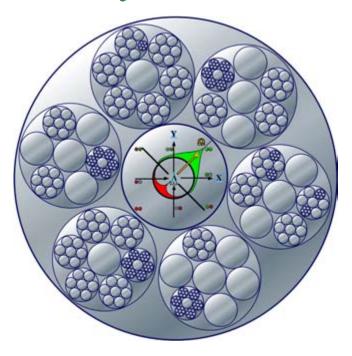
## Timothy Wilken, MD



Local Physician, Synergic Scientist, and Perennial Student

www.SynEARTH.net

# A Time for Healing

Timothy Wilken, MD

Thursday Evenings 7:00 to 8:30 PM

A continuing program of events consisting of lessons, meditations, exercises and discussions on health and wellness. Each event is designed to be meaningful, and useful in its own right, but experienced together, they form a whole that is greater than the sum of their parts.

#### Beyond Blame & Punishment



# Reality



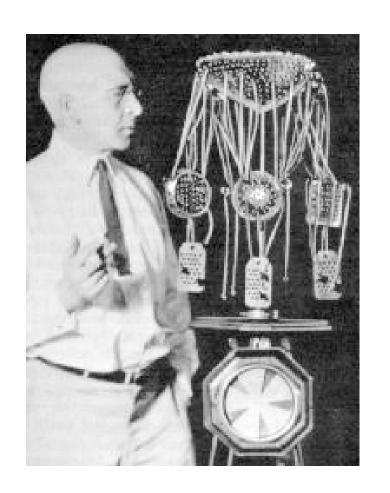
"Reality is a side-effect of the relationship between self and other."

#### $Adversity - \bullet - Neutrality - \bullet - Synergy$

- If our relationship is *adversary*, then we will **lose**. We will be *less* because of our relationship with each other. We will be less happy, less effective and less productive. Our reality will be hurtful, negative and painful.
- If our relationship is *neutral*, then we will experience a **draw**. We will be *unchanged* by our relationship with each other. Our happiness, effectiveness, and productivity will be unaffected by our relationship. Our reality will be ignoring, meaningless and indifferent.
- If our relationship is *synergic*, then we will **win**. We will be *more* because of our relationship with each other. We will be more happy, more effective, and more productive. Our reality will be helpful, positive and pleasurable.

Synergy
"For"
Friends
More happy, more effective & more productive
Win-Win
"us" centered

# Alfred Korzybski



If Universe is a unity—

if Universe is a whole—

if all the 'things' in universe are also unities—

if all the 'things' in Universe are also wholes—

then these 'things' cannot be broken down into basic 'elements'.

## Principle of Non-Elementalism

"This generalization states: that any organism must be treated *as-a-whole*; in other words, that the organism is not an algebraic sum, a linear function of its elements, but always *more* than that."

-A Korzybski (1933)

## Principle of Non-ALLness

We can never know *all there is to know* about anything — this is a fundamental 'law' of Nature.

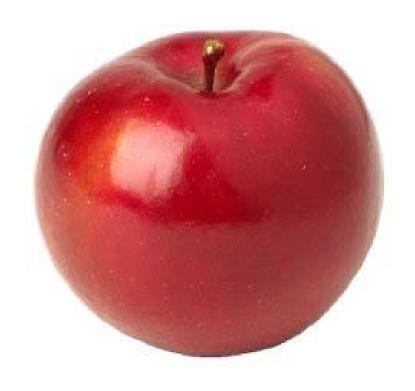
Ignorance is the word that best describes the human condition. Alfred Korzybski explained this condition scientifically as the *Principle of Non-Allness*. By this he meant that we humans make all of our decisions with incomplete and imperfect knowing. We make every choice without all the information. All humans live and act in state of ignorance.

Korzybski felt that developing an awareness of this 'law' of Nature was so fundamentally important to all humans, that he developed a lesson especially for children.

## Tell Me All About the Apple



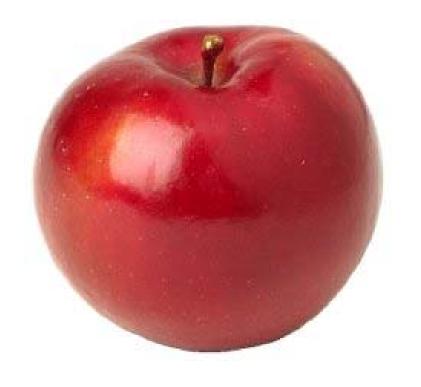
# Tell Me All About the Apple













#### Non-ALLness

"We are here face to face with the crucial paradox of knowledge. Year by year we devise more precise instruments with which to observe nature with more fineness and when we look at the observations, we are discomfited to see that they are still fuzzy, and we feel that we are as uncertain as ever. "We seem to be running after a goal which lurches away from us to infinity every time we come within sight of it."

—J. Bronowki









#### Knowing is Incomplete

Korzybski defined this as the *Principle of Non-ALLness*.

Heisenberg called it the *Principle of Uncertainty*.

Eddington called it the *Principle of Indeterminacy*.

Bronowski called it the *Principle of Tolerance*.









# Reality is Non-ALL



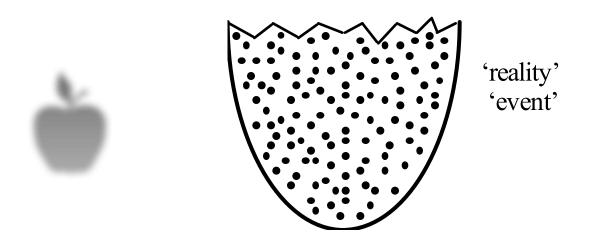
You can never know all about the apple or anything else!

#### Korzybski's Structural Differential

The Principle of Non-ALLness does not mean that we can't know reality. This is not what Korzybski and Bronowski are telling us. They are saying that our knowledge is incomplete, we can know a great deal about reality, but Nature is constructed in such a way that she will not reveal ALL her secrets. We humans can never know ALL there is to know about anything.

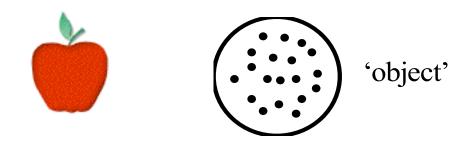
To help his fellow humans understand the importance of the Principle of Non-ALLness as Korzybski called it, he invented a device he called the "Structural Differential". The stated purpose of the device was that it allowed the viewer: 1) to establish a clear difference in the abstraction processes of Man and animals, 2) to visualize orders of abstraction, while allowing to point out silently, 3) to remind us that the event is not the object, that the object is not the words which describe it, and that these words are not inferences, and lastly 4) etc—there is always more to know.

It thus presented in a visual positive and objective manner, the negative formulations, thus making them usable. Let's make use of the Structural Differential to re-examine the apple. We can represent our scientific 'real' apple as a parabola.



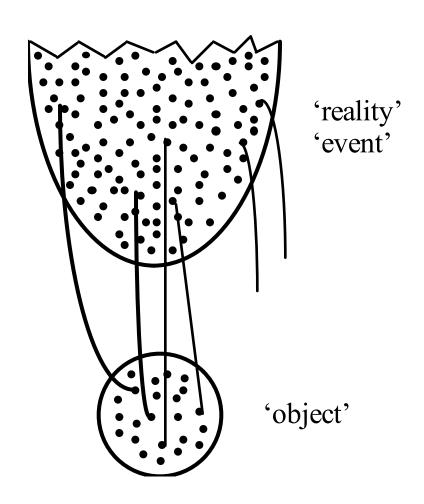
The black dots on our parabola represent all the characteristics of the 'real' scientific apple. The parabola can represent any 'real' event or process in Nature. The parabola would extend indefinitely into space. Korzybski closed the top of the parabola with a broken line—as if the parabola was broken off— to remind us that this is an indeterminate reality.

But when you and I observe the apple, we do not see the indefinite reality, we see a sharp, crisp, juicy apple, a definite apple, a finite illusion. Korzybski represented this 'object' as a finite circle.



The black dots within the finite circle represent the characteristics that we can know. The information that our human brain can perceive and discern from its senses. That which the observer can determine. Because, what we can know is always less than what there is to know—the characteristics of our 'object' are less than the characteristics of the 'reality'.

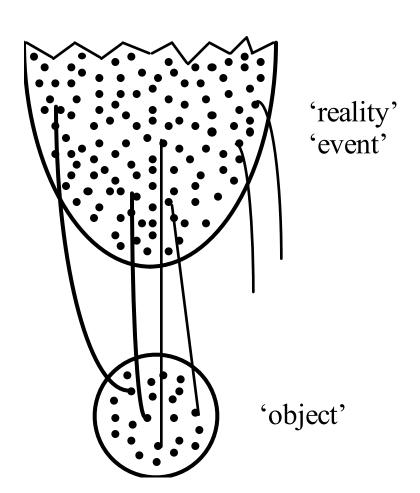
Korzybski demonstrated this by linking some of the characteristics of the 'real' apple with some of the characteristics of the 'object' apple. He also showed that some characteristics did not connect.



Since we humans make all of our decisions based on the 'objects' in our world, we make all of our decisions without ALL the information.

This discovery leads to a major revelation if we can but see the higher truth in it. We humans live in a world where all our decisions, all our choices are made without ALL the information.

We humans can know, but we cannot know all. We are always assuming something.



### Assumption

Korzybski teaches us that every human belief is an assumption. We can never know for sure. We can never know ALL. Incomplete and imperfect knowing means that every human action is made without all the information.

As you sit in your chair reading these words, you assumed the chair would hold you. You did not check under the chair to see if it had broken since its last use. When you ate lunch at your favorite restaurant last week, you assumed the waitress had washed her hands. You assumed the cook did not have hepatitis. If you had assumed otherwise, you would not have walked into that restaurant. You would not have eaten your lunch. We humans assume. Herein lies our uncertainty — that's all we humans can do. There is nothing wrong in our assuming, we are simply obeying a fundamental 'law' of Nature.

## Certainty

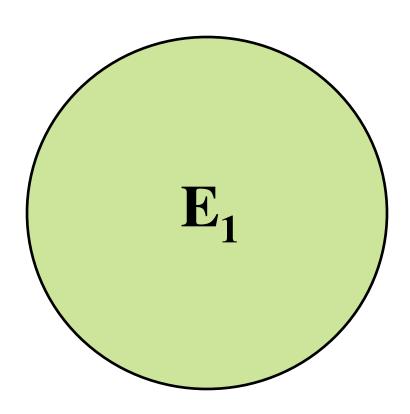
The principle of Non-Allness reveals that certainty is an attitude that has no basis. Certainty is granted to no human. The human condition is one of *ignorance*. There is always something I don't know. We are always assuming something.

If I am *ignorant of my ignorance*, if I don't know, then I become *certain*. *Ignorance of ignorance* is a very dangerous and highly leveraged form of ignorance.

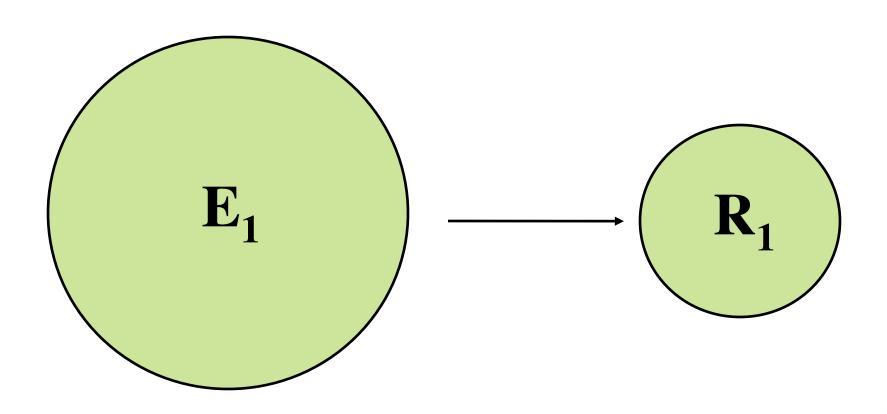
If *ignorance* is the opposite of *knowledge*, then *certainty* is the opposite of *wisdom*.

## Understanding a Law of Nature

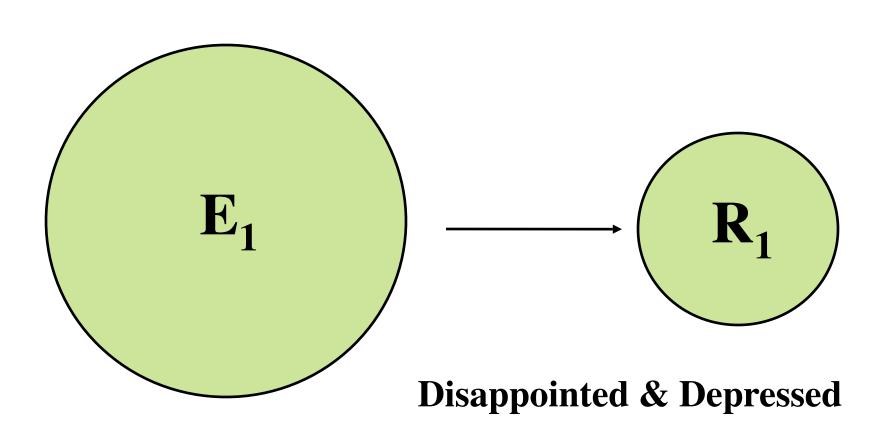
Korzybski's Theory of Happiness



If we have an expectation  $E_1$ 

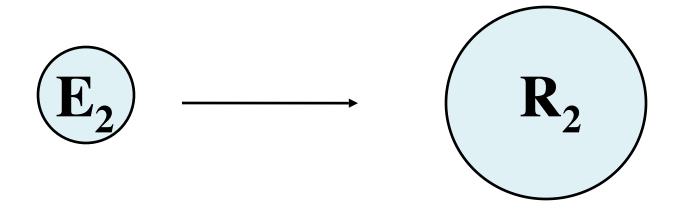


If we have an expectation  $E_1$ , but we get reality  $R_1$ , how do we feel?

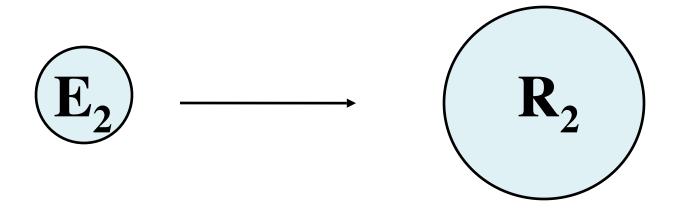




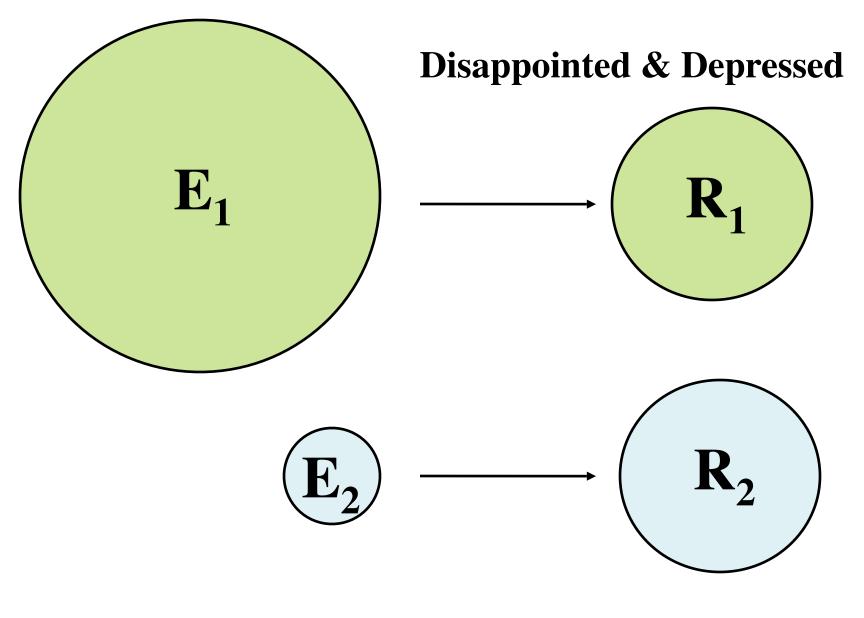
If we have an expectation  $E_2$ 



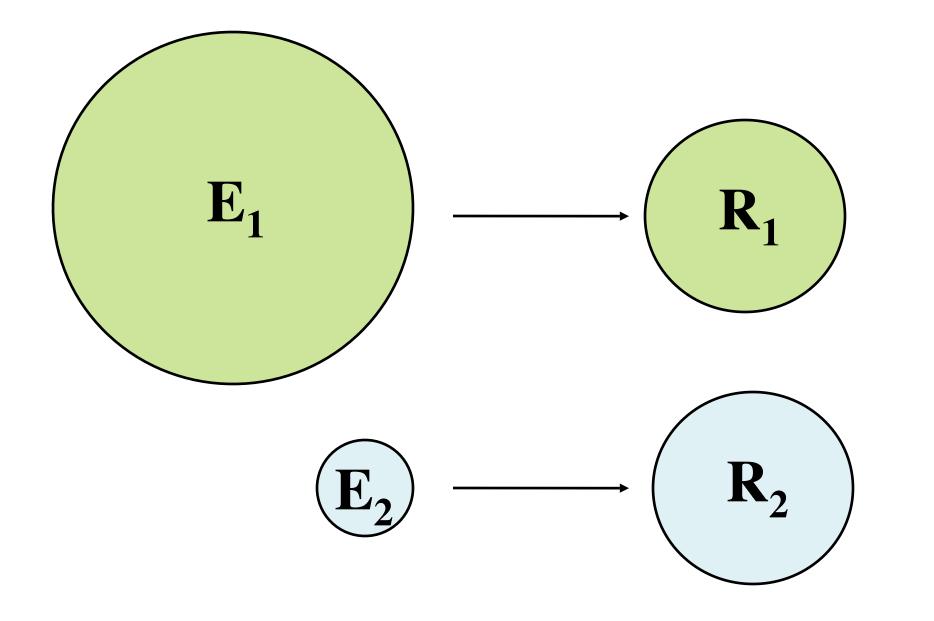
If we have an expectation  $E_2$ , but we get reality  $R_2$ , how do we feel?



**Pleased & Happy** 



Pleased & Happy



Notice Reality<sub>1</sub> is exactly the same as Reality<sub>2</sub>. And, yet we feel very different about the outcomes because our Expectations differed.

Always remember that what you don't know could hurt you. Since we make all our choices without all the information, the best strategy is to have *minimum expectations*.

But it is equally true that what you don't know might help you — things could come out better than you expect. So it is clearly rational to have *hope*.

#### Expectations

negative **EXPECTATIONS** neutral

When we expect something, we are confident (even certain) it will occur. If our expectation becomes reality, we aren't surprised or particularly pleased. We tend to feel neutral. I subscribe to the daily newspaper. I expect it to be in front of my door in the morning. When I open the door and it's there I'm not surprised, I expected it so I feel neutral. ... However, if it's not there, I feel disappointed and negative.

#### Hope

neutral **HOPE** positive

When we hope for something, we are confident (even certain) it will not occur. If our hope does not become a reality, we aren't surprised or particularly displeased. We tend to feel neutral. I occasionally buy a lottery ticket. When I check the newspaper the next morning, and my numbers aren't there, I'm not surprised. I didn't really expect to win. I tend to feel neutral. ... However, if I won, I feel great, excited and happy. I feel positive.

#### Expectations versus Hope

negative **EXPECTATIONS** neutral

neutral **HOPE** positive

**Expect and prepare for the Worst, but Hope for the Best!** 

# Understanding a Law of Nature

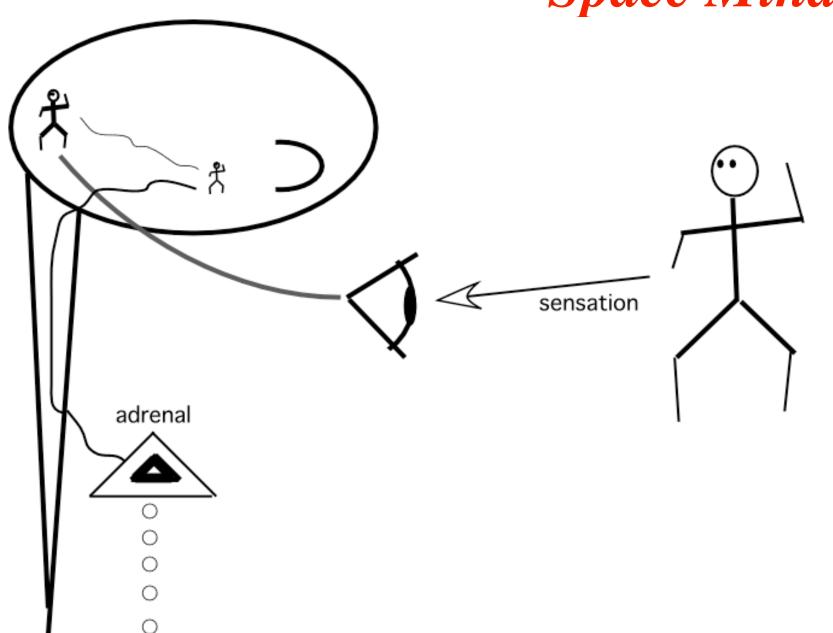
Principle of Error Innocence

## Korzybski's Error of Identity

When humans rely only on their spacial intelligence, they see cause as being identical to effect. They are in essence time-blind, and so they confuse cause with effect. Korzybski explained that when humans see things as being identical that are not identical, they are making an identification that is false to facts. Korzybski called this the *Error of Identity*.

When we confuse cause with effect, we are making the error of identity. Today most humans make this error. We assume without analysis that cause and effect are the same—that they are equal—that they are identical. If the effect of a mistake is bad then the cause of that mistake must also be bad. We don't analyze the event for sequence. We don't use our time-binding power to understand. And so,we act without hesitation, without doubt on our belief. We act in *certainty*. And, certainty as explained earlier by Korzybski, Heisenberg, Eddington and Bronowski is not possible, because knowing is uncertain.

# Space Mind



#### **SPACE-MIND**

Survival

**Mobility** 

**BEING** 

**PROCESS** 

Feelings

<u>pictures</u>

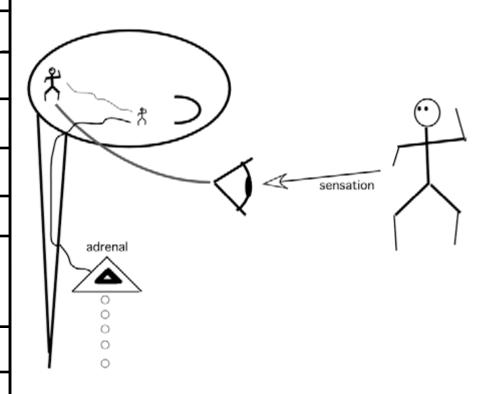
SPACE ASSOCATIVE PERCEIVER

Wholistic

=NOW=

**Intuition** 

aLogical aMoral



#### Mistakes = Badness

We humans have always believed that mistakes are bad. We have always believed that those who make mistakes are bad. They are stupid or careless — lazy or incompetent — just no damn good. If they were good, they wouldn't make mistakes. Everyone knows that. Decent people don't make mistakes. This is nearly a universal belief.

And this is a belief that results from our spacial intelligence which evolved in the world of space-binding and is not sensitive to time. We humans share the animal's body, and we also share their spacial intelligence.

# Cause = Effect

In the world of space-binding cause and effect can not be distinguished from each other. They are the same — they equal each other — they are identical. The space-mind is time blind.

If the effect of a mistake is bad, then the cause of a mistake is also bad. All humans have a space-mind. It is a powerful and often dominant part of our human intelligence. As children the spacemind is primary. The time-mind doesn't even begin to become operational in children until they reach the age of four.

So our human belief that mistakes are 'bad' is legitimate. Most of us learn about mistakes as small children. If I stumble while running, I get hurt and that is bad. If an animal is running for its life and stumbles, it dies and that is bad. For space-binders, mistakes are a part of bad space.

## $Mistakes = Bad\ Space$

In the world of space-binding, a mistake can cost not only the life of the individual space-binder, but also the lives of others in the group—pack, pride, herd, or troop. Therefore the result of a mistake was often bad, and not just for the individual, but for others in the group as well.

Since 99.9% of all human history has been adversary—99.9% of our history dominated by space-binding, it is no wonder that we humans have believed for countless centuries that mistakes are bad.

### Religion Validates Badness

The belief in the badness of mistakes was further reinforced and given divine sanction by our human religions. God is good. God is omniscience—ALL knowing. God makes no mistakes. He is perfect. We humans are admonished to be as God-like as possible. If making no mistakes is 'good', then obviously making mistakes is 'bad'. Our religions institutionalized the adversary processing of mistakes—Sin, Hellfire, and Damnation.

#### Perfect Universe

Science has also added credence to the 'badness' of mistakes. The world view created by the 'objective science' of Galileo, Kepler, Hooke, and Newton was a 'perfect' Universe.

Newton's *System of the Worlds* described a precision clockwork perfection that controlled all in Universe. If the Universe is perfect, then humans too must evolve towards perfection.

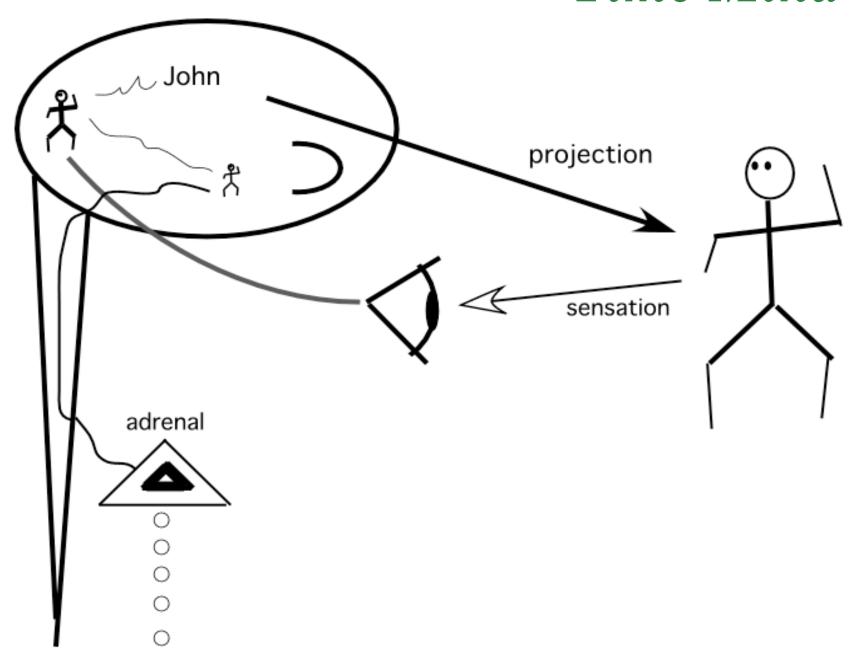
# Dealing with Badness

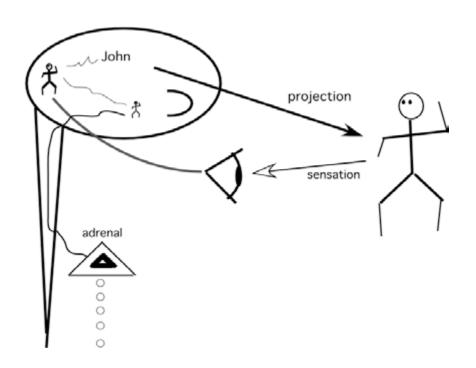
Since mistakes are bad, when one occurs, we investigate to determine who is at fault. Who made the mistake? Once that is determined, we blame those responsible. Following blame, we are ready to punish. More pain and suffering has been inflicted on humankind for making mistakes than for any other cause. This should not surprise us.

Punishment is the proper way to deal with 'badness'. And, if we are anything, we are fair. So when we are the one who made the mistake, we self-punish. Self-punishment is called "guilt". Humans are the only class of living systems that feels guilty. The only class of living systems that teaches their pets to feel guilty.

MISTAKES = Badness
INVESTIGATE
BLAME
PUNISH -> self punish
"Guilt"

#### Time Mind





#### TIME-MIND

Understanding

**Predict & Control** 

**BECOMING** 

**CONTENT** 

**Opinions** 

words

TIME ANALYTICAL CONCEIVER

Particulate

Past->Present->Future

Reason

Logical or illogical Moral or immoral

# Sequence

The time-mind's sensitivity to *sequence* allows it to analyze process. First A then B then C then D» Etc.»Etc.. *Sequence* is an ordered linear chain. This leads to the concept of causality. An event that consistently occurs before a following event is thought to cause the following event. First something causes an effect then that effect becomes the cause of yet another effect and so on. Thus, the time-mind comes to understand process through its temporal analysis of sequence and linear order.

Cause<sup>1</sup>»Effect<sup>1</sup>

Cause<sup>2</sup>»Effect<sup>2</sup>

Cause<sup>3</sup>»Effect<sup>3</sup>

Cause<sup>4</sup>»Effect<sup>4</sup>

• • •

# Cause and Effect

This ability to sequence is the secret of the time-mind's ability to understand.

Time-mind has the ability to analyze sequence and determine cause and effect relationships and come to understand. This leads to the ability to make predictions.

When I see Cause<sup>1</sup>, I can predict Effect<sup>1</sup>, when I see Cause<sup>n</sup>, I can predict Effect<sup>n</sup>

### Ignorance —> Mistakes

We humans make mistakes, not because we are bad, not because we are stupid, not because we are incompetent, not because we are lazy, nor even because we are careless. We humans make mistakes because we are ignorant.

Ignorance causes all mistakes. And the most dangerous ignorance is "ignorance of ignorance". Remember, when we don't know that we don't know, we are certain.

Certainty —> Mistakes

#### Mistakes are Natural

- Once you know you make every decision without all the information. Once you know that you must by the very structure of reality be assuming something that you don't know, and can't know for sure, then you must make mistakes.
- We humans can know, but we can't know all. And, what we don't know can easily injure us and others.
- We humans make mistakes because we are ignorant. Being ignorant is the human condition, and one hundred percent natural.
- Let me repeat that, we humans make mistakes because we are ignorant. We can never know all there is to know about anything this is a fundamental 'law' of Nature. This in fact is the only cause of mistakes.

#### To Err is Human

This truth, whether we call it the *Principle of Non-Allness*, the *Principle of Uncertainty*, the *Principle of Indeterminacy*, or the *Principle of Tolerance*, leads us to the conclusion that to err is indeed human, and there is no need too ask forgiveness for all mistakes are innocent. Mistakes are natural.

Universe is not certain—it is not structured as we humans have believed for countless centuries. Religion and the objective scientists were wrong. The physics of relativity and quantum mechanics describe a Universe in which things are not and cannot be perfect. A Universe in which, we humans are constrained to make all our choices without ALL the information. Mistakes are simply holes or gaps in our knowing—lapses in our understanding.

### What If I Knew Better?

I am often asked, "But, what if I knew better?" If I knew better and then make a mistake. Isn't that the result of stupidity. If I knew better, but still made an error, then surely that is my fault and not the result of ignorance.

I recall a young women patient I once treated. She had opened her hotel room door to a man claiming to be a maintenance worker, who then attacked and raped her. The attacker has stolen a hotel uniform from a laundry hamper and so seemed legitimate. However, something about his appearance disturbed her, but on second thought, she assumed she was just being silly and so unlocked her door. When I saw her several months later she was still struggling with guilt.

"Doctor, it was my own fault. I was so stupid. I shouldn't have opened the door. I knew something was wrong. I was so stupid. I knew better, but I opened the door anyway."

# You weren't stupid!

I responded, "You weren't stupid. You were only ignorant."

She replied, "No, Dr. Wilken, I knew better, I should never have opened the door, I was just so stupid."

"NO!", I told her, "You weren't stupid, you were only ignorant and I can prove it with one simple question. She looked deep into my eyes desperate to know what I meant.

I asked: "If you had known that the man behind the door intended to rape you, would you have opened it?"

# "No, of course not."

No of course not. None of us would make a mistake if we knew we were about to make a mistake.

Even when we humans repeat our mistakes, it is because we assume the mistake will not happen this time. We are ignorant of what will happen this time.

As I have stated, the only cause of human error—the only cause of human mistakes is ignorance.

#### What Hitler didn't Know

- Sometimes I am asked, but what about really evil people? If ignorance is the cause of all mistakes, what was it that Hitler didn't know?
- Hitler didn't know that, "As you sow, so shall you reap." He didn't know that his worst enemy on the Eastern front would be the Russian winter. He didn't know that English mathematicians would break his most secret codes, allowing the allies to intercept and know his every plan.
- Hitler didn't know that American capitalism could and would make airplanes, tanks, and other weapons almost without limit.
- Hitler did not know that his glorious "Thousand Year Reich" would last less than 10 years. He did not know that Nazi Germany would be totally defeated and forced to surrender unconditionally. He did not know that 7,300,000 German citizens would die as a direct result of the war he started in 1939.

#### Hitler didn't Know

- Hitler did not know that the cost of the war to the German Nation would exceed 282 billion dollars and bankrupt the country. Nor, that the German Nation would be divided in half and remain divided for fifty years.
- Hitler did not know that within 5 years of starting the war, he would feel compelled to kill the only two living beings he loved--his mistress and his dog, and then commit suicide himself.
- Hitler did not know that he would become the most despised and reviled human that ever lived.

How do I know that Hitler did not know these things? Because if he had, he would never have gone to war. Hitler was ignorant, not stupid.

#### Error Innocence

Scientists as well as non-scientists who seek to know must therefore embrace humility when we stand before the totality of Nature.

The Principle of Non-ALLness is a fundamental law of Nature. And the first corollary to the Principle of Non-ALLness is what I call the *Principle of Error Innocence*.

### Principle of Error Innocence

If we humans live and act in state of ignorance, then how we process mistakes, must be changed. I have formulated a corollary to Korzybski's *Principle of Non-ALLness* called the *Principle of Error Innocence*. Also known as "I may be ignorant, but I ain't stupid." The *Principle of Error Innocence* states that since:

- 1) All actions occur in a state of ignorance. All human actions and all human choices are made without ALL the information.
- 2) We are always acting and choosing without ALL the information.
- 3) What we don't know we must ignore, and what we ignore may hurt us and others.
- 4) Therefore all errors and and all mistakes are made in innocence.

#### Good News

I don't mean that mistakes are good things or that getting hurt is a good thing. I mean that since the cause of mistakes is ignorance and the proper response to ignorance is education, then we can learn from our mistakes.

We can acknowledge the mistakes of history and those that are occurring in our present world and work to correct them. This is good news. It will make it infinitely easier to build a better world.

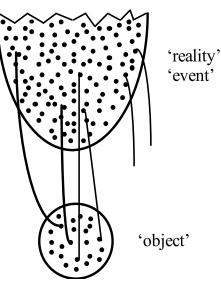
When we understand the truth of "to error is human", we can then begin to process our mistakes in a synergic manner.

Adversary	Synergy
"Against"	"For"
Enemies	Friends
Less happy, less effective & less productive	More happy, more effective & more productive
Lose/Win Lose/Lose	Win-Win
"I" centered	"us" centered

# Correcting Mistakes

- The human who understands that mistakes are a natural part of life does not investigate the mistakes like a detective, he analyzes the mistake as a scientist.
- He does not blame when a mistake occurs, he seeks to learn from the mistake and to learn he must accept responsibility and seek responsibility in others for their mistakes.
- Once he knows who is responsible for the mistake, he educates. If he made the mistake, he self educates. If other made the mistake, he educates other.

MISTAKES < — Ignorance
ANALYZE
RESPONSIBILITY
EDUCATE —> self educate
"Learn"



#### Education

Education is the proper response to ignorance. Education and learning is the synergic alternative to adversary punishment and guilt.

Education is the proper response to ignorance. However there is something in guilt worth keeping. It is certainly not the badness, it is certainly not the blame, and of course it is not the punishment.

Guilt also contains regret and this is worth keeping. When a mistake happens there is always regret. In the adversary world where there is blame and punishment of course I might regret being blamed and punished. I also might regret being considered bad by those who are blaming and punishing me. But there is almost always another component of regret. When I make a mistake that hurts someone, I regret that as well. This is the regret worth keeping.

#### **Adversary**

"Against"

MISTAKES = Badness
INVESTIGATE
BLAME
PUNISH -> self-punish
"Guilt"

Regret —

Synergy

"For"

MISTAKES < — Ignorance
ANALYZE
RESPONSIBILITY
EDUCATE —> self-educate
"Learn"

-> RESTITUTION

#### Restitution

And, this is often why we humans tend to hang onto our guilt feelings when we make a mistake. We regret injuring others. We can solve this dilemma by moving regret over into the synergic processing of mistakes, where it is called restitution. Restitution means to restore, to repair the damage caused by the ignorance of our behavior.

The synergist does not feel guilty when he makes a mistake, but he is sorry if his ignorance injured other. As a synergist, he will freely try to repair things. He will freely offer restitution.

#### Choice

We humans have a choice as to how to deal with mistakes. If we process our mistakes adversarily we get pain and no learning. If we process our mistakes synergically, we get learning and no pain.

In fact, you cannot learn when you adversarily process mistakes. We humans cannot tolerate the pain of blame, punishment, and guilt. We will deny that we make a mistake. We will project the blame for the mistake onto others. "I didn't do it."—"It wasn't my fault."—"And, if it isn't my fault, why should I have to learn anything."

In fact, if I am to learn from a mistake, I must first admit it was my fault. This is the real force behind what I call the "anti-learning barrier".

# The "Anti-learning Barrier"

If I am to learn from my mistake I am trapped into accepting responsibility for my error. If I am adversarily processing the mistake, I cannot accept responsibility without feeling guilty. To avoid guilt I must deny responsibility. And if I wasn't responsible then I have nothing to learn.

This barrier became evident to me in another one of my patients. I once had the occasion to treat a young woman in the early stages of her fifth pregnancy. During her medical history, she informed me she had four previous abortions, and planning to abort this pregnancy as well. I thought to myself, why can't she learn to use birth control?

# I must lie to protect myself.

If we examine her situation in light of our new understanding, we see that for her to use birth control, she would have to admit that it is her responsibility to prevent unwanted pregnancies. That admission would lead her to the further conclusion that she was then also responsible for her previous unwanted pregnancies and their abortions. This young woman was a Catholic and to admit responsibility for unwanted pregnancies and abortions were far too painful for her. She opted to deny any responsibility. "My boy friend got me drunk, and made me pregnant. It wasn't my fault, so I don't need to take birth control. Besides using birth control is a sin, I would never do that." The human brain is the most powerfully precise computer in the Universe. If we program it to believe mistakes are bad, it will function to prove it does not make mistakes. The human brain rebels at the idea that mistakes are bad. It will defend itself in any way possible, it will defend itself by lying. When I am accused of badness, I must lie to protect myself—to protect myself from blame and punishment—to protect myself from guilt.

#### Foe or Friend?

Confronted with an adversary reality that we live with today, it is rational to lie. Lying leads to distrust—"I assume you are my enemy". Thus, the processing of mistakes as bad always leads to conflict and adversary behavior.

If on the other hand, I process my mistakes in a more scientific manner—as simply ignorant – choices made without all the information, then I must tell the truth to protect myself – to protect myself from repeating the mistake—to protect myself and others from further injury—to protect myself from paying unnecessary restitution.

Telling the truth leads to trust—"I assume you are my friend". Processing mistakes as ignorance leads to co-Operation and synergic behavior.

**Adversary** MISTAKES = Badness*INVESTIGATE* **BLAME**  $PUNISH \rightarrow self$ -punish "Guilt" Regret

Synergy *MISTAKES* < - *Ignorance* ANALYZE RESPONSIBILITY  $EDUCATE \longrightarrow self-educate$ "Learn" -> RESTITUTION

I must lie to protect myself.

I must tell the truth to protect myself.

I assume you are my **friend**.

**Co-Operation** 

I assume you are my enemy.

**Distrust** 

**Conflict** 

**Trust** 

#### Beyond Blame, Guilt & Punishment

That all actions occur in ignorance is a fundamental 'knowing' derived from the *Principle of Non-ALLness*. And, its first corollary—the *Principle of Error Innocence* is a 'knowing' of great importance to understanding ourselves and the human condition.

Our new knowing offers us *analysis* over investigation, *responsibility* over blame, *education* over guilt, and *learning* over punishment.

Develop Calmness for Self

Practice Unconditional Respect for Other

Be Ready, Able, and Willing to Change

Live your Life Intelligently and Wisely

Live by Reality's Rules

Balance is the Key to Validation

Obtain Meaningful Survival by seeking Pleasure and Satisfaction

Make True Progress by Could-ing on Each Other

Forgive our Selves and Others & Learn from our Mistakes