

Gualtiero 5
Gualtiero Sampling Interview 5

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the June 9 sampling interview 5 with Gualtiero that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/2jYyUnbwaAA>. In green are Russ's comments, and in blue are Gualtiero's comments about and explanations of the Descriptive Experience Sampling process inserted after the interview. If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please post them as YouTube comments.

RTH = Russ Hurlburt

GP = Gualtiero Piccinini

LG= Lauren Graf

- 0:01 RTH: So other than that, anything that we should be talking about before we talk about Gualtiero's beeps?
- 0:11 GP: Um, there's one comment that I wanna elaborate on that I've sort of made before. Um, and y'know, as I gain more experience, I'm more and more convinced that, um, when, when, when the beeper beeps, um, since I have this task of describing the content of my experience, um, it seems to me that there is a natural reasonable attention shift as soon as I hear the beep, um, to the effect of figuring out what was I experiencing right before the beep. And that, um, um, enhances some signals that get selected, y'know, some, some, uh, some aspect of what was in my, my experience gets sort of highlighted or enhanced or, um, focused on more, um, at the expense of other things because, um, because there's only so many things I can describe or can I can say that, uh, in my experience. So, um, so this is not a criticism or anything like that; it's just what, what seems to be a, a, a, an aspect of this process, of this method that since I have to describe what's there, I have to select something to describe.
- 2:08 And since I have to select something to describe, I have to focus on something. But there, there is a kind a shift from a more free-flowing mental life in which a lot is happening. Some things are probably a little more, y'know, at the center of my attention. Some things are more like at the periphery of my attention. But there's still like a lot happening and there might be like degrees, right? So, uh, certainly when I look at something, I'm often more focused on the center of the visual field. Uh, but other things are still, y'know, present to a degree. And, uh, same with hearing, there's certain things that I'm listening to maybe if I'm listening to something and, and then other noises in the background that are kinda there and I'm maybe aware of them to some degree.
- 3:05 Same with proprioception. There's parts of my body if I'm focusing on that or if I'm paying attention to that for whatever reason, there might be part of, y'know, part of the body, part of the environment that I can sense more in a little more intensely. But there's a lot of other things that are still there at the same time. Um, and then when I, when I hear the beep, I have to sort of select, and so, y'know, certain things I end up focusing on and saying, okay, yeah, that was more salient or more at the center of my attention. And I ended up talking about *that*. And then everything else

just, okay, we're just gonna ignore *that*. Uh, not because it wasn't in my experience *at all*, but because maybe it was sort of more faded or more in the background, if that makes sense.

- 4:02 RTH: So first, I agree with everything that you said, I think. I don't, I don't have any objection, don't, don't feel any misgivings or whatever about what you, what you have said. I entirely agree with that. And, and so I, I do think it is the case that, that the DES process (as probably any other process, but DES in particular) is a simplification or a selection or, or, or something. I absolutely agree with that.
- 4:36 The question is... But there are several, there were several questions involved. So, one of the things that I've written about, actually Eric, Eric Schwitzgebel and I wrote about is, is I, I think, and I, (I don't actually know what he thinks about that), but we wrote a paper that was some something called like "little or nothing," little or little or nothing in attention" or something like that, a 2011 paper, [GP: Mm-hmm.] where I claimed, (and maybe he did too, I don't actually remember, because those were some debate issues that the 2011 papers were debate issues. I can't remember what site he was on, on some of those), but I, I think it's not possible for DES (or probably any other introspective method) to dis, distinguish between a little of something and nothing of something
- 5:24 GP: Mm-hmm.
- 5:26 RTH: And so I, I prefer to call that like "in the weeds." When something is in the weeds, well, maybe there's nothing in the weeds. Maybe there's something in the weeds. You can't tell the difference. And, and the reason, the reason is for what you, just, what you just said, I think, and that is that the DES process disturbs the weeds and raises dust, raises dust from the bottom of the ocean or whatever, whatever weeds are you, wherever you're looking at these weeds, and, and you can't really tell whether there's nothing there. So I, I do not dispute that there is a difference between little and little or nothing, but I think that it cannot be reliably attended to, [GP: Yeah.] By any method that I know of, including DES. And, and so while I wouldn't dispute it, I wouldn't, I, I just don't think it's that big a deal. And, and the reason that I don't think it's that big a deal is that there, there are, there are *big* differences that I think *are* important that one *can* distinguish between.
- 6:27 GP: Yeah.
- 6:28 RTH: Even with, even if you allow, as you did, that, that DES disturbs stuff. So for example, you, we, we now have from you, I don't, I don't know, 24 ish or 22 ish or something like that samples of your inner experience [GP: Mm-hmm.] And in that, I think with the exception to the one while you were asleep, there was no visual imagery in your descriptions. [GP: Yes.] And so one question would be, well, is it possible that he was having visual imagery at the time of the beep, but because of the selection in issue, he ruled out the inner seeing [GP laughs]. And my guess is the answer to that is I, *probably not*. But, but you, the, you're the only guy who can, who can judge that. And it's, and it's not only inner seeing, which is something that I think you had a, an interest in before we got into this line of reasoning, but I also think, if I'm recalling

correctly, (and I'm not a hundred percent at all sure about that), but I think you had no, you have no inner speech in your samples. You have not talked to yourself.

6:28 Russ comments: This is how I understand what has happened so far. GP has provided something like a general characterization of (or general critique of) the DES procedure, and RTH has *not* tried to counter, or argue, or defend against that general view. Instead, he has tried to bring that general characterization/critique into conversation with the specifics of Gualtierio's own experience. That reflects DES's recognition of the potency of specific moments. DES is *not* aimed at pitting Russ's generality against Gualtierio's generality. DES aims at allowing the obduracies of Gualtierio's own individually insignificant experiences, as Gualtierio himself experiences them, to abrade away any excesses in (or fill any gaps in) Gualtierio's generalities.

7:36 GP: Right.

7:37 RTH: And so the question is, *well, maybe there was inner speaking going on and he overlooked that, or he forgot to tell me about that* because.. And I don't think that's very likely because inner speaking is among the easiest things to report. If you've got it, people can tell you, well, this is it. These are the words, these are the inflections, this is what I was,

7:55 GP: And I, y'know, and I can *do it* if, I mean, I can talk to myself in my head.

7:59 RTH: Everybody can talk to themselves in their head.

8:01 GP: If I want, if I decide I can, I can say anything in my head.

8:04 RTH: Yep. Everybody can do that. Yeah. The question is whether you, whether you *do* do that spontaneously, frequently or spontaneously or whatever.

8:11 GP: No. Not really. Not much. Hardly at all.

8:13 RTH: I I think, I think that's probably true. *And*, and I think that's the kind a distinction that DES is capable of making. [GP: Yes.] And it, and it is *possible* to claim that DES disturbs it so that yes, he was inner speaking all the time, and DES systematically eradicates that somehow. But I think that is of roughly the same ilk as the brain-in-the-VAT claim. It just, it seems pretty *unlikely* to me.

8:43 GP: Yes.

8:43 RTH: And, uh, you can't prove it. You can't disprove it. But, but I, I don't care to spend most much of my life trying to, trying to attempt it.

8:58 GP: I'm with you.

9:00 RTH: So, so the, so the, the what I, so the *main* issue that I have, or the main response that I have to what you said was: there's big picture and little picture deals. And what I think we can, what I think DES tries to do is to get high fidelity into the big picture, [GP:

Yeah.] and, and be and recognize that it doesn't get the whole picture. Which is why, one of the reasons why I prefer to say that the, in that DES is a *high-fidelity* endeavor rather than an *accuracy* endeavor, because I think it is always inaccurate, cuz I'm agreeing with you, we are going to miss some aspects. Yeah. So I'm not, I don't strive for accuracy. I don't think that's possible in the, in the inner-experience realm. I *do* strive for *fidelity*, and that is, y'know, I try to get the big picture right, and try to suspend... People, people have big, huge blind spots (some people) have huge blind spots about the *big* picture. And let's try to get through, through those.

10:09 GP: I agree. Yes.

10:09 Russ comments: This conversation highlights a very important feature of DES criticism. People criticize DES because it fails to get the small details right, when they themselves are probably hugely mistaken about big picture aspects.

Gualtiero comments: who are the people you are thinking about? Is one of them Schwitzgebel? Who else?

Russ comments: I think I can't be more specific about this, except to say I do *not* mean Schwitzgebel.

10:11 RTH: And, uh,

10:12 GP: Um, and can I ask you a question? Um, do you have any collab former collaborators or students or current collaborators or students who are continuing this line of research, who are doing DES or some something similar?

10:32 RTH: Mostly, I'm sad to say, not. I would say that most of my primary, my collaborators would... I you ask, if you ask that question, which is something like, well, do you continue to do DES in your, in your life or whatever? I think most of them would say, (most of them are practicing psychotherapists of some kind) and most of them would say, I have been heavily influenced by my DES experience and I'm now a much better question ans asker and listener than I was before. [GP: Mm-hmm.] But it's, but I think they would say, but I don't specifically say I'm doing DES.

11:12 GP: Yeah. Well, cuz it would be, I think it would be valuable if this line of research continued into the future, that we would, y'know, there would be a need for a new generation of people to take it on.

11:29 RTH: I, I agree with that. And I have not been successful in doing that. I had a conversation, lemme see if I can reconstruct this conversation for you, because I had a conversation just a week or so ago, a couple weeks maybe, with a former student who was one of the, I would say was one of the best DES interviewers, student interviewers, that I, that I had long and, and I asked her, well why, why haven't, why didn't, why didn't you do it? Something like that, which is what your question is. [GP: Yeah.] And she's a privately practicing psychotherapist, and so makes her living as a, as a psychotherapist. [GP: Yeah.]

12:12 And I think she would say, she *did* say, and I might even have it on tape somewhere, but she did say something like, “it’s, I’m afraid I wouldn’t be good at it.” Something like that. I’m, uh, it’s, it’s what, this is what she said! She said, “To be good at it, it requires that you, you institute some careful strategies.” [GP: Mm-hmm.] “For example,” she said, “you (speaking to me, speaking to me) she said, you almost always do co-interviewing.” Which is true. I almost always do you, this, this is, um, um, an exception that Gualtierio and Russ are doing it just Guero and Russ. But the presence of Lauren is, uh, it makes it *sort of* a co-interview deal. She, so far, she’s a *silent* co-interviewer [LG laughs]. But, but, but, but, but that presence is there. The, the option, the option is there, which I think is, is an important, is an important part. And, and she advanced that as one of the, one of the things that if you’re gonna do it, you have to, you have to do it with care. And that requires [GP: Yeah.] investment.

12:12 Russ comments: RE “She’s a *silent* co-interviewer.”
 Mostly silent, yes, but her presence lends a substantial degree of genuine honesty to the process. The interviews are *not* Russ and Gualtierio, with no one else in the room. The interviews are Russ and Gualtierio who are monitored by Lauren.
 In the song “The Room Where It Happens” from the musical Hamilton, Aaron Burr sings, “No one else was in the room where it happened,” emphasizing the secretive nature of the negotiations around the *Compromise of 1790*. “No one else was in” is repeated throughout the song, highlighting the fact that only Hamilton, Jefferson, and Madison were present in the room where the compromise was brokered.
 The repeated “No one else was in” refrain is a way of conveying that the decisions being made were secretive and that only those present had a true understanding of what was happening, opening the opportunity for bias or manipulation.
 Lauren’s presence here, whether or not she says anything, pierces the “No one else was in” of the DES interview.

13:33 GP: Is there, is there a, um, PhD program in experimental psychology there at UNLV?

13:40 RTH: Yes.

13:41 GP: Yes. So in theory there could have been students getting into this and...

13:46 RTH: There could have been.

13:47 GP: ...as a kind a pure research effort, but there weren’t. Okay,

13:53 RTH: Thanks. It’s, it, I, I, I think, uh, I think it, I think it’s probably largely my fault, if you want to put a fault to it, that I, I may have set the bar too high. I, I may, I may. And, and I, I don’t, it’s not that I’m setting too high for others and not for myself. Like, because I try to do it, I, I try to hold myself to the bar than I, that I would hold anybody else do. But that bar might be too high. [GP: Mm-hmm.] And, and maybe unreasonably high and maybe inaccurately high. So I’m not, I don’t think I’m in a position to know the answer to that. [GP: Okay.] I, I can say, in answer to your question, “I’m sorry to report that I do not have a cadre of followers.”

14:51 What I would, I guess I would say one more thing about that. And there are, there are inner-experience explorational methods that do have that, that are sort of popular. And, and I look at them and I worry about them because I think while popular, they're not adequately careful.

15:11 GP: They're not as, they're not as, um, high fidelity as DES?

15:17 RTH: That's what I would think. [GP: Yeah.] But whether that's fair? I don't, I don't think I'm in the, I don't think I'm the right guy to ask.

15:24 GP: So would you mind just elaborating quickly on what these methods are for, um, exploring inner experience that are popular?

15:33 RTH: Well, the one that I had in mind when I said that is the, what's sometimes called micro-phenomenology. And there's, there are quite a few followers of that method who would say I'm performing micro-phenomenology, uh, following, following the teachings of Petitmengin. And, and I wrestle with, with whether that's a good idea or whether that's a bad idea. I don't, I don't think I'm, I haven't...

15:33 Russ comments: I wrote about my worries with micro-phenomenology (called there "Petitmengin's interview method," in Hurlburt, R. T., & Akhter, S. A. (2006). *The Descriptive Experience Sampling method. Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 5, 271-301.

16:08 GP: Did you say, did you say these people who do micro-phenomenology would consider *you* as somebody who *does* micro phenomenology?

16:15 RTH: No. No. I didn't, I didn't say that.

16:17 GP: Oh, okay. I understood.

16:17 RTH: I, I think they would consider me as somebody who's doing careful work, but, but not micro phenomena. Micro-phenomenology has, does, does things that I think are not safe or not [GP: Mm-hmm.] Not, uh,

16:33 GP: Yeah. Gotcha.

16:37 RTH: I think they're risky by

16:39 GP: That way. Yeah.

16:40 RTH: Which is, I, I don't wanna come across as being too critical of micro-phenomena, micro-, micro-phenomenology, because that may be something like the way of the future. If, if my way is indeed the bar is too high, then the micro-phenomenon, micro-p as they sometimes call it bar is, may be better.

17:06 GP: Okay. Gotcha. Okay. Thank you.

17:14 RTH: Other preliminaries before we look at beeps?

17:18 GP: I'm good. Thank you.

17:22 RTH: All right, then I'm ready for number 1.

SAMPLE 5.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE (the sample was actually from two nights ago)

17:24 GP: Okay. Number 1 is, um, from last night. And it's just, uh, similar to some other beeps that I've described, y'know,. I, I put that earpiece before on, before going to sleep, and, um, I got woken up by just the chirping that happens after the beep. Could you remind me how long the beep is?

17:49 RTH: So I, I, I just, just measured it. I think, I think the beep lasts for 80 seconds. [GP: Wow!] And then it, the chirp happens about every 15 seconds.

17:59 GP: Yeah. So, y'know, so it had then the, the whole 80 seconds passed without me noticing anything from the beep. And then at some point while it was chirping, I started hearing the chirping. And, um,

18:16 RTH: And presumably that might be two or 10 or 200 chirps.

18:21 GP: Yeah.

18:21 RTH: That's,

18:23 GP: Um, and I couldn't recall anything, any experience whatsoever from before I started hearing the chirping. [RTH: Okay.] So again, my inference is that there was no experience at that moment. Um, okay. So that's all I have for that one.

18:45 RTH: Okay. And so I would say in, in passing, that if my recollection is correct, when the, when the beep has awakened you, when, when you have awakened wearing the beeper, let's put it this way, sometimes there has been an, uh, the experience of a thought, but I don't know what the content is. That's not this. [GP: Right.] This one, there doesn't seem to be anything going on.

19:09 GP: No.

19:10 RTH: But the, the rise time of the signal is at least 80 or 95 seconds, I guess, with the 80 seconds of a beep and one 15-second chirp cycle. Yes.

19:25 GP: Mm-hmm

19:25 RTH: So that's a pretty long time. So, so I'm, I'm, I'm entirely in agreement with you that much of the time when you were asleep, that, that there's nothing being experienced. But I would also say, well, *this* is pretty weak evidence, in, in that regard, because, y'know, the waking up was pretty slow.

- 19:49 GP: Um, okay.
- 19:52 RTH: I'm not, I'm definitely not arguing against you. I was just saying [GP: Mm-hmm.] If the, the skeptic would've an easy argument to make against, against being too impressed by that line, I think.
- 20:10 GP: Okay.
- 20:14 RTH: Number 2? [GP: Number 2.] Or is there more to be said about that?

SAMPLE 5.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 20:18 GP: Uh, oh, y'know what though? Uh, I messed up. That was from two nights ago. Not from last night. Oopsie. Um, last night I woke, I was woken up by the ongoing beep without hearing the beginning of the beep, and with no awareness of any experience prior to waking up hearing the ongoing beep. So I didn't hear the *beginning* of the beep, but I heard the *beeping*. Um, and once I started hearing the beeping, I couldn't hear, I couldn't recall anything being in my experience prior to hearing the beeping, including the beep itself. Like I didn't hear the, the *beginning* of the beep.
- 21:06 RTH: So as far as detected or apprehended ongoing experience, these two experiences were the same. There was nothing going on that I could, [GP: Yeah.] that I could detect.
- 21:16 GP: Yeah. And I feel like the beginning of the night is a good time for me to find this. Um, cuz I guess after I go to sleep, like I just plunge into unconsciousness and I mean, eventually, and then, um, the beep, which me out, or the beep or the chirping or, y'know, if there's enough disturbance, eventually, like my brain will finally take notice and say like, *okay, something's happening. We need to do something about it.*
- 21:46 RTH: Well, I think, I think the skeptic could alternately say that he woke up. [GP: Right. Right.] When he, when he woke up, he discovered seven and a half seconds later that there was a chirp to be found.
- 21:57 GP: Oh, okay.
- 21:59 RTH: Well, saying that, so that the chirp the chirp or sequence of chirps really wasn't the instrumental factor in his awakening. But I, I, I, I'm, I'm not a sleep researcher, so I don't really apply myself to trying to sort, sort those things through.
- 22:19 GP: Yeah. Okay. Well,
- 22:20 RTH: But I do, I I I do think sleep research is difficult.
- 22:25 GP: Yeah.
- 22:26 RTH: *And* I think it's sort of remarkable that there's more, you, you can find studies of experience or reports about experience during sleeping in the, in a Psych 101

textbook, and you *won't* find reports about what happens in everyday awakening awake experience in a Psych 101 textbook. And I think that's totally remarkable, [GP: Yeah.] for, so I imagine, obvious reasons.

22:54 GP: Mm-hmm.

22:57 LG: Can I ask really quickly a question? Um, Russ, you said that on the first beep that was from a few nights, two, I dunno when it was from, but it was from two nights ago. Um, you said it would be weak evidence *because* it took so long to wake up. Is that because the waking up period maybe might've made not remember anything? Or what would be the exact reasons for a skep, a skeptic could find to have a problem with it.

23:25 RTH: For, for exactly that reason that you said, and, and for Gualtiero's initial question. His initial, his initial question today was about, well, there's a lot of stuff going on, but the process, the beeping process might, might cause me to focus on, on one aspect of it, not another. That was his first line of questioning. That is made much more difficult if the awakening process lasted for two minutes or something like that. I mean, he's got, if, when, when the beep, when when he knows exactly what the beep, what he's supposed to do, when the beep happens and the beep has, has a, a rapid rise time in his a awake experience, well then the beep has got, if it's gonna scare stuff away, it's gotta do it quickly! Whereas if he's got a, a minute or two or more to do it while he is waking up, the beep could get rid of all manner of stuff, I think. But mostly I just dunno because, because I think sleep is a different, different deal.

24:31 GP: Okay. Shall we go to this morning beep?

24:31 RTH: Number 3?

SAMPLE 5.3 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

24:32 GP: Um, yes. So that was this morning. And the, there's two parts to this. There is a more prominent proprioceptive and visual experience of my left hand moving to touch the right foot, which is also moving to touch the left hand, while in a pushup position. Um, and they almost touch each other *intentionally*, because I was doing an exercise. Um, so I was doing an exercise, and at that moment, my, uh, left hand and right foot were about to touch each other kind a on, y'know, lifting the, the leg kind a below under my, my body and reaching out with the hand to touch it. [RTH: Okay.] Um, so it was primarily prop, perceptive and secondarily visual. Um, that's the first part of the experience.

25:40 And the second part is me singing to Cinnamon, and I stopped at the word bar barbo, B-A-R-B-O. It, it, I didn't finish it. Um, I didn't finish the, the whole word because the beep interrupted, so I stopped.

26:00 RTH: Okay. And you said that the proprioceptive / visual is more prominent by 60—40, 90—10?

26:06 GP: Something like 60—40. Yeah.

26:09 RTH: Okay. And so let's start there. The, so I'm gathering, I'm reaching with my left hand and my, and my right foot trying to get him to touch each other. And I'm feeling that happen. [GP: Yeah.] And this is an intentional act in the sense that I'm performing an act, an exercise where the object was for these two members to touch each other.

26:31 GP: Yes.

26:32 RTH: Okay. And, and is, does the proprioception involves anything more specific than, than that? Am I into my left arm or my left hand, or my right foot or right thigh? The whole thing.

26:56 GP: The, it's, yeah. It's specific to the left hand and the right foot coming together, um, moving toward each other and, y'know, coming close to touching. Um, so I would say there's a lot of proprioceptive sensation. Uh, y'know, it's specifically more focused on those two limbs because they're the ones that are moving the most, and they're, and they're reaching a certain goal of coming together on the left of my body. But, um, there's probably, y'know, more diffuse proprioceptive sensation of the whole body. Y'know, I'm holding myself up with the right hand and the left foot. Um,

26:56 Russ comments: The DES aim is to describe directly apprehended experience and bracket away everything else. To my ear, there are lots of hints in this turn that suggest we are not being successful: "Coming close to touching" is probably *not* something that is proprioceptively experienced—that is more likely a conceptual overview. (I'm describing my own experience here; I'm not claiming to be a mind reader. It is possible that his 30 years of Tai Chi practice has led him to be able to proprioceptively feel when two limbs in very awkward positions are *close to* each other but *not touching*.) Then he subjunctifies ("so I *would say*"). Then he explains rather than describes ("because..."). Then he talks about a goal. Then he subjunctifies again ("they're *probably*"), and then explains again ("I'm holding myself up...").

Subjunctification, in my understanding, is the soul (whatever that is; call it the grammar producer, if you prefer) conveying that what is being said should, perhaps, not be taken at face value.

I emphasize that I am no mind reader; I'm trying to hear with fidelity what Gualtierio is saying (which includes how he says it), and trying to help him describe directly apprehended experience.

Happily accepting my lack of perfection in such hearings, I hear GP's talk as being less about directly apprehended experience and more about... Well, I don't really know, or really care, what the *about* is. Probably presuppositions. But my aim will be to help him stick to what he directly apprehends. It is not easy, either for GP or RTH.

27:47 RTH: So, so the, the question, the question that I find interesting is not so much what, what the whole proprioceptive bodily deal is, which I think is highly complicated, but the question is, what makes its way into your experience, directly apprehended? And so you've been talking about foot and hand, or hand and foot, I guess you've been talking about hand and foot. Do you really mean leg and foot and arm and hand, or do you really mean...?

- 27:47 Russ comments: It's simple: the skill of DES is to try to stick to the directly apprehended. RTH redirects the conversation to Gualtiero's specific extremities.
- 28:21 GP: Yeah. Yes. Um, yes. Um, this is a, this is a case of the kind a thing I talked about at the very beginning. So I would say, y'know, the arm and the leg are moving, right? They're the primary limbs that are moving, and the hand and the foot are even a little more salient because they're the ones that are sort of reaching for each other. But the, there's a sense of, y'know, at least the whole, y'know, the whole arm, the whole leg moving, um, in that way, y'know, in that, in, in that direction, in that mo, in that motion. Uh, it's not just the hand and the foot and not the rest of the arm, the rest of the leg.
- 28:21 Russ comments: To my ear, GP's response is more about explanation—*why* he experienced things—rather than description—*what* he experienced.
- 29:07 RTH: So that, I, I accept that that is absolutely true as far as your whole body is concerned. I think every, I'm guessing probably that every motor neuron in your body is involved in this process to some, to some degree or other! [GP: Mm-hmm.] But, but I *don't* think that every motor neuron in your body is equally apprehended by you. So for, for example, if you're a, if you're a baseball pitcher and you're throwing a three-seam fastball (whatever that is, I'm not really much of a baseball fan), but I can imagine that the pitcher in his windup and release is apprehending mostly his fingertips against the seams, because that's the part of the pitch that's the most relevant for him. [GP: Mm-hmm.] But everything is involved: his, his right foot on the, on the rubber, and his left foot in the kick, and the temperature of the dust, and whatever, all that, all that stuff is somehow present to him, *even though* at the moment he is mostly apprehending the right hand on the seams of the ball.
- 29:07 Russ comments: Actually, it turns out that there is no such thing as a three-seam fastball—there are two-seam and four-seam fastballs. That does not change the point that RTH is making.
- 30:16 GP: Yeah.
- 30:16 RTH: And so the, so my question is: given that I'm accepting that your whole body is involved, involved in this, is your experience mostly of hand, one hand and one foot, even though the other hand and the other foot and the leg and the torso and the neck and the whatever are all involved?
- 30:16 Russ comments: RTH gave a long explanation, designed to facilitate the bracketing of any theory about proprioception, but then brings it back to Gualtiero's actual experience.
- That is, in a nutshell, the heart of the DES effort: the aim is always to differentiate between what is experienced and all else, and help guide the conversation toward what is experienced.

30:35 GP: Yeah, I, I wrote down the left hand and the right foot, but I would say that at least the whole arm and the whole leg were apprehended as moving maybe with more focus on the hand and the foot than the whole arm and the whole leg. But [RTH: Okay.] Um, I'd say that at least the arm and the leg were somewhat in, y'know, being experienced as moving towards each other.

30:35 Russ comments: This turn is still highly subjunctified, to my ear: "I wrote down..."; "I would say"; "maybe"; "I'd say."

31:06 RTH: Okay. So the, the, I'm, I'm, I'm,... What, what, what I would say what the DES procedure is about is to is, is to relax as much as possible about the theoretical necessities and describe the whatever seems to be the most. And, and I'm not trying to talk us into a simplification.

31:36 GP: No. I'm, I'm doing my best to remember what I was experiencing, and [RTH: Okay.] Of course I could be wrong.

31:45 RTH: And, and the, and the, the reason, the reason that I am, that I encourage us to do this, I guess if there is to extent that there's one reason, is really it's follows from your question as of this morning. So there is *no question* that your entire body is probably hugely (I don't even know how you touch your hand to your foot while you're in a pushup position!) but the, the, your, your body is *straining* probably every muscle in it to engage that task, including the, the parts that are quite distant from the affected hand and foot. And, and I, and I don't deny *at all* that those, all the, all the parts of your body contribute to your apprehension. [GP: Mm-hmm. Yeah.] But, but the question is out of, out of all that billions of neurons and motor neurons and whatever that are firing, [GP: Mm-hmm.] what do you make, what, what, if anything, or everything do you make as an apprehension?

32:52 GP: Yeah.

32:54 RTH: And, and I agree that there's gonna be a, a place that you stop, y'know? Well, for sure it's in my left hand. *Maybe* it's in my left wrist, I suppose. Uuhhh, possibly it's in my arm, but it doesn't seem to be in my left glute. Maybe it is, I'm not, but it,

32:54 Russ comments: Russ's DES art is *not* to counter Gualtierio's theory with Russ's own theory, but to try to bring Gualtierio's own theory into confrontation (in the positive "face-to-face" etymology of that term) with Gualtierio's own direct apprehension. See the comment at 6:28.

33:11 GP: Yeah.

33:15 RTH: I don't wanna rule, rule it out, but [GP: Mm-hmm.] But that's the, that's the goal of it, I would say. [GP: Yes.] And, and we haven't said anything at all about actually how the hand and the foot feel. What that, how you apprehend that. Is this a straining for each other, a burning of the muscles or, uh, I dunno what, what the question is. What, what do you apprehend of, of that?

- 33:55 GP: Um, I, I say, y'know, when I work out or, yeah. Do, um, mindful movements, I have a sense of the, the full volume of the, of that part of the body being, being there being, y'know, being a certain position or moving in a certain way, y'know, in a certain direction, a certain speed. Um, so it's a diffuse awareness of the whole.
- 34:37 RTH: And the whole in this sense is mostly hand, possibly hand in arm.
- 34:37 Russ comments: Note that at 33:55, GP goes into the land of the general, and RTH brings him back to the land of the specific. Experience is *always* of the specific.
- 34:45 GP: Yeah. I would say the hand and the foot are a little more present, and the arm and the leg are secondarily present. And then there's probably some kind a diffuse sense of the whole, y'know, the, the rest of the body and the, and the environment, y'know, visually too, because I was also looking that way. So, um, as I said, there, it probably was primarily proprioceptive, but also visual, because I was looking there. Yeah. But the proprioceptive is a, is a feeling of the full, that full part of the body, y'know, that the, the whole volume as, y'know, being sensed, y'know, being, being, um, yeah, being experienced as, y'know, in a certain place or, or going a certain place. Um, something like that.
- 35:49 RTH: Okay. So volumetrically sensed, or
- 35:53 GP: Yeah. And this is something that has developed for me over the years, because I have been practicing Tai Chi for about 30 years, and now I have a daily practice. This, this stuff that I was doing is sort of preliminary, that I do some mobility and, uh, stretching and like minor strength, uh, exercises all kind a mixed together for say, 10 minutes or so before I do my Tai Chi. Um, but the Tai Chi I, I've been doing for 30 years, and it trains you to develop this mindfulness about your body. [RTH: Okay.] And I didn't have that 30 years ago the way I have it now. [RTH: Okay.] Yeah. So, I mean, I could elaborate about that, but, uh, it, it might help to explain what I mean when I say like, I have this proprioceptive sensation. It might be a little more of a full awareness of a part of my body or of my whole body even than some other people might have, um, if they haven't done this thing for 30 years like I have.
- 37:00 RTH: Right. And I'm, I'm, I'm not disagreeing with that at all. I don't, I don't, I I don't find it useful most of the time to explore the causality, but [GP: Yeah.] but I, but I do accept that people are gonna be very different [GP: Yeah.] for a, for a variety of historical and physiological and neurological and whatever other kinds of reasons that there are.
- 37:23 GP: Right. I know you, you have written about this stuff about how like, different people's mental lives are, and I think this is very valuable because, because y'know, like typical experimental psychology tries to like, um, y'know, make conditions such that everybody's doing the same thing. But, y'know, in real life, people's minds are very different. [RTH: Right.] Yeah.
- 37:47 RTH: So I totally, totally agree with that. Yeah. I think it's a fool's errand to try to make everybody do the same thing. That's not, I don't think it's possible. Uh, so then I'm also singing *barbo* to Cinnamon.

38:04 GP: Yes.

38:05 RTH: And is barbo a real Italian word?

38:08 GP: It's not exactly a really trying to word. It is part of that, y'know, uh, bastardized Italian words that I use when I sing to Cinnamon. [RTH: Okay.] Or when, or sometimes when I talk to her.

38:24 RTH: And your experience of this is, I,

38:29 GP: It's both auditory and motor or, y'know, proprioceptive motor, y'know, like I'm singing from the inside, but I also can hear myself.

38:43 RTH: Okay.

38:44 GP: Yeah. Yeah. The word *barba* in, means *beard* in Italian; *barbozo* means like *bearded*, kinda. [RTH: Okay.] But, but I was use, I was using a variation of that word that I kind a made up.

38:59 RTH: Okay. And, and I'm gathering that in neither one of these parts of this experience that you directly apprehend yourself as initiating this. Is that correct? I don't have myself, I don't, I don't have a direct apprehension of myself as at, trying to put my foot in contact with my hand, even though <crosstalk>

39:31 GP: Well, in that case, I did, I did, uh, experience myself as moving intentionally that way. But when it comes to the singing, it's more of a spontaneous free-flowing thing that almost happens on its own. It's not really, it's not really intentional in the sense of goal directed. There's not like really a goal, like I'm trying to reach, or I'm trying to say a certain thing. It sort of blows out of me.

40:09 RTH: So I'm, I'm not sure we can answer this question in this, in this sample, but it, but I think there's a distinction to be made between goal-directed and explicitly apprehending the goal.

40:23 GP: Mm-hmm.

40:23 RTH: Like, I'm engaged in this move. There's definitely a goal in mine. I'm trying to get my left foot to hit my right hand, or whatever it is. [GP: Yeah.] And, but that doesn't mean that I am explicitly conveying to myself, *move this foot to get that hand*, right then at that moment. Like, I think, right. I could have initiated this a while back as part of my practice, and my practice involves getting these things together in order to stretch or whatever. But, uh, but that doesn't necessarily mean...

40:54 GP: Yeah. In this case, I would say I was experiencing myself as reaching with the hand and the foot for each other so that it was part of the experience that it was a intentionally goal-directed act or motion. And it's different with the singing, cuz the singing wasn't like, that wasn't experienced like that.

41:25 RTH: So maybe, I dunno if this would be helpful. So I'm a, I'm a serious amateur, classical guitar player, and, uh, and I can, I can practice a piece that with the object of, of making a, making a beautiful, what I call a beautiful sound, what appealing to, appealing to my sensitivities, I guess you would say. [GP: Mm-hmm.] And, and there are, and experientially, there's, there are several what I think are very different ways of doing that. I can be *hearing* this music that I am producing, or I could be focusing on the *production* of it—I've gotta get my left second finger to this fret, then my, stretch by hand in this particular way, in order to make that interval sound right. I can be focused on the *action*, or I can be focused on, on the *sound* or *both*, but they're separate. It is, I'm, I'm a hundred percent sure that it's possible to be focused entirely on the sound, even though my body is producing it and *intentionally* producing it—I'm trying to make this sound happen—but that doesn't mean I *experience* it.

42:43 And then, and there are *other* times I can be almost entirely focused on the *hand-y* portion of it, uh, making the muscles do what I want them to do. And with, with the sound pretty much entirely in the background are gone entirely. [GP: Mm-hmm.] And so that's, those are the kinds of distinctions that I want to, when we make. So these things are intentional. When I sit down to play *Julia Florida*, I want the, i that's an intention to make this piece happen. [GP: Yeah.] But that doesn't mean that the intention of as present at every moment of the performance, it's, sometimes it sounds good to me. And that's, that's good. And sometimes sounds bad to me. That's good too, I suppose. But, but, but all, all that discourse is only designed to, to, to sort of bring out into the open the, in the notion of in intent what's intentional, what's not. [GP: Yeah.] Because I think, I think being intentionality is a very difficult thing. And I would, I would say in my guitar playing, most of the time I'm not attending to the *intentionality* of it. It is all *intentional*. [GP: Right.] But, but I'm in, I'm, I'm attending to whether this note is being held in a way that appeals to me, at the same time as that other note is being held, at the same time as this third one is being suspended, and whatever all that stuff is. And I, and I'm suspecting that that's in the ballpark of your Tai chi, that we've both been working at this for a while and the intentionality has become routinized or,

42:43 Russ comments: *Julia Florida* is a barcarola for guitar by Augustín Barrios Mangoré.

44:37 GP: Yes.

44:41 RTH: So what I would say is the intentionality very often is in the weeds, which is to say, can't really tell.

44:50 GP: Mm-hmm.

44:54 RTH: All right, Onto number 4?

SAMPLE 5.4 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

44:57 GP: Um, okay. So, uh, this also has two parts. Um, there's a proprioceptive feeling of the left hip, uh, moving downward. Well, there's my body going downward on my left, y'know, with the weight on the left hip, um, and feeling the hip there increasing

amount of weight because of the leverage, y'know, becoming, um, worse as I bend my leg. Okay. So I'm, I'm bending my, my leg, left leg. And so the hip is starting to have worse leverage in terms of, oh, there's the weight. And so I can feel the weight increasing, so to speak, if that makes sense. Y'know, like the sensation is of the weight becoming greater, it's bearing more weight, even though the weight is the same, but it just feels more because of the different leverage. Um, and that's like the more prominent, say 65%.

46:03 And then there's something more like the 35% of my awareness is taken by thinking, or at least the echo of thinking, that I prefer.... So there's a whole, there was a whole chain of thought, and I'm going to roughly reconstruct the chain of thought. Um, it wasn't all present at the same time, but it was all, um, what, what you would call unsymbolized. Um, I prefer to donate towards Ukraine, the Ukraine war effort than starving people in Gaza, because Ukrainians are defending our freedom. Um, and, y'know, none of the Gazans are not deserving of support. I just, if I had to make a choice right now, I, anyway, this part I'm adding to explain what, what I'm thinking. But, um, it was something having to do with, um, charity donations on my part and what and what to do because, y'know, there's like multiple good causes. In fact, there's many others. But those were the two I was comparing in my, in my mind.

47:18 RTH: Okay. And I think I got the basics of both of 'em. Let's start with the, the hip. So is it the case that in this particular sample, the most of my experience is of the increasing weight, regardless of whether it, whether it's truly increasing weight or just pressure or whatever that doesn't, I don't care about that really. [GP: Yeah.] But my experience is of the increasing weight in my hip.

47:44 GP: Yeah.

47:44 RTH: So I am feeling primarily my hip, or exclusively my hip or this 65%?

47:52 GP: It's, yeah, it's the weight on the hip or the, I guess you could call it pressure, I guess that works, that works about equally well. [RTH: Okay.] Um, pressure of my body on the hip as I lower, as I bend the leg. And so I, the, the hip goes down and the weight feels like it's increasing or the pressure, the pressure is increasing. [RTH: Okay.] That's maybe a better way to put it. Pressure is maybe a better word than weight.

48:21 RTH: Okay. And

48:26 GP: Or *force*, force that's being exercised against the hip.

48:31 RTH: Yes. From my point of view, the, the important consideration here, the most important consideration is that it's, it's *of the hip*. [GP: Yeah.] Whether we call it pressure, weight, force, whatever, it's *in my hip*, *I feel this pressure*.

48:45 GP: Yes.

48:47 RTH: And then, and relevant to the discussion we had before, the, your whole body is maintaining this pressure so that there's, there's equal, absolutely equal pressure on the bottom of your foot and, and throughout the rest of, throughout the rest of your

body. [GP: Yeah.] But as far as your experience is concerned at this moment, what I am understanding you to be saying *is* [GP: Mm-hmm.] I am attending to (which I don't particularly like that word), but I experienced the pressure in my hip.

49:16 GP: Yes.

49:17 RTH: Okay. Which is not to deny that there's, that all the rest of my body is in some way contributing to that, either physically,

49:24 GP: And that it's *increasing*, it's *increasing*. The, the, the pressure is increasing because I'm, I'm, I'm moving downward. I'm bend my leg.

49:36 RTH: So I'm feeling increasingly pressure in my hip.

49:39 GP: Yeah.

49:40 RTH: Okay. And we could say while I'm also experiencing it in my foot or whatever, which is true, no, not denying that, but that's, that that stuff is in the weeds, I'm gathering, [GP: Yes.] by compare, by comparison, by *comparison* to my experiencing of the hip.

49:59 GP: Yes.

50:00 RTH: Okay. *And* I'm understanding that this is primarily a physical sensation. I feel the sensation of pressure or force, or whatever you wanna call it in my hip.

50:12 GP: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Yes.

50:13 RTH: It's *not* that I am analyzing the cosine of the angle between the hip bone and the horizon or whatever. That's none of that. [GP: Unh-unh.] It is hip pressure.

50:28 GP: Yes.

50:30 RTH: Okay. And furthermore, *left* hip pressure.

50:34 GP: Yes.

50:35 RTH: So pretty specific.

50:37 GP: Yes. Because the, the way it was shifted on that side, and then I was lowering, I was going down bending the leg on that side.

50:46 RTH: So what I, what, what I want to encourage us to do is to *not* try to explain it. I, I agree, but to focus on the, on the *experience* of it, regardless of whether it's... Be, because there, there are gonna be time, there *are* gonna be times when the experience doesn't match the physics of it. [GP: Mm-hmm.] And so the, the *habit of explaining it*, I think is a, is a common, a common one, and, and to be avoided if, as, as part of what is bracketing from my point of view.

51:17 GP: Okay.

51:19 RTH: And, and I'm not, I'm not denying that it's true in this particular case or in any other, another case, but to a large degree, for me, it doesn't matter. [GP: Mm-hmm.] What, what matters is that for whatever reason (which I don't really care about) I feel on my, in my left hip, in, in my left hip, not on the surface of my left hip, but in my left hip pressure, *increasing* pressure. Is that right?

51:19 Russ comments: The point RTH is making here could be stated in general terms: not all proprioceptive occurrences are directly experienced. But instead of making that *general* point, RTH made the *specific* point: Gualtieri, a specific red-blooded individual, at 9:47:12 this morning (or whenever it was), directly apprehended pressure in his hip and did *not* directly apprehend hundreds or thousands of other simultaneously occurring proprioceptive events (or, perhaps more appropriately, those other events were in the weeds).

The reason that RTH proceeds in that way is that he had found, from long experience, that general arguments do not penetrate, whereas specific observations reach their target. That's why DES always aims at the specific and eschews the general. See the comments at 6:28 and 32:54.

51:45 GP: Yes.

51:47 RTH: Okay. And *then* I am in some way regarding the issue of (I guess I would say) the issue of donating to Ukraine or Gaza. [GP: Mm-hmm.] And this is not a specific, it's not like I am concluding at this particular moment. Yeah. I'll give \$25 to Gaza or whatever. [GP: Right.] It's not specific. No. And yet it's in, it's definitely in that ballpark as opposed to the ballpark of, y'know, should I have a hamburger for lunch or, or riots in Los Angeles, or whatever.

52:40 GP: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Yes.

52:42 RTH: Okay. So the experiences in the ballpark of a contemplation of Gaza versus Ukraine, or maybe more accurately Ukraine versus Gaza.

53:00 GP: And it's, yeah, I'd say slightly more specific than that because it's the Ukraine war effort. Um, and specifically there's like volunteer organizations that support troops with ex, y'know, extra equipment that the armed forces don't provide. Not that all of that was in the, in the thought, but definitely the portion of the Ukraine war effort via like volunteer organizations, that part was there. Um, and the, on the other, on the other side, it's famine. It's people starving at this point. So helping people *survive*, if, if there's a way even to get the aid there, well, that's another whole part of the problem, that there is aid that's not being allowed in, but, and people are starving. So Yeah. Like starvation in Gaza versus, um, war effort in Ukraine.

53:53 RTH: Okay. And from my point of view, this is a, (*I'm understanding this* is what I mean to say there) I'm understanding this as a, some kind a a cognitive analytical thought-y

54:08 GP: Yeah.

- 54:10 RTH: Yes. In the, in in that ballpark, but not in a specific base of that ballpark, or not in a specific result of that ballpark.
- 54:18 GP: Yes. Okay.
- 54:24 RTH: Which, for which from my point of view is the distinction I was just making there is between what I call cognitive awareness and unsymbolized thinking. This is in the realm of cognitive awareness, but not in the realm of unsymbolized thinking in my lexicon.
- 54:24 Russ comments: On reviewing the video, I think RTH did not adequately comprehend what GP had said in his 53:00 turn; today I might say it was specific enough to call it unsymbolized thinking. The dividing line between unsymbolized thinking and cognitive awareness is never perfectly clear.
- 54:38 GP: Ah, okay.
- 54:40 RTH: If, uh, if, if this thought had been in what I call unsymbolized thinking, the thought, what you would've been saying something like I was, I had determined that I should give more money to Ukraine than to Gaza. And that was the result of my contemplation. That would've even, and there were no words in Ukraine and Gaza or whatever, but I had, I was specifically saying, this is the result, specifically conveying to myself, this is the result. That I would've called uncivilized thinking. And I'm, and I'm, I'm, I don't want us to debate the where the drawing, where the, where the dividing line is between unsymbolized thinking and cognitive awareness. [GP: Mm-hmm.] But I, what I want us to recognize is that there are, there are some, maybe you'll discover some, maybe we had, and I can't remember. There's some unsymbolized thinking that is entirely specific and some which are in the ballpark of.
- 55:43 GP: Mm-hmm.
- 55:43 RTH: And I, and, and I, I have a, I would say a sensitivity (some would say I have a hypersensitivity) I would say I have a sensitivity to that. Because a lot of people want to, want to make unsymbolized thinking become something like a gist, more or less like what you were saying. And I want to say *it's more than a gist*, at least sometimes there's, sometimes this is a absolutely explicit, y'know, you can have an unsymbolized thinking that it's something like, *I'm gonna use two tablespoons of flour and one tablespoon of vanilla*, but without the words tablespoons or vanilla or flour or whatever. But every bit that specific,
- 56:25 GP: Yeah. Yeah.
- 56:27 RTH: So that, and, and so I, I defend the distinction there between sort of
- 56:36 GP: Okay.

56:37 RTH: With without, without, without, without at all saying that it's possible to have a clear dividing line. Well, this is unsymbolized thinking, and this is cognitive awareness, but

56:49 GP: Mm-hmm.

56:50 RTH: It's sort of like mountains from my point of view. There's, it's a pretty good distinction to be made between mountains and planes, even though you can't decide whether, y'know, this particular Lone, Lone Mountain in the outside of Las Vegas deserves to be called a mountain. I don't really care about that.

57:09 LG: Did you have anything specific written on your distinction, like in a paper or anything that I could read on your distinction between cognitive awareness or unsymbolized thinking? Or did you say you don't have that? I was just curious for my own research purposes of understanding them.

57:23 RTH: That's a good question. I don't think I even know the answer to that. Probably my 2011 book touches on it. And maybe even my unsymbolized thinking paper tries, tries to do that too.

57:38 LG: Thank you.

57:41 RTH: And there, there's a reply, there's, there's a re there's a reply to my unsymbolized thinking paper. Unsymbolized paper is like 2009 or 2008 or something like that. And there's a reply a year later than that maybe. And I think the reply might want to, might try to make that distinction, but I'm not very good at recalling that stuff, cuz I write a whole lot of stuff that never gets published and that I can't remember whether I published it or not.

58:09 LG: Thank you.

58:09 RTH: You're welcome. So on to number 5?

58:15 GP: It's four. I don't wanna keep going or maybe stop here.

58:22 RTH: I'm

58:23 GP: Four five.

58:24 RTH: I'm easy. As far as I, I'm, I'm, I'd I'd say maybe, I'd say maybe we ought to keep it at four. We should stop at 4. And that way we can plan our lives accordingly. And, and do we wanna do this again?

58:39 GP: Um, yeah. I'm also starting to wonder if I could keep the beeper even a little bit longer than when we stop. Um, [RTH: Yes. Yeah.] For like, just doing some, some stuff on my own [laughs].

58:55 RTH: Sure.

- 58:56 GP: Because now I want to write about this stuff, or it's, y'know, it ties into other projects I already had, but now they're thinking a different direction thanks to all this beeping and the DES and it's really fascinating.
- 59:10 RTH: So I would, I would say there's, there are other possibilities that you might want to consider as well. And that is you and I could co-interview somebody else.
- 59:23 GP: Yeah.
- 59:24 RTH: And, uh, like I have a, there's a podcaster who wants to, who I've been on his podcast and he wants to wear the beeper or whatever, and that's gonna happen relatively soon. Yeah. I could, I could suggest to him, well, why don't we get Gualtiero involved in that and he, and he and I can do the interviewing and then, then that might be interesting from a variety, different perspectives.
- 59:49 GP: Sure, sure.
- 59:51 RTH: So, so I'm not, I'm not saying we should do that. I'm saying I we've got possibilities.
- 59:58 GP: I would be interested in that, but I would also be interested in, y'know, wearing the beeper a bit more. I, I mean, depending on how long we go. But y'know, I, at some point you're probably gonna get sick of me, so, or like my beeps, so not me, like, y'know, we can still talk, right. Interview other people, just this thing like,
- 1:00:19 RTH: So may maybe I should say what's in it for me? What's, what this in this interview is for me. And, and I think, I think the answer is I, I, I, I think inner experience is of fundamental important part of the human condition, and I think it is not well explored. And I think, I think I, I think there's, think the, the conversations that we are having, the three of us are having, are inroads into the philosophical view of explorations of inner experience, which I think is important.

1:00:19 Russ comments: Today's interview provides an opportunity to examine in concrete detail an important general issue—the bracketing of presuppositions. Some of what I am about to say I think I said in pieces in earlier comments to today's interview—this comment wraps it up. Anyway, here's what I think happened today.

We began with GP providing a reasonable and thoughtful general account of the introspective process. His account is mainstream consciousness science, and I have no doubt that Gualtiero could buttress that account with substantial references across the literature, citing current and ancient philosophers who hold similar or related views. So that we can refer to it, but without trying to put too fine a point on it, let's call this the *there's-more* account—that DES is selective, etc. (Gualtiero—you should feel free to revise this, but the point is not about the exactness of the words.)

The DES task is to encourage GP to bracket that the *there's-more* view (among many other views). To bracket (in general terms, in my view, which is inspired by Husserl but without claiming to be or not to be what Husserl thought at any point in his writing) is to put out of play, to suspend. In specific terms, Gualtiero's (and Russ's and Lauren's) bracketing task *in Gualtiero's own personal/today practice* is to apprehend and describe his experience without regard for the *there's-more* argument.

To bracket does *not* mean that the *there's-more* argument is false; it does *not* mean that the *there's-more* argument is true; it does *not* mean that Gualtiero should pretend that he has never heard the *there's-more* argument, nor that he has supported it (or refuted it) in his own writings/teachings. Instead, it means that Gualtiero (and Russ and Lauren) should work diligently and effectively to suspend the ramifications of all those possibilities. He (we) should recognize the potential that the *there's-more* argument is true, and therefore be prepared to accept experiential aspects that align with that argument. But at the same time he should not confabulate aspects simply because they align with that argument. That is, he should apprehend his experience as he experiences it, without regard for its theoretical implications.

Russ's (and Lauren's) task is to help Gualtiero do that, accepting that bracketing operates (or at least may operate) in the realm of delusion, that what aligns with theoretical interests seems (or at least may seem) more real and more important than what is directly apprehended. Russ and Lauren have (or at least may have) an advantage over Gualtiero in this effort, because Russ's and Lauren's characteristics (theories, presuppositions, etc.) likely do not align perfectly with Gualtiero's.

Gualtiero's task is simple (describe phenomena that were ongoing when beeped) but difficult (avoid being influenced by anything that is not directly apprehended).

Gualtiero's description of today's sample 5.3 (the first sample today while awake) was relatively complex, which would seemingly support the *there's-more* view. However, sample 4.5 was relatively simple, which would seemingly argue against that view. But that is *not* what our point should be *here today*. Our task today should be to help Gualtiero to apprehend complexity *to the extent that it characterizes the phenomenon that presents itself at the beeped moment*, and with equal fidelity to apprehend simplicity *to the extent that it characterizes the phenomenon that presents itself*.

So when RTH said (48:47) "relevant to the discussion we had before, the, your whole body is maintaining this pressure so that there's, there's equal, absolutely equal pressure on the bottom of your foot and, and throughout the rest of, throughout the rest of your body," he intended to be emphasizing a *phenomenal* distinction, *not* a *theoretical* distinction. That utterance is designed to support GP's attempts at describing phenomena, and is *not* designed to refute (or support) a theory.

I think it is fair to evaluate that and every other RTH-to-GP utterance on this day and every day from the perspective of whether it even-handedly contributes to the iterative acquisition bracketing-of-presuppositions/theories skills. For another example, today at 5:26 I talked a bit about "in the weeds" (I had also mentioned it in interview 3 at 22:32). That might have appeared to be a discussion about theory, but its aim was iterative bracketing of presuppositions: in the future, let's accept that there *may be* (or *may not be*) some stuff where it is hard to tell whether it is directly apprehended. Let's not be frightened by that, and let's not confuse ourselves into thinking that things that are in the weeds should be as equally apprehendable as things that are more experientially prominent. My aim was *not* to comment on the *there's-more* theory—one can always hold that there is more that is just barely (or just less than barely) apprehended. My aim was to *leave explicitly open* the possibility that there was some *experientially hinty* aspect, some inchoate-ness that is apprehended in its inchoateness, but to try to bright-line differentiate such directly apprehended

inchoateness from some theoretically required (but not directly apprehended) element. (One can judge whether what I actually said in that regard was too intense, too constrained, or adequately balanced—DES is a performance art.)

Later, perhaps much later, after his beeped experiences have been individually apprehended with Gualtiero's theoretical interests bracketed to the extent he is (we are) capable, then he can unbracket his theoretical interests and discover whether his experiential apprehensions have any bearing on his theoretical interests. But that is a separate task, and if his sampling is to be theoretically informative, his bracketing has to have been adequate. Elsewhere I have argued that the phenomenon describer should be firewalled away from the theorizer, because bracketing is difficult. Here, I am relaxing that admonition and accepting that Gualtiero is on both sides of the firewall. My logic for that relaxation is that *I* am on only one side of the firewall, and we will see whether that is an adequate safeguard.

Gualtiero comments: I appreciate the desire to bracket presuppositions, especially insofar as they could distort the way experience is described. That said, I do my best to describe my experiences faithfully. In this respect, the "there's more" argument I gave at the beginning of this day was my honest attempt at capturing aspects of my experience including what happens between the experience between the beep and what I focus on, remember, and finally describe after the beep. So I am not just offering a theory of introspection but my best effort at describing what happens within me while I go from experiencing something before the beep until I describe what (I take to have been) the content of my experience before the beep.

In addition, I am still not convinced that the best way to go about describing experience is to (attempt to) bracket all presuppositions, partly because I'm not convinced that it's possible to do it. Maybe it's better to (do our best to) avoid bad/misleading/false presuppositions and rely on good/helpful/accurate presuppositions. These are difficult questions that I need to think more about.

Russ comments: RE your first paragraph: First, I fully accept that your *there's-more* talk was an honest attempt at capturing aspects of your experience. But the attempt seems too general, or too premature, to me. For example, does your *there's-more* general attempt apply as easily to your experience at sample 5.4 as it does to your experience at 5.3? I suspect that there is a manner of speaking in which the answer to that question is *Yes* and another manner of speaking where the answer is *No*. Something like the experience at 5.3 is at the center of the *there's-more* target, whereas the experience at 5.4 is probably somewhere away from the center of the target, so whether the answer is *Yes* or *No* depends on how big you make the target. 5.3 had *quite a lot* of inchoate-ish things, which is consonant with the *there's-more* characterization. 5.4 had *not very many* (or any) inchoate-ish things. One could say that *of course there was more to 5.4*, but that doesn't do justice to the relative clarity of 5.4.

There are thus two competing generalities: the *there's-more* generality, and the *there-is-a-range-of-definedness/inchoateness* generality. I would prefer to encounter each of Gualtiero's samples as they are apprehended in their immediacy, and then *later* go back and create generalities as seems appropriate.

RE your second paragraph: First, I suspect it is possible to bracket all presuppositions—I suspect that is nirvana—but that is not my expertise or DES

intention. Second, I do not have a well-worked-out understanding of presuppositions—maybe we can improve that.

I think of presuppositions as mini or maxi delusions. I don't really understand delusions, either, except that I think they operate at a very basic level—prior to any explicit decision making. The paranoid individual doesn't *decide* to believe that everyone is out to get him. I haven't sampled with any really paranoid individuals—it would probably be informative.

Presuppositions, in my view, blur the distinction between what is directly apprehended and all else, which is to say, they blur what I think is at the heart of what the study of pristine inner experience is about. So I think it is desirable to bracket all delusions. You think it might be desirable to choose some delusional system. I don't know. It seems to me that it is better to operate *as if* all delusions can be bracketed.

I have a DES study currently ongoing with people with OCD. They believe themselves to be constantly preoccupied with something. But our studies so far would suggest that their individual samples could be characterized as closer to *nothing in experience* rather than some preoccupying thing in experience. That is, what seems to them to be a generalization based on their experience is a long way away from a generalization about anything. I accept that their generalizations are honest attempts to describe their experience, but they are a long way off the mark. That is one example of why I am leery of generalizations about experience.

Actually, I don't think it is necessary to bracket *all* presuppositions—I want us only to bracket those presuppositions that interfere with the ability to apprehend whatever happens to be ongoing in experience.

Maybe a historical reminiscence would be useful. When I performed my first few DES studies (in the late 1970s / early 1980s), I was shaped (as I recall it) by many influences, including what was known as the Duquesne School of phenomenology. They were concerned with bracketing presuppositions, and recommended listing at the outset of a study the presuppositions that would need to be bracketed. That seemed reasonable, so I included in the early DES procedure what I called the *pre-sampling retrospective generalization* (or PSRG), a characterization of what we expected to find in any particular investigation. Then we turned that characterization into a list of presuppositions to be bracketed. I wrote in my 1990 book:

We will be asking each subject to describe straightforwardly his or her experiences as they actually occurred, not as they might have been *expected* to occur, according to some explicit or implicit understanding of inner experience. The phenomenologists refer to this as requesting that the subject suspend any preconceptions while engaging in the descriptive task. While it is easy to say that we should suspend preconceptions, it is far more difficult to do so, at least to do so adequately. The first phase of the method is an attempt to facilitate the suspension of preconceptions, according to the following rationale advanced by the phenomenologists.

If we make our preconceptions explicit, in our case, if we write a description of what we expect the general characteristics of our experience to be, then it may make it easier to take a dispassionate view of our expectations. We can say, as it were, "Now let us find out whether or not those descriptions are borne out by immediate experience." Making these expectations explicit may make it easier to

suspend them, thus allowing the actual experience to be described as less biased by initial *sub-rosa* expectations. (Hurlburt, 1990, p. 20.

Making a list of presuppositions that needed to be bracketed was a reasonable thing to do, but it was not successful. I discovered, after attempting this PSRG and its presupposition listing on several occasions with several participants, that the lists of presuppositions I and my participants were creating were not even close to being the presuppositions that needed to be bracketed. The listed presuppositions were too obvious (and therefore easily bracketed) and often quite divergent from the actually emergent phenomena. That is to say, we didn't know, at the outset of a study, what presuppositions would actually interfere with our ability to apprehend faithfully the phenomena that presented themselves (which were often themselves surprising, which is to say discrepant from the expected phenomena). So I eventually abandoned the PSRG, abandoned the attempt to specify a priori what needed to be bracketed, and, instead, took the stance that whatever interfered, or possibly interfered, with emergent phenomena needed to be bracketed. In short, bracket all relevant presuppositions.

As a result, part of what I take to be the DES skill is the development of what I call *antennae*, detectors of when a participant says something that seems possibly to be about something that is not descriptive of the at-the-moment-of-the-beep experience. When my antennae jangle, I try to explore with the participant whether he or she is actually describing experience, and if not what we can do to assist in cleaving to experience. I've been doing that for 50ish years, and I fancy myself to have some well-practiced antennae, sniffing out all manner of distortions. Part of every sniffing is the recognition that the sniff might be on the wrong track—you have doubtless heard me say that I am not as mind reader. The skill, as I see it, is to hone the antennae, and then to honor the antennae when they jangle, but at the same time to be open to the possibility that the antennae are jangling a false alarm.

That my antennae are always sniffing and I honor that without mindreading is what I mean by bracketing all presuppositions.

Gualtiero comments: Re: "There are thus two competing generalities: the *there's-more* generality, and the *there-is-a-range-of-definedness/inchoateness* generality. I would prefer to encounter each of Gualtiero's samples as they are apprehended in their immediacy, and then *later* go back and create generalities as seems appropriate." I agree that there are those two generalities. I am not sure why you say they are competing. They seem entirely compatible to me. I also disagree that there is any way to apprehend my experience more immediately than by pointing out that there was more to it than what I can recall and being as honest as I can about the limits of my report.

Re: other comments by Russ. I agree that you have good antennae and that it's important to help the subject focus on their experience itself without relying on "presuppositions" that might distort how the experience is described. One example of presupposition that could be distortive is Dan Dennett's claim that what he calls heterophenomenology, which according to him is the general method that includes all appeal to subjective reports, always results in reports that are about the *beliefs* of the subject about their experience (as opposed to the experience itself). I find that assumption to be distortive. It's much better to take a subject's reports to be about the experience itself. That doesn't make the reports always accurate but at least it

gets their target correctly and avoids the risk of introducing an extraneous layer of beliefs between the experience and the reports where there need no such layer. That said, assumptions are not necessarily distortive and some of them might be helpful. For example, it might be helpful to compare someone's experience of the duration of a stimulus to the duration of the stimulus itself, to see if the experience, or at least the report of the experience, was reasonably accurate. I think noticing that there is more to an experience than what a subject can report about it, and also noticing that there is a range of definedness/incoherence, are valid assumptions that can be helpful. FWIW, it seems to me that the "there's more" assumption/observation applies about equally to all my experiences, including 5.3 and 5.4. This is due at least in part to attention and memory bottlenecks, which make it impossible to track every aspect of an experience and report on them.

Russ comments: RE "I am not sure why you say [the generalities] are competing."

My aim is not really to advance an alternative. My aim is (and has always been in our conversations) to undermine the (what I take to be) corrosive power of any generality. I don't want to replace one generality with another; I want to clearly distinguish between direct apprehension and generality. One can argue whether I am effective in so doing, or whether I have enacted an appropriate strategy in so doing, but what I want to do is to describe what is directly apprehended while *minimizing* the interference of theory/generality.

RE "I also disagree that there is any way to apprehend my experience more immediately than by pointing out that there was more to it than what I can recall and being as honest as I can about the limits of my report."

This is the heart of the matter. We don't disagree in the slightest about that statement—I absolutely agree with your characterization here *as long as* the "pointing out that there was more to it than what I can recall" distinguishes clearly between direct apprehension and theory. The following two scenarios seem very different to me:

- (a) At the moment of the beep I directly apprehend myself as thinking about something, and part of that direct apprehension includes some sort of intimated recognition/inchoate-hinty recollection of the content thought. [For example, sample 4.3 was about my plans for the day including a DES interview; sample 5.4 was about charitable donations, Gaza, Ukraine.]
- (b) At the moment of the beep, I have a clear experience of something. [For example, sample 3.5 innerly seeing Dean moving in the vicinity of X-ray.]

About both (a) and (b), it is entirely fair to "point out that there **was** more to it than what I can recall and being as honest as I can about the limits of my report."

However, about (a), the *was* is a matter of direct apprehension—I immediately (as best as can be done by DES) recognize myself as directly apprehending the lurking more-to-its. By contrast, about (b), the more-to-its are the result of theory, not direct apprehension: my theory (probably correctly) tells me that no matter how clear and distinct my immediate apprehension, there is more to my experience than I have captured and described.

My aim is *not* to discredit the theory that there is always more than can be captured and described—I happen to think that is true. What I *don't* want us to do is

to confuse the difference between (a)-type and (b)-type experiences. That is, I want us to bracket the always-more theory so that we can distinguish *in the world of direct apprehension* between directly apprehended *there's more* and theory-driven *there's more*.

Here's a crude comparison: (a) It's morning in San Francisco, and I see the Golden Gate bridge partially obscured by fog. My direct apprehension is of the limits of my ability to see the bridge. (b) It's afternoon in San Francisco, and I see the Golden Gate bridge. My direct apprehension is of seeing the bridge clearly, even though by theory tells me that my seeing is not really of everything. In both cases, it is fair to say "there's more," but the there's-more-ness comes from very different sources.

RE "FWIW, it seems to me that the "there's more" assumption/observation applies about equally to all my experiences"

I agree—you, Gualtiero, as an individual, don't have many (or perhaps any) purely (b)-type experiences. But that does not at all mean that no-one else does.

RE "it might be helpful to compare someone's experience of the duration of a stimulus to the duration of the stimulus itself"

I entirely agree, but that helpfulness derives entirely from having gotten the directly apprehended experience right (meaning directly apprehended, not confused with theory) in the first place. If the direct apprehension and its description was already corrupted by the knowledge / theory about the stimulus, then the comparison is not very interesting.

1:01:10 GP: Yes.

1:01:11 RTH: And if, and if I can influence philosoph, what philosophers think about inner experience, that would be good. [GP: Well...] and, and, and I, I find that you gotta do that sort of one at a time and, uh, and, and that's,

1:01:24 GP: Well, you, you had already influenced how I think about it with your writings, but now it's much more direct and, and intense and it's, um, definitely having an impact on me. [inaudible]

1:01:40 RTH: Well, I'm, I'm in, I'm in favor of that. So I'm, but, but I would also say that it's, I think that the, the method works when it's, it's free agents coming together because they think it might be interesting to do something. And as long as, as long as we are interested in doing it, then I would say we should continue to do it. And when one of us loses interest, then we probably shouldn't do it anymore. [GP: Okay.] And, uh, and, and I don't think we need to plan what that's gonna be. We can, y'know, I'm, I'm a

1:02:12 GP: Yeah, yeah. I, and this past week I've been, uh, working on something else that's urgent. I have a deadline tomorrow. And then after that I can go back to some of the other, y'know, comments that you made in writing, and look at that stuff and maybe respond if I have anything more to say.

1:02:32 RTH: Okay. Well, so I've got, I've gotta respond to this podcast, you guys. Should I, should I raise the possibility? [GP: Sure.] Actually I'll just, I'll raise it in general. I'll say, y'know, I got a guy who might be interested in being a co [GP: Mm-hmm.] co-investigator and see what happens. Okay. I'm pretty sure he'll say yes, but he should have the, the free agent, right? Yeah. Okay. All right then.

1:03:01 GP: Should we schedule another one?

1:03:02 RTH: Yeah, let's schedule another one. Uh.