

Time Binding That Which Defines Us as Human

We humans have the ability to arbitrarily group things into categories or classes based on some unique characteristic they all possess. Thus, a clock, credit card and speed limit sign all fit into a category of things that have numbers on their face. Author and scientist Alfred Korzybski used this ability to group most living things into three such categories: plants, animals and humans.

In general, plants possess the ability to capture the energy of the sun, and combine it with elements in the air and soil to produce food for themselves and others. Korzybski called this ability to combine energy with other elements, 'energy binding', and called the plants 'energy-binders.'

Animals, on the other hand can move about from place to place. They are not rooted in one spot like plants but move from one space in their world to another. The animals can this way tie together one point in space with another point, and Korzybski gave them the label of 'space-binders'.

While you and I can move about in the space around us, and can even synthesize vitamin D from sunshine on our skin, we possess a unique property that totally differentiates us from the other two classes: we can bind time. We can ponder in our minds the thoughts of Edison, Shakespeare, Plato, and other long departed human sources of information. We can write our own thoughts, or electronically record them for future generations. For this reason Korzybski called us 'time-binders'. We are not limited to today, or what we can see for ourselves.

For an energy-binding plant to survive, it must remain in contact with the source of its energy. For a space-binding animal like a lion in the jungle to survive, it must move from one place to another. Likewise, if we time-binders are to survive, we must constantly strive to incorporate the wisdom of the past into our daily lives. We cannot personally experience a sufficient number of events to provide us with the knowledge necessary for safe guidance through life. Think about all you have learned thus far about this world, and then think about all you have yet to learn.

You, the student, are not limited to what you can see and hear today in your immediate vicinity, but you can visit your library and read what the Pharaohs wrote, or look at your television and see what is happening locally, or half way around the world. You have the ability to "freeze" and "unfreeze" your experiences with language. You have the opportunity to attend schools and universities to utilize the minds and nervous systems of other humans. Further, those minds can be hundreds of miles or hundreds of years away from you. You do not have to rely upon natural instincts for your survival, as do other animals. You are unique as a human and as an individual. For all these reasons, you can be called a language using TIME-BINDER. Make use of this talent, this gift, and utilize it to become an effective time-binder.