General Semantics Help Sheet
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Principles and Extensional Devices

The principle of **non-identification** — no two things or two points in time are **exactly the same**

Korzybski provided the **extensional devices** as tools to help us implement this principle:

- **indexing** — student$_1$ is not student$_2$; apple$_1$ is not apple$_2$

- **dating** — Andrea$_{1994}$ is not the same as Andrea$_{2004}$.
  Andrea's understanding of GS$_{June\ 14}$ is not the same as
  Andrea's understanding of GS$_{January\ 14}$.
  The apple in my refrigerator yesterday is not the same as that
  apple today.

The principle of **non-allness** — we cannot know or understand **everything** about an event, a person, an experience, an apple, etc.

Korzybski gave us the device of **et cetera (etc.)** as a tool to remember this.

  *Even though I understand a lot about general semantics, I know that I cannot know everything. I include the **etc.** to remind me of what is left out.*

When you observe these principles and use the extensional devices when thinking, evaluating, questioning, processing, deciding, behaving, *etc.*, then you are more **extensional.**

Identification — when you "identify" you behave, think, believe, decide that two things that look alike ARE the same or IDENTICAL.
  "Students are students, I just treat them all the same."
  "Pick any apple, there's no difference."
  "Japanese people love rice."

Allness — when you operate from "allness," you believe that you have ALL the facts you need, you know everything about a topic, you don't need any more information.
  "I took 10 swimming lessons, that's all I need to now about swimming."
  "I watched the Olympics and I now know what to look for in a champion skater."

When you observe, react, respond, think, behave as if you have *all* the information, know all about something, don't perceive differences among things that look alike or seem alike, then you are more **intensional.**