

LANGUAGE MATTERS

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How we use language determines the way we evaluate our relationship with ourselves, others, and our world. Many human problems can be traced to our ignorance of the ways we use language and the ways language influences us.

— Alfred Korzybski

- We use language to speak, write, read, and listen.
- We use language to think and express our feelings.
- We use language to analyze and solve problems.
- We use language to establish rules, regulations, laws, policies, procedures, ordinances, and standards.
- We use language to reach compromises, agreements, settlements, resolutions, and contracts.
- We use language to understand, to be understood, and to pass on our understandings to others.
- We use language to dream, imagine, contemplate, cogitate, deliberate, create, innovate, and ponder.

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and ...

- We use language to mislead, misinform, and misunderstand.
- We use language to deny, suppress, inhibit, prohibit, and limit what others do and say.
- We use language to rule, dictate, terrorize, intimidate, indoctrinate, and alienate.
- We use language to generalize, categorize, stereotype, pigeonhole, and profile.
- We use language to lie, cheat, steal, quibble, libel, slander, sue, and defraud.
- We use language to perpetuate myths, superstitions, prejudices, feuds, and atavistic traditions.
- We use language to create and exacerbate fear, anxiety, regret, guilt, jealousy, paranoia, suspicion, and hate.

If your language is confused, your intellect, if not your whole character, will almost certainly correspond.

— Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch