

TRANSCRIPT WITH COMMENTARY

Joe Jebelli: A Science Author

Interview 3: Sampling day 3

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the February 20 interview with Joe that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/ZdlHY7EWqlU>. In green are comments about and explanations of the Descriptive Experience Sampling process. If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please post them as YouTube comments.

RTH = Russ Hurlburt

CK = Cody Kaneshiro

AG = Amber Goto

Joe = Joe

0:06 RTH: Well, I hope the cat recovers soon.

0:09 Joe: Oh, thanks. Yeah,

0:10 RTH: [laughs]. How, how long, how long does he have to do this?

0:15 Joe: Um, so, cause we've got, we've got, uh, two cats, uh, brother and sister and this, they've both been neutered today. And, um, I think it's like a 10-day recovery where they have the, takes 10 days to have the cone. And I think we need to like, give them meds and sort of keep an eye on them. Um, so yeah, they're, they're not, they're not like the happiest cats at the moment. [laughs]?

0:35 RTH: I guess not! Well, I hope it all works out.

0:41 Joe: Thank you. How are you Russ?

0:43 RTH: I'm doing pretty well. This is a holiday for us, actually, so it's

0:49 Joe: Oh, nice.

0:49 RTH: President's Day we call it. But I think mostly it's just like any other holiday.

0:55 Joe: Uh,

0:56 Joe: Nice.

0:57 RTH: Means there's no, no school.

1:02 Joe: Okay. Lovely.

1:04 RTH: [laughs]. So this is gonna be your third crack at it, is that correct?

- 1:10 Joe: Yeah. Third time. Yeah.
- 1:17 RTH: And I think I'm ready to go at it if everybody else is ready.
- 1:22 CK: Yeah. Any questions, comments, problems, issues you wanna talk about, Joe, before we launch into beeps?
- 1:29 Joe: No, no, no. Think, uh, I think I'm getting that, getting the hang of the logistics, so, yeah. No, it all went fine.
- 1:44 RTH: Let me go with, go with my earbuds here. And, uh,
- 1:50 CK: And did you wear the beeper? Uh, today? Yesterday?
- 1:54 Joe: Uh, today. Okay. Uh, yeah, again, I was gonna wear it yesterday, but I just couldn't. Um, so, um, yeah, I wore it today, but again, I did, uh, I didn't, um, uh, I did my work pretty early this morning and I got everything I wanted to get done, done so I could then have the rest of the day freed, freed up for, y'know, experiences that I could, um, yeah, like normal experiences in relation to the beep that aren't me sitting in a coffee shop on writing my book [laughs].
- 2:29 RTH: Well, well, I would say let's see them then. Number 1.

SAMPLE 3.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 2:33 Joe: Uh, so number 1 I'm gonna have to say is, is that I don't want to disclose.
- 2:38 RTH: Okay. And that's perfectly fine with me.
- 2:42 Joe: Ok.
- 2:43 RTH: So shall we go on to number 2?

SAMPLE 3.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 2:45 Joe: Yeah. So number 2. Um, yeah. That, that happened at, uh, five past two today. Um, so the beep went off as I was looking at the words, uh, "rotted duff." Uh, and I was looking at those words in a, in a book that I picked up. I was in a bookshop, and I'd picked up a copy of, um, I think where the, *Where the crawdads sing*. I think that's the title of the book. And I, I was thumbing through it and I'd started re, I started reading the, uh, the opening of the book and the I, uh, the beep, yeah, the beep went off when I read the word *rotted duff*. And I was, so, the moment of the beep words, I was staring at the words *rotted duff*. Uh, but I also had, uh, an image in my head of a swamp because I'd, uh, yeah, I also had a, an image of a swamp because the story was describing a swamp.

- 3:43 RTH: And would you say that your experience is more about seeing the image or more about the words?
- 3:49 Joe: More about the words.
- 3:51 RTH: Okay. 60—40, 90—10, 99—1 51—49?
- 3:57 Joe: I'd say in that, in that moment it was more like 80—20. I was, I was struck by the words.
- 4:04 RTH: And what, what, what about them was...?
- 4:09 Joe: *Rotted duff*, it, it was almost like a surprise. It felt like a surprise. Like I didn't, they, there was something strange about them. They, they sort of, they *stuck out*, uh, in a strange way. Yeah.
- 4:25 RTH: Visually str, visually stuck out?
- 4:28 Joe: No, no, not visually struck out. Um, it's hard to describe. It wasn't, it wasn't visually. It was more like, uh, I was, there was a sense of surprise and, um, uh, a little bit of confusion as well. I think I wasn't quite sure what the word *duff* meant. So there was a bit of confusion about the word *duff*. Um, but there was, yeah, I don't know. It's not, it wasn't a visual thing. It was, it was more of a cognitive thing. I was just s, kind of surprised and confused and they just, there was a strangeness to them that I can't quite explain or describe. Um,
- 5:24 RTH: So a semantic strangeness.
- 5:27 Joe: Yeah. Uh, yeah, that would be a good way of
- 5:29 RTH: I don't, *I don't understand* strangeness, uh, *what does this mean? What, what's this about?*
- 5:36 Joe: Um, yeah, that's a really good question. So there was a kind of, the strangeness was, it was a, it was an unfamiliarity. It felt very, the words felt very foreign to me. It felt... Yeah. Just they felt fo Yeah. Unfamiliar, foreign, kind of distant somehow.
- 6:08 RTH: Okay. Um, and I'm taking this, this, I understand this as being something like a cognitive reaction to the words. Um, yeah.
- 6:08 Russ comments: Joe had used the word *cognitive* at 4:28, but as I write these comments, I think RTH's underscoring of the cognitive-ness of the reaction is too strong.
- 6:21 Joe: Yeah. That was definitely a cognitive thing,
- 6:24 RTH: Sort of a what the, *what the heck*, what the,

- 6:28 Joe: Yeah, yeah. Um, yeah, it's difficult cause I wanna elaborate on the word *strangeness* and like *unfamiliarity* to try and describe about what about them was, was sticking out. Um,
- 6:54 RTH: Well, there's, it's not necessary that we, that, that you understood at the time exactly what was strange or that there might have been some kind of a cognitive sense of strangeness or unfamiliarity and that's it. And that's,
- 7:10 Joe: Hmm. Yeah. It might just have been that. Um, [sotto voce] *rotted duff*. Yes, there was some something sort of dreamy as well. There was something, something kind of appealing about the word *rotted* in a weird way.
- 7:26 RTH: Ok. And the other thing I would say about the, about the method is that we try not to *reconstruct* the experience. So I, I heard you say "rotted duff, rotted duff," like as if maybe you were trying to recreate that experience. That's a different... A *recreated* experience is different from the experience *in the wild* for a variety of reasons. And so we try to focus on the, what we can *recall* of the experience at the moment of the beep, and,.. *rather than* to try to fill in the blanks by reconstructing.
- 7:59 Joe: Okay.
- 7:59 RTH: And the, and the *reason* for that is that what was going on at the moment of the beep is not necessarily the same thing that would be going on when you try to reconstruct it [Joe: Mm-hmm.] some number of hours later.
- 8:09 Joe: Yeah.
- 8:10 RTH: And, and so we recognize the imperfections of the method, but, but sort of value the *let's stick to the moment of the beep*, even if that's incomplete, rather than try to trowel in the blanks with some mortar that would be made by, y'know, at, at five o'clock in the afternoon rather than at [Joe: Mmm.] one o'clock in the afternoon or whenever, when the beep was.
- 8:33 Joe: Yeah. Okay.
- 8:36 RTH: So then at the same time, I'm seeing a swamp in my imagination.
- 8:42 Joe: Yeah.
- 8:43 RTH: And what do you see?
- 8:46 Joe: I see, uh, a an open plain of a swamp, and there's a bird as well, a large bird. And that's, that's in the front, that's in, the bird, that's the, that appears closer to me than the, than the rest of the swamp.
- 9:07 RTH: And so does it seem to you that I'm seeing a bird in a swamp? Or I'm seeing a swamp that happens to have a bird in it?

9:13 Joe: Is a swamp that ha, that ha happened to have a bird in it. That where I was standing in relation to the swamp was the bird, was the bird was al, almost right in front of me. And then the rest of the, the image stretched out into a kind of vista of a swamp.

9:31 RTH: Okay. But my, my interest for whatever reason is in the *swampiness* of it rather than the *birdiness* of it. Is that correct?

9:40 Joe: Uh, the interest, um,

9:44 RTH: My visual,

9:47 Joe: Yeah. Yeah. The, um, I feel like it was kind of 50—50. Okay. Like the interest in the swamp and the bird.

9:56 RTH: Okay.

9:57 Joe: Um, yeah.

9:59 RTH: And was this seeing in color, the swamp in color? The bird in color?

10:04 Joe: It was, but it was, it was a very, it wasn't, um, they weren't strong colors. It was, it was, there were faint colors. It was almost, it was *almost* as if it was black in black and white, but it wasn't quite in black and white. It was almost as if I hadn't filled in the image with the colors or something. I dunno. It was, it didn't, um, it wasn't in, it wasn't in full color, but it also wasn't in black and white.

10:31 RTH: And, uh, and the, does that mean that all the colors seem sort of toned down or there's patches of color and patches of black and white and

10:39 Joe: No, the, everything was toned down.

10:42 RTH: So I just haven't articulated the colors, or haven't elaborated the colors, or something like that.

10:47 Joe: Yeah. Yeah.

10:51 RTH: And, and does this have a, a border in it like some, uh, photograph image would and like that, [holds up fingers as if a frame] or does it just seem to go off an infinity, like a sort of a regular seeing.

11:05 Joe: Sort of just went off? It didn't have a, a defined border. It just went off. Um, but I was, but it wasn't like a, it wasn't like I could just keep seeing on and on. It was, I think the, the edge, the edges of the, the swamp vista went off into the distance sort of outta sight. Um, so it sort of blur, sort of blurred, it blurred on the edges that didn't have it, it wasn't like a defined thing.

11:37 RTH: Okay. And I think I'm good, unless anybody else has questions.

11:40 CK: In terms of the swamp, Joe, what, how, how does that all go? Or are there any, anything to say about what you're seeing?

11:51 Joe: Hmm. Yeah, it was, it was quite flat and it was grassy, um, with lots of, with lots of water. Um, um, that was the, those were the main features, just a sort of open plain of grass and water.

12:18 CK: Got it. Okay. Then I think I'm good on that

12:22 RTH: Number 2.

12:26 Joe: Okay. So,

12:27 CK: Or beep 3, I guess. Yeah,

12:29 RTH: Yes. 3.

SAMPLE 3.3 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

12:30 Joe: Um, so beep 3. Uh, so, um, what was this, this was around three o'clock and I was, I was, uh, sitting in my living room, uh, in my flat at home. And I was, I was on the, I was on the phone to a travel agent and I was talking about a trip to South Africa, and the beep went off, at the moment the beep went off when the travel agent, um, (I think his name was Scott) said, uh, "when would you like to go?" And the beep went off on the word "go." Well, it, it went off, it went off in the, in the, it went off at, it was the gap. He said, "go," and then I paused and said, "Go." [spoken slowly] And the beep went off at that moment, as I was saying the word *Go* and thinking about the word *Go*. Um, yeah.

13:32 CK: And either one of those things more present?

13:37 Joe: So the word *Go* was the most present thing. Um, it was more, it was more present, um, uh, me saying it than, than the travel agent saying it, cuz I'd repeated the word *Go* at the moment of the beep, um, almost as a question. Um, but yeah, it was as I, it was, there was a feeling of unknown at the same time as I, as I was saying the word *Go*. Um, yeah. Um, yeah. I'm trying to think. I mean,

14:31 RTH: Is the word *Go* out loud? Are you saying that to the travel agent, or is that an inner thing?

14:37 Joe: So I said it out loud, but I also *saw* the word in my head at the same time. And it was, uh, it was in *big* capital letters. Uh, and, uh, it was quite... [pause, rubs his forehead as if in distress] Again, it appeared in my head, uh, almost again. There was, um, there was like a strange wooden background, which, um, yeah, now I think about it, it's strange because I think, I think I've seen words before with wooden backgrounds, so I dunno. Yeah. Um, there was, yeah, there was, it was, for some reason it was in front of like a large dark plank of wood.

- 14:37 Russ comments: Regarding letters seen on a plank of wood, compare sample 2.3.
- 15:35 CK: And so is it, so in terms of what I see, is the, in terms of the letters, is there a, is it in a particular font or color, or?
- 15:51 Joe: No, it is, it was, it was in, it was in black, big, uh, like a, a big capital G, quite a big o as well. But that wasn't capitalized. Um. Yeah. It was just like, it was, it was in black. It wasn't in it, it was, it was very *big*. And I, I just, it was. Yeah, it's strange. Um, uh, yeah, that's all I can describe about the font. Uh yeah, it was big, the G was capitalized, and it was, it was in black, so.
- 16:32 CK: And what about the, the wooden plank, or the wooden background?
- 16:37 Joe: The wooden background that was like very dark brown, um, wood, and that was behind it. Um, but the, the, the whole image itself together, uh, the word *Go* and the, the dark plank of wood, um, was also in kind of a dark setting. There was, um, cuz even though I was in my living room, and my living room is flooded with light, that's not what I *saw* in the moment of the beep. The moment of the beep, as I was saying the word *Go*, I saw the word *Go* in those big, y'know, big letters with within the black ink behind, uh, sorry, in front of the dark, uh, uh, uh plank of wood. And that itself, that, that image was, was very dark. It was all very dark. Um, yeah, I don't know. I don't know why. Um.
- 17:36 RTH: And, and do the, do the letters seem like they're *on* the plank or *in front of* the plank?
- 17:40 Joe: In front of it. Uh, they were definitely in front of it. They weren't attached to it. Um, yeah.
- 17:50 RTH: And do you see the plank, enough of a plank, to see grain in the wood or anything like that? Or is it just a?
- 17:55 Joe: No, I can see, yeah, I can see that it's, that it's wood. I can see the, the grain and the, and the lines of the wood. Like, not that clearly. Like, it's like, it's not *that* well defined, but it's well enough defined. It's, it's, it's well defined *enough*, I mean, to see, it's, to see that that's, that's a plank of, of, of dark wood.
- 18:15 RTH: Okay.
- 18:20 CK: Alright. And you had said earlier, Joe, that there, y'know, like where you were situated in the moment is in a bright room, but this is sort of a dark thing? [Joe: Mm-hmm.] Is this, is this all *inner*, like in my mind's eye, in my imagination? Or is, is it, does it feel as if I'm sort of seeing this somehow external or something like that?
- 18:44 Joe: Hmm. [pause] Um, in that moment it felt external because I, I wasn't attending to any, the rest of the room or what was going on in the, the room. I couldn't, it's in that, in that, in that very moment that I saw that I couldn't see the rest of the room. Uh, so, uh, I don't know if that means it's in my imagin, imagination or if it's something I'm pr, I dunno. I mean, yeah, that's a really good question um. Yeah, so it was almost like,

um, it was almost like, y'know, the image itself basically blocked out what was actually in front of me. Um, yeah. Which is, um.

19:44 RTH: So, so, so lemme, lemme see whether I understand the question. So does it appear to you that this plank is out there in the real world? Like I'm looking at a *real* plank that's over there on my wall or something like that? Or does it seem like I am just, I'm seeing the plank and I'm not seeing the rest of the world. And why that's, why that's happening, I don't need to explain?

19:44 Russ comments: The interview is probably over-emphasizing the distinction between the experience of seeing an imagined object and the experience of seeing what is (mistakenly) understood as seeing a real object. I think the interview has created a confusion in this regard which was not warranted by what Joe has said. But it will take us a few minutes to straighten it out.

20:07 Joe: Yeah. So it, it was like I was seeing it out in the world, um,

20:12 RTH: As a real object out in the world, or as a, I'm, I'm just?

20:17 Joe: Yeah. As a real object out in the world, with the word *Go* in front of it. It wasn't that far away from me. And it was, it was sort of, it was to the right, like in front of me and to the right. And it *looked as if* it was out in the real world, but I couldn't see anything else at the time. But again, it was a very momentary thing. Um, but it definitely *looked as if* it was out in the real world.

20:46 RTH: So we, we need to push on this a little bit because, because of, well cuz I wanna know, I guess. So by "out in the real world," there are a couple of different ways that I could understand that. *One* is that at the moment of the beep, I can't tell the difference as to whether this is an imaginary plank or a real plank. Looks, looks to me like it's a real plank and I could reach out there and grab it. And, and, and, and, and so it would seem to be *of the real world* in the same way that the door behind you seems to me to be *of the real world*. [Joe: Hmm.] It's, it's not in *my* real world, but I, but it seems like of the real world; that's one possibility. And then the *other* possibility is that I see it clearly, and I, and this plank is understood to be out there in the real world, but it's not something that I would grab, that's something that I could, that I'm just seeing.

21:36 Joe: Hmm. Yeah. The latter, I didn't, I didn't, I didn't want to reach out. Yeah. It didn't, um, I suppose it didn't see, it wasn't as physical as, as you said, like the doors behind me and something I could reach out and grab, but it was still there. But, um, it was still *there*, but not in a strongly, a physical way, if that makes sense.

22:00 RTH: So it hadn't, maybe it would be fair to say that it had *imaginary* reality, but you weren't confused as to whether it had *real* reality?

22:12 Joe: Yeah. But then at the same time it was, it did look very real. Um, but uh, it looked very real. But I dunno. I mean, I can't, I don't know if, uh, dunno if it looked real enough for me to think, yeah, I'm just gonna grab it. Um, but I mean, it was so quick. Uh, I feel like

more, more, more the latter of your, your explanation is, is closer to the truth. Um yeah.

22:48 RTH: So I created a very realistic-appearing plank,...

22:51 Joe: Yeah. Yeah.

22:53 RTH: ...and yet I *know* that it's a figment of my imagination rather than a feature of the external world.

23:03 Joe: Yeah. [tentatively] Uh.

23:06 RTH: Or, or somewhere in the middle of that, maybe those are not distinctions...

23:09 Joe: Yeah, like, I feel like it's maybe somewhere, somewhere in the middle. [RTH: Okay.] Um, it was very, it was very striking.

23:19 RTH: Okay.

23:20 Joe: Hm. Yeah.

23:20 Russ comments: We have now finished the probably unwarranted excursion described in the comment at 19:44.

23:24 CK: And, well, I guess, and this is a question for ever.. Any other questions or anything else to say about the, the *seeing* portion of *Go*? I know there's other portions of this, but any, anything else more to say about that part

23:38 RTH: Of it? I'm good. I'm good.

23:40 Joe: No, nice.

23:42 CK: And, and so is, is *Go* present in any other way, Joe? Aside from the seeing of it?

23:51 Joe: Um, yeah, it felt, it felt like a, it felt like a question. There was a sense of unknown, um, also like a little bit of confusion about the word. Um, um, almost like I was sort of going, going over the word, trying to understand it. Um, so there was that kind of sensation with it. Um, uh, but again, but again, it's very, um, that was more of a sort of, uh, again, a very sort of short-lived, um, uh, like, uh, moment, like a very short-lived mo, feeling within the moment. Um, um, which I think then got dragged on out after the moment of the beep. Um, so just, yeah, the fe, the feeling of unknown and confu, confusion and unknown and kind, kind, it was framed as a question in my mind.

24:59 CK: So first by short-lived, I guess the first question I, is this something that is directly at my experience at the moment? Is this something that the beep interrupts, catches in flight?

- 25:13 Joe: Yes, but only... It feels so, it feels difficult to, it was, it was like it caught the be, the beginning of that feeling, um, of that sense of unknown and confusion and the question, the question of it, um, that there was a, a moment of unknown confusion. And, and, and the beep caught the *beginning* of that, which was more of a, just a visceral feeling than something that was cognitive and quite clear. Um,
- 25:52 CK: And by visceral...
- 25:56 Joe: Uh, yeah, like it was, um, like I, I felt something in my body at the moment. Um, yeah, I don't, I mean I, yeah, I mean, I almost wanna say anxiety because I didn't know the, cuz it was a question was being put to me that I didn't know and I had to suddenly think about it. But, uh, that's probably, that's probably me, y'know, not bracketing my presuppositions and explaining it. It was a, it was just a, there was a bodily sensation, uh, uh, uh, that accompanied the, the, the moment of confusion and unknown. Yeah.
- 26:47 CK: Okay. And with, uh, like by bodily, like in my, in my stomach? My whole body, my fingers [laughs]?
- 26:57 Joe: Like the chest and stomach, uh, it's a similar feeling I get when I'm like nervous and like, I don't really know. Yeah. It, it was a, i I dunno, I, i dunno if it was the same feeling as being nervous, but it is, it definitely felt *similar* to that.
- 27:19 CK: And, and so is this, in this, in the moment of this beep, is it that I'm feeling this bodily sensation in my chest and stomach and I know this to be confusion, anxiety, whatever? Or is it, *or* is it something more like I'm feeling confused, uh, unknown anxiety, whatever, and that happens to, and I just happen to, I feel it in my chest. I feel it in my stomach.
- 27:19 Russ comments: The distinction CK is asking about is whether this is the experience of a purely bodily sensation (perhaps caused by an unrecognized ("unconscious") anxiety process), or whether this is the experience of anxiety (which has, as a feature, some bodily sensations. That is sometimes a very important distinction, but here (at 23:51) Joe has been pretty clear that the fundamental experience was of anxiety/confusion.
- 27:52 Joe: Um, it kind of happened at the same time. It wasn't like I had the, the sort of, uh, it wasn't like I had the, the thoughts and then the, the feeling came and the bodily feeling came. The bodily feeling was, was, was, was direct, was accompanying, um, the, the feeling of like unknown and confusion about the word *Go*, was happening at the same time. If that makes sense. Um, so may maybe the first thing you said then, in that sense, in that case...
- 27:52 Russ comments: Joe and CK are at cross purposes, because whereas CK takes the distinction to be between sensation and feeling, Joe takes the distinction to be between feeling and cognition (perhaps because in his 27:19 turn, CK had asked about knowing). We will stay at cross purposes through the end of this sample discussion.
The good news is that the DES iterative process will allow such things to be worked out across sampling days, even if they are not worked out within this particular sample.

28:31 CK: That the, I guess my question, what I'm trying to figure out is: I can imagine, uh, is this is the center of my ex experience at the moment a bodily sensation sort of a deal, or a effective kind of a thing? Or, or neither of those things. And those things can be one and the same.

28:56 Joe: Yeah. It's really, it's, it is interesting cuz the bodily sensation was quite strong and, um, I'm, I'm not sure, I mean, I'm not sure I know the answer to this, but it might be that I was labeling that with unknown, that feeling with unknown confusion. Um, don't really know the answer to that. Okay. Well, cuz it happened so close together that I'm not sure, I don't know if it was the feeling and then I'm just labeling that with these words of confusion and unknown and, and a feeling of anxiety about not knowing about, y'know, the, the word *Go*, or if, um, uh, yeah, uh, if it's me labeling it or if it's me thinking that separately and then having the, the feeling. Um, yeah, I, I don't know actually.

29:57 RTH: So let me, let me take a crack at this. So does it seem to you that at the moment of the beep, I feel something in my chest and my stomach? [Joe: Yeah.] And then when I'm talking to you guys, I'm gonna say, well, that's anxiety. *Or* does it seem like at the moment of the beep there was some sense of unknown, uh, confusion about it? And when I tell you about the unknown and confusion, then I recognize that there's something in my body. And so, so the question is: does this seem like at the moment of the beep, did this seem like a bodily thing and then later I have to label it? Or at the moment of the beep, did it seem like a confusion thing? And then at the, when I talk to these guys, I have to describe it.

30:45 Joe: So it definitely felt like a, the bodily thing was happening at the moment of the beep. But there was also, there, there was a feeling of confusion and an unknown. But, um, I feel like it's possible that, that I'm retrospect, it is *possible*, uh, that I am retrospectively, um, like, uh, sort of, um, creating a cognitive, like, uh, like creating a cognitive framework for something that might not actually represent the feeling, if that makes sense. Like it's more the, the feeling was the, I, I can't, I don't quite know if, uh, if that feeling does match those sentiments or if those sentiments were like an in an invention of my mind to make sense of the feeling, if that makes any sense.

31:47 RTH: So I, what I, what I think is that we're not gonna answer the question about this beep. What we're gonna do is have that, that this conversation is gonna make the, the next sampling somewhat easier, maybe. But what I, what I would say is that it is quite possible, and we've sampled with lots of people who would say, "at the moment of the beep, I felt something in my chest and this was like a sensation in, in my chest. And the whole, the whole experience was a sensation in my chest." Later on I can say, "well, y'know, that was probably anxiety. But at the moment of the beep, it was just a chesty sensation." And then we have sampled with other people who would say, "well, at the moment of the beep I was anxious." And, and then when we ask them about the details of how that anxiety presented themselves, they could say, "well, y'know, I guess it was a feeling in my chest." [Joe: Hmm.]

And either one of those things is, is possible. And, and we don't have any theoretical preference for one or the other. And I guess I should also say that, and

then in, in terms of the last thing that you were saying was that, that, that some people would say, “well then I felt a cognitive thing, y’know, now I’m analyzing why I was anxious and I was anxious because I was unknown and whatever.” And it could be that that’s present right at the moment of the beep, and it could be that that comes later. [Joe: Mm.] So we, so we, what we think is that it’s possible to have a bodily feeling without anything else. And, and somebody else would say, well, that bodily feeling was anxiety. And it’s possible to have a, an affective feeling of anxiety. I felt anxious and with no thought about it and no bodily aspect about it.

In fact, quite a few people who are anxious say that it’s entirely a mental thing, doesn’t have any bodily aspects to it at all. And then it’s also quite possible to, for people to say, well, I was confused and this seemed like a *cognitive* thing. I couldn’t, I didn’t know the answer to a cognitive question that I was asking for of myself. And you could say, well, y’know, that sort of an anxiety provoking or whatever, but I didn’t feel anxious at the time. Any of those things is possible. And the question is, what was happening at the moment of the beep? And we’re probably not gonna get there about *this* beep, but maybe sometime down in the road, then down the road it’ll be easier for you to say, well, at this particular moment what I felt was a twinge in my stomach. [Joe: Mm-hmm.] Then later on I discovered, well that, or could say, well that twinge in my stomach, I recognize to be anxiety. But at the moment of the beep it was just a stomachy thing. Or the other way around I felt anxious. And then when I was writing down notes about this anxiety, I could say, well, and there was a feeling in my stomach.

- 34:28 Joe: Hmm. Okay. Yeah, that’s really interesting, cuz it’s like, yeah, it’s interesting cuz yeah, the, the feelings that you have sometimes that they, they seem so closely connected to like thoughts of, y’know, because I was talking to someone at the same time and I was having thoughts in general at the time because I feel like because it was so closely in, in space and time, it was so close to lots of cognitive things going on that the feeling as you said, it might just have existed, um, in the moment just as a feeling without the cognitive stuff.
- 35:04 RTH: Right. And, and it’s also possible that there’s no real answer to these things. These things fade into each other or whatever. And for some people that’s quite clearly distinct than other people. It’s not. [Joe: Yeah.] Well we haven’t, the conversation hasn’t is, is, is the, so you were going to south, south or Australia someplace?
- 35:31 Joe: It’s, uh, South Africa. South Africa, yeah. Trying to book a trip to South Africa.
- 35:35 RTH: And is that present to you at the moment of the beep? No,
- 35:40 Joe: The, the, the, the, the [inaudible] thing that was present at the moment of the beep was, um, y’know, the, the, the word go with that plank in the background behind it, the plank of wood and um, that bodily feeling, which, y’know, as I said, I, I, I think at the time was, was sort of unknown confusion. But it could have, I, I, I don’t know, it could have just been the feeling on its own.
- 36:08 RTH: Mm-hmm.

36:09 Joe: And that could have come afterwards. Um, but South Africa wasn't, um, no, that wasn't present.

36:20 RTH: Okay. So I think I'm good.

36:22 CK: Me too.

36:26 RTH: Number 4.

SAMPLE 3.4 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

36:27 Joe: Great. Um, so number 4, um, number 4 was actually, it was only about 25 minutes later. I was still on the phone, uh, to the, uh, travel agent. And the beep went off as he said, he said the words "in the bush." And uh, I just was just, I just, just just heard him say the words "in the bush." Um, yeah, that was basically it.

37:05 AG: And is there anything more to be said about that? Like his, I was particularly focused on his tone, for example, or I was focused on the meaning of what he was saying, or I *wasn't* focused on the meaning of what he was saying? Does, does any of that make sense?

37:21 Joe: Yeah, I was, there was definitely some focus on the word "bush." [sotto voce]Um, "bush," "in the bush," yeah.

37:42 AG: In, and then, um, you said there's some focus on the word bush. Is there. Um, what, what do you mean by "focus on"? Like, I was particularly into that word? Or the meaning of bush or...?

37:55 Joe: It it *stood out* more than the other words? Um, uh,

38:05 RTH: Yeah,

38:07 Joe: I mean, yeah, it's to kind of, uh, there's, y'know, there's, there's um,... I think at the, at the moment of the beep when he said the words "in the bush," uh, the word *bush* did stand out, but I didn't really have any thoughts about it. Um, I just noticed it. Um, y'know, uh, like later, later on like it, I could, I could think that, oh, maybe it's cuz I was unfamiliar with the word *bush* and, y'know, hearing he had a very, very, very, um, strong South African accent. And, but at, at the time there, there wasn't, I, I wasn't *thinking* anything, but I just *noticed* the word *bush* from the words "in the bush." Um, I noticed the word bush more than more than the other words.

39:06 AG: And, um, and at the moment it, does the word *bush* mean... Uh, does the word *bush*, I guess, have semantic meaning in that? I'm understanding that to be, I don't know, a shrub with leaves or something, or whatever that means? Or is it just, I'm just hearing these words and there's no meaning attached to them.

39:28 Joe: Yeah, it had, it did have semantic meaning, but the semantic, the semantic meaning was more, um, it was more visual than, um, um... Like, uh, I didn't see a bush when he

said *bush*, but there was definitely something, uh, there was something bushy in, uh, sort of present in my mind's eye that wasn't really a clearly defined image. Um, yeah. [sotto voce] "bush." [pause] Um, it, yeah, it was, uh, yeah, it was like my, it was like my mind was trying to grasp on to an image of what he was saying, but it didn't quite do it. Like,... Uh, but yeah, I don't know if that's, uh, it's, it's hard to tell with that one, if that was, uh, how much of that came after the beep? The moment of the beep was just the words "in the bush" and me noticing the word *bush*, and the me noticing it was present, it was present in a way that I, yeah, I can't really describe. Uh, I wanna say it might have been unsymbolized thinking because there was nothing there really for me to think about or it, there were no particular images even though, even though I just said that there was a sort of faint image of something bushy. But it was, I mean, it was, it was so faint. It was more just me noticing the word *bush*. Um, but I don't, it could, it, it stood out from the other words, uh, in a way that I can't really describe. Um, yeah.

- 39:28 Russ comments: This experience is not unsymbolized thinking as DES defines that term.
- 41:36 RTH: So can I, can I back up a little bit? So is, is "in the bush" recognized as a unit? Or is it that he's, he's saying something, y'know, "do you wanna see the cities or do you want to take, take a trip in the bush?" and, and it just happens that "in the bush" is where the beep happens to come? Or does it seem like you focused in on that particular chunk, and then of that particular chunk, focused in on bush?
- 42:05 Joe: Um, so it was that particular chunk of, of, of his, his conversation that, uh, that, um, those were the words that he, that I heard him say at, at the moment of the beep. Um, and it was the word, like the, it was sort of a, um, [pause]. Yeah, like, I mean cuz it was part of a longer, um, narrative. Like he was talking about the, the cities and, uh, not the city he was talking about. Um, he was talking about different camps. Um, and he, and he sort of ended the sentence with "in the bush," uh, the beep point off, um, as he was saying, the words "in the bush," and the word *bush*, um, stood out for me within that. So it was kind of a chunk, like, like the, the latter description that you gave I think was closer.
- 43:13 RTH: So "in the bush" seems like a chunk, and *bush* seems like an accent or whatever within that chunk.
- 43:20 Joe: Yeah, yeah.
- 43:22 RTH: So it doesn't seem like I'm tracking the whole sentence and the whole sentence might have been 20 words long or whatever, the last three of which were in the bush.
- 43:32 Joe: No, it was definitely, yeah, like, I can't even remember the words that he said before that. It was just the, it was the *unit* of "in the bush," uh, with the word *bush* being noticed by me in, in some way.
- 43:45 RTH: Got it. [pause]

- 44:02 AG: And is there anything else in your experience at the moment?
- 44:08 Joe: No, no.
- 44:22 RTH: Then I think I'm good.
- 44:24 AG: I'm good, too.
- 44:25 Joe: Me too.
- 44:26 RTH: Well, let me, let me, lemme restate what I've got here. The travel agent's talking. I'm processing it. I have picked, picked out, for whatever reason, as a unit "in the bush," ex emphasized whatever *bush*. But I, but I don't have any separate, separable, parallel experiences that, that are going on here, like comparing this camp to that camp, or this aspect of the bush to that aspect of the veldt, or whatever. [Joe: Yeah.] This is a taking in of the lexical or semantic sentence.
- 45:08 Joe: Yeah, yeah, that's right.
- 45:12 RTH: All right then I'm good. Number 5.

SAMPLE 3.5 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 45:19 Joe: Um, so this one happened, uh, okay. It was about, it was about half an hour later. Um, so, um, in my living room and, um, my partner, Olivia, um, is stood in the doorway. Um, I'm stood in the middle of the living room and we're sort of, we're basically getting ready to go out and, um, pick up our cats that have just gotten neutered. And, um, the, uh, uh, she stood in the, the beep point off as I'm looking at her, she's stood in the doorway in her coat and, um, she, she, uh, um, she was talking about different travel agents, and she mentioned the word *Kent*, and there was something about the word *Kent*, um, that, uh, um, I don't know, there was, there was, uh, I heard the word *Kent* as as, as, as the beep went off. Um, y'know, I didn't really have any feelings or thoughts about it. I didn't particularly notice it. Um, but I just noticed that that was, uh, I, like, I didn't, I didn't notice it in the way that I noticed the word *bush* with the other beep, but I, I, I noticed it more than the other things she was saying. Um, but the, but then the, the main ex, the main experience at the moment of the beep really was me just looking at her in the doorway.
- 47:05 RTH: And any particular aspect of this looking,
- 47:10 Joe: Yeah, so there was, I mean, I was, I was kind of, I was slightly struck by, she was wearing a, a blue coat, but she had like a hoodie on underneath and she had a blue hood that was like slightly up over her head. Um, and she was looking directly at me. Uh, so I noticed a lot of blue, like the blue of her coat, the blue of her hood. She's also got quite big blue eyes. Uh, I noticed a lot of blue as, yeah. And the word *Kent* while I was looking at her.

47:49 RTH: And so does that mean that of, of the visual display that's coming at me, which has form and shape and movement and what, and whatever, I am more interested in the blue of it than the shape of it or the hoodie-ness of it, or the coat of it? Or does that mean...

48:08 Joe: The blue was... Yeah, the, the color, the different shades of blue were more, more present to me than the shape of it. [RTH: Okay.] But, but it was a kind of a, but it was still the, the, the, the experience was still of like a whole. It

48:25 RTH: Olivia in the doorway...

48:27 Joe: Yeah.

48:29 RTH: ...but the most prominent aspect is the blueness. Or is that too strong?

48:38 Joe: I think that's too, yeah, that's too strong, strangely. Um, yeah, it's the, I feel like the, the, the, the, the different cut..., the different blue, blueness was quite noticeable at the moment of the beep. Uh, but uh, yeah, I'd,

49:10 RTH: So it's not so much the blueness as it is the distinction between the different kinds of blue?

49:19 Joe: Um,

49:21 RTH: Shades of blue?

49:22 Joe: Yeah. It was more that it was the, it was like, because I was seeing multiple shades of blue in different, like there was the blue of her coat, then there was the blue, the like a darker blue of her hoodie, and then there was the light blue of her eye, and she was stood in the doorway and she was sort of staring at me like quite intently with her eyes very wide open. Uh, and so I sort of just like, uh, was looking directly at her and, uh, I just noticed the, the shades of the blue, but also how she was stood in the doorway. Um, and the word *Kent* that was part of a longer sentence that I didn't really notice the rest of it.

50:06 RTH: Okay. So at the moment of the, the beep catches *Kent*, I understand that. And does, and is, does, is *Kent* standing out just because the, the beep happens to be, happens to arrive at *Kent*? Or is it somehow that I have pulled *Kent* out of the sentence and the beep happens while I've... So am I saying basically she's saying something, the beep happens at the word *Kent*. If I could pay more attention, I probably could tell you what the rest of the sentence was, but the, I was hearing what she was saying and the beep ha beep happened at *Kent*. Or have I somehow singled *Kent* out more or less in the way that I've singled *bush* out and, and something else earlier on too, I think. And uh,

50:53 Joe: Um, it was more, it was more like, uh, it was more that I'd singled it out, I think. Um, it wasn't like, uh, it wasn't like I was sort of hearing or noticing like a long sentence and then suddenly like the beep goes, suddenly goes beep at *Kent*. Um, she was like, she'd said like a few things before that, um, and uh, she'd said, she'd already said, like she'd

said the word *Kent*. And then something about that word stayed with me for a few seconds, um, in the way that *bush* stood out, and the beep went off while that word was still with me, if that makes sense.

DISCUSSION AFTER THE LAST SAMPLE

51:41 RTH: Okay. So it, it, it would seem in a sort of, um, looking-down view that there, there was something about the word present at all of the beeps today, *rotted duff* stuck out to me in some way; *Go*, I'm seeing written in front of me; in the bush, I'm looking at *bush* in the...; *Kent* seems, seems to stand out. Is that...?

51:41 Russ comments: RTH reviews today's samples and notes that all of them seemed to have something thematic to do with words. It wasn't just that the thought was in words; it was that the words themselves were the targets of the experiences.

DES is skeptical about first-day samples, but 1.2 (suprachiasmatic nucleus) also involved a word focus. On day 2, sample 2.3 involved the word *LIGHT* in front of a plank (c.f. 3.3); we discussed only three samples that day.

So it might appear (preliminarily) that Joe's experience involves a preoccupation with words. But there are other explanations as well: this is a very small sample; perhaps Joe talks about words in the interview but that doesn't reflect his experience for some reason; and so on. Subsequent interviews will perhaps shed light on this.

52:04 Joe: Yeah, yeah.

52:05 RTH: Do that, do those all seem similar to you? Or does that seem surprising to you? Or what, what...?

52:11 Joe: Yeah. That is surprising to me. That's really weird. [laughs], I got some weird obsession with words, [laughs]. I dunno what, dunno what that, uh, am I focusing too much on the words? I don't,

52:30 RTH: Well, I don't know. I, I, I think that's possible. I, I think it's also possible that, that *you*, as a sort of a characteristic way (I'd have, I can't remember what your previous beeps were like), but the, but maybe, maybe you *do* focus on words, that the words is the, the way, the way you apprehend the world. But what I was really asking does it, does it all, all those, all those things, words seem to stand out to you in some way. [Joe: Hmm.] Does the standing out seem like it's sort of the same thing? Or does it seem like, like this one stood out in a visual way, and that one stood out in an auditory way, and this one stood out in a semantic way, and this one stood out? Did they seem like *different* kinds of things or?

53:13 Joe: Yeah, they, they seem, they do seem a bit different in the way they stand out. Um, yeah, because they don't like, y'know, that like the word *Go* in front of like, in a sort of dark setting in front of a dark plank of wood. That's, uh, that's pretty unique. I feel like. Uh, I think the only other time was with that word *LIGHT*, um, which were on a previous beep [he intends previous day]. Um, which I'd have to look back through my notes, but I think that stood, I think, I think that was in front of wood as well. Um, but the, the word *bush* didn't appear in that way. And the word, the word *Kent*, um, the

word *Kent*, I didn't even really *see* in the way that I saw, um, the word *Go*. Um mm-hmm So it's a bit, yeah, it's a bit different. Um, I mean, yeah, I don't know. Um, I mean, I wanna say this, well, that, like, again, this is, this is probably me just, uh, using presuppositions and explaining that it might, I mean, I'd spent the morning writing a lot, may maybe words were more on my mind than they otherwise would've been. Uh, or, but then I do tend to do, tend to notice words or think, I do tend to think, uh, think using words as well. Um,

54:42 RTH: Well it, it could have been, it could have been a, a methodological mistake for me to have noticed it aloud or mentioned it or whatever because it, it didn't seem like you had noticed it *yourself* until I pointed out that this was an, words were an aspect of each one and you were, *Oh! that's weird. I hadn't noticed that*. Is that right? Is that...?

54:42 Russ comments: By "methodological mistake" RTH is referring to his 51:41 turn, where he noticed the frequency of words. If the aim of this study was primarily to count the frequency of particular phenomena, then it probably would have been better to keep mum about that, so as not to influence Joe's reporting.

However, counting is *not* the main DES aim. The DES object is to collaborate, all four of us, in the genuine exploration of phenomena, and from that viewpoint, RTH's forthright, candidly transparent *this is what I saw, did you see that too?* statement is what one would desire in a genuinely collaborative relationship.

But the identification of this potential theme does raise the risk of confirmation bias, so we will have to be on guard against that.

55:01 Joe: Yeah, that's true. I hadn't, until you mentioned that. Yeah, that everything,

55:07 RTH: Well, one, one, what's one of the things that's interesting about that is that you, you wrote down these things, and then we've been talking about 'em for an hour, and it *still* didn't appear to you that this was all about words. And that is, and that is (a) I would say not terribly unusual that there's a, there's a distinct pattern that that, that we can see from the outside that the person himself wouldn't see. And, and there's a lot of reasons why that might be, in, including, y'know, you don't smell the air that you breathe and you don't, y'know, if you're a fish, you don't feel the water or whatever. And, and, and it's also possible that this is just sort of an artifact of today and it's, and that's un-, unusual for you. So what I would say is that we, *well, we've noticed it and now, now we should bracket the noticing of it*. And, and going forward, if we sample again (which I hope we do), if we sample again, we should neither be particularly interested in words nor to try to avoid words. If words appear, then we would like to, y'know, we've had some practice in talking about it. And if words don't appear, well that's fine too. Uh, what that would mean would on February 20th, I was into words, but that doesn't necessarily mean that I'm into words some other time.

55:07 Russ comments: That was part of RTH's attempt to avoid confirmation bias, as mentioned in the comment at 54:42.

56:22 Joe: Okay. Yeah. Cause I'll try, I mean, like, it's interesting cuz I mean, is it, it it could be just a, a sort of phenomenon of the, of kind of, kind of the way I think about things? Or, or is it, or I dunno, is it me doing it wrong or I dunno! [laughs] It could be. Uh, well, I,

56:41 RTH: I, I think time will tell about that. My, my, if I had to guess, I would guess it's a phenomenon of the way your experience is and you take it sort of for granted. And, and other people do it that way and other people don't do it that way. And

56:54 Joe: Yeah, I feel like, yeah, I mean, yeah, I, I, I, again, this, this, I dunno if this is true, but I, uh, a random guess would be that because I spend a lot of time writing and a lot of time reading and, um, I sort of, yeah, I *do* kind of, I, I *do* notice words and think and think using words. Um,

57:21 RTH: And, and I would say that we should suspend, we should bracket all those kinds of things. But I would notice that the, if there is causation, it could go the other way around. It could be because I'm interested in words, *that's why* I'm a writer rather than I'm a writer and *therefore* I'm interested in words.

57:21 Russ comments: RTH's aim here is not really to suggest a competing theory, but rather (in a jujitsu kind of way) to undermine Joe's potential interest in *any* theory.

57:37 Joe: Yeah.

57:38 RTH: So, but, but either way, that's *not* our consideration because I don't think, I don't think those questions are answerable. At least... They *might* be answer, they might be answerable, but they're not answerable until we understand the phenomenon. And I think we're quite a ways short of the phenomenon. So for example, we're, we're exploring a phenomenon that either Joe is, is very familiar with, but doesn't, but has overlooked for most of his adult life. [Joe: Mm-hmm.] or, or we're into sort of an unusual kind of thing. We don't really know the answer to that. [Joe: Hmm.] And, uh, but before we *theorize* about that, we gotta get the phenomenon nailed down.

58:18 Joe: Yeah, yeah. I find it really interesting that I hadn't actually noticed [laughs]. That's really interesting to me. But yeah, I will bracket it.

58:18 Russ comments: My very first sampling paper was about a person who did not see an obvious pattern in his own experience samples, even though he had just typed them all out.

Hurlburt, R. T., & Sipprelle, C. N. (1978). Random sampling of cognitions in alleviating anxiety attacks. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 2, 165-169.

58:28 RTH: Well, so don't, don't be personally critical of you. There's no reason, there is every reason why you would not have noticed that. If it is, if it is a frequent characteristic of yours, that's the, that's *almost by definition* the kind of thing that you wouldn't notice. Mm. What it *should* say to you is that you should, you should develop a skepticism for people's retrospective accounts of their own, of their own experience. Because people *very often* don't notice things that are frequent characteristics of themselves, which is what makes this life interesting, actually. [Joe: Yeah.] Makes this *work* interesting.

58:28 Russ comments: This observation also suggests that one should develop a skepticism for armchair introspection, because people, even highly intelligent and well meaning people, very often don't notice things that are frequent characteristics of themselves.

59:10 Joe: Yeah. Yeah. And it's sort of, I, it's interesting about the, uh, sort of like, because there sometimes I, I feel like, uh, it's hard to describe a, a certain sort of feeling or sense of something. Um, but I really, I thought I was really, it was really interesting what you were saying in the last session about unsymbolized thinking. Um, and I sort of, uh, like sometimes I feel like in my experience there's more of that going on than I'm aware of, but it's because it's unsymbolized, it's hard to pin down in, in, in any kind of way. Um,

59:10 Russ comments: It is likely that Joe does not yet understand what unsymbolized thinking is, and is not yet in a position to notice whether it is or is not frequent. Notice that RTH does not respond to that. His preference is to discuss what is directly present in clearly identified moments, and he will generally decline to engage in other conversations.

59:49 RTH: Well I think there's lots of processing going on. I, I think it's, I I think the, the human is a parallel processor and, and a really sort of messy parallel processor and what, what ends up being in experience at the moment of the beep is one aspect of that, maybe an important aspect, maybe not an important aspect, but it's, it's one way that the, that the massive things that Joe is experiencing happens to bubble up in response to a beep. [Joe: Mmm.] Like, there's all kinds of processing that's happening and, y'know, you haven't fallen off the chair during this interview, but you probably haven't thought about your chair, [Joe: Mmm.] but you've been *processing* it.

1:00:37 Joe: Yeah, I was wondering about like, uh, I was just thinking as you were saying, I was thinking about people's experiences when they interact, and like how, how those experiences affect the experience, the experiencer, if that makes sense. Um, as opposed to, cuz I've, cuz I mean, so I mean there was, obviously there was the beep with my partner and the beep with me on the phone to the travel agent, but I do, y'know, I, I spend a lot of my time on my own and uh, so sometimes I wonder, oh, is my experience if I'm on my own versus interacting with someone else, is that gonna, with the interaction with someone else, change the exp change the experience I would've had or in, in any meaningful way? Like their own ex, is there kind of a clash of experiences that's, that that then is then its own experience? Or does that sort of, do y'know what I mean? Like, does that um, affect the experiences experience? Um, I'm tying myself up in knots, here [laughs].

1:01:37 RTH: I, I, I think you *are* tying yourself up and knots, but it is, it's a complicated thing. So, so your experience with your partner ended up being to some degree an an, uh, comparison of blue aspects or something like that. And that's, that is not particularly partnery. You could have been experiencing a shades of blue by yourself. But it is *maybe* particularly partnery cuz it's blue eyes and maybe it's the blue eyes, her blue eye that attract you. And, and anyway, the colors weren't the total part or experience lose her in her in the doorway. And they're, and, and there're just lots of other kinds of stuff: her eyes, eyes are up like that. And maybe that means *are you coming?* or whatever. And, and, and you haven't processed that explicitly, but, but, but you *recognize* that, and, and, and so you're hastening to finish up doing whatever it is that

you're doing and, but that doesn't necessarily make its way into your direct experience.

1:02:42 Joe: Hmm. Yeah. Do you think, do you, do you think there are thoughts and experiences that, uh, that lots of people, um, would have, uh, but, but their, um, but because of, because of their environment or cuz of other people around around them, it, um, like... I suppose what I'm trying to say is like, do, do you think there are thoughts and experiences that are so unique to an individual, but that they would only be experienced if they were on their own, if they weren't being influenced by other people and other things around them? If that makes sense.

1:02:42 Russ comments: I think RTH in the upcoming turn doesn't answer this question, so here's a shot: I think most people's inner experience is largely the same across a variety of situations, including those that do and do not involve other people. There are doubtless some exceptions to that generalization, so a careful answer would have to describe the particular people and the particular situations.

1:03:24 RTH: I'm not sure I understand that question. I think there are aspects of your experience that are, that are pretty uniquely Joe-y that I don't see very often. I've seen, I've, y'know, I've done this a couple of hundred or thousand times or whatever and I, I haven't, I don't recall seeing words in front of planks and, and so far we've seen that twice with Joe or maybe more than that, I don't remember, but at least twice. So what's the deal with that? Well, I don't, I don't know. Um, there might very well be some significance to that if the omni that the omniscient being wouldn't know, but, but neither Joe nor I know. And uh

1:04:07 Joe: Hmm. Yeah. So I suppose I, I suppose it's interesting, isn't it? Because I Yeah. But then yeah,

1:04:18 RTH: What I, what I do know is that, is, is that there's probably something I, I think, let's put it this way, this is speculation. I think there's probably something interesting to be known about inner experience and where inner experience comes from. And by, and by inner experience, I mean the kind of thing that we're talking about, what shows at the moment of the beep. I, my my guess is that there is a science of inner experience to be had and if, and the, and the having of it would be useful in some way. I don't think we know what that, first off whether that's true and, and, and the way in which it would be useful, because our, the, the basic data are not well understood. And the reason for that is that it takes kind of effort that we're going through now to, to do it, find out about it, and there aren't very many people out there making that effort.

1:05:16 Joe: Yeah. So I mean, because I suppose when I think about the, the idea that everyone's experience is totally unique, which I mean, it is, right? Everyone's experience is entirely unique. Uh, the thing I find really interesting about that is, uh, how much of that experience is internal versus interpreting what's out there in the world. Like I, y'know, like, y'know, do we see the same sh, do we see exactly the same shade of green as each other or, but the way we, y'know, and, and maybe, y'know, we might not, I suppose, but also the way we think about it might be, um, uh, completely unique. Um, and then when I try and think about how that would work in the brain, I

mean, I suppose because the brain is, everyone's brains are, y'know, slightly unique, even though there are things that are very similar, um, I dunno. It just, it just fascinates me as you said, like there is a science to be had about inner experience. Um, hard to, yeah.

1:06:22 RTH: So, so, so let's unpack that a little bit. So, so everybody is unique. I agree with that. And, but everybody, *but*, but I think there are some patterns to be had as well. So I, my work, our work has identified sensory awareness as the, as a sort of a frequent occurrence across a lot of people. Sensory awareness occurs a quarter or a third of the time. And, and that's happening with you. You, you got blue going on here and, and you've had some sensory awareness from the previous day as I dimly recall. (I can't remember--we'd have to go back and look.) But, but there are some people for whom sensory awareness is a frequent thing, like maybe almost all the time. And other people for whom sensory awareness just doesn't occur.

1:07:09 And by sensory awareness, I mean the of the kind that, that the blueness is something of an example of. You *could have* been seeing your partner in the doorway and not noticing the blue aspect *at all* as any kind of a thematic thing. She was wearing blue and her eyes were blue and her hoodie was blue and all that. But you could have been attending to the, *well, well come on, let's go!* aspect of her experience, or the leaning of the doorway experience. Or you could have been thinking about castles in South Africa or whatever, and, uh, while, while your eyeballs were aimed at her. So there's, y'know, there's lots of different ways that that experience can come and, and I just don't think we, I don't think we know much about it.

1:07:55 What difference, what difference does it make whether somebody is the kind of a person who characteristically sees sensory, or experiences sensory kinds of things? What, I don't think we know the answer to that. Here today, we, we saw a lot of words going on that Joe seems to focus on, on sort of individual words, sort of pulled out of the sea of words that are going by, or the stream of words that are going by. He is interested in this one or in that one. Well, that's sort of interesting. And let's, let's assume for the moment that that's the characteristic of Joe and not just Joe on the 20th of February. Then, then, well what, what does that say about the way Joe navigates his way through the world? Well, I don't think we, I don't think we know. Maybe nothing! It may, it might be totally epiphenomenal. Could be. I would, I'd be happy with that.

1:08:50 But it's also quite possible that it has some, some important... That if we *knew* that, then we would be able to say, well, y'know, Joe's like to have anxiety in this kind of, this kind of an environment. And if he, we can get, get him less focused on words, then he'd lessen his anxiety. Something like that. I'm not, I'm not, I'm no mind reader. I'm not trying to say this, this is the way it is. I'm just trying to say *if* we knew enough about the way Joe's experience was and Sam's and Bills and Russ's and Cody's and Amber's and everybody else's, if we knew all that stuff, then, then we might be able to say something useful.

1:09:38 Joe: Yeah,

1:09:40 RTH: Like there's a, there's a huge effort in the last 10 years or something in the individualized medicine which comes, people say, well, y'know, if we can figure out

you got this, *this* gene, then we should, we should prescribe *that* medication or, or whatever. Well that's good. I'm, I'm happy with that. But I think it's also true that if you had this *experience*, it could be that you should prescribe that kind of medication. But in order for that to be useful, we'd have to know what that experience was. And I don't think people's retrospections about their inner experiences is where it's at.

1:10:15 Joe: Yeah, because it's, I mean it's so, it is so interesting when I think about, um, cuz because obviously like, because the, the, the, the *scientist* in me wants to sort of think about, uh, sort of neurons and synapses and, and if we knew, as you were talking about just, y'know, ge if we knew like where every gene was in every molecule and if we knew the orientation of every synapse and every pathway and we could sort of map that in someone's brain, y'know, would that be enough to describe their experiences? But it, but, but I feel like the answer to that is categorically *No*. There's something on top of that that we haven't got to yet. It's um, I mean yeah, I don't, cuz I mean yeah, I mean, would you, would you agree with that? Cuz you were saying that there's a science of inner experience *to be had* and I feel like, I feel like I, I feel reluctant to, to believe or think that that will ever be reduced to neurons and synapses and genes and things firing.

1:11:21 RTH: So what, what I would say in, in the world according to Hurlburt, neuroscientists speak about brain states as if they know what they were talking about, and I'm pretty sure they don't know what they were talking about. I'm actually pretty *positive* they don't know what they're talking about because it, to, to, to talk about a *brain state* means to tell about however many billions of neurons there are and however many synapses there are in there and, and what the neurochemistry was in each one of those synapses. And, and that's just not, it's not possible. For sure it's not possible now. I doubt that it's *ever* possible. So I think, I think anybody who's talking about brain states is deluding themselves. If they, if they think they know what they're talking about, they're diluting themselves. So the question is, well what do you do? And the answer is, well, maybe you could map some kind of a, uh, an external version of brain states, which is what fMRI is and and what EEG is. So we're they're taking some average over time and space and whatever that, which is good, I'm happy to, I'm happy to engage in that. Or another way of doing it is to average over those, over those things by what actually is happening in, in, in experience. And I think that might be as valuable or more valuable in mapping across, y'know, fMRI, y'know, whatever....

1:12:46 Joe: It takes the external world into account as well, which is so important. It takes our interaction with the world into account, which I feel like a lot of these very reductive, um, neuroscience approaches just don't do. [RTH: Right.] Um, and they're also, by their very nature changing what they're setting out to investigate. [RTH: Correct.] Um, so yeah,

1:13:09 RTH: So your, your neuroscience apparatus, your neurophysiological apparatus, the Joe bag of bones that, the bag of bones and neurons which is Joe, are taking in the, the stimuli of the external world and taking the stimuli of the internal world and mashing them up in whatever way. And, and, and Hurlburt gives you a beeper and, and that gets you a beep, which is something of a glimpse, average, whatever of all of that, of all of that stuff. And that comes out to be, well, at the moment of the beep I had, I

was seeing a plank with the word *Go* in black and in front. Why the heck would be be doing that? I, I don't know. But there, there's, but that's, uh, that's an interesting question. And it's sort of like an fMRI snapshot. It's, [Joe: Yeah.] it's not that Joe, I, I don't believe that it's Joe's soul has created a plank and a, and a letters on top of this.

This is not about Joe's soul. I don't know anything about that either. And, but it, but for whatever reason, the bag of bones that is Joe was seeing a plank with *Go, Go* in front of it. Well we, there's something, yeah, there's something there that we should *at least* discover whether it's interesting, we could say it's epiphenomenal, but, but people who throw the word *epiphenomenal* around have never really looked at it. And so they don't know what they're talking about. And, and they might be *right*, but that would be sort of accidental, I think, rather than...

1:14:44 Joe: Yeah, that's, yeah. It's, that's so interesting. I mean, it, yeah, it's, it's, I don't know. It's like, it's, it's like an fMRI of experience, or a brain scan of experience.

1:14:55 RTH: Something like that.

1:14:55 Joe: Yeah, something like that. Okay, cool. Um, um, yeah, thank you for,

1:15:02 RTH: So, so we've, we've shot past our hour via 15 minutes here. So we shall we call this a day and figure out when we're gonna do this again and uh,

1:15:10 Joe: Yeah. Um, yeah, I'm happy to do it, do it again if you, if you guys are happy to do it again.

1:15:16 RTH: I'm in favor.

1:15:20 CK: Agreed.

1:15:26 RTH: When is a good time?