

THE TONE SCALE OF GROUPS AND NATIONS

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Scale of Relative Survival

If we knew how to predict the course of a nation, if we knew exactly how to tell what was going to happen to that nation or what form of government it would next take, that would be very handy knowledge to have around. One would be able to take steps to keep that nation from going into totalitarianism or into the messianic state of apathy. One does not wait for a person to die before he treats him.

In Dianetics we have a tone scale which is a very interesting, simple mechanism. It has to do with the state of happiness or unhappiness of the individual. It runs from 0 to 5; 0 is death, and 5 would be about the highest level of happiness or cheerfulness you could reach. Most people on this scale hang around 3, and a psychotic is down around 1.5 or 1.

This tone scale would tell a person immediately how much life he had in him that was active and that could be devoted to the pursuit of happiness. A person at any level on this tone scale will demonstrate certain definite, positive reactions. The grouchy fellow is about 2.1. The person who is bored all the time is generally about 2.6. It is a very simple scale. It is not something that grew up for the fun of it. This was picked up from actual observation of engrams. An engram is a moment of pain or unconsciousness during which that person records.

These moments of pain or unconsciousness contain the material of aberrations. When we are reducing one of these engrams by Dianetic processing, we are just knocking the pain out of a person's life. It is a matter of recounting it just as it occurred. The first time he recounts it he is in an apathetic state. The next time he is possibly angry about it, he is rather angry at the people who did all this talking around him on the operating table. He recognizes that they did bad things to him. The next time he is rather bored, and the next time he laughs at it. Laughter is the top of the tone scale, and apathy is at the bottom. Right between boredom and apathy we have anger. We can see a person running an entire cycle.

A person who ordinarily runs about 4 on the tone scale could be expected to live a long time. This is the stuff of life itself. He would be cheerful and nice to people. If he had just a little less life in him he would be down on the "bored" line. We see this in the society group. He does not get a kick out of life. His work is boring. He wishes he was doing something else. What this person is trying to do is to get a little bit away from death. Perhaps the average in this society is around 2.5, or a little higher.

Just below this level one has anger. Anger runs from overtly hostile people, who are rather savage in their attacks on people, down to the person who is angry all the time. You say something to him and he will fly back at you. This person has much less life left in him, even, than the person who is bored. He is trying to fight back up from death, but he is not fighting the things that are trying to kill him. He is just fighting everything around him. He goes back into apathy. He is so tired. Life isn't worth living. He is denying his own dangerousness. He says, "Please let me go away; I am not bothering you."

The bottom of the scale is catatonic schizophrenia, a person who lies around and won't move.

This entire society could exist around the 4 band, if this were possible. But it is not possible for people to stay there all the time. Greece, in its Golden Age, could be said to have been at tone 4. Perhaps in the first days of this country, when we were searching out a wilderness and building the nation, we could be said to have been at tone 4.

A nation follows in its cycles the same tone scale as individuals. A person can be as high as

Greece was, or in a state of apathy as were the American Indians when they were destroyed as a nation. You can tell just what the mental health of a nation is by observing its actions. A country like Russia that is always angry is at 1.5 or 2. It is either angry or in a state of war. If a human being were in this band he would be titled insane. A state in this band could not help being a police state.

The United States for a while was rather bored but getting along. However, this last war reduced us to around 2.1, which is rather overtly hostile—ready to fight. We are drifting back down the tone scale.

Between here and death is totalitarianism.