

TRANSCRIPT WITH COMMENTARY

Joe Jebelli: A Science Author

Interview 2: Sampling day 2

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the February 13 interview with Joe that is available as a video at <https://youtu.be/yOWofK8zJw>. In green are comments about and explanations of the Descriptive Experience Sampling process; in dark green are comments / explanations that took place in the interview itself. If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please let me know.

Joe = Joseph Jebelli

RTH = Russ Hurlburt

CK = Cody Kaneshiro

AG = Amber Goto

- 0:05 RTH: It is Monday morning here. Pretty early Monday morning.
- 0:09 Joe: Yeah. Did you, uh, have a nice weekend?
- 0:11 RTH: Yes, it was, it was very nice. A big, big sporting event in the United States. I don't know whether you all pay attention to the Super Bowl, but,
- 0:20 Joe: Uh, yeah, know, afraid not, but I, I know how popular it is over there.
- 0:24 RTH: It's a big deal here. My family had a party with <inaudible>. I was host.
- 0:31 Joe: Oh, lovely.
- 0:32 RTH: So it was good.
- 0:39 RTH: And anything we should be talking about before we look at beeps.
- 0:44 Joe: Um, so I should say that I, um, I did these beeps today only because yesterday I was planning on doing it yesterday, but something came up yesterday, which meant I couldn't actually really do it yesterday. So, but what I did is, um, I've taken today off work, so in order to get the effect of the weekend today, basically. Um, but the beeps, I did them today, um, not yesterday.
- 1:09 RTH: Okay, that's fine, fine with me. We, we found that within limits it doesn't much matter. Sooner to the closer to the interview the better. So that's good.
- 1:20 Joe: Yeah, exactly. Yeah.
- 1:21 RTH: And there's, I think Cody was saying the last time around, even, even during workdays people, people's mind wanders away off pretty often. So it depends on the person. So I'm, I'm glad to have him from a day off.

1:35 Joe: [laughs]Yeah, no, it's, it was, I think it is been really interesting doing it, uh, on a day when I'm not working, actually, um, to like notice experiences that, uh, wouldn't necessarily notice before maybe, or I dunno. Well, I don't know. I suppose it's interesting because I, I mean, I suppose on a workday, I, I, y'know, I'm, I'm at my computer so much that I think a lot of the beeps would be me at my computer [laughs], so. Right.

2:00 RTH: Well, let's, let's see. Number 1.

SAMPLE 2.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

2:03 Joe: So, um, so beep number 1, um, it was at, uh, ten to, ten to twelve today. And I was standing at a bus stop, um, and the beep went off. Um, I was standing at a bus stop in a crowd of people and the beep, the beep went off as my eyes were following a car. Um, cuz I was noticing how blue it was. It was like a very bright cyan blue. Um, and I noticed that my eyes were following that car at the moment of the beep. But I was also thinking at the same time, I was thinking the words "you have to decide." Um, that's, yeah, that's that though. That was my experience at the moment of the beep.

2:03 Russ comments: Notice that "I noticed that my eyes were following that car" is a statement of meta-awareness—Joe noticing what Joe is doing. We will have to sort out whether that is what he actually means.

2:49 RTH: And uh, are you more into the car or more into the, "you have to" be, "you have to decide" portion?

2:57 Joe: Um, I feel like it was 50–50. It was like, yeah, the, the, the blueness of the car was definitely something that, that drew my attention quite strongly. But the words "you have to decide" were also very present.

3:13 RTH: Right. Well let's start with the blueness of the car. So the car's going by. You see the car, and for whatever reason you're attracted to the cyan-y blue of the car.

3:23 Joe: Yeah, it's because everything else in my, in my, in my visual, in my field of visual perception, uh, wasn't as colorful as that. And it was a very striking cyan blue. So the moment I spotted it without even wanting to, my eyes just followed it.

3:23 Russ comments: Note that "because everything else..." is a statement causation. DES does not try to understand causation, so RTH will let this statement pass by.

3:43 RTH: Okay. And when you say your eyes followed it: is, are you attending to your eyes? Or are you saying, well, I'm, I'm seeing the blue and I'm continuing to see the blue and I'm continuing to see the blue [gestures turning his body]. So my eyes *must have been* following you.

3:55 Joe: Yeah, the latter. I was, I was sort of, yeah, I was just following.

3:55 Russ comments: See the comment at 2:03. Here we have decided that the eye-following is *not* meta-awareness.

4:03 RTH: Experiential, experientially it's about the blue. I see the blue of this, this car and the beep catches me in the act of it.

4:09 Joe: Yeah. Yeah.

4:11 RTH: Okay. Anybody else have any questions about that or aspect?

4:15 CK: No, I'm good.

4:17 RTH: And then "you have to decide." How is that present to you?

4:22 Joe: So, uh, that was present to me cuz it was, it was kind of the tails end of, of a thought process I was having. I was, cuz I was stood at the bus stop and I was, I was actually thinking about, I was thinking about, um, my work, I was thinking about the book and I was thinking about the structure of the book, and I was thinking about the structure of, uh, one of the chapters in the book. And I was running through all these ideas in my head. And then, but then, uh, I sort of had the thought that I just had to dec, *pick something*. I had to decide. I just had to decide basically how something would go in, in the structure of the book. And the words "you have to decide" basically appeared in my mind at the end of that thought process. And that was when the beep went off. But it was strange because it was, I dunno if *strange* is the right word, but it was, I noticed that those words, I could hear those words in my head at the same time as I was seeing and, uh, the, the cyan blue car and following it with my eyes.

5:24 RTH: And when you say you hear the words in your head, what, what exactly does that mean?

5:30 Joe: Um, so...

5:32 RTH: First off, lemme ask a simpler, lemme ask a simpler question. So were the, these exact words, quote, "you have to decide," unquote? [Joe: Yeah.] Or would it be that "make your mind" is okay? Or...

5:42 Joe: No? No. It was the exact words "you *have* to decide."

5:44 RTH: Okay. And, and with an accent, like you underline *have*, *have*, "you have to decide"?

5:50 Joe: Yeah. [RTH: Okay.] Yeah.

5:53 RTH: And then, so how are these, how are these words present to you?

5:57 Joe: It was al, it was, it was kind of like the, the auditory equivalent of the mind's eye, I guess. I sort of, I didn't really, I didn't see them. I didn't see them as text as I have with other thoughts, like similar thoughts about, about words. It was, it was more that I just heard them in my head. It was like a voice in my head. And it was, and it was, uh,

it was, it was similar to my voice and it had like, as you said, the same accents and intonations. So in the same way that I would say “you *have* to decide,” it was almost like I could just hear that in my head.

5:57 Russ comments: This presents a fundamental dilemma for RTH. Joe has spoken about *hearing*, but RTH knows that many people, perhaps Joe, speak about *hearing* when the actual phenomenon is of *speaking*. What a skilled interviewer would do in this situation is to introduce the alternative with a sufficient amount of undermining so that Joe does not feel pressured into assenting. Viewers can judge RTH’s upcoming performance for themselves.

6:31 RTH: And, and so sometimes it’s hard to tease apart, but there’s a distinction to be made between, I’m *saying* these in my head and I’m *hearing* these in my head. [Joe: Hmm.] And I guess the, so I, so first off, I think it’s possible to *say* something in your head without moving your lips or without anything. So, so let’s establish that as *possible*. Whether that’s what happened for you is another story altogether. And then the distinction would be, does it seem like I’m *saying* to myself, “you *have* to decide”? Or am I hearing my voice being played back to me: “you have to decide.” “You *have* to decide.”

7:12 Joe: That’s the, yeah, that’s a really interesting question. I dunno if I know the answer to that.

7:16 RTH: Okay. Um, so lemme say two things. One is, one is, uh, for some people that distinction is very clear as, as, as clearly distinct as saying into a tape recorder, “I have to decide” and hearing my voice coming back out of a tape recorder, “you have to decide.” Same person, same voice, same words, same inflection, same everything except the one’s *speaking* and one’s *hearing*. So for some people that’s very clear, [Joe: Hmm.] and for other people that’s not, not so clear. And e, either way is fine with me. And I would say this is your second sampling day. And so it sometimes takes a while to tease those options apart. So the fact that you’re saying, “well I’m not too sure,” that’s fine with me. Maybe on some sampling days now that we’ve had this conversation in others, [Joe: Yeah.] that either will become clear or not.

8:06 Joe: Could it be a bit of both?

8:09 RTH: Absolutely.

8:11 Joe: Okay. Yeah, it’s d... Cuz it’s difficult to... I suppose, I suppose there might be other experiences where I, it’s much more clear cut that I’m saying it in my head or as opposed to hearing it. But this time, yeah, it was, it was so difficult to, I couldn’t tell because it was, y’know, I was having these, these thoughts about, about the structure of the book. And um, and, but at the same time, because I was trying to think and reason my way through these things, there, there was a bit of like, uh, construction, there was a bit of me sort of, I suppose me, me saying things in my head. But then I think at the same time that might have then triggered things that then I would just hear. So I don’t know if that, that precise moment “you have to decide” was the sort

of conclusion of my thoughts being told to me or me saying it in my head? Um, or, or, or a bit of both. I dunno.

8:11 Russ comments: (See the comment at 5:57.) RTH takes Joe's indecision as evidence that RTH has not pressured Joe one way or the other. Good!

9:03 RTH: Well, I, I would say we should just leave that as a, as an open question. One of the characteristics of the, of the descriptive experience sampling method is that, that we don't have to decide about, about a phenomenon at this particular time. If, if this is the kind of a phenomenon that is frequent or important for Joe, then we'll see other beeps tomorrow or next week or whenever, and we can figure it out then. So I, I would say we, we would prefer to actually *gradually* figure something out rather than *speculate about* it.

9:36 Joe: Okay.

9:36 RTH: And that, that's an essential feature of the, of the method because, and it comes from, I think that most speculations are incorrect, including by me (and or *especially* by me, maybe you could say). And, and, uh, so I would prefer not to do them.

9:54 Joe: Yeah. Yeah. That sounds, that sounds good. Sounds, yeah, that sounds right.

9:59 RTH: So let me ask one more question, then we'll move on to beep 2, or anybody else has any questions about this. And that is, so the, you're, you're contemplating chapter stuff and, and is, is that present in your direct experience at the moment of this beep? Or is that sort of context, and at the moment what I'm, I'm saying or hearing, "you have to decide."

10:21 Joe: Um, I think that had passed at the moment of the beep. The moment of the beep was, um, was very much orientated around those words. "You *have* to decide." Um, so yeah, I, I feel like there was, there was a kind of a gap between me thinking about the chapter structures and then me, me sort of either saying or hearing in my head, "you have to decide."

10:47 RTH: Okay. No, I'm good. Anybody else?

10:52 CK: I'm good. And I would just add to the conversation we had about the distinction between inner speaking and inner hearing. Those are one of those things where we probably, I mean, maybe we'll be able to clarify that in a future beep today, if that's something that's relevant. But more importantly, I think the, the, the thing to note about this method is that, because we've talked about it, the hope I think would be, Joe, that going forward in the next round of sampling, you may, you may be better positioned to the next time a beep goes off and something like you have to decide here at this beep, maybe present another beep, you'll be in a better place to say whether this was spoken or heard, y'know, whether it was about producing the words or about hearing it. And, um, in that way, that's why we call this sort of training, *iterative training* within the method in that all these conversations are sort of both about today, but more importantly about the next time we do this. Um,

- 11:48 Joe: Okay. Yeah, no, that, that, that, that's, that sounds really good. I think it's, it, it's interesting because it's, it's, it's like what you guys were saying last week, I think, Russ, you used the words, uh, *mindfulness on steroids*. You're sort of not, you're noticing things, but, uh, you are having to learn how to notice things as well that you wouldn't necessarily, well you don't, I suppose until you've gone through, as you said, Cody, this training process, it's hard to almost have the vocabulary or the, the, the ability to, to notice things in the way that they're actually being experienced.
- 12:18 RTH: Right. I think that's right. But I, I would like to add one more thing to what Co, Cody said, and that is that he said you might be, you might be more able to distinguish between speaking in hearing going forwards. That's true. But it's also the case that as a result of this conversation, what you discover might be that it's neither speaking *nor* hearing it's something else that, that is off to the side. So I don't wanna, I don't want it to seem like we're trying to set up some kind of a distinction between A and B. [Joe: Mm-hmm.] It could be C or D or E or, or a bunch of other o, other stuff. Our *object*, like as *you* just said, Joe, is to, you started to become more mindful, to become more skilled, mindful and into whatever it is, A, B, C, D Q, [Joe: Mm-hmm.] whatever. [Joe: Yeah. Yeah.] Number 2.

SAMPLE 2.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 13:07 Joe: Um, so number 2. Um, so I was on a bus and I was looking out at the window and, uh, I noticed, uh, I noticed a, a, the, the beep went off as I was looking at a black cab. And I was noticing the, the orange, the bright orange taxi sign that just says *Taxi* on the black cab. Um, but I was, at the same time, I was also thinking, um, I was thinking that my parents are getting old and that I should visit them more often. [laughs]
- 13:44 CK: And what, anything else present at the moment?
- 13:51 Joe: No, I mean, I suppose it was a busy crossroads. Um, I was in, in Holborn in London, so I, I was also aware that I was aware that there were very tall old buildings either side of me, and it was a very busy crossroads. Um, um, there was, oh yeah, there was also a faint image in my head of my mother, like, while I was thinking that thought about my parents getting old and I should visit them more. Um, and that image, um, it was strange cuz it, I could, it, I could definitely see it in my mind's eye, but it was sort of, it was almost like it was overlaid, uh, y'know, on top of the, the taxi and the orange taxi light that I was, that I, my attention was most focused on.
- 14:36 CK: And any one of these things more prominent at the moment?
- 13:51 Russ comments: Joe has just said that the orange light was most focused on. CK's question is problematic because it implies that that orange-light-seeing somehow doesn't count. Probably as a result, the awareness orange light is (probably unfairly) dismissed from discussion for the next 25 minutes (until 40:59).
- 14:44 Joe: I think the, the, the thinking that, that I should visit my parents more often was, that was the most prominent thing in my experience at the time. Um, the black cab and

the orange light, the orange taxi light, um, was also quite prominent. But I would say not as prominent as me, me having that thought and, and seeing a sort of very faint image of my, of my mum. Um, yeah, it, it, it was, yeah, it was, it was almost like in all of the busyness, my mind had sort of found a, a point, if that makes sense, in that taxi cab and that orange light. And then I had that, and then I was thinking those things about my, my visiting my parents.

15:32 CK: Sure. Okay. Let's start with the parent. The, the thought about the parents. So how was that present to you?

15:46 Joe: Um, it was, so it was present as a, a slight feeling of, of guilt and, um, like I felt a bit bad, um, even though I, I do visit my parents like fairly often. I was, uh, but it was more a, a bit of a feeling of guilt, but it was also, um, it was kind of mixed up with a feeling of, um, like an awareness that they're, they're getting old, they're getting older. Um, and, uh, I mean, strangely, I don't, the, the moment of the beep itself, I was, I was thinking I need to visit my mom more, more my parents more often. And I had the image of my mother, but leading up to that, uh, was the feelings of guilt and thinking about visiting them more often.

16:34 And I, I also thought, uh, this was again, just before the beep, uh, but I was thinking about a conversation I'd had had with a friend over dinner a few months ago. And he had told me that there's this, there's this website where you can type in the number of how often you visit home and how old your parents are and how old you are. And it tells you how many times you are likely to see your parents again before they die. And I think that had got, I don't know if, I don't think that that sparked the thought, but that was like a part of the, the thought before I then had the feeling of guilt and the, the thinking that I need to visit my mom, my parents more often, and then having the image of my mother. Um, so yeah, it was sort of present as, um, I suppose, yeah, as a, as a kind of, partly as a memory from the conversation with my friend, but then partly also as a, just a feeling of guilt and, but more than anything, a feeling of just a feeling of awareness, like a discovery almost. Like, ah! y'know, I need to visit my parents more often.

17:40 CK: And so the deal with the, the conversation with the friend and the website and stuff though, I take you to be saying (so this is a question) that, that was *before* the beep, though? That's not to me at, at this moment. That's not directly present to me at *this* moment.

17:53 Joe: No, that wasn't present at the moment. That was like just before it. The, the actual, the, the moment of the beep itself was, was predominantly, uh, the, an awareness, a kind of like a discovery, like, ah! I need to visit my parents more often. Uh, and a slight feeling of guilt as well, like a, but it was difficult to tell if it was guilt or sadness. Um, I think maybe it was difficult to discern one of which of those two it was. Yeah.

18:28 CK: And so that, so the feeling of, of guilt or what we're calling sadness here, is there a is there any characteristics of that?

18:37 RTH: Can, can I interrupt that? Let's go, let's go with the heart of this, which is in, in the thinking about it.

- 18:44 Joe: Hmm. Um, yeah, what, what I was thinking about, uh,
- 18:48 RTH: Well, so I, I take you to be saying that at the moment of the beep, this center of this aspect of your experience is something like, well, I shouldn't, uh, I should be visiting my parents more often. Mm-hmm. Yeah. And if that's a sort of a cognitive-y thing (I'm get, I'm asking about that). Is that a cognitive-y thing?
- 19:07 Joe: Yeah, it was a cog, yeah, it was a cognitive thing. It was also, it was also strangely a, uh, a bit of a visual thing, which is why I could almost, I could, I could actually see an image of my mother sort of overlaid on onto the taxi. Um, um, and it was, I mean, it was predominantly a cognitive thing at that point. But there was also, uh, a small, I think a small bit of the experience was the feeling of sadness and guilt. Um,
- 19:35 RTH: And the cognitive thing. How does, how does that present to you?
- 19:44 Joe: [pause] Yeah, that's really, it's a really good question. [pause] Um, yeah, that's such a good question. I mean, it's, it's just there, it's, uh, it's just, uh,
- 20:09 Joe: Trying to put it into words. Um, it wasn't like, uh, it's strange because it wasn't, it *wasn't* an inner voice. I wasn't *hearing* myself say it, and I wasn't *saying* it in my head either. Uh, it felt more like, um, my mind was suddenly aware of it, um, but without, without me, uh, saying or hearing it, or it felt less like I was involved, if that makes sense. It, it of, uh, it kind of just appeared in my consciousness. It didn't, um, it didn't feel like I was constructing it. So as with, like, with the last beep when I was thinking, you, y'know, "you have to decide," that felt to me like more of a construction on my part, like whether or not I was saying it or hearing it, it was some, it was the kind of inevitable conclusion to like, some thought processes that I'd like that built up in my head. Whereas this didn't feel like that at all. This was more something that just, just appeared in my consciousness without, and it didn't, it didn't feel like I was that involved with the thought.
- 21:25 RTH: So, so let's let, let's have a little bit of a, a side conversation. Uh, we'll bracket this off, but from the interest that you have. So, so what you have just done is to give a textbook example of the first appearance, or early appearance, of unsymbolized thinking. This, and, and the, and the way that you have done it is, is classic the way this, this appears: you're scratching your head, you're not exactly sure. It seems like it's strange, I don't how to put it into words. It's a, and yet there is a cognitive, a cognitive feeling. And what you have said about it is pretty specific that it's, y'know, it's, there's an image, and that's *not* part of it. This is separate from it. And, and, um, so that, that's an example of unsymbolized thinking. Now, the reason that I interrupted Cody is that if he went down the road to talk about feelings first, it would've deprived you, *I think*, of the opportunity to, to be confused, but clear, clearly confused about the unsymbolized thinking.
- 22:32 And the reason for that is that unsymbolized thinking is sometimes, sometimes called a "feeling" because it's not, it doesn't have words in it. And so people say, well, it's feeling. If it doesn't have words, it must be a feeling or whatever. And the feeling aspect would've been confused. You would've gotten, you would've gotten *probably*

confused into that, and it *would've* destroyed the possibility of your discovering unsymbolized thinking for yourself. [Joe: Mm-hmm.] So we gotta, but if, if, if you want, if you want to know what unsymbolized thinking is, then after I send you the tape, rewind to the beginning of this, watch what you just watch what you just said. [Joe: Yeah.] And, and, and so unsymbolized thinking is a, is a phenomenon that I think is quite robust. I didn't hear any doubt at all in your account that you were *thinking* that.

22:23 Russ comments: RTH's description of unsymbolized thinking is risky in the sense that it might be taken as a suggestion that unsymbolized thinking is important and is an aspect of Joe's experience. In most sampling situations, RTH would not give such an explanation, would not mention the term *unsymbolized thinking*. Here, however, Joe's involvement with DES is as the writer of a book that will describe DES, and RTH thinks that the undue-influencing risk is outweighed by the describe-DES aim.

Hurlburt, R. T., & Akhter, S.A. (2008). Unsymbolized thinking. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 17, 1364-1374. doi:10.1016/j.concog.2008.03.021.

23:28 Joe: Hmm. Yeah, that's fascinating. There's sort of, yeah, there's nothing to clutch onto. It's no, so it's, that's why it's un Is that why they say it's unsymbolized? Yes. Not, they're not things you can grab hold of.

23:39 RTH: What, what unsymbolized thinking means. The *unsymbolized* of unsymbolized thinking means, is that there's no word. So I can't say, I was saying to myself, I should visit my parents, or whether my parents are getting old or what, there's no word *parents*, no word *old*, and there's no essential image. You had an image of your mother, I guess, but we haven't talked about that yet. But the, but that's not a part of this thinking. This thinking is its own experiential deal. And so the un, the *unsymbolized* means no words, no pictures, no external kind of symbol.

And, and many people think that's not possible. Y'know, people in pretty high places, pretty high psychological or philosophical, whatever places think that, think that's not possible. But I just think they, I think they're, they're mistaken about it *because* they inspect their inner experience using armchair introspection, and armchair introspection heightens things like visual [he means *verbal*] imagery. And, y'know, I, I sit down and say, well, what am I thinking about right now? Well, it puts me into a verbal frame of mind, and then I don't have the possibility for things like unsymbolized thinking. [Joe: Hmm.] And so I think much of the psychological explorations are, are misguided *because* they don't go through the, the process that we're going through here, which, which allows you to discover for yourself. I didn't, I didn't say let's go looking for unsymbolized thinking, Joe.

25:13 Joe: Yeah. It's amazing. I'm, I'm gonna spend a lot of time reading about unsymbolized thinking now. It's so interesting.

25:21 RTH: It is, it is interesting. And, but, and, and one of the aspects that's sort of the most interesting thing about it is that this method is about the only way you can discover it. [Joe: Yeah.] Maybe meditation, maybe, maybe meditation, but meditation doesn't lead you directly into this discussion. And so the good point, and the bad point is, well, that, well, one of the characteristics is that a lot of people discredit this method

because, well, y'know, Hurlburt says that people are thinking about things without words or imagery, and *that* can't possibly be true, so he must be fucked up.

- 25:58 Joe: Yeah. That's, that's, that seems so, that seems crazy to me because, y'know, as you just said, like you need to, you need to be sort of there out in the wild [laughs] to to, and have that ha you sort of go through that. Uh, I mean, it *is* a discovery. It's like, what, what, when you guys asked me that, I mean, I was, I was trying to think like, oh, y'know, how did it appear? And then I realized there is, there was no way [laughs] it appeared. And it, that was definitely experientially very different from, from the, the beep before, which was definitely more of a construction. Um, and yeah, I, I don't think, yeah, if, if I tried to like evaluate that or discover that like much later on, or going back, as you said, you would just be us, then using constructions to make some, to basically make something up. Right. Which, which isn't, which is not there. Yeah. That's amazing.
- 26:52 RTH: It it is amazing. And it's totally simple at the same time. [Joe: Yeah.] That's, that's sort of *amazing squared* or something like that. [Joe: Mm-hmm.] So Cody, you wanna go at the image, the, the image. So there's so, so as the lecture for Cody here would be, you can't ask anything in the vicinity of feelings if you suspect that unsymbolized thinking is in the vicinity, because if you do, you'll screw up the unsymbolized thinking.
- 27:23 CK: And I think that was a good, I that was so, so I guess as a, as a observation of the process, I also, Joe, recognized what you were talking there sounded like un symbolized thinking, and the reason why I had decided to ask about the feelings portion (which I think was misguided), but what I was trying to wrestle with at the moment was there was a bit of power when you were talking around like, the surprise about sort of the, or the, the discovery aspect of that thought. And I was wondering, I actually had thought in my mind, I'm like, is this more of an emotional thing as opposed to like, y'know, like meaning is this sort of an affective sort of a thing rather than an unsymbolized thinking thing. But Dr. Hurlburt, what you talked about with the, the danger of sort of falling into that trap of assuming that, y'know, most people talk about unsymbolized thinking early on as a feeling. I, I, I think is well, well said. So
- 28:21 RTH: Well, after you've seen 20 or 30 more years of, of inner experience, it'll, it'll be totally obvious to you when an unsymbolized thinking is [CK: Yeah.] on the horizon. Because, because they look just like Joe. [laughs] That was a really good example of how unsymbolized thinking appeared. But let's go to the imagery.
- 28:47 CK: Yeah. So then there's the, what you were calling a faint image of your mother, Joe. So,
- 28:53 Joe: Yeah. Um, yeah. And that appeared, uh, sort of, um, superimposed on the, on on, so on top of the taxi cab and the, the orange light. Um, so that was, it was kind of, cuz I was looking out the window, so it sort of appeared. I don't wanna, it wasn't really in the window. It was sort of, it was, it was out the window, but it was kind of, but it was in front of the orange light and the taxi. And it was just an image, a very faint image, though. It wasn't like I could see, I could see the taxi and the orange light and everything behind the image. So it was, it was faint and, and basically transparent. Um, and, uh, and it was just of my, it was just of my mother's face, uh. Yeah. Um,

that's all it was. I don't know. I mean, not quite sure *why* it was there. It was just, uh, it was just there.

29:53 CK: Yeah. Okay. And so just her face by meaning like just this portion, not the neck or,

30:01 Joe: Um, it was like there, well, the neck and the hair, um, but then like, I feel it wasn't, um, yeah, I mean, it was mostly, it was mostly it was her, it was her head hair and, and neck. And it didn't really, and it was quite large as well. Um, uh, yeah. And she's, yeah, but she wasn't like looking at me, she was sort of looking away. Um, and she looked, she looked as she does now. Um, and I, yeah. And it was just, um, yeah, I'm trying to, th I'm just looking at my notes, but there was nothing else that I, I jotted down apart from just the faint image of, of her head. Um,

30:51 RTH: And by looking at the way, do you mean sort of in profile or do you mean face towards you, but eyes off to the side or something?

30:58 Joe: Uh, kind of in profile. Like she, it was like her, her face was like off to the right a bit.

31:09 CK: Maybe this is a difficult question, but is this the case that this is sort of like, I'm pretty clearly seeing my mom, but just the transparency, like if this were in, y'know, in a computer program, I've set the transparency quite high so it's clear but transparent? Or is it sort of, when I say faint and transparent, the whole thing is sort of blurry or unarticulated or something like that. And so

31:35 Joe: Yeah, it was more, more the second thing you said, it was more like, um, it was kind of hazy. Um, it was ki um, it was, it was, um, it was a kind of, it was a, I mean, it was, yeah, blurry, hazy, uh, almost, almost kind of ghost-Like it was, y'know, just sort of just, uh, just a sort of a very sort of faint haze of, of her face in profile looking to the right. Um, but there was something, I mean, there was something kind of sad about the image as well. Like I, she didn't, um, I could, I could, I mean it was, I couldn't really discern that much of a facial expression because it was, again, it was quite faint and she was looking to the right. But I think maybe cuz I was, maybe there was a feeling there was a slight that that slight feeling of guilt and sadness I think maybe was caught up in the image as well. Cause uh, she, she looked sort of a bit sad. Um, so, um, but it was quite, I mean, it was fairly short-lived. So I, I dunno if I can describe anything more than that really. Um, I'm worried that if I do describe anything more than that I might just be, um (what's the word?) um, confabulating or I dunno, uh, over overinterpreting.

33:05 RTH: So can I, can I give a little lecture here? A presupposition lecture? So when we started out talking about the imagery, you said, well, it was transparent because I could see the orange light of the taxi cab or something like that. That's, it's that *because* I would like us to focus on, so that, that *because* sort of implies that you have a theory that says, well, if I see her and I see the taxi cab and they both seem in the same direction, then *she must have been* transparent. Hmm. Something in that ballpark. I'm not, I don't, I don't, I don't wanna pin us down too much about that. What, what I would like us to do is to recognize that the, that the world of perception does not follow the rules of physics. So the fact that you can see her out there and the fact that you can

see the taxi cab out there and you can see them both and they don't interfere with each other does *not*.... il, in the real world, that would imply transparency. But in the exper, in the experiential world, it doesn't. And, and so if she's transparent, fine, I've got no problem with her being transparent, but let's not make her transparent *because she had to have been transparent* because I was still seeing the orange of the taxicab light.

33:05 Russ comments: This discussion of presuppositions is *not* designed to discover anything about today's sample—*not* aimed at discovering whether the image was or was not transparent. The discussion is aimed at *tomorrow's* sampling; it is an attempt to weaken a presupposition about the world of perception.

34:18 Joe: Yeah, yeah, that's a really good point. I mean, yeah, it makes me think that, uh, I can't be a hundred percent sure about the transparency as, or maybe it was just a faintness or I, I was aware that I could see both things, the, the taxi cab and the orange light and her. Um, and so I can't be a hundred percent that, um, yeah, that I haven't, I, I suppose that I haven't just used the rules of physics there to sort of try and make sense of it. It could, it could be that she wasn't as faint or as transparent as I thought basically. Um,

34:58 RTH: So what's hap what's happening here is another textbook example (and you're doing *great* about this. This is the, this is *perfect* as far as I'm concerned), but it's another textbook example of what, what I call (after Husserl or whomever) the bracketing of presuppositions. So if you have a presupposition that perception has to follow the rules of, of physics, then that, that presupposition can screw you up as you have just pointed out then in terms of your reporting. Cuz y'know, if you start to say something that seems obviously wacky, well that can't be right. So I gotta go off to the side a little bit. So our task is what I (pirating Husserl or whoever) would say we gotta *bracket* those presuppositions, which means, well, y'know, the, the real physical world does exist and, but, but let's just not assume that the, that those rules apply to per, perception. But that the question is, is what is characteristic, what is present to us? And y'know, let's let, let's, let's not say it *has to be* this way or *has to be* that way. The question is just the way it is.

36:08 Joe: Okay.

36:08 RTH: *And*, and I'm delighted with, with your coming to the conclusion, *well, yeah, maybe I did that and now I'm not so sure* and be, and that that's *perfect* for my point of view. That that's the sign of a good careful, well-motivated guy. *And*, and it is the reason why descriptive experience sampling has to unfold over, over some number of days. So I could have told you at the beginning, y'know, well let's make sure (y'know, last week or two weeks ago or whenever) I could have said, you, y'know, the world, the rules of physics don't apply. It wouldn't have st, that wouldn't have had any really effect on you or, or if it *had* an effect on you, it would probably screw things up even worse than they, than it would be now. But *now* we can say, well, Joe's got a particular example of how, well *in my experience, these rules do seem to apply*. *Now I gotta figure out what to do about that*. That's, that's Joe learning to bracket presuppositions, bracket *his own* presuppositions, bracket on his own turf in his own

territory, so to speak. And it, and you and the, the, there's no way to do it other than to, to be iterative and have people who, who are skilled at, y'know, at sniffing presuppositions when they occur and, and non-judgmentally saying, *well, let's figure out how, how we can bracket it.*

37:41 Joe: Yeah. You sort of have to, you sort of have to go through it to realize that, that you're doing it. It's almost like you, you need to be immunized against that.

37:50 RTH: I think that's right. I think that's right.

37:54 Joe: Okay. Yeah. That's interesting. Yeah, that *is* interesting. I think that's, that's so useful to, to think it's so useful to think of it in that way as well, the bracketing of presuppositions because it, I feel like it's, uh, gives me, uh, yeah, more not, well not more freedom, but more, it's a stronger ability I suppose, to actually describe and notice your experiences in the way that they're actually appearing as, as opposed to as you said, y'know? Yeah. I suppose the mind is still, they're still parts of the mind that are creating rules that don't apply to the actual experience.

38:32 RTH: Right. I would, I would say a lot of my art, the DES art, is to be sensitive to when it looks like *possibly* people are, are operating on a presupposition rather than a des, rather than a description. And I'm no, I'm no mind reader. I, I have no, no particular insight into Joe's inner experience. What I am, I'm pretty, I'm pretty careful listener. And so when he uses words, like, *because*; when he says something like, well this is faint *because* I was seeing the, the orange light, well I'm, I've been around the block a few times and, and I've heard, I've heard that kind of, that kind of thing come into presupposition. So the art of, the art of DES is to, is to recognize that that *might* be a presupposition (might *not* be, because I'm *not* a mind reader) and to say, well, *if it is*, then let's bracket it. And if it's not, then you can just, well, Hurlburt was on the wrong track here at this, at this particular point. So the art of the, of the interview is to, is to non-dogmatically bracket presuppositions, I guess.

39:49 Joe: Yeah.

39:51 CK: And it's aspirational as well, right? Like we're never gonna, I, I think we're not gonna be, we're not striving for perfection where we bracket everything, but we do our best where we can and [Joe: Yeah.] y'know, so I think that's also another part of this too that's important. And that's why we take a team approach too, so that, y'know, clearly this wouldn't happen if it was just Joe and Dr. Holbert doing this, or Joe and Cody, or Joe and Amber, right? Like it, if there's multiple people here, we can all, we're all bracketing our own presuppositions, the presuppositions of others. And so...

40:24 Joe: Yeah, that's a trick, a tricky thing to do. But, but I can see that it's really essential. I'm just gonna quickly turn a light on. Okay. Okay. Yeah, no, that's, that's really useful and um, really important to know actually.

40:52 RTH: So I think we've probably beat number 2 to death and we outta move on to number 3.

40:58 CK: I think so, um,

- 40:59 AG: Before we go on, I have a question about the sign and the taxi. Um, so, uh, you were mentioning the bright orange of the sign and the black taxi. Are those colors prominent in your experience or is it, or are and are they two separate things? Or is it just, I'm looking at the taxi and the sign is catching me or something else?
- 40:59 Russ comments: See the comment at 13:51 regarding avoiding talking about the experience of the orange light. The power of the upcoming description suggests that the seeing of the orange was indeed a strong aspect of Joes experience at this beep.
- 41:22 Joe: So the, the color orange was quite prominent in the experience. Um, and the, the brightness of the orange as well, um, because it was, uh, cuz it was during the day, uh, it's quite bright outside anyway. And normally when you see these bright orange, black, uh, taxi lights, you notice them at night obviously. Um, and uh, I noticed the brightness of it because there was, there was, it was almost as if there was a bit of surprise of how bright the orange of the taxi sign was, given how bright it was outside. And I think that a, a part of the thing that caught my, that that drew me to it was that was that little bit of surprise as well. Like there's a really bright orange taxi light there and it's really bright orange, um, even though it's really bright outside.
- 42:18 AG: Okay. So is there anything about the cab-ness in your experience? Or is that more context, I'm looking at this cab and the sign happens to be on top of a cab? Um, or does that question not, does that distinction not make sense?
- 42:35 Joe: Um, so do you mean like, was the cab like, uh, separate from the sign or like, uh,
- 42:42 AG: Yeah. In your experience or is it just, or is it the, I mean, to the black of the cab, I'm into something about the cab? Or am I just into the sign that happens to be on a cab?
- 42:51 Joe: Yeah, it was more that I was into the, the orange sign that happened to be on the black cab.
- 42:57 AG: Okay.
- 43:00 RTH: So, well, I'm in my lecturing mode. Lemme give you one more lec one more lecture here. So when you described the, the orange, you, you explained *why it was*, well the orange was here cuz it was the traffic or whatever. We're, we're not particularly interested in that explanation and for, for a number of reasons. One is it's just too complicated and, and, and two is it is probably not true, y'know, or, and if it is true, it's only sort of partially true. So the, the world of explanations is not, is not our bailiwick, I guess I would say. So it would've been fine with me if you had said, well I was just into the orange sign and that was it, y'know, for whatever reason. I don't know, just the orange. Oh yeah. So it's about the *experience*, it's not about the *explanation* of the experience. Yeah.
- 43:48 Joe: Cause the, okay, yeah, that makes sense. The ex Yeah. Cuz the explanation is something totally different and irrelevant to the experience.

- 43:56 RTH: It is. And the, and the, the, the reason that this is important for what, why I'm telling you (cuz you're writing a book on about this stuff) *is* that if that, that people like you (and almost everybody else) are, are, find it easier to go to *explanations* than they do to go to *experience*. And, and so science is built on explanation. Psychological science is built on explanations, y'know, and they, and they build 'em on and they, the explanations come before they have an adequate grasp of what the phenomenon is. That I think is the fundamental nature of the book that you're writing about. It's about people who write explanations without adequately knowing about the phenomenon. And the *reason* is, well, because they're written by people like you, and, and we, we haven't yet figured out that you have to look at, you have to bracket it away explanations in order to get it at, uh, [Joe: Yeah.] phenomenon. And, and I'm not a, I'm not *opposed* to explanation. I'm, I'm totally *in favor of* explanation. I'm trying to give an explanation right now! But I *am* opposed to giving explanations before the phenomenon is understood. And I'm *particularly* opposed to believing explanations before they have been tied to the phenomenon, which is...
- 45:23 Joe: Yeah. That totally makes sense. It's, it's like a, I suppose it's sim maybe similar to the, the hypothesis-driven science model where you, you have an idea about something, right? And instead of just observing the data and you are overinterpreting and analyzing and coming up with stuff that then, as you said, you haven't really understood the observation or what the phenomena actually is.
- 45:47 RTH: Right. Sci science is totally hypothesis driven, psychological science dramatically so, and I don't, and I don't think that's sustainable. Sooner, sooner or later, psychology has to recognize that hypotheses have their point (I'm, I'm totally in favor of hypotheses. I've written a statistics textbook. I'm, y'know, I'm, I'm a, I'm a believer in hypothesis testing.) but they're, but they're *almost* always *way* premature before you've really understood what the, what the phenomenon, you're trying to measure. [Joe: Mm-hmm. Okay.] But that's, that's an aside. So Amber's gonna ask you about beep number 3.
- 46:30 Joe: Yeah, um,
- 46:31 AG: On to beep 3.

SAMPLE 2.3 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 46:33 Joe: So beep number three, um, I was, uh, on the, on, on the tube, on the London Underground. Um, and I was, I was sitting down and the beep went off, um, at the moment that I noticed a small black mark on the seat opposite me. Um, and I was staring at it. Um, and while the word "light," um, I was one, the word "light," um, kind of appeared in my, in my mind. I was just, I was wondering, um, I mean, so yeah, I was, it was part of a, a thought process that I was having before the beep went off. Um, in that thought process, just as, as a quick as I was, I was, I was, uh, I was having, I was, I was thinking, oh, I was, I was thinking, oh, I, I was thinking more on the bus, and I'm not thinking really anything on the tube. And, uh, and I was thinking it was so light outside. Maybe it's because it's, it wasn't, uh, maybe it's cuz it's dark, but the beep went off as I was noticing the black mark and noticing the word, uh, "light" in my

head. Uh, the only other thing that was present was the vibrations and rumble of the train and a screeching sound as well.

48:05 AG: And are any of these things more prominent to you?

48:10 Joe: The black mark was the most prominent thing.

48:17 AG: Okay.

48:18 RTH: And can I ask one more presupposition question before we get done too far down the road? So I'm to my presupposition antennae, which I have a lot of, as y'know, not noticing here. I'm, I'm wondering whether the vibration rumble and screeching is in your experience, or whether that's a characteristic of the world out there, and then when I stop and take stock in the world and I say, well, I must have been paying attention to the that stuff.

48:46 Joe: Hmm. Yeah, I, I think there's definitely, there's definitely some truth to that because the rumble, the actual feeling of being on the train, the rumble, the vibration, and the screeching, uh, I was aware of that more *after*, um, the moment of the beep. Uh, I mean, it was there all along, but I wasn't, I don't think it was, um, don't think it was, it, I don't think it, it wasn't, uh, as present at the moment of the beep. So it could very well be that the moment of the beep went off, I noticed my experience and then, um, y'know, and then as I was jotting down notes as well, I think it's, it's possible that some of that was a presupposition that I was, as you said, trying to maybe fit into, a fit, uh, um, yeah, trying to make more more sense, trying to relate the experience more to the real world maybe than it actually was.

49:54 RTH: So I, I, I think that's possible. As as, as I said, I'm not a mind reader. Let me tell you why, why I would've, why I asked that question. One is, Amber treated them as if they were three separate deals in experience, which I thought was a little bit out ahead of the possibility of the third one being presuppositional. But the reason that I, that my pre my presupposition, antenna jangle is because it is, every, everybody would say about the tube. Well, y'know, the rumbles and screeches and vi, vibrates, but those are three pretty separate sensations. There's, there's the auditory and the mechanical and the, and, and the whatever. And, and that would make it, if, if you, for for example, if you had said as number three, "I was noticing the screech of the, of the wheels," I would've, now my presupposition an antennae probably would've been okay about that mm-hmm.. But when you give a generality that is applicable to the tube and *not* the way sensations actually sort of generally work, well then my presuppositional antennae...

51:10 Joe: Yeah. The more I think about it, the more I think that that, that probably was a presupposition. The, the, the actual moment of the beep, the thing that was I was most starkly aware of was, was the black mark. Uh, I was just tracked just staring at the black mark and the word "lights" was, was in my mind at the time. Um,

51:34 RTH: And I'm gonna turn it back over to Amber, but I'm gonna give you one more lec, lecture as a, as a book writer; Science would have been interested in your experience

of the screeching, vibrating whatever, *which didn't exist*, and *wouldn't* have been interested in your black mark and the word "light," which *did* exist. And they would've talked about that as if you were having experience, and it would've been 100% wrong. [Joe: Hmm.] And that's what, what, that's what, that's the root of psychological science. [Joe: Yeah.] *What was going on with you when you were on the, on the, on the tube? Well, I was paying attention to the vibration and the screeching and the whatever.* That's, and, and then that would've accepted, been accepted as fact, and then we would've tried to *explain*.

52:21 Joe: Yeah.

52:24 RTH: And so it's a big deal to me.

52:27 Joe: Yeah. I mean it's, it's interesting cuz now I'm think, uh, it's almost like I'm, uh, I'm sort of a bit annoyed with myself that I can't sort of hone my awareness more [laughs], if that makes sense. It's almost like it's, yeah. It's almost like the, the presuppositions sort of take you away without you realizing.

52:48 RTH: Uh, yes, yes, they do. And, and it, and this, I wanna make 100% clear, this is *not* a criticism of Joe. This is Joe. Joe at least has the good sense to have sought us out and tried to, tried to figure out something about most people are just sailing along in their presuppositions without ever, ever thinking about it. So Joe's *ahead* of the pack of presupposition bracketers. And, but it, but it's, y'know, the, the *world* has taught you to pay attention to the theories and not pay attention to the actual phenomenon. Your entire training has been in that direction, both formal training and informal training.

53:40 Joe: How does it... Yeah, I mean, uh, I was, I was gonna ask like, I suppose it depends on the person, but I mean, so that can be unlearned? You can train not you can train yourself not to do that.

53:53 RTH: Yes, you can. Yeah. And you we're in the process of doing it right now. We're on a second sampling day, and Joe has discovered two pretty different, but pretty significant presuppositions that infect his own way of looking at his own experience. One is that visual experience has to be the way that it is, and the other is with auditory experience has to be, y'know, has... Well, maybe it is and maybe it's not. So I'm, I'm, I'm *not* in the business here specifically of saying, well, y'know, you *weren't hearing* the vibration or feeling the vibration or hearing the screech or whatever. I don't have *any idea* about that! I don't know. I *am* in the business of pointing out, well, *you've gotta pay attention to that. Y'know, let's, let's only be talking about what's going on at the moment of the beep and not try to make any, make any stuff up.* And, and that it's, y'know, it's, it's a fairly high art. You gotta be, you have to be attuned to a lot of stuff going on, and you have to have a sort of a clinical deal. I've gotta support you. I can't say, y'know, what a stupid guy. You are, y'know, you're not even paying attention to your...

55:05 Joe: Yeah. It's like, it's almost like the, the mind wants to tell a story, right? It's always wanting to tell a story [laughs] instead of actually figuring out what the plot is at the, at the moment [laughs].

55:18 RTH: I, I think that's right. And, *and* what I would say is, I think, and I've, and I'm, maybe I'm mistaken, maybe I'm *unusual* in this regard, but I think that the, the Joe's *actual* experience is more interesting than the story. We haven't yet talked about it, but the, the mark and the word "light" are *way* more interesting than, *oh, I was paying attention to the rumble and the screech* and uh, y'know, who gives shit about the rumble and the screech? Everybody hears the rumble and screech. That's the way the tube is. You could, there's, y'know, you could be poet, wax poetic about that or whatever. It would *not* be interesting. [Joe: Yeah.] Black mark on the seat? "Light"? [Joe: Yeah.] Those are gonna, those are gonna turn out to be interesting.

56:01 Joe: Yeah. Yeah.

56:02 RTH: And the *reason* that they're gonna turn out to be interesting is that they're, they're uniquely Joe. They're, there's what, for whatever reason, Joe is interested in that kind of stuff and the rest of that stuff, y'know, that's, that's an average across 2 billion re, riders of the tube.

56:22 Joe: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. That's, that's, this is a very good point. Okay.

56:30 RTH: I've given several pretty long lectures here. So Amber, you wanna find out about the mark on the seat here and, uh,

56:37 AG: Um, well, I, so is the black mark, like more prominent, like way more prominent than the light, or just a little bit like 60—40 or like 90—10, or... the numbers don't really matter, but just so we can get an idea.

56:50 Joe: It was more prominent than the word "light." Um, I'd say about 70—30. It was, it was definitely the most prominent thing. Um, okay. The word "light" was also quite, was, was definitely quite prominent.

57:05 AG: Okay. Um, so let's start with the black mark. Um, tell me more about how that, how you are noticing that.

57:16 Joe: Um, so I can see it on the seat opposite me, and it's a small sort of misshapen black mark, and it's on, it's, it's against a, the, the chair is blue, but it's the black mark itself. It's just, um, yeah, it was small against a blue chair, but it was, y'know, I don't, um, it's, it's really hard to explain. Um,

57:57 AG: No. Yeah. Um, so I guess, I guess I'm wondering, are you into the *shape* of it? The *size* of it? The *color*? Or something else? Or is it just, I'm looking at this mark? Or is something I didn't say? Anything else? Is that distinction Not make any sense. Like,

58:20 Joe: I was noticing the blackness of it was very, it was very dark black and the shape as well. Um, and it wasn't, uh, it wasn't like I was sort of just looking around and it caught my gaze. There was definitely, um, I was definitely focused on it for some

reason. I was, I was sort of staring quite intently at it. I didn't, um, it didn't just sort of catch me mid-flight, mid, mid-thought flight, if that makes sense. I was very much sort of just staring at it. Um, yeah, it was very much, yeah.

59:04 AG: Oh, is there anything?

59:06 Joe: No, I was just, I mean, I, yeah, I was always gonna say that the mark was sort of, it sort of appeared to be like the only thing that was going on essentially in the experience. Um, and it was certainly like most of what was going on, um mm-hmm. Yeah. Um, yeah.

59:26 AG: So is this intense staring, is that part of your experience or is that, uh, well, we like to call like a fact of the universe, like, well, I, I'm looking at this, I've been looking at it, and so I'm saying I'm intently staring at it? Or is it that something about this intense staring or staring in general, anything like that in my experience at the moment of the beat.

59:49 Joe: Um, so when you, so, um, wait, could you just a, can you just repeat...?

1:00:02 AG: Yeah. So is there anything about the staring, er, the intense staring or anything like that, is that present to me at the moment of the beep? Or is it just my eyeballs are aimed in the direction I'm caught at? I'm, I'm catching this mark.

1:00:19 Joe: Oh, let's see. Um, no, there was definitely something about the intensity of staring. Um, so I was aware that I was staring at it as well. Um, so it wasn't, yeah, it wasn't the kind of use the words fact, fact of the universe that I was sort of happened to be staring at it at the moment of the beep. Um, something about it felt a bit more purposeful if that, uh, if that word makes sense. Uh, but again, that might just be, that might just be presuppositional explanation. Um, I mean, it was, I was, yeah, it was,

1:00:19 Russ comments: AG's 1:00:02 question ("is there anything about the staring....that is that present to me at the moment of the beep?") asked about what DES calls meta-awareness—not just staring, but noticing myself as staring. Joe's answer ("I was aware that I was staring at it as well") suggests that there was indeed a meta-awareness.

However, that answer is surrounded by equivocation: It starts with a pause and "let's see...," and it ends with "Um, I mean, it was, I was, yeah, it was," which suggests that the intervening answer should not be taken at face value.

RTH recognizes that questions about meta-awareness are frequently misunderstood, and hears Joe's equivocation, so he will seek to clarify.

1:01:10 RTH: Let me see whether I can rephrase the question, because my presupposition antennae are jangling. So, so what Amber is asking is, is your, is, is this (for this aspect, this 70% of your experience), is this aimed at the mark or is this aimed at *me* and *my intensity* as I look at the mark?

1:01:35 Joe: It's aimed at the mark.

1:01:36 RTH: That's what I figured. And as a, as a point of technique (sort of lecture for Amber as well as for, for Joe here), that when you ask, so when an interviewer ask you a question and the, and the, and the person is nonplussed about the, about the answer, the that should be taken as a really clear no. And then if he says yes after that, that's gonna be presuppositional. So Joe didn't, in this particular case, Joe didn't understand what the question was and said, oh yeah, can you tell, ask, ask me that question again. And then at the end mm-hmm., and then you asked the question again. And then he said, well, yeah, I was, there was an intensity about it or whatever. That's, that's a behavioral *no*, that this wasn't a, an important part of this question followed by a *yes*, which light up my presupposition. Well, y'know, Amber ever done the wrong, wrong path and he'd been into it or something. So I, what I'm trying to say is there's no mind reading involved. I am *by no means* a mind reader. I am listening to what's going on here.

So I think we're good about the, the blackness of the mark. The word "light."

1:02:51 AG: Yeah, I think so too. Yep. How is the word "light" present to you?

1:02:57 Joe: Uh, it was, it was partially visual, so I could see the word itself, "light." Uh, strangely it, I, I, well, it, it almost appeared, uh... I was staring at the black mark, the word "light." uh, kind of, well, I'm just gonna say it cuz it's, [laughs] this is, this is basically how it appeared. It was the, the actual word "light" was like in, in big capital letters, which were each in like, sort of, uh, they were like white, white big capital letters that were white that spelled the word "light." And that was, that was a sort of on top that was, uh, on top of the black mark, uh, sort of, sort of above the black mark. Uh, it was almost as if it was *in* the carriage itself. Uh, yeah. Um, so it was, yeah, uh, I mean, yeah, uh, I mean it's strange, but there was sort of, um, uh, there was something, um, y'know, there was something, uh, to do with *wood* as well, like in the way that, um, there were, there was the word "light" appeared in that way, but there was also a sort of, uh, it was, I think it was, it was, it was fairly visual of, uh, a, a plank of wood and light shining on the plank of wood. And the word "light" was sort of on in front of that, uh, almost. So it kind almost made the word "light" kind of look like a sign. Um, uh, there was something really peculiar about the way I was experiencing the word "light" whilst looking at the mark. Um, I'm trying to explain it without sounding a bit mad [laughs]Um, uh, no, uh, yeah.

1:02:57 Russ comments: I am often asked, about DES, questions such as, "Why should you believe what your participants say about their experience? They are just making things up, saying what you want to hear!" I think Joe, here, is definitely *not* making things up. His struggle with himself is obvious as he works to overcome his deep reluctance to give a description that by his own lights sounds a bit mad. Either Joe is a *very* good actor, or he is describing experience that would be easier to avoid.

1:05:34 RTH: So, so could I intervene here and say there's what we're interested in, is what you see, whether it's strange or weird or whatever is not particularly of interest to us. What's of interest to us is what it is that you see. *And* ev, everybody has their own unique ways of looking at it, and that's what makes people interesting. That's what makes Joe, Joe and, and whatever. So, so let's see whether we can set aside whether it's weird or crazy or mad or whatever and describe what you saw.

- 1:05:34 Russ comments: A large part of the DES skill is to be supportive of participants when they have ventured out onto thin ice.
- 1:06:06 Joe: Yeah, okay. So yeah, so it was, it was in big capital letters. They, they were white and it was on top of the black mark, but there was what appeared to be a sort of a, a, a plank of wood immediately behind the word :light." And there was actually light shining onto the word l'ight." Um, so, and it kind of, uh, it almost looked like a sign, um, like a sign you, yeah, like it, it almost looked like a sign that had the word light written on it, like on a, on a, on a, on a board. Um, but again, the, the, the, the, but it wasn't as, again, it, uh, it still wasn't as present as the, as the, the black mark. Uh, it was just there on *top* of the black mark. And I was aware of it, uh, yeah. As, as a, just as, as, as, as, I mean, it was mostly visualized.
- 1:07:25 Uh, but I, but the thing is, there was, uh, yeah, I mean there was, [long pause] there was a sense of *absence* as well. Uh, it didn't, like, it was, uh, I was aware as, as I, I was also aware that it, that it, um, that it was, it might have been symbolizing that, um, I was aware that there was no light where I, I was, um, I can't be completely sure about that though. It was more of an, uh, it was more of a visual thing, although it was, as I said before, it was, I think it was the result of, uh, me having the thought processes leading up to the beep about how I was thinking more things on the bus. And, and that's because there was more light, um, on the bus. And that where I was at the, at the moment, there was, it was just dark. So, um, but that's probably presuppositional explanation. [AG: Um mm-hmm.] Um, yeah, that's, that's how it appeared. The word "light." [AG: Okay.]
- 1:08:57 RTH: I think that's great. And my, in my role as timekeeper, I would say we've overshot our hour by 10 minutes. And, and in my role as observer of the whole process, I would say, (I guess maybe I said it before, but I'm gonna repeat it), you're doing a great job, Joe, of, of describing your experience. These, these things are not easy to describe and, and it's a way of, and it's a way of talking that you have relatively little practice in doing, probably. And, uh, so we're asking, we're asking questions which are, which are tough. And uh, and I think if the, y'know, this are complicated mo.... All, all human interactions are complicated. This one is complicated. And so I think we're trying to keep track of, of those complications. And I'm hoping we can do it again, cuz I think it's interesting.
- 1:09:50 Joe: Yeah, yeah. Absolutely. Um, yeah, I think it's, it's, I find it so fascinating that this, the idea that, uh, there's training involved in this. The, like the, what you were talking about with the practicing the presuppositions and being more aware of actually what you're experiencing, um, as well as yeah, not trying to fit it into, uh, yeah. Act, actually, actually like experiencing the thing you're experiencing rather than just going on, um, the tracks that you are sort of already pre-programmed with. Um, so I, I, that's, that's fascinating to me. The,
- 1:10:30 RTH: Well, lemme, lemme say one more thing about that. At the risk, we're wasting everybody's time, but it's something that I haven't written about bracketing or presupposition, and it's pretty clear in this model. I, I guess I have written it, but I haven't been too explicit about it. You, one cannot give a lecture in the abstract about

bracketing presuppositions. If I had given a lecture, uh, about bracketing presuppositions before we had started here, that would've just built more presuppositions in your, in, in your construct of... or more theories, I guess I should say, more little theories or whatever, more constructs in, in your system of constructs. *Instead*, what we have done, is we say, look here, Joe, at this particular moment looks like *maybe you*, Joe (not Sam or Bill or whoever else), *you may be* imposing some self theory, world theory, whatever. And that and that. So the, so the difference is it's not a presupposition is not a thing in general. It's a personal thing *about Joe*. And that's why you can't give a lecture about bracketing and presuppositions and expect it to do anything except make things worse. A lecture about bracketing presuppositions just builds *more* structure. Whereas, look here, Joe, maybe at this particular time you were thinking that, that that had to be transparent because that's, that's, that's a different deal that's aimed, aimed at it in the opposite direction.

1:12:00 Joe: Yeah. It's sort of, you have to be aware of it kind of in real time, almost

1:12:05 RTH: In real time *and in real person*. it's about *Joe's* presuppositions. It's not about presuppositions—it's about what might happen *in Joe*, not in general. Or what *is happening* in Joe or what might be happening in, but about something *that happened with Joe*. That's the key. And it's looking *that way* [points to the right] as opposed to looking *that way* [points to the left]. Er, it's actually looking that way [points at Joe] (I'm now pointing at a picture of Joe) rather than looking this way [leans back and holds his hands up expansively] y'know, people in general, well, y'know, people in general sometimes have pre positions, that's a totally different deal. [Joe: Okay.] But that's just taking us farther past our hour and, uh,

1:12:49 Joe: Yeah, I, I'd love to do this again. Um, I feel like I'm, uh, just starting to, uh, starting to a, uh, understand it in the way that I should. So, um, yeah. Um, are you guys, um, up for doing it again fairly soon?

1:13:07 RTH: The rest of this week is pretty tough for me.

1:13:07 Russ comments: They compare calendars

1:13:52 Joe: That should work. In terms of, um, so I think this time I will, um (even though I've taken today off, um, so today would basically be like Sunday), uh, I think I'll, um, I'll, uh, although I don't know, I mean again, so is it better to do it on, on the day as opposed to the day before?

1:14:13 RTH: It doesn't much matter. *Two* days matters, one day is okay.

1:14:18 Joe: Okay. Um, well I'll either do it the day before or again on the day as I've done today. In terms of um, uh, like where to do it. So, so far it's just been, again, me sort of in the wild doing things that I would just go and do and normally do. Um, but I, I'm curious about whether or not, um, like, uh, should I make more of a conscious effort to go and do things that, uh, I would say do, but not like that often to get different experiences? Or, um, yeah, I don't know.

1:14:58 RTH: I would say the more you try to meddle in it, the worse it gets.

1:15:03 Joe: Okay.

1:15:03 RTH: Sooner, sooner or later. Y'know, if we, if we sample the half a dozen times or whatever, you'd probably see a bunch of different kinds of experiences. It would just sort of naturally happened by the ran by the nature of randomness. At *that* time it might be, it might be interesting to, for you to speculate, y'know, I haven't done it while I've been, y'know, whatever, whatever *X* would be there and then I, I should sample at that time and that might be a good idea. But

1:15:31 Joe: Yeah. But for now, just to stick to no meddling totally in the wild, just, yeah. Okay. Yeah.

1:15:40 RTH: The, the reason the reason for that is that if you were to say, *well, y'know, I haven't done it doing, doing X*, that would be your presupposition that something is going on in *X* that might be interesting. Well, maybe that's true, but the but the what that, what that does is that sort of raises the presuppositional stakes. *Well, I gotta find something interesting, something here. I gotta find something here that I'm not finding anywhere else.* I would rather have you get some more practice at just describing experience as it is—presupposition-bracketing experience you could say—and *then* [Joe: Yeah.] and then you can do what you want to do after that.

1:16:23 Joe: Yeah, that sounds, that sounds good. I think that, yeah, so I'll just, uh, yeah, I'll carry on just doing whatever I happen to be doing at that time.

1:16:33 RTH: I think that's fair.

1:16:34 Joe: Great. Okay. Okay, great. Uh, thank you all so much. Um,

1:16:39 RTH: You're welcome. And I will, I'll send you the video sometime later on today and uh [Joe: Yeah.] it takes, it takes a while to process it. [Joe: Yeah.]

1:16:48 CK: And just to make sure we're on the same page here, did we say, are we saying nine o'clock 9:00 AM Pacific time / 5:00 London time next week, Monday the 20th? [Joe: Yeah.] Is that what we decided on? Works for me.

1:16:59 AG: Thank you.

1:17:00 RTH: Works for me too.

1:17:02 Joe: Thanks so much guys.

1:17:04 CK: Thanks Joe. Have a good one.

1:17:06 RTH: See you later, Joe.