

PROCESSING CHILDREN

A lecture given on
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Pointers

This is a brief lecture on treating children with Dianetics. Although this problem has been touched upon in the past, there have been no very definite statements made about it. There may be an impression that children are almost impossible to treat by Dianetics. This is not true, and the Dianetic auditor who tries it is going to be most astonished at his success.

The warnings in the Handbook are directed toward those people who will try to handle the child the way one would handle an adult preclear with statements like, "Lie down, close your eyes, go back to..."

The child does not work this way. Handling a child requires a great deal of personal charm. One has to be able to interest the child. He will take Dianetic therapy as a game when he will not take it actually.

I have worked a child slightly over 4 years of age and have achieved very marked results with the child. I have also worked children at 8, 9, 10, and have found that in that bracket they are much more accessible and that results seem to be more certain. At 12, 13, 14 years of age, the child seems to be a trifle less accessible but nevertheless quite treatable.

At 17 and 18 one is dealing with an adult who can do almost anything the auditor wants him to do. It is at that bracket that one can first expect a person to be able to undergo therapy just as any normal person would, with "Close your eyes, let's go back to the earliest moment of pain or unconsciousness . "

In the early years a child's mind is not completely formed physiologically. It is still growing. You see evidences of this in a certain lack of concentration which is not engramic and in their lack of ability to handle themselves physically.

Something else which is not physiological enters in as a very important datum. The child has a limited supply of data. Therefore, his ability to relate what he discovers to his own reality is limited. One must recognize that this lack of data first manifests itself in overuse of the imagination.

The mind is constructed to supply with imagination what it lacks in information. If this is interrupted by some uninformed person such as in psychoanalysis, where all is delusion and so on, or by mothers who say, "That's your imagination, you had better be careful about using your imagination," one gets the worst case of childhood dementia.

The brain has to have imagination. If it doesn't have imagination, it cannot make from a few isolated data any conclusion. It has to fill in the gaps. Further, if one had no imagination or his imagination was not in its fullest play, he could not make an accurate prediction of tomorrow.

Imagination is a fine predictor mechanism. That is probably its basic purpose. If one wants to upset a person about the future, take from him his ability to use his imagination.

In treating children, the auditor is going to find the problem of imagination very acute in many cases. The child has come into the world, has looked around at a bunch of sour-faced adults for a while, has a few data and has tried zestfully to recompose this data into something which looks to him like a logical picture.

A dinosaur romping down Hollywood Boulevard could be a perfectly logical picture to a child, but the adult comes along and says scornfully, "Oh, that's all in your imagination. You shouldn't use your imagination."

As one treats children, one gets a beautiful cross-index of the adult world. It is stupid. I have never failed to remark on this in treating a child. Usually the child is quite bright when he first comes into the world, with an acute sense of what is real and what isn't.

He will try to tell adults jokes, and he has a very playful look toward life. But the adult says, "Oh, no, that isn't so." I imagine that many a child feels like a comedian who is talking to a house that is absolutely flat.

The social aberration is that there are several ages of human being. The first is the age of protoplasm where there is no life, no feeling; no sensitivity up to birth. It is simply protoplasm and that is that.

The next age begins magically at the moment the umbilical cord is cut. This is "Oh, you dear, sweet, cute little thing, you." And this means the child is very sweet, quite pure, quite innocent, and all in all a very wonder of a thing, but not a human being of course.

The next stage of childhood is when a child is unlucky enough to try to learn language from people who don't know language. This is the postspeech period of childhood which is very trying. The child discovers here the social aberrations in full force. He wants to know what such-and-such a word means. He finds out merely by uttering this word that people fly off at tangents, look at him scornfully, stand him in a corner and so forth. But he can say "cornflakes" and nobody does anything to him, which gives undue emphasis to language. So he gets punished because of language, and language becomes very dangerous stuff to him.

But he is still cute and people can still bear with him because he is dependent. Dependency has a high value in the society. It has such a high value that today people in Washington are willing to sell out the whole United States and all of its philosophies and past glories for the great privilege of being depended upon by the mass of the populace.

During the Thirties, people in Washington were avidly creating indigency. The WPA was no effort to rehabilitate the self-respect of an individual, it was an effort to coax his dependency into being so that somebody could look smart and important.

In the very small family scene you will find out that the child is made into something with which to bolster the ego. People keep dogs for the same reason. I have seen children that the parents had mistaken for army privates, or for sailors in the navy. I have seen children who have been mistaken for almost anything that would act as a sop to the engrams of the adults. But seldom have I ever seen a child taken for a child. It doesn't occur to people that the child is a live, living, thinking organism possessed initially of enormous self-determinism. It is the first goal of the normal adult in this society to break utterly and forever, if possible, the self-determinism of the child.

I have become convinced of this by listening to the cant that goes on, "Elders know best. You must do this. Now just mind." I will admit that a child is noisy and that a child breaks things; or a child because of lack of data and coordination may be a bit trying on those who have a blocked second dynamic. But I have found the following to be the case: Any child who was engaged in breaking things, in being bad, was in a high state of revolt which would not admit of an immediate surrender to anything save heavy corporal punishment.

We have the reverse of this in what is laughingly called modern psychology—laughingly called because this is the most insidious undermining influence on children that I know of.

In the first place a child has to have a goal. There are many ways to handle a child, and certainly a child has to fit in as a social unit in a family as soon as possible. The quickest way to

make a child an antisocial unit is to punish him. The pain-drive theory always adds up into an antisocial state.

It adds up to the fact that the child, by modern psychology, is more or less denied his self-determinism in his early stages, and yet is told continually that he has all of his self-determinism. Then when he gets his brains rocked thoroughly by this, they can call him an anal type, or something of the sort. The child has to have a goal. His goal is growing up and being an adult. As long as he has this goal, he does pretty well; he can come through almost anything. "Someday I am going to...." That's hope. That is the mind overcoming obstacles toward a known goal.

Any system which knowingly or unknowingly seeks to convince the child that the thing to be is a child is going to lead this child away from a goal and is going to make his wits rot by that and that alone.

Therefore, some of the worst cases in Child Dianetics are those children whose self-determinism has initially been undermined because, by lack of skill and parental intolerance, they have at the age of 2 or 3 broken things or cried a little loudly, and been punished and then gone into revolt.

The Gestapo up there at the top doesn't like to be revolted against. This is actually a totalitarian regime. There is no court, no justice for a child. He has no recourse to law. He goes against totalitarianism and he gets slapped flat. So he revolts again and he gets slapped flat. And he revolts again and he gets slapped flatter. And by the time this is kept up, he finally gets broken down.

Then, when he is sufficiently broken down so he is about the most dangerous character one could look at, down inside, then they say he has now been given social graces.

The child would learn naturally by mimicry and by a desire to become an adult. But if he doesn't see any profit in being an adult, if adults aren't enjoying being adults or if he finds a great deal of profit in being a child, his goal is stripped from him. This is all on a wide computational margin.

But the process of breaking a child into harness in the society is a process of breaking abreactions. Now, this child has engrams. At first they are not badly restimulated. After Papa has vented his pet fit (which may only be sullen discouraged silence over the whole thing) a few times, this is a restimulator and it is being used now as punishment on the child.

The child, healthy, growing—or even unhealthy but still growing—will try somehow to break loose in this environment which is hemming him in, and it will hem him in closer and closer.

There is an idea we have in this society that a child has to play and have a good time. I have seen the most disgusted children I ever wish to see who had to play. It's tough. "Now go out and play" is a sort of punishment. Such a child has no responsibility. Nobody looks to him for anything. Besides, nobody has bothered to define what play is.

Play is actually a natural training process built into the mechanism. A child goes out, he learns to handle himself, coordinate himself and so forth. But, instead of using it that way, it's used in others.

A child learns by mimicry. Most children, unless they are severely aberrated, are very good mimics and they look at the adult and try to use the adult as a pattern for their own actions. This is natural. Unfortunately most adults around children have quite a few dramatizations. So the child may start now to mimic the dramatization, little witting that he has this same dramatization back of him many, many years or months in the form of an engram which has a lot of pain connected with it. So the instant he starts to mimic this dramatization it reacts back on him and comes up to the surface. Let's say it's the fight chain—he sees Papa fighting. He decides, "Oh,

that's the way an adult acts." And so he fights with his little playmates and occasionally tries to fight with Mama. Only he uses Papa's dramatization.

And what does this do to Mama? This has been setting her off her rockers for years. So, Mama at this point departs rationality even further, and promptly breaks the dramatization. She has been trying to break it for years, and here it is, so she smashes it.

If the child goes into Mama's valence, he may do the same thing toward Papa. I worked on one child who had been very clever about this. He used the parents' own dramatizations against the parent who had the dramatization. He practically broke them. He had very high survival value.

With these crosscurrents of broken dramatizations one after the other, soon the child goes into a hysterical state of great nervousness, indecision, and an inability to do what he is supposed to do, or know where he is supposed to be. With everybody changing his mind around him, and unable to mimic the target that he is supposed to mimic and thereby learn, he goes crazy and this is known as modern childhood.

If you have ever seen a flock of children playing and noticed the high hysterical scream lying back of a voice and the number of times someone gets hurt, realize that you are dealing with somebody in a temporary break, not with a little child.

The coitus chain is particularly severe on the prenatal child. Although innocent, those are some of the most aberrative moments, yet they are almost impossible to avoid because one doesn't even know the child is there for the first weeks.

Here is a review of what I have learned in treating the children of America. One can spot the child immediately who has quarrels in the home. It is a truism that the child who comes from a broken home is nervous. But that is one of these shortsighted surface views. Why did that home break up? That is the reason the child is nervous. The dramatizations which throw one parent against the other bring about a highly nervous condition in the child.

Preventive Dianetics aims toward keeping engrams out of a child, and toward no restimulation. Don't throw the same phrases at the child that you know he has in his bank.

For instance, one little boy at the age of about 4 1/2 was addicted to bed wetting. The parents had no clue as to what this could be or how it could be controlled.

In a review of the moments prior to the child's arrival in the world there lay the engram in the first many contractions of a tough birth, "Lie there now and go to sleep. Don't get up." And somebody says, "But the water's breaking."

"That's all right, just lie there and let it come."

So, this little boy of 4 1/2 was obeying these injunctions 100 percent. He was wetting the bed and couldn't be awakened. Trying to reach this birth sequence in him at that age was impossible. Then, they suddenly realized that every night they were telling the child the exact words that would key in the engram. "Go to sleep," they would say to him, and then caution him about the water, which restimulated the command in him. His father didn't know too much about how one dramatized an engram until all of a sudden here was the whole sequence. He himself had installed it and every night was reinstalling the command in the kindest possible way.

So, they no longer tell the child to go to sleep, and they don't talk to him about water, "Don't drink any water before you go to bed," and so forth. They just delete all these things and simply say, "Good night," instead, which has brought about an improvement.

They had been putting the child back into the anesthetic of birth. He hadn't been sleeping, he had been lying there drugged, every night for years.

So, treatment No. 1 is to prevent restimulation of the child. It is quite important. Treatment No. 2 is breaking locks on the straight memory circuit. Treatment No. 3 is releasing painful emotion from places one would never believe were painful. This is done in reverie.

One can take a child, for instance, of 6-7 years of age and get an emotional discharge of grief. And once a bit of grief comes off the child's case one would be amazed at the improvement in that child.

It is very hard to get a child early. The way one gets him into reverie is not by making him do anything very special or spectacular, but by playing a game with him. Most children's recalls are pretty wide open.

One doesn't have to be too saccharine about this game either. It is trying to find out if the child can go sleigh riding, walking, hiking, swimming— pleasure moments.

One will find the child will go through these things rather easily. After a child has gotten the idea of doing this, one can pick a moment when the child has been bumped, having him pick up the bump. He will usually pick up a recent bump very quickly and run it out with all perceptics. And that will get rid of the pain.

One continues to pick up recent bumps and little bits of pain, as well as recent emotional upsets where the child was scolded, until one has deintensified the bank that is near present time. But at the same time one has educated the child into an ability to return, without undermining him in any way.

One is very careful not to give him positive suggestions or a lot of advice. It's no good anyway. One doesn't know what he is trying to think up or to resolve and one certainly doesn't have enough data to solve his problems for him. He may have various conflicts and engrams in restimulation that have to be steered around which one doesn't know anything about, so no adult could solve a child's problems.

Then one educates the child a little bit further into picking up and running through an illness, let's say 2 or 3 years before, and getting him back along the line. Usually this material will blow off, it's so light. Being so active, the child can throw this off easily.

One will find it possible to knock out dramatizations on standard diagnosis with Standard Procedure. Don't go for the engrams, go for the locks and knock them out, and one very often gets emotional discharges on them. Deintensify those and then try to make sure that they are not restimulated later.

Education comes next. Try to teach the child to handle himself so that he can throw natural discipline in on himself rather than aberrated discipline. Natural discipline of course has to be within certain established limits. Never upset a child's decision, but try to make him handle himself.

Give him a reward, or little bits of pain. Assign him tasks, skills and so forth, and make it quite inexorable that these things take place. Never install an engram when you punish the child. You can give him a little corporal punishment, a little switching won't kill him, but don't say anything.

For instance, you can say, "Well, too bad. I assigned this to be done by 2:30 this afternoon. It isn't done." So you simply pick up your switch, and switch him lightly. In that way one is setting up life in vignette. If we miss doing things in life, we get punished for it. Life punishes us. But it's not that tough on a child because, as adults, we are standing as an interposition between life and the child to a large degree, so we have had to substitute just a trifle. But, don't be angry with the child about it.

After this has happened three or four times one will be amazed at the amount of self-determinism that the child begins to pick up, since his self-determinism is now being directed toward handling his own organism.

Where there is an older child in a family, he won't do anything to a little baby. He will be very interested. But sometimes parents get the idea that the child's nose will be out of joint about this and they try to take measures one way or the other and do the whole computation for him and then say, "This is the way the child reacts," whereas the child doesn't react that way at all

A baby has a rough time around an older child. Babies fortunately are practically indestructible. They are very hard to hurt.

The problem in dealing with a child is that one is dealing with an aberree. He is a little character in a world full of giants. And what one says to him has weight far beyond what one intends it to have.

The problem is to observe departures from what one would consider rational conduct, and not throw these things off or assign them to the idea that he is just a child after all. Children will act fairly rationally. They will act as well as they have data. They will figure things out just as well as they can. But they don't have much data sometimes and they get some very peculiar solutions to problems, such as a little boy I talked to recently. He had been punished. Everybody had been furious with him. He had been ostracized and kicked out of the house. Papa had come home and beaten him up and so on and he was in bad shape. And after all he was just trying to be helpful. He had buried the silver in the garden in nice rows because he wanted to grow some more silver! He couldn't understand it. Nobody in the whole course of the conversation bothered to tell him the missing datum that when you plant metal you don't get metal. Of course, all Mama could think of at the time was the fact that her silver was lost forever.

So, the discovery of the missing datum when one is handling children is very important. And one will find some of the strangest concepts in a child, particularly if one is dull enough ever to give him access to Eugene Fields and Grimm's Fairy Tales. Eugene Fields is terrible because he adds all this pathos about how the little boy is dead but he has laid out his toy dog and then an angel comes by and so on.

The data a child has sometimes is of insufficient relationship to the real world to be properly differentiated. This can be in what the child reads, but it is just the same as what the child is told.

Then there is Little Orphan Annie, and "The goblins will get you." That is a rough one. I have picked up more charge out of more people off that poem in childhood, and in three children have practically straightened their lives out just by picking up the emotional charge in that poem.

Here is a brief resume of computational neuroses and even psychoses one might find in a child.

You not only have to learn how to think like an engram when you are dealing with children, you also have to learn to think without data. And if you ask yourself, "Let me see, if I knew no more than this child, what would I think about something?" you will come up with some remarkable computations.

It takes some practice to think that way. One little girl was in a neurotic state. She did nothing but run. She would never walk, and could not be persuaded to. In the course of running she would inevitably fall and bruise herself. She was accident prone and was always a mass of contusions. So, I treated this little girl and in the course of about an hour picked up the following data: There was an engram someplace in the bank which laid down the proposition that one was liable to take root and grow. Somebody was a globetrotter and had to move around. The phrase "take root and grow" was the key.

Now, the child had read a story in school about a little boy who was a laggard—and this was a moral tale. He lagged and lagged and lagged, and one day he lagged so much and he fell so far behind and stood so still that although the family told him, “Come on,” he didn’t, and there he took root. Roots came out of his feet and they went down into the ground. Of course, when the family went back to find him, they couldn’t, because there he was standing as a tree, and he was never thereafter able to attract anyone’s attention.

This story can be found in bookstores, and even the best regulated families give this one to children to read.

The engram said, “Take root and grow,” so the child didn’t dare stand still. When she was standing she couldn’t let her feet stay down because roots were going to come out of the bottoms of them and attach her to the earth and there she was going to be forevermore. And she was in a state of terror about it.

The felony was compounded by Lewis Carroll, a rather innocent source. Papa was saying, “You have to run just to keep up and you have to run twice as fast if you want to get anywhere.” So, this poor little girl was in a bad way. I started back down the track on more or less straight memory, locating various things, and finally found out by a little adroit cross-questioning (that didn’t appear to be cross-questioning) that she was liable to take root and grow.

Papa said this continually in quarrels in the family. He wanted to go out and travel, he wanted to move around, and Mama wanted him to settle down and take a job and stay there. “Do you want me to take root and grow?” he would say.

So I went back and found the earliest dramatization of this quarrel and knocked it out. Note that I didn’t go back and find the story being read. It would be a waste of time to do that. Try to go to some live bait.

The story was simply an indicator. One must find a dramatization or a punishment or something of the sort and knock that out. For instance, a child starts worrying about “the little tin soldier is covered with rust as sturdy and staunch he stands....”

In trying to find this thing, one will probably find an incident late at night, when the child is sick and somebody is saying, “Now say your prayers.” “Now I lay me down to sleep,

I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake,

I pray the Lord my soul to take.”

Tin soldier and toy dogs and so forth are part of this proposition because an angel is liable to come and he is not going to be there anymore.

Now, the child says, “What is an angel?” One can tell from his questions what is disturbing him. He finds somebody who he thinks has data. He will start asking questions, and they will sometimes appear to be very illogical, irrelevant questions. But they are not. Follow them along the line and one can sort out of these questions what is troubling the child.

“What is an angel?” is not a natural question for a child to ask. An angel belongs in metaphysics, in mysticism someplace, but not in a child’s bank, not on that level. If this child is really interested in the definition of an angel, he is interested in the definition of something that doesn’t exist, which indicates the fact that there is already disturbance on the subject.

What would the child be interested in normally? He would be interested in food, clothing, shelter, good companions, being loved, playing games, imagining things to do, and so on.

When you find him way offside asking questions about things that belong in mysticism or about the behavior of certain people such as, "Mama, what is a crazy man?" this child has just bumped into something, and if you are doing therapy on him, get interested. What does this child ask questions about, what does he want defined? And particularly, what question does he ask that nobody can satisfy? What question does he ask chronically?

When doing therapy on a child, one does practically nothing but listen. That way you gain the confidence of the child because he finds he can talk to you. In fact, you will find him a gushing geyser of conversation, even if he is usually rather mute.

I have taken a child at the age of 6 and knocked out locks and worked with the child and had considerable success, because there is something that is working on one's side. The organism at that stage is growing, it has a goal as an organism. It is not yet static, it is still changing and there is enormous resilience. The child will pull out of almost anything.

It is very difficult, however, when a child has an enormous amount of emotion in the prenatal bank. If somebody has died in the prenatal bank or been left in the prenatal bank or something else very emotional has occurred, there one is going to discover a great difficulty. A child will face physical pain before he will face emotion. I don't know why. The endocrine system is triggered up so that it is very high-powered.

As a matter of fact man himself is a very emotional beast, but the society says no.

Concerning children and sex, when we consider that a child has along the coitus channel all sorts of shame and dramatizations in the line of sex, and when the child is surrounded by older children who have engram banks to dramatize, some of which are quite remarkable, and when one considers that sex in this society is top-secret, never to be relayed or talked about, one can expect a great deal of trouble in childhood along this line and a great deal of concern.

The engram which has in it a suppressor is the worst engram that a person can have, as a general rule. This is why straight line therapy has such a marked effect. It is taking suppressors off information. A suppressor on something seems to double the power. It cannot release itself and it seems to try to press up underneath, can't get free, and dramatizations occur.

The amount of perversion which is leveled against children will astonish you once you start working in this field. The child who is subjected to such an atmosphere, because of the aberration of this society, not because there is something very remarkable about sex, is liable to manifest in this society the worst aspects.

There will be a mental instability. There will be situations where the child is prohibited in communication. He has learned a few words. He has found that these words are bad. Already the words are suppressed. Then perhaps he does something or he is made to do something by some other child, or a teenager or adult outside the home, and this is very severely suppressed on an analytical level and it will go out of sight and trouble the child a great deal.

Free communication has a definite index with sanity, and that can be put down to anything in the field of the mind. Free communication and sanity are partners. Similarly, inability to communicate or suppressed data or communication is a partner of neurosis. The reason why group therapy works as well as it does lies in the field of communication. Freedom of communication all by itself is a therapy.

So in a child, the first thing that one can expect to establish is communication. And by establishing sympathetic communication with the child one will be delivering more therapy per square inch than may be needed to release the case.

The next area is that of semantics. When all else fails on a child, when one can't get early, or find engrams, when the locks are evading one and so forth, start squaring up semantics. This

can be done in reverie or wide awake, but it is best done on a semi-reverie basis even though the child's eyes are open.

One can teach the child how he can get better in school, if he is a school age child, by showing him how he can go back and take a look at the word in the spelling book, and he gets the idea rather rapidly, after which his spelling grades will come up.

But start looking over the semantics. Find out when he first had defined for him a particular word. What does this word mean? It is very efficacious to put him through a very informal little quiz.

One will discover that where he has improper definitions, he commonly has emotional upset or disturbance in that area. And although the word was defined improperly when the child was 2, and defined properly for him at the age of 5, he will compute basically upon the definition he received at 2.

In full clearance, this sort of thing goes out as locks. But semantic orientation with reverie is a study all by itself.

In reverie, go back to the time when things were misdefined for the child. One can tell his concerns from his questions. Now, take the words in which he is expressing these questions and run them back to find their first definition. Somebody had to define these words for this child.

If he is really concerned, he thinks he is concerned about the object. Don't mistake it. He is not concerned about the object, he is concerned about the words. Find out where these words came up, but particularly where they were defined for him, because his orientation and understanding of the world depend upon the definition of these words. It is very difficult to define words for a very little child who has very few words. As a consequence you get a crazy house of language built into this child's mind, interdependent, badly related, thoroughly upset. And this again impedes communication with him.

The therapy level here is just to get words that he is concerned with, because those words commonly contain an emotional disturbance area which will lead one straight to a lock with repeater technique. One will get the child back to a period when this word was used and it meant pain, or when it was defined to him in some way crossly or otherwise, in a way to suppress communication.

Utterly free, unimpeded, understandable communication in this world, all by itself, might very well resolve the problem of sanity and insanity.

If one gets into an engram in that fashion, run it. But one ordinarily won't with a child. He doesn't like to go back to those areas. Once in a while one will have to run the birth out on a child to cure his asthma if it is very bad, but I would certainly advise against it.

Try to knock out a few of the locks if possible. Find out what he commonly believes or thinks about his asthma. Try to key him out. After all one is working on a short span of years when one is working with a child and one can hit those locks and knock them out.

It would probably be fine to go through birth with an 11 year old. One can try it with an 8 year old but try it by first finding out if he can go through his tonsillectomy, or something like that. One has to handle a child very carefully—very sentiently.

The bank gets pretty thin when one is down in childhood. It is actually in late life when incidents begin to stiffen up. What constitutes late pain? The engrams which have happened about a year or so ago. The rest of them are rather immediate engrams and one can knock them out sometimes quite easily and quickly.

The engram has not yet locked in with a lot of locks. It hasn't been superimposed by grief.

I would normally avoid moments of pain or unconsciousness with a child unless, as I worked the child and through an educational process, I was eventually able to coax him down the track so that he could run out basic-basic. I would let him get some unconsciousness off the bank, then start erasure and bring him up to clear. If one can hit basic-basic, one can clear someone.

One does not define anything for him. That would be evaluation which would be a break of the Auditor's Code.

A standard upset amongst children is data invalidation. I ran out a whole chain of these on a child one time. Everything the child said was invalidated. For example, he would say, "You're mad at me."

"No, I'm not, dear." He couldn't evaluate who was mad, after a while. That was one manifestation of it. This child was surrounded with people who did this continually. Or he would say, "You're feeling happy today, aren't you?"

"No, I'm not happy," yet the person had been singing a moment before.

The child would immediately think, "Gee whiz, this is wrong. I've said something wrong. My communication is wrong." So the child would get "corrected" continually although he had made a correct instinctive diagnosis of many things.

Then the adult, in an effort to mask from the child this or that, would draw the curtain and say, "No, this is not the case," when it obviously was the case. And one will see a child become confused for hours after something like that. There may be no punishment involved at all. His communication has simply been shut down on him.

But get the child communicating and start picking up the early moments when miscommunication occurred, and one will get some emotional charges off the child and have a well child. Unfortunately we can't treat children with straight line memory until the time they can talk.

I've never seen a key-in on an engram with total consciousness present. Nobody who has engrams is ever totally conscious, because unconsciousness is the common denominator of engrams. But there may be many of these perceptics suddenly happening in a bundle. If the person's current emotional tone happens to coincide with the engram's tone level, everything will add together, he will get a key-in and thereafter he doesn't feel quite as good.

I have known a whole chain of engrams, in fact a whole prenatal bank, that was keyed in on practically only one thing, the sound of streetcar wheels screaming as they turned a corner. Once that one thing was encountered the entire chain disappeared. And every period in this person's life that was serious or emotionally distressed or disturbed was triggered by streetcar wheels. Not only unconsciousness was common to all of these severe engrams but also streetcar wheels. They lived in a house at the corner where the streetcars turned every few minutes. That was the first key-in, but by having it happen again and again, this thing started to get high priority.

An engram lies dormant until its first key-in. All the words of the engram can be flying around the person. Even the emotional states of it can be flying around him until we finally arrive at a period when enough perceptics happen at the same moment to bring that incident into action where it can be restimulated, and it can thereafter be restimulated as long as it is keyed in.

An engram has to be keyed in in order to be subject to restimulation, it can't just be restimulated into view.

Going back along a life, one can find the exact instants of key-in. A very severe example of this would be a big AA bank, then the little boy walks in on Papa and Mama when they are attempting an AA. He hears the phrases which are uttered as their standard dramatizations, and of course keys in. He is not unconscious at the moment this happens, but the impact of it suddenly stirs it up and his whole AA bank goes into key-in at that time. The child will not be well thereafter.

There is something important in the mechanical proceedings of engrams which one should recognize, and that is the unknown key-in.

An ally is not set up by being nice to the child. A typical falsehood was the idea that if one is nice to a child, the child is therefore being spoiled and will get sick.

I remember a navy admiral who said, "I don't know what the matter is with my daughter but I'm doing all I can to help her."

I asked, "What are you doing, admiral?"

"Well, you know after my wife and I separated, I went to see somebody in the field of psychiatry and he told me exactly what was wrong."

And I said, "Yes, yes, go on," because this little girl was sick and I knew what she was sick from.

"He told me that I would have to be very careful about my affection so that I didn't set up an Electra complex. So, of course I haven't been able to really get at the root of this problem as I can't talk to her a great deal because she's liable to start loving me. I don't even dare be affectionate towards her because you see this would disturb her enormously."

Here was the little girl practically dying because she didn't think her father loved her anymore. Her mother had gone and her father didn't love her either! So, this child had spent four years crying herself to sleep every night due to this sloppy logic.

The way it goes is that the ally who is around the child when the child is ill establishes a sympathy engram by saying things to the child which are engramic. And because this adult (the ally) loves the child, the computation on the part of the child is that he must then accept everything which is said at that time.

The kind of engram that creates an ally computation would be "Stay right here with me and fight it out. Don't go, don't die, please stay." That computation might come from the best meaning person in the world, trying to save the child's life, but the child is delirious with a high temperature.

That is an ally computation. It is what is said to the child when the child is injured—when anaten and pain are present. All one can do for a child at that time is to be pleasant and silent. The ally type of engram is extremely difficult to find in the child, later, because these moments become protected.

Don't, however, ever fall under the delusion that love ever aberrated anybody.

In the example above, the child was in "anguish" because of something. That isn't an engram. The moment when it was announced to her that her father and mother were being divorced and that her mother was going away, and when her mother said good-bye—those were moments of loss. But everything else lying on this line consisted of locks. Engrams are moments of physical pain, particularly when unconsciousness is very marked and deep. Demonstration of affection toward the child at such moments and word content of such a demonstration are not just aberrative, those are the things that make the very heart of a difficult case.

But when the child is not in physical pain and not unconscious, to deny the child love and affection is a very slaphappy observation that will make a child miserable and unhappy, and on a totally analytical level set up a highly undesirable situation for the child. And the withholding of affection from a child who is well, even if in sorrow, is simply another aberrative factor which is now thrown in on the child.

What affects a child in pain is the aberrative content of what one says. It's the words as they form, such as saying to the child, "Yes, I still love you dear, now lie quietly until the doctor comes, he'll be here in just a moment, I'm going to stay with you. Everything is going to be all right, honey. Now don't worry about a thing. You are a very, very good boy, I love you very much, now stay here, lie quietly. I know it hurts, I know it hurts a great deal, oh, you poor kid, you poor kid." That's murder!

If the child after an accident asks what happened to him, one can say, "Tell me about it." But watch your words, because there you have an engram going in and you can stand right there and put it in. You are the boss man as far as that engram is concerned, and you must realize that you are not talking to a thinking mind at that moment.

Part of the material in this chapter is also found in the article on "The Processing of Children" in Volume I of the Technical Bulletins of Dianetics and Scientology, pages 44-49.