

**WONDER.** I see a cloud; I see the moon; I see a star, the Sun.  
I see a tree; I see a leaf; I see a grain of sand, a shell, the beach.  
In the distance sailing boats, the Manly ferry; water laps at my feet.  
**A**nd I see that courageous mosquito, risking its life to suck my blood.  
I see the things that make up the world around me; benign things,  
all very familiar; all of them have to be there; all of them wonderful.  
**I** think about the wonder of what's beyond ... the Earth, solar system,  
galaxy and universe. My mind wanders from the material to the ethereal.  
I lie on the sand, eyes shut; I ponder my place in the world.  
**H**ow strange all this came about ... and how strange I am here.  
My being here amazes me, but I'm glad to be here. As I contemplate  
meaning and purpose, I am content and grateful. It all is a wonder.

*"And you realize how lucky we are. Lucky to be alive, to be breathing  
in this world of beauty ... where it's lucky to love and to be loved."*

*Bruce Springsteen, in 'This American Life' by David Leser  
SMH, Good Weekend, 31 October 2020*

*see also HUMAN*

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**WORDS.** One day the Polish-American philosopher Alfred Korzybski was giving a lecture to a group of students, when he suddenly produced a pack of biscuits wrapped in white paper.  
**H**e muttered that he just had to eat something, and he asked some students if they would also like a biscuit. "Nice biscuit, don't you think", said Korzybski, while he took a second one.  
**T**hen he tore the white paper from the packet to reveal they were dog biscuits. The students were shocked; two of them wanted to throw up and ran for the toilets.  
**Y**ou see", he remarked, "I just demonstrated that we do not only eat food, but also words - and that the taste of the former is often outdone by the taste of the latter."  
**H**is prank illustrates how some suffering originates from the confusion of linguistic representations of reality, rather than reality itself; one's perception of truth is not truth itself.

*Korzybski is famous for his remark:  
"The map is not the territory",  
a representation of his discipline of  
General Semantics, meaning an ab-  
straction derived from something,  
or a reaction to it, is not the thing itself.*

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*"One of the difficulties of thinking clearly about anything is that it is almost impossible not to form our ideas in words which have some previous associations, with the result that our thought is already shaped along certain lines before we have begun to follow it out. A word may have various meanings, and our use of it may deceive us into supposing that we were using it in some other sense."*

*A. A. Milne, author of Winnie The Pooh  
wrote the pacifist essay Peace with Honour  
in 1934, between World Wars I and II;  
it is about the nature of aggression and  
the difficulty of establishing who is really  
the defender and who is the aggressor.*