

SCIENTOLOGY AND DIANETICS

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The Degeneration of Illusion

Technique 88

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TO THE STEADFAST AND LOYAL SUPPORTERS OF
TOMORROW AND THE THINKING MEN OF YESTERDAY

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- SELF ANALYSIS
- HANDBOOK FOR PRECLEARS
- DIANETICS: MODERN SCIENCE OF MENTAL HEALTH (1950)
- SCIENCE OF SURVIVAL (1951)
- SYMBOLOGICAL PROCESSING
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- COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS (HOW TO LIVE THOUGH AN EXECUTIVE)
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THE DEGENERATION OF ILLUSION

1. Axiom 121: Every *aberrated* thought has been preceded by physical action.

The addition of the word "aberrated" to this axiom strengthens the idea that theta is CAUSE and that physical action is only the EFFECT of theta.

If we view the ordinary organism – even the ordinary human organism – we may conclude that any thought which that organism has must be a response to some stimulus in the environment. We may conclude this simply because it is so easy to demonstrate the effect of the environment upon organic thought. If we limit ourselves to the opinion that thought is a function of organisms and, therefore, an accident of the MEST universe, we have to conclude that *every* thought has been preceded by physical action which CAUSES that thought to occur as a response. But we do not limit ourselves to such an opinion. Rather, we reject it.

The view of Scientology is that organisms and even MEST are EFFECTS of theta. Therefore, it must be only aberrated thoughts which are necessarily preceded by physical action.

This presents two possibilities which did not exist when we accepted Axiom 121 in its earlier form: (1) creative thought, in general, and (2) DED's, in particular.

2. Creative thought, most familiar to us in the field of art, is the aesthetic band of thinking, which has utterly defied analysis by stimulus-response schools of psychology. If *every* thought were preceded by physical action, how could there be

aesthetic creation? This impossibility has worried certain academicians who yet sought to justify the stimulus-response fallacy by saying that imagination was merely the recombining of remembered experiences, somewhat as a slot machine recombines lemons, oranges, and bells in its hypnotic process of separating the sucker from his nickels. Once in a while, they say, someone like Beethoven hits the jackpot with three bells, and we get the Seventh Symphony.

Is this a convincing statement? Can we believe that there was nothing original in Beethoven? That he was simply a better slot machine?

One wonders what would have happened to the opinions of these campus-bound pundits had they been placed in personal contact with Beethoven; had they watched him compose, known him intimately. It does not take long residence in our authoritarian educational system to reveal that there are a myriad imitators who call themselves artists, but this should not have deceived men of learning into thinking that art, therefore, was merely imitation.

The less aberrated thought becomes, the less it depends upon previous experience. Imagination, as exercised by the great creative artist at the peak of his power, is the highest commonly known kind of thinking. A generation of psychosophsists, who have riveted art to neurosis in the public mind in order to prove that man is mud, have still been unable to obscure this fact finally and totally: aesthetics is the upward road, and it takes many a one far beyond the scope and reach of the stimulus-response superstition.

Creative thought exists, independent of MEST, and it is detectable even in human organisms, which are partly MEST.

3. The second possibility presented by the change in Axiom 121 is that of DED's.

A DED is an exchange between the individual and his environment in which the individual uses upon the environment an effort which has not previously been used upon him as a counter-effort and thereby reduces the survival of some other dynamic. Later, this effort *is* used against the individual. The individual then seeks to use the later incident as a justification for the earlier incident. This is an attempt to turn the DED situation into a MOTIVATOR-OVERT situation by reversing the time table.

If every thought were preceded by physical action, the MOTIVATOR-OVERT would be the only possible situation, and the DED would not exist.

4. The word "DED" is a contraction of "deserved". It refers to the attitude of the individual that the harmed dynamic deserved what it got. It refers also to the attitude of the society, later, that the individual deserves what he gets when he receives the counter-effort from the environment. In neither of these cases does the individual or the environment deserve what it gets, from the point of view of the general survival, and so the word "DED" reflects an aberrated attitude. It is ironical terminology.
5. What is the relationship of "past lives" and "between lives" to the "whole track"?

It is very simple. The whole track is just that: the *whole* track. Upon this track appear various past lives. Between these lives incidents occur which are called "between lives". A past life is only a portion of the whole track upon which the individual was trapped in an organism. But the most severe incidents are concerned with trapping the individual into a body, and therefore the most important incidents are not to be found in past lives but *before* past lives and *between* past lives.

6. The MOTIVATOR-OVERT phenomenon gives us, as an interesting sidelight, an explanation of why running present-life pain incidents does not help the preclear, if it is carried on for long.

Each of these incidents in which the preclear was hurt acts as a MOTIVATOR for his hidden OVERT acts and DEDs. When these incidents and nothing but these incidents are reduced, the preclear is left with no excuse for his behavior. He quickly must bring up some other heavy counter-effort against himself as an excuse, so that he can say. "I behave abominably, I'll admit, but it's all justified by this terrible thing which was done to me." The preclear must continue to be sick in order not to be WRONG.

In order successfully to remove any chain of MOTIVATOR incidents, the auditor must at the same time run, by alternation, the OVERT incidents on the same chain.

7. Theta can BE or NOT BE. When it is BEING, it is infinite. When it is NOT BEING, it is zero.

Figure I shows the familiar tone scale drawn with respect to thought, space, and time. As theta ascends and descends the

tone scale, corresponding adjustments take place in theta's relation to space and time.

At the top of the scale, an infinity of time is under the control of the individual. At the bottom of the scale, the individual is subjected to and controlled by an infinity of time.

At the top of the scale, the individual controls an infinity of space. At the bottom of the scale, he is lost in an infinity of space, none of which he controls.

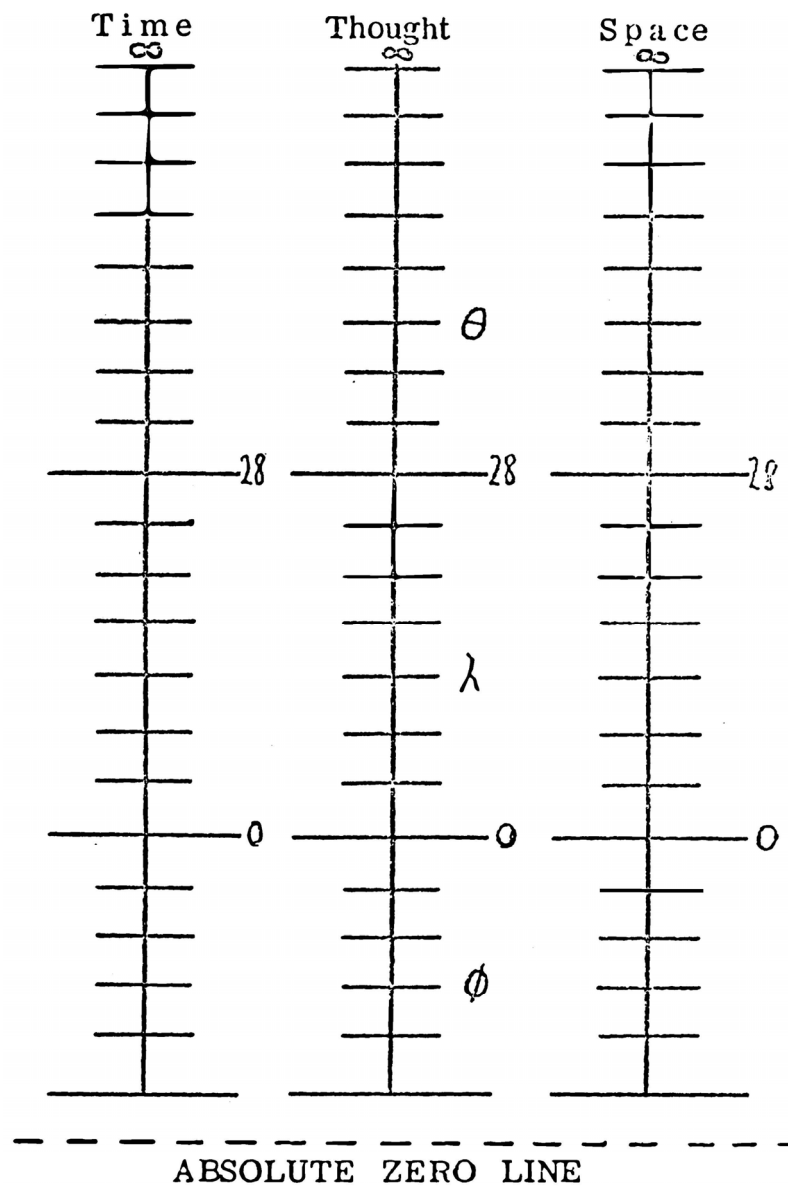


Figure I

There is a zero point on the tone scale, and it coincides with organic death. But, far below that zero point is the line of absolute zero. Many organisms reach the zero point and die, but no organism or theta being or other entity reaches the absolute zero line, because if it did all BEING would cease. Every portion of BEING is connected to every other portion. If one portion of BEING succeeded in *absolutely not being*, it and all other portions of BEING would NOT BE, and we would have no universe left to discuss, nor would we be left to discuss the universe we did not have.

9. On the other hand, we also may suppose that no part of theta is absolutely BEING. We may assume that no part of the theta resides at the infinite and absolute top of the scale. Any part of theta which did so would be infinite and would include all of theta, which then would be infinite. None of the special infinite forms in which we know theta would exist, and so the universe which we must consider, being in it, would not exist.

The tone scale relationship of theta to time shows us why an apathy incident takes so long to run and why a person in apathy moves so slowly. Control over time and space is practically nil.

10. At every point on the scale, between absolute zero and infinity, there is motion.

Motion is the interaction of space and time.

11. The first verse of the Gospel according to St. John reads as follows: "In beginning was the *logos* (thought), and the *logos* was with God and the *logos* was God. All things were made through it, and without it nothing was made..."

12. Here is a theory of the origin of space and time.

Before anything happened, there was nothing, and you had the experience of nothing happening. This is an experience which you can remember.

Then you decided to make an illusion. The first illusion was to make self.

That was the first thought, *the* thought.

The thought had no reality, since there was no one with whom to agree about it.

It had no affinity, since there was no one to love because of it.

It had no communication, since there was no other person to communicate it to.

But it was *the* thought, the first illusion.

When thought made no illusions, it was zero. When it made the first illusion, it tended to become infinity. As soon as it approached infinity, it had to retreat, since every one of its thoughts would have been infinity, and so, equal to every other of its thoughts, and there would have been no point to thinking.

Useful thoughts had to have finite size and shape. Therefore, you had to come down from infinity in order think.

In order to provide your illusions with a capacity for form, you created space.

In order to be able to get rid of your illusions without having to destroy them, you invented time. When you did not want an illusion any longer, you just said that it was no longer

"now" but was now "then". You put it in the past, so that you could fill up your present space and time with more illusions.

Your first thought was the illusion of self. Then you made another illusion of self, and another and another. But this was not getting you anywhere, so you began to differentiate between self and self. Finally you called one of these selves "me" and the others "he". And you made some of them "then" and some of them "now". You made "him" different from "you", and then you made "them" different from "each other".

The situation was beginning to become complicated.

You began to make puzzles for yourself. At first, you made only puzzles that you could solve, but then you succeeded in making a puzzle which you could not solve, and you were excited and pleased. You began to work on solving this problem. You worked with all your might, but "they" came around and began to work on it with you, and you had to go into A-R-C with them, and "they" added things to the problem and made it more complex.

Finally, after a long process of building this puzzle, it became so obscure and unfathomable and heavy and unmanageable that "you" and "they" agreed to call it "Matter".

"What's the Matter?" you asked yourself, but it was already too late for that, since Matter is made of illusions which have become too complex to be understood.

13. When this state has been reached, you find yourself doomed to "everlasting" A-R-C with "them".
14. This ability to put things in "now" and "then" may be demonstrated, even now, by thinking for a moment some

definite thought and considering this thinking as occurring "now". Then the individual switches the thought to the past. Suddenly this process is not "now" but "then". It changes from something he *is* doing to something he *was* doing, and it changes merely by his altered feeling about "now" and "then".

15. When so many individuals have been created and have therefore had to go into A-R-C with one another, the problem of agreement over illusions arises. The reality of an individual's illusions will depend upon the amount of agreement he receives from others. This can be made into a contest.

Bill makes an illusion. Joe comes along and disagrees with Bill's illusion, which vanishes. Joe is pleased. Bill now has two possible courses of action. He can go into apathy and agree with Joe, thereby abandoning his own illusion and strengthening Joe's illusion. Or he can repeat his own illusion just as it was before, thereby dissolving Joe's illusion and driving Joe down the tone scale.

16. Individuals who argue that this life is the only life usually are arguing straight from the fact that an organism is born, grows, dies, and decays and obviously does not appear again. They are right about this, but this is not a particularly important fact. The important fact is that the MEST body IS NOT the individual and IS NOT capable of any but the most rudimentary activities. The individual himself does not die or decay, because he is not MEST.

Figure II gives a rough idea of how concentration on one life only is related to whole track processing.

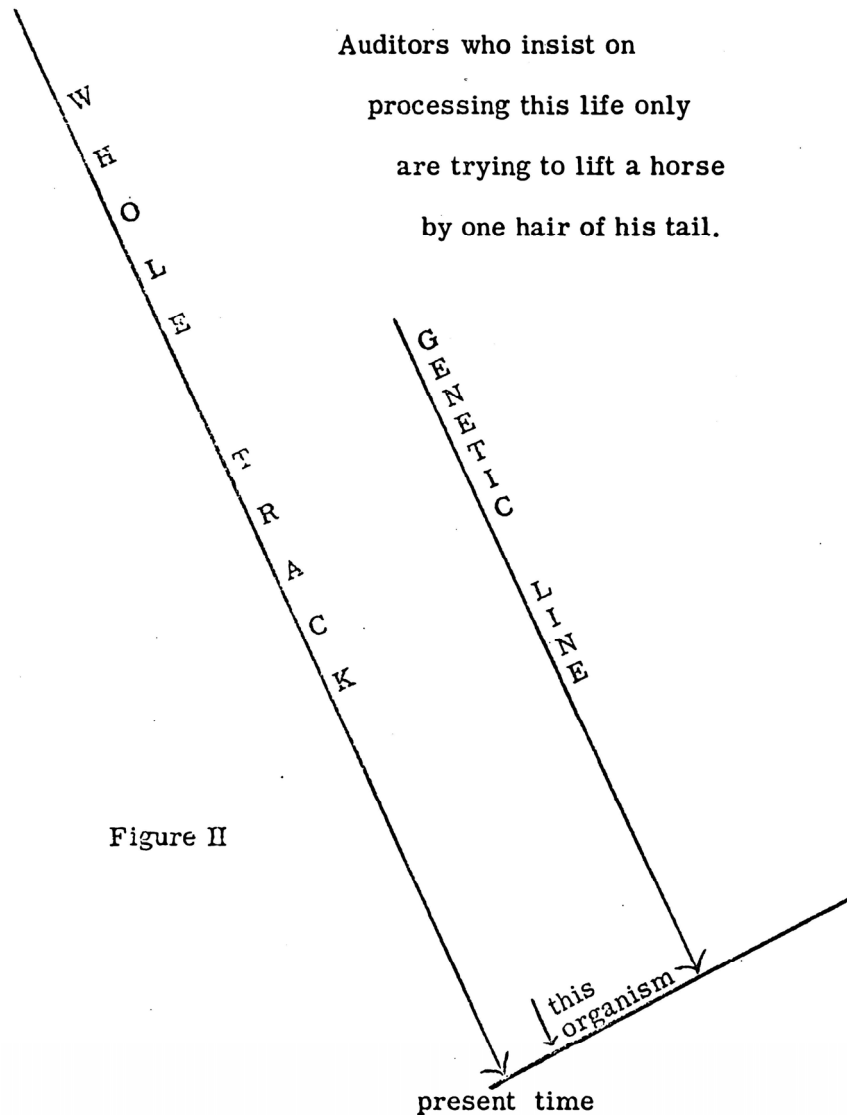


Figure II

17. This lecture contains important mention of illusion. What is illusion? Or rather, what do we mean when we say "illusion"? It might be a good idea to look, as we have done before with other important words, into the historical background of the word "illusion".

The root word is the Latin word *ludo*, which means *play, sport, toy, amuse one's self with doing*.

Ludus means a *game*. A *ludificator* is one who makes sport of another.

The verb *illudo* means *play with* and also *mock*.

The noun *illusio* means *irony*.

There is nowhere in the Latin source any meaning of self-deception, but when we come to the English word *illude* (which is obsolete) we find that it means to mock, deride and deceive, and when we come finally to the English word *illusion* we see that its first meaning (obsolete) is a deception and that its second (current) meaning is, at last, an *unreal or misleading image presented to the vision*.

What a long road, from *play* to *false perception*! How has this word come this road? What factors have brought about this change in meaning?

First of all, there is the Latin section of the road: from *play* to *mockery* to *deception*. This part of the path is not so hard to follow. We see, in the beginning, the prime individual, making his illusions, his plays. He is performing an activity of some kind which amuses him. Then another individual joins him at play. As long as these two are on good terms, they are playing together, but when they are no longer on good terms, the play of one will become the torment of the other. The reality of one will become the unreality of the other. The illusions (plays) of one will not agree with the illusions (plays) of the other. The first, by manipulation of illusions, may be able to deceive the second, to lead him astray, to confuse him. This is the development of *illudo* from *play* to *deception*.

But how do we get from deception to self-deception? For that we have to proceed into the English section of our road, and we have to introduce a new idea, not mentioned thus far.

If an illusion which an individual makes (or has, as psychology would say) can deceive him, if his own illusion can lead him astray, then there must be some other illusion with which it does not agree and which is correct. We cannot say that an individual's perception is wrong unless we have a standard of right perception. And what is this standard of right perception?

MEST.

The road from *deception* to *self-deception* in our process of defining *illusion*, is a road built solidly of MEST – as we might have expected. The standard for right (non-illusory) perception – that is, perception with no play in it at all, no fun in it, perception which is as solid and conservative and unimaginative as it is necessary for a solid citizen of the twentieth century to be – that standard is MEST. And what is MEST? It is only that illusion which has been most thoroughly and solidly and disastrously agreed and disagreed upon by so many for such a long time and under such aberrated circumstances that they have completely forgotten how to disintegrate it and are now definitely and finally stuck with it forever.

Illusion, in Scientology, does not mean *deception* or *mis-perception*. It means *play*. The individual who makes an illusion is amusing himself. When Shakespeare wrote HAMLET, he was illuding (in the Latin sense, of playing). The pyramids are an illusion. We cannot erase them, because

they are made of MEST, and we have forgotten how to erase MEST. But they are an illusion, as is MEST, and if we were in better condition we could do what we liked with them. A piece of paper is an illusion. If you burn it, the illusion changes. This is an experiment which is easy to perform right in your own back yard. When you develop more skill, try turning the ashes back into paper again.

Theta beings were meant to play. They make pretty things and then dissolve them or leave them in the past in order to make more and different pretty things. The fact that there are so many unpretty things around us is evidence that someone has been making bad illusions and neglecting to erase them. This indicates that a few of us, at any rate, are not so high on the tone scale as we might be. Imagine! Theta beings who let their illusions get out of control! Preposterous!

The habit of society of measuring the correctness of illusions by their likeness to MEST is a handy habit but it is not leading us upward and onward, by a long shot. It is not restoring our power to handle illusions, to create them, store them and destroy them. Rather, it is confirming our infirmity.

Let us consider the young bride-to-be who dreams of life with the man she loves as a relationship in which freedom and mutuality are sweetly blended. She wants to help him to BE himself and to accept his aid in her efforts to survive and BE herself. She dreams, in other words, of a CAUSE relationship.

After the wedding, it turns out that the new husband is a boor and a cad. He won't tell her what he does at the office, but he criticises everything she does around the house. He won't

take her out and he won't let her go out by herself and he won't be nice to her if she stays home. The miserable girl finds herself the EFFECT in a CAUSE-and-EFFECT relationship.

After a while she revolts and refuses him her favors. This makes him sit up and take notice. They go together to a marriage counsellor. The counsellor helps and advises them for a period of time, until they have learned how to maintain an unruffled EFFECT relationship, in which each tolerates the other.

And what does Mrs. Effect say to her bridge friends? "I've lost my illusions. I'm facing reality now."

The trouble with the human race is not that we have lost our illusions. If we had only lost them, we could make more. We have lost ourselves in our illusions. Our illusions have turned into MEST, and we are pinned under them. This is what makes our existence like a horror story by Edgar Allen Poe. Homo Sapiens is "Buried Alive" in congealed illusions.

18. Some review questions:
19. What is the purpose of Technique 80?
20. How long is time?
21. Do time and tide wait for no man?
22. If they do, for what man do they wait?
23. What is one way to express time?
24. What do the beginning and the end of time have most in common?
25. What size is a thought?

26. Is the symbol of the triangle within the circle suitable for casting spells upon enemies?
27. What would you be more likely to use it for?
28. Where is the power which is represented by the symbol?
29. How many dynamics, as a rule, is the normal individual surviving on?
30. How many dynamics IS the normal individual?
31. What is the accumulation of BEINGness?
32. What is the difference between BEING one's body and being *equal to* one's body?
33. Can John be CAUSE of Mary's efforts without Mary's being an EFFECT of John's CAUSE?
34. What does responsibility have to do with this?
35. What does control have to do with it?
36. What is another way to describe what the marital counsellor calls "a good adjustment" in marriage?
37. What three courses are open if Mary hits the neighbor's gate regularly once a week?
38. Why may it be a good idea to substitute the word "race" for the word "mankind" in the fourth dynamic?
39. What happens when an individual tries to BE one of the dynamics, say the third, without having already succeeded in BEING the dynamics which precede?
40. What do the yogi and the commissar have in common?
41. What is the penalty of failure TO BE?

42. What is the easiest way to observe the presence of a fast mover?
43. What are the disadvantages of having a body?
44. Is the cycle-of-learning the only way?
45. If not, what is another way?
46. Where, if anywhere, is your emanation point?
47. What lies beyond Computation Ridge?
48. Do you prefer to live IN the present?
49. What is your best relationship to present time?
50. What kind of time is all present?
51. What kind of time is all past and future?
52. What does an indecision do to the time which follows it?