doing is **not the only way**, enables us to review, abandon, or radically ‘change’ many of our ‘tribal’(earlier times-binding) problem creating attitudes and behaviors. And in terms of Lonergan’s “cognitional structure”: ‘personally appropriating the structure of our own experiencing, our own intelligent inquiry and insights, our own critical reflection, judging, and deciding’. In other words, becoming more ‘transparent’ to ourselves in discovering, acknowledging, and becoming familiar with the activities and limits of our own intelligences, and the harmful potentials of uncritical language habits, we eventually become more conscious-times-binders. Through practicing consciousness of abstracting, ‘we’ (as individuals) can do our part (however seemingly inconsequential) in contributing to more sound foundations for coming generations to evaluate and build on. (Students of general semantics might recognize how a calculus-consciousness of abstracting approach informs and complements Lonergan’s “cognitional structure”. (See Lonergan’s “Insight”, page xviii, xix)) The words of this essay represent aspects of my present very limited understanding of a world of indefinitely extended multidimensional realities. In the spirit of “non-allness” readers are invited to critically evaluate and expand on structures they relate to these words, adding some of their own insights. For more on general semantics principles and practice, read Korzybski’s “Science And Sanity”, Martin H. Levinson’s “More Sensible Thinking”, Bruce Kodish’s “Dare to Inquire”, other books-abstractions available from the Institute’s collection, and visit <miltondawes.com>

Milton Dawes/15