

Agnes Bolinska
Agnes Interview 3
Sampling day 3 at the Workshop

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the April 18 workshop interview with Agnes that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/bMPV9HBe3Mc>. If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please post them as YouTube comments.

RTH = Russ Hurlburt
Agnes = Agnes Bolinska
MD = Michael Dickson
P1-P5 = Workshop participants

- 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, Agnes, or other workshop participants 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.
- 0:02 RTH: So I don't have much of a plan for today, except that I've asked Agnes and, and Michael too, who, who whose, whose contribution is sort of done and in the can, and you all have seen that. But, uh, but the plan, the plan is, I, I plan to talk a little bit about what a, what I think a good DES question is, for five minutes or so. And then I plan to ask some questions of Agnes, who wore the beeper yesterday and today, and, uh, sample with her and, in more or less the way a DES interview would take place. And, and I invite everyone to participate in that interviewing in whatever way that you would like to participate. If you've got questions for Agnes, you should ask them. If you've got questions for me, you should ask them. If you've got questions for each other, you should ask them or whatever. This is a, a dozen people coming together to talk about inner experience. And we can do, we can do with this, the time that we've got here, whatever we want to do, as far as I'm concerned.
- 0:59 MD: Let me interrupt you for a second. Uh, that reminds me to say, um, I, I'll be a moderator here, so as you have questions, just raise your hand and I'll keep track of the hands.
- 1:11 RTH: So as most of you know, uh, descriptive experience sampling try, tries to aim at what I call pristine inner experience. And can you all hear me? I don't have much of a voice. I'm doing the best I can here with what I've, what I've got at the moment.
- 1:26 Uh, uh, descriptive experience sampling is about pristine inner experience. And by pristine... By *inner* experience I mean what passes before the footlights of

consciousness at some particular moment. And by *pristine* inner experience I mean in the natural environment, not as the result of some, uh, scientist's exploration or, or, or, uh, uh, uh, or the command to introspect. So that it is a goal. The exploration of inner, inner experience is an aspiration from my point of view. We, we never actually get there because we're, we're, we're going to explore Agnes's pristine inner experience, but not really because she is going, we're in a beeper.

2:09 So her experience is not pristine. And, and we have asked her to report about her in her experience. So she's me, she's meddling around with that. But, but the goal, so we have to, we, we do need to keep the distinction between an aspiration and actuality, and the question is how far, how, how far apart are, are those things.

2:28 And I think as a, uh, as, as once a descriptive-experience-sampling participant gets into it, they forget that they're wearing a beeper. And, and they get, and they have mastered the technique and they know that this beep means a beep is a (this is Agnes's beeper [holds it up], and she wore a earphone like this in her ear and the thing delivered a beep. Be-e-e-ep! [simulates a beep] The beep continues until she stops it by pushing a button that's on the top of the beeper. And, uh, then she wrote down in a notebook some thoughts about whatever, whatever occurred to her to write about the, about that inner experience.

3:12 There are two main characteristics, I think of a good, of a good DES question. And, and those, those I call *cleaving*. Uh, you have to *cleave to the moment* and *cleave to the experience*. And by *cleave*, I mean what, what, what Webster means in the sense of *pay attention to; be interested in; don't do anything else other than that*. We want to, I want you only into into the, the what is at the moment of the beep. And, and I want you to cleave to (which is to say pay attention to) experience and nothing else. Those are pretty simple rules. So like, give her a beeper and I say cleave to the moment and cleave the experience.

3:51 I'll explain a little bit about what that's about. The, the cleaving to the moment means I'm interested in what was happening, right as at what I generally call *the moment of the beep*. And by the moment of the beep, I really mean *one microsecond just before the beep began*, which of course is not really a microsecond. And uh, sometimes I call it *the last undisturbed moment before the beep*, which of course is not really undisturbed. But what I want is something was happening, sometimes I, I call it *caught in flight by the beep*. All this, all those locutions are aimed at the same thing. They're aimed at what was happening *before* the beep mucked around with, with the experience. So I'm *not* interested... *Cleaving to the moment* means I'm interested in that moment and that moment only. And I'm *not* interested in one minute before that or five minutes before that or what your reaction to the beep was, which would be after the beep, or what you're doing in general, what the way you think you are in general.

4:51 All that stuff is *not* [snaps fingers] at the moment that I'm interested in. And the reason I'm interested in that moment, there's basically two reasons why I'm interested in that moment. One is, at least we know what we're talking about. Let's talk about that moment and not some other kind of a moment. And the other, the other important interest for important characteristic is that it makes your task easy, easier. All you have to do is pay attention to that moment and not anything else. So we don't have to worry, you don't have to put into your memory banks anything other than what my experience was at that particular moment.

- 5:24 RTH: So that's the moment. The cleaving to experience portion. Uh, what I mean by *experience* is what's before the footlights of consciousness, what you are *directly apprehending* is my preferred term for that. What you are directly apprehending at the, at the moment of the beep. And by that I *don't* mean your theories about that, or your generalizations about that, or your self-charact, self-characterizations about that or what you're trying to, how you're trying to impress me or whatever. All those kinds of things could be reported at that particular moment, but they're not the things that I want you to be talking about. I want you to be talking about what, if anything, [snaps fingers] was at the moment to be.
- 6:08 So there's really only one legitimate question I think about inner experience. And it's, and, and so that's the only question that I ask, which is basically "what was in your experience, if anything, at the moment of the beep?" And the *if anything* is an important piece because I don't want to presume that there is inner experience, that there to be found. And maybe there is, maybe there's not. So that's the preamble. The... Questions, comments about that before we switch to part two?
- 6:45 P1: Do you, I'm just wondering about the word *inner*. So would you would not ask them "what were you seeing?" "What you were hearing?" Or you *would* ask those questions?
- 6:56 RTH: I would not ask those questions, but, but, but your question about *inner* is a good one. The... So inner, inner experience by, by in, in *my* lexicon does include seeings and hearings if that's what you're happen to be paying attention to. So if the beep goes off and I'm, I'm looking at John and I'm noticing his blue shirt, well, that's my inner experience. And why do I call that inner experience? You could say, well, that's *outer* experience. It's John's shirt! It's not, not Hurlburt's inner, inner shirt or whatever. But that... And, and the reason for that is that it is *my* inner experience that has chosen to be interested in that blue shirt rather than that red dress, or whatever. That's my, that, that is my creation. Of all the what the, (what I call the) welter of possibilities that I could be paying attention to, I choose to be that one. That makes it inner.
- 7:46 But I don't ask "what were you *seeing*?" Because there's no reason to, to believe that you were seeing that, that, uh, that Agnes (in our, in our case) was seeing just because her eyes are open doesn't mean that she's *experiencing* something. She might be lost in some thought about. So,
- 8:02 P1: So just to follow up a little bit, so what, so, uh, other sort of background features of that experience, like body position or whatever maybe I wasn't explicitly attending to, but you wouldn't interrogate those things?
- 8:16 RTH: I would not unless you were attending to them. [P1: Okay.] So Agnes was sitting and she was leaning and she was paying most attention to the left, to the leaning, then left leftness of her experience, [P1: Yeah.] then I would be all over that. [P1: Okay.] But if that was, if that was part of the [inaudible]
- 8:33 P1: Not part of the explicit attention [inaudible]...

- 8:33 RTH: Then I'm not [inaudible] By inner, by inner experience, I mean this narrowly defined thing. Agnes and everyone is responding experientially to a whole lot of different kinds of stuff. You're, you are responding to your chair and the way you're sitting, you haven't fallen off the chair, or whatever, which is not that, that you've put it explicitly before the footlights of your consciousness, but you adjust yourself as your, as your body requires it. But if that, if that doesn't make it into the, the direct directly apprehended bit, then it's not part of the deal.
- 9:12 P2: Um, would the inner experience be *that blue shirt* or *that blue*?
- 9:12 Russ comments: RTH didn't answer that question very well, preferring to move on to the demonstration. A somewhat more complete answer: Most people, at particular moments (once they learn to discriminate such things) are easily able to discern whether, at the moment of the beep, their experiential direction or interest was in the *blueness*, or in the *pattern*, or in the *fabric*, or in the *shirt-ness*, or whatever.
- 9:21 RTH: Um, that would, that would depend. So, but maybe we should, maybe we should do, do a demonstration before, before I respond and before I respond to too many more questions here as abstractions, we should be specific. Because one, one of the characteristics of my professional existence, I guess you would say, is that the, the, the most interesting things, which is to say the only interesting things from my point of view, are, the come from, uh, apprehending moments come from particular moments. And then we can have the concrete or abstract conversations about them. But, but they ought to start with the, with particular moments. So if that's all right with everybody, we can write down your questions and save it for later or whatever.
- 10:12 And, uh, the, uh, so we have asked Agnes to wear the beeper. And, and we've done it. I, I guess it's, we have confessed about this, but I'm open about this. We've asked Agnes so far to wear the beeper three days. This is today is her third day or yesterday, and today she wore the beeper starting at the party last night and then this morning. And, uh, but that's their *third* sampling day. And the reason for that is that people are not very good at descriptive experience sampling on the first day, and they're better at it on the second day or whatever. And so I, I thought for this demonstration, it'd be worthwhile to not, to, not to demonstrate the first, the first day, which is, which are, which is difficult in a, in a lot of different ways for a lot of different reasons. People are worried about the beeper or whatever and trying to figure out what's going on. I'd say, well, let's set that aside and, and, and focus *today* on Agnes's third day.
- 11:08 But to be totally candid about it (which is also part of what, what I think is good science) we have put day one and day two out there on the web so that you can have seen exactly what has happened about the, about this in the past.
- 11:21 So what I understand, Agnes, is that you've worn the beeper last night. In fact, I was there for your first beep, I believe.
- 11:26 Agnes: Not my first beep, but your, my fourth beep. [laughs]
- 11:29 RTH: [laughs]. And then...

- 11:30 Agnes: But yes, you were there. Oh no! You were there for the first and the fourth beep. I, I stand corrected! [laughs]
- 11:37 RTH: ...And, and also a couple of beeps from today. And as a, as a general rule in that situation where I have beeps from yesterday and today, I would generally prefer to start with beeps from today. And the reason for that is I think *fresh beeps* are better. My experience has been that you can usually sur... A beep, the recollection of a beep can usually survive what, sometimes I call it 24 hours, sometimes I call it really one sleep cycle. You can sleep on a beep one time, but if you sleep on it the second time for some reason, then you generally forget the details about it, as it seems to me. So I would... So fresh is better, and unless you've got a better idea, I'd say let's start with beeps from today.
- 12:20 Agnes: Sounds good.
- 12:21 RTH: And I'm gonna, and and I am going to begin the interviewing, and then you all can chime in if you've got questions about what it, what it is I'm saying. So I'm gonna ask the question that I would always ask in this situation, which is, ([to workshop] you should know what it is by now) it is:
- 12:36 [to Agnes] What, if anything, was in your experience at the moment of beep... This is gonna be like beep 5? [Agnes: Beep 5, yeah, we'll start with beep 5.] This is sampling period 3, beep number 5. What was in your experience at beep 5?

Discussion of sample 3.5 starts here [starting with the first sample from today]

- 12:47 Agnes: So beep 5 happened this morning. Um, this was the first beep of this morning. Um, and it hap, this is all just background, context, not what I was actually experiencing. Um, so it was, I was downstairs and I had just made coffee and I had like a glass of water on the counter and the dishwasher was open and I was, um, walking towards, uh, towards this glass of water. I think when the beep went off, I was like, about to reach for the glass of water and I was looking at the dishwasher. Um, so what was in my experience in the moment was that I was seeing this section of, um, counter / glass / open dishwasher. There was like a, a visual experience. Um, and previous to the beep, so like a few moments before the beep, not the moment, the last uninterrupted moment, but a but before that, um, I *had been* thinking, should I empty the dishwasher now or should I save that for later?
- 12:47 Russ comments: RE "this is all just background, context" ... "so what was in my experience in the moment"
Good! Agnes makes a clear distinction between background and at-the-beep experience. That is a major aspect of cleaving to experience. I'm happy to have Agnes give us whatever context or background that she feels will help her describe her experience *as long as she understands the distinction between context/background and experience and keeps them separate.*
- 13:52 Agnes: Um, but in the moment of the, so in the moment of the beep, I felt like there was still like a, a, a sense of that thought, though I wasn't any longer thinking it, but I

was kind of looking at the dishwasher with something like that (I dunno) remnant of that thought [laughs], um, still in mind. And I was like about to reach for, for the glass. So I had, I had a visual experience and then that kind of remnant of thought experience, um, of should I empty the dishwasher now? But I wasn't saying those words to myself, it was just kind of a remnant.

- 14:32 RTH: So are there two aspects of your experience at this moment? That I'm seeing this dishwasher area and I am in some way remnantly thinking, should I empty it now or later?
- 14:44 Agnes: Yes. Okay. Um, and yes, see, okay, this is where the challenges come in already! Um, I'm, now, I'm trying to remember like my hand was reaching out to grab the water as well. Um, and I wanna say that was part of my experience, too.
- 15:06 RTH: As like a third track of the experience?
- 15:08 Agnes: And that's what I'm not sure about whether, like, I'm not sure how to, um, individuate the tracks, if that makes sense.
- 15:16 RTH: Okay. So, so I don't, I don't think we, I don't, I don't, I'm not worried about whether we individ, individuate or not. [Agnes: Okay.] The que, the question is, I guess first is the reaching, is the *reaching for* part of your experience? Or is that part of something that's just happening? And either way is fine with me. I don't...,
- 15:36 Agnes: To be honest, I'm not sure. See, okay, this is again, like part of the challenge. Like in, in the moment, I, I wrote some stuff down [laughs] and, and I said "hand reaching out to grab water." Uh, this may have been my failure of, uh, of getting it down, but it may just have been, I think part of the challenge that I've been experiencing, and I've talked about this with, with a lot of you, is *what was I in fact experiencing* as Russ put it *in that last undisturbed moment* as opposed to when the beeper was going off and after. I, I have a hard time distinguishing between that. So I'm not sure, to be honest, whether the hand reaching out to grab the water was genuinely part of the experience or not.
- 16:19 RTH: Alright, well let's come to the, let's come back to that. So let, let's, so, so far we've got two or maybe three tracks of experience. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] And is one of those tracks more prominent than the other? Or, or do they all seem, say, like a mix of something?
- 16:32 Agnes: I'd say, I'd say 60—40. The seeing the counter and then that vague sense of should I empty the dishwasher.
- 16:39 RTH: So mostly seeing the counter,
- 16:41 Agnes: Like yes, a little bit mostly.
- 16:43 RTH: Okay. Yeah. And, [to workshop] and I, I, I very often ask for numbers like 60—40, that's why she gave me 60—40. I don't really care about numbers 60—40. What,

what “60—40” means to me is what she then, uh, verbalized, which is, uh, “yeah, a little bit more, but not very much more. I’m, I’m in, I’m into the, the seeing of the scene.” So what, what exactly is it that you’re, so this I, this I take it is a visual thing. [Agnes: Yes.] I’m *seeing* this. I’m not moving towards it. I don’t experience myself as moving towards it? I just see it? Is that right? Or does seeing involve an approaching?

- 17:22 Agnes: I’m seeing. I wanna say the seeing is somehow mixed with the thought about the, the emptying of the dishwasher. Um, I mean, it’s not... I wanna distinguish between like the way I’m seeing this glass right now and the way I was seeing the dishwasher with the remnant of the thought, *should I empty it?* And I was kind of approach, I was in this approach moment. So I don’t know, I’m not sure. [laughs] Okay. I’m not sure,
- 17:57 RTH: But so “I’m not sure” is a great answer. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] And, and, and it is one that, it’s one that DES participants sometimes have to learn to give that it is, it’s alright to say “I don’t know.” And it is not the case for all participants. That experience is lumped into this thing and then this thing and then this thing, and those things are all separate. Sometimes they’re more, more oatmeal and sometimes they’re more ham and eggs, y’know. Sometimes they’re separate, sometimes they’re overlap. So, so what do I see? That part of this, a big part of, of your experience is seeing some, something? Tell us more about that.
- 18:33 Agnes: So, um, that part is pretty clear to me, right? So the dishwasher is kind of open, one of the, um, trays is slid part way out. Um, and then there’s the countertop and the glass of water. I’m kind of seeing all those things. Like, it’s almost like, and this is, I’m saying this metaphorically, not literally, that there’s this kind of like spotlight on that, um, bit of my field of vision. And I say *metaphorically* because what I don’t mean is like I’m only seeing that and there’s blank at outside of that. I think we talked about that as like a foreground.
- 19:14 RTH: So the rest of the counter is not absent. It is present but not clearly, or not, [Agnes: Exactly. Yeah. Yeah.] not with my interest. That’s
- 19:21 Agnes: Exactly, exactly.
- 19:23 RTH: Okay. And, and am I interested in any particular part of the, the dishwasher? The open-ness, the shelf-ness, the, the glass-ness, the...?
- 19:32 Agnes: Kind of the openness. Like the openness and the there-to-be-emptied-ness. [laughs] [RTH: Okay.] The, the full-ness? No, maybe just the, okay. No, now I’m confabulating. The openness.
- 19:46 RTH: Okay. So I see my open dishwasher. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] As we could, as sort of the center of that aspect of your experience?

- 19:55 Agnes: Yes. But, um, I wanna say like 60—40 with like the counter and the glass as well. Or maybe 70—30. But like the, the counter and the glass were also there, even though my attention was more on the dishwasher than on the counter in the glass.
- 20:15 RTH: Okay. So I think I'm good with that portion and I'm ready to move on to the, the, uh, I forget what we call it, remnant of a, remnant of a thought. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] What, tell us more about that.
- 20:29 Agnes: So again, this is one where I, if I'm honest at the moment of the beep, like it was hard to really recon or remember or whatever, um, what precisely was happening. Um, I know that it was not like, "should I empty the dishwasher now?" Like I wasn't innerly saying it to myself or anything like that. Um, but I, but I *had been* thinking about that and that was still like, there was still this kind of question left over or this, um, maybe half in, half-formed intention, or something like that. Um, yeah, I mean I, I, I, I don't have a better way right now to describe it than that.
- 21:17 RTH: So it, does this seem like I'm in some way thinking that even though I can't tell you exactly how, how that's happening? This is a thought process. It's not just the context of the, of the seeing? But there's some experienced [Agnes: Yes.] cognitive track?
- 21:33 Agnes: Yes. But I like, I wouldn't call it like an explicit cognitive track. It's almost like implicit or a subconscious or not fully conscious. I don't know, I don't know what the right words are to describe that, but it's not fully conscious, maybe. I don't know...
- 21:52 RTH: Okay. So the distinction that I was trying to make there was, was not between consciousness and unconscious (cuz I don't know anything about the unconscious) but the but between sort of implied in the sense that it is part of the seeing that all, all, all I'm doing is I'm giving some context for the seen, for the seen dishwasher; versus experience—I somehow experienced myself as still in the think-y realm contemplating should I do this an hour later?
- 22:28 Agnes: Yeah, the latter.
- 22:29 RTH: So there is something...
- 22:30 Agnes: Like, it, it's not just, it's not just part of the seeing of the dishwasher. There's still something in the think-y realm. [laughs].
- 22:36 RTH: That's, that's the question that I was imperfectly trying to ask. Fair enough. So I, I *do somehow experience* myself cognitively think-y, think-ully, deciding-ly whether to open this now or later.
- 22:54 Agnes: Yes.
- 22:56 RTH: And is there anything more to be said about that? I, well, let me, let me ask a few questions about that. So, so a second, or a couple of seconds before this? Was that in words? or No, I'm not,

23:07 Agnes: I'm not sure.

23:07 RTH: Fine. Cuz I didn't ask her about that. Cuz now I'm violating my own rule. Like I'm asking about something that's not the, not the moment of the beep. At the moment of the beep, is this in words? [Agnes: No.] Any words? [Agnes: No.] Like not even "open," or "now," or...

23:25 Agnes: No. I mean, I, I maybe, but I can't say yes.

23:29 RTH: Okay. So I have the, I am in some think-ully way contemplating should I open it now later?

23:38 Agnes: [corrects his misspeaking] Should I *empty* it now or later

23:40 RTH: Later, empty it hour later, thanks. And, uh, but without the words "open" or "later" or "now."

23:47 Agnes: Exactly. Yeah.

23:51 RTH: And that is separably experiential in the sense that I feel I understand myself to be *thinking* this. And, and at *the same time* I am *seeing that*, and those are to some degree different things. [Agnes: Yes.] But they're also somehow interrelated or [Agnes: Yes. or or whatever. [Agnes: Yes.] So I think I'm happy with those two portions. And then there's the reaching for the glass.

24:29 Agnes: Yeah. I don't, I, I don't want, I feel like I don't wanna talk about that, cuz I'm like very uncertain that it was part of the experience. [RTH: Okay.] Um, in the sense that like on two different levels, I mean, I think...

24:44 Yeah, actually, okay, sorry. Part of the challenge here, [laughs], which I thought I was gonna get better at, but it turns out I'm still learning, um, is the, the note-taking part and then interpreting your notes. Like, part of me thinks, oh, this was this morning, no problem. But, [laughs] but actually, I mean, I wasn't doing that great of a job. I think actually, see, looking at this again, I think the hand reaching up to grab the water was meant to be as context, rather than as part of my experience. Cuz then I said, "*seeing* counter and open dishwasher, and then like this vague sense that I should empty the dishwasher were my experience." So I'm gonna scratch that, scratch the, that as part of my experience.

25:25 RTH: Back to two tracks.

25:26 Agnes: Yeah, [laughs].

25:30 RTH: So what I, what I would say about that is that the, the distinction between context and directly apprehended experience is not necessarily 100% clear, as in this particular case. [Agnes nods affirmatively] So maybe she wasn't, maybe she's, she wasn't, I'm, I'm not sure that there's a right answer there. When you get down into

the weeds, I think you're into the weeds. And that's just, that's just the way it is.
What I think, what, what I think we can...

25:53 Let me, let me, let me ask a couple of other, couple of other questions here. At, at the moment of the beep, did you have an inner, an inner image of the war in Iran? [Agnes: No!] [everyone laughs]

26:03 MD: Inside the dishwasher! [everyone laughs]

26:13 RTH: So, so that, that kind of thing is, is a, a worthwhile observation to make because it seems like, *well, this inner experience stuff is really difficult. I can't really tell what's going on!* But in the, in the big picture it is, she's a hundred percent clear about what's, what is, what's at stake here. And what's at stake has some edges to it, which we can't, which we're not gonna be able to define. But the, but those edges are not everywhere that you look. Those edges are well in a, in a well-defined region. And, and I think, I think it is possible in some situations for experiences to be very separate, to have one experience of seeing the dish, the dishwasher, and, and an entirely separate, well, should I do open it now or later, take a year or whatever, to have those be entirely separate.

27:03 That's possible. That doesn't happen to be the way it is for Agnes. And what I, I *don't* want us to, to interpret Agnes's indecision as *well, this process is impossible*. What, what, what we're, we're seeing is Agnes's indecision. And in terms of Agnes's inner experience, I think her inner experience is not clearly distinguished between this and that. If somebody else's inner experience distinguished clearly between this and that, then we'd have a conversation which is quite different from this. So we'd have a, about this and, and, and, and about that. But that's not what we have. And this is not a criticism of Agnes by any means. This is the way different people's inner experience is.

27:03 Russ comments: The point RTH has been trying to make here is that the indecisiveness of Agnes's language is due to the indefiniteness of her experience. It is *not* the case that the indecisiveness of Agnes's language *causes* her experience to appear indefinite. Agnes is perfectly capable of being definite about her inner experience when her inner experience calls for definiteness (as in her emphatic *No!* about not seeing an image of the war in Iran).

That is, I think her descriptive language matches her experience, not the other way around.

27:43 So I, so that's sort of the end of the discussion as far as I would, as I would make it, as, as the first beep, I would say something like: Agnes and at five (whatever it was this morning) was, uh, aimed towards her dishwasher. She saw the dishwasher tableau of, uh, which was a visual experience. And at the same time she was somehow cognitively think-ully, but not word-ly and not image-ly, contemplating whether she should open [*he misspeaks—should have said empty*] the dishwasher now or later. And that was a, a waning experience that had been more explicitly cognitive some while before. And but, but was not entirely gone, either. And, and, uh, that would be the end of the first beep, from my point of view. We good about the first beep, [to Agnes] you and I? Cuz I'm gonna ask questions to...

28:37 Agnes: Yeah, yeah, we're good. And I, and I wanted to comment that just from my perspective, that what Russ said, I, I would say *Yes, exactly. That's exactly right.* I mean, he, he just captured what I was experiencing in a way that was clearer than I would, I mean, as you all saw [laughs], that then I would have, um, packaged it. So anyway, just that's kind of a comment, a, a meta-level comment about this whole process. And I guess one thing I'm interested in is, is how, um, second- and third-person perspectives can help us better understand first-person perspectives. And I think this is perhaps an example of that.

Discussion after sample 3.5 starts here

29:17 RTH: I, I think I, I think DE, consider DES to be a two, a second, a *first-person plural* endeavor, is what I think it is. And I think, I think it's necessary. I think it, I think I shouldn't say necessary. For, for most mortals, a first person plural, ex exploration is pretty darn close to necessary. For an adept meditator who has reached nirvana, it's a different deal, but I don't, but that's not me! [laughter] And, uh, uh, but, but that, I think, I think those guys might be able to tell you about their inner experience absolutely perfectly, much better than we can do here, *on their own*, one guy at a time. Short of that: first-person plural. So I think this would be a time to open it to the questions that people had. And [to Michael] you wanna moderate?

29:17 Russ comments: DES has to be first-person *plural* because (a) everyone has presuppositions, blind spots, exaggerations, and a second person raises the possibility that the two sets of presuppositions may help keep each other in check; (b) because the only experiences one has ever seen are their own, and therefore they are not in a position to know what about their own experience is common or is unusual, and therefore not in a position to know what needs or does not need careful description; and (c) nearly everyone thinks everyone else's experience is just like their own, and therefore thinks that what is obvious about their own inner experience is obvious to everyone.

30:06 MD: Yeah, I'll moderate. I got Christian and yeah. Okay. I got, I got the order now. So go ahead. I'll point, I'll point in your direction when it's your turn.

30:13 P3: So this is

30:14 RTH: Before we do that, I want, I want to thank Agnes and Michael both for participating in, in this kind of a deal. There's, there's risks involved this kind of this, this kind of a thing. And, uh, and so I appreciate it.

30:30 P3: So this is fascinating to see it in, in real time, so to speak. Uh, y'know, uh, that, that's, that's a wonderful, uh, y'know, sampling and, y'know, the demonstration here. But, y'know, um, on a, on a day-to-day basis, we find ourselves always in various situations other than dialogical situation—Agnes was, Ag, Agnes were talking last night when the beep went off. So she was in the dialog situation at that point. But then the, the fourth bit that we just unpacked now, she was all by herself. So there is any, any range of context that we find ourselves in on a day-to-day basis. And, um, most know, tell you that every awareness happens in the background of,

uh, intuitions about something that's, it's there in the periphery, but y'know, it's not there yet. And it can become central as attention shifts or moves. And so attention shifted from the dishwasher to the previous moments of, y'know, what she was attending to.

31:28 So my, my question is the, uh, the experimental setup itself seems to, to, and as I said, there's a bit of a learning curve from, y'know, just getting to use the beeper, but as soon that the beeper itself draws automatically the attention to one's self. So I might be, y'know, absorbed into what it is that I'm doing, and all of a sudden the beeper goes off. And now that automatically, by default, by just the nature of the, the setup of the experimental setup, I'm supposed to direct attention to myself or to some aspect of my awareness. What was I thinking? What was I doing at that very moment? What was my experience at that time? So it seems to me that the very nature of the protocol here, the beeper is, is directing attention in some form or another, right?

32:13 So when I'm trying to describe what I was going on, I'm already, my sense, my attention's already shifted from what I was coping with, the activity that I was engaged in, the way the world was soliciting me to do some task or another, whether that was a dialogue. So let's say when Agnes and I were talking, maybe I was anticipating what she was about to say, I was [inaudible] what she was doing vice, vice versa. So we, we engaged in some sort of external activity. And then all of a sudden that directs attention to ourselves. It could be the other way around, too. It could very well be that I'm just lost in thought or I'm just contemplating something or the other, I'm remembering a childhood experience and then the beeper goes off, right? And again, in that case, maybe the, my attention is sort of more, more even now, because I'm, I was deeply absorbed and now I'm paying attention to the beeper, and I gotta sort of shuffle and find out my notebook and, and quickly record the...

33:03 So it, I'm not sure that to what extent the, the, the experimental protocol itself is neutral as, as, as an experience sampler, um, because it seems to me that it, it out, it, it directs attention in a way that's sort of specifically tailored. Um, and also, um, in some sense, I don't wanna say disturbs the flow, but it actually does impact in some form or another the flow. And I'm kind of curious to learn more about how do you accommodate that? Um, like in what way do you think that this experimental protocol itself in some sense impacts or changes or shifts, colors, whatever, y'know, constraints, um, the reporting?

33:45 RTH: So first off, I agree with most everything that you said. I *do* think that the wearing of beeper affects the, the situation. The question is how much and in what way? [P3: Umm.] And, and the answer to that, I don't actually know the answer to that very well. But what I would say is, I think most, most people when, before they wear the er and, and on the first day when they put the beeper on for the first time, think, oh, this is really gonna disturb me because I've been, I gotta wear this beeper. But by the time they're half an hour into it, or the second sampling day or whatever, they've pretty much forgotten that they're putting the beeper on. So there's, there's very little impact by most people's self-report. There, there are some exceptions to that. There are, I've assembled a few people who *the whole time* worried about having the beeper on. Ab, absolutely the whole, the whole deal. But most people, most people, that's not [inaudible], that's not that interesting.

34:40 The, the beeping process is *entirely retrospective*. I'm, I'm not denying that. The beep happens and then she's gotta look back. [P3: Mm-hmm.] And she's gotta look back from then, and she's gotta look back in the, in the, in the realm of having to push the button to stop the beep and find her notebook and all that stuff. All that, all that is correct. And the, the question is, well, to, to what extent does that disturb the ongoing experience? I would, I would like to have her tell me about her experience—or not tell me about it. But, uh, I could have a corkscrew that I could just pull it out of her whenever I felt like it! [mimes twisting and pulling something out of Agnes's head] I would, I would do that if I could, but I don't know of any way to do that. And I don't think anybody else has got any way to do that either. And so I think, yes, this disturbs inner experience. How much does disturb inner experience? Well, I'm guessing not very much by comparison to any other method that people are using now, with the possible exception of nirvana, [laughs].

34:40 Russ comments: I might add: the clearer one's experience is, the less susceptible it likely is to the influences P3 mentions. If, for example, Agnes's experience at the moment of the beep had been that she was innerly speaking "I should clean that now!" in those exact words in her own clearly articulated voice, there could be all kinds of disturbances and/or delays between the beep and the note-taking, and it wouldn't have mattered. In Agnes's actual sample, there was not such definition, so grasping it was harder.

 I happily accept that all introspection *might be* entirely and swiftly confabulated in response to the beep—that is, there is no ongoing experience until one attempts to introspect. Possible? Yes. Likely? No.

35:42 MD: Okay. I think we had 1, 2, 3, 4.

35:46 P1: So one thing I've found, I've, I've been trained in microphenomenology and done some work in that area, and there's definitely some overlap. One thing that I've found, (uh, actually quite a lot of overlap), but one thing I found really interesting is that there was basically no reports that involved affect here. And, but there was what I thought an affect, a quite important aspect of the experience, which is affective, which was the use of the word "remnant." So there was a sense in which it's not a have a thought, but like when you're saying remnant, and also the expression on your face was you're trying to describe something that had a certain *feel* to it, which was not like explicitly thinking the thought. And so that's the thing that I would have actually gone after in the interview, is I would've gone after, *what's that feeling of a remnant?*

36:38 What do you mean by a "remnant"? Like, what is it? Is it because you're not, y'know, then I would not say, is it because XY, I wouldn't even use that language, but I would try to find out what that, what "remnant" meant, because I suspect it actually is a really important part of the experience. So I don't know if that makes sense to you. Like, so maybe part of it is that there's, uh, in that style, because there's like, affect is somewhat as a context, because here's the idea, my explicit attention is on the dishwasher in a sense that I have that. But the idea that that's affect-free, I think, even when people, when people write things down, they're not trained to write down their affect with it. That's not how we write things down. *But* there *was* affect with it, with the ex, with the *explicit* experience, not implicit.

36:38

RE “*But there was affect with it, with the ex, with the explicit experience*”

To my ear, such an unequivocal, forceful claim about affect is likely the result of theory, not the result of anything Agnes said about her experience. I myself do not see evidence *coming from Agnes* for even a mild version of a claim about affect, much less such an unequivocal / forceful one. To my ear, the commitment to affect as exemplified in this comment will change the interview from a fidelity exercise (let’s try to help Agnes describe her experience to the limits of our ability) to a validation exercise (let’s see whether we can get Agnes to say something that we can interpret as supportive of our theory of affect).

Russ comments: RE “What do you mean by a ‘remnant’?”

This is a good example of why I say that DES is not (or at least should not be) about the words. Agnes did not refer to her experience as a “remnant” in her best (first) attempt to describe this phenomenon (13:52). She referred to it as an “<underminer> remnant.” That is, Agnes’s description was at least as close to “not a remnant” as it was to a “remnant.”

This is what she said: “something like that (I dunno) remnant of that thought” and “that kind of remnant of thought” and “I wasn’t saying those words to myself, it was just kind of a remnant.” There are two important aspects of those locutions: first, *remnant* never stands on its own—it is always undermined: doubly so in “something like that (I dunno) remnant,” and singly in “kind of remnant” and “just kind of a remnant.” So I think she never meant anything by “remnant”; she meant something by “<undermined>remnant.” As a result, I think P1’s intention to “try to find out what that, what ‘remnant’ meant” is unfair, if the intention is to help Agnes describe with fidelity her experience at the moment of the beep.

RE “*what’s that feeling of a remnant?*”

Second, Agnes’s mention of “<underminer> remnant” was always in the realm of cognition, not feeling. She said (13:52) “something like that (I dunno) remnant of that thought” and “that kind of remnant of thought”; and “I wasn’t saying those words to myself, it was just kind of a remnant.” That is, I hear no hint of affect in what Agnes said. So I think “*what’s that feeling of a remnant?*” is unfair, if the intention is to help Agnes describe with fidelity her experience at the moment of the beep.

It would have been okay with me had P1 said his intention was to find out what Agnes meant about her *experience* when she grunted *something in the ballpark of remnant*. That would have inquired about Agnes’s *experience*; P1’s original request was about the *word* “remnant” (taken out of its undermining context). P1 *could have* asked an even-playing-field question, something like: “Agnes, we’ve been talking about the experience that you’ve called an <underminer> remnant as a think-y kind of thing. Would it have been just as good, or better, or not as good, to say it is a “feel-y” kind of thing?”

37:30 RTH:

So, so [to Agnes] let’s go back to just you and me here for a minute. So, at the, at the moment of this what we’ve, so been calling a think-y thing, should we have been calling it a think-y and a feel-y thing? Was this a some kind of an affective...?

- 37:44 Agnes: So this is, I mean, in listening to John's question, um, the question that arose in my mind, I mean, when you said that, I was like, *was it affective?* And then the next question was, *well, what's the line between* [P1: Yeah.] *affect and a think-y thing?* I mean, when Russ had asked me whether it was a think-y thing, I said, yes, but he didn't say a think-y thing as opposed to an affective thing. And to,
- 38:13 P1: And I would, I would put that
- 38:14 RTH: Together. Let's let, let's let her,
- 38:15 Agnes: Well, and, and to be honest, like, I'm not sure I know, like I'm not sure I understand fully what affect is. Like, I mean, of course I know some examples, like I know broadly what affect is, but I don't know what the boundary is between an experience that we would call an affective one and not. And so that's my challenge, actually, to answer that question because I just don't know what the boundaries are. So I think I would want to ask you more about like what constitutes an affect versus not. Does that make sense? [P1: Yeah.]
- 38:51 RTH: So the, he, he, he's drawing the distinction between DES and microphenomenal microphenomenology. And for those who don't know what microphen is, it basically is, is uh, and uh, uh, a deal that is designed to make what is preconscious or in the, in the realm of conscious, make that conscious. DES by contrast, on the other hand, is designed to make what is already conscious, rememberable. And so we would, I would not try to look beneath the surface to find out what was, what was there. I think it, I think that is a fraught effort. And the, uh,
- 39:34 P1: And my claim is it's not beneath, it's just the way she's been asked to report that you're losing affect. That, that would be my claim.
- 39:48 RTH: I, I think that DES is, DES is not a, not a thing in its, of its own. That is to say what, what we, what you're seeing in, in is not DES, you're seeing Russ's version of DES with Agnes. And, and to the extent that Russ is death to affect, then you're going to see a version of DES that is death to affect. I don't, I, when my sensors sense affect, I'm all over that, I think. I didn't sense it here. And I would also say that's, so that's, that's one discussion there.
- 40:33 The second discussion is, and I, I think it is a mistake to ask the question, "what did you mean when you said [P1: Rem.] remnant, whatever, what, whatever it was. It makes it too much about the words. DES is *not* about the words. I, when the, the art of DES, I think is to call attention back to that. So if, if I had, if I had some kind of a whiff of affect in there, what I would say, I would try to get us back to talking about that. So when in, in, and I might say something like, well, y'know, we're in this think-, think- thing, so I would like, (I like the neologisms like thinking because it doesn't, it, it doesn't have much baggage to it. It makes, it cl, makes it clear that I'm making things up on the fly here.) And, and that I would, and I might say, well, y'know, is that an emotional experience or a think-y, think-y experience? that *if* I, if I had sensed that. So I'm, I'm, I'm accepting that there is a personal narrow narrowness that's Russ-ian about [P1: Mm-hmm.] about this, about this. And the,

the, the microphen thing I think looks harder than it has a right to look beneath the, beneath the surface. And the, that, I think is risky.

40:33 Russ comments: If P1 or anyone else goes back through the video and can point to a particular place in Agnes's talk that displays affect, and that was overlooked by me, I would greatly appreciate that. I'm happy to accept imperfection in my ability to whiff affect—that's why DES almost always uses co-interviewers—my co-interviewer might me sensitive to something that I overlooked.

But at the same time, if P1 wants to engage in high fidelity interviewing, he would do well to be alert to the possibility that his interest in affect is theory driven, or personal-history driven, or whatever, but *not* Agnes's-experience driven.

I'm no mind reader, and it is not given to me to decide between these two alternatives.

41:58 MD: Um, so I'll just inject one thing and then we have more questions. Um, just maybe a little bit supportive what you're just saying. So I, I did this for 11 weeks or something like that, and there were a few affective moments. And when that came up, I, I think we talked about one of them for a good half an hour or something. Um, so it can come up. Um, and I don't remember how it came up, but I do remember having a long discussion about it. Um, I think we're here now and then there, and then there.

42:26 P3: Okay, thanks. Uh, I think it might be unavoidable when you, when you start to describe or analyze something like the experience here, um, that you start to divide up. So almost immediately, uh, there was a, a division between two things. There were two tracks, or two, I figured what you call them, uh, but the, the, the thinking part and then what you were seeing. Um, and then when John asks about affect, oh, there's another, maybe there's a third part in there. We, so we, we should talk about that. Then we have to question that. Um, but then that, that seems to assume that we can separate or, or divide, uh, an experience that might in fact be more unit, unitary. Um, and, and say, now first let's talk about the visual part. Now let's talk about the thinking part. Um, so I'm wondering about just that, that kind of division, uh, whether, uh, that is, is actually capturing the precise, uh, nature of that experience.

43:46 So, uh, I, y'know, I immediately started to theorize, which of course is not, not a good thing of course in this context. Um, but I, I, I thought, *ah, this really is very, very nice. Uh, I would say it's almost evidence, but, y'know, very nice kind of description of an, an active perception.* [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] Uh, or if you prefer Gibson and ecological, y'know. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] You were, you were perceived, you were, as he puts it, seeing an affordance. Uh, y'know, and, and that's, that remnant is kind of built into your perception. Yeah, right? I see the dishwasher as something that can be eti or put off. Uh, and that seems more unitary than, than thinking, well, there's this thought first and then there's perception. I don't know how you might wanna think about that.

44:38 RTH: Well, I, I would, I would say we did break the, break it up because it's, I don't see any other way around it, but to, to at least to some degree break it up. But if I rewind the tape to what I said at the end, I thought, what I recall saying about that is that it, that I did not say that there were two separate things. I, I said that there was

a, this kind of experience that was more, more overlappy or more unitary or whatever. I, I don't think I was captured by my own words of saying that it was broken up. I, I,

- 44:38 Russ comments: RE "But if I rewind the tape to what I said at the end"
That summary is at 27:43. Viewers can judge for themselves; my view is that my description was overlappy.
- 45:10 MD: Well, I remember what you said. I won't quote it, but I mean, but there was a question at one point was were these things, were these experiences unified in some way or were they somewhat separate? And I believe Agnes said somewhat separate, but still connected, something along those lines.
- 45:27 P1: Um, I mean, that's just affect, that's what I was also exactly that the idea that the thought was also like a kind of feeling of engaging, wanting to move through the dishwasher, do something with it. That's kind of what I was trying to get at, actually. That's the branding.
- 45:44 RTH: The big, the big picture that I would, that I've, that I would like to convey is the, the lack of perfection of the operation that we're doing here. This is... Nothing that we do is a hundred percent right. I think, I think I'm, I could a hundred, pretty much a hundred percent say that that Agnes was not engaged in visual imagery about Iran, for example. [laughter]. And that is a, that is a huge thing to keep in mind when you, when you, when you try to understand what we're doing here. We're, we're, we're quibbling about here are fine points about fine points, I think. Well, all, all the questions so far are fine points about fine points, where the, the big picture is that I write that, that Agnes was *not* doing a *lot* of these other kinds of things that people *do* when they go about their everyday life. But it didn't happen to be Agnes on this beep.
- 46:41 MD: George.
- 46:44 P2: Um, so first it's, it's a, i I think for myself, not having undergone the, the process, I, I feel like I have very little awareness of sort of, uh, states as they progress, y'know, and, and how I would bring attention to it. And it seems this method is very valuable, this kind of tutoring people to bring, uh, a sense of the richer texture, right, of, of our experience into awareness.
- 47:30 Um, a a question I have is on the moment, and the role questions play in constituting it. Um, and what I, what I can imagine is kind of the more, say, when you interact with someone, uh, no, that's context. Um, this, y'know, go and then you a certain coherence to the experience, like in the discussion right now where it might, there might be these fragments, right? But if you step back with what might be called context, the fragments come together.
- 48:11 Um, and the, the question is, um, what role does the question play in constituting what counts as a moment and how fine grain do you bring that attention? So with the dishwasher, I, I imagine where concepts are playing a role or what I was doing in that. Um, if you push further, you could bring it to attention to say certain quality or whatever. Um, and, uh, so is it a discovery that certain things

make up a moment that part of what you discover through this process is say that, um, that our, our conscious states are constituted at, say, a certain kind of interval, maybe for some beeps it's much narrower, it's more, uh, y'know, much smaller in increment. For other beeps it might be, to get it out, it might be broader. Um, and is there a discovery regarding the line between what's part of the moment and what's part of the context? Or are there background considerations regarding, y'know, the type of descriptions that are thought to be reliable in relation to moment that over time and experience with many people you've come to appreciate, this is how a moment is constituted.

50:03 RTH: So there's two important issues there. One, one is most people, many people are quite ignorant about their own inner experience. So the fact that you started off by saying, well, I, I don't know what I would be saying, whatever. That's the way almost everybody is. And, uh, maybe philosophers worse than other people by then, [laughs] the, or more so than, more so than other people. But, but, but many, many people end up being entirely surprised, shocked, life-alteringly in some, in some cases about what's actually going on in, in their inner experience. So that's about the, the ignorance of, of individual people, about their own characteristics, of their own inner experiences is probably the, the, my main contribution to the scientific literature. I would say something like that.

50:52 Second about the length, the length of a moment, I think, is entirely arbitrary. So I don't, I don't say a, a moment is short and I don't say a moment as long. I'm interested in the moment says your sausage maker makes them, y'know. If you make the link links like this, then that's how big a moment is. And if you make the links like this, then that's how, how, how big a how big it is.

51:11 For, for most people. There is a natural way of saying what is the moment and what's not. And, and the clearer your experiences, y'know, like if, if your experience was, I was seeing it in my imagination, a picture of a, of a tanker in the, in the Hormuz Straight, then you're pretty good. You're gonna be pretty clear about what that moment is. You, that moment is, as long as that image was there and that image was there for two seconds or something like that, or half a second or whatever it was, that's, that was my, that was my moment. And the next moment is gonna be something entirely different from that. [makes a chopping movement onto the table; startles Agnes] It's no question, ([to Agnes]sorry) no question about it. It is, it's, this moment is different from that one. For some people like Agnes's beep, beep here, the, the, the moment itself has a indeterminacy to it. That is, is the case for some people and not for other people.

52:14 MD: Brett, did you have your hand up?

52:15 P2: Yeah, yeah. I, um, I have a question about the role of attention with respect to foreground/background considerations.

52:23 RTH: What was the word? The role of what?

52:25 P2: Uh, foreground and background.

52:26 RTH: Of attention?

- 52:27 P2: Yeah. So, so like when you started out talking today, you, you talked about trying to zero in on like what is, what you're paying attention to. Um, and, and I would've thought, perhaps wrongly, that my experiences could be colored by various elements that are in the background, but which I'm not paying attention to. But, um, and I grant that that could be a mistake. I, I'm, I'm not confident that I'm, I'm, I have a good grip of my own experience. But I guess I, I was wondering, I can imagine somebody, um, saying that, that, y'know, it, it might worrying that it's sort of like, um, inferring that the refrigerator light is always on cuz every time we check it's on. Um, similarly, like if you think the only things that are in your experience or the things that you're paying attention to, um, are we leaving out background elements that are in the background of your experience, but which you're not paying attention to?
- 53:28 Um, and if we're *not* leaving that out, um, how do you draw the distinction between the things that are in the background coloring your experience, which you're not directly attending to on the one hand, and the stuff that, um, is not in your experience? Like, so I, I know like you've sometimes said, y'know, just cuz your eyes are open and pointed at something, it doesn't mean that that what you're looking at is part of your experience. But I, I see that more. But how, how do you draw the, *do you* draw distinction? Uh, and if so, how, between like the background elements that are in your experience and the stuff that's *not* in your experience.
- 54:03 RTH: So I fully acknowledge, agree, whatever that the, that all those things that you described end up altering what it, what you directly apprehend. There's no question of no question about that. I, I don't (and I think microphen does, for example) but I don't try to identify what those things are. I think that's not, I think, I think there's no end. Once you start down that slope of trying to figure out, well, what is it that made Agnes interested in this particular dishwasher at this particular time? I think there's no end to that because I think you can get to, well, y'know, she knows she's gonna be here today, so she's, so there's this whole, this whole thing was here; and then, then she knows that her car's in the shop and she's gonna do that; and then there's the whole Iran thing; and then there's the whole Trump thing; and then there's the whole whatever. And all those things have impact on *should I open, should I unload the dishwasher at, at this particular moment?* I fully accept that. But none of those are explicitly present in the opening of the dishwasher, I don't think. And, and so my, my interest is in what, what makes itself explicitized in experience at a particular moment. There, there are lots of other things that might be, *might be* of interest, but that's not *my* interest.
- 55:34 MD: So we're going to, um, do, Rihanna has a question, and I'm gonna suggest, since Agnes claims that she got *two* high quality beeps this morning, [Agnes: It's true! (laughs)], that we move to the second high quality beep. And that doesn't mean you can't ask your questions, just hold them in reserve and maybe they'll be colored by what happens up here as, as they do that. Um, I'm not saying don't ask your questions, I'm asking you to hold off for a minute. Except for Rihanna, cuz you were very patient.
- 55:59 RTH: Good. Good work.

- 55:59 P4: Um, yeah, this is so interesting. So I have a question, um, about the linguistic aspect of the protocol. Um, so one of the things that I found really striking in Agnes's description of the dishwasher, um, counter and, um, glass, uh, attention space or whatever spotlight, um, was the way that those things were sort of happening simultaneously. But, um, language is, uh, linear. And so when we're describing things in language, we're kind of forced to put a linear order on it. Um, and on experiences that might not have a linear order. And I'm wondering whether, um, in the protocol or, um, whether you ever have people who kind of say, "well, I can't, I'm having a hard time describing it in language, but I'd like to paint a picture of it, or draw it" or make, even if they're using words, make, uh, I'm not sure that the words are the problem, but the linearity of it.
- 57:07 Um, I have a bunch of students who are very artistic because we have a big animation and illustration design program. And sometimes they say to me, "I can't really write my essay cuz this linear order is really hard." And I tell 'em to like draw a mind map for their, um, for their notes and things like that. And they find that to be much more useful. So they're still using words in that case, but it's taking away the linear aspect. Um, so that's like one aspect, like words without the linear part.
- 57:39 But then also other mediums of communication. I know that part of this is, um, this protocol is because it's dependent on you and your ability to communicate. But I wonder what it might look like, um, with people who maybe find other media to be more effective ways of kind of communicating their experience, whether that might be art or... In the paper, um, some of the things sounded to me almost like a photograph, um, or film, or dance, even movement with the body. So I'm, I'm really curious about how the linguistic aspects are.
- 58:16 RTH: So that's a great question. And, and what, what I would say is from, I would say DES is mostly practiced in English. But it is not entirely practiced in English. So Agnes would've been instructed when I told her how to write, how to write down her notes, that I would've said (probably did say—probably have it on tape somewhere) something like, "you can take whatever notes you want. If one word is enough, the whole page is, is enough, if you want to draw a picture, draw a picture. If you want to dictate it into a machine, into dictate it into the machine. If you want to dance it up, dance it up, uh, whatever is, it is fine with me." But the, but the output, which is I, I, I think you would say the Russian portion of it, the output is going to be primarily verbal. And we're, we're here in a primarily verbal, verbal thing. If we, if we, if this workshop had been structured around dance, then maybe we would be doing something that would be... But that is, I would say, a fundamental characteristic of the, of the method.
- 59:33 But I, I, I, I appreciate that there are other mode modes of communication other than language.
- 59:40 MD: Okay. I think we're going on to beep number 2. Is
- 59:42 Agnes: Beep number 6!
- 59:44 MD: Okay. Second for today.

Sample 3.6 discussion starts here

- 59:47 Agnes: Beep number 6. The final one of the day. Okay. So, um, in this second beep, um, I was sitting at my desk with this [holds up tablet] my remarkable paper tablet, and I was writing down, um, some notes about what I was gonna say at the start of the next session that we have. Um, and I had just written (uh, this is all background context) um, in parentheses, “and this is...” [looks closely at tablet] What do my words...? Oh, sorry! Sometimes I can’t read my own writing.
- 1:00:19 I had just, just written in parentheses, “(and this is particularly important to me as a philosopher of science).” And, um, and I was thinking about what I was going to, like, what I was gonna say next. And, um, and previously I *had* formed the thought of what I was gonna say next, like, what was gonna finish that sentence. Um, but then I had become distracted by this parenthetical remark [laughs], like, about the important of importance of this question for me as a philosopher of science.
- 1:00:53 Um, so at the moment of the beep, um, the, the last in undisturbed moment before the beep, um, my mind was kind of a blank. Like I, that’s the best way I can describe it. Um, I didn’t yet have, um, that thought that would finish that sentence that I was writing. Um, it was sort of in between thoughts. I think that’s the best way to describe like my cognitive state was, was between thoughts, kind of blank. Um, and I was seeing like the remarkable, um, and I was focused on that part that I had just written. Um, but I wasn’t reading it. I wasn’t, um, one thing that we have discussed in previous samplings, um, was a distinction between seeing a bunch of words and actually reading them innerly. So I was *not* reading them innerly, but I was seeing them. Um, so there were these two aspects of my experience. There was the visual aspect, and then there was this blankness kind of in-between-thoughtness, um, thinking about how to finish this sentence, or perhaps trying to recreate what I had already had previously in my head, but, um, was now gone.
- 1:02:13 RTH: So I’m not a hundred percent sure that I tracked all of that. So I had written “the remarkable thing for me as a philosopher of science”?
- 1:02:24 Agnes: “(And this is particularly important to me as a philosopher of science)”. I had written that in parentheses. [holds up hands to illustrate parentheses] So there was like a start of the sentence, and then I had that in parentheses, and then I was gonna finish the sentence.
- 1:02:35 RTH: And my eyeballs are aimed at that. [Agnes: Yes.] And I’m seeing that [Agnes: Yes.] as it is written in parentheses on the [Agnes: Yes.] on the tablet. [Agnes: Yes.] Okay. And that we’re [inaudible] call, we’re calling one track of my experience. [Agnes: Yes.] And the other track of my experience is just empty.
- 1:02:54 Agnes: Uh, I wouldn’t call it “just empty” because there’s this quality of between-thoughts, um, waiting for the, like, re... finishing, like, I, I want to finish that sentence. So, so it’s not just blank, blank, blank. Um, there’s
- 1:03:14 RTH: Pregnant, pregnantly waiting.
- 1:03:16 Agnes: Sure! [laughs].

1:03:18 RTH: So anticip, anticipatorily waiting or whatever.

1:03:21 Agnes: Yeah. Yep. I think that's a good way to put it. Yeah. Okay.

1:03:25 RTH: And, and does, does the anticipatorily waiting-ness... I, I do. Is that, is that experiential? Do you, do you experience myself? I experience myself as waiting.

1:03:43 Agnes: Yes.

1:03:46 RTH: But the con, there's no content at all to that? Or is there?

1:03:54 Agnes: I think at the moment, like the last undisturbed moment before the beep, I don't recall there being any content. Like, that's the best I can do. Um, perhaps the moment before that, I think there *was* some content, like I, like, as I said, I had, had, I *had* finished that sentence in my head and I was about to write it down. Then I got distracted, *not* by the beep, this was before the beep. I had, it's like something distracted me. I think I got actually distracted by that parenthetical remark. Like I started thinking about that. Um, so I *had* finished that sentence, and *now* I was like, my mind was blank, but I was sort of trying to then go, oh, what was I, I mean, I wasn't saying this to myself in my head, but the quality of the blankness was, *what was I gonna say again?* Or like, what, *how does the sentence finish?* Or something like that.

1:04:44 RTH: Okay. And is there anything else in your experience, other than these two aspects that we've talked about?

1:04:52 Agnes: That's it.

1:04:59 RTH: So about the seeing. I am, I am experientially seeing what I have written, as I have written it. [Agnes: Yeah.] I'm seeing it accurately...

1:05:08 Agnes: Just as I, just as I've written it. Yeah.

1:05:10 RTH: And, and is, do I experience this as seeing the, the words, whatever, I, I can't, still can't remember what they were. I think I...

1:05:18 Agnes: And this is particularly important to me as a philosopher of science)".

1:05:24 RTH: So is that, is the semantics of that present to you? I am seeing this, "this is particularly important to me as a philosopher of science" Is that what I'm, is that what I'm seeing, or am I seeing what's just the, the pixel display of it or the,

1:05:43 Agnes: The semantics are there. Yeah. I mean, there, I'm not reading it, but it's also not... I, I mean, one thing that came up in one discussion with Michael's, uh, of Michael's experience was, um, whether, whether what's there is somehow intelligible, and, and *it was*. I mean, I saw that sentence. It wasn't just a bunch of letters that were

meaningless or words that were meaningless. Um, so I'm, I'd say semantically, it was there.

- 1:05:43 Russ comments: I believe Agnes is referring to Michael Dickson's DES sampling (Agnes had been a co-interviewer). At Michael's sample 9.3, he was seeing on his computer screen the cover of a book whose title includes the word "stratification," which Michael had just read with comprehension. Now, however, Michael saw a pile of letters. Those letters were *as a matter of fact* the letters of the word "stratification," but *as a matter of experience* they were just a heap of letters without any semantic significance. [See 41:11 into the YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k0UjrfQzqsc> (or its transcript <https://hurlburt.faculty.unlv.edu/ieo/michaeld/michaelD%20interview%209%20transcript%20with%20commentary.pdf>).]
- 1:06:10 RTH: I'm seeing a semantically meaningful writing, parent, parenth-al, whatever, about philosopher of science. [Agnes: Yes.] That's, that's what I'm seeing. [Agnes: Yeah.] But I'm not *reading* that [Agnes: Correct.] in the sense that I'm not saying it to myself. [Agnes: Yep.] I'm not analyzing it. [Agnes: Yep.] But I am seeing it. [Agnes: Yes.] And is there anything else to be said about that aspect of your experience?
- 1:06:32 Agnes: No.
- 1:06:35 RTH: And *then* I am anticipatorily waiting for the answer to that question, I guess. Something like that.
- 1:06:44 Agnes: Yeah. For the record, the, I mean, there was something before that parenthetical remark that was like a, like, I can't remember what it was, but it was like, "In this case, blah, blah, blah." Like "In this case...." And then I said, "and this is particularly important," and then I was gonna finish that sentence. Um, and so yes, uh, I was anticipatorily waiting for the rest of that sentence to come to me so I could write it down.
- 1:07:07 RTH: And is there anything more to be said about how that waiting occurs to you? What, what that feels like? Or,
- 1:07:16 Agnes: I mean, I would say this is similar to something that came up before, but I would say it's kind of like a listening. Like, I mean, like a metaphorical listening where I'm just kind of waiting for it to, to come so I can write it down. [RTH: Okay.] Um, that's, yeah, that's the best I could describe it. That's metaphorical. Um,
- 1:07:39 RTH: And I'm, I'm happy with, with that.
- 1:07:42 Agnes: And maybe I should just add: Not listening, as in I'm waiting to have an auditory perception of it, but just waiting for it to, to descend upon me and I can write it down. So anyway, all metaphorical, but... [laughs]
- 1:07:54 RTH: Then I'm open to discussion.

- 1:07:57 MD: So can I suggest, um, if there's anyone who wants to ask Agnes a question in the same mode that Russ has been doing that, let's do that first, and then we can have the meta discussion about what just happened. Um, so I see hand, hand, hand.
- 1:08:12 P3: So in, just in that, um, last bit, uh, you're anticipating, uh, waiting for it to come, but is there also anything like a, a, a tr, a trying to remember what you had already decided?
- 1:08:32 Agnes: Probably that there was some bit of that, but I'd say it like, primarily it was more of a listening. Even though as I explained, like, I preface this by saying, I had already said this. But I think it was, it wasn't like a... What it *wasn't* was like me going, *oh, I had it! I need to get it back!* Like, I kind of knew it was there. I knew it would come back to me if I just listened. So it wasn't about remembering what I had just thought of, it was just about like, getting it back, if that makes sense. So, so then, so there may have been some kind of memory component, but I think it was primarily a listening component, uh, listening experience.
- 1:08:32 Russ comments: RE "Probably that there was some bit of that, but I'd say it like, primarily it was more of a listening."
As a general rule gleaned from 50 years of interviewing, I would say that when an interviewer asks "Was it X?" and the interviewee says "Yes... but...", that answer should (at least provisionally) be understood as *No*.
My understanding of that is that interviewees (like Agnes) are generally nice people, and they want to give interviewers what interviewers want to hear, so they start with a nice-guy answer ("Probably that there was some bit of that") and then switch to the better answer ("but I'd say ... primarily it was more...").
- 1:09:08 P3: And at that point, did you go back to the beginning of the sentence just to refresh your, y'know, to, to know what you were listening for?
- 1:09:08 Russ comments: To my ear, the interviewer continues to push Agnes in the *trying to remember* direction. That is risky, because many interviewees would rather give interviewers what they want to hear rather than to work at describing what was in their experience. The good news is that Agnes is strong enough to avoid that pressure.
- 1:09:16 Agnes: In the moment of the beep, I was not going back to the sentence. Like I had just in, in the moment of the beep, the mo, the last undisturbed moment before the beep, um, I was just kind of looking at that. Like in my visual field had that thing, and I was looking at it, that thing, meaning that parenthetical remark that I had just written, and I was looking at that. I was not going back to reading the first part of the sentence or anything like that.
- 1:09:43 MD: Okay. I think Christian then.
- 1:09:46 P4: So, um, that's fascinating. Um, so this, were, were, were any sort of thoughts trailing as you were,.. So you said you're just looking at particular sentence, you wait, you in an expecting mode, write the sentence, the next sentence, which would come.

But was any sense, any sense that the next sentence (or what, whatever the next thought hasn't occurred yet given that gap between thoughts, so to speak) but there is a kind of a trailing, in other words, there's some residual sense of, okay, while I'm expecting this thought to come to occur hasn't happened yet, it can only, it can be this thought and not that thought. Is any sort of sense of anticipation of what might come, is there sort of trailing of the content? So the meaning of, um, what's, what was just there a minute before? In other words, are you holding those two somehow in, in, um, like in abeyance or something? Are they, are they there providing some sort of a unthematized, y'know, uh, context for what's about to happen? In other words, is it gonna, is there gonna be some image? Is gonna be another sentence, presumably, right? Um, so it's, it's the, that's, so the, the previous thought-moment of the semantic content is gonna constrain what's coming next. There's gonna be another kind of semantic content that's not gonna be some imagery, right? Is that, is that the case?

1:11:09 Agnes: I mean, I think that is in fact true. I'm conscious that that Russ is here and... [laughs] Um, uh, I think what I would say, um, is that there's a sense in which everything you said is true of like characterizing that what was happening. Um, but one thing that Russ emphasizes, and maybe he can chime in later, is just distinguishing between what was happening and what was actually in my experience. So then if I think about *what in fact* was in my experience, um, certainly there was some trailing, um, part of my experience, I would say, was that I had had the end of that sentence already, and I feel like that was somehow there. But actually as I'm saying this, I'm not sure! Like this is, again, this is coming to this point where, um, previously, like in our round of questioning with Russ, I had described my mind mostly as blank and as listening.

1:12:14 Um, then Shaun had asked me a question, now you're asking me this other question, and I'm not sure I 100%... Like it, it's almost as if you're asking for like a more fine-grained description. And this is where I'm not sure I can give it exactly. Like I, like the best I can do is to say *Yes, that was in my experience previously*, um, there *was* like an anticipatory, there was like the, the past, like what had just happened, plus my having finished that sentence earlier. *And* there is this anticipation of how I'm going to finish it. *I'm not sure* whether to call that part of my experience or not. Like, I don't know. Um,

1:12:55 P4: So just a quick follow up. So you're in a, when you write, was it...? You're in a state of flow there, right? The words are somehow unfolding. There maybe there's the gaps here now, every now and again to kind of reflect on what's just been said. But there is a flow state there, right? You're *writing*, right? It's an unfolding of a thought. It's taking, y'know, it's, it happens in sort of bursts or segments, but it is a, it is a flow state in some sort. Would you say that? At least there is a sort of a sense of continuation? Or do you It's all gappy and, and sequence-y?

1:13:31 Agnes: I'd say I was like, before the beep went off, I was in a pretty flow-y state, but actually that last indu, *undisturbed* moment was one where there was a bit of a gap, but it wasn't a gap of the flow state. Like, y'know what I mean, if you're in a (Russ is gonna object to this too), but when you're in a flow state (because now we're talking about our shared experience which maybe we don't have!) but when you're

in this flow state and you're just writing and you're like, you're completely focused, you're zoomed in, there's nothing, nothing would disturb you. I wasn't in that state. [P3: Okay.] Because I had just paused. On the other hand, I hadn't just gotten distracted so fully that now I had to go, *okay, what?* It was like a minor pause within generally a pretty flow-y state, although not like a fully absorbed state.

1:14:17 RTH: So before we, before we move on, let me, let me make a meta-comment about both of those comments, which, which struck me as being something like, well, Shaun thought it was sort of plausible for thinking to go this way, and *you* thought it was sort of plausible for thinking to go *that* way. And they ask questions based on that plausibility. And, and what I think is that the plausible is the enemy of the experiential. [P3: Umm.] And, and, uh, it's risky to ask about plausibility. You can ask, you can ask about it. And, and, and particularly if you've got a participant who's not gonna cave into, into it (which I think Agnes did a little bit at the end). [laughter]

1:14:56 Agnes: [laughs] I tried my best because I could feel, I could feel, I could feel the pressure! [laughter]

1:15:01 RTH: But the, but the, (and, and this is sort of the opposite of microphen for that, for that matter) the, the, we're I, I'm, I'm willing to overlook things which *might very well be* experienced down near the weeds act down, down in the weeds, in favor of being pretty sure that the aspects that we talk about are actually directly apprehended. If you, if once you transcend that, or move on beyond that into, *well, it could have been this and it could have been that, and it could have been this other thing*, then you've lost what is actually apprehended.

1:15:01 Russ comments: RE RTH's (1:14:17) "the plausible is the enemy of the experiential"
I would refine that by saying "*attachment to the plausible is the enemy of the experiential.*" It is 100% okay with me for a person to find something plausible so long as they genuinely prefer to grok Agnes's experience as Agnes's experience is, rather than extracting something Agnes (imperfectly) said about her experience to buttress some aspect of the plausible. Preferring the experiential to the plausible is, for most people, a very difficult thing to do. It requires a genuine preference for being wrong (about what one finds plausible), whereas most people have a genuine preference for being confirmed.

The art (and I think it is high art) is to be able to inquire about something you find plausible *without* pressuring Agnes in the direction you favor. Agnes said (1:14:56) she felt the pressure from the first two questioners, and I think she feels pressure in the upcoming round. If Agnes feels pressure, then there's no sense interviewing her if the aim is fidelity.

1:15:39 P1: And that, and that's exactly what microphen does. Exactly. Its a, it's not what you think it is, basically. I'm pretty sure.

1:15:49 RTH: I've spent a fair amount of time with Claire. So we, she and I, disagree about some stuff.

1:15:53 P1: I'm sure you do. But, uh, I'm gonna try, can I do like two or three very short questions? Right? So we've been trying to talk a lot about this particular part of your experience, and you've got a lot of ideas about it. So I kind of want to invite you to let go of those ideas. [Agnes: Okay.] Just like, it is not, don't worry about trying to figure it out. And I just wanna ask you a couple of really simple questions about it. So one of them is you have this sense of, uh, looking at the screen, looking at your, um, uh, your device and also a blank, what you described as a kind of state between, a gap between thoughts. We got that so far. Is that right? [Agnes: Yeah.] So in that, in, in that state of that had, that happening, did that feel like, um, the, what was happening to you visually and the feeling of being in a gap, were they kind of combined? Distinct?

1:16:55 Agnes: [pause] I don't know. Um, I'm,

1:16:57 P1: That's fine. You don't have, you don't have to

1:16:59 Agnes: Yeah, I'm not, I'm not sure

1:17:01 P1: Were the... so in that like,

1:17:03 Agnes: Like I feel like I could answer that either way.

1:17:05 P1: Sure. That's fine. So you were, and it was like you were listening, but you say it's really kind of a metaphor.

1:17:11 Agnes: Yes.

1:17:12 P1: So can you tell, tell me a little more about what that's like, listening?

1:17:17 Agnes: It's kind of like a, like a, getting very quiet and still, and, um, I'd say it's similar to meditative kinds of experience.

1:17:29 P1: Are you *trying* to do something? [Agnes: No.] So you're, you feel like you're just...

1:17:32 Agnes: No, exactly. It's an effortless, uh,

1:17:34 P1: It's an effortless...

1:17:34 Agnes: It's like an effortless, uh, relaxed state.

1:17:38 P1: Some people would say blank mind. That would mean they're, they're almost like asleep. Are you asleep?

1:17:43 Agnes: No. I'm very alert.

1:17:43 P1: You're very alert.. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] And the visual field, do you, you said you see the letters, are they in focus?

1:17:51 Agnes: Yes.

1:17:51 P1: The letters are in focus? [Agnes: Yes.] So you don't, you're not seeing through or in front, you're seeing at the...

1:17:57 Agnes: I'm seeing, yes. I'm, uh, they're in focus. Like I'm not seeing through or in front, they're in focus as in, they're not blurry or I'm not kind of looking through the page such that they're doing this. [gestures with interleaved fingers] Um, but also I'm not necessarily focusing on them, as in my attention isn't

1:18:16 P1: Isn't on them. They're there.

1:18:18 Agnes: They're there and they're in focus, but my attention isn't squarely focused on them.

1:18:23 P1: So were you at, paying attention to anything?

1:18:29 Agnes: Not really. I mean, it was, it was in my visual field. It's, but I wasn't,

1:18:33 P1: I want to talk about some of that later [Agnes: Yeah.] because it's a very interesting thing in Mahamudra, that's, [Agnes: Okay.] very interesting, like paradigmatic. [Agnes: Okay.] Yeah. Super interesting.

1:18:45 MD: Are there, um, well, I guess first, if anyone has a, a question for Agnes that, that, now it's not your last chance, but this would be an appropriate time to ask it. If not, if there are meta, any kind of meta questions about what just happened here, we can move on to that if people have them. [pause]

1:19:04 So I'll make a comment. It's not really a question. Um, one of the things that I think became clear for me, I hadn't appreciated before, is how many different ways there are to look at words [laughs] or to experience the seeing of words. I mean, you just, you just mentioned a few in terms of like visual focus, but there's also some were explored right here. Like, was the semantics present to you or not? Um, were you going serially through them or not? So on and so forth. I, um, and maybe that's a good example of... I don't know, I, I'm not gonna put a value judgment on it. I was about to say *trivial*, but it's not, it's probably not trivial, but I don't know what its importance is either, um, the kind of things that we were learning over the past couple months, um, kind of making kind those kinds of distinctions that hadn't really ever occurred to, to us before.

1:20:17 I think we have Rihanna and then Sean. And then Christian. Yeah.

1:20:09 P5: Um, yeah, maybe this is more of a comment or an observation, but, um, it's something I'm curious about as well. Um, so many of the questions that were being asked, um, were sort of, yes/no questions or, um, like discriminatory questions like, uh, was it like this or was it not like this? And I think the only question that we had that was a little bit more open that, um, Agnes responded to with a description that wasn't sort of, yes/no, like this, or not like this was from you when you said, like, "what was it like?" um, and yeah, I'm curious about in the descriptive experience sampling and maybe even in contrast with or comparison with microphenomenology. Um, do the, does the form of the question tend to be more

like, yes/no, like this not like this? Or to what extent are there more kind of open-ended questions of like, well, *what was it like?* um, and um, *how did that feel?* And like, um, *what was your body doing at that time?* Or something like that, y’know? Um, yeah. So,

1:21:27 RTH: So what I would say about that is I, I think this situation led me to ask more yes/no questions than I would generally ask why that is. I don’t know whether it’s because I’ve only had about five cylinders rather than eight, or, or, because Agnes’s experience is relatively amorphous by comparison to some others. So it, it would seem more difficult to ask a question. Well, just tell me more about that. And [inaudible].

1:21:27 Russ comments: During the workshop, I accepted the premise that RTH had asked mostly Yes/No questions. But having reviewed the video, I no longer accept that premise.

First, RTH did start each aspect of the discussion by asking open-ended questions: 16:43 “what exactly is it that you’re [seeing]?”; 17:57 “so what do [you] see? ...Tell us more about that”; 20:15 “remnant of a thought. What, tell us more about that”; 23:51 “And then there’s the reaching for the glass.”

Second, there are places where Agnes says “Yes” repeatedly. For example, here is RTH’s turn from 1:02:35:

And my eyeballs are aimed at that. [Agnes: Yes.] And I’m seeing that [Agnes: Yes.] as it is written in parentheses on the [Agnes: Yes.] on the tablet. [Agnes: Yes.] Okay. And that we’re [inaudible] call, we’re calling one track of my experience. [Agnes: Yes.] And the other track of my experience is just empty.

That is *not* a sequence of Yes/No questions. That is RTH’s summary statement of how he understands what Agnes has said about her experience—a careful checking-in about the details of Agnes’s experience. Agnes interjects “Yes” as a running declaration that RTH has heard, and is now faithfully restating, what she has said.

Agnes has spent 13-ish hours co-interviewing with me, and I suspect she understands that the reason I state my understanding of some phenomenon is to invite modification, correction, disagreement, polish. I frequently do state what I have heard in declarative sentences, because I have found that that is an effective way to invite correction or disagreement—the clearer I can say what I heard, the easier it is for the interlocutor to say *that’s not quite right*. That is, I think all of my DES utterances carry the genuine implication that I would prefer that you correct what I am saying, and I think my DES participants understand that.

In short: Whereas I accept that many (probably most) people ask Yes/No questions as a way of entrapment (Don’t you agree with me?), I think Agnes understands that if I happen to ask a question in the form of a Yes/No, that it is intended as a Yes/No/please-clarify-if-Yes-or-No-does-not-lie-easily-on-your-experience.

RE “*what was it like?*”

That is an invitation to metaphor: it was like a cold glass of water splashed in my face; or it was like the Battle of Hastings; or it was like a cloud on a sunny day; or it

was like the result if Darth Vader and a broken kazoo produced a child. We haven't learned much about the phenomenal characteristics of the experience itself.

RE "*how did that feel?*"

That question presumes that it *did* feel in some way, which is not always true if by "feel" one means (as does DES) the direct apprehension of emotion. Lots of things have emotional impact that are not directly felt. Asking "how did that feel?" presumes that it was felt.

RE "*what was your body doing at that time?*"

Your body does lots of stuff that is not directly apprehended. Asking what the body was doing blurs that distinction. I don't doubt that there are some situations where it can be quite useful to ask "*what was your body doing at that time?*" but keep in mind that DES is aimed at only what is directly apprehended.

RE all three of those questions:

The key issue is that DES seeks to describe with fidelity the directly apprehended characteristics of an experience. If the experience is of (or includes) innerly speaking, then the characteristics to be described are in the realm of the vocal (pitch?, accent?, words used?, words omitted?, tempo?, loudness?, etc.). If the experience is of (or includes) innerly seeing, then the characteristics to be described are in the realm of the visual (color?, detail?, border?, perspective?, clarity?, etc.). If the experience is of bodily sensation, then the characteristics to be described are in the realm of the body (position?, location?, depth?, pressure?, temperature?, pain?, etc.). If the experience is of feeling, then the characteristics to be described are in the realm of emotion (kind?, intensity?, physicality?, etc.). Those are all fidelity-aspiring questions, aimed at describing the features of directly apprehended experience.

The three questions P5 has advanced are *not* fidelity-aspiring questions; they are theory-driven questions. There may well be a theory (for example) that suggests that attending to what your body was doing is useful. But the request for such attending is a path *away from* fidelity: it will *interfere with or destroy* any attempt at answering the questions illustrated in the previous paragraph. If (for example) I am innerly speaking, asking me what my body was doing will *interfere* with my ability to describe any experiential details of my inner speaking.

Agnes comments: I agree with Russ's characterization here of my "yeses" in response to his summary of what he heard me say.

1:21:53 [continues] I don't like the question "what's that like?" because *like* puts you into the realm of metaphor, or whatever. And, uh, and I, I try to live in the realm of description. [P5: Mm-hmm.]

1:22:12 And, uh, uh, and I don't like the question, "how does that feel?" because feel is an almost meaningless word in the, in the experiential lexicon, as far as I'm concerned. *Feel* sometimes means affect, and *feel* sometimes means thinking not very clearly, and sometimes means sensation of the sensorial stuff, y'know, whatever. And so, I like to know what I'm asking, and I would like to, and I like to know what the guy's telling me when they're telling me that. And so the, the word

feel is a, is a hard one *until* we have agreed that that word means only one thing, which is to say the experience of, of emotion. After, after that, then I have no problem with using the word *feel*.

1:22:58 RTH: I, and I would say one, one more thing. I would, I would say DES is not only open-ended, but open-beginninged. And uh, and I think that's a hugely important distinction. So the questions that, what I called the *one fundamental question*, or the *one legitimate question* was "what, *if anything*, is in your experience at the moment of the beep? I didn't ask you what are you *seeing*? Or what are you *feeling*? Or what are you *sensing*? Or what are you *thinking*? Or whatever. I did *not* specify what the aspect of her experience was, even that there was any. And so that's an invitation that I call, *open-beginninged*. I'm, I'm asking *if there was anything* in your inner, inner experience, what, what, what is it? Let's go, let's go from there.

1:23:44 And DES is fundamentally that way because I think it is the, the alternative is the, is to start from some place. And when people start from some *place*, they almost always have a theory about that. And so the whole exposition becomes something like theory-validation or whatever, which is not what I think ought to be happening at this stage in the history of the universe. So I, I, I, I want Agnes to tell us about her experience, whatever it was, and the only, the only beginning of it that I'm going to specify is I've given her beep, and we're gonna start there. And, and, uh, after that, all, all bets are off.

1:24:30 P3: I think Shaun was next. Yeah. So I have a, a question about the anticipatory aspect that's what was introduced. And uh, so, um, I think the, the term *anticipatory* came from Russell. Um, and you confirmed. Then there was a point, uh, where you said something like, uh, well, uh, uh, uh, um, you talking about listening and waiting, waiting, I think your initial, um, term was waiting and then that was interpreted as anticipatory. Um, so I'm wondering if, uh, one could wait in a kind of passive fashion, one could wait, and here I think anticipatory has this kind of more active, um, y'know, I'm expecting something to happen, whereas I'm just waiting for something to happen. I don't know if that, if that gets too, uh, fine-grained there, but I'm, I'm, I guess I'm wondering, uh, in, uh, when I asked, uh, were you *trying* to recall what you had formulated before, um, and Russell said, well, that, that seemed to be like my, uh, conception of maybe how the experience would go. And I'm wondering how is that different from introducing the concept of *anticipation* into the, uh, or is there a difference or, uh, does *anticipation* add something to the characterization of, uh, what waiting means? Um, I'm, I'm, yeah.

1:26:19 RTH: So what I would, what I would say about that is that my, my recollection of the sequence of the words was she said, whatever she said, I said "pregnantly." She responded in a way that I thought was that I, that I had used the *wrong* term there. What I, what I had said wasn't right in some way. And I don't know why, I don't know exactly why that is: too personal too, too off the track, too, too whatever. And *anticipatory* was my rejoinder in that re, in that respect. So what I felt, what I feel myself to, felt myself to have been doing, as I recall it, was trying to put into words what she had said in a.... And so we have to, we have to develop a shared lexicon of understanding. I could have said *trying*. I don't think I would've had any, any, well, trying, trying the word *trying* has some baggage to be, so I don't, I, I wouldn't have

used *trying*, but *anticipating* is *trying* without the baggage, I guess. So that's where that came from. But the,

1:26:19 Russ comments: RTH is referring to the interchange in the vicinity of 1:03:14.

1:27:24 P3: But we, we eliminated trying by asking the question about was there any kind of trying to recall, she said, No. So that wasn't in there. [RTH: Right.] Which is a good thing, right?

1:27:33 RTH: Right. Exactly. So what, so, so, I, I, y'know, in a way I suggested a word; she didn't seem to like that; I suggested another word; she did seem to like that, that. But, but, but I wouldn't have taken that as the final word. And you, and we, and then when you suggested trying, then we can, we can shave the meaning off of it, off of every word. I'm, I'm, this is not about the words. It is, it, obviously it takes place in words, but the, but the object is not to try to figure out, well, she used this word, and this word has this meaning, and, and it's, it's not a hermeneutic kind of a deal.

1:28:16 It's a, I, I take, I take a word as being something like a, I'm pointing to my experience and it's over there somewhere. And then that's Agnes saying that. And then Russ says, well, y'know, you mean over there? And she says, No, I don't mean over there. I mean over there. And, and we're gonna use words instead of the *over there* until we, uh, until we agree that we're looking in the same direction. And, and trying to, trying to make it as, and as *unspecific* about the words as, as I can make it. Let's put it that way.

1:28:56 P3: I wanna push back against a little bit against this, because in response to Riana, you said that, y'know, the, the, *what it's like* is sort of in some sense meaningless because with sampling experience here, y'know. One of, one of the things that came up in our conversation yesterday with John is that, y'know, we talk about in intent, intention. Mental states have both intentionality, have a directness to them, to whatever it is, images, words, what have you, but also have a character. They feel a certain way. And, and most philosophers and phenomenologists say that you can't untangle those. I mean, every being about something, it's also feeling a certain way, seeming a certain way. If you don't like language of feeling, language of affect, that's fine with me. Experiences seem a certain way to someone. And it's only in so far as they seem a certain way to someone, they also have some kind of intentional content there about something.

1:29:46 So being about something is always for someone from some perspective, even with someone is very sort of minimally present in the experience, is just sort of a, y'know, and, uh, an anchor, some sort of, hey, y'know, um, zero point. But let's leave that aside.

1:30:01 So, um, when, when, when you're sampling experience, you're not just sampling the content of the experience, you also sample the char, I mean, you also want a description of what experience is like, and that's exactly what Agnes is providing there, what everybody's providing, right? In narrating the, when trying to capture in words as best they can, they're not just capturing the content of the experience, they're also capturing the character experience, right? The experience was, it has the, it had this qualitative, um, nature to it. It was right, as in a state of expectancy or, or, or, y'know, retention or anticipation or just, y'know, nothing, y'know, as you

said, you just in between the gaps. So she's not just simply capturing the content of the experience, she's also to capturing the character.

1:30:49

And it that extent that you want to basically say the exper, what I'm trying to get is that inner experience, right? Well, in experience, you have to capture both. You can't simply sample the content. You also have to sample the character, the qualitative aspect of the experience. And those two cannot really untangle. You cannot really always read off the character from just the content. You also have to basically say the experience is a, has it, it's, it's, [inaudible] has two aspects to it. One is the qualitative, phenomenal character of the experience, and the other one it's intentional content. Now, this may always be, y'know, clearly, but part of the microphenomenologist of, um, uh, project and part of the phonological development writ large is to basically realize that experiences are not, um, in other words, you don't really have the object of the content first, and then you have the character, and somehow you have the character. But the content, those are two parts of the same, of the same experience. I mean, the experiences have this sort of two dual, dual aspect.

1:31:46

And so, um, it, it is, it is kind of telling how Agnes in some sense, it's pushing back sometimes to the questions that you ask. Was it, y'know, but it had this particular anticipatory feel. And now she's saying, well, no, because she's now, she's drawing on the qualitative aspect of her experience at the same time, while she's trying to say, well, but my experience is about this, but it felt a certain way. So she's vacillating between, between the language of phenomenal character and the language of intentional content. Is that, would that in some sense?

1:32:22 Agnes:

Honestly, I, I feel like, I'm not sure I can answer that question well, because I hadn't really thought about that distinction in the moment between the phenomenal content and the in intentional character of my experience. Like, I think I would say when I was answering all the questions, I was trying, I think I was talking about both of those things. I mean, I, I hadn't made, I first of all hadn't made the distinction. I mean, I know that it's a distinction, but I wasn't conscious of the distinction. I hadn't thought about it in this moment at all. Um, and when I was describing my experience, what I was trying to do was describe it, um, as clearly and accurately as I am capable of, and describe as many aspects of it as possible. So I like what I said and what I said, like in the later line of questioning, um, I think that roughly exhausts my experience. I mean, to like, to the extent that one can do such a thing. I, I, I think it, it does that. So I, I mean, I would want Russ to answer this question also, like, I'm kind of curious.

1:33:31 P3:

But would you say that some of the things that you're doing were about what experience was about, was about, and some of the things that you're doing was what experience was like? Or [they talk over each other]

1:33:41 Agnes:

Certainly, I mean, certainly, right? Like I'm talking about the remarkable and like the, there's clearly intentional content to that portion of my experience. Uh, on the other hand, when I was describing like what it was like to have that blankness, like I think I was describing that from, um, in the first interaction with Russ, I think I was described describing what that was like. So I think I was describing both of those things.

- 1:34:14 RTH: So I think those are very difficult questions to deal with, and be, because it, it, the experience, the experience, I think there is an experiential world, and I think most people have a relatively clear as, relatively, can relatively clearly apprehend what was happening at the moment of the Be Agnes is actually sort of at the not very good, not very clear end of this, the spectrum. [laughter] It's sort of, sort of difficult. Which, which is, which is, and that's not a, that's not a value judgment, that's just a statement of sort of experiential facts from my point of view. Whether one divides it up into content and intention or whatever, I think is, I don't think Agnes does that. I don't think any, I don't think most people, most people do that in as their everyday experience unfolds for them. One is free to analyze it in what, whatever way one wants. And, but it's, it, it, I, I rarely find that way valuable in doing justice to the experience, let's put it that way.
- 1:35:37 MD: [points] [inaudible]
- 1:35:39 P1: So? Uh, I think the, um, it's been a great exercise by, and I really appreciate learning about this. I have to leave at 11 unfortunately, so I can't have missed the discussion. But, um, one thing I think there's, there, there may be more alignment, y'know, I think you're making some really good points. There may be more alignment than, uh, in the actual process when we talk about the process and actually do it. I think there may be differences that come up when we talk about it and the process ends up actually resolving some of those differences, I feel like maybe. [RTH: Could be.]
- 1:36:13 Uh, um, but one thing that I did think was super interesting, partially cuz it's such an important thing in Mahamudra, is that when we did inquire a little bit more about that sort of moment of the gap between thoughts, what I think what we discovered, if I remember I asked, were you paying attention to anything? And you said No.
- 1:36:31 P1: So you were actually, you had visual content, but you weren't paying attention to it. And you were in a mental state, you can describe, but it wasn't about anything, right? So that is a little bit, I think, the kind of inquiry that, that you're pointing to Christian is actually like, and I think DES sounds to me like it could get to it. But there is, there is a way in which the, that peculiar experience is because it's not about anything. If we're just asking what were you paying attention to, then we might think, oh, you weren't paying attention to anything, so there's nothing to talk about there. But actually there's a lot to talk about in that moment. And like, so in Mahamudra, that's actually a technique where you, you, you induce a kind of state between thoughts, because what's happening there is the about-ness, intention, intentionality of that state is really thinned out.
- 1:37:29 So it feels like you're not paying attention or anything, but you're fully alert and that, and that's that. And, y'know, theoretically that means that the reflexivity, which is the key to non-dual awareness, is really like heightened in that experience. It's really foregrounded. It's usually just in the background, but now it's been, y'know, foregrounded. And people describe it as being like clear. And, y'know, they'll use things like listening or a sense of spaciousness, y'know, so there you'll see certain things that they, when I, y'know, I mentioned how in my paper, how teachers have to figure out, have people gotten there, this is exactly the kind of experience that they ask about and use certain questions to try to get there.

- 1:38:08 And so I just wanted to mention that, cuz I'm gonna have to go, and I can't tell you later, but I think it's so interesting that you had that experience. But I do think there's a kind of inquiry that I'm sure you would get there if you had more time, but there is a kind of inquiry that might pay attention to more about what it's like, so to speak. I am sympathetic very much to how that could go awry. But I do think there's something about like the, not the, the, that aspect of the experience that, in this case anyway, was useful to inquire into.
- 1:38:38 Agnes: Yeah. And maybe can I say something in response to that? [MD: No!!] because John, [laughter] because John is gonna leave, and this is exactly the thing I wanted to talk to you about, and I was gonna raise it in my comments for the final discussion, but I thought I would just say it quickly now. I mean, that's the part that is like the thing that you said in your paper that I wanted to talk about. And this discussion has been helpful because one question I'm interested in, in this context, um, is precisely about how language, uh, both shapes how we interpret our own experience, and then how we communicate that to others, right? And that part of your paper really struck me because it seems like, I mean, what you just said, if I understand correctly, is that perhaps I had some sort of non-dual like experience, maybe a little bit.
- 1:39:36 Um, and this, like, I've thought a, a reasonable amount about non-duality. Not a lot, not as much as like you guys have, but, but a little bit I've thought about this. And it's never, um, I feel like I have this vague sense of what that means, but have I experienced it? Do I really know, um, what would it mean to have that experience? And I think there are other examples like that. I mean, the example that we were talking about with the heart rate, I think, and the perceived exertion in, in running I think is like a different kind of example. And so I think, um, just a question that I wanted to flag is how, how our language and concepts and how we talk about things may affect what we learn about experience.
- 1:40:11 P1: And notice how hard it was to describe that.
- 1:40:13 Agnes: Exactly, exactly. I mean, that, I think that's one of the key elements is just being able to describe it and then what language do we use? I think one of the tensions that maybe is coming up is about the role of metaphorical language as opposed to just, um, language. I mean, I don't know what the, as opposed to would be here, but, um, whether like Russ seems to be against metaphorical language?
- 1:40:40 RTH: That's not at all true. [Agnes: Okay.] I, I think *all* language is metaphorical. And so I don't think you can be against metaphor [Agnes: Okay.] at all. I think that's not possible. So I *like* metaphor. I'm, what, what I'm in favor of is knowing how metaphorical your language is [Agnes: Yeah.] or being, being skillfully being skillful about your deployment of metaphor. Uh, I think very often, most of the time, much of the time, people get carried away by their own metaphors. And so they, they say a metaphor and then they believe what they just said and forget that it was metaphorical. And, and then they're off to the races. And, and I think that's probably a mistake. But, but as far as advancing a metaphor like *listening* or, or, or whatever, in order to try to, and try to understand, but then to, then to peel away the details of that metaphor to, to try to get at what as best we can, what was, what remained in, in, uh, Agnes's experience—that that is the art.

1:41:45 And I, I would say one thing about the word *attention*. I don't, I, I think the word *attention* is a particularly fraught word from a Cartesian deal. And I, I *don't* consider DES as being an exploration of *attention*. It is an exploration of *experience*. Attention makes it seem like there's an, like, there's an experimenter and a thing that's experienced. And I don't think that's true. And I think I gave a couple of examples of that yesterday where I think that there are several multiple experiences going on at the same time. And I *don't* think it's a good idea to think of those things as divided attentions. I think of, I think we're always parallel processing, and some of those parallel processing is more, more available to experience and some of it is less. And, uh,

1:42:29 MD: So, so we have, um, Riana and then Jordan.

1:42:34 P5: Um, yeah, I, uh, am really interested in this idea of developing a shared lexicon and how you [inaudible]. Um, and this claim that is not about the words and the words are supposed to be pointing to experience, but there seems like there's a trade-off between, um, the, so on the one hand, sometimes it's useful to not be specific, he said to be as unspecific as possible about the words. And then on the other hand, it seems like it's important in some cases to *be* specific in order to come to that shared experience. Like when we're asking about things like feeling.

1:43:13 Um, and when, when you were talking about Agnes's reaction to the word *pregnant*, right? Um, you said that it seemed like she wasn't quite, that wasn't quite right. Um, and I got that feeling as well from Agnes's reaction. But Agnes didn't actually say it's not quite right, and you didn't in the moment ask, Russ, about, um, Agnes's reaction to that. Like, "well, it seems like maybe *pregnant* isn't right, but why not?" kind of thing. Um, and same thing, like, I'm wondering, um, if you would ask a question like, "well, what do you mean by *anticipation*?" Um, uh, like, is anticipation right? Like if so, why, or why not? Um, or, um, yeah, so, so I'm wondering...

1:44:05 RTH: [interrupts] Can I, can I interrupt? Can I interrupt your question and answer that one first [P5: Sure.] before I forget it. So, so I, I, I would *not* ask, what did you uh, "what did you mean by anticipation" or [inaudible] or whatever? Because what that does is that asks Agnes to focus in on the word *anticipation* and her understanding of how anticipation is meant in the, in Webster and, and her history, which is *not* what I'm interested in. [P5: Okay.] I'm interested in, in trying to get Agnes to focus on her experience. So I want to ask a question, which is basically, y'know, "we used that grunt *anticipation*; I don't give a shit about that grunt, [P5: Um hmm.] but that's the ballpark of what I'm interested in—your experience." And, and, and so I would sort of muddle my way back into that to try to get her to say something more about that without having to refine the words. So I, so when she reacted and the way she reacted to *pregnant*, I didn't say, well, y'know, you said you looked like that when you said pregnant or whatever. I didn't, I did not do that. [P5: Mm-hmm.] I tried a different way into her experience, the object being, *my* object being to keep her focused on the experience, not on, not *ever* on the word, actually.

1:44:05 Russ comments: RE (P5 1:43:13) [would you ask] "well, it seems like maybe *pregnant* isn't right, but why not?"

[illegible]

anticipation

excitement eagerness
 hope curiosity looking forward to
 thrill optimism dreams wait countdown positive
 impatience wondering excited anxious planning preparation ponderment
 can't wait looking ahead joy curious energy motivation ready possibility
 attentiveness interest future event opportunity
 suspense yawning foresee waiting for in expectation prelude momentum buzz
 intensity awaiting possibilities imagining vision meaning poize
 delight drawn to the best is yet to come outlook desire faith
 awaiting passion goals in store in the air expecting
 reflect prowling adventure exhultate change unknown new beginnings
 in progress reflection wondering infinite possibilities awakening something special
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at understanding those words. So we're gonna have to dance or interact or, or, or whatever. And, and, and that is a, a fundamental characteristic of DES, which, which, which I call *iterative*, which means she's on, on day one, she's gonna make some kind of a stab at describing her experience, and I'm not gonna understand it. And we're gonna figure out what that means *a little bit*. And, uh, and then on day two, we might be, we might have profited from that, that, uh, first interaction. And then on day three we might be a little bit more than more than that. So, so the object *hasn't been* to develop a shared lexicon. The object has been for me to have understood what Agnes means when she says what she, the kinds of things that she says.

1:47:00 MD: All right, we're gonna have one, one last question. Um, and then we will take a short break. People can get coffee or water, whatever you'd like, and then we'll come back for our final session, which will also feature Agnes, but in a different role.

1:47:16 P2: So I'd like to pick up on Agnes's question regarding language, but ask about it, not just, so you highlighted its role in describing experiences, but it seems it also plays a role in constituting experiences as they are. And it was really interesting, I mean, John's questions and Russell's questions. You, John, when you asked Agnes, you, you honed in on certain features of the experience that were very interesting, and it seemed to capture something distinctive about the Agnes experience. Like I, for me, writing, it's a, it's a painful process of kind of struggling with a thousand ideas and kind. And, and there's something really beautiful about the, the moment captured and the way you asked about it and the words in focus and the waiting. Um, but it struck me, um, sort of two things without the initial questions of Russ and Agnes on context, I would've had no idea what that, y'know, the, the slice that you captured. What, what made it sort of really interesting is how it was tied to a broader moment, which was framed as a moment of writing and the awaiting of the next line, which, which in terms of the, the narrow slice I wouldn't have gotten.

1:48:54 But it struck me also that John's questioning of Agnes, um, honed in on something tied to who Agnes is and how she constitutes her experiences and something shared between both of you in, in terms of experiences that were part of your life and what you're attentive to. And I wonder if without that shared language, it wouldn't, it, so even in terms of the skills you have as a researcher in those moments, right, you are, you are able to get at something essential to that experience. Um, so I'm, I I'm wondering about the work, y'know, are, are each of us just very different in constitution of our experience because of the way language functions for us? Y'know, in all of the broad ways we, we draw on language and to what degree can we get at description, right, if, if we don't have an alignment in appreciating certain things that are shared to bring attention to features of experience that are important that, y'know, constitutes the distinctive Agnes experience about writing.

1:50:36 RTH: So my impression is that experience is relatively little shaped by language. I know that's probably an unpopular review here, but, uh, but I, I think ex, experience for the most part, and, and by the most part, I mean a big, huge, huge portion, is what it, what experience is. You have to put it into words in order to convey it to

somebody if you feel like you're conveying it to somebody. But the, but the, the words don't constitute the experience in fundamentally important ways, I think.

1:51:17 P2: Just a brief follow up in your essay, you, you at the beginning, uh, speak about red and the broader social formation regarding discrimination among types of redness. And it seems, y'know, that sort of different people have uh, a capacity to discern colors that would depend on the degree to which they have concepts and language for, uh, making fine-grain discrimination among colors. And y'know, some are capable of doing this in ways others wouldn't be. And why wouldn't it be the same way with respect to the host of other ways that we use language to discriminate, where some would have more refined capacities to get at certain features of world?

1:52:16 RTH: These, so I, so I think that's a great example. Uh, so I think in, in, in a, in a person who has a very-well-discriminated lexicon for terms for red, that person is, is likely to have a relatively well-defined, well-differentiated experience of, of colors, for example. And it's gonna go both ways. So the, the, the elaboration of the language is going to have improve the, or differentiated the, the experience of the colors. I totally accept that. But that is a minor deal. That's the, that's the froth on the coffee. The coffee is that one person is gonna be paying attention to colors and the other person is gonna have any interest in colors *at all*. And it doesn't, and it doesn't come from the fact that the one person has differentiated language about colors and the other person doesn't. It's the, it's, it's the, the wiring of the experience or, or the history of the experience, or whatever it is that makes it (I don't actually know), but the, that leads, leads one into one realm of experiencing and somebody else into another realm of experiencing. And I don't think... what the point that I was trying to make was, I don't think that is in, in large degree driven by language.

1:52:16 Russ comments: The point RTH was trying to make is that person A might have lots of visual imagery; and person B might innerly speak a lot; and person C might have lots of feelings; and person D might attend primarily to colors; and person E might think without words or imagery; and person F might have multiple strands of experience; and person G might have no figure/ground in visual experience; and person H.... Do those differences arise because of any differential linguistic features? Probably not. Could I teach person B to have a differentiated language about imagery? Probably so. Would that make him have more imagery? Probably not. If person A1 has lots of visual imagery, and Person A2 has even more visual imagery, is A2's language about imagery more differentiated than A1? Maybe (but I think that effect would be small). And if so, is that cause, effect, or feedback? No one knows.

Or is it possible that A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H all have basically the same inner experience, and it is differential linguistic sensitivities that leads A to *describe* that experience as being of visual imagery, and leads B to *describe* that same experience as inner speaking, and C to describe that same experience as being a feeling, and so on? I have posed that very question to many participants across the years, entertaining it as a real possibility, and I can say as a result of many honest attempts, that Yes, it is possible, with about the same probability as that I am a brain in a vat.

1:53:39 MD: Alright, we could keep talking, but we're not going to! Thanks Agnes!