

Agnes Bolinska.
Agnes Interview 5
Sampling day 5

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the May 7 interview with Agnes that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/vnQVom9QvbK>. If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please post them as YouTube comments.

RTH = Russ Hurlburt
Agnes = Agnes Bolinska
MD = Michael Dickson

- 0:00 Russ comments: The comments that I have inserted in the transcript below are intended as commentary about what I think at the time I write the comment, which is generally within a day or so of the interview. They are not to be confused with the Truth with a capital T; there is no guarantee that I will agree with them if I review them at some later time, at which time I might revise or extend them; they are invitations to Michael and/or Agnes to disagree, or to amplify, or to say they don't understand, and so on. If they wish to insert their own comments, they should pick a color other than this green, and then do so. They should also feel free to correct the transcript.
- 0:03 RTH: So this is going to be Agnes's fifth shot at this. Anything that we should be talking about before we look at beeps?
- 0:15 Agnes: Not from my end.
- 0:17 RTH: [MD: Nope.] Me neither. So I would say, let's go for it and, and are we gonna alternate, Michael? Me, you, me, you, whatever. [MD: Yes.] Alright, that's fine. Let's, let's do it number 1.

Sample 5.1 discussion starts [here](#)

- 0:32 Agnes: Okay. So, um, so beep number 1 happened like the quickest it's ever happened in my experience with the beeper. Like just in, from turning it on. So it was this morning, um, and I had just sat down to do my morning meditation. So I was like, maybe two minutes in, or something like that. And I was kind of like following my breath and settling, but I was also very much thinking about the beeper [laughs] and the fact that the beeper could, could go off. And, um, what ended up happening is that the beep interrupted a thought process that I was unable to accurately recall in the moment of the beep, because it was kind of like, it startled me and I went blah [laughs]. But it was something like, um, and it was something like, *okay, here I am aware of the beeper again*. Um, be, but, but then I was kind of saying to myself, *but this will pass soon enough*. Um, *it's just that I'm settling in and I'm just starting to wear the beeper again*. So I'm aware of it.

- 1:36 Um, but then also I was, I was still having this awareness that my awareness of the beeper is affecting my actual meditation, because I'm now thinking about this beeper thing. And then I was also having thoughts about *how does this affect the DES process? And if I'm wearing this beeper, how is it affecting my experience because I'm thinking about it*. Um, so those were like, that was kind of the sense of the kinds of thoughts that I was having. Like this is what the beeper interrupted. Um, I, what I just described. It's not like I was using those precise words. I'm not sure whether I was innerly saying these things to myself or not. Like I suspect that it was like a combination of those things. Like I think at, in some moments I may have been saying some of those things, but in some moments it was just this kind of vague sense of all those things like this, this awareness of the beeper plus, *what am I gonna say if the beeper goes off, plus stop paying so much attention to the beeper* [laughs], like, like that kind of thing.
- 2:44 Um, so, and, and all those thoughts that I just said, I can't make out the sequence of those thoughts either. Like, as I said, when the beep went off, all I could recollect was that there was this thing going on. And, um, and that's kind of as good as it gets. Um, and hold on, what else did I write down? Yeah, and I, I also wrote down that I think there may have been some words there. So it's not like it was just this empty, like in, in previous experiences, I've described this empty feeling that had this resonance of blah, blah, blah, but this wasn't like that. Like I think there may have been, there *may well have been* some words, but I don't know what they were exactly at the moment of the beep.
- 3:37 RTH: So is it the case that there are something like two things going on? There's something about the breath and something about the beeper?
- 3:44 Agnes: Yeah.
- 3:46 RTH: And are those happening at the same time, would you say? [Agnes: Yeah.] Okay. And is one of them more prominent than the other?
- 3:54 Agnes: The thoughts are more prominent than the [inaudible] breath.
- 3:57 RTH: By, by a lot or a little? 60—40, 90— 10, 99—1,
- 4:01 Agnes: Uh, 70—30.
- 4:03 RTH: Okay.
- 4:04 Agnes: Maybe even like 80—20. Yeah. In that mo, in the moment of the be, I was quite preoccupied with that.
- 4:10 RTH: Okay. I'm not picky about the difference between 70—30 and 80—20. That's
- 4:15 Agnes: [laughs].
- 4:17 RTH: The, and, and what I saw about the thought process, my understanding of what I heard. So what I heard you to say was something like: I'm pretty sure I'm thinking

about the beeper, and these are the kinds of things I was probably thinking about. Whether they were sequential or simultaneous. Pretty hard to tell whether they were some worded, all worded, un worded, one worded, pretty hard to tell.

- 4:45 Agnes: And, and I would, so yes, to all of those things. I would also add, um, that I, I believe that part of the challenge is identifying what was happening at the last undisturbed moment bef, like, before the beep went off. Like all this stuff was kind of happening in some space of time before. I don't know what precisely was happening at that time.
- 5:16 RTH: Okay. But I'm gathering, I'm gathering, but this aspect of it is *cognitive* in the sense that I'm *thinking* these are, these are *thinky* kinds of things.
- 5:30 Agnes: Yes. Very much thinky kinds of things.
- 5:33 RTH: And, and in the ballpark of about the beeper and how it's disturbing me, and it'll go away and it'll pass and whatever.
- 5:39 Agnes: Exactly.
- 5:40 RTH: That's, that's the ballpark. [Agnes: Yes.] And I'm not willing or able to pin myself down as to whether these things are simultaneous or, or sequential or all, at all at once, or just some overlap, some mish-moshy overlap.
- 5:55 Agnes: I, I would say, say they, they were probably, some of them were sequential and some of them were overlapping, but I can't pick out how precisely that happened in that span of time before the beep, and where the moment of the beep, like what precisely was happening at the moment of the beep.
- 6:14 RTH: So something like a bowl of spaghetti, they're these noodles, some of them overlap, and some of them are on the one side of the bowl, and some of them are on the other side of the bowl, but [Agnes: yeah.] hard to, hard to,
- 6:24 Agnes: Exactly. Yeah. Hard
- 6:25 RTH: To differentiate 'em. Okay. So I'm good about that portion. Michael, you got questions about that? [MD: Um, no, I don't think so.] Okay. And then there's the breathing portion, which I understood you to be saying something like, I'm settling into my breathing. What does that mean?
- 6:53 Agnes: So that means,... Okay. So typically what that means without all this beeper stuff that was going on, that means like I'm paying attention to my breath as it goes in and as it goes out, and I'm kind of feeling into my posture at the same time and just kind of trying to relax and trying to settle my mind. Um, like trying to just be there with the breath and my posture and not, um, engage in all this stuff. Um, so in moments when I'm successful, um, I do feel this kind of just stillness and presence. In this moment, um, I felt some of that, um, but also as I said, like in an 80—20 way,

this stuff about the beeper was dominating. So this what I'm describing now, this kind of presence was a bit like in the background. Does that make sense?

8:15 RTH: We, yeah. But it's sort of in, in the way then, the way that you're describing it makes it seem like it's maybe part of the same deal. It's that it's hard to separate out the thoughts from the breathing thing, that these are all part of the spaghetti bowl, basically in the,

8:31 Agnes: Yeah, maybe, I mean, this is one of those things where I can't say confidently what precisely was at the moment of the beep and what wasn't, so I'm not confident in even, I mean, one of the things we've talked about was like the, how big that moment before the beep is. Um, and in that moment, I'm not sure even whether the breathing part was necessarily part of it, or if it was like further into the past. It may be part of the spaghetti bowl thing. Like, I'm not sure, um, like I don't have a clear answer to the question of whether it was separate or like a distinct thing or not, or even if I was experiencing that in that exact moment, or whether I'm just kind of confabulating and bring... Like I was experiencing that, um, that mishmash the, the thoughts about the beeper plus the settling and following the breath, at least at some point before the beeper, but in that precise moment, I'm just not sure.

9:39 RTH: So it's possible that the 80—20 is a temporal something.

9:48 Agnes: Yeah. It's possible.

9:49 RTH: But at, at, at the moment of the beep it might be 0—100.

9:52 Agnes: Exactly. It might be, yeah.

9:56 RTH: Okay. Okay. And, and is, to the extent that it's there at all, is that about the physicality of the breath and the posture? Or is that about the, is that a cognitive thing as well? My posture is right, my breathing is shallow or whatever.

10:18 Agnes: It's more about the physicality. It's not cognitive. In fact, it's almost like, um, like non-cognitive, I don't know if that's exactly the right word, but like, there's this effort to remove the cognitive in that and just *be*, and yeah. So *be* like in this embodied state.

10:43 RTH: And whether I was successful in doing that at the moment, the be we, we'll leave that up for grabs, but

10:48 Agnes: Exactly.

10:49 RTH: But that's the goal.

10:49 Agnes: I mean, probably I was unsuccessful. I wasn't that successful, but I was, yeah. But I was attempting, I think that's what, like, I think I, I wanna say that that was there at least like 10%. Like, I, I don't think it was 100—0. Like I feel reasonably confident

that it wasn't 100—0, like as we're talking about this, but I could be wrong. I don't know. Okay. [laughs].

11:13 RTH: So I'm good about that sample. Michael, you wanna?

11:17 MD: Um, can you, can you maybe say a little bit more about, you said the settling-in business was more bodily than cognitive, I think. Um, I, is there any specific bodily feeling or, or is settling in, like just the, is that the description of the bodily feeling? Or is there something, is there some bodily feeling that you're calling *settling in*?

11:49 Agnes: So, [pause] that's a good question. Um,

12:05 MD: Sounds like it's a question...

12:06 Agnes: Yeah. I, I'm not sure, like, I'm not sure if I can answer that right now in this moment. Clearly. And like, like there's not, it's, it's not like, yes, I feel it, like I feel my back being straight, or like I feel the pressure on my butt, or any, like, it's, it's *not* one of those. It's more holistic, [MD: uhuh.] Um, and yeah, I don't know. Yeah, I'm not sure how much more,

12:38 MD: That's fine.

12:39 Agnes: I can say right now about that. But it's like, I, I guess the only thing I feel that I can say is that it's holistic rather than some specific body part or feeling that I can describe accurately right now.

12:56 MD: That was helpful. [RTH: On to number 2?] Yep.

Sample 5.2 discussion starts here

13:03 Agnes: Okay. So number 2. Um, I was working on these revisions, um, on a paper, and I had just had an insight about where to insert this important point that I need to make. Um, and I had just like hit *Enter* twice to like, make a space in the document for that insight. Um, so the moment, like the beep happened shortly after I had made that space for, for this new thing that I was gonna type.

13:40 So at the moment of the beep, I was seeing the screen, um, but not reading anything. I guess I was, I was looking at that blank space in betw, that I had created, but not like in any intentional way. Like it was just kind of in front of me. Um, and the beep interrupted my, just having placed the cursor after that last sentence, and I was about to start typing up this insight. And I had this, there was like this feeling of like anticipation and excitement, like, *yes, this is it!* This is, this is the thing. Um, so, um, yeah. So, so there's this visual component, um, and then there was just this like light feeling of anticipation, this kind of like, *yes, this is it* feeling like I was excited to type my, my little insight into this spot.

14:39 MD: The, let's start with the seeing part. Um, are we, are we including, you, you said you just had hit, sorry, before I get to the seeing part, let me just clarify what, which part

of this is background and what's not. So the, the hitting the *Enter* key twice, that's, that's prior to what we're gonna call this beep.

15:04 Agnes: Exactly. Yeah.

15:05 MD: Okay. Okay. Um, so, so for the seeing then, is there... So I, I get, you said you weren't reading anything, you were looking at the space. Are, are you seeing it as the space where you're gonna put this? Or are you just seeing space? Are you seeing color? What, what kind of seeing is happening?

15:34 Agnes: I'm just seeing, I'm just seeing the document with the space in it. Like I'm not reading, I don't really know what, seeing it *as the space* where I'm gonna put something in really means I,

15:48 MD: I'm just seeing the well, as opposed to so as, as opposed to saying, I'm seeing, I think you just answered my question, by the way, but I mean, but as opposed to say seeing the, the monitor or seeing white or seeing,

16:03 Agnes: So I'm seeing, um, I'm seeing the document.

16:10 MD: Yeah, no, that's what you said. That's why I said, I think you answered my question. Yeah.

16:13 Agnes: Like, I'm seeing the document with this newly created space, I see the words like, I don't see the, the letters aren't blurry or anything like that. Um, so I'm seeing the document, right? The document, um, I'm seeing it as a Word, as a Google Docs document, [laughs] with, with a space in it.

16:35 MD: With space, okay.

16:36 Agnes: Yeah. With like that new newly created space.

16:42 MD: And so I'm, I'm struggling now to reconcile and I don't have to be reconciled. So maybe the answer is you can't reconcile these things. But you said you're not seeing it with intention, but then also it's the space where you're gonna put this, which feels kind of intentional.

17:00 Agnes: Well, the intention isn't part of the seeing, right? So, um, when you ask the question about are you seeing it *as the place* where I'm gonna put this thing in, my answer is either no or I don't know what I, what that means, because as, um, part of the seeing component of the experience, I *wouldn't* put the *intention*. Um, I would say that the intention is like a separate track of my experience.

17:00 Russ comments: *Intentionality* is a difficult concept, perhaps particularly for philosophers. There is little doubt that Agnes's action is intentional: She does intend to put this new insight into that spot. But whether there is any experience that is directly apprehended as being *of intention* is a quite different question.

Michael comments: I'm going to defend philosophers a little bit here. I agree that perhaps philosophers find 'intentionality' difficult to understand. I'll suggest that's because it *is* difficult to understand. Every time I teach medieval philosophy we read a passage from Anselm where he is wondering "what do I really mean when I say 'I intend'?" The students all think they know perfectly well and they consider the question silly, until, as we discuss the passage (including the radically non-modern way that Anselm has of unpacking this notion, the 'weirdness' of which the students never see initially), most of them begin to realize that they are confused about intentionality. That's when I say to them "congratulations or condolences as the case may be -- now you're a philosopher."

So yes I was interested in exploring intentionality here, as it occurs for Agnes, and I was specifically interested in whether she experiences intentionality as an 'aspect' of seeing ('seeing *as* an available target', or something like that), and it seems, from her answer, that that is not how intention worked for her in this case.

Russ comments: RE "I was specifically interested in whether she experiences intentionality as an 'aspect' of seeing"

The aim of DES is to describe experience that is *directly apprehended*, *not* to inquire into *presumed states* (or whatever is the category in which you would place *intentionality*). The risk is that Michael's interest in intentionality might pressure Agnes into confusing philosophical inquiry with description of phenomena. I have antennae that are sensitive to such risks, and they jangled when Agnes (17:00) said "I would say that the intention is like a separate track of my experience." *Oh no!* they jangle, *let's not venture down the what-is-intentionality rabbit hole!* So I wrote my 17:00 comment.

The good news from the describe-phenomena perspective is that Michael did *not* enter that rabbit hole: "it seems, from her answer, that that is not how intention worked for her in this case." He did *not* pressure her to describe intentionality. Good!

There are samples where it makes sense to describe directly apprehended phenomena as being of intention. I had a sample a few weeks ago where the beep occurred when the participant was using an orange pencil to shade the region of a map, and her directly apprehended experience could fairly be described as intending to shade neatly—to bring the orange shading right up to the black line but not over it. In that case, the unit of experience was *not* the particular down-and-to-the-left-orange-stroke-and-its-proximity-to-the-black-line that was ongoing at the moment of the beep; that was the basically unacknowledged action that embodied the shade-neatly directly apprehended phenomenon.

And I have sampled with a participant who was beeped when going up stairs, and his directly apprehended experience was of *put your left foot up there*, which was understood as being part of a *put your left foot up, put your right foot up* sequence—that is, for him, the intentionality of each foot placement was directly apprehended. But that is by far the exception—most people going up stairs have no directly apprehended of their feet at all.

The object of DES is to be sensitive to intention when it is a salient aspect of directly apprehended phenomena, but not to confuse intentionality-as-a-concept with directly apprehended phenomena. Only then can one recognize the experiential unusualness of phenomena such as put-your-left-foot-up.

- 17:29 MD: Okay. Okay. Good. Um, so I think I'm good on that part then before we get to the anticipation part. [RTH: I'm good about that.] Okay. Um, so you're, you are, you said you're feeling anticipation and excitement. Um, um, and then you, you, you put some words to that, but I had the impression that you weren't saying that those words were present to you. [Agnes: No.] You were, you were just describing the nature of the excitement.
- 17:59 Agnes: Exactly. Okay. Yeah, exactly, exactly. Those words weren't present to me. [MD: Okay.] But I was, yeah.
- 18:04 MD: And was that feeling a bodily feeling, a cog? Was it a cognitive thing?
- 18:04 Russ comments: Russ thinks that this question conflates two aspects: (1) was it affective or cognitive? And (2) if it was affective, was it bodily or non-bodily (which DES calls "mental")? MD's question, to Russ's ear, conflates those two questions; Russ thinks that conflation contributes to or causes the hesitation in Agnes's 18:11 turn. Upcoming, there will be considerable discussion of the distinction between (1) and (2).
- 18:11 Agnes: I think it was a bit of both. Like bodily, I would say that there was this kind of like lightness in my body almost. Um, whether it was cognitive. Um,
- 18:32 RTH: So can I, can I expand that question? And then you can, then you can answer it. So Michael seemed to make it seem like there was, it could be either bodily or cognitive, but I don't think that's true. I think it can be, I think feelings can be entirely mental and not at all cognitive. Whereby *mental*, I mean, I feel them, but I don't feel them in my body. And so when I have to describe them, I would say, well, they're *in my head*, or they're *mental*, or something like that, but not bodily. And yet still I *feel* anger that sadness or anticipation or whatever.
- 19:09 Agnes: Russ, when you said *mental but not cognitive*, did you might mean mental, but not bodily, or are you making a tripartite?
- 19:16 RTH: I, I meant mental and not cognitive. [Agnes: Okay.] What I meant, what I'm, what I'm trying to say here is that in the feelings realm itself, [Agnes: Mm.] we could, we could separate feelings from cognitive.
- 19:28 Agnes: Okay.
- 19:28 RTH: So, uh, feel feelings are in the emotional realm, and cognitives are in the analytical realm.
- 19:33 Agnes: Okay.
- 19:34 RTH: So that's a distinction that I think we can all easily make. But what I thought that Mike, and... But, *but*, but within the feelings realm, there can be feelings that are

bodily and feelings that are mental, what I call mental. [Agnes: Okay.] And what I mean by mental is not bodily, but still emotional.

19:54 Agnes: Gotcha.

19:55 RTH: Okay. And I thought, and I thought Michael's question sort of blurred that distinction or conflated that, that distinction. So I think it can be, it can be feelings either bodily or mental, and then it can be feelings or cognitive.

20:07 MD: Okay. So just for clarification, I, I mean, I wasn't making that distinction between cognitive and mental. I, I, I was probably being too blunt, but I, or not blunt, I'm not sure what the right word. Not, not very subtle, but I just meant by cognitive. I just meant not bodily [laughs], but, but I get, I get the distinction, so I'll, I'll, I'll be careful in the future.

20:28 RTH: Yeah. That it, it's a pretty, it's a pretty major decision [he means "distinction"] because, because, because I'm a hundred percent sure that it's right. That, that there, that you can, you can have a non-bodily feel emotional feeling that is *not at all* cognitive. I'm, I bet the ranch on that. No,

20:45 MD: I'm, now that you've said, now that you specify what you mean by cognitive, I, I co totally agree. I, I was just, I'm just saying I wasn't using the word cognitive in that way. Okay. Um, I just meant, I think I just meant what you meant mean by mental [laughs].

20:45 Russ comments: I happily believe Michael's account here of the distinction he was making. However, I also think Agnes did not understand it in the way Michael intended it (the evidence for that is the hesitational difficulty that Agnes had in her 18:11 turn). That's what makes communication difficult, and requires the clarificatory discussion we have been having.

Michael comments: For what it's worth I entirely agree, and I think I was just being sloppy with language, a sloppiness probably encouraged by my not having a very firm grasp of distinctions amongst different types of 'non-physical' experience, i.e., types marked by words like 'mental', 'cognitive', 'feeling', and so on. (I think I understand these matters until I start to think more about them, and then I become confused again...)

Russ comments: For the record, DES uses *cognitive* to refer to directly apprehended experiences that are analytical, computational, knowledge-based, judgment-based; and uses *emotional* or *affective* (as synonyms) to refer to directly apprehended experiences such as sadness, anger, anxiety, caring, using *feeling* to refer to that directly apprehended emotion experience. DES uses *mental* in only one way: to refer to feelings that are *not* experienced in the body (that is, sometimes feelings are bodily and sometimes they are "mental").

DES is *not* concerned with cognition as a process or with emotion as a process—it accepts that such processes doubtless exist, but they are inferred rather than directly apprehended.

- 20:58 RTH: Okay.
- 20:58 Agnes: Well, and I think that's helpful because what I was about to say was that, um, there was certainly like a bodily element, a subtle bodily element, like a subtle kind of lightness. Um, there was *not*, I would say, a cognitive element, but I think there may have been a mental element as well. Um, that's what I was gonna say. I mean, I wasn't gonna use the word *mental*, but I was gonna resist *cognitive*. Um, yeah.
- 21:32 MD: That's, that's my fault for bad word choice. Sorry. [Agnes: That's okay.]
- 21:36 RTH: Yeah. I don't, I don't like the word *mental* either, but I can't think of anything that's better. And I've thought about it for 50 years, basically. [they laugh] Ear, early on in my career, I thought it was my problem, that I, I just, I, I was blind to that kind of stuff. But I'm pretty sure it's not my problem, now. I think it's just the way it is.
- 21:56 MD: I, I think I'm, I think I'm good with that now.
- 22:00 RTH: So what I've got is: I am somehow in the affective realm, anticipating, exciting, excited to be able to, to do this. I'm ready to do that. [Agnes nods affirmatively.] And that is, to some degree bodily—I, I feel a sort of a lightness in my body, but it might that, but that might not exhaust the effective feeling of it. [Agnes: Yeah.] There, there may be some mental anticipation. Mental excitement or whatever. [Agnes: Yes.] And *none* of that is analytic or whatever [Agnes: Exactly.] you might put into cognitive, cognitive realm.
- 22:42 So to summarize both the, both, both aspects, I see this page and it's a, I see it as a page with a space in it, a space maybe even waiting to be filled, but the, *and* I feel an anticipation, excitement, *let's do this* kind of a deal. [Agnes: Yeah.] Okay. But neither of those is worded. This is not, there's no quote "Let's do this." [Agnes: Exactly. Yes.] "This is it." Whatever.
- 23:18 Agnes: Yeah.
- 23:18 RTH: In my experience, and I'm good. Number 3.

Sample 5.3 discussion starts here

- 23:26 Agnes: Okay. So, um, so now I'm working on the paper still [laughs]. Um, but now I'm sitting outside on my front porch, um, (oh, sorry. I'm just trying to read my own writing [laughs].) Um, and I had just paused after, I had just paused after writing out some, like, good stream of consciousness stuff that, so I like figured out some more stuff in this paper. And I had, and I, and, um, the beep interrupted, um, the exper.... So I had just paused and I had just looked up and stretched my legs out after writing all this stuff. So that's, that's what was happening.
- 24:16 And then my experience was visually I was seeing like the houses in front of me. I wasn't focusing on any house in particular. I was just kind of looking out ahead, um, and I could feel my legs stretching out. Like I could feel that bodily.

- 24:38 Um, and then there was this kind of, at the moment of the, the beep, there was this slight pause in my thinking, but it was just like the beep interrupted, this brief pause where I was like looking up and, um, stretching out my legs, but I was about to return to my writing. So, um, [laughs] again, there is this feeling of eager anticipation, this kind of like, *aha!* and this lightness within the pause, [laughs]. That's it.
- 25:15 RTH: Okay. So the *pause* portion is not empty of it. It, it's not just, I have ceased to think. It is that I am not actively thinking what I was, what about that stuff. But it is somehow lurking in my anticipation, eager excitement mode or whatever.
- 25:36 Agnes: Yeah. Like the stuff I had just kind of typed out this stuff and like figured out some stream of conscious, like through typing it, figured out some stuff. And so it was just kind of like a pause of like, *huh, okay*. And then coming back. So, so I don't know. I guess, um, I'm not sure if that stuff was in the pause, but the anticipation, I would say, *was* in the pause, like the anticipation of coming back to it was
- 26:09 RTH: The eager anticipation.
- 26:11 Agnes: Yeah. Or if anything, what, what *was* in the pause from that stuff was just this feeling of accomplishment, perhaps, that, that I'd like figured out this little bit of the paper, um, but not the content of what I was writing.
- 26:28 RTH: Okay. And I think I'm good about that aspect. [MD: Um, yeah, I think I'm okay.] And then, uh, the houses across the street, my eyeballs are aimed at them and I'm seeing them?
- 26:46 Agnes: Yep.
- 26:48 RTH: And what do I see?
- 26:51 Agnes: I see like three houses, roughly, um, in front of me. Um, I see like in the periphery, I'm sitting on my front porch, so I kind of see like the, whatever you call that, the roof of the porch, um, and like the columns. But I'm not focusing on anything in particular. It's all just there in front of me.
- 27:15 RTH: So that scene is somehow making its way into my consciousness, whatever that is. It's not *merely* that my eyes are open and aimed in that direction. And it's not *merely* that my eyes are aimed at the houses across the way, and in my periphery are the columns that are holding up the roof. But in my experience, I *see* all those things,
- 27:40 Agnes: Yes.
- 27:44 RTH: , but not, I'm gathering, not, not with any particular focus. I'm not looking at that particular house. I'm not looking at this particular column.
- 27:52 Agnes: Exactly. Yeah.

- 27:53 RTH: They are somehow experientially present to me, but not strongly or not, not articulated-ly or whatever.
- 28:06 Agnes: Yeah.
- 28:08 RTH: Okay. And I think I'm good about that portion.
- 28:13 MD: Um, you said you said "three houses." Was that something that you were, was the, the number three, were you aware that it was three? Or you just, you
- 28:21 Agnes: No, I'm just, I'm just saying that in response to Russ's question, like when I kind of close my eyes or metaphorically or, uh, close my eyes to picture what it was that I was seeing, I see three houses. But that it was *three in particular* was not part of my experience. Okay.
- 28:40 RTH: So I do want us to keep as, as clearly as we can separate *what I imagine myself now* when I try to recreate what this would be like, what it must have been like from *what I recall it having been like*. And I'm, I'm accepting that that's, that's not perfect. But the aim is to constrain ourselves to what, what I was seeing at the moment.
- 29:05 Agnes: So I'm recalling what I was seeing at the moment, and then counting [laughs], maybe that's a better way to put it.
- 29:12 RTH: Okay. And then I feel the stretching in my legs. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] Can you say more about that?
- 29:27 Agnes: Um, [pause] I don't know how much more I can say about that without like, confabulating, I guess. I, I mean, um, like I had, like the stretch, stretching of my legs and looking up kind of just happened spontaneously. Like I *didn't go, okay, I'm gonna now stretch my legs*. Um, and yeah, I was just aware of stretching my legs. But if I'm honest, like, to think about how that felt, I'm doing it now [laughs], which is I know the thing we're not supposed to do. So, um, I, I don't think I can say a whole lot more about that, honestly, except like I stretched my, yeah.
- 30:24 RTH: So you said in, in my recollection of what you said, is that at first you said you were stretching your legs, and I took that to be context. And then when you describe your experience, you, you said, I feel the stretching in my legs. [Agnes: Yep.] And the difference there is that in the first way of speaking about that, that this is something that I'm *doing*, and in the second it's something that I'm *feeling*. I'm either stretching my legs *as an act*, or I am feeling my legs being stretched *as a sensation*. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] As the there, do you...
- 30:24 Russ comments: A main requirement of DES is to distinguish between directly apprehended experience and all else. Here, that distinction is between an action (which may be context and may be experienced) and a sensation (which is experienced.)

In the first paragraph of Agnes first attempt at describing this sample (33:26), she says “So I had just paused and I had just looked up and stretched my legs out after writing all this stuff. So that’s, that’s what was happening.” I take “that’s what was happening” as a marker of action *as distinct from* experience.

Then the second paragraph begins “And then my experience was...,” which I take to be the confirmation that what *had been* described was *context* and what *will be* described is *experience*. Then in that paragraph she says “I could feel my legs stretching out. Like I could feel that bodily.” That is a description of sensation, not of action.

So I take Agnes’s first attempt (which I generally think is the *talk* least corrupted by later interviewing) as quite carefully saying that the action is context, and the experience is sensation.

31:01 Agnes: Have any Yeah, I, I was feeling them, I was feeling them as a sensation. I wasn’t feeling them so much as an act, um, in the sense that it felt like they were *being* stretched rather than I was *doing* the stretching. So it was kind of like a more passive feeling. Um,

31:21 RTH: So I feel the, I feel the sensation of stretching in my legs. [Agnes: Mm-hmm. Yeah.] I am in fact doing that. But that, but that is not directly present to me. I’m doing it. [Agnes: Exactly. Yeah. Exactly.] What I’m experiencing is the *being stretched sensation*. [Agnes: Yeah.] Which is, which I think is entirely what you said at the beginning, [Agnes: Uh-huh.] then later on it became more act, active. But, uh,

31:48 Agnes: Yeah, I think it was more passive. But I’m kind of like, I hadn’t made that distinction in the moment. And so I wasn’t like, I can’t say with confidence, I can’t make that distinction with confidence, cuz I hadn’t made it in the moment. But if I had to, if I had to guess, I’d say it was more passive.

31:48 Russ comments: The distinction that is being made here, I think, is not actually between *active* and *passive*, but between *an action* (which is performed but not directly apprehended) and *a sensation* (which is directly apprehended even though the causative action is not directly apprehended).

Michael comments: I don’t understand what is being said here. I agree with the latter distinction, but I still feel inclined to associate action with ‘active’ and sensation with ‘passive’.

Russ comments: DES is interested only in directly apprehended experience, and whether something is active or passive is basically irrelevant to the distinction between whether something is or is not directly apprehended. For example, in your own (Part XV) sample 7.1, you were walking across campus; the walking was your own action which you were actively performing, but your walking was *not at all* directly apprehended—your direct experience included softly singing and French-horn fingering a tune and also recalling a conversation with a student. Thus, the walking was active, an action, and not at all directly apprehended. By contrast, at your sample 9.1, you were walking and you were (among other things) hearing

(directly apprehending) your footsteps. In short: Whether you are active does not determine what you directly apprehend.

32:17 RTH: Okay. What I would, what I would say is that your linguistics were quite careful, were, were, we're quite discriminative in that, in your, in, in your opening salvo, which is where I think actually the most information usually is in your opening salvo. You said, (we can rewind the tape and check this out, but, and my recollection of it), you said, I, I, I was, I was stretching my legs and looking up, looking out. That was a sort of what was happening. And then when it got, at the moment of the beep, you said, I felt my legs being stretched.

32:51 Agnes: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

32:53 RTH: You made, you made whether you, whether you knew what you were doing or not. Your, your descriptive apparatus made that distinction in the first go. But the whole thing is iterative. And, and so we, we would say, well, now the chances are good that if, if we were to sample again, and if this kind of thing happened again, then Agnes probably would pay more attention to whether this feels like a doing or feels like a sensation. So I think I'm good about number 3. Michael? [MD: I, I'm good on that.] Yeah. On number 3.

33:35 Agnes: Okay. So, uh,

33:36 RTH: And I'm guessing, I'm guessing. So so far I would, I would say there have been no inner words and no inner pictures?

33:45 Agnes: No. So far, no.

33:46 RTH: These are, these are all in the bodily sensations or feelings.

33:52 Agnes: Well, except potentially the first one, I think had some words. I, I, I feel that there were probably some words, but I can't spell them out.

34:04 RTH: Okay. Got it. Number 4, which is Michael's.

Sample 5.4 discussion starts here

34:08 Agnes: Okay. So the fourth one, um, like I was about to go back outside to eat breakfast outside, and, um, my phone was plugged in on the counter. Um, and so the, the moment of the beep happened as I was reaching for my phone, um, because I was, I was about to take, like, so, okay, this is all context. Um, I was going to take my phone outside with me. And I had seen, like earlier I had seen that a friend had texted me. So I was about to reply to that message, which I hadn't yet read.

34:48 Um, so what the beep interrupted (and this is the experience now) was this like reaching with intention to unplug my phone? Like there was this reaching that I was aware, like I was aware of my reaching for the phone and being about to un, unplug it. Um, and I could see the, I could see the phone, I was focused on the phone on the counter. That was part of the experience.

- 35:19 Um, but also part of the experience was, um, this kind of vague sense that I'm about to look at this message and, um, and also I knew that there was like another message that someone had sent me yesterday that I hadn't replied to, so that I should probably reply to that message. Um, and I wasn't thinking any of this in sentences, but that was all just kind of present to me, this like, okay, I'm gonna go and see what this message, this one message says, and also reply to this other message. That, that was kind of present in my, in my intention.
- 36:06 MD: Okay. Um, I think I'm gonna take those in reverse order.
- 36:12 Agnes: Okay.
- 36:12 MD: So, so I'm, I'm, is it right, there's basically three components here. There's this sense of about to look and reply. There's a, uh, a seeing of the phone, and there's a, somehow experiencing the reaching towards the phone are the [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] Those, yeah. Three, three tracks of experiences.
- 36:12 Russ comments: RTH would have combined, or at least have left as a possibility, that the reaching and the seeing are part of the same experience.
- 36:33 Agnes: Yeah, I would say so, yeah.
- 36:35 MD: Okay. Um, okay. So let's take 'em in reverse then. So the, the, the sense of about to look and reply, um, you said that wasn't, was it, was the, was the, I, I couldn't, I couldn't figure out whether the identity of the senders was somehow part of your awareness, or was it just about messages that I'm gonna reply to, not attached to any,
- 37:01 Agnes: Yeah, it wasn't about the identity of the senders, *per se*. Like, I knew who the senders were. And like at some point bef, like the moment before, the moment of the beep, I believe that those identities were somehow *there*. But what was most salient to me at the moment of the beep was like the future act of replying to these messages.
- 37:29 MD: And it was just the, it wasn't, I, I, I, I just wanna make sure it wasn't, it wasn't that you already had formulated a reply or anything like that.
- 37:37 Agnes: No, No. In fact, I mean, one of the messages,
- 37:40 MD: Well, you said you hadn't read one of them.
- 37:42 Agnes: One of them I hadn't read. Like, I had just seen that it existed. The other one I had read, and I knew what I was gonna say, but I wasn't like formula. It wasn't anything complicated and I wasn't formulating a reply. It was more just like, oh, I should reply to that.
- 37:55 MD: Okay. Um, the seeing of the phone, so before, before we leave, so sorry. Yeah. I, I meant to, so,

- 38:01 RTH: So what I've got, what I've got about that is that this, this is, this is a sort of a two-pronged anticipation of, and one prong is more prominent and more well-defined. I'm, I've got to read that, or I'm gonna read this message and reply to it. And somewhat less salient is, oh yeah, there's another message to it that I should probably reply to. Is that right?
- 38:01 Russ comments: RTH apparently somewhat misunderstood Agnes's original description.
- 38:27 Agnes: Um, not, not really. I, I would say it's more just about the, again, this is all kind of vague, but the sense was more like, I'm now gonna go take this and reply to these messages on my phone. [laughs] Like, like it was more, and that stuff was there, but it wasn't like one message was more prominent than the other. Or like the, in the moment before the moment of the beep, I probably had like, *oh yeah, I should see that message*. And by the way, there was this other message, but like in the moment of the beep, it was more like, um, *gonna reply to these messages*.
- 39:13 RTH: I should deal with the message stuff. Yeah.
- 39:14 Agnes: I should like deal with these messages now or something.
- 39:18 RTH: Alright.
- 39:21 MD: Okay. Are we good now?
- 39:22 RTH: Then I'm good with that.
- 39:23 MD: Okay. Um, the seeing you said you're, you, you saw the phone on the counter and I wasn't sure whether you, whether the right way to describe that is I saw a phone on counter, or I saw a phone, and by the way, it was on the counter.
- 39:40 RTH: And can I raise one more possibility about that? And that is that the, we differentiated this as its own track, but maybe it was part of this, I'm reaching for it and I, and I see it.
- 39:50 MD: Yeah, I was actually gonna ask that same question.
- 39:53 Agnes: Yeah. I mean, it may have been, to be honest, like, I, I don't know. I can't say confidently that those were separate tracks or they were together. Maybe I would put them together, maybe. Um, but yeah, I saw, like in my visual field, I mean Okay. What I experienced seeing was like phone on counter. Um, and again, that was what I was focused on in the periphery were the other things on the counter, but they weren't as salient to me. Um, the, the phone on the counter was salient to me. And then that was sort of combined with like, the reaching activity, the reaching-to-unplug activity.

- 40:41 MD: And so, so just, just to reiterate the, my, the first question to make sure: you saw a phone on counter, not phone, and by the way, it was on the counter. So the, the seeing it as being on the counter was part of the [Agnes: Yes.] experience.
- 40:59 Agnes: Yeah. Phone on counter. Yeah. Okay. Not *by the way*, it was on the counter. [Agnes: Right.]
- 41:02 MD: Okay. Um, and
- 41:04 RTH: Phone plugged in? Phone plugged in on counter?
- 41:06 Agnes: Phone plugged in on counter. Yes. Yeah.
- 41:08 RTH: And is the plugged-in-ness as salient, more salient, whatever than other aspect? As far as you're seeing is concerned?
- 41:13 Agnes: Uh, I would recall, like, I'd say the phone-plugged-in-ness and counter are like equally salient. [RTH: Okay.]
- 41:23 MD: So let's, let's talk about the reaching then, which may or may not be the same track as the seeing. Um, you're, what kind of experience was the experience of reaching? Were you, was it, was it bodily? non-bodily? Like, do you feel yourself reaching or you just know that you're reaching, or you intend to be reaching? I'd say
- 41:51 Agnes: I just know that I'm reaching, I'm reaching agentically, [laughs] [MD laughs]. Like I know that I'm reaching and that I am about to unplug the phone. I wouldn't say it's bodily. Um, like I, I wouldn't say like, *oh, I feel myself moving*. It's just like I have this experience that I'm about to unplug the phone of. Yeah. Agentically [laughs].
- 42:18 MD: And was the, was the reaching I, I don't mean, and I don't mean like physically what, what was, what were you reaching for, but did you experience yourself as reaching for the plug? for the phone? or neither or both or?
- 42:33 Agnes: I experienced myself as reaching to unplug the phone. [MD: Okay.] So not like for the plug or for the phone. I didn't have that distinction.
- 42:40 MD: Okay. I think I'm good then. [RTH: Me too. Number 5?]

[Sample 5.5 discussion starts here](#)

- 42:46 Agnes: Number 5. Okay. So five happened very shortly after 4. Um, I had just gotten outside and I'd sat down like in the seat again on my front porch. And there's this, this kitty in my neighborhood who, who's like, been hanging out with me lately, and I've been feeding her [laughs] and I really like her. I kind of wanna, I wanna keep her, but I'm, anyway, that's, sorry. Sidetrack. Sidetrack. Very cute little kitty that I really like. Um, so she had jumped up on my lap and I was petting her and trying to get her to settle down. Like she's very excited to see me and she's like, all, she's all over me, but I'm

- trying to eat this breakfast. So, um, I was trying to get her to just like chill and settle down so I could eat my breakfast. Um, so that's all background.
- 43:41 Um, when the beep went off, like I could feel her, and I was seeing her, and I was trying to coax her into a position that would allow me to eat like that, that kind of attempt was there as well.
- 44:03 Um, yeah. So those were those, those were the three things, like the visual of this, this cat, um, the feel of, cuz I was petting her and then trying to coax her into a position, like that kind of effort was there.
- 44:21 Um, one thing to say about this is like, when the beep went off, I don't know like what precisely I was doing in, in that moment. Like, I don't know whether I was like in mid stroke or like what, like what exactly I was doing. So this is like, yeah, this is the best I can do to describe this.
- 44:42 RTH: So is, let's start with the feeling aspect. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] So is this, I feel her fur? [Agnes: Yes.] Or I feel her on my lap? Or I,
- 44:58 Agnes: To be honest, I'm not sure actually. Like, um, I wanna say I feel her fur and I feel her on my lap. [RTH: Both.] No, actually, okay. Sorry,. Backtrack. Um, so again, this is one of those situations where I, I'm having a hard time like delineating the moment before the beep, as opposed to like several moments before the beep. Um, certainly several moments before the beep at some point, kind of like the spaghetti thing with the meditation, there was a feeling of her fur and a feeling of like her paws on my lap as she's like walking around. Um, that was certainly there in the spaghetti, but I don't know what was there like at the precise moment. That's my challenge.
- 45:52 RTH: So at the precise moment, this *could be* fur on fingers and it *could be* paws on lap [MD: Or both.] And it could be some other physical aspect: weight, weight distribution, or
- 45:52 Russ comments: I agree with the "or both" as a live possibility.
- 46:06 Agnes: Exactly, yeah. Something. It could be like claws digging into lap, also [laughs].
- 46:13 RTH: But I'm not sure about that.
- 46:15 Agnes: But I'm not sure about that. Exactly.
- 46:17 RTH: And that seems like sort of a temporal imprecision or temporal [Agnes: Exactly.] inability or something like that.
- 46:25 Agnes: Exactly. Yeah. Like, I think just, I mean, in a lot of these beeps when the beep happens, I feel this kind of pressure like, *okay, what just happened? What just happened?* And that, that pressure makes me like, I don't know, like scrambles my brain a little bit [laughs], and then I, then I can say what happened like in this timeframe, but not necessarily right before a lot of the time.
- 46:52 RTH: Okay. So I would say there are limitations with the, with the, with the study, but, but what I, with the *method*, but the, but the limit limitations have the limitations

themselves have their limits to them. [Agnes: Right.] So it's not like you are trying to decide between *saying* to the cat quote, "get off my lap" or "come over here," unquote, or whatever. That's, that's not there or confident about that. What's, what's actually, there is some in the physical realm we're declining to be more precise about whether it's one or the other or all of those at a particular moment.

47:35 Agnes: Well, and here's a question for *you*, Russ. Like, as I'm doing this, um, I'm realizing now that part of the, part of what's getting me all jumbled in the moment of the beep is this feeling that I experience of being like, *okay, now you're time to know what happened in the exact moment before the beep*. This kind of perfectionism about, um, I mean perfectionism in general, but in particular about like, *okay, now's your time. Figure out what happened at this precise moment of the beep*. Um, would it be helpful or like in the spirit of DES or whatever to like relax that standard somewhat. So instead of saying like, okay, what's going on right at this last moment to say what was going on in the last like *two* moments or *three* moments? Or is that, um, is that against like a fundamental aspect of DES, which is to capture like the last undisturbed moment?

48:48 RTH: So what I, what I, I, I, I think that the answer to that question is probably that there's not a really good answer to it. But, but what I would say about it is that the, the object is of DES is not to capture *the last moment* so much as it is to capture *what is in flight*. [Agnes: Mm.] So what, what is ongoing. [Agnes: Mm.] Because to to, to conceptualize it as capturing what's in flight means, I don't have to worry about whether this moment is one second long or five seconds long or whatever. It just has, it just has to be ongoing.

49:19 Agnes: Mm-hmm.

49:21 RTH: But I would also say that your perfectionism (as you, as you described it, or, or whatever) that, that, that there might be perfectionism which disturbs your ability to, y'know, you get into a *perfection mode* rather than an *apprehension mode*. I think that's possible. But if I had to bet I wouldn't

49:45 Agnes: Like that perfectly apprehend. It's like try to apprehend this perfectly [laughs].

49:50 RTH: Yeah. And, and that might, that might that I, I think it's possible that you have a personality perfectionism or whatever. I don't, I'm not claiming that—in fact, I'd probably bet against it. But I'm not, I'm not denying that as a possibility. Because I think it's also possible (and I would say probably more likely) that your experience does not easily divide into one thing at a time. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] And if it did divide into one thing at a time, then it would, then the task would be easier for you. And then you wouldn't have to worry so much about, about whether, whether it was this or that.

50:29 Agnes: Mm. Mm-hmm. That makes sense.

50:40 RTH: So I'm, y'know, so, so I, so in this particular example, I would say it's quite possible that I am petting the fur—I feel, I'm feeling the softness of the fur and that that has

sort of become more central in my experience and has waned or whatever. And at the same time I'm feeling the pressure of her paws in my lap, and that was uncomfortable a little bit more before and now it's even more uncomfortable. So that's sort of rising and I'm trying to eat my cereal and I'm holding that in one hand while I'm trying to push her away and around or whatever with the other hand. And all that stuff is, is, are more or less independently waxing and waning or whatever. And so when the moment when the moment happens, it's, it's sort of hard to tease them apart cuz they were [Agnes: Mm-hmm. Yeah.] there was no, there was no apartness in the first place.

51:41 Agnes: Yes. Yeah. Yeah. I would say that that's right.

51:44 RTH: And, and *that* is not a matter of, of characterological perfectionism or whatever. That's a, that's a matter of experiential independence and parallel processing or whatever, which I, which which, if I had to bet, I would probably bet on on that aspect rather than the perfectionism, as an aspect. But...

52:09 Agnes: No, that's helpful. Yeah, that's helpful because I think I, part of the perfectionism is, is trying to be crystal clear about what was in the experience and what wasn't, and be able to describe that. Well and any ambiguity or um, y'know, vague edges kind of translate for me to like, *you're doing it wrong!* [laughs], which is, which I think what you're saying is that's not true.

52:39 RTH: Well you're, I think if we went back and looked at all these experiences today and, and probably all your experiences in general there, none of your experiences are crystal, crystal clear this, this or that. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] Maybe, maybe there are some from previous days cuz my memory isn't that good. But the, but certainly today, there, there are things that are going on, your body is doing stuff and the cat's doing stuff and these things are all overlapping and whatever. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] And you, and you don't single in one of them and exclude all the others. Some people do, some people don't.

53:16 Agnes: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

53:21 MD: That makes sense to me.

53:24 RTH: And the end, I would, and I would say it's, I'm trying to imagine what this is like from Michael's point of point of view that, because his experience is quite different from Agnes's in that, in this regard. And it probably, probably, it would be probably easier for him to get his head around DES if the, if the experiences were somewhat clearer, maybe, I don't know.

53:50 MD: Well, what the, what you just said or suggested, um, was illuminating for me, um, illuminating of Agnes's experience, I mean, not of my own. Um, it, it helps me to understand it better. So I guess that's part of the point. [laughs]

54:15 RTH: That is, that is, it is most of the point actually. So I think I'm, I think I'm, I'm good about this. Is there something else that I was, I think we've sort of probably ran wrong as much outta this as we're gonna get. [MD: Yep.] Number 6?

Sample 5.6 discussion starts here

54:38 Agnes: Okay, so number 6. Um, I had just finished, um, a zoom meeting, um, with John Dunn, actually. Um, and one of the things that came up, um, during the Zoom meeting, cuz I'm gonna be in Wisconsin next fall, and we were talking about cross country skiing and I told him I wanna do some skiing while I'm there. And he mentioned the Birkebeiner, which is something that, which is a race that I had heard of, but I like hadn't considered doing. So I was kind of in this moment, um, I had finished the Zoom meeting and I was a little bit like tired and Zoomed out and feeling a bit blah. Um, and so just kind of not sure what to do with myself yet. And so, um, I was type, type, so I was typing "Birkebeiner ski" into my web browser cuz I was gonna Google it to see when it was happening. Um, and the, the beep interrupted that typing.

55:46 Um, so I was seeing the words that I had just typed into the browser and I was just feeling this feeling of like laziness and like blah, like I like just this, um, drained feeling of, um, not really having the energy to like, do anything productive [laughs] at the moment. Um, so, so there were two components to my experience. They were seeing these words that I had just typed and then this kind of feeling of laziness. Like I was doing this just cuz I didn't wanna do the next thing [laughs] that I had to do.

56:24 MD: Can you say more about seeing the words your, your...?

56:33 Agnes: So I typed them like in the, the place where you would type the, um, what's it called? [laughs], like the, the webpage. Um, like in that bar on the top of the process.

56:48 RTH: [laughs] the text, the text-entry bar,

56:50 Agnes: The text-entry box. Yeah, whatever. So I had just typed them there and I was looking like it beeped right after I had typed ski. And I was just seeing that those words in that box. The rest of the screen was, um, present in my experience. But the focus was definitely on that bar at the top.

57:18 MD: And you're seeing them with understanding, uh, you're, you're,

57:25 Agnes: Yeah. Yeah. This semantic,... Yeah. Um, I understand what it says. I'm not thinking about those words anymore. Um, the cognitively, it's just kind of like hazy, but, so I'm just seeing the words. Yeah.

57:44 MD: Okay. And the, I guess, I guess that's, I guess that's all. I, I, I feel like I have another question about seeing the words, but I can't formulate it. So maybe I'll ask Russ if he has any questions.

58:06 RTH: So am, am I seeing the words “Birkebeiner ski” or am I, is that in reality what my eyeballs are aimed at? And what I’m doing is I am seeing the, the stuff that I’ve just entered,

58:25 Agnes: I’m seeing the words,

58:27 RTH: The specific words. So I’m seeing,

58:29 Agnes: Yeah, I’m seeing the specific words. Um, of course I know that it’s the stuff that I just entered, but I, but I am seeing the words, I am making out that these are the words rather than merely the stuff that I just entered.

58:45 RTH: Okay. And I think I’m good with that portion.

58:48 MD: Um, so then there’s this feeling of, blah, laziness. Um, and you had in, or originally you had associated that with just getting done with the Zoom meeting. Is that, so is it a specifically post-Zoom blah, or is it just blah? or?

59:15 Agnes: I’d say it’s just blah. Like, I, like it’s not specific to post zoom in the sense that I think I could have this kind of blood in other contexts.

59:23 MD: Oh, sorry. Yeah. And so I guess what I’m [laughs] um, yeah, I didn’t think there was a, a specifically post-Zoom, [they laugh] But [laughs], um, I guess what I meant was is are, are you, so you’re aware of this feeling, that’s why you’re telling us about it. Were you aware of, were you thinking of in any way of its causal origin? Because you, you, when you described it, you, you described it as post-Zoom, blah, but was it

59:53 Agnes: No, the post zoom thing, I was just telling you for context, but um, I wasn’t thinking about its causal origin or anything. I wasn’t thinking about the feeling at all. It was just this feeling, this kind of low feeling of, [MD: Okay.] um, yeah, like this lazy, like I just was searching this thing, not because I had to, but because I was procrastinating like doing anything real [laughs] in that moment.

1:00:23 MD: And so that, that was gonna be my next question. Um, are you, do, do you feel like the, these two experiences, are there different experiences or different tracks of experience or whatever, are, but are they, are they connected in the sense that you’re, you’re... Lemme put it this way, are you seeing the words *lazily* [laughs]? Like, is that, is that, like, is laziness, is that in informing all of your experience or is that just a separate thing completely?

1:01:00 Agnes: Hmm. I’m not sure if I can answer that confidently, but that’s a good question. Like maybe? It’s possible. Yeah. Like it’s, it’s possible in this moment. I, I should also say, I guess that in this moment, um, I was also just tired. And so like when the beeper went off, I felt just like, *okay, the beeper went off. I don’t know, like blah* [laughs] [laughs]. So, so like I think that tiredness also impacted my ability to apprehend the experience, maybe. I don’t know, I don’t know if that’s true or not, but it just, um, I’m not sure if I can, I’m not sure if I know the answer to your question.

1:01:52 MD: Okay. I think that's it then for me.

1:01:54 RTH: So let me ask a related question. Back to the, back to the words. Were you reading these words at the, at the moment as in I'm *saying* these words to myself.

1:02:04 Agnes: No, I wasn't saying them to myself at the moment. But I was seeing them. I'm as words, the words that they are.

1:02:12 RTH: So there's no sequentializing of the words in the sense of reading starts at this syllable and goes to that. No, no, there's no nothing there. And, and I gather, I'm not seeing in my imagination anything about this. I'm not seeing a ski track in the mountains or skis leaned up against the lodge or skiers or whatever. I'm not seeing any of that stuff.

1:02:37 Agnes: No.

1:02:38 RTH: So I am seeing what my eyeballs are aimed at, but really not much more than that.

1:02:45 Agnes: Exactly.

1:02:46 RTH: And whether we call that lazily or not, or oof oof-ly or whatever, what, whatever that syllable was hard to know, but it's not, it's not *excitedly searching* or whatever.

1:03:00 Agnes: No, it's not. It's just kinda like, okay, blah. Like yeah,

1:03:08 RTH: Then I think I'm good.

1:03:10 MD: Yeah, me too.

Conversation after sampling: Where to go from here?

1:03:14 RTH: So that's the end of the day. And, and uh, we're at pretty close to an hour, so we gotta decide what we're gonna do. So, do we wanna sample again? So here, here are what the options are, from my point of view. We could, we could call this enough sampling and then we'd be and be done, period, with the whole pro, project. We could say, well, let's sample one, another time or two. Or we could do what I call a *green meeting*, which we didn't do for Michael. What might've been an interesting thing to do. But a but a green meeting is, from my point of view, is we go back through all the samples and, and bring them all back to mind, because we've been sampling with Agnes now for a month and, and we, we probably don't have as clear picture of their first day samples as, as we did then.

1:04:01 And the, and the reason that I do a, so the reason first off, the reason that I call it a green meeting is that when, when we go through those samples, I generally write a, a, a description that I call a *caption*, which is a few words that tries to capture. So about this, I would, I would say "seeing, seeing the words without, without doing much with them and feeling a lazily blah feeling." That would be what the caption would be like. And the reason that I, that I do captions is so that when I try to, so if I gonna write a description of Agnes's, Agnes's experience more or less,

like I wrote it for Michael's, but, uh, but I would, I would go back through those captions and that would, those would help me to, to remember what, what the stuff was. So we could do a green meeting and uh,

1:04:54 MD: I think it would be interesting to do a green meeting just to see what that's like. I'm not saying that has to be the next thing. I'm just saying I, I wouldn't, I would be in favor of planning on doing that at, at whatever point seems like the right point to do it. [RTH: Okay.] Now I, as I recall when you described it before, I may be misremembering though, but, um, there were some timing aspects to it. Like, y'know, within X number of time, X number of hours, you're supposed to do Y, or am I, if I got that wrong?

1:05:26 RTH: So in the or orthodox DES green meeting, we there, there's no, or there's no time specificity about when you do the green meeting other than sooner is better than later. Then, *then* there is a time thing is after the green meeting is over, then within 24 hours at that time, people, the participants in the green meeting are supposed to write, *this is what I took to be the salient, important features of Agnes's experience*, and do that independently. It's not entirely independent by any means because we've just all been through the same green meeting, but [MD: Right.] But, uh, but it, it, it is, I guess from my point of view, it's something like a responsibility exercise. You've gotta say, this is what I, this is what I take and I gotta say, this is what I take. And Agnes has to say, this is what I take.

1:06:19 And then we compare those things and see whether we, we heard the same thing. And if we didn't, well then we gotta figure out what to do about that. And that doesn't mean that we have to search for *consensus*, but it means that we have to take seriously *why it is* that Michael saw it one way and Russ saw it the other way or whatever. And then if we agree with about things, then we can write a description. And if we don't agree, then we might have to write several versions of a description. We might have to say, well, Russ saw it this way, Michael saw it that way. We couldn't reconcile these things. It's not the case that Russ is the expert and Michael isn't, or whatever. We ended up with two different versions.

1:06:57 MD: Like the Supreme Court.

1:06:59 RTH: Exactly. Very much like the Supreme Court. [MD: Okay.] Which is, which is quite different actually from much of psychology. But which most of the psychology I think has, you have to, you have to get to consensus. And then this is what it is that we found. And, and I don't I think that's unhealthy. I think it's, I think honest dissent is probably more healthy than, than, uh, contrived consensus. [MD: That seems right.] and without, without trying to apply it about the Supreme Court too, too strongly. [they laugh] But all these, all these things are, are human events. So the, from the Supreme Court on down, including DES. So it's, it is *people* doing the best that they can, whatever that means, and with, with whatever pressures that they've got on them, which they're either gonna admit or they're not gonna admit.

1:07:57 MD: Right.

1:08:00 RTH: But I do think, I do think the green meeting is, is often an interesting thing because the, the, even the slight places where people disagree is, is how you learn something. So if, if I, if I see that Michael saw it this way and I saw it that way for then, and, and then we have to try to figure out, well, how, how, why is that? Then that can help me discover a blind spot or whatever. And, uh, so I, I do think the degree meeting is a vital portion of the DES process.

1:08:33 MD: Well, if others are interested in doing that, I would be interested in going through it.

1:08:38 RTH: So I'm, I'm in fact I'm in favor of that.

1:08:40 Agnes: Yeah. Me too.

1:08:41 RTH: Okay. So then the question would be, do we wanna do another sampling day before or should we just go directly to the green meeting? And what I, what I would say about that is that my sense is that the samples that we saw today were pretty similar to the samples that we have seen from Agnes in the past. So we have, we, we didn't, we didn't see *today* something like, *well, I've never, never seen that before*. And that, and that kind of experience is what I think while we've reached the end of sampling that we've, we're reaching diminishing returns, y'know, you never know for sure. Maybe there's, y'know, it is the case that much of the sampling that we have seen has been Agnes while she's writing papers.

1:09:25 MD: You write a lot, Agnes!

1:09:27 Agnes: I know. Well, y'know, the sampling is biased too because it's always like in the morning. So it's like, this is, this is the thing that I do in the morning. And also, I mean, there are things that I don't wear the beeper that I do in the morning for, because like, it would be annoying, like doing like workouts. Like I don't, I don't want the, like the beeper would be get in my way, [laughs], so I don't wear it. So it's kind of like a biased, um, thing, the samples. But that's,

1:09:54 RTH: So one, one possibility would be to, to, to schedule one more meeting and do it in a different time and, and see whether that bias affects your experience. My *sense* is that people, people speak like Agnes just spoke. That's a pretty common way of, of people speaking. But, but it doesn't really matter when that they're, when it, when they actually sample and those other experiences, their experiences look pretty much the same. I would say that's the way it most of the time is. But that doesn't mean that it's all the time is, and it doesn't mean that it is for Agnes. And, uh,

1:10:28 Agnes: Well I have no strong view about that. I'm just, um, it is also easy to wear it in the morning [laughs] like when I like it, it is convenient to wear it while I'm doing these things rather than other kinds of things.

1:10:46 RTH: So I'm, I'm more or less easy, in this, in this regard. So the choices are, let's, I guess the choices are: let's go do, do, do one more meeting and it with a different and try to sample at a different time? *Or* go directly to the green meeting. Either one of those would be okay with me.

1:11:05 MD: So my, my gut reaction, I don't know why, well, I do know why actually. I just, but I don't know whether I should trust the *why* part, is to do one more sampling, cuz I felt like today, there three or four times today, either Russ or I asked a question that felt like, like ag Agnes wasn't able to answer it, which is totally fine of course, but it seemed like it may have planted a seed [laughs] for what might be reportable the next time around. I'd be curious to see if that actually happens. Um, I mean I think that could actually be informative if it, whether it does or doesn't happen.

1:11:53 RTH: And, and I would, I, I would also say that Michael said somewhere along the line that that one, some line of questioning was informative *for him*. And, and so he, he is getting presumably something out of these meetings as, as well. So we shouldn't conceptualize it as being, *just* finding out about Agnes. But, but Michael finding out about the process and Agnes finding out about the process and finding out about Agnes and Russ....

1:12:21 MD: But I don't, I don't mind being overruled. I, cuz I don't have a very, I that's not a very strong line of reasoning. I just gave you all. But, um, but

1:12:29 Agnes: I agree with that, what you just said, Michael.

1:12:31 MD: Well then what, maybe we should do

1:12:33 Agnes: Well, I, I mean, I'm up for doing it again. Um, one thing that I should say is that, um, like I'm around next week, but then I'm gonna be gone after that for like 'til the 25th of May.

1:12:49 MD: So maybe we should try to do both of these things next week.

1:12:54 RTH: Try, let's see, do a sampling meeting early in the early in next week.

1:12:59 MD: Do, do a sample meeting early and then the green meeting and

1:13:01 RTH: The green meeting later, later in, in the next week.