

Agnes Bolinska.
Agnes Interview 1
Sampling day 1

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the April 8 interview with Agnes that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/4noaqCMgkP0>. If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please post them as YouTube comments.

RTH = Russ Hurlburt
Agnes = Agnes Bolinska
MD = Michael Dickson
RB = Robyn Bluhm

0:00 Russ comments: The comments that I have inserted in the transcript below are intended as commentary about what I think at the time I write the comment, which is generally within a day or so of the interview. They are not to be confused with the Truth with a capital T; there is no guarantee that I will agree with them if I review them at some later time, at which time I might revise or extend them; they are invitations to Michael and/or Agnes to disagree, or to amplify, or to say they don't understand, and so on. If they wish to insert their own comments, they should pick a color other than this green, and then do so. They should also feel free to correct the transcript.

0:06 RTH: So, this is a, gonna be a little bit of a different deal for the three of us, have met quite a few, quite a few times, but never in exactly this perspective, format, I guess I, I guess we could say.

0:20 And, and I, I guess I would also say that there's still time to back out of this. We could say, "well, y'know, this was not a good idea. We thought it was a good idea at the time, but that was then this is now." We should always have the right to do that. And we should always have the right to change our mind about the recording. So, I'm restating the rules that we, that I stated when Michael was the participant here, but, but now that it's Agnes's turn, we should, we should at least acknowledge that that's a possibility.

0:54 And uh, and the other thing I would acknowledge is that we have decided that we would, or we have (decided it might be a little bit too strong), but our plan was to make the video of this available to workshop attendees.

1:09 [Robyn Bluhm joins Zoom call.] And it looks like we might have a workshop attendee joining us. [Michael: Hello, Robyn.] [Robyn: Hi.] I don't know Robyn. Robyn, I'm Russ Hurlburt, nice to meet...

1:18 RB: Hi, nice to meet you. Robyn Bluhm.

1:20 RTH: Nice, nice to meet you. Welcome, welcome to it. We were just in the process of reviewing what it was that we were here, here to do today. And I probably ought to

do it at least a little bit about that again, because now we have, we have a fourth person.

1:36 So, so the *three* of us, Agnes and Michael and I, have been meeting for quite some time now in a sampling deal, more or less like what we're planning on doing today, except with Michael as the participant and Agnes as the interviewer. And, and today in the workshop deal, we're planning on turning that around and having Agnes be the participant and Michael and I being the primary interviewers. And, uh, and we'll probably alternate back and forth, Michael and I, in, in that regard.

2:12 And *you*, Robyn, should feel free to participate to the extent that you would like to do that. If you've got questions that you would like to ask, you should do that. If you would like to just watch and not say anything you should do *that*. That you should feel like, like, uh, that, that you should be able to do whatever it is that you want in that regard.

2:31 The, the aim is to put this on the web for the workshop participants so that those of us, those of *them*, I guess you would say, those of us who didn't show up, I guess that makes it *them*. Those of *them* who weren't here, aren't here today, can or cannot watch it at their 24/7 leisure or sometime between now and a week from Saturday.

2:56 And I would also say that, that we should, we should agree that we should keep this interaction as confidential as can be expected to, to be in a situation where there's a lot of people might have access to it. But, but, and by *confidential*, what I mean by that is that we should treat Agnes particularly with respect, in, in the sense that we're going to be asking her to tell us something about her experience, which is *entirely* private. And, uh, that nobody has a right to any access to *at all ever*, actually, unless Agnes is willing to share that. And, and we should take that seriously. And so we shouldn't do anything with Agnes's experience that Agnes would not approve of. I guess that's what I mean by *confidential*.

3:48 And uh, so anything else that we should be saying? Robyn, do you have any questions about this? Or are you just happy to... [shrugs shoulders]

3:55 RB: Uh, I don't think I have any questions right now. No, thank you.

4:00 RTH: And Agnes, are you ready for this? We know we...

4:04 Agnes: Kind of, I mean, one thing I just wanna say, like from the get-go is how hard this was! Um, like *way* harder than I expected. And I think also, I also wanna say from the get-go that I think *my* experience of this has been colored by my *previous* experience with Michael's, with interviewing Michael. [laughs] So I just wanna say that from the get-go, I don't know if I've done a very good job, but I've tried my best. [laughs]

4:04 Russ comments: Agnes is an unusual DES participant in the sense that she has substantial prior experience with DES from the standpoint of being a co-interviewer in a dozen DES sessions with one participant, Michael. Most DES participants have no prior personal experience with DES; and those people who do have prior DES experience have participated in interviews of a variety of people. I'm not saying that Agnes is in a particularly good position or a particularly bad position. I am

agreeing with Agnes that her interviewing of Michael will probably color her experience here in some way.

- 4:31 RTH: Okay, well that, that's fair enough. And, and I would, I would say almost everybody thinks on the, the first sampling day was very difficult. And, and some people think that it got diff- gets easier after that. I would say even *most* people think that it gets easier after that. But I'm not, I'm not suggesting that it *will* get easier for you. Maybe it'll get harder for you. What I am suggesting is that we, that we don't gloss over that. Uh, that, that if it gets more, I, I *don't* want us to *pretend* that it gets easier. That would be sort of the *worst* thing that, that. And uh, so [shrugs shoulders]
- 5:09 Agnes: I, I guess one thing I can say is that, um, there have been beeps where I felt like I did a better job apprehending my experience. And there are other beeps where I was just like, *ah, what just happened? I don't know!!* [laughs] Like, I don't know if Michael had that experience, but that was my experience or some, some I thought I did better than others. So,
- 5:31 RTH: Well, I would say, I would say what you've said so far is very typical of, very *similar* to what most people say in the first sampling day. [Agnes: Okay.] And, and in, in fact, I would say that the first sampling day is by far the most difficult day of every every, any sampling. And I think the reason one of, one of the reasons that descriptive experience sampling is not as, not any more popular than it is, is that first day interviews are very difficult. And, uh, and I liken that to something like sailing. If you're, if, if you're a small-boat sailor, the absolutely the most difficult part of small boat sailing is getting away from the beach, which is the thing that you gotta do *first*. And uh, one, once you're, once you're a hundred yards away from the shoreline, sailing is a pretty easy thing. But the first hundred yards is quite, quite a challenge sometimes. You gotta get surf and people and other boats and whatever that you gotta deal with. But, and, and in a, in a way, I think this is sort of like that.
- 6:30 Agnes: So, uh, another thing I should say is that like, I was worried that I wouldn't get enough samples. So, I actually started yesterday morning, and I went up to like sometime this morning. So I actually have eight. And I was wondering whether, um, it makes sense to just take the last six or, or what,
- 6:50 RTH: So are that like two from yesterday and six from today?
- 6:54 Agnes: No, two from today and six from yesterday. But starting yesterday morning, I, I did a few yesterday morning. Then I did, I turned it on yesterday evening and then I turned it on this morning.
- 7:06 RTH: Well, I would say my usual procedure and this kind of thing is to take the "fresher beeps" first. [Agnes: Okay.] So if we've got days, if we've got beeps from, from yesterday and today, why don't we start with today's beeps?
- 7:16 Agnes: Okay, sounds good.

7:17 RTH: And I don't really care in that regard whether we start with the last one and work backwards or whether we start with the first one from today and work forwards, which I guess is what I usually do, but there's not, not much of a usually preference [Agnes: Okay.] there.

7:29 RTH: So there's eight, there's eight total [Agnes: There's eight total.] And if we started, if we started with the first one from today, that would be beep number seven,

7:36 Agnes: The first one from today.... Hold on. Actually no, I had, sorry, I, I said that wrong. I have four from today. So the, the first one, one, from today.

7:45 RTH: So 8, 7, 6, 5, first one from today would be like 5.

7:49 Agnes: The first one from today. Hold on. The first one would, today would be 4.

7:53 RTH: Okay. Why don't we start there?

7:54 Agnes: Sorry, am I counting wrong?

7:55 RTH: So it'll be three from yesterday, [Agnes: sorry, I'm, I'm just counting wrong.] three from yesterday, four from today.

7:59 Agnes: I have five today.

8:00 MD: [laughs] Wait! Six! Wait a minute. I have seven!! [laughs]

8:05 Agnes: I have four or five. Hold on. No, sorry. See, I'm already getting it wrong! [laughs] Um, starting at number 5 today. I, [inaudible]

8:14 RTH: Let's, let's start, let's start with number 5. [Agnes: Um,] Whatever, whatever beep, whatever beep we're gonna call is we're about to talk about. We're gonna call that beep number 5.

8:25 Agnes: Okay. And one of the things I'm already realizing is my note taking system is not good yet. Um, but yeah. Okay. Let's start with beep, beep number 5.

8:34 RTH: Let's do it!

Sample 1.5 discussion starts here (beginning with the first sample from today)

8:35 Agnes: Um, so, um, I was doing my morning meditation, and I was probably about like 35 minutes-ish into it, although, I don't know, I wasn't looking at the time, but that's what I would estimate. And, um, in the mo-, like I had had my eyes closed the whole time, um, but when the beeper went off, I had just kind of spontaneous spontaneously opened my eyes. And so in my visual field there was the room that I was sitting in, I wasn't focusing on anything in particular. I had just opened my eyes.

8:35

Russ comments: RE “And so in my visual field there was...”

This is a DES fine point: The “and so” suggests, or at least *might* suggest, that Agnes is responding to the presupposition *if my eyes are open, I must be experientially seeing what my eyeballs are aimed at*. I’m pretty sure that that presupposition is not true, but many (perhaps most) people believe it. At any rate, my presupposition-detecting antennae register this locution. That does not mean that Agnes is influenced by that presupposition—I’m no mind reader, and my job is *not* to perform some sort of hermeneutic analysis. My antennae register a possibility, which later I may explore.

9:19

Agnes: (continues) And, um, also I was thinking about this, this faculty meeting that we had today where I had to, um, where I had to talk through this, this document that I’m preparing. And, um, the words that were in, I, I was sort of saying to myself, “solicit feedback via email,” like as if I was kind of [laughs] practicing what I was going to say in the meeting in that moment. Um, so yeah, that’s it.

9:50

RTH: So my eyes are open. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] And am I seeing the room around me? Or is that to say that the room is falling on my retina, but I’m not really seeing it at all. Or maybe *at all* is too strong.

9:50

Russ comments: RTH begins the exploration referred to in the 8:35 comment.

10:04

Agnes: I’m not sure... I’m not sure I understand the distinction there. Like I’m not, I’m, I’m seeing the room... I’m... In my visual field is the room. I’m not focusing on anything in particular. Um, I, I have the whole room in my visual field.

10:27

RTH: So the, so the, so one way to think about this is: right now you, you are backside is sitting on the chair. [Agnes: Yes.] And, and one could say that the chair and, and the sensations in your backside are in your *backside field*, whatever that is, and probably have been throughout our conversation. But I’m guessing that you haven’t been paying much attention to that. [Agnes: Correct.] It’s in your, it’s in your, in your buttocks field, whatever that is, and as opposed to the retina field. But, but the, but the question is, is that are you we’re, have you been directly experiencing that? And one way the answer to that is clearly yes, because you haven’t fallen off your chair. [mimes falling off the chair] So you’re processing that. I totally ac-accept that. But, but now that I’ve called your attention to it, I’m guessing that you’re experiencing it in a different way than you were throughout this conversation. So my question is about the visual field. Are you processing that in your sort of directly apprehended version or in the backside-up-until-now [version]?

11:36

Agnes: Yeah. I mean, I, I understand the distinction. And I understand what you’re asking, I think, but I still don’t feel like I can properly answer the question. [RTH: Fair.] I don’t if that makes sense. I mean, [RTH: Fair, fair enough.] I, um, I was aware that my eyes were open, right? And that I had, I was also aware that I had just sort of spontaneously opened my eyes after having them closed that whole time. I had just probably cuz I was thinking about this [inaudible]. Well, actually, okay, no, that’s the causal story. I’m not gonna try to tell it. But I had just, I was aware that I had just opened my eyes and I was aware that my eyes were open and the visual stuff was

coming in. So in a way I was aware of that stuff in the way that I was not aware of my butt on the seat.

12:24 RTH: Okay.

12:24 Agnes: So I don't know if that answers your question.

12:27 RTH: Well, we're, we're, we're getting in, we're getting to the answer to that question. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] [RTH starts drawing a figure] So in, in my crude schematic of what's happening here, this is time going this way, and this is the beep, the beep comes on right here, and then you continue until you push the button and then the beep stops and time continues to mark, march on. And the time that I am interested in having us talk about is the time that is *just before* the beep begins. And so what I would like to know, uh, is, is this awareness that you're talking about, *I'm aware that I've opened my eyes*, is that present right here? [RTH points to figure] Or does that come somewhere here that I look back and I can see, well, I can see that my eyes were open.

13:12 Agnes: So that's actually something I had a really hard time with. Like this, like answering this very question. Um, basically I guess my experience of a lot of these samples, and this I think was one of them, is like: the beep goes off and I'm just like, *whoa! the beep went off!!* [Agnes laughs] And then, so then it's like, *what, what was my experience just then?!? Whoa!! I don't know!!* So, so to, if I'm gonna give an honest answer to that question, um, the honest answer is *I'm not sure*. [RTH: Okay.] Um, I'm not entirely sure whether what I'm explaining, whether I was in fact aware at the moment the beep went off or not, because the beep kind of interrupted the experience such that it was hard for me to know what I was experiencing before. That's one of, that's one of the challenges I've been having in general.

14:05 RTH: Okay, so ff-fair enough. So f-, so first off, *yes!* I would like the honest answer, n-not a, not a shine-me-on answer. Second, I, I, I do think that that the question that I'm asking is not a possible question to an-, to ask or to answer in, in some very fundamental way, [RTH starts showing figure again] because sometimes, sometimes I refer to this moment here as *one microsecond just before the beep occurs*. It's obviously not really a microsecond. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] But what I, sometimes I call it the *last undisturbed moment*, but it's not really undisturbed either. And because it, it is, we're looking back, we're, we're looking back at it. So I, I *totally accept* all of those things as being *absolutely* in some fundamental way impossible.

14:50 The question is in some, in, in some other ways, in some other beeps, maybe, *maybe* that question is not problematic, because you'll be able to say (*maybe*; we'll see) this was ongoing; clearly it was ongoing and it started back here somewhere and it gets caught in flight by the beep. That's another time way that I talk about this moment here. *Caught in flight by the beep*. [RTH puts figure down] Some things are definitely caught in flight in beep, there's no question about that. And other things are not. *Maybe*—we'll find out. And, and, and maybe we even have one of those here that the, the other portion of your experience is "solicit feedback via email."

15:29 RTH: Well, maybe we should talk about that for a minute and then we'll come back to this eyes-open deal. Maybe we started at the harder [inaudible]

15:34 Agnes: So I mean, can maybe, can I, can I answer what? Like, can I try to refine what I said in light of what you just said? I think if I had, if I had to do my best to reconstruct the experience in light of what you just said, I think probably, although my eyes were open and I *was* seeing the room, my best guess from memory and of this experience was that that wasn't prominent. I mean, it was there, it was there. I, I knew the different that my eyes were not closed anymore. But I think that the "solicit...", I, I think I was so, I was more absorbed in the thought that solicit feedback via email. I was like, one, one of the things that I remember about this experience was the absorption in the thought.

16:23 RTH: So fair, first: fair, fair enough. Second, no matter how you had answered this question, what, no matter what you had said for the last 30 seconds, I wouldn't have believed it. Still don't. [clears throat] And that should not be taken as a criticism of Agnes by any means. The first sampling day is more about *practice so that the second day is better* [Agnes: Mmm.] than it is about trying to actually get at what's in, what's on the first day. And that's, that's just the way it is, *always*. Not just for Agnes, but the, but that's the way the procedure goes. So we are learning the extent to which we can answer this question, and that takes some practice. And what, and, and what that means is that we're, we're, that you, I, I'm, I appreciate that you're doing the best you can, best you can do, but you weren't ready for that at the moment of the beep, which is the only time that it really matters. Now we've had a conversation about it, then maybe next time is gonna be somewhat easier. Maybe it, maybe the conversation will make it more difficult, too. That's possible. Either way is okay with me. But we have to go through *this* in order to get to *that*. And in the meantime, well, we're just doing the best we can. [Agnes shakes her head yes]

16:23 Russ comments: RTH is describing here what DES calls the *iterative procedure*—using the present conversation to help us (at least possibly) to be successively a bit better if we encounter a similar experience on some subsequent sampling day.

All DES interviewing *sounds like* it is exploring some in-the-past beeped experience (here, sample 1.5); but the *aim* of the interview is actually at some in-the-future beeped experience.

That is, all DES interviewing is a mix of in-the-past interest and in-the-future interest. On almost all *first* sampling days, the interest is almost entirely aimed at in-the-future experiences, and we explore in-the-past samples as a means of supporting future interests.

To recapitulate: what I am aiming at here is to raise our (Agnes's and my) interest in this distinction between what is in the real world (my eyes are open, room falling on retina) and what is in the experiential world (I directly apprehend X). I don't want us to *answer* that question; I want us to recognize that it is apparently an important issue for Agnes, and we will take that seriously and try to sort it through on subsequent sampling days.

17:37 RTH: So the second half of this quest of this experience, or now what it seems like is actually not the second half, but actually the prominent portion, is "solicit feedback via email." Tell us more about, about what that experience was.

17:55 Agnes: So, um, again, I have to say this, this is all like quite vague and it was so, so yeah, I'm just, maybe I should just, that's the qualification for all of this. But, um, my best sense is that I was kind of ruminating about this email, this, uh, meeting in my head and what I was gonna say, and, um, in the moment, this "solicit feedback via email" was me saying, *oh, I'm gonna say these words like this* kind of feel to this ra-rather than, I'm gonna say this kind of thing. I'm gonna say these precise words like this, um, that was the, this feel of this particular saying in my head.

18:48 RTH: And, and so at the moment of the beep, as best we can say, are you *saying* these words in this particular way? So this, so I'm trying to distinguish between the notion I'm gonna say these words in this particular way, *or* I am saying these words in these particular way, sort of un, in the framework of these are the words I'm, I might say,

19:09 Agnes: I think I was saying them in this particular way in my head.

19:14 RTH: Okay. And, uh, in, by, in your head, do you mean silently as opposed to out loud? Or do you mean, y'know, in, in my head?

19:26 Agnes: I mean *innerly*. [Agnes laughs]

19:27 RTH: Innerly. Okay. So I am innerly saying this. [Agnes: Yes, yes.] And, and, and as best you can say innerly saying in the same way that you have just said them out loud?

19:42 Agnes: Yeah.

19:45 RTH: Which is to say with the same inflection and the same...?

19:48 Agnes: Yeah, um, like I probably would've said, "I'm going to solicit feedback via email." Yeah. Kind of like that.

19:56 RTH: Okay. And, and this is, this is a speaking the experiences of speaking these words, I gather, [Agnes looks up] as opposed to hearing them being played on a tape recorder, for example. But

20:17 Agnes: [Agnes still looks up; pause] I wanna say yes, but if I'm honest, I'm not sure.

20:21 RTH: Fair enough.

20:23 Agnes: But I want, I want to say yes, that it was like a rehearsing saying these words, but yeah, it's not crystal clear to me, the answer to that question.

20:33 RTH: So I, I'm going, I'm going to say again, in sort of a meta kind of a way, the, the, the more we can end today, today's discussions with, *I don't know, I'm not sure, but that's an interesting question. Maybe, maybe next time I'll be better or maybe I*

won't, that is the aim of today, rather than to try to *answer* those questions. What we're trying to do is to raise the, raise those questions as being a feature of Agnes's experience, not of not of anybody else's experience, but of, but for *Agnes*, well, Agnes seems like she's talking to herself, so we gotta figure out what exactly that means that what, what, what she's talking about when she says that, for Agnes as a, *as an individual*, not as a, as an instance of some subset of people or whatever. But we gotta figure that out for Agnes. So I, I,

20:33 Russ comments: By "figure out," Russ pretty explicitly does *not* mean to interpret or analyze what Agnes has said or might say. He means we have to arrange, if possible, a situation where we (Agnes and the interviewers) don't have to worry about interpretation or analysis—the phenomenon will have become unambiguously clear so that it would not occur to us to wonder whether Agnes has apprehended the experience. Or that we come to realize that we tried but we can't clarify that aspect.

21:35 MD: [Inaudible] [RTH: Yes sir] Sorry, I didn't mean to cut you off!

21:37 RTH: I was just gonna ask whether anybody else had anything yet.

21:40 MD: Oh, I do. [MD laughs] Um, so in that spirit, but I, I, I, but I'm, so I'm not necessarily expecting an answer, but, um, but I'll just tell you the, that I, I, I formulated several options for what I thought you might be saying when you were talking about your visual awareness. So I'm going back to the first part of it now, and I, and, and I wasn't sure which, if any of these things you meant or if you meant something else, or if you're not sure what you meant or what.

22:11 So, so one, so, so you talked about being *aware* that your eyes were open, and then you also talked about being aware *of the room* at one point. And so I guess I, I'll offer several options. Like, so one thing you might be aware of is the openness of my eyes as opposed to their closedness.

22:28 One thing you might be aware of is that there is visual content, but you're not aware of what the actual content is. You're just aware that there *is* something visual going on.

22:39 You could be aware of the room, but not aware of any specific things in the room, just by aware that the room is being visually presented to me right now.

22:48 Or you could be aware of the room focused on some parts of it or not others.

22:52 Or you could be aware of the room, but the whole thing's kind of out of focus, visually speaking.

22:57 And there's probably other options as well. But all of those occurred to me as things you might have meant. And do you think you have a, a preference for some of those rather than others? Or is it just like they're all the same to you right now, or what?

22:57 Russ comments: I agree that those are possible interpretations of what Agnes might have meant. But I think it is a risky question. I'm going to say why I think it is risky, but I will preface that by underscoring that what I am about to say is my opinion, which I think is based on long experience, but that I happily accept the possibility

that my opinion may reflect my idiosyncratic personality rather than a generally true characterization about DES. That said...

I find that a risky question because it seems to presume that Agnes has adequately apprehended what was ongoing at the moment of the beep, and that Michael's task is to help her clarify her at-the-moment-of-the-beep apprehension. If his presumption is correct, then his questioning will be effective and informative. But if his presumption is *not* correct (that is, Agnes did *not* adequately apprehend her experience), then the question is likely to be highly problematic, because it will suggest that Agnes's task is to analyze what she meant when she said X. And, worse, if Michael seems impressed by her analysis, then it will likely lead to a shared (DES calls it "collusive") focus on the analysis of words rather than to a focus on trying to apprehend experience with greater fidelity.

Said another way, referring to the comment at 16:23, I worry that Michael's question is too much about the past, and not enough about the future. Now I'm no mind reader, and I don't know anything about Michael's intent or Michael's and Agnes's history, so it could be that Michael is on to something that I am blind to.

Said yet another way: If you find yourself asking a multiple-choice question (was it A, B, C, D, or E?), you should ask yourself, If I have to ask the multiple-choice question, is it reasonable to believe that Agnes was in a position *at the time of the experience* to ably discriminate among A, B, C, D, E? That is, at the time of the experience, did Agnes appreciate all those possibilities and have them sufficiently at hand to be able to immediately say (if asked) "That was, of course, a D experience"? If not, then you should conceptualize the DES interview as an iterative training ground so that *next time*, if such a situation arises, she *will* have them sufficiently at hand.

Michael comments: I see the point about it being past-directed rather than future-directed. I guess I *was* trying to ask a future-directed question in the sense of offering some distinctions that might (or might not) be applied in future cases, but I could have been more explicit about that. (It felt to me that my own DES experience went something like that – I became aware of certain distinctions during an earlier discussion and found myself able to consider them later.)

Regarding "it seems to presume that Agnes has adequately apprehended what was ongoing" I guess I failed in some respect, but I was at least *attempting* not to make that presupposition by (a) making the question about what she was saying just now (rather than about the experience itself) and (b) offering the proviso "or if you're not sure what you meant."

23:10 Agnes: Yes, I do. Um, so definitely the room wasn't blurry, right? Like nothing was blurry, everything was in focus. Um, the question about whether I'm aware of my eyes being open versus visual feel...that, I mean, that's an interesting question. Um, and I don't know if maybe Russ is gonna be mad at me for saying, [Agnes laughs] for saying this, but I, but I'm gonna try to answer it. Um, in like, part of the, the background here is I'm attempting to keep my eyes closed the whole time that I'm meditating, [laughs] like I'm not, the, the opening-of-eyes isn't planned. It just kind of happened. And, um, and so the, the fact that they were open was not, um, was not salient to me. I wanna say *No* in response to that option, that that's, it's not like, oh, my eyes are open. It was more the visual field. But I don't know if I can

conclusively rule out that option because eyes open / eyes closed in this context matters. So that may well have been a feature of my experience, but I'm not sure.

24:25 Um, and I think, I think like my gaze was kind of slightly directed bottom-left slightly, but still, it was just kind of general. Like I could see everything in the room. I think in that moment, if you had asked me, like, I think I could see everything... I wasn't focusing on anything in particular, but everything was in my visual field and nothing was blurry. Nothing was more prominent than anything else. Again, with the caveat of what we already talked about before, about not being sure, [Agnes laughs]

24:25 Russ comments: RE "about not being sure"
(Continuing the discussion from 22:57) Said yet another way, the most desirable first-day answer to a multiple-choice question is "Hmm. That's interesting, but I'm not sure." That is evidence that the iterative procedure is taking root.

25:08 MD: That's all from me.

25:12 RTH: So in the, in the, from the standpoint of the meta, the, the meta conversation about what is descriptive experience sampling: that I, I thought Michael did a pretty good job of, of laying out those possibilities, except that I would've preferred that he highlight or make, make more closer to the surface *I don't know the answer to those questions*. That, that the object, the aim, Mi-Michael's aim, as it seemed to me, was more about trying to dis- discriminate between those six alternatives, whereas my aim would've been to try to determine whether those, whether discriminating between those six alternatives made sense by comparison to what was in her experience.

25:12 Russ comments: That is RTH's on-the-fly version of the comment at 22:57.

25:56 MD: Okay, that's fair.

25:57 RTH: Or what she, what she knows about it. [RTH clears throat] So we're good about number 1?

26:05 MD: 5!

26:06 RTH: So on to number 2, and our, uh, or which is gonna be number 6, one beep day, day beep number, day 1, beep number 6. And I think our original plan was that Michael would be the lead interviewer about this. We still on that plan?

26:24 MD: I'll, I'll try not to screw it up, Russ!

Sample 1.6 discussion starts here

26:27 Agnes: Okay. So now I am sitting at my computer and I'm working, and I am writing some notes in preparation for this meeting. [Agnes laughs] Um, and so I'm, I'm, I'm looking at my computer and I'm visually focused on the screen. Um, and I had just written like a line that said, um, "we will now have an embedded MA." And then in

the next line, um, I had just written, "So ideally," and when the moment, um, at the moment that the beep went off, um, I was kind of in my head reading this aloud in my own voice, "So ideally," and seeing it. And I was in the middle of like, having just paused to think about how to frame the, the end, like the rest of that thought, um, when the beep went off. So I was in like, in that kind of moment before the beep.

27:34 And this is one where I, this is one where it was clear to me where, where the beep didn't like startle me into not knowing what happened. Um, it felt clearer. Um, so I was in that moment of kind of thinking of how I was gonna formulate this. And, um, I was reflect, like, when I was writing the notes, I was reflecting on, *well, what, what were you doing exactly Agnes, when you were thinking* [Agnes laughs] *about, um, what was happening next?* And, and the best way I could characterize this thinking was, was perhaps like a kind of list internal listening for the answer of, "So ideally," like what follows from that. Um, so I was seeing, like seeing the computer screen I had just read "So ideally," and then I was pausing, like in the moment I was pausing and thinking about, like, I was yeah, in this thought about *what am I, how am I gonna frame this?*

28:37 MD: Okay. Um, let's start with the seeing the screen. Um, are you seeing the whole screen? Are you seeing just the part that you're writing on? Are you seeing something else entirely, or what, [Agnes: No, I see.] what do you mean when you say, "I'm seeing the screen"?

28:51 Agnes: I, I see the whole screen, but I'm zoomed in on "So ideally."

28:57 MD: So the rest, so you're, you're focused on, so I, so let me just, I wanna understand this. There's all sorts of historical reasons for that (Russ and Agnes, know, I wanna understand this, but I won't bring those to bear.) But when you're, you're, so you're focused on the words "So ideally," but you see the rest of the screen. Does that, how does it appear to you? Is it out of focus? Is it, so it's kind of blurry or is it just you're not attending to it, but it's just as crisp as the thing you're looking at? Or how, what is that experience like for you?

29:28 Agnes: Yeah, the, the latter, right? So it's all crisp. It's just my vision is zoomed in on that part. Like that's just where my focus is. But the rest of it is, is focused. I think another way I could describe it is, um, if you're, you're focusing on something, you can have like a very narrow aperture of focus or you can have a wider aperture. I wanna say that... Hmm. Actually, I don't know if that works. Um, I wanna say, I mean, everything was in focus, the whole screen was in focus, but I was like paying attention, maybe that's the way to put it. I was paying attention to the "So ideally," but the rest of it wasn't blurry or anything. It was all crisp.

30:15 MD: Okay. Um, I wanna skip to the thinking, kind of, I know, I know there's also the, the seeing the "So ideally," but, um, you, you said that the thinking was like an internal listening for the answer to the question that you had, I guess posed to yourself. And maybe the first question to ask is, you, you, you, you said you, you were thinking about the question, how to frame the rest? or what comes next? I think is what you said at one point. Were those questions posed to yourself? Like in words, were you, did you ask yourself that question? Or was it just sort of the next thing you were

doing? Or what do you mean when you say you were *thinking* about this question? Like how, how to frame the rest? How was that? [Agnes: Yes, so I did not,] I, I guess the question I wanna ask, how was the,

[MD's audio cuts out]

31:10 RTH: You're, we've lost your audio, Michael. [Agnes: Michael, you just got quiet.]

31:15 RTH: You still, we still don't have Michael's audio? Nope. Still, no. [MD signals to continue with the interview]

31:25 So let me, while, while he's trying to sort that out, let me comment on his question because I, I would have the same kind of a comment about that as I had about the, the first one. I would, he, he was trying to find out about Agnes's experience, whereas I would be more interested in trying to help Agnes get to be better at apprehending her experience so that next time we can do a better job of this. And those, those are two pretty much different kinds of different kinds of things.

31:57 And so in particular, in this particular beep, what I would say is that Agnes has said there were sort of three things, three *candidates* for what *might be* an Agnes's experience at the moment of this beep. One of them is seeing the screen, one of them is *saying*, "So ideally," apparently that's a, an innerly spoken thing of reading what was on the screen. And then the other was about the, some kind of rumination or consideration about what that, what that meant. And I'm, and I'm not confident that we have determined which, if any, or all of those is actually directly apprehended by Agnes at the moment of this beep.

32:42 And so I would, so rather than to try to figure out any one of those things, I would've been trying to answer the bigger question about, or the, the more fundamental *to me* question as how much of those were present. And I would've done it by, by probably referring back to back to this thing here. [RTH shows board again and points to figure] So is the speaking "So ideally" present right here? Or is it out here somewhere and now I'm reflecting on it here? Or is the speaking present here and the reflecting has been sort of going on in the whole, the whole deal? I'm, I'm reflecting as a, that's the task that I have set for my set, for myself, and the, and the particularly momentarily at-the-moment portion of it is the speaking?

32:42 Russ comments: There are, one might say, two main skills of DES: to cleave to experience (and by cleave I mean to adhere firmly). Cleaveing to experience entails aiming at the directly apprehended and eschewing all else. The other main skill is to cleave to the moment—to describe experience that is ongoing at the moment of the beep and to eschew all other times. RTH is taking this opportunity to practice the skill of cleaving to the moment by discriminating between at the moment, after the moment looking back, before the moment in preparation, etc. That is standard day-1 procedure, because participants are not generally very skilled in this regard.

I think it is essential to have this conversation *on Agnes's own turf* (as I would characterize it). I *don't* want to have an abstract conversation about these things—to define the distinctions between retrospection and prospection, for example. I think having such abstract conversations makes apprehending experience *more* difficult. I want Agnes to practice noticing features that are *important to her own*

experience, and one of those features is that she will have to develop a sensitivity to the discrimination between at the moment, before the moment, after the moment, the moment is not relevant, and so on *as it applies to her interest in describing her experience*.

Michael comments: re “ I think having such abstract conversations makes apprehending experience *more* difficult”. I think I agree with this statement, although I’d also suggest that we are dealing with a rather unusual case here, namely, philosophers who spend a lot of time with, and are generally very comfortable (maybe too comfortable) with abstract thinking. Perhaps that means that philosophers are just inherently bad at this process, or that we face a particular kind of uphill battle with it, but perhaps it just means that the particular manner in which we need to be on guard isn’t quite the same as it would be for a person who does not spend 8 hours a day thinking abstractly. (And once we are on that guard, maybe abstract ideas are not as dangerous as they otherwise would be? Maybe. I’d want to keep an open mind about that.)

33:31 Agnes: So I want to say,

33:32 RTH: And I’m seeing, I’m seeing the screen, is that right in here somewhere or more, more around here?

33:39 Agnes: Yeah. So I, I guess I have, well, I wanna answer the question, but then ask you a question, Russ, about this that maybe we’ve talked about before. But I’m really seeing... like doing it is different from when we talked about it before and I didn’t actually have to do it. So I have the question again. Um, so I think the best, my best, um, answer, I *believe* (again, um, I’m, I could be wrong about this) um, I believe that at the moment of the beep I had already said to myself “So ideally,” so that came *before* in your, in your diagram. And,

34:18 RTH: So that’s out, that’s out here, here, somewhere [points to diagram]

34:20 Agnes: Exactly. Like I think I had Yeah, yeah, like right where your, where your pencil is right now. Okay. I had just finished saying “So ideally.” [RTH: Okay.] And then I was in that pause of thinking and then the, the screen was present throughout this whole experience. So that’s, I *think* that’s what it was. But again, I’m not sure.

34:42 But one question that I have is, um, the length of the moment before the beep. Like is it like this tiny sliver in time or is it, how long is it because it was part like in particular with this? Um, it’s hard, it’s hard to say what, like, it’s possible that the “So ideally” and then my thinking may have been simultaneous. It may have been “So ideally,” then the thinking, and then the beep. So *how big* is the moment allowed to be time-wise? Because I believe, [RTH: inaudible] yeah, go ahead.

35:28 RTH: So the answer, the answer to the question about how, how, how big is the moment, is that I don’t think there is a good answer to that question. And DES is not particularly *interested* in that question. [Agnes: Hmm.] It’s more interested in *at the moment* rather than *the moment* itself. And I, and I think I’m partially responsible for that because I think I used to write more sloppily about that, and now I, now I

see the error of my ways, or whatever. But the, but I, I, I'm, I'm interested in what's going on *at the moment*. And so the, the, the, the speaking, [RTH shows the board again] for example, the speaking might have started back here. And so I'm saying "So ideally," and I can recognize that that is continuing, "So ideally," and it continues through the moment [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] through the, through the actual apprehension of the beep. And the ruminating might.... Or, or I can, I can recognize that that started and *stopped* before the beep began. That's what, that's another possibility. And in which case should we consider that part of the moment? Because that's what I'm really reflecting on. I don't really know the answer to that que- kind of question. It's, I don't think there is a, I don't, I don't, I don't think there is an answer to that question actually. But, but, but *for sure* what I'm *not* trying to do is to find out *only* what's happening right there, because I don't, I don't think that's possible. What I wanna know is what is *caught in flight* right there. And that might be something which happened, well, way back here somewhere, like, I'm thinking about this meeting, [Agnes: (inaudible)] I'm trying to figure out what's about that meeting that's the half an hour-long moment, and then I'm reading what I just said. Well, that's a half a second long mo- moment or something. All those, all those things. But the question is what is being directly apprehended right here? which is what we're, what we're trying to shoot for.

37:20 Agnes: So I, again, my best guess here means that, um, I think what was being apprehended was like, "So ideally," and then the pause, I think that's kind of a continuous, it's not neatly separable those two pieces.

37:20 Russ comments: RE "my best guess here"

In his 16:23 turn, RTH said "no matter what you had said for the last 30 seconds, I wouldn't have believed it." The same thing applies here. The aim of today's conversation is to build interest and skill so that *tomorrow* we can make these discriminations more clearly. Said another way: today's interest is almost entirely iterative training, and that is almost always the way it is on day 1.

37:38 RTH: Okay.

[MD sends a Chat saying that his mic is dead, and that he will hear what is said but not be able to respond.

37:42 Agnes: Okay. Mike's um, Mike, Michael's mic is dead.

37:46 RTH: Okay. All right. So that makes me the primary interviewer and, and which is I guess what we've been doing while Mike has been trying to sort, *Michael's mic* has been trying to sort that out.

38:04 So, so this, so this is this, the, your, your question is a totally legitimate and typical first-day que, question as, as we try to sort those kinds of things out. Because for one thing I would say about the, so we, so we're deciding that, that *before the beep*, the, the, "So ideally," I have, I have said as if out loud, but actually silently, in, innerly, I have said "So ideally," and, and then there's a pause. And the question is, is that pause really part of the speaking "So ideally" [he draws out the y syllable]?

The answer to that is I don't probably know, but maybe we'll be able to figure that out as we get more skilled. But maybe not.

38:50 As it is now, we are raising questions, first-day questions: *Well, wouldn't that be interesting to have known the answer to that?* [Agnes: Yes!] Yes, it would've been, it would've been. And we're not, and we're not gonna know. We're not gonna know it. And, and we are not gonna be critical of Agnes for not knowing it. That's, that's [Agnes: Whew!! (smiles and exaggeratedly wipes her brow)] the sort of the, the, the fun, the fundamental thing about the first, the first day is that we, we are asking Agnes to do something that she's *not good at* and do it in public. [Agnes laughs] And, uh, and that is, we're, that's asking a lot of somebody. And, uh, and, and we have to, we have to establish that we are on, *on Agnes's side* in, in this regard. That's a, that's a big part of the first [Agnes: Yeah!] first-day deal.

39:44 Agnes: Yeah this is hard. I, I respect, I have a newfound respect for Michael.

39:49 RTH: Yeah. But the, but the dis- the distinctions that you're making are the, are the interesting distinctions as well. So what we're trying to do is to, well, our *aim* is to get as good as we can be about making these distinctions, which are gonna, which is going to be less than perfect. We are not aiming at perfection in making these distinctions. We're aiming to be, to *become* as good as we can be about it without shining each other on, or, or sweeping things under the rug, or whatever. That's, that's really the aim of the first several days of DES sampling. Or, or maybe *all* days of DES sampling is, is to accept, pr, accept that and profit, pr, profit by it.

40:42 So I think I'm ready to go on beep number 7, I guess [Agnes: 7.] 1.7, unless anybody got anything else that they wanna, [Agnes: Okay.] let's go for beep number seven. [Agnes lets out a sigh] And, but, [Agnes: So this one,] and I would say from a methodological point of view, there, there would probably be other things that we could try to extract out of this, out of Agnes experience, but I think it's probably on the first day, maybe later too, better to leave those things unextracted in favor of *well, that's an interesting question. Let's move on, see whether we can find some other interesting questions.*

Sample 1.7 discussion starts here

41:15 Agnes: Okay, so hold on. Sorry, I'm trying to look at my.... This one was a tricky one. Um, like even in the moment, I was not sure about what exactly was in my experience and not. Um, so I was at my computer and I was reading, um, an article and, um, like I, there was a sentence that said "A variety of issues arise about how to characterize those contexts..." And at the moment of the beep, um, I was reading, "...and what determines them," that was the rest of the sentence. So, "and what determines them" was the part that I was reading, and it was kind of in my voice. Um, okay, this is partly my, my note taking. So, okay, I'm, I'm just gonna say, I don't know what was part of the experience at the beep and what wasn't, but I wrote all this stuff down, so I'm just gonna tell you what el, what else I wrote down.

42:23 Um, [reads notes] "I had also just, um, kind of softened my gaze and looked to the bottom left of the computer screen, and just had a pause in focus." So I believe, if I'm interpreting my own notes correctly, that I had read "*And what determines them*" in my own voice, and then had this softening of gaze and looking down to the

bottom left of my computer screen and pause of focus, like, I think when the beep went off, I was in that pause-of-focus mode.

42:58 Um, the other thing that was kind of, um, in my attention, and I'm not sure whether this is, I'm not sure how to characterize this, um, as background, I had just looked at my watch and had seen that it, it was about 7:00 AM, and I have this vague sense that in this moment of pause of focus, there was like a very, not fully formed, but still present, vague not, yeah, thought like thing, idea that, that it's time to go outside because I, I tend to go outside like first thing in the morning, I spend time outside. Um, but it's not like I was saying that in words. I just, I think that was somehow part of my experience, [Laughs.] um, in that pause, as well. So, sorry, this is like a very messy, um, yeah, messy, messy beep. [laughs]

44:07 RTH: So, so regarding the, the *sorry* portion first. If the experience is messy, then that's what we wanna, that's what we wanna talk about. [Agnes: Okay.] And, and, and I, that's not to say that I prefer messy experiences. I, I'm indifferent, uh, to the messiness of an experience, but if it's messy, I wanna, I wanna, I wanna go there. And if it's not messy, I wanna go there, too. So there's no need to apologize for whatever kind of a, kind of a, kind of experience. That, that's what it is.

44:38 And, *and* I would say the messy experiences are somewhat difficult to describe. And so we're, we're, our task here is to try to learn how to describe 'em. And by the way, in, in another meta, the reason that we're having these conversations today, rather than in the workshop, was so that, because I think it was probably gonna be a better con, as far as what the workshop can, can understand and be better to have these, these experiences sort of in the past. And then you will have developed whatever skills you're gonna develop. And then for the, for the day that we're gonna present in the workshop. We'll find out whether that's, whether that was a good idea or not, because you could argue that in a lot of different ways. But that's the, [clears throat.] that was the method of the madness of what I suggested. Why don't we, why don't we do this a couple times before we get to the, the workshop. [Coughs.]

44:39 Russ comments: This round of sampling is preparation for a demonstration of DES at a workshop that will take place next week. The plan is that we will do two days of sampling interviews on Zoom (this is the first), and then the third interview will be live in the workshop with workshop participants able to ask questions, etc.

45:32 RTH: (continues) So, as far as isolating what the *at the moment* means is the "and what determines them" part of what's caught in flight by the beep? Or is that in the, waning?

45:49 Agnes: I wanna say that's, that's the moment before the moment before the beep.

45:54 RTH: Okay. So is, and, and is that completely over with, as far as your experience is concerned? Or is there some residual of that, that's experiential remaining, Experientially remaining? I recognize that in your, in your neurons, it's remaining somewhat somewhere. You have read that and your, your neurons are vibrating about that or whatever. But the question is whether that's, whether you're directly apprehending that.

- 46:20 Agnes: I can't answer that with confidence. [RTH: Fair enough.] Like I can, I wanna say maybe yes, but my, I'm like 50/50 about whether or not it was residually still there at the moment of the beep.
- 46:32 RTH: Fair enough. And I would, and I would say this is one of those interesting questions that, that may, maybe we will learn how to answer those questions and maybe we won't. And either way, either is fine, either of those outcomes is fine with me. I'm, I'm raising questions in a, in what I take to be a truly Socratic way, that I would like us to be able to answer those questions *if we can*. But as Socrates said, we probably *aren't* gonna be able to answer them. And it's not a lawyerly Socratic thing where I think, y'know, I know the answer and I'm gonna try to trap you into that. I'm, I'm, I'm an honest Socrates, not a lawyerly Socrates, I guess you, you could say.
- 47:12 Then, about the softened gaze. There's something, *is there* something that's a question, is there something about the left-hand corner? You said you, your gaze went down to the left. So do I?
- 47:25 Agnes: There was nothing there. It was just like, I, I just kind of stopped reading and that's where my eyes went, but not for any particular reason. Like I just was, I just kind of became unfocused, and that's where my eyes happened to go.
- 47:38 RTH: Okay. And, and is the unfocused-ness part of my experience at the moment of the beep?
- 47:38 Russ comments: That is a risky question, because it is a question about meta-experience: does Agnes experience Agnes-as-being-unfocused?
- 47:46 Agnes: Yes.
- 47:47 RTH: Okay. And are we talking visually unfocused?
- 47:55 Agnes: Um,
- 47:56 RTH: ex, cognitively unfocused?
- 47:58 Agnes: Um, like I visually unfocused in the sense that I'm no longer, um, tracking the words on the screen of the thing that I was reading, but not blurry, visually unfocused. But what I meant in that context more specifically was just, um, attentionally unfocused. I was, I was attending to reading this article and my attention drifted away.
- 48:26 RTH: And so does that mean. I've got, uh, its been replaced by nothing? I've drifted away from this article, but it hasn't been replaced by anything. So I, I could say I have a gentler or a softer, whatever word you use, softened. Was that, does that mean I am lessening my, my focus on the article, or does that actually mean that I'm seeing something in its, in its place?
- 48:56 Agnes: So I think what replaced it was. I mean, I wasn't now focused on the bottom left corner, attentionally of, of the screen. Um, but I think it was replaced with this

vague sense, *is it time to go outside?* Okay. My, I think it was replaced in part by that, but not fully by that. Like, I wanna say that occupied like maybe 50% of the remainder, and then the other 50% was just empty- [RTH: Okay.] -ish. Very, like in a very rough way. That's, that's how I would characterize it.

49:34 RTH: So the sequence is being, I said this line, then I softened my gaze and the, and, and, and in its place, there came the rising notion *it's time to go outside*.

49:55 Agnes: Yeah.

49:56 RTH: But that rising notion, while present, is not spoken, and not worded, I gather, but yet I understand my, I understand myself to be saying something about the time and the outsideness.

50:12 Agnes: Exactly. Yeah. There was no, it was not spoken, It was not heard. There wasn't an image. It was more just this. Yeah. I don't know if it was like a re[sidual], maybe I had had the thought earlier. I, I'm, I most likely did have the thought earlier, like, *oh, I should go outside soon*. Um, and it was kind of some kind of residue of that that wasn't, um, in any of those modes.

50:12 Russ comments: Note that there was no meta-experience. (See the comment at 47:38.)

50:42 RTH: Okay. So, I am happy with this in the same sense as I've been happy with all the others. I'm, in the sense that, and that sense is, [coughs.] I think we're learning how to talk to each other about Agnes's experience. And that's the, that was the goal today, even though we're probably gonna be falling short about actually being very good at that. That's, that's what we're, that's what we're up to. Anybody else have anything to say about that? That, that has a, has a microphone that works and, uh,

51:14 RB: I don't think I do. I'm just taking it all in. [laughs]

51:18 RTH: Okay. All right. Let's do one more here in, uh, number, which will be number 8. Is that,

51:22 Agnes: Number 8. Yeah. Um, man, I really didn't write very legibly, and I'm trying to figure out what I, [Laughs,] what I wrote here. Oh, Agnes. Um,

51:34 RTH: So let me, let me make a little bit of a comment about that. I did, I did not instruct, this, instruct Agnes about how to take notes and what she needed to say. And that is *on purpose*, on my part. I don't wanna have told Agnes what to do. I want A, I want Agnes to *become*, or *be* or whatever, interested in trying to do a good job of describing what's in her experience, and that means she's gotta work it out. What she has to write, how, how legibly she has to write, in order, in order to answer the kinds of questions which hope, hopefully she will find interesting, she's gonna have to develop the skill, including, how to take notes about it. And so I'm not, I'm not, I'm not at all being critical of Agnes about this. This is, this is part of the, part of the first day, first-day deal.

51:34 Russ comments: Russ would say that *DES is iterative all the way down*.

Sample 1.8 discussion starts here

52:27 Agnes: Okay. There's one. What does that say? This is so bad. Okay. I've, I'm just not able to read my own writing. [laughs] Okay. Um, this one is also very messy in the sense that I'm not entirely clear about what precisely was going on. This is one of those moments where, one of the beeps where the beep just kind of startled me. And, and again, I had this like, *Ah! it just beeped. What was I supposed to, what was going on? Ah! I don't know*. Like, it was one of those. So, um, I was eating breakfast, I was eating granola. And, um, before, like be, before this, before the moment of the beep (now I'm just kind of giving context), um, I had again been thinking about the meeting [laughs] and what time I wanna get to campus. And I was thinking, I need to talk to Brett about something. Um, but also I didn't wanna get too distracted. If I come into the office early, I'll just talk to everyone and not do my, so that's, that was happening before.

53:34 Um, and then *also* before, (again, this is just before the beep for context), um, I was also, and, and this was actually a good part of my experience wearing the beeper. I often was thinking about the, the beeper, [laughs] like thinking about the fact that I was wearing the beeper and like, *what if the beep goes off now?* And, and just kind of thinking about the whole wearing the beeper experience was prominent. So that's all just background. Um, in the moment of the beep, I was kind of, had paused eating and I was kind of like staring blankly out, like just forward. Um, and like the word, I believe the word "calibrate," or "I'm going to have to calibrate," was somehow present to me.

54:25 But that was, this was one of those beeps where I really had a hard time even figuring out what was going on. But somehow *calibrate* was something I, I thought was there. And I think the calibrate was with respect to the thinking about the beeps and how each experience was different, and just kind of like, getting all, like, thinking about that, thinking about the way in which the beeps sometimes changed, affected my ability to know what was going on in my experience, because I was so, um, trying so hard to get it right. And then the beep, like, it, it almost feels like a test. Okay, *the beep has gone off. And what are you experiencing? Uh, oh, I don't know!!* [laughs] Okay. So, so the word *calibrate* again, was, was somehow present to me. Um, yeah. So,

55:14 RTH: Well, let's start, let's start with *calibrate*. In what way was that word *calibrate*, present?

55:24 Agnes: I don't know. Um, this is one where I just, um. I wasn't able to very clearly apprehend my experience. So I wrote down the word *calibrate* as somehow being there, but I don't even have a memory of how it was there. So this is, this is like a very unreliable beep, I should say from the get-go.

55:49 RTH: So there's, there's two possibilities. One, one is that the beep did disturb you and shock you or whatever, and so that you forgot what was going on. And, and the

another possibility is that my experience was sufficiently inchoate or whatever that, uh, that I, that I couldn't get it. And, and, and, and, and part of the deal that we're gonna try to figure out is w, which is it, y'know? And, and maybe we're gonna be able to figure that out and maybe we're not. [Agnes: Hmm.]

56:16 And we're, and we're *for sure* not going to hold it against Agnes that she didn't get it, she wasn't able to do that on the first day. Because that's a, that's a big portion of what goes on in the first day. And either, and either one of those outcomes is gonna be okay with me. I think it it, if it, it *might* come to pass that the, the beeper method just *doesn't work for Agnes at all* because the beep disturbs her or whatever. And, and, and that would be fine, and, and then we might learn something about, *well, when is the beeper a, a useful thing?* And when it's not, that would, that would be okay with me if that's what we, if that's what we find.

56:47 Or it could be that what we're gonna find out is that Agnes has experiences which are fairly messy or, inchoate, or I guess "messy" as her word, "inchoate" is mine, but it's, it seems like we're sort of talking about the same thing: things that are not clearly apprehended, or apprehendable or whatever, in which case, maybe we'll figure out how to talk about that *to the extent* that we can talk about that. That'd be fine with me, uh, as well, I'm not, I don't have a, I don't have any *preferences* in this regard other than let's try to speak honestly to each other about, about it and, and do the, and, and do the best we can and, and recognize that the first day is, our first crack at trying to talk about this stuff.

57:34 And then about the, about "calibrate." So I'm, I'm gathering that the, somehow the word "calibrate" *might have been* present to me. Not the, not just the *concept* of *calibrate* or *calibration* or whatever, but the *word itself*. [Agnes: Yes.] And yet I'm not saying, that it's present to me in a clearly spoken way as for example, "so *ideally*" was back a couple of beeps ago.

58:04 Agnes: Exactly, yeah.

58:07 RTH: So somehow the word. So, so what we're, what we're learning here is that it's possible that words can be present but not, clearly innerly spoken. That's at least possible.

58:16 Agnes: I think so, except with the caveat that I feel very, um, I don't feel like I'm, I know this experience well. Like that I'm able to, that I've apprehended it clearly, even. Um, compared to the, with the other ones where the words were spoken, I, I could confidently say "I was innerly speaking these words" in a way that I can't confidently say anything about *calibrate*.

58:44 RTH: So lemme give just a little lecture about the, a, about the calib[rate] the word, the word deal here. I think it's possible to innerly speak words. I think it's possible to have words present, and specifically a word is present without being spoken. Or without being seen or without being whatever. But there is a word present. I think that's possible. I also think it's possible for a *meaning* to be present, the meaning that we generally associate with the word *calibrate*, but the word isn't there. So I, I could have the meaning without the word. Oh, I, I think all possible, all possibilities are actually, [laughs.] actually present. So I think it's, I think I can have the experience of speaking the word *calibrate*, but even the, but the word *calibrate* isn't

there. And I can have the word *calibrate* be there, but I don't have any sense of how it's there. I can see it, I can speak it, I can do whatever. All those things are possible.

59:41 I'm not saying that that's the way it is for Agnes, on this beep. And I'm not saying that that what I'm, that, that I... I'm not a mind reader, so I don't know anything about it. But, uh, what I, what I, what I want to do is to, open us to the possibilities of the way these things *might be present*. And then, and then go from there. But not, but it's not that I pre, and, and I *don't* wanna say that, that, that I've just given an exhaustive list. And I don't wanna say that I prefer any one of those to, uh, others. It's my aim here is to, is to try to get us in the direction of fidelity. Like, like a, like a high-fidelity microphone. I want this microphone to catch whatever sounds are out there. I don't care, which, those sounds are and what the, I would like us to, do, learn to do as, as good a job as we can, and, and to recognize that, that the, the whole process has got limitations to it. And like any microphone has limitations to it. It can't pick up like ultra-high frequencies or ultra-low frequencies or whatever. And then we're gonna, we're gonna do as good a job as we can do, and not better than that. And we might be better at it the next time, the next time around. And might not, might, we might have discovered now that we're really trying to do this, that this is just even *more* difficult. That would be fine with me. And, uh.

59:41 Russ comments: This is an explicitly-about-the-future conversation in the spirit of the multiple-choice commentary at 22:57. RTH has listed some possibilities, *not* because he expected Agnes to choose the correct option (he thinks she was not yet ready to make those discriminations at the moment that it counted—right after the beep). Maybe next time...

1:01:04 Agnes: Well I have to get going. Um, unfortunately, cuz I have an, an appointment that I have to run off to.

1:01:09 RTH: So we are at an hour, which is what we contracted for. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] So, and we have a, we have another scheduled meeting on Monday, I believe.

1:01:19 Agnes: I believe. Yep.

1:01:21 RTH: And so, Robyn is welcome to that as well. And or not, whatever turns around about, about that. But we're gonna do one more meeting before next Saturday.

1:01:31 Agnes: Alright.

1:01:32 RB: Thank you.

1:01:33 RTH: Thank you all very much.

1:01:34 Agnes: Thank you, see you next time.

1:01:36 RTH: You're welcome. See ya'.