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Meet a Scientologist—George Seidler, There Since the Dawn of Dianetics

When George Seidler first read *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health* in July 1950, the book was already breaking records. Published two months earlier, it rocketed to the *New York Times* bestseller list, where it stayed for 100 weeks.

Seidler, then a 27-year-old graduate student, was studying biochemistry at University of California, Berkley, courtesy of Uncle Sam and the GI Bill. As a medic in World War II—he refused to carry a gun—he earned a Bronze Star Medal for bravery at 21 when he crawled out of a bunker under fire and pulled wounded soldiers inside, saving their lives.

“I heard about *Dianetics* from a classmate,” says Seidler. “I was a scientist and a skeptic to end all skeptics. My philosophy was—unless you can see it, feel it, touch it, it isn’t worth bothering with. I told my friend, ‘Sid, you’re an intelligent

person. How can you believe that stuff?' But I was intrigued and I got a copy of the book anyway and started to read."

On page 2, Seidler came across something that completely changed his attitude.

"L. Ron Hubbard wrote that Man is basically good," he says. "I always believed that but never found anyone else who shared my views—certainly not in the religions I knew—but here was L. Ron Hubbard was saying it. My wife got interested and started reading it too. Before long, we were fighting over whose turn it was with the one book, so I got a second copy."

Seidler decided he wanted Dianetics counseling. His friend Sid agreed to pay for the training if Seidler would audit (counsel) him and his friend on his return. Seidler left for Los Angeles to study at the newly opened Hubbard Dianetics Research Foundation.

"When I got to L.A., the newspapers were announcing that L. Ron Hubbard was in town to deliver the first public Dianetics lectures," recalls Seidler. "There were 6,000 people at the Shrine Auditorium to hear him—the auditorium was packed. A few days later, I was one of 400 people on the course. Every morning, Ron would give lectures and in the afternoons we would audit each other."

Seidler describes what it was like to meet and work with L. Ron Hubbard: "Ron was a genius and one of the most talented, accomplished men who ever lived. He never put on airs. He was always easy to approach and talk to."

The results from Seidler's first Dianetics session were far beyond his expectations, but the results on the first person he audited on his return to Berkeley amazed him even more.

"When I got back home, my wife told me her best friend's husband was dying of Hodgkin's disease. I just knew I could handle this case. Here was this guy who looked like a living skeleton. He was coughing so severely he could barely breathe," says Seidler. "We ran an incident that occurred in Germany during World War II. His squad went into a house and a beautiful German girl was there. He was horrified when the soldiers lined up to rape her. He didn't participate, but he did nothing to stop them. That's what was killing him. Almost immediately after we ran that, he started rallying. He put on 30 pounds. He recovered."

Seidler has been an auditor ever since. He and his wife moved back to his hometown of Peoria, Illinois, where he took over running the family business—wholesale distribution of newspapers, magazines and paperback books—until he retired in 1998. Ever since that first session he has been introducing people to Dianetics and Scientology.

At 89, he is still the director of the Church of Scientology Mission of Peoria, and he still audits Dianetics. And he is still amazed at what it does for people.

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Scientologist George Seidler