Time-Binding Tutorial 2

Can you imagine a respectful, supportive and fruitful dialogue (on the topic of their mutual concern) occurring between:

   * A proponent of The Right To Life and a Pro-Choice advocate?
   * The Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan and a black sharecropper from Alabama?
   * The Pope and the Chairperson of the International Lesbian Sisterhood?
   * The CEO of Monsanto and the conservationist and feminist organizer Vandana Shiva?

Why not?

Biologists tell us that all living humans belong to a single species. But over and over again, we create "In-Groups" which exclude "Others". Then "We" speak to, and about, "Them" as if to, or about, Aliens (onto whom we project those aspects of ourselves that we don't like). Frequently, "We" take it as our job to tell "Them" how wrongly "They" behave and how "They" **really ought** to do things.

How come?

I assume that humans **assume**. What any human or group of humans DOES, I maintain, follows from what s/he/they ASSUME. We can assume THIS, or *that*, or *something else*— but we cannot assume NOTHING AT ALL. Much of what we assume remains entirely non-verbal. (We can and do talk about physiological processes, but the activities of breathing, heart-beating, maintaining blood-pressure, etc., which (I say) do involve assuming, do not depend primarily upon what we say.)

In practical terms, the *term* theory signifies "relations among assumptions"—so, I say, we ACT from theory, **lived** (as opposed to abstract) theory. Since what occurs in-and-around any organism takes place dynamically and on many "logical levels" at once, no organism can get away with generating one and only one assumption and doing one and only one thing at a time. Instead, the process of surviving entails making many assumptions, most of them entirely non-verbal, and conducting inter-related activities, on every available "logical level" concurrently. So I regard the inter-related activities which a human engages in as following from what s/he assumes, or in other words, from the theory composed of the relations among the fullness of what s/he assumes.

Then when we language our relationships with other humans in "Us vs. Them" terms, we rely on certain lived assumptions, deeply embedded in our languages and our cultures, that we generally don't notice or have any awareness of.

> Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own   participants. (Hall, 1973, p. 30)

So does our languaging.

The very fact that we don't notice them and express them in words keeps these crucial

assumptions concealed, where we can't get at them—can't subject them to scrutiny. In fact, many of us Americans carry this process of concealment so far that we feel sure we don't really HAVE a culture, much less one that tells us what to do and how to live—including how to treat our fellow-humans. It seem hard to imagine a more effective way for a culture to hide itself than to persuade its participants that it "doesn't exist". And even those of us who do recognize that we do have a cluture and that it usually "hides itself" miss a deeper point: The term *culture* refers to "a bunch of people who behave similarly—who appear to share a particular set of rules, etc." So when I say that a culture "hides itself", I point to a bunch of people utilizing one more way (as modern physicists put it) to **eliminate the observer from consideration**. Generally, we recognize the great gains in predictability which the physicists achieved when, at the beginning of the twentieth century CE, they found some ways to "take the observer into consideration". However, we seem reluctant to accept the inverse of that insight: To eliminate the observer from consideration amounts to symbolically annihilating that observer—oneself. The act of even symbolically annihilating oneself manifests **self-hatred**. Before the twentieth century CE, the fact that the participants in our culture in general, and the physicists in particular, lacked the tools to take the observer into account means that they had no way NOT to manifest self-hatred.

The evidence shows that we haven't thought through our cultures or our languaging—analyzed these aspects of our own behaving-and-experiencing, scrutinized them, asked how they work, noticed whether or not we arrange to conceal their presuppositions or premises, and discussed the terrible consequences that arise when we do. We just live by them or "use" them.

"A house divided against itself cannot stand." Each of the examples I listed at the beginning of this Tutorial points to a persisting area of conflict within the larger human community—on at least some occasions, the stated excuse for demonstrations, riots, lynchings and other kinds of murder, war, etc. In the twentieth century CE, the human race has created nuclear explosives, nerve gases and other poisons, enhanced pathogenic germs, and other so-called "weapons of mass destruction". We have no evidence, to date, for widespread agreement throughout the human race that we must under no circumstances use such "devices" on ourselves-and-each-other. In the presence of such "devices" and the absence of such agreement, these examples of unremitting conflict raise a question: Will we end up using these various "devices" on ourselves-and-each-other? Will we do ourselves in?

> In 1965, contemplating the then-current situation of humans-in-their-environments, I set out to put such questioning into perspective. I made a list of ways our current behavior threatened our continuing survival:

> Thoughtful people are aware that in the year 1965, there is a world-wide crisis in human history which is also a crisis in the history of all life. Our survival is in question: The possibility exists that the human species may destroy itself, and perhaps all other species too. Not only is this outcome of the evolutionary experiment of this planet likely, but it even seems to be increasing in probability.

> For the sake of analysis, I subdivide this crisis into four inter-dependent problems,

which in briefest summary can be stated thus:

1. We do not know, reliably, how not to have wars;
2. We have not figured out how to stop having too many human babies;
3. We are contaminating the biosphere, destroying the biological resources which make life capable of continuation; and
4. We do not have sane societies: nowhere have we created human environments fit for humans to live in.

(Hilgartner, 1965, p. 1)

I made that list some 34 years ago. I believe that since then, the human race has still not dealt with the overall situation I pointed to. What do we assume, that leads us to put ourselves-and-other-living-organisms in such peril?

As I say on the Welcome page of our Website, "To change what we DO, we have to change what we ASSUME." Do we have other assumptions available, that might lead us out of this self-inflicted danger, to which we could switch?

In this series of Tutorials on the topic of *time-binding*, I explore that set of assumptions which I regard as the most promising.

Background:

In my own teen years (back in the late 1940s and early 1950s), I had begun to question my own culture and its assumptions, and to make tentative plans for how I might educate myself so that I could work at answering such questions. When in 1950 I encountered the work of Alfred Korzybski, and began reading his 1933 book, *Science and Sanity,* I quickly recognized that he had already done most of the exploratory work I had hoped to pursue. I set out to assimilate his contribution, so I could pick up where he left off and proceed from there.

In 1950, when I visited the Institute of General Semantics (which Korzybski had founded) I bought (and read) the brand-new second edition of his 1921 book, *Manhood of Humanity*, in which he first set forth the construct of *time-binding.* But it still took me a full decade to assimilate Korzybski's contributions enough to use them to guide my own living and to build on them in my own work.

While still a child, Korzybski had begun questioning the assumptions, the "theory of humankind", of his own culture. At certain points in his life, he expressed the most profound and troublesome of his ongoing inquiries as: **what makes humans human**? This question became positively painful for him during World War I, while he served as an officer in the Second Russian Army. As Charlotte Schuchardt put it in a biographical sketch of Korzybski, published shortly after his death:

Immersed as he was in sufferings on the battlefronts, intimately at home with death and pain, contemplating the thousands of years of such continually recurring conflicts and their attendant human tragedies, his questioning became focussed on,

"Why? What is wrong? How can this be prevented?" He had no answer. (Schuchardt, 1950, p. 34b)

For more than half his life, Korzybski found no way of answering his own urgent and profound questioning—worse, he found no way of **discussing** his quest, his most central felt-problem—until, in 1919 or 1920, around his age 40, he deliberately set out to generate a frame of reference that allowed him to place humans into the context of the whole domain of living organisms, and that domain within the cosmos. (If you have not already read the page entitled "**Classifying Critters**", in which Martha Bartter summarizes the main thrust of Korzybski's answer, I suggest that you do so now, before proceeding with this Tutorial.) To quote Schuchardt again:

> "What makes human beings human?" The endless questioning continued. With his mathematical training [Korzybski] recognized eventually that his question must be reduced to the simplest, most encompassing, *functional* terms. Taking into consideration all living organisms, he asked himself, "What is the role of plants in this world? What do they *do*?" He found that they chemically synthesize the soil, water and air with solar energy. "What of the role of a dog, a horse, or a monkey?" Their survival depends on moving around in space. "We cannot deny them communication. Nor can we deny them 'intelligence' or 'emotion.' Their devotion! Often they are more faithful, more dutiful than many humans. What about humans? How do *they* differ?" The question was deeply disturbing.
>
> One night he suddenly sat up in bed with tears dripping off his chin, so moved that he had finally solved his question in his sleep. "Humans have the capacity to transmit from generation to generation; one generation or one person can begin where the other left off," he said to his wife. "Man is not an animal." He did not have the terms then, he had to analyze first what the different classes of life DO. Shortly, he formulated his labels—"chemistry-binding" for plants, "space-binding" for animals, and "time-binding" for that characteristic, defining capacity, out of all life, unique in human beings. With this simple functional formulation he could at last become articulate. (Schuchardt, 1950, p. 35b)

The Main Idea:

I regard the construct of *time-binding* as the most important innovation Korzybski ever came up with. (For some background on this usage of the term innovation, see paper #55, "An Innovative View of Innovating".) By questioning the "theory of humankind" of his own culture, Korzybski discarded the available "received wisdom" of that era, coming to look at the territory for himself—and ended up seeing new relationships, ultimately based on new assumptions. Eventually, he devised a way of expressing these relationships and assumptions linguistically (to himself-and-others), in the process developing an **explicit, general theory of humankind**. This construct, this theory, did not arise as a generalization of the "common sense" of any culture or family of cultures, nor from the assumptions encoded in any language or family of languages. Instead, it appears **supra-cultural and supra-linguistic**—or in short, **entirely non-traditional** in origin. It sets forth a way of viewing the place of humans vis-a-vis other humans, other organisms, and the cosmos as a whole which differs from that set forth by the advocates of any traditional

viewpoint. The construct of *time-binding*, this way of summarizing his lifetime of questioning, became the basis for everything Korzybski did thereafter. (Korzybski, 1921) He used it as a frame of reference from which to review what we humans, or at least we Westerners, have learned since the era of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. He put his findings together into a new "World-View", which he first presented in his 1933 book Science and Sanity *An Introduction to Non-aristotelian Systems and General Semantics*. In 1941 he disclosed the most-fundamental premises from which this alternative "World-View" stems—the **non-aristotelian premises**—and stated them in English. The alternative "World-View" which we present on this Website stems from Korzybski's non-aristotelian premises, and so has both its historical and its logical beginning in this innovation.

Korzybski concludes that we humans **accumulate human knowledge** (in the form, I assert, of **tested guesses**), **at rates that depend on how much knowledge we already have**. This means that within a given culture, or across cultures, our collective knowledge increases at exponential rates. This overall construct, *time-binding*, both models what distinguishes humans from other species, and also models the general processes by which we humans survive in the biosphere. It accounts for what we DO that (so far as we now know) other organisms do not yet do. In short, it holds that **we humans cooperate to apply what we know, in the process coming to know more.**

In developing the construct of time-binding, Korzybski uses the construct of **dimensions**: Humans live in environments with more dimensions than do any other currently-known organisms. In Figure 1, I summarize this way of looking at living organisms:

COMMON NAME   NUMBER OF DIMENSIONS   SUMMARY:
WHAT THEY DO   POSITIVE
MARK   NEGATIVE
MARK
"Non-Living Things"   0
(Like a point—no dimensions)   PROVIDE THE FOUNDATIONS   (Not relevant)
        (Not relevant)
"Plants"   1
(Like a line—one dimension)   CHEMISTRY- BINDING   Bind basic energies.
(For green plants, that means, use the energy of sunlight to combine carbon dioxide and water into glucose—from which the plant makes everything else it needs.)   Don't move around "on purpose".
"Animals"   2
(Like a plane—two dimensions) SPACE-BINDING   Utilize basic energies. Move around "on purpose".   Species don't change rapidly with the changing generations.
"Humans"   3
(Like a solid—three dimensions) TIME-BINDING   Utilize basic energies. Move around "on purpose". Psycho/cultural evolution: increasingly rapid change, as we accumulate human knowledge (in the form of tested guesses) at rates which depend on how much knowledge we already have.   Humans cannot establish a "negative mark" for humans. To do so, we would have to see, and speak, from outside of our human points of view.

Figure 1

Then the relationship between a human born into and growing up within a culture and the time-binding heritage has three main aspects:

1. Each human **inherits** the available body of knowledge—or at least, that portion available within her/his culture in the era of her/his birth. Further, s/he **assimilates** some portion of the heritage—makes it her/his own.
2. Each human **contributes to** the heritage—whether or not you or I can name our contribution.
3. Each human **passes on** the resulting augmented body of knowledge, to peers and to progeny and to the generations yet unborn—after the fashion of a steward or trustee.

Transacting

As Korzybski's friend, the mathematical philosopher Cassius J. Keyser, puts it,

> ... it is obvious, once the fact is pointed out, that the character of human history, the character of human conduct, and the character of all our human institutions depend both upon what man is and in equal or greater measure upon what we humans think man is. (Keyser, 1922, p. 291)

An important part of the survival-problems I list in my 1965 paper comes from a demonstrable, fundamental misconception some of us humans have about ourselves. As members of the currently dominant world culture, which does not explicitly subscribe to the theory of time-binding, we tend to hold ourselves as "separate from Nature." That leads to some weird consequences, which I can bring out most succinctly by referring to the term **to transact**. We humans, I say—like other living organisms—**transact with ourselves-and-our-environments**. I do NOT use the term *environment* to signify "some THING 'out there', distant from me as an organism, that remains static and unchanging and 'exists' independent of any observer". Instead, I use the term *environment* to refer to "the other side of my skin"; or to put it the other way around, I use terms like I or *me* to signify "the other side of the environment's skin". So I consider *environment* and *organism* as both dynamic and intimately-connected.

Thus I say, we transact with ourselves-and-our-environments. Each instance of *transacting* leaves both us and our environment altered. To see what this means, please engage with me in a simple demonstration: Take a deep breath—hold it for a few seconds, and then exhale. Yes, please—don't just read about it or talk about it—actually DO it. (You'll breathe anyway, or perish on the spot—but here, my request says, "Inhale and exhale once CONSCIOUSLY, as a part of a demonstration, and do so NOW specifically because, for the sake of this demonstration, I asked you to.")

In the process of inhaling and exhaling once, you have absorbed something on the order of 40 mg of oxygen, and have excreted about 55 mg of carbon dioxide. This has changed the chemical composition of the air in your immediate vicinity (environment); and likewise has changed your own chemical composition (organism) by a comparable amount. I call this kind of two-way interchange *transacting*. (after Dewey & Bentley, 1949)

If, as someone who holds yourself as "apart from Nature", you should wish to downplay and minimize the "external" or biological significance of the transactional changes you engage in by breathing, allow me to remind you of one way you fit into the biosphere: During mosquito season, female mosquitoes find their prey—you—by "smelling" the carbon dioxide you excrete. Supposedly, they detect the local increase in concentrations of carbon dioxide which you produce, and follow this gradient "upstream" toward higher concentrations, in order to find you and suck your blood, and thereby get the high-protein meal they require so their eggs can mature.

So far as I know, a female mosquito "mosquitoes" seamlessly and flawlessly. Any English (or set theory) sentence I can construct to describe "what she does" divides up her activities in ways that do not represent them accurately. For the purpose of discussing the process of "mosquitoing" I might find it useful non-verbally to IMITATE "the mosquito as she hunts"—spread my arms and make flapping, winglike motions; vocally mimic a mosquito's whine; make sniffing gestures, and biting-and-sucking gestures (however inaccurate as a representation of "inserting the proboscis and sucking blood"); etc. The mosquito does not, I believe, engage in linguistic analysis of her own activities. Most especially, she does not—cannot—mislead herself (the way we humans can and do) by using, for example, a western Indo-European (WIE) language such as English, whose way of "slicing up the world" verbally partitions the seamlessness of her non-verbal "mosquitoing"-in-her-environment-at-a-date into separable and separate verbal "items"— *organism, environment, wings, proboscis, air, gradient of carbon dioxide*, etc. Since these aspects function seamlessly, any linguistic system that separates them gives a distorted representation of how they (seamlessly) work.

WHAT HUMANS DO IN THE PROCESS OF "HUMANING"—TIME-BINDING—SEEMS EQUALLY SEAMLESS. BUT AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE ASSUMPTIONS BUILT INTO OUR LANGUAGING, WE HAVE HAD REAL TROUBLES SEEING IT OR DESCRIBING IT THAT WAY.

What Happens When We Time-bind in the Absence of an Explicit Theory of Time-binding

For any individual human, or group of humans, time-binding takes place within a culture which also functions as a speech community. It starts a new chapter at the birth of every child. What the parent-figures pass on to their young consists precisely of the human heritage—a lived theory composed mainly of tested guesses (framed in their shared language), which we might call *that culture*. But in the absence of an explicit theory of time-binding, practically nobody has seen it that way. Instead, humans treat and have treated it a bit like breathing—a backgrounded activity, which everyone DOES and few consistently NOTICE doing.

Of the ten thousand or so cultures which have flourished on planet Earth over the last three million years or thereabouts, each has its own coherent, shared, growing patterns for what "We"—the "Real People"—DO, and DON'T DO. Within a particular culture, I say, these patterns—the participants' view of what we Westerners call "human nature"— amount to a developing lived theory, a shared, mainly tacit, restricted "theory of

humankind". Each "theory of humankind", I contend, follows from assumptions (which, with careful scrutiny, we can tease out and specify), just as any other theory does. Further, as a restricted theory, in principle each depends on at least one special, restricted and restrictive assumption, that has the effect of limiting what the theory can successfully apply to.

In no instance that I know of, however, do the exponents of a restricted "theory of humankind" awarely

   a. regard it as "a theory", or
   b. regard it as restricted, or
   c. hold it tentatively, or
   d. regard it as developing and changing, or
   e. frame it so as to make it disconfirmable, or
   f. explicitly regard it as having arisen from the abstracting (symbolizing-activities, languaging) of the "Real People"—past, passing, or to come.

Instead, they appear to take their own restricted "theory of humankind" unquestioningly, as a "given", an unchanging manifestation of "The Way Things Really Are".

Since few humans believe that their ways of living have anything to do with theory, very few workers have even tried to make the lived theory of their own culture explicit, or sought to trace out and state the assumptions it stems from. To compound the difficulties, the participants in the culture learn their "theory of humankind" at Mother's knee, so to speak, and Mother herself didn't know much about formal logical analysis or making assumptions explicit. (Not to mention that modern logicians tell us that no one can adequately analyze a system from within the system.)

Ultimately, any lived "theory of humankind" appears normative—it functions like a **self-fulfilling prophecy**. The theory says, in effect, "Real People DO this and DON'T DO that"; so those who follow the theory make themselves Real by DOING this and NOT DOING that.

The restricted "theory of humankind" held by the members of one culture may differ wildly from—contradict—each of the various restricted "theories of humankind" (and the associated assumptions) held by the members of other cultures. But however much these lived theories may differ from one another in detail, each encodes one feature in common—the idea that humans who operate on other principles "do not belong to the Real People." Thus each particular culture creates in-groups ("Us", the "Real People") and out-groups ("Them", "The Enemy", "Not-the-Real-People"). The science fiction author Ursula K. LeGuin calls this **creating pseudo-species**. Here I would say that each particular culture that I know of REPRESENTS the human species as fragmented into many pseudo-species—"Us" vs. "Them".

In 1978, I published a long paper which includes a discussion of various of the intricate ways exponents of Western frames of reference symbolize—mythologize—some of the consequences of such "Us" vs. "Them" relations—in terms of norms or "pictures of what goes on in-and-around-us". In general, the shared Western "pictures" posit psychological

impasse, power-struggle and conflict. Early Western viewpoints posit conflict in Heaven (between the King of the Gods and the other deities, or between God and some of his Angels (Devils)); between God and earth-dwellers (in the Garden or in the persons of Prometheus or Job); and on Earth (between nations or groups, which wage war; within the group, between Man and Society; and within the nuclear family, between Man and Woman and between parents and children).

> Then both Socrates of Athens (469-399 BCE) and Jesus of Nazareth (4 BCE?-30 CE?) proposed that we REPRESENT the authority of the group as divided, or better, **dissociated** into at least two mutually-exclusive, antithetical "parts" or "wings," e.g. *spontaneous* vs. *deliberate*, or *secular* vs. *sacred*, or *temporal* vs. *eternal*, or *emotional* vs. *intellectual*, etc. To quote words attributed to Jesus, "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and unto God that which is God's." ... (Hilgartner, 1978, pp.153-8)

Socrates and Jesus continued the job of "UNIVERSALIZING" and PROJECTING the conflict by making it intrinsic to the rest of Creation. Given that the members of their cultures already symbolized human living in terms of the listed areas of conflict, we associate the names of Socrates and Jesus with the symbolic innovation of REPRESENTING conflict as occurring

    a.   between different aspects of the group's authority—for example, whereas before, the King had also filled the role of God (or later, of High Priest), they proposed separating the spheres of authority of God (Priest) and King; and
    b.   intrapersonally, "within" every human—for example, as occurring between "the soul" (subject to God (Priest)) and "the flesh" (subject to King).

But of course, "No man can serve two masters."

Do we have a better term for *intra-personal conflict* than **self-hatred**?

And as the late Joseph Campbell (among others) has demonstrated copiously and repeatedly, though they differ in detail, the various philosophies/religions espoused by inhabitants of Asia closely match the Western ones in some fundamental aspects. To say it more directly, exponents of the so-called "Eastern Philosophies" also posit conflict on every level including that of the intra-personal, and so they too espouse self-hatred.

For us as exponents of the currently dominant world culture, to "organize" (disorganize) our symbolic universe in such ways has consequences we rarely face head-on, and mostly fail to notice at all. By framing our "pictures" in this way—by REPRESENTING the whole "universe" on every discernable "logical level" as dissociated into warring "parts", we **institutionalize self-hatred**. We commit ourselves to **systematically corrosive dealings with self-and-others**. We make war on our own primary physiology.

Paula Gunn Allen, an American Indian of Laguna Pueblo and Sioux heritage and a scholar in American Indian literature, notes that from the point of view of tribal peoples, our language supports our dissociated stance:

In English, one can divide the universe into two parts: the natural and the supernatural. Humanity has no real part in either, being neither animal nor spirit— that is, the supernatural is discussed as though it were apart from people, and the natural as though people were apart from it. This necessarily forces English-speaking people into a position of alienation from the world they live in. (Allen, 1992, p. 60)

The views Allen points to commit any "I" who holds them to conflict on every level: conflict with "self" (self-hatred), conflict with "the supernatural", and conflict with "the natural". She thus shows how self-hatred extends to the whole of the natural world, the whole of the cosmos. Her comments present an "external" view of the culturally-and-linguistically-determined assumptions of which I gave an "internal" account above. Her notion of "hav [ing] no real part" in the universe, as I read it, corresponds to the more standard Western philosophical or theological notion of "unmoved mover" (an alternative label for God): In the shared "pictures" of the currently dominant world culture, humans act ON the natural universe, but it has no effect on them. We function like little "gods" granted "dominion" over the Earth and all of the (other) organisms that inhabit it. As Daniel Quinn puts it, as members of the currently dominant world culture, we act as if we believe that

"The world was made for man to conquer and rule, and under human rule it was meant to become a paradise. ...but tragically, [man] was born flawed. And so his paradise has always been spoiled by stupidity, greed, destructiveness and shortsightedness." (Quinn, 1992, p. 82-3) Further, our belief systems insist that we can expect nothing better of humans; and the linguistic structures that support that perspective (which I regard as warped) exist in all of the WIE languages.

How Human Transacting Works
Here we come to the heart of the matter. As I have insisted, we humans transact with ourselves-and-our-environments, and we use the pictures of "what goes on" embedded in our shared lived theories to guide what we do. Inevitably, we thereby alter both ourselves and our environments—and the changes we produce tend to make us-and-our-environments into closer approximations to the pictures of "what goes on" embedded in these shared theories.

• IF, lacking (or ignoring) an explicit theory of time-binding, we continue to assume a "cosmos" characterized by conflict and power struggle on every level, THEN the changes we produce will consist of further conflict and power struggle on every level.
• IF we continue to assume a "universe" in which we humans function as "unmoved movers"—little "gods"—(and so may do whatever we "whim" to do), THEN the changes we produce will continue progressively to render the planet, the biosphere, less and less habitable, less and less capable of participating with and so sustaining actual humans—perhaps less and less capable of sustaining any organisms at all—and to render ourselves less and less capable of acting like participants transacting with ourselves-and-our-environments within nested ecosystems.
• Alternatively, IF we should recognize ourselves as able to change what we assume, and should accept and make our own a theory, such as that of time-binding, which denies the primacy of conflict and affirms humans not as little

"gods" but as limited, but transacting, participants in the biosphere, THEN, I predict, the character of the changes we would produce by our transacting would change also, in directions which would render ourselves-and-the- biosphere more capable of mutually supporting humans-and-other-species.

We seem quite unaware that we do transact—and seem almost totally blind to what the pictures embedded in our lived theoriesd SHOW. The progressive, cumulative threat to the survival of ourselves-and-the-rest-of-the-biosphere comes precisely from that unawareness and that blindness.

Meanwhile, we TALK about what we do (as we blindly engage in time-binding). Given the shared assumptions we currently rely on, we usually, we talk about "what we do" in ways that precisely misrepresent this dynamic two-way interchange. Because our language makes it so easy to do so, we consistently notice what we do and have done—and consistently fail to notice what that "doing" has done to and for us. As Allen points out in her own way, that fits right in with the linear structure of WIE languages such as English and set theory, in which it seems so easy to argue that "A causes B, and B causes C, and C causes D, and ...". This linear "reasoning" provides no way of arriving at, or marking, "end-of-string"; and it fails to account, in "becausal" terms, for A. This makes the process of discussing self-reflexive topics such as *time-binding* unexpectedly difficult. However, what we CAN say (in English and set theory) about time-binding does bring us to a point where we can at least glimpse how we work within our cultures now, and how we might do so if we operated less blindly.

Time-binding in the Presence of an Explicit Theory of Time-binding

I can at best come up with a partial listing here—as someone brought up within the currently dominant world culture, I find myself limited in what I can visualize or imagine.

Using *Time-binding* as an Over-arching Generalization

I regard the construct of *time-binding* as an **explicit**, **general theory of humankind** which has broad implications:

   a.   for how individuals live their lives and deal with themselves-and-their-
        environments;
   b.   for how groups deal with their members, with themselves as groups, and with other
        groups;
   c.   for how we humans treat the other organisms that share the planet with us;
   d.   for how we deal with the planet as a whole;
   e.   for the ways we structure, and hold, our existing heritage of human knowledge;
   f.   for how we seek out new knowledge;
   g.   and so on.

As Keyser (1922) suggests, when we revise "what we humans think man is", that provides us with means to re-structure the ways in which we humans transact individually and collectively, in every dimension available to us.

A general theory of humankind based on time-binding provides distinct advantages over any of its older rivals, including that it satisfies modern logical and empirical standards of adequacy:

1. As a view of the uniquely human environment of symbolizing, it includes fine details concerning the structuring of human knowledge. In my view, any transacting, any guess, any knowledge has two components. One of these **hetero-referentially** "tells about" some aspect of what goes on around-and-in the human organism who generates it; the other component **self-referentially** gives some kind of representation of that human.
2. It treats a culture as a lived theory composed of tested guesses and the relations amongst them, held in common by a group of humans, which, on its "other" side, gives its exponents guidance as to what aspects of their environments ("what goes on in and around us") to consider as important, and on its "self" side, encodes an explicitly-held, normative set of rules or standards for how "WE PEOPLE" behave, for what "we" must, and must not, DO, etc.
3. It provides an operationally-defined model for how humans manage to survive in the biosphere.
4. Its exponents, from Korzybski to the present, have explicitly based it on evidence.
5. Its exponents explicitly regard it as restricted—as in principle inaccurate, incomplete, and self-referential.
6. Its exponents explicitly regard it as developing and changing.
7. Its exponents explicitly regard it as A THEORY (not a "divine revelation" or "the way things Really Are").
8. Its exponents explicitly and insistently hold it tentatively.
9. Its exponents have framed it so as to make it disconfirmable.
10. Its exponents explicitly regard it as having arisen from the abstracting (symbolizing-activities, languaging) of humans—organisms capable of time-binding.

These advantages provide the tools for eliminating the "war" with "self", with "nature", and with "the supernatural", replacing the tradition of incessantly shuttling between war and *peace* with another pattern of living altogether

Using Time-binding to Re-define the Primary "Us"

When I call time-binding a *general theory of humankind*, I suggest that we treat it as a **higher-ordered generalization**, of which the restricted "theory of humankind" generated by each of Earth's specific cultures forms a **special case**. (I discuss aspects of my way of using the notions of *general theory* and *special cases* below, under the caption. "If and When a Group Adopts *Time-binding* As Its Own".) Thus the act of holding this general theory enables me to represent the cosmos we inhabit, and the human species that lives here, as unitary; every individual as intrinsically undivided (never mind how our culturally-determined frames of reference may REPRESENT humans-in-their-environments); and all culturally-determined viewpoints as co-equal. This lets me show in principle and in fact how NOT to fragment humankind into pseudo-species. In effect, then, the construct of *time-binding* makes it possible for us humans to re-draw the boundaries of the primary human "In-Group", the "**Us**".

The implications of this construct lead us to treat any organism at all which observably can engage in time-binding as a member of the primary "Us". If an organism, of whatever species, can and does receive, and assimilate some portion of, a heritage composed mainly of tested assumptions (in other words, a theory, a culture); if it can and does contribute to the heritage; and if it can and does pass it on to peers and progeny and to the generations yet unborn—then as an advocate of the theory of time-binding, I say, let us welcome it as one of "Us".

Taking the Observer Into Account in a New Way

The construct of *time-binding* also has implications for human knowledge in the broadest sense, and for how we deal with our knowledge. As I mentioned above (first section), in the first decades of the twentieth century CE, certain physicists noticed that whenever they measured a physical system, that altered the system under scrutiny. They became very ingenious about it, and even quantified certain aspects of the changes they brought about. The theory of time-binding takes the observer into account in a new way. For whenever someone measures a physical system, s/he also alters the MEASURER her/himself.

And since the notion of *measuring* stands as a special case of '**sensing**' or '**perceiving**', that means that any organism at all, which by any stretch of the imagination has a "sensory receptor" and uses it to 'sense' or 'perceive' what goes on in-and-around-itself-at-some-date, by that very act alters itself-and-its-environment-at-approximately-that-date (the point I made above, without explanation, when I introduced the construct of *transacting*).

This sense of "taking the observer into account" appears utterly fundamental. By the argument presented above (first section), the logical feat of taking the observer into account in a new way alters our lived theories—it replaces a specific instance of tacit self-hatred with one of explicit self-acceptance—shifting how we conduct our search for further knowledge as well as how we live our lives. Arguments already presented above suggest the necessity for and possibility of revising the underlying theoretical basis for biology and for the human psycho-social sciences. These comments about *taking the observer into account in a new way* suggest also the urgent need to revise the foundations of WIE logic and mathematics, as well as quantum theory and relativity.

The research group of Hilgartner & Associates has at least scratched the surface in each of these arenas—and has published some of our findings in professional journals of the various disciplines named. (See Paper #91, "E-Prime and Linguistic Revision", for an extensive bibliography of these publications.)

When Individuals Adopt *Time-binding* As Their Own

Since Korzybski published *Manhood of Humanity* in 1921, some people have consciously adopted the theory of time-binding as their own. The ones I know personally or know of appear to have gained advantages which no linguistically-and-culturally-determined, traditional "theory of humankind" can match. For example, these include

opportunities to eliminate intra-personal as well as inter-personal conflict and power-struggle; opportunities to treat our fellow-humans as co-equals, rather than divisively, as some kind of "threat" to the "rightness" of our own culturally-determined views; etc.

If and When a Group Adopts *Time-binding* As Its Own

In principle, any culture, any group could, at its own initiative, consciously adopt the theory of time-binding as its own "theory of humankind". As I picture it, the process of adopting this general theory would NOT require an amputation—the group would not have to chop out and throw away its own traditional "World-View" with its own built-in, restricted "theory of humankind". I do imagine that someone would have to show how the traditional viewpoint fills the role of a special case of time-binding—which, formally speaking, amounts to having this person inter-translate between that traditional "World-View" with its encoded "theory of humankind" and the more comprehensive theory of time-binding. To do that, the inter-translator would, I believe, have to disclose, bring out, and make explicit the previously-concealed restrictive assumption—and the group would then have to acknowledge it as restricted and restrictive. In so doing, they would re-frame the restrictive assumption in light of a more general frame of reference.

That would, of course, alter the traditional "World-View" somewhat—which means that the process of adopting and assimilating the theory of time-binding would amount to a turning-point in the development of that culture, analogous to passages individuals go through in the process of growing up and growing older. But just how the group would modify its previous ways of living would remain a matter of the group's choice, at its own initiative, and so need not violate its own sense of integrity and self-determination.

Then across the human species, what had looked like a chaos of codes of conduct, irreconcilably contradicting and conflicting with one another begins to become reconciled.

I see reasons to expect that any group that adopts the theory of time-binding as its basis will gain advantages analogous to those gained by an individual who adopts that theory. More than that, the theory of time-binding provides the basis for a whole-species code of conduct. By assimilating such a general "theory of humankind", the group removes its principles for what "Real People" DO and DON'T DO from the list of mutually-contradictory, parochial codes of conduct. Instead it aligns itself with a species-wide morality/ethics which acknowledges and accepts the relationships of humans with themselves, with other humans, with other organisms, and with the cosmos as a whole.

Reconciling Previously Fixated Conflicts

Now return to the first page of the Tutorial, and consider again any one of the fixated conflicts listed there—say, between a Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan and a black sharecropper who had filed as a candidate for an elective position on the local County Board of Commissioners. If each of the parties to these previously fixated oppositions has already assimilated the theory of time-binding as her/his own, that would mean that each has drastically altered her/his assumptions, and so her/his stance. Under these altered conditions, the kind of confrontation I suggested when I wrote that list could not occur.

Indeed, the descriptors I chose to name the opponents would no longer apply. No one who had assimilated the theory of time-binding could serve as Grand Dragon of a Ku Klux Klan that still pursued its historic mission (to use tactics of physical violence and terror to insure that humans of African descent—humans with melanotic skin—remain in subservient social roles, regardless of whether we still allow the institution of chattel slavery). No exponent of time-binding, I believe, could or would remain a member of such an organization. Likewise, in order to assimilate the theory of time-binding, the "black sharecropper" would have had to revise his own self-esteem and re-evaluate his own social status, and explicitly recognize that he, too, contributes directly to the human heritage, and that observations he makes may well enhance the lives of his peers and successors. And each would have had to reassess also who constitute his peers. Given these altered conditions, I regard it as likely that these former adversaries would meet as mutually-acknowledged equals.

Similar considerations apply to other of the listed conflicts.

People who adopt the theory of time-binding as their own, I expect, will transact in ways that do not precipitate out as fixated conflict and power-struggle. Rather, the participants have the tools—the assumptions, the skills, the personal commitment, the self-esteem— to transact in ways that end up RESOLVING conflicts and power-struggle.

SO NOW WHAT?

As members of the currently dominant world culture, we have considered it our job to "fix" the world. We have done so with great, and increasing, success—and we don't like some of the results: polluted air and water, eroding land, changing weather patterns, disappearing species, etc. For centuries we have tried to "fix" the world without paying any attention to our own assumptions—our linguistically-and-culturally-determined picture of our relationship to the world.

Up till the recent past, we have not had a useful, general "theory of humankind" (set of assumptions) that describes humans-in-their-environments in disconfirmable, operational terms. Now we do.

This picture shows us that the only way effectively to change what we DO requires that we change what we ASSUME.

The available evidence seems to indicate that the best chances for the long-term survival of humans-in-their-environments will arise if we bring into existence cultures explicitly based on time-binding.

How do we go about creating such cultures?

You and I have already made a start—we both know that the theory of time-binding exists. It says that when a human changes the way s/he transacts, everyone s/he comes in contact with has to alter the way they transact with her/him.

LIVING the assumptions encoded in this theory takes practice.

However, to the extent that we make this our OWN lived theory, we contribute to revising the ways that humankind functions.

It starts with us. Will YOU take it on?

C. A. Hilgartner

Now take a break:

Anyone who has stuck with this Tutorial this far should take time to catch your breath. Please look at what you have accomplished already—and allow yourself opportunities to assimilate some of what we have presented you with.

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