



# First National Conference

Initiatives of Change Centre, Toorak, Australia

27-29 August 2010



## Living well

“through the effective use of language in thought and action, with General Semantics”



# Australian General Semantics Society Inc

Sanity - Unsanity - Insanity  
Psychology / Journalism,  
Nexialism, van Vegt's novels,  
Imaginative problem-solving  
Happiness Formula update  
Sense of Purpose & Wellbeing

## About General Semantics (GS):-

- the study of the structure of symbol systems (particularly language) and how it affects thought and actions.
- how we perceive, construct, evaluate and communicate our life experiences,
- the inter-related effects of language and symbols on our attitudes and behaviours,
- an interdisciplinary system with practical application for everyday living,
- a methodology of guided awareness to better understand and evaluate our experiences and reactions,
- a point of view that applies a scientific way of thinking to the challenges of everyday problem-solving,
- a teachable framework for critical thinking, media literacy and personal responsibility.

## General Semantics arises from:-

- the work of Alfred Korzybski, a Polish Count, engineer and military officer, and an extraordinary observer of human behaviour. He survived the horrific battlegrounds of World War I and wondered why humans could progress and advance in some areas, but not in others. He theorised that the attitudes and methodologies responsible for advancements in engineering, the sciences, and mathematics could be applied to the daily affairs of individuals, and ultimately cultures. He called this new field General Semantics and introduced it as a practical, teachable system in his groundbreaking 1933 book, *Science and Sanity*. This work is a fundamental building block in diverse disciplines including RET and NLP.
- many other books and works by authors exploring the human condition and contemporary issues,
- university courses, industrial and commercial training programmes, and ongoing academic research in USA, Europe, India, Australia and elsewhere.

## The Institute of General Semantics ...

- was founded in 1938 by Alfred Korzybski to enhance and promote GS as a useful discipline, to foster study and practice of the principles and formulations,
- conducts courses, conferences, seminars and workshops to promote the sharing of ideas and experiences of GS practitioners, and introduce the discipline to others who may benefit from its use,
- publishes books, quarterly and annual journals, and maintains internet sites and resources for use by members.
- in "Special Consultative Status" with the United Nations as a Non-Government organisation.



## Australian General Semantics Society:-

- Was founded over 20 years ago by Laurie Cox and Andrew Lohrey.
- is affiliated with the (international) Institute of General Semantics, communicating with practitioners globally, sharing ideas, experiences and resources,
- meets regularly to conduct discussions and weekend seminars, sharing experiences and insights, communicating with GS practitioners globally and studying GS materials.
- is in Association with the United Nations DPI / NGO (Department of Public Information / Non-Government organisations). This relationship entails having effective information programmes in place and the ability and means to disseminate information about the work of the United Nations.
- will be representing the IGS at the UN Conference on Global Health in Melbourne 30 August to 1 September 2010, following our AGS National Conference.

### Contact AGS:

Phone: 0419 698 200 (Dion Wilton)

Web: [www.ags.org.au](http://www.ags.org.au)

Email: [agssoc@hotmail.com](mailto:agssoc@hotmail.com)

## Victorian Chapter of AGS

- was formed when Tom Valcanis and Earl Livings discovered the AGS Website, then met with several AGS members in 2009,
- provides a local contact facility for Victorian enquirers seeking engagement with the GS community,
- enables our Melbourne colleagues to share in our resources, international GS community links and personal contact.
- Provides a Victorian contact for AGS enthusiasts to meet and experience the cultural wonderland of Melbourne!

## The AGS First National Conference

Living Well

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- A chance for AGS people from far and wide to meet, share experiences, knowledge and insights, and have some fun while we're at it!
- A forum for AGS members to meet with interested people in the Melbourne community in open session on Saturday afternoon and evening.
- Leads into the UN "Global Health" conference, as we represent the Institute as their local members.



## First National Conference

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### Are you;

- curious about things - want to make sense of the world, searching for better understanding?
- interested in self-improvement?
- concerned about developing clear thinking?
- concerned with critical thinking and seeking to become a more critical thinker?
- wanting to improve communicating skills?
- wanting to improve relationships (at home, in the office, among friend, etc.)?
- wanting a general method to use to make improvements in any area?
- with a philosophical bent... someone who just likes to think about things?
- wondering even from childhood, if there was something 'wrong' with your way of thinking?
- Concerned with our human situation?
- Wondering why other people's thinking about things seems so different to your own?
- Thinking the world could be a better place, that our human situation could be improved?
- Feeling that, in terms of your views, you were born in the 'wrong' age, feeling out of place?

### This Conference is a colloquium on some challenging topics, including;

- "Sanity - Unsanity - Insanity"
- Psychology / Journalism
- "Nexialism", featuring of A E van Vogt's novels,
- "Imaginative problem-solving"
- "Happiness Formula update"
- "Sense of Purpose and Living Well"
- "Identity, non identity and then what?"
- "Creative problem-solving"
- "Longer - Living Well - GS Formulations at Work"
- "Plans and resolutions for the future ..."

*Note that this Programme is a "living document", subject (like all of our affairs) to change and enhancement...*

***General Semantics takes an interdisciplinary approach to philosophy, language & psychology. It teaches us to improve our thinking ability.***

***Come on Saturday afternoon and evening, to meet us!***

### Our Conference Hosts

**Initiatives of Change** (IofC) is a diverse network committed to building relationships of trust across the world's divides. Our conference is at the IofC Australian-Pacific Centre "Armagh":

226 Kooyong Rd, Toorak, Vic

[www.iofc.org](http://www.iofc.org)

(03) 9822 1218

Easy walking from Heyington Railway Station and trams. Plenty of free parking on-site! Please note that this is an alcohol-free venue.



## Our Presenters ...



**Laurie Cox MA** - AGS Founder, Consultant/Coach/Mentor in Communications and Problem-Solving. Laurie teaches and consults on issues such as Conflict Management, Communication, and Relationships. Author of "Self Management in Difficult Situations". He has studied and practised General Semantics principles for more than 50 years. Laurie has undertaken GS studies in the USA, and was a recipient of the prestigious Talbot Winchell Award in 2003 for his work in promoting GS. Together with Dr Andrew Lohrey, Laurie founded the Australian General Semantics Society in 1990. He is a regular presenter at the AGS monthly seminars, keeping us on the "straight and narrow" with material rigorously derived from "Science and Sanity" and other approved texts.

**Pauline Davis** - AGS President, Mother of magnificent teenagers, Manager and Map-Maker.

Pauline has been a GS practitioner since 1989, when she met Laurie at his introductory GS course. His "uncommon, common sense" resonated with her, so she joined his Tuesday-night GS discussion group. Pauline has found the GS formulations and tools useful in keeping her "maps" close to the "territory" in her property management business, family and community life. Through AGS, she met the current Treasurer Gavan Callaghan, and it only took 19 years for love to blossom. They happily share their lives at Bonnet Bay which they generously host the AGS monthly seminar meetings.

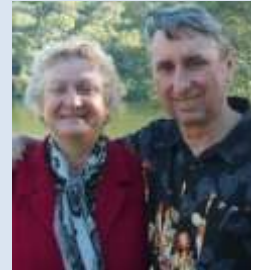


**David Hewson** M.Com(Hons), B.Sc (physics and maths), I.T. & Problem-solving consultant, GS Teacher. David has studied GS since 1977 and first heard of AGS when he met Laurie in 1992. David arrived in Australia from New Zealand in 1999 and resides in the Sydney area. Since then he has been a member of AGS and a regular attendee/presenter at our seminars. David has undertaken GS studies in the USA (5 seminars and 2 conferences) and gained an Approved Teacher of General Semantics certificate from the Institute. As well as acting as the AGS Public Liaison Officer since incorporation, he also keeps us abreast of current GS developments overseas and writes a Newsletter informing overseas GS colleagues of our events. He has published several articles in "ETC" and runs a GS related web site: [www.dh.id.au](http://www.dh.id.au)

**Jeanne & Robert James** – Parents, facilitators of AGS activities.

Robert has known Laurie a long, long time, and has attempted to assimilate GS principles such as Time-binding, non-Allness in his family, community and professional (IT Project Management) life.

Jeanne has worked for some decades teaching ESL (English as Second Language) and Special Education at schools and aged-care facilities. Jeanne's passions include Art Therapy, Singing, Yoga and Diversional Therapy. Jeanne and Robert have lived in Canberra since they married 35 years ago. They enjoy the socially and intellectually edifying AGS activities when they can.



**Dr Earl Livings** - Writer-Editor-Teacher: [www.thewritingcycle.blogspot.com](http://www.thewritingcycle.blogspot.com)

Earl came to writing and poetry late, after careers and ambitions in mathematics, martial arts and music. Earl had had poetry and fiction published in journals and anthologies around Australia and also in Britain, Canada, the USA, and Germany. He is the current editor of Divan ([www.bhtafe.edu.au/divan](http://www.bhtafe.edu.au/divan)), Australia's first all-Australian online poetry journal, and in 2005 he won the Melbourne Poets Union International Poetry Competition. He teaches a writing course at Box Hill Institute, Earl completed a PhD in Creative Writing, and is working on his second collection of poetry and a speculative fiction novel. Earl lives with his wife, Jo, and two cats

**Tom Valcanis**, freelance journalist and Master's candidate in Media and Communication studies.

Hailing from Melbourne, Tom has been an enthusiast, student and practitioner of GS and GS principles ever since discovering Korzybski during his undergraduate studies at Melbourne University. Graduating with a BA in political science he tried his hand at freelance music and culture journalism in Melbourne and Atlanta, GA before returning home to embark upon a Masters' degree in Media and Communication. He has been selected for the advanced research dissertation program by the National Centre for Australian Studies with a thesis entitled "The Media Ecology of Rock Journalism in Australia" which will employ GS influenced techniques and theories. He currently writes for Onya Magazine and other on-line publications.



**Dion Wilton** BVA (film & television production),

Dion brings a "real-world" view from the realm of commercial media and communications that keeps us in touch with contemporary trends and technologies. As a long-term student of General Semantics & proprietor of Creative Information Media, Dion works in a freelance capacity with a wide client base to produce productions that range in genre from entertainment, corporate thru to training, General Semantics provides the formulations to manage problem-solving / conflict-management strategies and communications with colleagues, clients and suppliers. Apart from casual tutoring for Metro Screen (Sydney), Dion also presents the occasional seminar at the AGS Monthly meetings.



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## Australian General Semantics Society Inc. First National Conference

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226 Kooyong Rd., Toorak, Australia  
27-29 August 2010

REGISTER NOW

The AGS First National Conference is a premier learning event designed to provide enjoyable and meaningful learning and interaction with the GS community over these few days. Join with us to explore and progress our "Living Well" journey!

### CONFERENCE FEES (for non-members)

Attendance type	Sat am	Sat pm	Sat Evening	Sun am	Sun pm
Casual Sessions	\$20	\$10	\$10	\$20	\$20
Great Package Deal	\$70				

*(Includes Morning Tea and Afternoon Tea. Excludes your transport and accommodation)*

### REGISTRATION DETAILS;

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Phone: ..... Email: .....

Pay by: ..... Amount: \$.....

Role at the Conference: .....

Comments: .....

.....  
*(We don't guarantee any cancellation refunds, but will try to accommodate special circumstances)*

## Australian General Semantics Society Inc.

[www.agssoc.org.au](http://www.agssoc.org.au)  
[agssoc@hotmail.com](mailto:agssoc@hotmail.com)

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