

TRANSCRIPT WITH COMMENTARY
Do I Really Have Internal Monologue?
Lena Interview 8:
DES Sampling Day 6

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the April 3 interview with Lena that is available on YouTube at youtu.be/BaemC2nqDWI. 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 Lena: Okay.

0:00 RTH: Everybody healthy?

0:02 AK: Yes.

0:02 Lena: Okay. You?

0:04 RTH: So far so good. It's a challenge. But glad everybody's good. So anything... So this is going to be day, sampling day 6?

0:19 AK: 6 I think. [Lena: Yes.]

0:21 RTH: I think that's right. And anything we should be talking about before we talk about the samples?

0:28 Lena: Uh, just as a um, curiosity, I know that you said initially this would just be six sampling days in total. Um, uh, just putting it out there that through this quarantine, I really don't mind continuing if it helps further your research, unless you guys find that six is enough and would like to, not continue. But just putting it out there then I'm happy to continue if you guys are.

0:55 RTH: Well good, I think, I'm happy to continue as well, I think. So I would say we should just play it by ear when we get to the end of today, we'll say [inaudible] pick another one. But I'm guessing that the answer to that is Yes, we'll want to pick another day.

1:11 Lena: Yeah, I don't mind it. I enjoy it.

1:13 RTH: Good. [to Alek] Are you on the same page as that, Alek?

- 1:18 AK: Yeah, definitely. [inaudible]
- 1:23 RTH: Um, well good. Um, So I'd say, let's press on and see what happens. [Lena: Cool.] Are you, are you in your car, Lena?
- 1:31 Lena: I had to go in my car 'cause my kids are monopolizing the whole house. And they're very loud. And so are my dogs. And we have people fixing our air conditioner right now. I can't sit inside and focus. So yes, I'm sitting in my car, which has a flat tire so I can't actually go anywhere, which is apparently no problem cause we're in quarantine, so...
- 1:48 AK: [laughs] So you are not the first person I Zoomed with who had to go in their car, actually, for like the same [Lena: That's funny]..., yeah, nowhere in the house to go.
- 1:58 Lena: Yeah. It's just too loud.
- 2:00 RTH: Well, despite, despite the rainbow, I am in my office, and um. [shrugs] But I'm ready to go on to number 1.

SAMPLE 6.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 2:09 Lena: Yeah. Beep 1? Okay. Alright. So in my beep 1 I was reading and um, and as I was reading out loud, (umm, out loud, yes) I said out loud, "made it possible to identify sleep states." And I circled the word "possible" 'cause that's where the beep went off. Um. And in the moment of reading that, um, sentence, I was visualizing a sleep lab (however a sleep lab looks, I was visualizing it). And, um, and I also thinking about my own personal experiences with vivid dreams. Um, very specifically to a specific memory of a dream that I had which kind of felt like, I guess what you would call like an out-of-body experience. And um, yes, that all of that was happening at the time of the beep.
- 3:14 RTH: So you're reading out loud [Lena: Um hm.] And is that in your experience? Because it's possible to read out loud and be paying attention entirely to the uh, visualization or whatever. Or it's possible that all of them could be simultaneous in your experience.
- 3:28 Lena: So the reading out loud is directly in my experience because what I'm reading is textbook stuff. So I'm trying to comprehend the material. But at the same time, I'm, as I'm reading it, I'm visualizing, which is more, I would say, not direct, but, um, part of my experience, um, visualizing the concept of what a sleep lab looks like. (I've never been in one, but I'm just trying to, I'm just making it up in my head.) But also, too, what's also most, I would say the most obvious in my direct experience *next to* reading out loud was my, um, memory of a dream I had, that, and I was trying to see if the textbook had any, um, as I was reading, I was thinking that, Oh, maybe this textbook will have some sort of explanation as to this vivid dream that I had before. And um, all that was sort of happening all at once.
- 4:23 RTH: Okay. And did I understand you to say that the most prominent portion is the speaking aloud? The second most prominent is the recollection of the out-of-body exp...
- 4:34 Lena: dream thing? Yeah.

- 4:38 RTH: ...experience? And the third most.... And is that like, well, I guess 50-20-10 or 90-6-2 or [laughs] not sure how these are going to add up! [Lena: Right!] Or 33-33-33? Or...
- 4:53 Lena: Um, I wouldn't say that they're even, um, I would say that the reading out loud, I would say took up, yeah, a little over 50 and um, a little more than half of my attention. And then, um, the, the thinking of my vivid dream, my memory of it, I would say took up roughly, I dunno, 40% of that. And then the rest of the percentage was in, uh, towards the visualizing of a vision of a sleep lab.
- 5:27 RTH: So I could understand that as being either 50-40-10 or [Lena: Yeah.] 50-30-20.
- 5:33 Lena: 50-40-10.
- 5:37 RTH: Okay. Then let's talk about the, the reading portion, the 50 portion. So I'm reading out loud, "made it possible to identify sleep states," and the beep happens at "identify." And are you, it, well... What is your experience of that?
- 5:51 Lena: So in reading out loud, kind of like other beeps before, as I read out loud, it's kind of, I'm, I'm aware of the fact that I'm reading out loud so that I can help myself understand and comprehend the words that I'm reading. So I'm doing that again, um, in that exact moment as I'm reading out loud.
- 6:09 RTH: And, and is that awareness that I'm doing this to further my comprehension, is that in my direct experience? Or is that like the background--that's *why* I'm doing it. And when I'm... in my direct experience right at this particular moment is, well, I'm just reading out loud.
- 6:25 Lena: It is in my direct experience and I am reading out loud specifically to comprehend what I'm reading. Like I understand that that's what I'm doing in that moment. I am aware of myself doing that.
- 6:36 RTH: So there's part of you that is observing Lena read. Rather than just read, there's a part of me that's, that's saying, well, I'm (or not *saying*) but that's *recognizing* I am reading in order to comprehend.
- 6:52 Lena: Yes. And in, in, in the recognizing of myself doing that, it's very subtle. It's not this just this super obvious like distraction that *Oh, I'm, I'm aware of myself reading and comprehending*. It's just, it's this general awareness of *This is what I'm doing. I am reading out loud and comprehending what I'm doing*. And I'm aware of what it is that I'm doing in that moment.
- 7:14 RTH: Okay. And that would be *different* from just reading out loud?
- 7:20 Lena: Yeah, it feels different to me. Yes.
- 7:25 RTH: Okay. And is there anything more to be said about that? I'm reading out loud with the intention of--and, and noticing the intention of learning this stuff--or...

7:35 Lena: No, not that I can think of to add.

7:40 RTH: Okay. [to Alek] You want to add anything to that?

7:41 AK: Can I, can I ask a question about that? [Lena: Yes.] We had a beep (maybe last time) where there was, I think again, you were trying to learn something or think about something. And you were in like this deeply thoughtful kind of experience. [Lena: Um hm.] And this seems a *little* like that, but can you kind of compare and contrast these for me?

8:09 Lena: Yes. So it's deeply thoughtful because I am, I am reading out loud, I'm comprehending, and I'm deeply thinking about what I'm, what I'm comprehending. But in this particular beep it just so happens that I'm taking what I'm comprehending and I'm applying it to a personal experience, to a memory that I had in myself of a dream. That to me was very vivid, which felt like, I guess explained as an out-of-body experience. I don't know. It was very unusual. And I was, as I was reading the material, I was, um, also, uh, thinking of that memory.

8:48 So yes, I was deeply concentrated and almost in a state of, um, that same feeling of meditation. But it was more.... Like the last one was more just this, um, feeling connected to something that I'm, in a different way, [Alek: Um hm.] y'know. This one is more, I'm just connecting to a memory, something in myself. But the memory itself, it has that feeling of being connected to something different, or connected to something other than myself, if that makes sense. So it's almost like I'm connected to it indirectly through a memory, trying to figure out what it meant by reading the thing out loud that I'm, was, that the beep caught, if that makes any sense.

9:35 I think it does a little bit because as I recall, the, the, beep before, it was not quite so specific. It's like I've got some feeling of deep thought/body feeling-y thing--I'm connected to something--but it was a little more general. Where here, we, the thoughtfulness is kind of, *I've got a specific memory in mind*. Is that right?

9:54 Lena: Yes. Yeah. Yeah, it's more specific.

9:58 AK: Okay. Mm hm.

10:01 RTH: Okay. Then there's the vivid dream/out-of-body experience, which is somehow present to you.

10:07 Lena: Yes, it is. Yeah.

10:12 RTH: In what way? How does that present itself to you?

10:12 Lena: Well, as I'm reading, um, about different sleep states, um, I was, I was, it was already, it was already in my mind about *my* sleep experience. The one I was talking about. And in reading the words out loud, I am *reminded* of the memory of that dream. And it comes

to me as also the, a visual representation from a *part* of that dream that I had that stuck out to me the most. And...

- 10:46 RTH: And so the recollection of the out-of-body dream... [Lena: Yes.]...is a visualization?
- 10:52 Lena: Yes. It's coming to me as a visualization, like a, almost a snapshot, like a photograph of that, of that particular memory. Kinda just, [inaudible] like it gets brought up the second I think of it as I'm reading the words. And I'm...
- 11:06 RTH: And what do, what do you see in that visualization?
- 11:10 Lena: The visualization is of me in my physical body, but w, but my body had that translucent kind of, um, color or, or look to it (as I've stated before with the whole wispy thing, except I wasn't wispy), it was just more that I was not *completely* solid. I was more translucent. And the visual of me was me kind of flying through the sky, but not flying typically like you are headfirst. It was like I was sitting like as if you're sitting on a chair in an airplane, except that I was in no airplane and I was just moving through the sky and I was, I could see my legs and that's how I was able to notice I was a bit more translucent, not so solid. And I could see that underneath me was land and um, scenery. And it's not scenery that I have ever seen before in my normal earthly life (I dunno). It looks like something maybe I would see out of like a movie, like so, very green hills and um.... I guess it kinda reminded me of like landscape from like Ireland or something. And I was flying through that towards a cottage. [laughs] So I was seeing that whole image as a still-shot picture as I was reading out loud.
- 12:38 RTH: And do you see yourself through your own eyes? [Gestures with both hands pointing out of eyes] [Lena: Yes.] Or do you see yourself from the side? Or whatever?
- 12:44 Lena: Through my own eyes. I'm completely experiencing this first-hand experience as I do, as I am experiencing myself right now.
- 12:50 RTH: So, so you see your legs. Is that, is that the only part of you that you actually see in this...?
- 12:59 Lena: Yes. Um, well I mean in myself, yes. I see as I'm looking down, realizing I am moving through the sky, I am looking down and I noticed my legs. And that is the part of my body that I can see because I'm experiencing myself through my own eyes.
- 13:17 RTH: So what I see is my legs and then behind that or beyond that [Lena: Yes.] this Ireland-y landscape. [Lena: Landscape. Yeah.] And I'm heading towards a cottage. Do I see the cottage? Or do I just understand that I am heading towards a cottage?
- 13:34 Lena: I see the cottage in the distance. Like I don't see it as right in front of me or anything, but I know that it's in the distance and I can see like the, the building from a distance. Okay. [Lena: Yeah.] And do you, is.... Your *legs* are translucent.
- 13:52 Lena: Yeah. Um hm. And it, the longer I would focus on my legs (and not specifically in this visualization, but I guess it was just more implied in my understanding) that the longer I

would focus on my legs, the more solid that they would be. Um, and that was from my actual dream. So in my visualization I'm *seeing* my legs *translucently*, but I, but there's also this kind of layered understanding that I, um, know that by focusing, if I focused on my legs specifically, they would become more solid, if that makes any sense. Just adding more detail.

14:31 RTH: So this is a, so this is a visual experience [Lena: Um hm.] and includes some layers of understanding that aren't actually present in the visualization. [Lena: Yes.] That the translucent-y [inaudible] would go away, that the cottage would come closer (or I would come closer to the cottage).

14:48 Lena: Right. The whole picture, um, was the sum total of the context of what I was feeling in that, in the dream that I had at the time. Hmm. [RTH: Okay.]

14:59 AK: And does this seem like an accurate recreation of the dream you had before?

15:06 Lena: *Seems* to be, yeah. For that moment though, for that like snapshot moment. Yeah. Just at the time I was visualizing my dream as I was reading out loud. It was just that snapshot moment and it seemed accurate to my visualization. Yes.

15:23 RTH: Okay. Then you're also visualizing the sleep lab, is that right?

15:28 Lena: Um hm.

15:29 RTH: So this is two simultaneous inner imaginary scenes, is that right?

15:36 Lena: Um hm. Yes.

15:38 RTH: And what do you see in this sleep lab scene?

15:42 Lena: It's almost, it's less defined. It's less solid. It's more of just kind of like, as I, if I could describe it, it's like a quick little draw-up of my own, my own imagination. Just quickly drawing something. And it just looks like your regular, well, [laughs] I don't know actually if there is a way that a sleep lab looks regularly, but it just has, um, just quickly, if I look into it, there's, um, ([looks out the car window] sorry, my kids are all coming outside). If I just look at it, um, from, I'm looking at it from, from above, from an aerial perspective, and I see, um, like a circle in the middle with multiple people's heads connected to the circle, um, as they're laying in their bed. So like, here's the center and then there's beds around the center all hooked up to this center piece. And I don't necessarily see a head or a person or ([waves out the window] it's okay. And I'm sorry. So sorry.) And, um, but I just see, um, the general idea of the lab, that there's this center piece that is connected to people's brains and analyzing their sleep states. Kinda like what you would see in maybe a sci-fi movie, except just really less defined, more just very general [inaudible].

17:11 RTH: And when you say "less defined," do you mean it's like a sketch or do you mean I'm just not paying attention to it?

- 17:18 Lena: Less defined, like I can't really, I don't have, there's not a lot of details. I didn't give my, my imagination enough attention to add details to it. Like I was just more, um, y'know, the, the like it's almost very dark in color, like, like shadowy, kind of. Like more, um, like your basic black and white picture, y'know? And I don't know if I'm associating it to darker colors because I think of sleep (and I mean that's just my theory of course). But um, that I just see it more as in darker color. And so with the darker color, I see less detail.
- 17:58 RTH: So what I'm, what I'm gathering is at this particular por, portion of this beep is that I see, in black and white, a circle, where in the center of the circle is, is sort of the control or whatever. And then there's people whose brains are being monitored around in a ring. And there's five or six of these people going around in the circle. [Lena: Yes.] And that, and I understand that to be sort of a standard sleep, sleep lab, [Lena: As I would see it, yeah.] but what I see is this unelaborated ring of people? [Lena: Yeah.] Is that right?
- 18:33 Lena: That is correct. [RTH: Okay. So ...]
- 18:35 AK: Can I... Sorry, is that an illustration of like what you're reading in your texts? Is the text about...?
- 18:42 Lena: No, there's no illustration. They're not like drawing out a picture for me. I'm just, um, visualizing...
- 18:49 AK: You're reading about sleep and you're thinking of sleep studies?
- 18:52 Lena: Yeah, yeah. Right. [Alek: Okay.] Yes. Well, prior to reading what I was reading currently, there was um, a bunch of different stuff I had read throughout the day about different sleep studies. Um, so maybe in some way I was influenced to think, you know, but that's the theory part. So,
- 19:10 RTH: So the... One of the problematic pieces of this kind of research that we do is that a, is that it has, it's there.... It's possible, and I don't really know the extent to which this is true, but it's *possible* that when you describe an image, you elaborate the image as you go and then the image becomes more and more elaborate. And the [inaudible] that was at the moment of the beep becomes, or maybe it was even more sketchy, but as we talk about it, it becomes elaborated. [Lena: Um hm.] And people want to know whether that's really true or not. And I want to know that, too, and everybody, everybody wants to know. So I want, what I guess I'm, I'm *suggesting* is that the next time, in another sample or if we have a sample coming up that has an inner seeing, let's see whether we can go directly to what you see and don't worry about the background at all.
- 19:10 Russ comments: DES tries to describe direct experience (experience that was directly before the footlights of consciousness at the moment of the beep), which means that DES has to distinguish between directly apprehended experience and all else. RTH is worried that our discussions with Lena have not adequately made that distinction clear, so he is suggesting a procedure that might promote the making of that distinction.

20:02 We can, we can always go back and get the background. Well, let's go as fast as we can to, y'know, at the moment of the beep [Lena: Direct.] this included an inner seeing and this is what I saw. [Lena: Okay.] And, and uh, and, and we can get the background. The background, the background is going to stay constant, I think. So I don't think we need to worry about getting the background of, and we do need to, I guess, somewhat worry about getting the sensations [inaudible]. And what, I guess I'm saying that it would be generally true, not only for an inner, an inner seeing or internal visualization, but no matter *what* the experience is, let's, let's see whether we can go as fast as we can get to the *experience*. [Lena: Um hm.] (Well, not *fast* but as *direct* as we can to the experience). And then, and then worry about the explanation second. [Lena: Got it.] Does that make sense to you? [Lena: Um hm.].

20:57 And I'm not sure we can do that. It's a, y'know, the whole thing is always an experiment. But the...

20:57 Russ comments: When RTH says, "y'know, the whole thing is always an experiment," he means it. While DES has one fundamental and focused interest (directly-apprehended inner experience), the method itself is not dogmatic. We have some general ideas about what seems to help apprehend experience in high fidelity (e.g., random sampling, a quick rise-time beeper, interviews within 24 hours collecting beeps, and so on), but we do not pretend to know the best way to capture each individual person's inner experience. So, for example, generally we do *not* explicitly instruct participants to "go as fast as they can...to the experience," but, for Lena, RTH thought that might be helpful. We shall see, but probably not until the next interview or so.

21:06 Lena: Well I can definitely try. Yeah, definitely. I can definitely try.

21:16 RTH: I would say let's, let's try that and see what happens. Maybe there will be [inaudible]. So I'm ready to go on to number 2. [Alek: Yup.]

SAMPLE 6.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

21:20 Lena: Okey doke. Um okay. So I was... With the second beep I was reading still and um, and I was reading, um, this time I was reading in my head. And um, the word "likely" was where the beep set off. The sentence itself was, "are likely related to chronotypes." And, um, at the time that I was, um, that the beep went off as I was reading this in my mind and digesting the material, I was, um, thinking, as I was reading it, about people who, about how older people, as they get older, um, tend to have a, tend to wake up earlier and go to sleep earlier, rather than young adults who go to sleep later and wake up later. Um. And there was a visual representation of, of an older man waking up earlier, going outside to water his plants. Um, that's just what I noticed in my thought, my visual representation of thinking about what a chronotype is, and then in response to reading about that as we age, our internal clocks change in that way. So I...yeah...

22:50 AK: So this includes an inner seeing? A visualization?

- 22:54 Lena: Yeah. [Alek: Okay.] An inner seeing and also, um, kind of a thought [Alek: Okay.] going along with the visual, visualization as well as a comprehension, um, towards the subject that I'm reading.
- 23:07 AK: Okay. Well, in the spirit of what we just talked about, let's go as directly as we can to the inner seeing. [Lena: Yeah. Okay.] So what exactly do you see?
- 23:17 Lena: Um, uh, the representation of the words that I am reading is I'm interpreting or representing the words as um an older man, waking up early to go outside to water his plants.
- 23:17 Russ comments: This sentence embodies the dilemma that we have been facing. What is Lena conveying by saying, "the representation of the words that I am reading is I'm interpreting or representing the words as"? Is that a speculation about how her mental process works? If so, then a *description of her direct experience* would omit those words, and she would say, simply, "I see an older man waking up early to go outside to water his plants." But she doesn't say that. So the question is, when she talks about "interpreting or representing," is she telling us about *something that is in her experience*? If so, we should describe it. If not, we should cull it out. We are still trying to sort that out.
- 23:32 Lena: And that is what I'm seeing.
- 23:36 AK: So I see an older man watering his plants?
- 23:39 Lena: Yeah. In my mind.
- 23:43 AK: Outside? Inside?
- 23:43 Lena: Outside. Yeah. An outdoor, outside, early in the morning, going outside to water, his plants.
- 23:53 AK: And is this in color?
- 23:54 Lena: Um hm. Very vivid color.
- 23:58 AK: And what are the colors?
- 24:00 Lena: Um, just your regular garden array of different colors of flowers and grass and... Um. The man is watering his plants and somehow he kind of... I guess in a way it looks like you, Dr. Hurlburt, you know, white hair and tall. It's just like how I visualized the, the man I'm seeing in my mind that falls in line with chromotype. [Alek: Mm hm.]
- 24:26 RTH: And is he using a hose? Or a watering can? Or neither one?
- 24:31 Lena: Yes. Using a hose.
- 24:32 RTH: Right hand? Left hand?

24:35 Lena: Right hand.

24:35 Russ comments: Notice how easily and authoritatively Lena answers these questions. That suggests that the old man was *seen*, not just imagined in some abstract way.

24:36 RTH: And so you see him from the front? Or the back? Or the top? Or the...?

24:42 Lena: Side. [inaudible]

24:42 RTH: Which side?

24:42 Lena: Um, I would say to his left side. I am looking at him, through the garden. As I'm watching him water the garden.

24:51 RTH: So the hose is on the far side from what you see. [Lena: Um hm.] And is this in motion?

25:00 Lena: Um. [quizzically] I dunno if it's in motion. It's just, it just seems more like a scene, just a scene. And I, I don't see necessarily running water or the plants moving or even really him moving. I just see this one particular scene. [RTH: Okay.]

25:00 Russ comments: To the untrained ear, Lena's hesitation about motion may suggest we should be skeptical of her description of the inner seeing. On the contrary, we understand Lena's quizzical tone and "I dunno" response as a very good sign that she is working hard to describe the experience as it really was and is resisting presuppositional ideas about how experience ought to match reality. In reality, things are either in motion or they are not. Not so in the world of experience. Note also that DES investigators are perfectly capable of asking impossible questions and, in fact, doing so is a crucial part of the DES interview—it's how we find the "edges" of experience and the ability to describe it. Motion may be one such edge—either outside Lena's in-the-moment apprehension or her in-the-interview memory. Either way, these are good signs that Lena is trying carefully to describe experience.

25:15 AK: And the, you've mentioned a couple of times that this is early in the morning. Do you see anything that, that is early in the morning? Or do you just understand this to be an old man early in the morning?

25:35 Lena: Um, the indication that I'm making it early in the morning is by the lighting that I'm choosing it to have.

25:35 Russ comments: This also embodies the dilemma (see the 23:17 comment). Is "I'm choosing it to have" a description of her experience—that she experiences *herself as choosing*? Or is it a characterization of her presumed or inferred inner process—that she *must have* chosen the lighting because the lighting is that way? DES would like to bracket inferences or speculations about presumed processes and simply describe the experience. DES would say that we wish to "cleave to experience." We are trying to sort out whether Lena is in fact cleaving to experience, that is, whether the "choosing it" is actually experienced.

25:42 Lena: So the lighting that to me, I notice in the early morning is what I'm applying to this visual representation of what I'm reading.

25:52 AK: So it's an early morning kind of light.

25:52 Russ comments: So AK offered a statement entirely about description of visual experience.

25:55 Lena: Yeah.

25:55 AK: And I see that. It's not just that I understand it to be early in the morning.

25:59 Lena: It's part of the visual. Yeah.

26:02 AK: Okay. And I'm understanding this is like an illustration of what you're reading. So you're reading about chro, did you say chronotypes?

26:11 Lena: Yeah. Chroniotype...

26:13 AK: Chromiotype. What is that?

26:15 Lena: Yes. I don't know if I'm saying it right. I just learned it. It's, it's, it's just, it's something that we're all born with that... We wake up. It's, it's part of our circadian rhythms. [Alek: Okay.] As we age, those chromiotypes change and when we're younger, those are different. And um, [Alek: Okay.] yeah, so it falls in line with, [Alek: That makes sense.] falls in line with... 'Cause it was prior to reading that one sentence I stopped on, I was reading about how older people's, um, chromiotypes change and alter, is where they can, they wake up early and go to sleep early, you know, as an adjustment to their circadian rhythm. So I...

26:53 AK: And so you are illustrating that in a kind of creative way. You've picked an older man and watering his plants in the mornings. [Lena: (bashfully)Yes.] And so, um, is there also, separate from the inner seeing, is there a thought about this *as you get older, you go to bed earlier and wake up earlier*? Or does the inner scene kind of capture that?

27:17 Lena: The inner... Yes. Yeah. The inner seeing definitely captures it all. Um, but I wrote down that I was at the time of visualizing it and reading, I w, I was having the *thought of*, of it as well. But the thought wasn't really in this worded way. It was, it was a feeling, I guess the thought/feelings that I've explained before in the past. [Alek: Um hm.] And that feeling, I want to say, is responsible for the creation of my visual representation.

27:17 Russ comments: The dilemma is embodied here as well. Lena says, "I was having the thought of, of it as well." Is she saying that she was *experiencing* a thought (regardless of whether we call it a thought, or a thought/feeling, or a feeling) at the moment of the beep? Or is she saying that *there must have been* a thought (or feeling) because something *has to be* "responsible for the creation of my visual representation"? Those are very different things: one is a directly-apprehended experience, the other is a self-

theoretical inference. DES wishes to cleave to experience, that is, to bracket any self-theoretical inferences. (That does not imply that the inferences are incorrect—it simply takes no position on that one way or the other.) We have no preference for or against there being an experienced thought (or thought/feeling or feeling). We do wish to be as clear about it as we can be.

27:50 AK: Um hm. Well, what exactly is the feeling? What... As far as your experiences is concerned here? So there's some kind of thought-feelingy thing about, you know, young people versus old people and waking and, [Lena: Umm.] and that we're calling a thought/feeling. Is that right?

27:50 Russ comments: So AK asked Lena to describe the experience.

28:10 Lena: Um hm. Yeah. The thought/feeling is, it's hard to explain because it's not, um, it's a sensation of an understanding of something. And um, I don't know how to describe that sensation into physical, into what, into a way that you can understand it, like you're feeling it physically. 'Cause I don't know that I'm feeling it physically. I just know that I am sensing some sort of understanding. And I don't know that there is a physical action that goes into that. But I mean it's definitely mental in some way. [Alek: Um hm.] And emotion, emotionally, I respond to it by creating this visual representation. But yeah, thought/feelings are hard for me to describe.

28:55 AK: Yeah, I mean...

29:00 RTH: So, can I, can I ask a question...Alek may have already asked this and I, and I got distracted or whatever, but the.... So I would like to know whether the, whether there is two separable pieces in the experience. One of which is the *seeing of the man* with the, with the hose, and the other is a *thought about* older people and chronotypes and whatever. And the, and the, the difference there that I, that I would like to tease apart as best we can, is it's possible that I'm *seeing* this illustration, um this picture. I am *seeing* this man, and that represents for me—I *know*, I totally understand that what this means is, *he's up early and he's going to go to bed late*. But I don't, I'm not separably *thinking* that—that's the, that's the reason why I created this picture. But the picture *stands for that* in my experience. Or I have a seeing of this guy, and while I'm seeing this guy, I *also have* this separable thought/feeling that says, well, *people get up early, go to bed earlier*.

29:00 Russ comments: RTH tried to ask whether there is an *experienced thinking* along with the seeing, or whether the understanding is simply contained in the seeing. After all, Lena is the (inner) seer, and it is perhaps unnecessary for her to explicitize for herself the rationale for why she is seeing this.

DES is a performance art, and RTH's question is perhaps not as clear as would be ideal. But that is a strength of DES, not a weakness. The iterative process applies to the interviewers as well as to the participant. The interviewers will get a chance to clarify what they want to know, both later regarding this sample and in the future about new samples.

30:15 Lena: Hmm. It almost feels that it is not separate. It, to me, it represents itself as an unfolding of one thing. It's just has many different, um, layers within it that come out as I, um, experience it. And um, I don't know what comes first, the chicken or the egg. I can assume it's probably the thought/feeling, you know, but it seems like the whole experience of the thought, of the thought/feeling of the older generation as you get older, we wake earlier and then sleep earlier, but also, too, um, the visual representation of what that all means kind of unfolds itself altogether at the same time. If that answers your question.

30:15 Russ comments: Lena's response highlights an ambiguity in RTH's question. When RTH referred to "separable thought/feeling" [at 30:07; cf. 29:47], he was trying to ask whether there was a directly apprehended, before-the-footlights-of-consciousness thought/feeling, *not* merely a sentiment or understanding that was somehow known non-experientially. But Lena apparently took "separable" to mean something like "independent" or "operating on its own." So Lena did not directly answer the question RTH was interested in. Her answer does somewhat *suggest* that the thought/feeling was experienced, but there is ambiguity there, too.

The fact is that both the interviewers and Lena have to learn to talk to each other. Perhaps they are making progress, but the goal is not yet achieved.

31:06 RTH: So, so there's... Well, we're working on it. [Lena: (seems relieved) Okay.] And it's a hard or maybe almost, maybe impossible question. So I'm, I'm totally capable of asking impossible questions. [Lena: Okay.] W, but the, what I *really* want to know, I think, is whether this thought/feeling is *directly apprehended* by my definition of "directly apprehended," which is to say, it's *before the footlights* of my consciousness. Because we've decided, for example, I can drive, you can drive, and the driving can be highly skillful and yet totally outside of my experience. [Lena: Um hm.] The same thing is true of thinking, *maybe*, that I can *think* and *that* can be totally outside my experience, and what I'm doing in terms of what's directly before my experience, is, I'm seeing this old guy in the early morning. [Lena: So, I...] And I, I can say, well, I know that this reflects my thought process, but I'm not really directly apprehending that thought process at the moment.

32:07 Lena: Um hm, yes. Um, I think I understand what you're saying. In the thought/feeling itself. So if I was to be driving this, the, the driving part of me is automatic--it's the skillful part of me that just knows to do it. I would say that the thought/feelings are, is that part of me in that moment, the thought/feeling is the skillful sort of thing that just happens. And then the visualization is the thing that I am doing to interpret it all, I suppose.

32:07 Russ comments: There is no question that Lena and the investigators are working assiduously to try to communicate with each other unambiguously about this issue. But RTH's driving metaphor has not yet been successful in helping Lena say, in a way that RTH can understand, whether the thought/feeling is (a) directly experienced or (b) inferred. As in 30:15, her answer does somewhat *suggest* that the thought/feeling was experienced, but there is ambiguity there, too.

Lena's utterance at 32:34 ("the visualization is the thing that I am doing to interpret it all, I suppose") is apparently a self-theoretical inference ("the thing that I am doing to interpret it") about a directly apprehended experience (the visualization). RTH

thinks that trying to help Lena bracket away the self-theoretical inferences will make it possible to perform the discriminations that he thinks are important.

- 32:44 RTH: So the, so what I want us to do is to be very careful about the difference between what I'm *directly experiencing* [Lena: Um hm.] and what the *theory behind*, my own theory about why I'm doing that. 'Cause those are, those could be very different kinds of things. [Lena: Okay.] So the, so I'm, I'm *accepting* the theory. I'm not saying that the theory isn't right. The question is whether that's directly in your *experience*. So the, what I'm trying to get at is, is this thought/feeling [Lena: Um hm.] apprehended before the footlights of consciousness?
- 33:21 I think, so first off, I think we understand what 'before the footlights of consciousness' is, but let's make sure about that. So the, in this example, the seeing the old guy is directly before the footlights or consciousness--I think is what you're saying. You can say, well I *see* it, it's *vivid*, it's good *color*--these are the colors. He's looking this way [snaps fingers] and he's holding the hose this way. And I *see* that in my mind's eye without doubt. Is that true? [Lena: Yes. Um hm.]
- 33:50 So now the question is about the thought/feeling. [Lena: Um hm.] Is the thought/feeling directly apprehended? Or is the thought/feeling what, what I, my theory, my self-theory says, well that *must be* happening because it's creating this picture and, and I understand what the picture means. So there must've been a thought/feeling which made that picture happen?
- 32:44 Russ comments: RTH took another whack at clarifying the distinction he's interested in. At 33:55 he restates that question: "Is the thought/feeling directly apprehended?" That (and the distinction that follows it) seems pretty clear.
- 34:15 Lena: I could say that it could be, but I do know that in, in, in the, um, process of the visual representation, there is a feeling with it. And I possibly could be constructing in some way this this whole thought/feeling thing to better understand my whole process of visualization. But I do know for certain that in my process of visualization, there seems to be an underlining feeling involved that is the... The feeling is what I'm using to construct it in a sense. Is...
- 34:56 RTH: So that's what, that's what I want to be careful... [Lena: Yeah.] That's what I want to be careful that I understand: "the feeling that I'm using to construct it." *That* is a statement about a *theory*, [Lena: Hmm.] not *necessarily* a statement about experience. [Lena: Got it.] And if, if I *feel* something (and I'm with, that could, it could definitely be in front of the footlights of consciousness), but it could also be a theoretical *explanation*. [Lena: Um hm.] And, and I'm trying to figure out whether those things are the same thing or whether, whether we should keep those two things in separate, separate compartments, I guess. One of them is something which is which, which *directly presents itself*: I see the old guy with the hose! And something which is, well, like, there, *there could be*, and I have some kind of a thought/feeling that goes *along* with that, which is a little bit harder to describe but, but it's clearly in my experience. [Lena: Um hm.] Or it could be, well I know there must have, it seems, it seems, I guess, there seems

there *must have been* a thought/feeling that generated this actually apprehended seeing.

- 36:18 Lena: Um hm. I think I need to pay attention more next beep, [laughs] um, in terms of how to, ah, better understand the thought/feelings in the footlight of consciousness.
- 36:31 RTH: I think that's right. I think that's *absolutely* right. And that *is* why we have to do this kind of thing *often*. And it's also why I'm happy to continue to do this because I think we're, we're starting to, [Lena: Um hm.] we're, we're starting to get into what are the difficult, but very interesting [Ale: Yeah.] parts of, parts of the experience. Separating out the *theory* that I have about how I work [Lena: Um hm.] from the *experience* that I actually *have*--[Lena: Um hm.]--that is not trivially easy, maybe, maybe it's impossible, and, [grimaces as in distress] but for sure it takes, it takes work. [Lena: Yes. I agree. (laughs)] And, and I think (and now I'm speaking for myself here only) that, that that work is a virtuous thing to do, I guess, because it's, it seems like if, if the Oracles were right, the 'know thyself' that Socrates or whoever it was that said it--all those, everybody who was a great thinker, thought that--it seems like this is in the heart of that wheelhouse, which is... [shrugs]
- 37:48 Lena: Yes. And, um, just to put it out there, 'cause I'm currently learning about this stuff now and it's just kinda been at the front of my mind. But in terms of knowing yourself, um, it's sort of philosophical, but in the class I'm reading about, it's about the brain and behavior. And it seems that every motivation we have comes from some sort of behavior. And every behavior comes from some sort of stimulus. And that stimulus can be a number of things. And most of those stimuluses come from all the chemicals floating around inside of us. So everything has some sort of chemically driven agenda. And I suppose in relation to your question is w, are we really, are we driven by some other sort of consciousness, state of awareness? Or is that state of awareness driven by some sort of chemically driven process that, y'know, responds to our internal reward system, like we behave to get what we want.
- 38:56 RTH: So I think that's a great question, and what I would say about that is that there are, or there may be, or whatever, reward systems. And, and, and there are certainly are cells. And there are, there are neurotransmitters. And there are some number of billions of synapses out there, hundreds of billions (er, I forget exactly the number, but it's a big number.) And, and I'm guessing that you are not aware of all of those synapses. They're skillfully doing their thing, but you don't know about it. And I don't know about mine, either. And, and I have a reward system, maybe, in some manner of speaking. And so do you. And I'm not aware of usefully about my, my rewards system. [Lena: Um hm.]
- 39:39 And, and so the question is, so there's, there are, there's a lot of stuff all the way down in our physiology, which is acting in some more or less coordinated way. And out of all of that stuff--which might be neurological and might be psychological, it might be social, it might be whatever--*maybe* comes a sort of a special kind of a thing, which is, *this is what I'm directly experiencing at this moment*. So at this, at the moment that we're talking about, I'm seeing the old guy with the, doing the watering. And I could say, well, there's a reward system that made me do that. And there's a social system that made me do that. And there's some of my own family situation that made me do that, and

there's what I think about thoughts and feelings that made me do that. All of those things are in some degree, true, but they're not directly experienced at that particular moment. At that particular moment what's experienced is an old guy with a watering hose. [Lena: Um hm.]

40:42 And, and so the, the aim of this study, the aim of our work here, is to see whether we can describe what is actually experienced and set aside (what we call "bracket") all of those other things: the synapses, and the, and the reward systems, and the social desirability, and [inaudible]. Let's see whether we can... If, if we're not experiencing those things *directly*, then let's try to set them aside. And you're totally right: that's not an easy thing to do and it takes practice. And that's why we do this more than once. [Lena: Um hm. Um hm.] Or even more than *six* times, or maybe... I mean that we have to... it is a, it is a complex skill, I guess I would say.

41:33 Lena: Yeah. Very, very, very. I agree.

41:37 Lena: Um, well if that's said and done, uh, do we have time to talk about another beep? [Alek: I do. (inaudible)].

SAMPLE 6.3 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

41:41 RTH: I do. Beep number 3.

41:47 Lena: All right. Okay. Let me just look for my beep here. [looks in notebook] Yeah. Sorry, one second. [continues to look] Okay. Alright. Here it is. Alright. So in this beep, um, I, I was reading, but at the time of the beep I actually grabbed my coffee and looked up, took a sip of my coffee, and I was looking at the TV. And in that moment of the beep, I was sipping coffee, looking at the TV, having a thought about what was on the TV. And that was my direct experience.

42:41 RTH: And does that mean that not only am I looking at the TV, but in my experience is a thought *about* what I'm looking at the TV? [Lena: Yes, and...] And what were you thinking about?

42:48 Lena: I was thinking about the content of the episode I was watching. So as you already know, I like watching the Travel Channel, so on the Travel Channel...

43:05 RTH: [interrupts] Okay. So let's set aside the background and go directly for what the thought was. [Lena: Oh! Okay, okay, okay.]

43:05 Russ comments: It may be noticed that RTH has become substantially more confrontational in this interview than in any of the previous interviews. Prior to this interview, the interviews have tried steadfastly to focus on the understanding of what has been said. The interviews have been confrontational in the etymological sense of *confront*—to come face to face with. That is, the interviewers have been confrontational in the sense that they have steadfastly declined to let ambiguity or unclarity slide by. Here in interview 6, the interviewers have stepped that up a notch to try to bring the distinction between directly experienced and all else (theoretical

inference, background, etc.) directly into view. That is the distinction on which DES is based: DES tries to describe direct experience as uncontaminated by anything else as possible, and RTH is now becoming somewhat more assertive in trying to make the distinction.

43:08 Lena: The thought was, um, I was, I was thinking about the, the content, the, the um, the idea of having a paranormal experience in that what I saw on TV, in that moment that I looked up, kind of spooked me out a little bit. So I felt in looking at the, at the moment of looking at it, thinking about having a paranormal experience and the, the episode of the paranormal experience occurring also made me feel spooked about it.

43:08 Russ comments: This is Lena's first description of the TV aspect of her experience. Is her experience (a) I was thinking about the content of the TV show; (b) I was thinking about the *idea* of having a paranormal experience; (c) I was feeling spooked; (d) two or more of the above; or (e) something else? This is Lena's sixth sampling day, and most DES participants are less ambiguous by their third day, let alone their sixth. Why is that? Broadly speaking, there are three possibilities: (1) *Communication style*: perhaps Lena has a way of talking that makes her experience seem more ambiguous than it is; (2) *Situational factors*: perhaps there is something in the process of this particular sampling (the knowledge that the videos will be posted on YouTube; an incompatibility between Lena and the interviewers; the coronavirus interference; the mechanics of the beeper don't work for Lena); or (3) *Characteristics of Lena's experience*: perhaps Lena's experience does not divide easily into categories such as the (a), (b), (c) options described above. All of that is still on the table.

43:52 RTH: So at the moment of the beep, I am *thinking* about something? Or feeling *spooked*? Or both? Or neither?

43:59 Lena: Both. I'm thinking about the paranormal exp, uh, the possibility of a paranormal experience on top of feeling, um, a little bit spooked-out by the, um, moment of the scene that I was watching of the paranormal experience

44:19 RTH: And is the spooked-ness directly in my experience? I feel spooked?

44:25 Lena: Yes.

44:26 RTH: And would you say that's more powerful to me or less powerful to me than the *thinking* about having a paranormal experience?

44:35 Lena: Less powerful than thinking about the possibility of having one myself.

44:40 RTH: Okay. Then the, so the *thinking* is about the *possibility* of whether I, Lena, could have a paranormal experience. Is that right? [Lena: Um hm. Yeah.].

44:54 AK: And sorry, is that *in general*? Like can I *ever* have a paranormal? Or is that in this moment, were you wondering if you were having one?

45:01 Lena: I was just in general, could I ever have one? Yeah. [Alek: Okay.] Um hm.

- 45:05 RTH: So I'm pondering the notion of whether I could ever have a paranormal experience. [Lena Yes.] And how does that pondering present itself to me? [pause] I could imagine it's in words: quote [Lena: Yes.] "Could I possibly have a paranormal experience?" unquote. Or I could imagine it's in pictures: I'm visualizing myself having a paranormal experience. Or I could imagine that it's something which is neither words nor pictures...
- 45:41 Lena: I'm not seeing, I don't, I didn't have any visualization in that moment. Um, the only visual that I was seeing was the TV in front of me. And um, the feeling, it was more of the feeling, and there was thoughts with words relating to, um, possibly what it would be like to possibly have my own paranormal experience.
- 46:08 RTH: [pause] And is the thought the most salient thing to you?
- 46:12 Lena: Um, I would say the thought was most salient. And the, I mean, I would say the thought and the feelings were both equally salient. The feeling of, there was definitely an underlining feeling of what I was thinking about. And that feeling was the spooked-out feeling I was getting from the actual episode that was on in the moment that I looked up. And um, the thought of experiencing what it was I was watching altogether creates, just added to the spooked-out feeling that I was experiencing. So there was a thought *and* a feeling, which both felt or feel salient in that moment.
- 47:11 RTH: So I think I've heard sort of three versions of the thinking. (Maybe whether I can remember what they were, not as a different story.) But, but something like, I'm wondering whether I could ever have a paranormal experience; I'm wondering what it would be *like* to have a paranormal experience; and I'm thinking about the paranormal experience that I see on the screen. [Lena: Um hm.] Are all of those aspects of this thought process present at the same time?
- 47:42 Lena: I would say that they are. I mean, I, it's hard for me to, to really know, to say for certain one or the other. I, I'm having a hard time recalling the exact feelings and thoughts, but I can say for sure, definitely, that I had the thought of *what if I had my own paranormal experience*, and, and at the same time watching the episode on TV, there was, um, a spooked-out feeling that went along with seeing the episode, um, that overall gave me like a spooky feeling. Um, I am having just a little hard time breaking this one down for some reason.
- 48:38 RTH: Well, I think there's a lot of possibilities for them. So one is [Lena: Um hm.] that *thinking* can be multi-dimensional at, at, at a time. And so I, I broke things down into three pieces, but that doesn't mean that the thought process has to be one of the one of those or whatever. [Lena: Right.] Thinking, the experience of thinking can be quite inchoate or combined or, or whatever.
- 49:10 Lena: Yeah. It, that's how it feels to me. It doesn't feel that there's one more thought that over the other. It had more of, they're all present at the same time. It was just more about it in the time of, in that moment of experiencing that, what, whatever it was, I decided to focus on the most. And in that moment, I wasn't focusing on more, one, one

thought over the other. It was sort of just this whole general idea of paranormal experiences, all...

49:50 RTH: That's fine, that's fine with us. The, I think it's quite, it's quite possible, quite *likely*, that I can be thinking about paranormal experiences and in a variety of different ways all at the same time. [Lena: Um hm.] And I don't have to *articulate* them. I don't have to say, well, I'm going to think about *what it would be like for me*. And I don't have to think about *whether it's possible*, but I can be thinking of, in that arena, of *all* of that stuff. I'm somehow cognizing about all that stuff and, and directly experiencing that in front of the footlights of consciousness for it. I think that's quite possible. [pause].

49:50 Russ comments: For the last six minutes we have been wrestling with how this thinking has been experienced. In our experience, this type of wrestling very often signals that the source of the wrestle is (like all wrestling) two pronged: (a) Lena's experience was an instance of what DES calls "unsymbolized thinking," the direct, before-the-footlights-of-consciousness experience of thinking that does *not* involve words, visual imagery, or other symbols; and (b) Lena has presuppositions that make it difficult or impossible for her to accept the possibility that unsymbolized thinking exists. For example, Lena said (at 45:49), "there was thoughts with words relating to um possibly what it would be like to possibly have my own paranormal experience," but despite several minutes of opportunity, she has not described those words. So the *with words* part of her 45:49 statement is quite likely not true, but her belief that it *must be true* hangs her up.

Note that RTH has *not* pushed Lena in the direction of asserting the existence of thoughts without words. He has been supportive of Lena's struggle to describe her experience, as in his 49:50 turn and throughout. But presuppositions are delusions, and psychologists worth their salt know there is no gain in trying to talk someone out of a delusion. If it is true that Lena can experience thinking without words, she will have to arrive at that conclusion on her own (with the interviewers' clarifying help).

RTH is an experienced interviewer, and he is in a position to recognize an incipient description of unsymbolized thinking. But part of his art is to bracket his own inference: Yes, it seems like the beginning of Lena's acceptance of unsymbolized thinking; but let's hold that aside, be indifferent to whether that seeming is true or not. If it is true, the later sampling will probably provide instances. If it is not true, then later sampling will probably provide counterexamples. The DES interviewer's art is to be even-tempered about either possibility.

50:33 And then there's the coffee. Um, [Lena: Um hm.] I am taking a sip of coffee; and that's in the real world: I'm taking a sip of coffee. [Lena: Um hm.] Is that in my experience? Because it doesn't have to be, in the same sense as driving: I can, I can skillfully take a, take a drink out of a cup of coffee and not notice it. Or I can have that be in my experience.

50:53 Lena: Um, taking a sip of coffee was very much my experience, um, because as I was taking a sip of the coffee, I was taking a break from reading. So I was very focused on my intention of having a sip of coffee. And in that sip of coffee was the exact moment I looked up at the TV and then everything else followed.

- 51:16 RTH: And so is my experience the *intention to have* a sip of coffee? Or is it the *taste* of the coffee? Or is it the *action* of taking the sip? Or all of the above or none of the above?
- 51:28 Lena: I w I would say the whole thing, the intention and as the intention arose, the whole, the whole thing happened. That, it was an immediate response to the feeling of wanting to drink coffee in that exact moment the beep went off. And as I was sipping the coffee, um, all those feelings, (well I wouldn't say feelings), but all those three things that you listed were present at the time of sipping the coffee. Uh, but they're not fully direct as is in my experience as I am *reciting* those things to myself. It is, it's an *implied* part of drinking the coffee. 'Cause I knew that in reading what I was reading, there was a thought that said to, the, mys, or my own self said to me, "Oh, I want a sip of coffee." It was, it was just an instant desire for coffee. And in grabbing it and drinking it, it, the whole process was when the beep went off. If that makes any sense.
- 51:28 Russ comments: There is much to clarify here: Does Lena's own self *say* to her, "Oh, I want a sip of coffee"? Or was it "just an instant desire for coffee"? RTH would guess that this is a struggle between Lena's presupposition of *saying to herself* and the experiential reality of *no experienced saying*. That is, many people use phrases like "saying to myself" to describe intentions even when there was no experienced *saying* (i.e., no experienced voice, no experienced words). RTH's guess is, of course, his own speculation, which he will bracket away, letting subsequent sampling answer the question one way or the other.
- 52:47 RTH: It definitely makes sense. And, and, and it highlights the difficulties that we're facing here, [Lena: Right. Yeah.] I think. It's a good example of the difficulties. [Lena: Yes] Because the, there's, it is certainly true that in some manner of speaking, Lena wanted to have a cup of coffee or drink a coffee [Lena: Um hm.] because if she didn't, then she wouldn't be drinking it. Right. So then it's *definitely* true that she has some kind of a *need* for coffee or *desire* for coffee or whatever. But that, but whether that was ever present before the footlights or consciousness or not is another story. And, and whether it's a present at the particular, at this particular *moment*, that's another story [Lena: Um hm.].
- 53:29 Because, [pause] (and that's, that is what's difficult, what's difficult to tease out), because in our timeline, I guess there could be, I feel the *need* for coffee or I feel *thirsty* or I feel the *taste*, I'm imagining the taste of coffee. All those things are sort of different experiences. [Lena: Um hm.] And then I reach for the coffee and I feel my, I could say I feel myself, actually the *heft* of the coffee cup, or slightly after that, probably, I *taste* the coffee and I can taste the sweetness or the bitterness or whatever of the coffee. And, and the beep happens in there somewhere and it's, and it's hard to, and maybe impossible to, separate all these things out. So our, our task is, I think, to try to figure out the degree to which we can separate those out. If we can't separate them out, then we can't separate them out. [Lena: Um hm.] But if, if, if we *can* separate them out and we *haven't been* separating them out because we haven't yet learned to *talk* to each other, well then we should learn, [pause] we should learn what the difference is. So I have a *theory* that says: I *must* have, I must have *wanted* a cup of coffee because I'm *drinking* a cup of coffee. Well, that's probably true. But that doesn't necessarily mean that I am experiencing the wanting of the cup of coffee.

55:04 Lena: In my experience, I was experiencing the wanting of, of needing a sip in that moment.

55:12 RTH: And how does, how do you experience that?

55:16 Lena: Um. In the middle of reading, the thought of coffee just popped in my head.

55:25 RTH: A *thought* of coffee? Or the *need* for coffee? Are those the same thing?

55:28 Lena: Yeah, I would suppose that they're the same thing. The thought and the need of it.

55:28 Russ comments: That would seem to be the statement of a self-theory: *If I need it I must be thinking it*. DES tries to bracket self-theories, but because self-theories are delusions, bracketing is (as with Lena) always a battle royale.

55:36 Russ: And by "in my head" do you mean, well... What do you mean by "in my head"?

55:44 Lena: Again, just a visual flash of the, the, the visualization of my coffee mugs. I didn't look up and see it and think, "Oh, coffee!" I, it was in the middle of my reading. It was just, Oh, I'm thinking of coffee all of a sudden. I'm going to take a sip of coffee. And that's what drove me to take a sip.

55:44 Russ comments: This is the first reference to *visualization* of the coffee. RTH suspects that this is the self-theory delusion intruding into the description of experience—presuppositions don't go away without a fight. But he will have to bracket that and inquire about Lena's experience even-handedly.

56:06 RTH: So I'm thinking about coffee, and I am visualizing my coffee cup. It seems like those could be two different things?

56:20 Lena: I suppose you could break them down into two different things. In the moment, it felt almost as the same thing. That in thinking of, in, in the disruption of me reading, the thought of coffee coming in, I don't necessarily know *why* I randomly thought of coffee (and I guess it's not important), but in the moment that the coffee popped into my head, um, was the exact moment that I reached for it. If that answers your question.

56:56 RTH: Well, what it, it is, it is, it is illustrating the *difficulties* of the question, let's put it that way. [Lena: Okay.] And maybe the *impossibilities* of the question. So I'm, I'm not, I, I, I 100% don't want to come across as being critical of you or whatever. [Lena: That's okay.] I think this is on the edge of impossible, and I don't know which side of the edge, that edge it is. Could be on the far side. It could be on the positive [inaudible].

57:23 Lena: I'm determined to understand. [Alek laughs] Ask me a different way.

57:32 RTH: So in some renditions of this wanting coffee, there's a *visualization* involved. I see the coffee cup. And in other renditions, there's *not* visualization. And if there *was* a visualization, it doesn't occur until 10 minutes into the conversation about the, the wanting of coffee. And so the skeptic who's watching these videos is going to say, "Well,

you know, Lena didn't really have that visualization at the moment of the beep--that was something that came as the result of the conversation." And, and, and we don't want to sweep that potential skepticism under the rug. We, we don't, we don't know the answer to that question. We'd, we, we, we would go along with the skeptic. We would say, yeah, well it didn't occur until 10 minutes later, or 10 minutes into the conversation. Well that's true. It *didn't* occur until 10 minutes in that conversation. What that means, well, we don't really know about that. But that's...

58:32 Lena: I can, yeah. Go head.

58:38 RTH: ...So the question really comes down to the definition of *experience* or what is, what is *directly in front* of Lena's experience. And *sometimes* when she, she says "visualization," it *seems like* she is speaking of something which is undeniably before the footlights of consciousness—like the old guy watering. That... I didn't, I didn't see any reason to be skeptical about that at all. Er, it seemed like Lena was describing something that was [snaps fingers] right there before the footlights of my consciousness at the moment. But the coffee cup was a different deal. Now the coffee cup, it's, is that, it seemed like a visualization. Is that the same kind of visualization as the old man? Doesn't seem like it? Well, maybe it is, but shorter? Well, that's what we're trying to figure out. And...

59:31 Lena: Right. So, and um hearing where you're at and what your concern slash question is, um, in relation to what I'm saying. So when breaking this one down, I think is hard. This one's hard for me because, um, I'm not exactly sure *why* this one appears harder for me. But, um, in terms of bringing up the visualization of the coffee mug later into the, um, this beep here, is because I didn't, for one, I don't think I understood exactly what I was trying to convey from this beep. And also I was, it felt, I think, I'm struggling a little bit with this one. And, um, the, I hadn't thought at the time that I wrote it down the details and my experience in the moment I thought of coffee and visualized my cup. And then there reached for it, which is when I looked at the TV and took a sip. And then, which is when the beep occurred as I was sipping the coffee and looking up at the TV. Because the beep happened as I was sitting across and looking at the TV. The beep didn't happen when I was, um, visualizing the, the coffee cup as a, to reach for the coffee cup. It was at the time that I was looking at the TV. So in that beep, the, the, the biggest part of my experience was looking at the TV and seeing what was on the TV. And the coffee was this, I guess, secondary part of my direct experience in, in the moment of the beep. If that breaks it down a little bit better.

1:01:23 RTH: Well, yeah, I think so. Yes. [Lena: Okay.] I guess what I would say is that the, that the method that we have evolved here [Lena: Um hm.] is, is designed to (in a, in a fundamentally important way) not care about this particular beep. [Lena: Okay.] In a, in one manner of speaking, *all* we care about is this particular beep. And in *another* manner of speaking, we don't care *at all* about this particular beep. And that's, that's just the way this method is, and it's, and it's a fundamentally important part of it. So the conversations that we've had about this beep are as much about *next time* as they are about *this time*. They are, and, and, and it's a totally, it's *totally* in both directions. This conversation is *totally* about this beep, and it's *totally* about, about next beep, next, next, next time as well. And that's, and that's just the way it is.

- 1:02:20 When we... We are trying to figure out how to talk to each other about Lena's experience in a way that, that the three of us can, can as fully understand as, as, as we can fully, um, understand it. And the, and this is a difficult and quite possibly impossible thing to do, because Lena has a perspective on her experience that is entirely different from mine, which is also entirely different from Alek's. And, and, and so what we are trying to do is honestly see how good a job we can do in this understanding.
- 1:03:05 Lena: Yeah. Yes, I agree.
- 1:03:10 RTH: And you know, and I, and I agree this one was difficult [Lena: Um hm.] And, and, and in, in the, in the sense that it doesn't matter to me, it was, it gave us the opportunity to explore important aspects of experience.
- 1:03:27 Lena: Yeah. Um hm. Yes. I agree. And do you think that, in these difficult beeps, so this one was hard for me to break down and really fully have this detailed recollection. Um, do you think that that occurs (because I know this isn't our first difficult beep, you know), and would you say that these more difficult beeps are because there is in the moment of the beep, I wouldn't say like a *lack* of consciousness, 'cause I am to some degree conscious of my experience, to some degree. But would you say there is, um... W w what do you think contributes to the difficulty of really bringing back the moment?
- 1:04:26 RTH: So that's a great question. And the answer is, I don't know. I could, I think I could if, if we had the time and interest, I think I could probably give a half a dozen fully articulated theories about why this was a difficult beep. And all of them would probably have a piece [holds up two fingers indicating a little bit] of the truth to them. [Lena: Um hm.] And none of them would be the whole, the whole truth. And, and y'know, it's, and that's, that's why this whole process is a *future* looking thing. Y'know, it's like... I'm a, I'm a guitar player and I, y'know, you could say, well, "Why can't I play this, this particular passage?!" And the answer is, well, there's probably a lot of different reasons why I can't play this, this particular passage, and it doesn't matter. I'm going to, I worked at it and then tomorrow maybe I'm going to be able to play it. And, and, or maybe *not*, y'know. Maybe I'm not maybe that good a guitar player. That's a harder piece. Or whatever block I've got, I can't, I can't do it. And, uh, and that's, I think what this is about. W, we are trying to master a skill, and we're trying to get better at it and trying to figure out what we're doing. [Lena: Um hm. Okay]
- 1:05:50 And the fact that it's difficult--I don't, I just don't think I know how to answer that question any more than I know how to answer the question of why that particular passage was, was difficult. 'Cause I'm, I'm thinking about a particular passage from when I was playing the guitar this morning. And it doesn't seem like there's anything particularly difficult about it, but I can't play it. And, and, y'know, it's, I just don't think it's fruitful to try to explain it. It's just, well, *slow* the passage down, play it right, y'know, when the metronome is going as slow as it can go. And then we'll speed the metronome up and maybe we're going to figure out how to, how to play it.
- 1:06:35 Lena: Got it. Okay. Then that's what I'll do on the next beep.

1:06:41 RTH: I'd say that's good. And we've, we're, we've been in this probably long enough for what we can do in the environment that we're in. And should we figure out whether we can do it again or what?

[We fast forward over some negotiation about meeting time.]

1:07:32 Lena: So, um, did you want to do Wednesday at 10:30? [Alek: I can do Wednesday at 10:30.] [RTH: Works for me.] Okay. So I'll wear my beeper on Tuesday and I'll see you guys on Wednesday.

1:07:46 RTH: Okay. And, and... Before we say goodbye here, I want to, I want to make it abundantly clear that *nothing* that I have said should be understood in, in a way of being critical of Lena. [Lena: No.] These are... any, any more than what I said about my own guitar playing should be taken as being critical of my guitar playing. I'm at the level of skill that I am. And I would like to be at somewhat better skill. And so you can criticize me by saying, "Well, y'know, you're not as good as you'd like to be!" Well, that's probably true, but that's, y'know, that's not really a criticism of where I am. It is just the way it is.

1:08:18 Lena: Um hm. Yes. No, I don't take it as a criticism in any way at all. Trust me. You'd have to say a lot more than that to hurt my feelings. [all laugh] So, we're good.

1:08:29 RTH: All right, so we will see you on Wednesday at 10:30. Alek will send you a reminder on Tuesday. [Alek: I will.]. Thanks very much.

1:08:39 Lena: Perfect. Thank you, guys. Stay healthy.

1:08:42 Alek: You too.

1:08:42 Lena: Bye.