

TRANSCRIPT WITH COMMENTARY
Do I Really Have Internal Monologue?
Lena Interview 12:
DES Sampling Day 10

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the May 14 interview with Lena that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/UXHU5wiYIMQ>. 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

AK = Alek Krumm

Lena = Lena

0:00 RTH: I'm ready to go on to be number one, if everybody else is. [Alek and Lena: Yes.] Alright, let's do it.

SAMPLE 10.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

0:08 Lena: Okie doke. So, um, my first beep was, um, happened when I was, uh, in an argument with my two-year-old son on not playing in my drawer full of scissors. And um, in the moment I was pulling him away from the drawer, the beep happens and I wrote down that I was feeling frustrated but not mad, like a patient frustration. That's what I wrote.

0:53 RTH: And is the patient frustration the central thing in your experience? [Lena: Yes.] Moreso, moreso than the scissors or the or the kid or the pulling? Or...

1:05 Lena: I would say that the, the patiently frustrated feeling was about.... I think it was half and half, of 50% me feeling patiently frustrated and 50% me concerned and trying to get him away from the drawer.

1:31 RTH: Okay. Well let's start with the, the patiently frustrated. How does that present itself?

1:37 Lena: Um, physically it was very, um, there was tension, but with that tension there was an understanding that he's only *two*. So I become patient with that frustration and that's why I wrote patiently frustrated.

1:58 RTH: Okay. And so there's a tension. And by tension did you mean bodily tension or mental tension or both? Or neither?

2:07 Lena: Both. Um, the, the physical tension's not necessarily just concentrated in one part of my body. It's just a general, um, subtle tension throughout like my muscles, I would say. And then, um, the mental tension is more just, y'know, I want to just be very stern and be upset and say, you know, *this is bad* and um, be just be upset, be frustrated.

But it's the patient aspects of that feeling is met with, uh, um, a calmness because I understand that he's only two and so I, I can't be frustrated. I can't show, or at least I can't *show* my frustration. [pause] If that makes sense.

- 2:58 RTH: So, so does that like two separate things? I'm frustrated and I'm trying not to show it. I'm trying to show sternness, but not anger or something?
- 3:07 Lena: Well, the, it's like the patiently frustrated. So yeah, it's two feelings being together, um, happening at the same time. I know I'm frustrated because he's upset that he can't play in this dangerous drawer. *I'm* frustrated because he doesn't understand that it's dangerous, but I'm also *patient* about it because I can't, I know he's only two. So I have to be patient with him and not *impatient*. So it's, there's two feelings happening together at the same time.
- 3:39 RTH: So two separable feelings, [Lena: Yeah.] not one feeling with two aspects.
- 3:46 Lena: To me they are two separate feelings.
- 3:50 AK: As in like if the frustration weren't there, the understanding and the patience would still be there?
- 3:57 Lena: Yes. If he wasn't playing in the drawer, if it was maybe something else different, less dangerous, I would just have that one feeling.
- 4:13 RTH: Okay. So the, so the 50% which is a patiently, patiently frustrated is, could be divided up into 25-25, or 20-30, or 10-40, or...
- 4:27 Lena: I would say 25-25.
- 4:32 RTH: Okay. And, and the patiently frus, the *patiently* part of this is, well he's only two. I understand that. [Lena: Um hm.] And I couldn't show, I shouldn't show my frustration. I should show my sternness. Is, is that the same thing as patience, [inaudible] patiently?
- 5:03 Lena: Could you ask the question again?
- 5:09 RTH: I guess I'm trying to understand what the pa, what, what, what the "patiently" is here. In one way it sounds like it's sort of something like, *well I know my, I know I'm frustrated and I shouldn't show my frustrated*. That's a sort of a self-analytic, self-monitoring, keeping-myself-in-check kind of a thing. And the other, and then another kind of patience would be, well, I, I, I'm, *it's coming directly to me that he's only two* and, and so I don't have to, I don't have to *try* to keep it in check. It's going to sort of *automatically* stay in check because he's only *two*. [Lena: Right.] Sorry, I'm not articulating that right.
- 5:54 Lena: Yeah. Okay. I understand your question better. For me, the patient, patiently part is, um, yes, there's a, there's a piece in there that is analytical with myself, knowing that I have to keep myself in check and not y'know get too frustrated. But also too, there's,

um, the patiently is more of um, an understanding. Like, I just, I just *understand* that he's not going to understand *me*. So I just *choose* the understanding over the frustration. And in doing that I'm like, I'm negating the frustration in a way. Like I'm, I'm putting it at bay,

6:42 RTH: Mitigate, mitigating the frustration.

6:45 Lena: Yeah. I am, I'm *choosing* the understanding. And so it kind of alleviates the tension and I become less stern, or not stern, but just less frustrated. Yeah. The understanding, the patience, is more of an understanding, knowing that he's not going to understand me, so it's better for me to just be calm and do [inaudible] calmly.

7:14 RTH: Okay. And then the other half of this is the trying to get him away, being concerned.

7:19 Lena: Yeah. So, um, it's funny because my feelings kind of reflected my physical behavior just from what I noticed. But as I was feeling this and I'm pulling him away from the drawer, you know, I'm prying his fingers off, which is, you know, as people with children know that can be kind of difficult and he's very strong. So in pulling him away, I'm feeling like that, that same feeling of frustrated, frustration, like just want to yank him away. But then I'm like, *Oh, I can't just yank him*. You know, they don't want to hurt his little fingers. So that patience feeling is there with that whole physical thing where I kind of just slowly start to y'know disengage him with the drawer. [laughs] That was like kind of all of that happening together.

8:14 RTH: So does that mean that I feel patiently frustrated and at the same time I am targeting that patiently frustrated at his little fingers?

8:26 Lena: Yeah. I guess that's how it sounds. Yeah. At the time of feeling frustrated it's because I'm prying his little fingers away from almost in the drawer. And in doing that, y'know they've got these death grips. So y'know, it takes some strength on the other side. So in doing that like frustrated 'cause I want him to open his hand and stop touching these, this stuff. But on the other end I'm also very patient so I, I have to take my time. I can't just rip it out of his hand, y'know? That's kind of what was going through my mind in that, in that experience.

9:04 RTH: So that makes the whole experience seem sort of like a patiently frustrating feeling and action.

9:14 Lena: Yeah, it's very dichotomous.

9:22 RTH: Okay.

9:24 AK: I have one more question about the feelings. So you described kind of what sounded kind of like a process. Like there's these feelings coming up and I'm choosing the understanding and it's kind of dominating the frustration and that's mitigating the whole thing and, and all of that. And I'm wondering if that, if you mean that as in *I directly experience that process*, I experienced myself choosing, I experienced the, the way it alleviates and all of that? Or if what's really present to me is just the result of

that? And then when I've got to tell you about it, well on some subconscious, unconscious, whatever level, I *must* have been choosing. Does that make sense?

10:03 Lena: Yeah. I'm actively in the moment choosing understanding rather than frustration.

10:09 AK: So you are experiencing that whole process. [Lena: Yeah.] That's not just, it's not just some neurons figuring that out. You are consciously aware of that whole thing?

10:19 Lena: Yes.

10:19 Russ comments: Alek has been trying to establish whether Lena was experiencing what DES calls a "meta-awareness." Lena was in some way making a choice, but the meta-awareness question is whether she was also, before the footlights of consciousness, *aware of herself as making the choice*. Here it seems that Lena is indeed describing this meta-awareness kind of experience. The aim of all DES interviews is to try to sort through whether the description actually rests lightly on Lena's actual experience at the moment of the beep (as opposed to whether Lena hasn't understood our questions, or we haven't understood her answers, or we have gotten caught up in some red herring, etc.).

10:24 AK: And does it feel like the beep seems to catch *all* of that? Or is it sort of a *sequential* thing and the beep interrupts at a certain point?

10:35 Lena: Well, what I wrote down was that the beep happened at the time that he was in the drawer grabbing all this stuff as I was going in to take it away. And then the beep happened. And so I recorded my experience from the time of the beep, up until the beep and, but after the beep I'd say.

10:35 Russ comments: That raises the question of whether Lena is confining herself to experience that was "caught in flight" by the beep—perhaps she is also describing experience that was before the beep (which DES tries to avoid). RTH will explore this later (at 11:33).

10:57 AK: So I'm already engaged in the act of patiently frustratedly prying his fingers away. [Lena: Yes.] And does it make sense to say that at, like at the moment of the beep, the feeling is more understood, more patient, or more frustrated or doesn't really make sense to say that?

11:19 Lena: I can't say which is more. Yeah, I just know I was *choosing* patience and understanding over the immediate feeling of frustration, that kind of automatic frustration.

11:31 AK: Okay.

11:33 RTH: And I'm, I'm interested in the timeline aspect of this too. So... [Lena: Yeah.] In response to one of Alek's questions [at 10:46] you, I wondered whether the, how long the timeline that we're focusing on here is. I, is, is his fingers in the drawer and then a second later I feel...

11:54 Lena: Right. He's already rummaging and getting into things before the beep. So I'm already feeling the frustration because he's already happening doing all his little toddler things in the drawer. [RTH: But at the...] And yes, before the beep. And then the beep occurred at the time that he was pulling out the scissors and getting into the more dangerous stuff. And at the same time me pulling those scissors away and trying to pry his fingers away from the drawer. That was, the beep caught all that.

12:27 RTH: Okay. Then I'm good.

SAMPLE 10.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

12:28 AK: Yup. Cool. Thank you. Number two.

12:35 Lena: Okay. Number two. Okay, so beep number two. Um, I was listening to music and I was singing the words "got what I got." At the same time as doing that, I was searching the chords for the song. And I recorded that I was feeling very excited or sensing excitement, um, but also feeling very contemplative because I really want to learn the chords to that song. So that one particular song. Um, so yeah, I was listening to song, I was singing it out loud, and at the same time I was on my phone searching for the particular chords for that song, feeling and sensing excitement and contemplation.

13:32 AK: Okay. And so just to get the context a little bit, is the song you're singing also the one that you're searching about?

13:40 Lena: Yeah.

13:41 AK: Okay. And does it seem, that sounded like kind of like four-ish (maybe more) things like, um, [Lena: Yeah.] I'm listening to the music and singing with it. [Lena: Yes.] (Maybe those are separate. I guess we'll see.) But, and I'm searching for the chords. [Lena: Yes.] And I've got a sense of excitement and I've got a sense of contemplation or maybe those are feelings or. [Lena: Yeah.] Okay. And is one of those more, the most prominent?

14:10 Lena: The most prominent is the searching for the chords.

14:13 RTH: And most by like it's 50% of the experience, and then the others are 10, 10, 30 or something like that? Or...?

14:25 Lena: Uh, yeah, I would say about that. Yeah.

14:33 RTH: Somewhere around like 50? [Lena: Yes.] Okay. And so, well, let's just start there. So I'm searching for the chords so I can learn how to play this song. And is it guitar, am I remembering right? You play guitar? [Lena: Yeah.] Okay. [Lena: Learning.] You're learning how to play guitar, okay. [Lena nods affirmatively.] And how exactly does the searching present itself to you?

14:53 Lena: Um, the searching is presented in a, um, in a thought of, *Hmm, I wonder what these chords are to the song, if it's easy or if it's complicated.* And, um, and that's the

contemplation aspect of it. It's wondering about whether or not this will be easy to pick up. And um, and then, but at the same time *excited* because I want to know is this going to be an easy song to learn or is this gonna be a hard song to learn?

15:32 AK: Okay. So somewhere in this experience there is a wondering or like an analytical kind of, *I wonder if these are going to be hard to learn?*

15:41 Lena: Yes.

15:43 AK: And, and is that wondering, is *that* the searching experience? Or are those things separate? Like there's an experience of searching and separately or, y'know, obviously related, but separately there's a wondering, a contemplation about what I'm going to find.

16:00 Lena: The, the, the wondering is in the, is part, is how, how I described it is the wondering was more part of the contemplation. *Is it hard, is it going to be difficult?* Is you know, *how am I going to learn this?* Kinda like strategizing in my mind whether or not this is gonna be a song that I can learn easily. That's part of the feelings that I get from contemplation. And then the sense of searching the chords, like the mechanicality of typing in my phone, ah, "chords to so-and-so song," that's not at all present in my experience. It's just like we said, this skillful driving thing, y'know, I'm picking up my phone and typing it in. I don't *experience* that part. I'm experiencing the emotions of doing that. So like the *excitement*, that was the other part of it. The emotion was feeling excited that, the same kind of excitement I was feeling when I was telling you I was Googling that definition. I'm still like kind of like that on the edge of my seat. Like, okay, what am I going to find? *This is going to be easy or is going to be hard. Am I going to know this? Am I going to have to learn something new?* Um, that was presented as excitement.

17:11 AK: Okay. Okay. So let me see if I, if I've got that. So I am in fact searching, like I'm typing in "chords for whatever" (and we should probably name the song at some point), but "chords for this song." And that is going on automatically. It's coming out of my thumbs. I'm doing it, but I'm not really paying attention to that. [Lena: Yeah.] What I *experience* are feelings or senses or wonderings or something *about* what I'm going to get. [Lena: Um hm.] Is that right? [Lena nods affirmatively] So would it make sense, then, to say that really the, the most prominent part of your experience, this 50% we're saying, is, are the feelings, the excitement and the contemplation about the searching? [Lena: Yes.] Okay.

17:50 RTH: Well, I understand the wondering not to be a feeling thing.

17:58 AK: Right, yeah. My bad. [Lena: Yes.] Yup.

18 RTH: So there's a, there's a wondering which is something more cognitive-y think-y about whether this is going to be difficult, can I, can I learn this? kind of a deal. [Lena: Right. Yes.] And, and at the same time as that, there's an excitement that it is, I'm edge of my chair, I'm gonna, I'm gonna get the answer to this question.

18:20 Lena: Right, yes.

18:22 RTH: And are those equally present to you in your experience?

18:25 Lena: Yes. Very present to me. Yeah.

18:27 RTH: Both of them.

18:29 Lena: Sorry.

18:31 RTH: Both of them?

18:31 Lena: Both are very present. Yes. Both those feelings or contemplations, yes.

18:37 AK: And so I, I do agree with that, that I understand there's a more cognitive wondering. But it did kind of seem like you were using some *feeling* language there. Like you've called it a couple of times, I think, like a *feeling* of contemplation, or...? [Lena: Yeah.] And by that do you just mean *wondering*? Or do you mean like there's no, there's an actual *sense* or there's something beyond [Lena: So....] like a cognitive wondering.

19:01 Lena: Yeah. What I wrote down is the "feeling the songs, sensing excitement, but also feelings of contemplation." So, even though I know the contemplation is a cognitive process, if I'm looking at it like that, but it comes up to me as a sensing, it comes to me as, as I'm sensing something. Like very similar to what we've discussed in previous beeps, um, in how I try to describe that sensing, that inner sensing. Um, but it doesn't seem that I *can*, um, or at least they haven't found the right words to, yet. Um, but yes, it comes to me as like a, uh, you know, a *sensing* of some sort. Like I'm, it's, it's a subtle feeling, but it's *there*. And I know that I'm using whatever part of me to *sense* it. I don't know how to explain it. I don't, I'm trying not to theorize. I don't want to like inject any what I *think* it is, but it definitely, it comes to me as a sense of like tapping into, uh, my myself, kind of, and whatever that means. Like, I'm, I don't know if I should say if I'm *receiving* some sort of something? Like a signal in myself that I'm picking up on like, *Oh, okay, I'm receiving the signal and I'm very aware of this signal, this internal signal*. Hmm. And I'm just kinda like feeling like getting that sense of that feeling. But it comes to me as a *sensing* when I'm thinking or having this contemplation or feeling the excitement. It has, yeah, it has an underlying sensing feeling, sensorial very, I don't know. [laughs] I have a hard time describing this.

19:01 Russ comments: It might be worthwhile to be explicit about what we are wrestling with here, because it may give some insight into the DES process. Lena says she is wondering / feeling / cognizing / contemplating / sensing / strategizing about whether the chords will be easy or difficult for her to learn. There is little doubt about the content: she's wondering about her ability to master the chords (she's *not* wondering about the effects of global warming or whether Marlon Brando is a better actor than Robert De Niro, etc.). And there is little doubt about some main experiential aspects: she's wondering (she is *not* speaking words "I wonder whether I can learn this?" or innerly seeing herself playing the guitar, etc.). What's left to be described?

DES has described (Hurlburt & Akhter, 2008) unsymbolized thinking as the direct experience of thinking that does not involve experienced words, images, or other symbols. By that definition (which is the one DES uses), unsymbolized thinking presents itself as an unworded, un-visual-imaged cognitive/analytic consideration of its object.

DES participants describing unsymbolized thinking often use “I was feeling” in their attempts to describe, and it takes some careful questioning to help them discriminate between “feeling” as describing an emotion and “feeling” as describing a not-in-explicit-words-but-nonetheless-experienced-as-cognitive thought.

DES participants often describe unsymbolized thinking by saying “I was wondering about” X. Lena’s [14:54] “I wonder what these chords are to the song, if it’s easy or if it’s complicated..., wondering about whether or not this will be easy to pick up” sounds quite typical of the way that unsymbolized thinking is often described.

Furthermore, Hurlburt and Akhter observed that DES participants’ ability or willingness to describe unsymbolized thinking is often quite slow to develop (requiring several sampling days), apparently because they believe it is impossible to think without words or images.

To apply that to Lena: Perhaps Lena’s experience is actually garden-variety unsymbolized thinking, but for whatever reason she intersperses her description of the unsymbolized-thinking cognitive experience with talk about sensing, and so on. But on the other hand, perhaps her actual experience essentially *does* include a sensing aspect, *does* include something beyond the strictly cognitive / analytical / logical reasoning of unsymbolized thinking. How are we to know? We must keep poking, exploring, questioning, conveying to Lena that we want to know her experience in high fidelity, encouraging her interest in these discriminations. We must continue to clarify ambiguities, resolve seeming contradictions, and so on. Eventually, we may figure it out. Or not.

20:59 RTH: So these are very difficult kinds of things, I think. [Alek: Yeah.] And, and so I want to let... Let’s start with the word “feeling” that you’ve used a couple of times in this. But most of the time when you use “feeling,” you back away from it, and you say “feeling” and then jerk back or whatever, and say “well, it’s not really a feeling.” So, so I’m gathering that in *this* context about this, uh, *is it going to be easy or complicated* deal, the word “feeling” there has to do with, uh, some kind of a *sensing* kind of a thing, or some kind of a bodily, soulful something recognition, but not an emotional feeling. Is that right? This is not a...

21:45 Lena: Mmm, I would say that there’s emotion *involved*, but I wouldn’t say that like, and it’s my sensing, my inner sensing that is recognizing what I’m experiencing. Um, I know I’m feeling excitement and contemplation about the chord, and the excitement, to some degree is, is my *emotion* about what I, what I’m doing. And the contemplation I would say is the more *cognitive* part of what I’m doing. But what I’m gathering in that moment is that there seems to be this kind of awareness of the sensing of it. Uh, an awareness of the sensing of my excitement, or the awareness of my sensing of my contemplation about it. Kind of like an echo. Like I’m just hearing this echo, like not hearing, it’s not, I’m not, it’s not an auditory thing or a visual thing even, but it’s, it’s,

it's, it's definitely like a an awareness that I am *sensing* these things. It's very present to me in my experience that I am sensing the *sensing of* my, my feelings and my contemplation. Yeah, its....

21:45 Russ comments: When Lena describes sensing “awareness of the sensing of it” [22:22]; “like an echo” [22:36]; and “sensing the sensing of my feelings and my contemplation” [22:54], she seems to be describing a meta-awareness: not merely sensing, but sensing the sensing. Does that actually reflect her experience? (See the discussion at 10:19.) The evidence in favor of the believability of her meta-awareness descriptions include that the present description arises afresh out of the discussion of sample 10.2. That is, it is *not* merely a parroting of what was said in the discussion of sample 10.1. She seems to be describing similar phenomena that arise in two separate samples and in two separate ways. That is characteristic of words being driven by phenomena, not description being forced to be consistent with previously stated words. Additional evidence will be considered in the comment at 37:40.

23:05 RTH: So, when you say “the sensing of my feelings,” do you mean the sensing of the excitement?

23:11 Lena: Yeah. Yeah. Like I am aware of the fact that I am sensing, I’m aware of my sensing-ness, my sensing-ness.

23:24 AK: So there’s like a second-degree of sensing, or something. It, it sounds like it, it would not be right just to say, “I feel excited and I’m wondering if this is gonna be hard.” [Lena: Right.] Those things are happening, *and* I’m sensing them happening?

23:39 Lena: Yes. Yes! Yeah. That’s probably the...

23:41 RTH: And is that different than just saying, “I experienced them”? Right. These things are in my experience?

23:47 Lena: Yeah. They’re in my experience. But I’m also *sensing* the thing that is sensing the experience, too. Like it’s very third person. It’s almost dissociative, but I’m very involved in the experience also. Um like, I understand *yes, I’m excited and I’m contemplated and I’m searching for these chords* and I know the whole storyline of that. But there’s this other part of me that is, yes! sensing the sensory of it all.

24:24 RTH: So way we sometimes use, that’s a like a *meta*-awareness. [Lena: Yeah! Yeah.] And that was, and that was true in the first beep, too. There was some kind of a, an awareness of Lena choosing to be [pause] [Alek: Patient.] patient.

24:43 Lena: Yes. Yeah. It seems that that’s what I’ve been trying to kind of describe in some of these previous beeps. Like when I try to say “sensing,” it’s this just awareness of what I’m doing--not what I’m doing. I’m sorry. It’s the awareness of my awareness. It’s like looking at myself in third person, but it’s not necessarily from a visual perspective or a internal speech perspective. It’s just, it’s, it’s, it’s a sensing thing, like the same sensing you get when you touch a table, but it’s inside, and it’s, I don’t know how to explain it any further than that.

- 24:43 Russ comments: We seem to have pretty clearly established that, by her use of “sensing,” Lena does indeed mean to refer to meta-awareness characteristic. But the DES exploration does not simply accept that; the probing will continue as when Alek raises the possibility that the beeper has induced the meta-awareness.
- 25:21 AK: And maybe a, like, skeptical observer of this video would say, “Well, she’s just saying that she has this meta-awareness because we’ve given her a beeper and we’ve kind of *created* this meta-situation. [Lena: Right.] Is that...?”
- 25:40 Lena: But I don’t, I know that in myself, like knowing myself, I have always been the kind of person that, I don’t know how to explain it. It’s just I’m always very aware of myself being aware. Um,
- 25:40 Russ comments: Uh oh! The DES interviewer’s “presupposition antennae” jangle. When a DES participant states an abiding self-characteristic (“I have always been...”), it raises the possibility that what has been advanced as direct apprehensions of experience (the meta-awarenesses in samples 10.1 and 10.2) are actually reflections of a self-theory. We’ll have to be on alert for evidence that will help us sort that out.
- 25:58 AK: And is that, is it right to say that that is going on regardless of if the beep comes? [Lena: Yes.] That’s happening in Lena and the beep *catches* it. The beep doesn’t *create* it.
- 26:08 Lena: Yes. Correct. Yes.
- 26:10 RTH: So at this particular moment, I am, I’m searching for the song [Lena: Yes.] or searching for the chords. That’s not particularly in my experience. What’s in my experience is a *wondering* whether this is going to be easy or difficult. And that is to some degree cognitive, but to some degree, bodily active or something like that. And then at the same time, I’m feeling excited, on the edge of my chair ‘cause I’m going to get the answer to this question [Lena: Yeah.] and find the chords. And then, and then I’m folded back on myself [Lena: Um hm.] observing both of these things happening. And that [Lena: Yes.] seems like that that’s a part of the wondering process.
- 26:56 Lena: Yes. Yes. It’s just an awareness of my awareness of my own sensing.
- 26:56 Russ comments: We have established, to the extent possible in this interview, that “sensing” is understood to mean a meta-awareness folding back of experience on itself. We have left the door open for understanding the source of this phenomenon (it might be an artifact of the beeper technique).
It is noteworthy that it has taken us ten sampling interviews to describe clearly a meta-awareness experience. Lena has referred to “sensing” on 71 occasions in interviews 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. Looking back at those instances, it seems pretty clear that she has been describing something like meta-awareness all along, but we haven’t figured out what she meant until now.
- 27:08 AK: Hmm. And at the same time I am singing along to music.

27:12 Lena: Yes.

27:13 AK: And do you experience that? Or is that going on automatically?

27:17 Lena: I would say it's more automatic. I'm just following the lyrics to the song and not really thought, thinking about it or... Um, yeah, I would say it's more automatic.

27:29 AK: And when you're, what you're referring to is that the singing, like the singing is automatic. [Lena: Yeah.] And at the moment of the beep, do you hear the music?

27:39 Lena: Yes, yes. The music's playing.

27:42 AK: So those are kind of two different things, right? Like the music's playing: it could be playing and I'm not really attending to it, or it's playing and I *am*, like, it's registering?

27:50 Lena: Yeah. So the music is playing. I'm aware that the music's playing. I'm singing along with it and I'm not necessarily *thinking* about the words I'm *singing*, I'm just, y'know, singing along with it, y'know.

28:01 AK: So I'm not super engaged in the singing. Do I experience myself singing *at all*? Like the, do I feel the physicality or the rhythm or anything? Or it's just kind of coming out skillfully. But it's sort of like the searching, the typing into the search bar or whatever.

28:16 Lena: Um, I would say it's a little bit more involved than just the typing in the search bar. Um, 'cause I'm aware that I'm singing, I understand that I'm singing, and um... But I'm not putting, um, but it doesn't seem to, I'm not *adding* a whole experience. It's not part of my experience in such a way that is, um, taking away from the searching of, for the chords and having that whole sensing-excitement-thoughtful-contemplation thing.

28:45 AK: Okay.

[pause]

SAMPLE 10.3 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

28:55 RTH: Number 3.

28:55 Lena: So, okay. Um, so my daughter was talking to me at this time of this beep. She said "too much of the cereals." And then I echoed her, I said "cereals" and then the beep hap, happened. Um. When I echoed her words and I said "cereals," um, I was thinking in my mind about the food from the freezer and how we have so much food in the freezer that I'm gonna take some over to my brother. And I was just contemplating about which food I'm going to take. And at the time of contemplating that my daughter is talking to me and I echoed the word "cereals." And it was very automatic. The echoing when she said "too much of the cereals," I said "cereals." And I think that was automatic. She was talking and I automatically responded, didn't really think about it

'cause I'm already occupied. I was occupied in my own thoughts thinking about the food in the freezer and what I'm going to select to take over to my brother.

30:08 RTH: And so does that mean as far as your experience is concerned, you're a hundred percent into the food-to-your-brother thing?

30:15 Lena: Yes, I would say I would say 90% for the majority of it. I was very focused on that task.

30:22 RTH: So there's a *little* bit of the recognition of what your daughter is saying [Lena: Yes.] and your response, and you're responding to it and whatever. [Lena: Yeah.] But mostly, mostly it's about your brother and the food in the freezer. [Lena: Correct.] And how does *that* come to you?

30:37 Lena: Um, I see my brother. I have this visual thing again. Um, 'cause I, I know that I need to take out some of this stuff from the freezer. And the first place I think to do that is to take it to my brother. And he pops in my head as a visual representation of just his face. Like nothing crazy, not him doing anything, just kind of the idea of him comes up through a visual representation and so..[RTH: Face only?] Yeah, yeah. [RTH: From the front?] From the front. Yep.

31:20 RTH: Okay. And, and so part of this experience involves seeing your brother. [Lena: Um hm.] And is other parts of the experience something about the food? Or is that sort of implied in the seeing of your brother, this is, I know, I know myself, I'm thinking about the food in the freezer and the brother's face indicates that I'm probably going to take it to him.

31:45 Lena: Yeah. The only part of the food that I was contemplating was which of the food items in the freezer I was going to take.

31:54 RTH: And is that present at the moment of the beep, interrupted by the beep?

31:59 Lena: Um, yes. So in the thought of that, the beep interrupted as Livia was talking, as I was thinking that and as I echoed "cereals," the beep went off in a moment and I walked over to my notepad.

32:17 RTH: So the, so I guess what I'm trying to get at is sometimes it seems like I'm trying to differentiate between what's in the freezer: I could take the ground meat and keep the chicken, or whatever. [Lena: Yeah.] Is that part of your experience? Or is that sort of implied or taken for granted or something in the experience?

32:41 Lena: It's part of my experiences. I am deciding which food to take. That was the most present.

32:48 RTH: And how does that, and how is that present to you?

32:53 Lena: Um, I'm deciding what food I know *we* won't eat. And, er, um, I just, not *deciding* 'cause I, it's like I already know what food and this fridge is not going to get eating. So I

already know that's not going to get eaten. So I'm going to take that out and take it to him, see if he'll eat it.

33:16 RTH: But when you're not at this moment, you're not specifying what that is. That's not the ham, hamburger patties or whatever. It's that it's that I know what it is and I don't have to specify?

33:29 Lena: Yeah, yeah. If I'm understanding you correctly, you're saying I can just, I'm looking in the freezer and I can look and see at this one particular item and say to myself, that's going to be the item that he may eat that we won't eat.

33:46 RTH: Well, that's not exactly what I am. Like are you looking inside the freezer at this moment?

33:52 Lena: Yes. Yeah.

33:55 RTH: I didn't know, I didn't understand [inaudible]

33:57 Lena: Sorry. I wasn't very clear about what my surrounding was. Yeah. I'm actually in the freezer doing this whole thing. Not just randomly thinking of what could possibly be in there. I'm looking inside the freezer at all the items that I can see and deciding, having that deciding going on. [RTH: uh huh.] Yeah.

34:18 RTH: So while I'm physically looking at the objects, [Lena: Yeah.] I am recognizing, well, we probably won't eat that. We probably will eat that. Whatever. [Lena: Yeah.] And along with the part that we won't eat, I have a inner seeing my brother's face.

34:39 Lena: Yeah, very background. It's not necessarily very direct. Like, what's most direct is me deciding about the food. And he's, his face is present to me and in my mind as the person that I'm deciding to bring this food to.

35:02 RTH: And so I'm in the freezer, [Lena: Um hm.] looking into freezer. [Lena: Yeah.] And I'm in some way dividing up in my, somehow, this food we'll keep, this food we'll send. [Lena: Yes.] And does that seem like a visual thing? When I *look* at this food, I just immediately see that as *keep*; and when I look at *that* food, I immediately see that as *send*. Or is this some of a cognitive analytical *I am in some way analyzing whether this is a keeper or a giver*?

35:48 Lena: Um, more cognitively analyzing whether or not the food should be kept or not.

35:57 RTH: Okay. And so is it then the case that at the moment of this beep, the *primary* portion of my experience is a cognitive analytical *should I keep those or not*?

36:08 Lena: Yes, that is the primary experience.

36:11 RTH: Okay. And then about that aspect, *should I keep or not*: Is that similar or different to from the previous beeps: *I wonder whether the chords are going to be difficult, difficult or easy are can I do them*?

- 36:32 Lena: Um, it's similar in that, um, that there is a um, a wondering, you know, *is this going to be something that we're going to eat or is this not going to be something that we're gonna eat*. So the wondering is there, the same sort of wondering is there.
- 36:58 RTH: And the difference, I understand, is that in the previous beep there was also some kind of a excitement / [Lena: Yes.] feeling /sensing [Lena: Uh, yeah.] that isn't really present here.
- 37:15 Lena: No. No excitement is present in this experience.
- 37:27 AK: *And* in the previous beep there was this inner meta sensing [Lena: Yes.] of what you were experiencing. And it, I don't hear that happening in this one?
- 37:40 Lena: Um, in this one, I wasn't *aware* of myself being *aware* of my choice, of the choices that I was making. It wasn't, I wasn't presently active in that. [Alek: Um hm.] I was presently mostly active in the decision between keeping or giving away. I was more in that space rather than having that moment of kind of overlooking the whole thing and sensing the whole thing, like, like in other beeps.
- 37:40 Russ comments: There are two aspects of this comment that lend additional credence (see the comment at 21:45) to Lena's meta-awareness descriptions of beeps 10.1 and 10.2. First, she denies the presence of meta-awareness here, so we can rule out the possibility that perhaps Lena has become of the opinion that she *always* has meta-awareness and therefore will now indiscriminately apply that self-theory to all her subsequent experiences. Instead, apparently she has a discriminating view of her meta-awareness: sometimes yes, sometimes no. That is, our presupposition worry (see the comment at 25:40) is somewhat allayed.
- Second, Lena here refers to her meta-awareness as "overlooking the whole thing." That is a new description of the meta-awareness phenomenon, using different words and a somewhat different metaphor. That is evidence that Lena is trying to *describe a phenomenon*, not merely parroting back words that have been previously used. "Overlooking" has a somewhat different flavor from RTH's "folding back" or "meta-awareness." Lena is apparently motivated by her apprehension of the phenomenon, which is capable of generating a variety of different metaphorical descriptions of itself.
- 38:19 RTH: And does this experience seemed more like a cognitive thing, where the w, where my eyes and my eye apparatus are involved (they're supplying the information on which I am deciding whether I should keep or not)? Or does this seem like a visual thing, where, as I *look* at the pork chops, I can see that's a keeper, and when I look at the ground meat, I can see that that's a... [pause][inaudible]
- 38:49 Lena: I would say that it's, it's both happening together. As I'm visualizing or visually seeing the food in the freezer, I am having a cognitive, um, um, analytical, um, weighing of decisions about the food I'm looking at.

- 39:09 RTH: And as far as your *experience* is concerned (so I'm accepting that that's true, what you just said). But as far as your experience is concerned, were both of those things equally in your experience? Or does, does it seem more visual or more cognitive? Or doesn't that distinction make sense?
- 39:24 Lena: To me, in my experience, what seems most aware, like what I'm most aware of, is the, is the cognitive-analytical trying to decide between what I'm seeing.
- 39:34 RTH: Okay. And by "most," do you mean 60-40? Or 90-10? Or 80-20?
- 39:40 Lena: I would say, so, yeah, 70-30.
- 39:40 Russ comments: The little things contribute to whether a DES interviewer should have confidence in a description. Here RTH has presented Lena with three multiple-choice options, and she responds with a fourth. She is an independent investigator, which is a very good thing.
- 39:44 RTH: So quite a bit more cognitively [Lena: Yes.] ana, analyzing that in this situation. [Lena: Yes.] And then I'm, I'm still gathering that the, the interaction with the daughter [Lena: Yeah.] is still down in the 10% range. It's uh, it's happening. It's coming out of me. I'm hearing obviously what she's saying and I am responding to it.
- 40:10 Lena: Yes. So I'm so involved in the thought of, of what I'm doing, of the decision I'm making, that I know she just said something. I'm aware of the words, I heard the words 'cause I repeated one of the words to her. But I,.. but it's funny 'cause in that, that's where I have that inner something in that specific sec moment where I'm *sensing* that I *know* that she said something and I know I said something, but I also know that I wasn't very *aware*. I'm aware of my unawareness of that moment. I was aware of not being aware. And I was...
- 40:46 RTH: in the moment, you were aware of that?
- 40:48 Lena: I was, yes. And when she said those words to me and then I echoed "cereals," I became aware that I was not being aware.
- 40:56 RTH: And that's *prior* to the beep?
- 40:59 Lena: That was in the midst of the beep. 'Cause right as I was looking in the fridge and doing those tasks, she spoke to me and then beep went off. And when she spoke to me I realized, *Oh! I'm not being aware* because I didn't respond to her in the way that a normal person would in a question like that. And then I [inaudible]
- 41:19 RTH: So I'm trying to ask the same question that Alek asked about the last beep, I think, and that is, is it the beep that forces you into this folding of, folding your consciousness back on itself (or what we sometimes call meta-awareness, the awareness of being aware)? Or was that already ongoing and the beep catches that in flight?

- 41:19 Russ comments: DES relentlessly tries to ensure that everyone understands what we're talking about and is making important distinctions in the same ways. It requires repetition, each time from a slightly different perspective.
- 41:39 Lena: Already ongoing. I'm already having an experience of looking in the freezer, looking at the food, deciding, hearing my daughter speak, realizing, *Oh, I'm not being very aware right now.*
- 41:52 RTH: And *then*, Beep!
- 41:52 Lena: And then beep. Yes, yes. And then I walk over in the midst of all that stuff, jumbling around inside, walk over to my notepad and record, as best as I can, what was just happening for myself.
- 42:07 RTH: And, uh, I, I also don't understand by your rendition that when you repeat the word "cereal," you repeat it with some inflection that's goes beyond what your daughter had said.
- 42:21 Lena: Yeah. It was, um,
- 42:23 RTH: Sing-song it, or I don't know exactly what word to use about that, but...
- 42:27 Lena: Yeah, it was funny. I, um, she said "too much of the cereals?" Like she was asking a question. And then I said "cereals?" [said with a questioning tone] So, and I knew when I said that, that was where that awareness came in of I understand that I was not being aware. I'm aware of the fact that I was unaware and didn't respond to her accordingly, like a normal person would.
- 43:03 RTH: All right. Then I think I'm good.
- 43:07 Lena: Okay.
- 43:07 AK: It looks like we're probably only gonna have time for like one more, so if you want to pick a favorite among the last two or three?
- 43:15 Lena: Okay, let's see what I have here. So all right. Um, there's two that I can, you guys can pick. One is where I was on the phone with somebody making an appointment and I had like a thought about what was happening. Or, or I can talk to you about. I was writing something about a specific subject, not for school or anything like that, but it was just something I was writing out. Um, and uh, and I was having a sensing thing. So I mean a little bit the sensing thing on the other one, too. I don't know which one would you rather me talk about?
- 44:12 RTH: I'd say let's do the phone. We've got some writing ones already, but let's do the phone. What number is that?

SAMPLE 10.4 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 44:19 Lena: Uh, this would be number four. Five? Yeah. Um, okay. So I was on the phone, I was making the call and the woman answered the phone, um, right away saying "Please hold." And in the exact moment that she said that, I had a thought that, it was an immediate thought of, *Hmm. She sounded very agitated* and um, and I just immediately started considering other ways that she could have, um, answered the phone. And um, and then at the same time, after that thought, I'm probably just reading too into it. She's probably just busy and not to take her way of answering the phone so personally. Um, and in the thought of all of that, the beep happened. And I was able to write everything down.
- 45:19 AK: Um hm. And so what exactly of all that is caught in flight by the beep?
- 45:26 Lena: Um, the part where, I wrote down, uh, the beep caught the very end of it where I was saying how the, I'm probably reading too much into her emotional state, I guess.
- 45:41 AK: Okay. And is it only that the, *I shouldn't take this personally, I'm reading too much into it?* Or is the other stuff still present as well? The, here, *here's how else she could have answered. And boy, she sounded agitated.* And...
- 45:55 Lena: Um, in the, in, uh, the beep caught me being mostly experiencing, but then the, the thought of me taking it too personal, like that was the most, uh, that, I was more involved in that part of my experience than I was with the previous thoughts. That's where the beep caught it.
- 46:18 AK: Okay. And so does that mean entire, I'm *entirely* into this, don't take it personally? Or I'm only *mostly* into don't take it personally, and there's still something else in my experience too.
- 46:29 Lena: The, I'm mostly into the not taking it personally or not taking her, um, personal, um, within mind having that inner sensing of *her*, like her as a person. I don't know her, I've never met her. I just heard her voice on the phone and I just was trying to understand her emotional state. Um, in terms of, but also realizing and understanding her emotional state, not take it personal, whatever it is.
- 47:05 AK: Okay. So I am somehow, I am telling myself or reminding myself or whatever, *don't take this too personally.* And I'm also somehow trying to acknowledge her as a person. Understand her, what she's feeling, whatever. [Lena: Um hm.] And that is what is caught by the beep.
- 47:27 Lena: Yes. Yeah. Yep. So all of stuff... [inaudible]
- 47:31 AK: So do those seem like two separate things? Two separate kind of aspects of the experience?
- 47:37 Lena: They seem together to me. They don't seem necessarily separate. It kinda seems like it's happening simultaneously at the same time.

- 47:49 AK: Um hm. But part of it is aimed at me like, *Hey Lena, don't take it so personally*. And part of it is aimed at, *let me try to understand this person as a person*. [Lena: Yes.] Okay. So about the don't take it personally, how, how does that present itself to you?
- 48:07 Lena: Um, just that I had a, an awareness of, um, uh, like, like a, uh, an awareness, not so much a thought. It was just an awareness of you can't *know* what everybody's feeling. Like I can't possibly know what that woman on the other line was feeling or doing or going through or whatever, um, in that moment to assume she should be less agitated when she answered the phone or whatever.
- 48:43 AK: Um hm. And you said it's not, that's not really a thought.
- 48:47 Lena: Right. It was more of just, it was just an awareness of the moment. Like I, I had like, like your own inner voice kind of thing. Like just, I don't know how to explain it. Like just, it's the same feeling as that sensing thing. Um, and it's coming to me as more of like, y'know, kind of like your own inner wisdom. Like just see it for what it is. Kind of like that inner voice that is just always trying to be the more logical part of you, not in the personal emotional part of you. And so I was, that's where I was at in the beep at the end.
- 49:31 AK: And when you say the same, or sorry.
- 49:33 RTH: [simultaneously] So does that mean that *don't take it personally* isn't really about Lena, it's really about like, you know, people you never can know what, what's really going on with a person.
- 49:49 Lena: True. Yeah. It's not about what *I* was feeling about her in that early two seconds prior. It is more about realizing that *I cannot possibly know* every feeling that everyone's feeling. Yeah. Or specifically hers in that moment.
- 50:09 RTH: Okay.
- 50:10 RTH: And when you said this is the same kind of sensing feeling or something like that, do you mean the meta kind of folded-over-onto-myself, observer-y kind of thing we talked about before?
- 50:23 Lena: Yeah, it's, I was aware of myself feeling like, I wouldn't say offended, but like aware of myself feeling the, the, the, the, um, I guess rudeness. I w I don't know, whatever you want to call it, rudeness of her tone on the other side, y'know. Um, and I, in that awareness, that is where I developed the whole, like not taking it personal, um, and realizing that I can't possibly know the feelings of this woman who I am only on the phone with for like one second.
- 51:07 AK: Um hm. And that is some kind of inner sensing, inner wisdom. Doesn't really make sense to call it a thought. It's not, I'm not thinking this, but I'm somehow sensing it, aware of it.

51:19 Lena: Yeah. And it comes to me, um, subtly, but enough to where I can be very aware of it and create the whole inner experience. Yeah.

51:33 AK: And a couple of times you alluded to an inner voice, but I couldn't tell if you really meant like "I hear a voice," or, or if you just meant kind of inner wisdom and we're using kind of voice and wisdom synonymously there.

51:33 Russ comments: AK 51:33 is a skillful question in at least six ways. First, the origin of this study is about internal monologue, so the question about inner voice needed to be asked. Second, it refers back to Lena's mentions of a voice at 48:56 and 49:18. Alek did *not* reflex-like ask about the voice then, which would have given Lena's voice-mention more importance than it deserved. But third, Alek didn't forget about the voice-mention, either, so the mention is not swept under the rug. Fourth, Alek takes responsibility for the lack of understanding—her query is most directly aimed at *Alek* ("I couldn't tell..."), not at Lena. Fifth, there is not a hint of criticism in the query. Sixth, she mentions both poles of the ambiguity: could be vocal, could be about wisdom. That is the kind of skillful query that invites Lena to clarify without defending, and it reinforces the co-investigator role.

51:46 Lena: When I said "voice," it's like in this particular beep it was not a voice like how I would normally hear myself when I um, read and I'm hearing it in my head, or when I'm having like a very specifically loud thought that I hear my own voice in my head. It was, it was *like* a voice, and I want to say that it reflected a tone. Like there was a tone to it. But it wasn't necessarily like talking like *this* as it would be in maybe other thoughts that are more wordy. This was just more, I understand that this inner sensing has the tone to it and I could pick up on it and I could understand whatever needs to be understood in a way that's not necessarily verbal. [Alek: Um hm.] But I can gather it in a, in a similar way that you would gather the understanding in a conversation. Like a conversation without words.

52:56 AK: Yeah. So it's coming to me sort of *like* a voice in that it has some vocal characteristics. It kinda, it has a tone. It's got a message. But there's not, it's not that I *hear* words or *hear* a voice, [Lena: Right.] But I somehow apprehend like, this has a tone, this is, this is like say it. Like as if someone's telling me, Hey, you can't know what.

53:16 Lena: Right. It's the same as like that when I'm trying to explain the sensing of something and in that experience, y'know, I'm sensing something, I'm having this kind of openness to the sensing thing and that's what comes out when I start to become aware of myself. I have this kind of sensing thing happened and then that's when X, Y and Z goes down.

53:47 AK: Okay. Yeah. And so we're saying it has like a tone to it. How would we, how would you describe the tone?

53:57 Lena: Um, like, um, when I say tone, like, like there's a character, like I'm trying to characterize it almost in a way, like I'm trying to put a, um,

- 54:09 AK: Like is it like admonishing? Or it's kind of encouraging? Or those don't really fit what you're trying to describe?
- 54:18 Lena: Um, in saying "tone," I'm saying that the, the, the thing that I'm sensing has a, um, sort of a bit of a persona to it, um, where I could almost, I can't see it, I'm not visualizing it. I'm not necessarily hearing it in an auditory way in my, in my mind, but I have, there's like a tone to it. Like I can sense there is a, um, particular, um, persona about it, but I don't know how to describe that persona. It's, it's not necessarily a thing of itself. It's not like a person, it's not like a, um, you know, whole construction of... It's not me thinking it's me, you know? I mean, I know it's, I mean I have to think it's me but it's just theory, but it's, um, I'm just aware of something or... I don't know how to answer your question, but, but I do.
- 55:24 AK: It has some kind of...
- 55:27 Lena: Something to it. I just don't know what, what, what you would, how to, how to break that something to it down to, y'know. I don't know how to say what it is. Like there is a particular thing about it, but it's not particular enough to where I can describe it. [Alek: Okay.].
- 55:45 RTH: So tone, tone does not mean an auditory thing. Tone means a ...
- 55:46 Lena: Right. Like there's like a feeling to it. Yeah, like a, like there's a *recognition* when I feel that--I'm recognizing something, you know, but I'm not hearing an actual, um, beep or specific hum or sound or something.
- 55:46 Russ comments: These exchanges illustrate presuppositions and the importance of multiple DES interviewers. If one interviewer presuppositionally presumes that Lena was using "tone" in its usual auditory-characteristic way, the other interviewer, perhaps not sharing the same presupposition, may be more sensitive to the possibility that Lena might use "tone" in some non-auditory, idiosyncratic way.
- 56:07 AK: Um hm. And you mentioned something about like, well, it's me. No, it's not me. Well, I got to assume it's me because who else could it be? But I'm going to try to bracket that theory. [Lena: Yes.] Um, so I, I was gonna ask about that. But then your comments made me think maybe she can't, maybe it's too hard to say whether this seems like it's, it's me, like this is Lena or if it seems like this is sort of some outside thing that has made its way into my experience, but I'm not really in charge of it?
- 56:36 RTH: Or neither one.
- 56:38 Lena: In my experience I, in my experience, because when I have these experiences, when I have these like little moments of insight, I don't necessarily feel they're from me. I have to think they're from me, like logically, if I just put my theory into it, I have to say, *Oh, that's me*. You know? But in the moment of experiencing it, I'm not feeling directly, that it's directly coming from me. I have this, I don't know if it's imaginative, but I always, I feel that I am imagining that something way wiser is giving me that insight. Not that it's not coming from within me, it's just, it's, I, I imagine it as separate.

57:25 RTH: So we're, we're probably running out of time here, but let me summarize what I've got about this. So there, there is a, there is a tone, which is something like, uh, um, a recognition of a wisdom-y thing that says, *well, you can't really know, take it easy, don't jump to too many conclusions*, whatever. And that doesn't seem to be me talking to myself and it doesn't seem to be somebody else talking to me, but yet this idea comes with a tone of intelligence or wisdom or something. Is that fair?

58:04 Lena: Yes. [pause] Yes.

58:08 AK: Cool.

58:10 RTH: All right. So I would say we should leave it to you all to figure out when we're going to do this again and uh, and then we want to decide what you all can decide whether we want to schedule a separate time to debrief or, or, or do that at the same time.

58:33 Lena: Yeah, it would be, I think good too. Um, I was just thinking in my head a second ago to um, ask a few questions so maybe, um, we can arrange something where we can ask a couple of questions and from there, um, continue, if that is something you guys, um, feel would be good for you guys.

58:54 RTH: Okay. So one more. So you're going to arrange another sampling day and then either at the end of that or at another time, well, have a question and answering and see what we want to do about that.

59:09 Lena: Yep. Cool.

59:11 RTH: All right, sounds good. Thank you very much.

59:12 AK: Thank you, Lena.

59:14 Lena: Thank you guys. Have a good day.