

TRANSCRIPT WITH COMMENTARY
Amber G.: A college senior
and
DES practice for a graduate student

Amber Interview 8

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the June 2 introductory interview with Amber that is available on YouTube <https://youtu.be/0aVEQtLQOXw>.

In green are comments about and explanations of the Descriptive Experience Sampling process.

This interview serves as practice for a DES graduate student, Cody Kaneshiro. A masterclass conversation can be found at <https://youtu.be/zGWJCwh5fmM>.

If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please post them as YouTube comments.

RTH = Russ Hurlburt

CK = Cody Kaneshiro

Amber = Amber G.

0:01 RTH: So this is going to be Amber's 8th, [Amber: 8th.] crack at this.

0:07 Amber: 8th.

0:13 RTH: And I think I am ready if everybody else is ready. Or do we have anything we should be saying about it?

0:19 Amber: I don't have anything.

0:20 CK: Uh me neither. I'm ready too.

0:21 RTH: Alright. Beep number 1.

SAMPLE 8.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

0:26 Amber: Okay. So beep number 1. I had just like finished a sighing [laughs] and I turned my face back toward a screen I was holding. And I caught the whiteness of the screen. And there were like words on it, like text, but I didn't see the text. I had just caught like the whiteness of the screen. And the sigh itself, it had just, the beep had gone off right as I finished it. So I would say like, sigh beep, if that makes sense. So, but anyway, that kind of presented itself as I was looking at the white screen, after I turned back, as kind of like a, like a release of tension in my shoulders, like it kind of almost like, uh, like relaxed my shoulders. That's kind of how I would describe that, how that presented itself.

- 1:18 RTH: And so, I understanding that I have, I have sighed. And in the sighing, my shoulders become relaxed. And at the end of that, something, the end of that sigh, the beep comes and maybe it's right at the end, or maybe it's some microsecond after the end, it's hard, sort of hard to tell. [Amber: Mm hmm.] And at the same time rising up in my experience, overtaking my experience at the moment of the beep is the whiteness of the screen?
- 1:45 Amber: Yeah it was like, um, it was like the beginning of looking at the screen and the end of the whole thing with the sigh, like that's how that's right where it went off.
- 1:55 RTH: Okay. And, and I'm seeing the whiteness of the screen, not the screen, not the whole screen, not the other characteristics of the screen, is that right?
- 2:05 Amber: Yeah, I would say that the whiteness though was like, obviously bordered, because it was only so whatever. But what I was noticing was kind of like the whiteness of it, like the screen, like the light almost was white. And I just, I wasn't really seeing the text quite yet, I was just seeing the white.
- 2:26 RTH: Okay.
- 2:26 Amber: Yeah.
- 2:31 RTH: And so, so I'm, is it fair to say that this, that these are sort of overlapping that the, the one is on the rise and the other is on the wane and the...?
- 2:42 Amber: Yeah, it was like one was just finishing like, like if I would describe it like a book, like it was like the last two pages of a book and then the other one was like the first two pages of a book. That's kinda weird.
- 2:51 RTH: Okay. And, and is one of them more salient to you, more present to your experience at the, at the, as best you can say at that moment of the beep?
- 3:03 Amber: Not really. It was kind of, it was kinda interesting, yeah, not really. Um, I wouldn't say that just cuz it was almost like, I don't know, it was, I don't know how to describe what was kinda happening, but it just felt like one was closing and one was starting. [RTH: Okay.] So it didn't feel like anything was more.
- 3:23 RTH: So is, so let's start with the sigh then. The, so the, the sigh I guess could mean some air exhaling out of my mouth or nose or something, and it could be that it, this is just a way of, of shrugging my shoulders, a physical kind of a thing, what it...?
- 3:46 Amber: Yeah. Um, well, as a fact of the universe, I did make like a noise kind of, kinda like, I don't know, it wasn't like a, huuuh. Like it was kind of more like aaah. I don't know how to describe that, but I did make a little bit of a noise, but that was well before. And then by the end, it was like the end. It had, that had stopped and then I could feel my shoulders relaxing cuz I'd done that. Yeah.

- 4:11 RTH: So at the moment of the beep this is a shoulder thing, not a, not a nasal, or oral or something thing, is that right?
- 4:19 Amber: Yeah. Cuz the sound was already finished. [RTH: Okay.] And then like the remnants of it, I would say are like the relaxing of the shoulders.
- 4:29 RTH: Okay. And anything more to say about the shoulders? Top of shoulders, bottom of shoulders? Just the shoulders in general?
- 4:37 Amber: Uh, the shoulders in general, almost like the muscles, like when you kind of like exhale your shoulders kinda go down, like that's kinda of how.
- 4:41 RTH: Slumping of the shoulders?
- 4:43 Amber: Yeah. But I, but I would almost call them like relaxing, cuz I feel like sometimes when I sit, well if you like sit straight, you hold your shoulders up. But then like they kind of like did that.
- 4:54 RTH: Alright.
- 4:55 Amber: Yeah.
- 4:57 RTH: So what I'm gathering here is that this is really sort of two physical-ish sensations. So two sensa, two sensations, not physical-ish, but two sensations, [Amber: Yes.] one the physical relaxing of my shoulders and the other is the whiteness of the screen?
- 5:13 Amber: Yes. Yes. And I would describe that maybe a little bit better would be, it was similar to, I think last time I had the one where I turned my head and I caught a few words. Um, it's almost like that, cuz I, I turned my head and I caught the whiteness of the screen. It's kind of like kind of what was going on there.
- 5:31 RTH: Mm hmm. And sooner or later you're gonna integrate the whiteness of the screen into being a screen with words on it and whatever. [Amber: Yes.] But not yet.
- 5:38 Amber: Not yet. No.
- 5:44 RTH: Then I think I'm good, Cody?
- 5:44 CK: Yup. I'm good as well for this beep.
- 5:47 RTH: Alright. Number 2.

SAMPLE 8.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 5:51 Amber: Okay, so beep 2, I was walking down, um, our hallway and the... Okay, this is a little bit of context, just so that what I say this is gonna make sense. So the way our hallway is there was like light at one end, but there was no light at the other end cuz it's a room and the lights are off. So I was like looking at the dark [gestures with hands], it was like a

dark room. And I was carrying a bunch of stuff. So I was starting, I was frustrated cuz I was carrying so much stuff. So at the moment of the beep I was looking at the dark room, like it was like black. I was just looking at that. And then I was feeling kind of like, I was feeling tense, I was feeling kinda frustrated cuz I was carrying so many things. Um, yeah. That's how I would describe that.

6:39 CK: Okay. And both of those, I take you to be saying there's the looking at the dark hallway, at the dark room stuff, and the frustration stuff?

6:51 Amber: Yeah. Yeah.

6:52 CK: Okay. And both of those like equal, either one of those more present?

6:58 Amber: Uh, definitely the feeling.

7:00 RTH: So can I, before we get too far down that road, [Amber: Yeah.] is, are you actually seeing the blackness? Or is it the case that your eyes are aimed in that direction and now when we have to describe it, we say it's a black room. The question is whether it's [Amber: I...no...] experience, whether it's?

7:16 Amber: Right. I was seeing it for sure. But I'm trying to think of a best way to describe that because it was almost like... Cuz it's, it's light fading out into... Cuz there's light behind me, but there isn't light in front of me. So of course there's light kind of, light kind of fading on the side. So I don't really know how to describe it. I don't know if I would describe it as the blackness, but I was looking into like darkness and that's what I was seeing. [RTH: And...] Cuz it was getting a little bit hard to see.

7:43 RTH: And by *seeing* you are intending to convey that you are *experiencing* that, not just that your eyes are focusing on the darkness or whatever?

7:51 Amber: Yeah. Yeah. Like just a little bit how it was a little bit, it's getting difficult to see. Yeah.

7:59 RTH: And that's, I'm gonna pound on this one more time. [Amber: Yeah.] I, I wanna make sure that that's an experiential thing, not just a fact of the, fact of Amber's visual processing that the light's changing, [inaudible]. The question is whether, whether you.... So the point that I'm asking here is [Amber: Yeah.] that your body makes all kinds of adjustments all the, all the time, [Amber: Right.] right now you adjusted the way you sit and whatever. [Amber: Right.] And those are outside of your awareness most of the time, like sometimes they're in your... So the question is, is this *seeing* what we're calling seeing, something that's taking place outside of your awareness or is that I'm [Amber: Oh.] so noticing this, seeing?

8:41 Amber: Right. It was there, but I would say really little. [RTH: Okay.] Like it was very, very little.

8:50 CK: Okay. So let's turn at least now to the, the frustration or, [Amber: Yeah.] what we're calling the frustration for now. And so [Amber: Mm hmm.] how exactly was that present to you?

9:02 Amber: Um, okay. So it was almost like I would describe it as like holding my breath. That's how I would describe it because yeah. I just felt kinda interrupted. It, it, I don't know, or.... No! I *was* interrupted, but I would almost describe that as like holding my breath, cuz I was trying to get to where, what and where I need, what, what and where I needed to go and all that stuff like that need, just was trying to get to that quickly.

9:32 CK: So this is sort of like a, this is a physical sensation?

9:36 Amber: Yeah.

9:39 CK: And...

9:41 Amber: But it's also in my mind.

9:43 CK: Okay.

9:44 Amber: Yeah. It's a little bit of both, I think. Cuz I was, I was physically walking. I wasn't like sitting and feeling it, right. I, I think most of the time when I'm describing feelings, I'm sitting. This time I was actually walking. I wasn't just still.

9:59 CK: This is an emotional experience with the bodily component [Amber: Yeah.] or physical component.

10:06 Amber: Yeah. Yeah. It was kinda weird, yeah.

10:09 CK: Okay. And...

10:10 RTH: I might have been distracted. I, I didn't, I didn't, hadn't heard the emotional portion. Did, did I miss, did I just space out for that?

10:18 CK: Well, I took, Amber, I took you by saying like, it's both like this, this holding-my-breath sort of thing as well as somehow this other [Amber: In my mind.] part of frustration, frustration as something that's in your mind too [Amber: Yes.] simultaneously.

10:35 Amber: Yes.

10:36 RTH: So I guess that's what, that's what got me a little bit confused. So are, is this a frustration thing or a hyper-careful [inaudible]?

10:44 Amber: A frustration thing.

10:48 RTH: Okay. That's the part that I missed. [CK: Yeah, got it.] So, so we do mean this as a, something of a mental, mental, emotional reaction to the [Amber: Yeah, yeah.] balancing of the stuff.

11:02 CK: Yeah.

11:02 Amber: Yeah, to what was going on too. Yeah.

11:05 RTH: Okay.

11:05 CK: So in terms of the, in terms of the, the, the bodily or physical stuff about this, right. You described it as holding my breath. Is that to say, this is like a, y'know, this is like my chest being tight? Or something else? Y'know, how is that holding-my-breath present?

11:05 Russ comments: CK's question ("how is that holding-my-breath present?") is risky in that Amber actually has *not* described herself as "holding my breath." She said (at 9:02) "*I would almost describe that as like holding my breath,*" which, because of the qualifiers that I italicize here, explicitly says that Amber was *not* experiencing herself as holding her breath. In fact, she said that *same* qualified sentence *twice* at 9:02, which suggests that she was carefully telling us that the saying of "holding my breath" was in some way informative but was *not* the direct experienced that CK's (11:05) question assumed.

It is possible that CK's (10:18) reference to "this holding-my-breath sort of thing," with its own (*sort of thing*) qualifier, will have adequately established that CK understands breath-holding as being an approximation. As is usual in DES, we can discover whether a question was a good one by observing the response to it.

11:21 Amber: Yeah. Um, it was almost like an interruption. Um, I would almost describe it as like when somebody startles you and it kind of, you kinda stop for a second, but it didn't feel like, and you stopped for a second. It felt like I stopped for like a few, like maybe a minute or two, because I was just, I don't know how to describe that better. Like it just felt like a *stop*.

11:21 Russ comments: Amber was *not* thrown off by CK's question—she ignores entirely the breath-holding aspect. So the question was a good one. That's good news for the interviewer—you don't have to ask perfect questions—and good news for Amber as a participant—she is not trapped by the words; she is apparently aiming at the phenomenon.

11:48 RTH: Suspended animation?

11:50 Amber: [laughs] um. Yeah, I don't know. I'm trying to think of the best way to describe this. Cuz I wouldn't say it felt like, like, um, like if I was like swimming and holding my breath, or if something smelled bad and I was holding my breath. It almost felt like, uh, I don't know, like, like a quick, I don't wanna call it a gasp cuz they didn't feel like a gasp, but like kinda like when you gasp really quickly and you don't breathe for a second. That's kinda how I would describe that. But not obviously for a second, it was for like a little bit longer than that.

12:25 CK: So it's not so much an, holding a breath in, but sort of like you said, you called it an interruption, right. But like almost like, I guess you're like a, I'm thinking of maybe like when you're, if you're holding a bunch of stuff, maybe it's like a, you're, not straining, exactly, but. [Amber: Yeah.] Trying to kind of tensing you're, a tensing? I don't know if that.

12:46 Amber: Yeah. That's I think that's closer to, [laughs] the best way to describe that in words. Yeah.

12:53 CK: And when you say interruption, it's not like that's a, the beep caught me, caught that. And so when I look back, it's an interruption. I, I took you to be saying, this is like at the moment, there's something about like my breath being interrupted or uh.

12:53 Russ comments: CK again asks about breathing...

13:05 Amber: Yeah. About feeling interrupted. Like that's I was frustrated because, and then the, it presented itself almost as if like when you were normally functioning as if that was interrupted. Like normally breathing and normally relaxed [CK: Right.] and normally in your state of being that felt like that was interrupted.

13:05 Russ comments: ...but Amber responds about something other than breathing. As a general DES rule, if you ask about X and the reply is about Y, then it's likely that X was not experienced.

13:31 CK: So I'm, I'm, I wanna make sure I get this right or, [Amber: Yeah.] cuz I don't think I quite got it yet. Is this about my breathing?

13:31 Russ comments: This is an excellent question because it illustrates that CK has been paying attention to the flow of the conversation and is willing to put his own understanding on the line, without in the slightest blaming Amber for his own potential misunderstanding.

13:41 Amber: Maybe not, no, not really. I think I just described it like that. I'm trying to think of the best way to describe that, that's why. Cuz it almost felt like a stopping, but not necessarily a stopping of my *breathing*, but.

13:56 RTH: A stopping of anything bodily that might tilt this precarious stack of stuff that you're carrying, is that?

14:04 Amber: Yeah. Maybe not the stuff per se, but like kind of stop my, uh, what is like the word, like my equilibrium, not my equilibrium. I don't wanna call it like my balance, but like my, my internal balance of the self (it sounds very spiritual), but like something like that, or my homeostasis or something like that.

14:25 RTH: I put my, I put my existence on hold for a minute so that I don't spill these books, which spill these, spill this stuff.

14:25 Russ comments: Here, RTH is overemphasizing the stack-of-stuff-ness of Amber's experience (more or less similar to CK's overemphasis on the breathing). Amber's response indicates that it is not really about the stack-of-stuff.

14:32 Amber: Yeah. And that I get to where I'm going to do what I have to do.

14:37 RTH: Okay. And now I'm, I'm, I'm still a little bit confused about the, about the frustration portion. So [Amber: Okay.] putting myself on hold doesn't seem like frustration to me, but maybe I just haven't grasped it yet.

14:55 Amber: Yeah.

14:56 RTH: And, and, and I wanna make sure that we're not talking about inner reaction to the beep, but. [Amber: Yes, yes.] So once the, once the beep begins, we're done. We don't care about whatever. Whatever "Oh pshaw! I've, I've been interrupted by the beep!" that doesn't matter. [Amber: Right.] So, so is there a, a feeling of frustration that is part of this experience be, before [Amber: Yes.] before the beep?

15:25 Amber: Yeah, it's a feeling that I would describe as frustration. Cuz feelings are hard to describe.

15:34 RTH: And is the frustration, the same thing as what we're talking this stopped-ness of my existence? And is that another way of saying frustration?

15:44 Amber: Yeah. That's how I would say that situation presented itself, um, to me. Because instead of saying like, I feel frustration, I recognize that I feel frustration. It's more like, I feel frustration and that's kinda how it presented itself to me at that moment. I'm sure it could be described as other things to other people, but like at that moment, that's kind of how it, that feeling was presenting itself to me.

16:09 RTH: Okay.

16:16 CK: I'm sorry. I, I, I think I, I was distracted when that came up. I, I wanted to... Amber, when you said how that presented, are you talking about, is this entirely like that stopping, that interruption, like that's what that's, when you say "frustration," that's what it's all about? Or is there both sort of like a stopping of my existence or homeostasis as well as some sort of additional simultaneous way that the, somehow I'm frustrated?

16:45 Amber: Oh, okay. No, it was more like that whole situation, that physicalness and all that stopping and whatever, that's how, what I would describe as frustration [CK: Okay.] presented itself to me at that moment. Because, yeah... [shrugs].

16:45 Russ comments: We have worked pretty hard to figure out what Amber means by "frustration." That effort is the heart of DES. Amber uses the word "frustration" to describe something like an interruption of her state of being. That is not how some (probably most) others use the same word. DES accepts that sometimes (or often) people use words to describe inner experience in idiosyncratic ways, and therefore it accepts that we have to spend considerable time and effort to discover what words mean.

17:07 CK: Okay. Dr. Hurlburt, do you have any more questions about that?

17:12 RTH: Nope. I'm good.

17:13 CK: Okay. And so the *seeing*, when you said this was like a, a much smaller portion, [Amber: Mm hmm.] again, in terms of ballpark, is that like, you know, 1-99 or?

17:23 Amber: Maybe like 90-10, 95-5. [CK: Okay.] It was super low down the line.

17:31 CK: And so could you tell me again what exactly you're seeing?

17:35 Amber: Um, it was like darkness, but it was like, I don't know how to describe that any better. Cuz like a fact of universe is that the light behind me, y'know, it's starting to get dim, but I don't like what I was seeing was just kind of dark. That's how I would describe that, but it wasn't anything like, it wasn't like a color. It wasn't like, um, anything really specific about the dark except that it was dark.

18:01 CK: And I'm seeing dark as opposed to I'm seeing a dark room?

18:05 Amber: Yeah. cuz it was like. [gestures]

18:09 CK: And dark as opposed to like [pause] a waning amount of light? Again in might not be that.

18:20 Amber: Yeah. I see what you're saying. Yeah, like I would say that the dark was like central, like this [gestures to the center of her visual field] and then it kind of like in my vision it was kind of like getting a little bit lighter as it went outwards, but obviously it stopped at some point, but like it's kind of like what it was, yeah.

18:39 CK: So at the moment of the beep I'm, I'm looking at sort of a, yeah (I'm trying to think of the words too) like almost like a growing darkness or something, there's a mi, there's a spot in the middle where it's more dark than the rest of it and it kinda gets less dark around the...

18:53 Amber: ...As you go outwards, yes...

18:54 CK: ...perimeter of it.

18:55 Amber: Yes.

19:01 CK: Anything, any questions you wanna ask, Dr. Hurlburt?

19:03 RTH: Nope, I'm good.

19:06 CK: Anything else about that beep, Amber?

19:09 Amber: Nope, that was the, yeah.

19:12 RTH: Okay.

19:14 CK: Alright.

19:16 RTH: Number 3.

SAMPLE 8.3 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

19:17 Amber: Okay. So number 3, I was watching *This Is Us*, and, um, I was seeing the screen, but it wasn't like, um, it wasn't like super, I would say it wasn't super clear or super strong in my experience because my attention was getting diverted by others in my environment. And um, I was watching like a grown, this is a character, a grown character, a male. And he was like standing and he was facing towards like my left and then behind him it was like night. So it was kind of dark behind him, but that's kind of, it was more what I was seeing on TV. Um, that's pretty much it for that one. But yeah, this is just my notes are a brief, a very detailed description of what the scene was rather than. Yeah.

20:11 RTH: Okay. And, and at the same time you're being distracted by or diverted by what's going on in your environment?

20:19 Amber: Yeah.

20:20 RTH: And is that part of your experience?

20:23 Amber: No, but I, but that's what made the seeing of the TV kind of like, I would, I don't wanna say indiscriminate, but like, um, not as clear as it has been in the past, like it was kinda like not a clear seeing of anything.

20:40 RTH: And is that, are you sort of speculating about the cause here so that the, [Amber: I, I...] in your, in your experience is, uh, not as crystallly clear TV screen as I've sometimes seen. And I, I also know about myself or my situation that there's some diversion coming up, but that's not in my experience right now, but it probably is enough to weaken my clarity. Is that, is that the translation here?

21:09 Amber: Yeah, that sounds, yeah. That's yeah. That's the best way to say that.

21:13 RTH: So as far as your experience is concerned, it's all TV? [Amber: Mm hmm.] There's these other things in your environment that are going on, but not yet made it through the weeds of your edge of your experience?

21:28 Amber: Yes. And it was kind of odd, like, um, this isn't really part of the whole thing, but it was kind of odd because I almost felt like I would call, I wouldn't call this experience. Um, if you say seeing the TV, I wouldn't even call that a hundred percent, like I would call it like 80%. But the other 20% out, or maybe not even that low, maybe like 85, 90%, but I don't know what the rest is because I, I think it was just maybe my focus or my, I was being a little bit distracted, but it's kind of weird like that.

21:56 RTH: So the, so in, in my experience is the waning clarity and maybe sort of the waning, experiential quantity, whatever that is 80, the 80 percentish. But, but what's competing for that 80% hasn't yet?

22:12 Amber: Yeah, it's not there. It's just like a lack of attention, almost, to what's happening.

22:21 RTH: Okay. And so let's talk about that, what, what do you mean by lack of clarity or lack of attention or lack of whatever?

22:33 Amber: Yeah. Like...

22:34 RTH: Or maybe I shouldn't even start with that. So, so what are, what are you seeing?

22:38 Amber: Oh, I, I'm seeing, so, in *This Is Us* the time jumps a lot. So it's, it's the adult version of a character, his name is Kevin, and he's like, um, he's standing on a, it's close up on him, so it's like kinda like how we see each other now, like almost like kinda like the chest up, The midsection up. And, um, he's like looking toward the left cuz he was standing on like a open field. So in his perspective, it's like, like from here it's like kind of dark and, but it's mainly focused on him and he was just kind of like standing like to the left like that, [RTH: And...] but you could see space still.

23:12 RTH: And, and I take it that you're describing what's happening on the screen and you're seeing, [Amber: Yeah.] and you're seeing this? [Amber: Yes.] And you're not zooming in on any particular aspect of it. I'm not particularly interested in the darkness around him and I'm not particularly interested in the adult of him and I'm not particularly interested in the profile-ness of him? [Amber: No.] This is what the screen has presented for me and I'm seeing it?

23:30 Amber: Yeah.

23:30 RTH: And, but I'm, I'm, I'm also somehow not seeing it as clearly as I might otherwise see it?

23:44 Amber: Yeah.

23:45 RTH: And is, is that *lack of clarity* present to me or is that when I start to write this down, I can see, well, I'm not quite as clear or?

23:55 Amber: No, it was a little bit, it was not that clear cuz like when the beep went off, I was kind of, I, well, I guess that's speculation after, but what af, when I had, when right before the beep it wasn't that, that whole situation. It's because I had seen that before I knew what was going on. I didn't feel like I was really absorbing anything that was happening. Um, because of my diverted attention, I was kinda just watching it at that point. And I was, I was noticing all of those things, but I wasn't necessarily taking in what, what the context of the situation was at that moment.

24:32 RTH: So what I still don't, quite haven't grasped yet is: at the moment of the beep, does Amber recognize that Amber's attention is drifting? Or is it that at the moment of the beep (right before the beep goes on) Amber's attention has drifted, and then when she responds to the beep, she can say, well Amber's attention wasn't quite fully there she was?

24:58 Amber: Hmm. Yeah, it was the, it was the first one. I was kind of feeling distract, I don't wanna say I was feeling distracted cuz that's not part of my experience. But it was almost like I,

I was distracted like, um, like almost I, I would describe it almost like in class when you're trying to like when you're doing stuff and you get a little bit, your attention gets slightly diverted. And you're aware of what's going on, you can see what you're doing, you're writing whatever, but you're absorbing is not fully there, you're absorbing of information or of whatever's presenting itself to you. That's how I would describe that, but that's probably not the best way to describe that, but that's how I...

25:38 RTH: And, and you recognize that this is happening and that recognition is part of your, at the moment of the beep experience. Is that right?

25:46 Amber: Yeah. Like I felt unfocused or I felt not unfocused, but I almost felt like my focus was not a hundred percent. I keep saying the word focus, but I felt like it wasn't a hundred percent.

26:05 RTH: So I, I think I know the answer to this question, but I'm gonna ask it one more time. [Amber: Okay.] I've asked this five or six times, [Amber: Yeah.] I'm gonna ask the seventh or eighth. [Amber: Okay.] The, this awareness of Amber having lost her focus is itself present in Amber's experience before the beep occurs. Is that true?

26:26 Amber: Yes.

26:28 RTH: Okay. That's what I understood. That's the kinda thing that we would call meta-awareness that Amber has some meta-awareness of her lack of attention. And that meta-awareness is part of her direct experience. [Amber: Mm hmm.] Even though what is diverting her attention hasn't yet made its way into her experience.

26:51 Amber: That's cool. I never, that's. Yeah, that one, these beeps are kind of interesting cuz they were very different than what I feel like I normally am talking about.

27:01 RTH: So let me, let me ex, describe exactly what I've got here. *Most* of my experience is on the TV--I'm watching being carried along by the action of the TV. And that's not entirely visual, it's not entirely auditory, I'm, I'm pick, taking in the TV, I'm watching TV? [Amber: Mm hmm.] But at the same time, I am recognizing (in a meta-awareness sense) that I'm not fully engaged anymore. I'm, and so the clarity of my sensory picking in of the TV is not fully elaborated?

27:40 Amber: Yeah.

27:41 RTH: And *later* I can say, well there's stuff going on in the room and that's what has distracted me, [Amber: Yes.] but so far, I don't know that?

27:50 Amber: Yeah, yeah. That the, the distraction was more context and then the, than the, yeah.

27:58 RTH: Then I think I'm good.

28:01 CK: I had a question about the, when you said, Amber, that, y'know, when you're seeing what's happening on the screen, you're watching TV. Is what you're s, is the thing that you're seeing, is what's going on on the screen? Like, is, are you, when you say that

wasn't clear, is that like, I'm seeing the, a blurry TV, like in some of the past beeps where like you were seeing something and it was blurry? Or is it less kind of, is it just, just I'm or something else?

28:29 Amber: Um, yeah, it, it was, yeah, it was, I would say like a tad blurry like that, like a tad. Um, but it was, it was clear enough that it, that, that the details of like what I was seeing were clear, like it wasn't like just a mush of colors or anything like that, like details were clear, but it wasn't like super, super clear. Like how I would say like a nice picture would look or how, uh, uh, like a focused, y'know, image or something. It was just like a little like that.

29:05 CK: And that has to do with my actual visual experience, right. It's not so much that just as part of, as part of this beep, which we know we talked about already is that, that there's this meta-awareness that I'm sort of not focused, right. It's, [Amber: Mm hmm.] I take you to be saying, this is more than just, it's not just that I'm not focused and well, I'm, y'know, part of that means that I'm not seeing, but that actually like.

29:22 Amber: Yes. Yeah.

29:23 CK: I'm seeing TV and that's, it's just not.

29:26 Amber: It's not happening, yeah. It's [CK: Not...okay.] It's not happening right now, yeah.

29:32 CK: And then I'm, I'm good for this beep.

29:35 RTH: Number 4.

SAMPLE 8.4 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

29:36 Amber: Okay. So number 4, I was still watching the same show, *This Is Us*, and I was wa, and it was seeing, um, now, uh, of a female, Kate and she was kind of also turned to the left, it was kinda interesting. And her, um, her dress was the same or a similar color to the room she was standing in. And, um, they, they, well, yeah, I wasn't necessarily, and, and at the moment, the beep that's kind of what I was seeing, like how she matched the room. But I wasn't, I wouldn't say I was particularly drawn to the blueness or anything that specific. I would just say that when I saw it, I was like, she, she, *she* matches the room. Not, and I wasn't saying that it was just kinda like a, a thinking like, oh, like *she matches the room right now* kinda thing.

30:34 CK: And is that, I know you had just said that, but I'm not, [Amber: Yeah.] I don't think I got it. How, how is that present to you? How, how is this present to you?

30:43 Amber: Like, it was like mostly seeing again, but it was like a small sliver of, it was kind of like this, no, noticing that the, the set or the room that they had obviously designed for this scene was the same color as the out, or similar color, a matching color, to the outfit she was wearing. Something like that.

31:09 CK: Okay. So I'm both—and by seeing, is that sort of similar to the last beep where y'know, I'm just, I'm, I'm watching what's happening on the screen like you described the scene and I'm, I'm just watching that? [Amber: Yeah.] Is that? Okay.

31:24 Amber: Yup.

31:25 CK: But what I'm seeing, right, invol, or... But sort of additional to that, what I'm taking it to be seeing Amber, is that there's some sort of noticing or recognition...?

31:36 Amber: Of the colors of the scene. Like, um, those were, yeah, like that stood out to me, just maybe just slightly, a little bit more, like, I don't know how to describe that, but I wouldn't say I was drawn to the blueness *per se*, but it was more that it *matched*, and she just hap, it happened to be the color that was matching was blue.

32:00 CK: And is that *noticing* like a, is that a visual thing? Just another aspect of I'm, I'm seeing this is, or something else? I guess my main question is that noticing or that rec, how is that present to you?

32:13 Amber: Yeah. Um, definitely seeing and, um, but I would say it's just a very little, little, like, thinking. Like a thinking about it kind of thing like, *oh, that matches*, but it was, it, I wouldn't say it was a whole process and that took over anything. It was just kinda like a thinking about it very s, little bit.

32:35 CK: So it isn't totally seeing, right. That this is mostly a seeing thing, but that there, [Amber: Yeah.] it's not totally vi, this is not totally seeing it's not totally just [Amber: Right.] that.

32:44 Amber: Yes, yeah.

32:45 RTH: So can I, can I drag my feet a little bit about that? So I think it would be possible to see blue here and see blue here [gestures two different places]. And as part of that, seeing, part of those seeings have some, this is the same blue as that as part of my visual processing, make it sort of purely visual [Amber: Mm hmm.] this blue, that blue? *Or* I could be seeing of this blue or that blue *and* have some analytical, *this is the same blue*. So the, so I, I want us to leave space for the possibility that this is entirely seen. I'm not trying to say it is the seeing. [Amber: Right.] I don't, but it, I don't want us to naturally say, well, you know, they're, they're the same *it must be* that I have some cognitive comparison going on that, don't want us to do that.

33:42 Amber: Right. No, that first point that you made, made sounded more correct. Like, yeah, I was seeing the similar colors and they kind of, [RTH: In my blue...] or in my opinion, they were similar colors, yeah.

33:54 RTH: My blue registrations, my, my blue visualization is somehow noticing that it's the same blue over there as it is over here?

34:04 Amber: Yeah, or like a similar color, yeah. Like it kinda something about it was very cohesive, yeah.

34:09 RTH: Okay.

34:16 CK: And is there anything else going on at the moment of the beep, Amber?

34:20 Amber: No.

34:24 CK: Then I, then I think I'm good.

34:28 RTH: I'm good too. Number 5.

SAMPLE 8.5 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

34:32 Amber: Okay. Um, okay, so number 5, I was looking at a computer and, um, at the moment of the beep, I was looking at like a group of files and they were all highlighted. And they were highlighted as kind of like dark blue, like a, like a, I dunno, like a normal blue crayon kind of blue, like almost like the blue of like Facebook or something. And, um, I could physically also feel my face, like scrunching kinda like, kinda like how I'm doing it right now. Like scrunching, I wasn't really squinting, I was kind of scrunching, like I was thinking. No idea what I was thinking about that wasn't there, all that stuff like that, but I was scrunching my face, I could feel it, um, in my like eyebrows. Um, but, and I was paying attention to kind of like the blue highlights like they were, it was like blue, blue, blue, blue, blue, blue [gestures in sync]. And there were like these little like gaps in between them cuz that's what was I was seeing. And um, but I wasn't paying attention to what the files were labeled or the name of anything or what even I was what even was highlighted. It was just blue, blue, blue, blue, blue, and then like the scrunching of my like eyebrows and my face.

35:43 RTH: And is the blue, blue, blue more or less prominent or equal to the scrunchingness?

35:49 Amber: I would say a little bit more.

35:51 RTH: Okay. And is the blue blue, blue, blue, blue, does that seem like one experience I'm seeing blue bars? Or does it seem like I'm going from one to one to one to one to one?

35:59 Amber: I'm seeing blue bars, like a, like a cluster of them or a group or a?

36:04 RTH: So this is a visi, I see the blueness of the several bars?

36:11 Amber: Yes. Or, well, yeah, I'm yeah. I'm seeing the bars and they're blue. Like I don't, I don't know if that's a better way to put it. [RTH: Alright.] Cuz I wouldn't say, I wouldn't say I was drawn to the blueness. It, it was just that, that's just how they looked and they were blue and I was, I was experiencing that they were blue.

36:27 RTH: So I'm drawn to this visual display [Amber: Mm hmm.] which happens to be blue and happens to be bars, [Amber: Yeah.] but I'm not particularly interested in the blue and not particularly interested in the bars, but I am drawn to the blue-bar display?

36:44 Amber: Yes. Yes.

36:46 RTH: Okay. And then I also feel my eyebrows crunching?

36:55 Amber: Yeah.

36:55 RTH: I feel my face scrunching, mostly in my eyebrow?

36:58 Amber: Yes.

37:00 RTH: And is there anything more to say about that?

37:03 Amber: Not really, no.

37:06 RTH: So this is a physical sensation?

37:08 Amber: Yes.

37:10 RTH: And I would *say* that it's, goes along with thinking, this is what I do when I think, but that's, [Amber: Yeah.] but my thinking is w, isn't present to me?

37:21 Amber: Nope. [RTH: I've...] Not at this moment, no.

37:24 RTH: So I've got two sensory displays going on here. One visual bar, blue bar, blue bar, blue bar, [Amber: Mm hmm.] and the other physical forehead-y, eyebrow-y, scrunchy?

37:38 Amber: Yeah. Yeah.

37:41 RTH: And, and the rest, the, the rest of this stuff is more or less context that these are files, they have names, [Amber: Yeah.] I'm on a computer, I'm doing this project, whatever, [Amber: Yeah.] all that stuff is a correct fact of the universe, [Amber: Yes.] but not present in my experience at the moment?

37:57 Amber: Nope. Yeah. Yeah. I was just, yeah, I just wanted to point out that I, yeah, I couldn't, I didn't see the names or anything like that as part of my experience. It was just lines, it was kind of.

38:08 RTH: And when you say I didn't see the names, do you mean that literally? That I see bars and there are no names in my experience, even though I know there are names in the bars? *Or* do you mean, well, there were probably names there but I wasn't really paying attention to it I was interested in the blue aspect of?

38:25 Amber: No, in my experience, yeah there were like no names. I was just seeing the bars as blue.

38:31 RTH: So your, so your visual experience has *eliminated* the bars?

38:37 Amber: The names, yeah.

38:38 RTH: The yes, I'm sorry, the names. So it's not just that I'm not particularly interested in, so I'm not paying attention to that. It's that my visual processor has erased the verbal stuff and left me only the bars [Amber: Yeah.] left me only the bars to see?

38:53 Amber: Yeah. It erased, like the texts that were within them, yeah, that weren't, they weren't.

39:04 RTH: Okay. Then I think I'm good.

39:10 CK: Yup, I'm good as well. Alright, beep 6.

SAMPLE 8.6 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

39:15 Amber: Okay. So beep 6. I was, um, I was trying to get sour cream to put on a baked potato and, um, I was eating this baked potato. So I was so at the moment of the beep, I was like eating it, so I was tasting it. And, but I was also seeing (this a lot of seeing), but I was seeing like, so the way the container was, it had like whipped butter and it had sour cream on, like, it was like a small little dressing container and it had whipped butter in it as well as sour cream on the other side. So I was like using so, okay at the moment of the, I was seeing my fork, like the edge of the fork with the tines, lifting the butter up to get to sour cream underneath it. As well as tasting it, that, but the tasting was very little.

40:04 CK: Okay. [Amber: Yeah.] This is mostly the, this is mostly not the tasting? [Amber: Yeah.] It was present, but that's not the center of it at least right now?

40:12 Amber: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

40:14 CK: And when you say you're, this is like a seeing of the fork that, this is the I'm, the seeing of an action that you're doing?

40:23 Amber: Yeah.

40:23 CK: Right? Okay. [Amber: Yeah.] But this is a visual experience, right. This is a...?

40:29 Amber: Yes. Yes. And in like my experiential processing field, I have very much zeroed on this whole situation happening here. Like rather than everything else in the background, I very much zeroed on this, on the edge of my fork and the, the butter like this, and then like lifting it up kind of thing.

40:48 CK: And is that zeroing in like, is that just, I'm only seeing the, that, is that just to say, I'm, I'm just seeing this or is there like, you know, a I'm fo, y'know, I'm *intentionally* focusing or something?

41:02 Amber: I'm only seeing that, and it's like extremely close to me. Like it's extremely close, that's how I'm seeing it. Like it's right in front of me. And I'm sure it was right in front of me, I dunno, but in my experience, that's what, it was.

41:16 CK: A, almost like a zoomed in?

41:19 Amber: Yeah.

41:20 CK: Seeing of the, and zoomed is that literal? Like, I'm like, even though obviously like, I mean, you're doing this, right. But does it feel like this is like, y'know, experiential, [Amber: Yeah.] I'm seeing this as if it's like close up closer than what's actually happening in real life?

41:33 Amber: Yeah. I'm I, I truthfully am not even sure if it was, who knows if it was that close or not, cuz in my experience it was super close.

41:43 CK: I'm seeing a super close [Amber: Like a...] lifting, I mean, I'm seeing the fork lifting the butter?

41:50 Amber: Yeah. In this little container. [laughs]

41:55 RTH: And, and is this a visual experience? You're, you're *doing* it, your hands are doing it, but you're not experiencing that doing it? [Amber: No.] It might as well be, might as well be me doing it?

42:06 Amber: Yeah! And yeah, I wasn't even seeing my hands actually. I was just seeing the fork.

42:12 RTH: And, and not experiencing yourself as doing it? [Amber: No.] This is, this is a *I'm seeing it happen*, not a *I'm doing it and seeing it happen*?

42:20 Amber: Yes.

42:21 RTH: Okay.

42:21 CK: Yes, okay.

42:24 CK: And just to clarify, Amber, I know you said this before, but what, what exactly are you seeing? The, the fork, the butter?

42:31 Amber: The edge of the fork, like the, the part with all the, the tines on it. And then the, um, it's like it's underneath like whipped butter. It's like butter that almost looks like ice cream. So I don't know if that's whipped butter, but [laughs] it's butter that looks like ice cream. So it's like lifting it up, so it's like, the fork is underneath it already. The butter is up and I can see the sour cream underneath it as well. Like as part of the whole picture, like I, it's there.

43:08 CK: And do I see the container too?

43:12 Amber: Um, I, yeah, like on the outskirts, like this little, the black, the container was like a circle, so it was a, yeah, it was on the outskirts,

43:18 CK: But this is mostly just the fork supporting the butter with the sour, with the mound of sour cream underneath?

43:24 Amber: Yeah. Yeah. Like if I had to paint a picture yeah. It would be mostly that, but then that would be on the outskirts of the whole painting or whatever.

43:34 CK: Okay. And is this seeing, is there anything more to be, to say about the seeing it's in motion? Still?

43:42 Amber: It's still.

43:49 CK: Okay.

43:51 RTH: So I, I understand you to be saying about the close-up-ness that this is sort of exaggeratedly close up. *Maybe* it was really that close up, I don't know. But man, the, but the close upness was the thing about this. Is, is that right?

44:06 Amber: Yeah. It, it, it did. Yeah, it presented itself as extremely close.

44:11 RTH: Okay. And in *my* head that is more or less similar to the blue bars of the previous beep in the sense that you've erased the text out of the blue bars, [Amber: Mm hmm.] even though your eyes are seeing it, your experience isn't. And here you have closed up zoomed in on this thing, which is probably not the way it is in the real life, but as far as your *experience* is concerned that, so do those seem, seem the same to you or?

44:44 Amber: I wouldn't say that they're same cuz in this one, I just obliterated almost like the background, like everything around it, rather than the blue bars, I obliterated something as part of it, like the details of the butter and stuff were there. Like the details of the thing were there, but the back, everything else around it, like if it's like this, everything from, is gone! But, um, in terms of the blue bars, that one I feel like I was omitting a detail of the, like if I just paint a picture of it, I'd be omitting a detail of the painting rather than omitting the background or whatever's surrounded, the surrounding area.

45:22 RTH: So, so what I wanna know is similar side. So you asked the answer to the question, which is not the question that I wanted to ask. [Amber: [laughs] Oh, okay.] So lemme try again.

45:31 Amber: Okay.

45:33 RTH: It, it seems to me, I'm wondering whether this is *true*, but I'm, I'm wondering that the, that you're bringing this thing closer than it deserves to be, is in some ways similar to your taking out the letters that deserve to be there.

45:51 Amber: Oh!! Yes!

45:53 RTH: That this is, this is Amber sort of creatively distorting her visual experience for her own ends, whatever it is. I mean, she's, she's interested in the, the details of whatever it is she's seeing, so she's bringing it right here or she's, she's not interested in the words, so she's just erased them.

45:53 Russ comments: Today Amber has two examples of what DES calls *creative seeing*. Creative seeing has two aspects: it must (a) be experienced as a real seeing (not the seeing of an image or seeing in imagination); and it must (b) be different from (one might say a distortion of) reality. So in 8.5, Amber was seeing blue bars. She sees the bars on the screen, not in her imagination, so (a) is satisfied. The bars on the screen have writing on them, but Amber sees plain bars. This is not merely failing to attend to what the bars say, not merely focusing on some other aspect while the writing fades to the background. She *does not see* the writing, so (b) is satisfied.

46:13 Amber: Yes! Yes!

46:19 RTH: Okay. Then I think I'm good.

46:20 CK: Yeah. And then on the tasting, Amber, is there anything more to say about that?

46:25 Amber: No, uh, I mean, I, I was perceiving myself as tasting it [laughs] but yeah, that's pretty much it. And it was like, again, another really low, less than 20% kinda thing. [CK: Okay.] It was it's super low, yeah.

46:40 CK: Okay. And tasting as opposed to say like, you know, feeling the potato in my mouth or...?

46:45 Amber: No, it was tasting.

46:47 CK: ...pretty much tasting. Okay. Then I think I'm good.

46:52 RTH: Me too. So we've been talking about when, when we should be done with this and I'm thinking we should do it one more time.

47:00 Amber: Okay.

47:01 RTH: You in favor of that, you...?

47:03 Amber: Yes!

47:04 RTH: Okay.