THE FILE CLERK AND VALENCE SHIFTERS

A lecture given on
5 July 1950

The Mechanical Approach

If an auditor starts asking stupid questions of the file clerk, he will get demon circuit answers. He should ask for yes/no answers, names, numbers and dates.

Supposing one had a good chief clerk in an office full of files. What would one expect him to do? One wouldn't go in and say, "Is this business going to succeed or fail?" or, "Give me your estimate of the stock market reports." But one could ask him, "What was the date of the merger of this company?" And he could give it immediately, because it's there on file. He is up against the standard banks, and the standard banks are a beautiful filing system set up by time and topic, all indexed and beautifully crossreferenced. Evidently it only takes the file clerk a millisecond or two to swing in and sort the whole thing out and hand out the answer. It is extremely rapid. But he will give the auditor names, dates and any question that can be answered with a yes or no.

The auditor can say, "The name of the person who is talking in this engram will flash into your mind (snap!)."

"Mother." The file clerk will produce it.

Or, "The place this occurs will flash into your mind (snap!)."

"Hospital."

But ask him for the name of an incident, or "What is this operation?" and he will very often stub on it. That is because one is asking him for a reactive bank datum, and the file clerk doesn't work with the reactive bank beyond a certain point. The reactive bank is an incomputable mess. This is all the material that he has had to push back in the corner; all he knows is what is on top. And he will look at this junk pile that he is trying to get rid of. Basic personality really wants to get rid of it too and is very accommodating.

When one is close to an engram one can sometimes ask the person if he can give a vague approximation of how many other engrams there are like it. But it's not accurate. He can't give an accurate answer for the good reason that this is all junk piled in the corner. It has never been entered into the files, and that is what is wrong with it.

In this case, we are not addressing the file clerk. We are addressing something else. There are currently two major unsolved problems in Dianetic therapy.

The first one can be labeled "Methods of getting people into their own valence with great rapidity and very early in a case." We have several methods that do this, but there have got to be better ones.

The second problem concerns methods of knocking out lie factories and discharging painful emotion.

We have answers that will accomplish these things much faster than they have ever been accomplished before, but there have got to be methods that will accomplish them even faster, and that sort of precision is what we are looking for, so that one can practically stare a person between the eyes and get all the painful emotion off the case. Of course, the optimum is a 1 l/2-minute clear or, even better than that, a 30-second clear. Some of the cases in the past I could have visualized very easily as being 5000-hour clears!

Those are the problems, and I am going to try to take those problems apart.

Sympathy engrams are particularly bad because they form manics. They are closer to the alignment of the dynamics themselves—closer to survival—which makes them harder to get.

Try to take a manic-depressive apart sometime and one will discover a rough case on his hands. The manic-depressive was not considered the toughest case in psychiatry but he definitely is in Dianetics, because those manics will be very solid and there will probably be a bundle of them. It is one dramatization on the part of some member of the cast, and that will appear many times, and there is probably lots of injury and so on. He will also protect that ally down to the last ditch, and therefore protect his own psychosomatic illness.

Sometimes people can't pronounce the English language well, and when you find the reactive bank on a wide pun, it is usually the fault of the speaker. For instance, "I hate coffee" might just sound like "I hate coughing," but the "ng" disappears out of the thing so the person goes around detesting coffee.

The reactive bank will only register what the soundwave says, but it will register what the soundwave says with the most remarkable accuracy. Don't expect very many puns of word misinterpretation to turn up unless those words are completely homonymic.

Punning is not the lowest form of wit but it is certainly the most engramic. "He rowed a horse." The reactive bank will just as soon have him doing this.

It is remarkable to note that a very heavy reactive bank can destroy, if it's on the apathy side, a person's sense of humor. There is where a sense of humor goes down the drain, both that and the fact that there is no sense of humor in the reactive bank. Take a very heavy apathetic bank where the person has to make so sure analytically of everything that is said that if someone cracks a joke, he will look at that person very carefully and figure it all out. Then he will probably nod. I have had such people look at me fixedly and after a while say, "Oh, you're joking."

Laughter is an interesting mechanism. Take the world of the monkey. If you watch monkeys, you can see that if they run into danger they laugh uproariously. Little children, too, when put into mock danger will laugh about it, and they will sometimes go around and tease some very dangerous source and then run away yelling with laughter. That is a natural mechanism. When the interior engram world is in there solidly, and a person is confronting that, he will sometimes take the same reaction against the engrams. They may be his most serious, most aberrative engrams and yet he will go around telling jokes about them, and laughing. It is evidently a method of keeping them in line.

Laughter definitely does have survival value. It is very peculiar stuff. Someday we may know all about it, but I doubt it.

The next subject I want to take up is the various steps connected with valences. People are commanded into valences. They don't just drift into them. The fact that one can command a person from valence to valence while he is in therapy demonstrates this. The engram bank can do very thorough commanding on the subject. In other words, a person is put into his valences by engrams, and he will be locked up in them by engrams which specifically state that he must be in those valences. Engrams command him out of the valence that he is in.

When one gets down to the early part of the track, one has less engrams and therefore one can slue the preclear out of the valence he has been occupying and into his own valence. Most of the time one will accomplish this by taking him down into the basic area, keeping him rolling in his own valence when he starts to slip out of it and running him on through. One can in such a wise get sonic in the basic area if one hasn't got a lot of emotion on the case.

If this can't be done, one had better pull the preclear out of his commanded valence, the one he's occupying, by discovering and reducing the engrams which are holding him there. This is not always easy to do because the commands keeping him there may be multiple in the extreme. Such phrases as "I can't be myself around you," which is one of the lines of the early 1900s, and "I can't face it, I can't believe this is happening to me, I'll have to pretend it's happening to somebody else" are basic, highly generalized commands which will slue a person out of his own valence into another one. "I am just beside myself" will also knock him into another valence.

But the things that really put him in a valence are specific orders to go into a specific valence which exist in this form: "You're just like your father. You talk like your father. You act like your father."

"All right. I like my father. I'm proud to be his daughter. I'm just like him. What are you going to do about it?" That sort of a quarrel causes a valence shift in the engram.

The child when born will go over into a dual valence, his own father's valence by misinterpretation, but more solidly that of his maternal grandfather because that was the actual one meant. This basic command will now get enforced by something like this, "By George, he'd better be a lot like me. I don't trust you. If he's not like me I will kill him"—Papa. That is a call-over into a valence.

So a person can be pushed into someone's valence by a command, or a demon circuit can be set up that holds him in that valence, or the valence itself can call him into it.

A person can also be bounced out of a valence with a command like "He'd better not be like his father." It will not necessarily bounce him into his own valence, but may throw him into his mother's valence. However, he would also have to be assisted by a call-over into Mama's valence with a phrase such as, "You're just like me, aren't you, honey?"

Another one would be "You will have to be a better boy. Why aren't you like other little boys?" All such commands throw out identification. A serious type of command would occur in something like "You're just like everybody else. I can't tell any difference between you and any other man. You needn't think you're so good," which works hand in glove with the demon circuit mechanism. So the person actually has a demon circuit of a minor or major character set up which is constantly ordering him over into a particular valence. It isn't merely an engram in restimulation, its a whole circuit, because the valence shifts are to a large degree on the subject of "you," which is a demon circuit setup. "You are like your father. You grow more and more like your father every day."

Valence shifting then is done sometimes by social repugnance for other people, but more probably by the social desire to be continued after death. So, if Grandma says enough times to the child, "You're just like me, you're the spitting image of me when I was your age. You're just like me. You're a very nice boy. I like you very much," that acts as an order!

Now, when Grandma dies, Grandma to some degree has a continuum from the point of death as Grandma. It seems to be that life has set it up this way. It's a general desire on the part of men to live after death. That's why people make crazy wills. They are setting up valence circuits for themselves to exist in. The cell thinks everything Cell A knows when Cell A subdivides is now part and parcel of Cell B which is still Cell A. So it goes on an identity basis. Cell A is Cell A is Cell A is Cell A is Cell A, right on the level of reactive mind thought.

So we get a hundred generations of this cell. But it doesn't work that way in men. Papa is not the son, they are different individuals entirely. But on a cellular, reactive circuit, we have got A equals A equals A equals A, and on a cellular level there is nothing to do but to continue the valence and it goes on on that basis. It is a mock-up of the person, existing in another person's mind who is occupying the valence.

Then, as various engrams restimulate, a person shifts and one can see a woman, after her husband quarrels with her, look differently and talk differently. She has been shifted in valence and there will be a call-over into that valence.

Then she talks with Mamie next door and slips over into her papa's valence. Then perhaps she hops into Grandfather's valence, and only when she is riding horseback or enjoying a play is she in her own valence. That is the great relief of pleasurable entertainment. Not only is it pleasurable to a person even when cleared, it also has a tendency to permit a person to be comfortable in their own valence as well as set up mock-ups on the stage into which they can go.

This valence computation can be discharged from the top or the bottom. In doing so, we are actually jumping over the tape on one of the fundamental principles of therapy which is: Do not ask for a special psychosomatic ill or a special aberration. Handle it with kid gloves or one is liable to get the patient into something he can't handle.

I was interested in talking to someone who-appeared perfectly sane by today's standards to find out that he was changing his voice tones considerably. And I said, "Do you ever feel like anyone else?"

He said, "Sure, doesn't everybody?"

So I said, "No. What's your sensation on this?"

He started thinking it over and said, "Well, when, for instance, you came into the room, I felt like you, and if somebody else were to come in I would feel like that person."

And I said, "Do you ever feel like yourself?"

"Well," he said, "myself...." This didn't even exist in the engram bank. It was a lost commodity.

This dramatization was a command to be everybody, one at a time.

A clear, of course, can mimic at will. That's the difference. He has got his own individuality. But it's the very fact of the analytical mind's ability to mimic that makes a valence shift possible.

A person could not learn anything unless he could mimic to some degree. It is a natural mechanism. Take a baby at three months of age who has no heavy engrams in restimulation and smile, and if you can attract the babyb attention he will gradually twist his muscles around so that he does the same thing. How did he know? He can't see his own mouth moving. So it's a spooky mechanism. And you say, "Ho, ho, ho, ho," and he will quickly form his mouth to the same position, trying to figure out why no sound comes forth. This puzzles him.

It is certain that a child after four months in the womb starts recording analytically. One can go back and find conversations about this and that. The child has its ears open. These are not engrams or holders. They just listen. I have even found symphonies in there. And a person starts going over them, they are like a pleasure memory. They don't erase. It's a full analytical recording.

That one must tackle a valence as a specific aberration violates the general law of not tackling specific aberrations, but attacks the case from the standpoint of getting out mechanically the earliest engrams and getting erasures, without paying much attention to the computation. However, don't neglect to pay some attention to the computation, because part of the mechanical factor is the computational standpoint.

In one prenatal incident there was Mama's father saying, "I know I am going to die. Don't come to my funeral because I don't want you to feel sad. Now don't cry, control yourself. I know you'll be a girl I can be proud of. I have always loved you dearly and I don't want you to feel bad about this. But never come back to see me and never look upon my face when I am dead." This occurred with Mama crying and carrying on, and complaining that now she would be left all alone and would not be able to bear up in life. She went on to say that she felt everybody was against her, her husband was against her, her husband's mother was against her, her brother, and so on.

This occurred about two months postconception. Her father continued to die all through the rest of the prenatal period but this was basic on it. So we had to find out who was dead. That was a mechanical solution to an emotional engram we were looking for so that the case would free up, and we got that solely by asking the file clerk what to pick up.

Sometimes one asks the file clerk to hand up the next incident that is necessary to reach, and "I" will hand one something which is in conscious memory. He will say, "Well, I remember my aunt telling me once that my grandfather died and didn't want anyone to come to see him at the funeral. My aunt was telling me about this and I've just remembered it."

That is the file clerk at work. But he is working now up through the regular area where he works. His chief line of business is in the standard bank. So, we get that incident in view and then we know that it is locked squarely on the actual incident. Father said, "Forget me. Forget everything that has happened. Don't remember anything about me," which caused a block-off. But with the lock in conscious recall, we know that it is settled right down on top of the engram. So the instant we start to run this lock we say with a snap of the fingers, "The file clerk will give us the engram that accounts for this." He runs it and then we say, "Is this the earliest one?"

"No."

"How many are there before this?"

"Three."

"Go to the beginning of the first one." And the case falls apart and begins to work beautifully.

Then we can say, "Can we now go to the earliest moment when somebody said 'against me,' yes or no?"

"No."

"You will now give us what we have to have before we can get to the earliest one," and so on.

Before that, the case had been about 50 hours in therapy. The error in that case was very definite, and consisted of going after specific aberrations by repeater technique. The auditor had found several convulsions and just doted on running these convulsions, then didn't have any dialogue sense so didn't know that there was somebody else talking in the convulsion. The case would have solved somewhat if she had just recognized that.

So, don't go for a specific aberration or psychosomatic. Work the case on a mechanical basis and it will resolve.

But when one gets into working out valence shifters, one has to go after something specific. In doing so, one must get the full cooperation and consent of the file clerk. One doesn't use repeater technique, but gets the reason why—the basic engram which commands the person to be Mother. One tells the file clerk what one wants. If the file clerk can produce it he will. Usually that engram is in restimulation, ready to be pulled.

One keeps pursuing it on this basis: "Give us the engram which we have to have in order to get to the engram which commands you to be your mother." And the file clerk will obey.

One has to give the file clerk enough data of what one is trying to do, and he will cooperate. But one doesn't just go in with repeater technique.

The file clerk expects the auditor to give him plenty of help in order to hand up the bottom engram. The auditor controls the analytical mind while the file clerk hands up the data. If the file clerk hands up material which has a bouncer in it the person will bounce off the material. But nevertheless the file clerk will hand it up. It's up to the auditor to recognize there is a bouncer. People who don't trust the file clerk on these things make bad auditors.

The next thing is how do we free up the file clerk so he will work with us?

Dub-in is caused by a cross channel from imagination to reality and reality to imagination. There is a short circuit on imagination. Imagination can be very powerful. It can contain all the perceptics except pain. But that can get crossed up and we get weird things like prenatal visio and all sorts of oddities. If the person's sense of reality is in bad shape, the auditor must work on a straight memory circuit and try to restore his sense of reality if he possibly can.

Some of these people have lie factories, and they are the ones with the jumping somatics, ordinarily. They will have other manifestations which are quite interesting. Some of them when asked for a bouncer will give a denyer. Some of them will talk about being able to go over the engrams themselves.

People who go around wondering about their engrams and rolling them in present time, trying to think what is in them and so on, have one engram in common and that is "Control yourself." "Control yourself" and "I can handle this myself" are demon circuits and are not only not necessary, but very, very damaging to the process of thought and action. They are superimposed on the file clerk, and those "control yourself" engrams, including the whole composition of "You've got to get a grip on yourself, you've got to take it easy, you've got to do something or other, you've got to relax, you can handle yourself, you know you can, now control yourself, now don't get excited, now you can command yourself better than that, he who would learn to command others must first learn to command himself," are setting up demon circuits.

Sometimes one gets autohypnosis coming in on the top of the patient. A person who can do autohypnosis very easily has a "control yourself" mechanism as an underpinning to that ability.

As long as that is in place, the auditor can't control the file clerk and the somatic strip. They are being controlled by some kind of an internal mechanism. So if an auditor gets a case that is really bucking and he doesn't get material off the case but gets all sorts of visio where he shouldn't, or he asks for a bouncer and gets a denyer and so on, and the case is not cooperating very well, he must knock out that self-control mechanism.

Self-control mechanisms are very prevalent in the society and are very common in the engram bank.

If this carries forward for a good, healthy series of cases we have dub-in licked. At present we only have a series of eight on it that broke precisely at that moment, which is not long enough for our purposes in Dianetics. At Johns Hopkins University, the world would now know all about it and have it as an absolute fact which "everybody" knew. But that is not good enough.

So, when an auditor tackles a case that is proving a little bit rough, he should get in there and knock out that "control yourself" mechanism, and note how the case is worked. It is likely to be very early in the bank, so he should cooperate with the file clerk on it and make it as mechanical a process as possible.