

TRANSCRIPT WITH COMMENTARY
Do I Really Have Internal Monologue?
Ryan Langdon Interview 5:
DES Sampling Day 5

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the June 16 interview with Ryan Langdon that is available on YouTube at https://youtu.be/k_P5POx2A3I. 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

Ryan = Ryan Langdon

0:02 Ryan: Alright. You ready?

0:04 RTH: I'm ready.

SAMPLE 5.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

0:04 Ryan: So, beep one, I was, um, typing something in my phone. And, uh, I typed out like a full sentence. And then at the end of the sentence, there was a word that was like out of place or I wanted to move the word to a different part of the sentence. And it beeped when I was typing the word "innocent." And I wasn't thinking about the sentence at all anymore. I was just saying the word "innocent" as I was typing it. So I was saying it like slowly, 'cause I type slower on my phone than I do when I type on a computer. So it was like saying "in-nuh-sint" in my head when I was typing.

0:47 RTH: And is your experience of the typing as well as the speaking?

0:53 Ryan: Um, that's more of the muscle memory of, of actually typing the word. I wasn't like focusing on the actual individual letters while I was typing. I was more so just saying the word and my fingers were going along with it.

1:07 RTH: Okay. So your experience is, directly before the footlights of consciousness, experience is of "in-no-sint"?

1:14 Ryan: Yeah.

1:16 RTH: Okay. In your voice slowly. Any other characteristics of your voice that are notable?

1:21 Ryan: No.

1:23 RTH: You could have said it out loud the same way, but...

- 1:27 Ryan: I could have said, yeah, but I didn't need to. So,
- 1:30 RTH: And, and I'm not sure that I understood. So you *had* typed the sentence and now this is going to be the last word of the sentence? Or are you putting this word in a different place?
- 1:39 Ryan: I'm putting it in a different place. So it was like I said the word towards the end of the sentence. Um, and I would have had to like repeat the word in the sentence if I wanted to put it there. So I just moved it and then it, it made the sentence make more sense.
- 1:56 RTH: So you had put your cursor to some interior place in the sentence [Ryan: Yep. Right (inaudible).] and now your type, now you're *saying* "in-no-sent," and that your fingers are doing the work to make "innocent" appear at that spot?
- 2:08 Ryan: Yep.
- 2:10 RTH: Then I think I'm good.
- 2:12 AK: And the slowness of it, Ryan, is that, um, does it seem slow to you in your experience?
- 2:19 Ryan: Yeah, it seems like la, like laggy, like "in--nuh--sint."
- 2:25 AK: Um hm. And that's part of the experience? Not on like, after the fact like, "Oh, that's weird. That was, I was saying it really slowly."
- 2:30 Ryan: No, that was just, I didn't second-guess it.
- 2:35 AK: Okay, then I'm good. By the way, is this day five or six?
- 2:38 RTH: Five I think.
- 2:40 AK: Five. Thank you. Number two.

SAMPLE 5.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 2:46 Ryan: Alright. Um, I was reading something out loud. Uh, I read the word "saphenous vein," which is a vein in your leg. Um, and I said it out loud just because I like to be able to pronounce things. Um, because it's kind of embarrassing if you're talking to someone you don't pronounce things correctly. Um, and I had like a vague image of the right leg of a diagram. Um, it wasn't, like I wasn't being able, I wasn't able to like pick out the veins on the diagram or like any structures. It was just like vaguely attached to, to the word "saphenous vein" when I was saying it. [Alek: Okay.] Yeah. Just because like, it's important to know where things are. So almost every like anatomy word that I think of or say it's usually a visual experience for me. I can't say that, but for this one, it was.
- 3:42 AK: Okay. Nice bracketing there.

3:43 Ryan: Thank you! [inaudible] [they laugh]

3:43 AK: Right. Um, okay. So, so you're re... I want to understand the reading and the saying it out loud. Are you, um, is "saphenous vein" the, like the word you're on in your reading or are you reading and you sort of pull away from the reading to, to practice pronouncing this word.

4:02 Ryan: It was a heading, um, or it wasn't a heading, it was a bullet point where you, it was about, um, like doing a CABG, which is like taking veins from other [inaudible] arteries from your body and putting it over the coronary artery, if there's, if it's clogged. So I was just reading, there's like a bullet point, and one of them was saphenous vein and I, and I said it out loud just to like, to make sure I, I know how to say it.

4:27 AK: And does it seem like I'm reading out loud at this moment? Or does it seem like I am saying "saphenous vein" because I want to practice pronouncing it. And maybe you're like, I don't know, these are the same, or this question doesn't make sense.

4:41 Ryan: No, that makes sense. It's just, it's, it's tough to differentiate the two. Um, I was definitely focusing on like phonetically saying it correctly, so it's not like I saw it and then I read it out loud. I was, I was more aware of the fact that I was saying out loud for a purpose, if that makes sense.

5:02 AK: Okay. So it is,

5:04 RTH: It's not just reading out loud. It's reading out, it's *pronouncing* out loud. [Ryan: Yeah.]

5:11 AK: Which I'm taking is kind of also part of reading out loud. 'Cause I'm also reading this section, is that?

5:16 Ryan: Yeah. So I, I had already read it. Um, and then I said it again out loud.

5:23 AK: Oh, okay. That's helpful.[Ryan: Yeah.] Okay. And did you say it just as you've said it to us: "saphenous vein"? Or was it some...

5:34 Ryan: Yeah. "Saphenous vein." I said,

5:36 AK: Got it. And I'm understanding this is just for you. It's not like somebody's in the room you're studying with or something.

5:44 Ryan: It's more of like, just making sure the motor aspect of my mouth is working correctly

5:49 AK: Got it. Spoken like a true PA. Okay. So then, then there's also a vague image.

5:58 Ryan: Yeah. A vague image of a diagram that I've seen in the past, um, where it's just like a cartoon of someone's body. And it was like, uh, just the leg part of that. It was like an anima... Not like an animation, but just like someone would draw with like a pencil. [Alek: Okay.] It wasn't super [inaudible].

- 6:20 AK: Do I see that? I mean, in my imagination, of course, but am I, are you seeing something at the moment of the beep?
- 6:26 Ryan: Just like the leg, like a vague representation of a leg. There's not much detail to it. Like I don't see the vein or any other veins or it's not labeled. It's just attached to the word when I say it.
- 6:42 AK: Okay. So by vague, I'm understanding you to mean like this seeing has almost no details. It's very inarticulate, unarticulate, but I do *see* something, I see a leg of a diagram.
- 6:53 Ryan: It's similar to, um, beep one of last session where I was thinking about sending someone a message and like, it was like a vague image of them, but what it wasn't like super defined or anything.
- 7:09 AK: Um hm. And as I recall in that beep we kind of went back and forth about whether it was an inner seeing, but I think we came down on the side of it's probably, or we're pretty sure it's an inner seeing, that this is a visual experience. It was just so inchoate that it's hard to even call it a seeing. Is that....
- 7:09 Russ comments: RTH thinks that AK's characterization of Ryan's seeing in sample 4.1 is slightly more ambiguous than he recalls it. This might be seen as a weakness of DES—two skilled interviewers can't agree about whether Ryan was innerly seeing. On the contrary, we see it as a virtue. First, Ryan's experience at sample 4.1 was indeed inchoate, so the issue is only the degree of confidence about whether Ryan was experience *seeing* when the thing seen is inchoate. To force Ryan's experience into one of two seemingly clear categories (seeing vs. not seeing) would not do justice to Ryan's experience. Second, honoring (keeping alive, respecting, exploring, debating) investigators' differing opinions is, over the long term, the way non-omniscient beings practice striving for fidelity. The question is not which of RTH or AK is right; the issue is that RTH and AK have alerted each other (both here and in discussions after the interview) to be sensitive to nuances about the boundary characteristics of Ryan's inner seeing.
- 7:27 Ryan: Yeah. Correct.
- 7:29 AK: And how does this one compare to that? Like, is this equally inchoate? Or is this one a little clearer, a little more detailed, or?
- 7:37 Ryan: Um, I would say it's a little bit more clear just because it's a diagram that I've like was just looking at. So it was like fresh in my mind and I didn't have to like put much work into it or anything. Like I could have forced myself right now to, to like, think about the picture that I I'm thinking of right now, but I, it wasn't like that. It was just like vaguely there, like. [Alek: Okay.]
- 8:02 RTH: So by "vaguely there," do you mean... I'm still trying to figure out what do you mean by "vague." [Ryan: I know.] Do you mean that the, this is a cartoony thing and I see the outlines of it clearly, but I don't see anything else? All, I it's like a cartoon and all I see is the black lines of the cartoon, but the black lines are themselves clear? So that could

be vague because all I see is the outline. Or by vague, you mean, I don't even see the outlines clear. The outlines--I can see them, but they're just... Even outlines aren't clear.

- 8:32 Ryan: Yeah. It's more like the latter. It's more like, it's just, it's like drifting off in my, in my brain. Like it's not fully present, but it is definitely like lingering around. [RTH: Okay.]
- 8:46 AK: Hmm. And is it clear enough to say like, do I see just a leg? Or do I see the whole diagram but really mostly the leg? Or,
- 8:57 Ryan: Yeah, it's clear enough for me to know that it was just like the right leg of the image.
- 9:03 AK: Okay. So I know this comes from a diagram of the whole body, but at the moment I just see the right leg.
- 9:08 Ryan: Yeah. The patient's right leg. [Alek: Okay.] er, the images.
- 9:14 AK: Okay. And between the saying aloud "saphenous vein" and this vague inner seeing, is one of those more prominent for you at this moment.
- 9:26 Ryan: Okay. Can you repeat that? Sorry.
- 9:28 AK: So I'm understanding there's sort of two things going on in this experience. I'm saying allowed "saphenous vein" and I've got the vague image of the leg.
- 9:35 Ryan: Definitely saying the words "saphenous vein."
- 9:35 AK: Okay, that's much more prominent. And like 90-10 more? Or like 60-40 more?
- 9:42 Ryan: 95-5, 99, 90-10 yes. It's just vague. It's like, I know it's hard to explain, [Alek: Yeah.] but I definitely have, I've had stronger visuals [Alek: Mm hm.] in the past for sure.
- 9:58 AK: Great. Yeah. Then I'm good.
- 10:01 RTH: So it seems like you're capable of having a visual in a range of clarity or whatever. [Ryan: Um hm.] Number three.

SAMPLE 5.3 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 10:13 Ryan: Um hm. Right. Um, I, so that the saphenous vein thing, I was studying for a test this morning, and I was taking the test and also doing the experiment. And, um, I was reading a case study. Uh, that was one of the questions. And I read the case study and then I read the answers along the side of the screen. And I said in my own voice, in my head, um, "I have to figure out what it is first." So the question wasn't asking, it wasn't like a list of symptoms and saying like, "what's the diagnosis?" It was a list of symptoms. You had to figure out the diagnosis and then to get the answer, you had to know how to *treat* that diagnosis. So in my head, I said, "I have to figure out what it is first." If that makes sense. I can explain that better if you want me to.

- 11:02 RTH: And by “what it is,” you mean what the diagnosis is, what the disease is, or whatever? [Ryan: Yeah.] Okay. And this I’m, I’m gathering is inner speaking. [Ryan: Mm hm.] In a straightforward, declarative way? Or,
- 11:16 Ryan: Yeah, it was w this one was more of me forcing myself or me initiating speech. Um, I know in the past I’ve said sometimes I initiate it. Sometimes it just like flows out. This one was more initiated, like, like I was working myself through the problem.
- 11:34 RTH: Okay. And my eyeballs are aimed at the list of the answers. [Ryan: Yeah.] And do I, am I seeing them in my experience? Or is that...
- 11:43 Ryan: Um, I saw, I read the answers or maybe not even all of them, just like one or two of them. And I realized what type of question it was. So then, like, I, I, I, [gestures position] the question is in the middle, and then the answers are along the side. So I scan my eyes back over to the big problem. And then it beeps at that point while I was saying it. So I was like, “I have to figure out what it is first.” So I scan back over to the question just to analyze that more.
- 12:11 RTH: Okay. Um, so my question is, is there a visual aspect of your experience here? I understand that your eyes are aimed at the page, and moving back from one, from the answers to the question, but is that in your experience? Or is that just a fact of the universe? My eyeballs are swinging back.
- 12:26 Ryan: Yeah. It’s more of like a motor movement of moving my eyes over to the problem. I wasn’t like thinking about the problem or the details of Oh, that was within the problem. At that point, I was just on my way to, to start doing that.
- 12:43 RTH: And *experientially*, am I actually... Does that mean I’m not seeing the problem at all? My eyeballs are aimed at it, but I don’t see it?
- 12:50 Ryan: No, I see it. It’s just there’s no, it doesn’t mean like, the words aren’t meaning anything to me at that, at that exact moment of the beep.
- 12:58 RTH: So I have a, some kind of a perceptual, visual-perceptual awareness of what I’m seeing.
- 13:04 Ryan: Yeah. But I have awareness of where I was planning on putting my eyeballs, which was the group of words that I needed to read, but I haven’t, I hadn’t started reading yet.
- 13:16 RTH: Okay. And does it make sense to ask the question, how much of your experience is, what percentage of your experience is in the saying, “I have to figure out what it is first,” and how much is visual...?
- 13:33 Ryan: It’s, I mean, it’s definitely like very prominent me saying, “I need to figure out what it is first” or whatever. Um, but I was, I was really focused on the, I was taking a test. I don’t know how to like, answer that question [RTH: Okay.] differently. Obviously I’m like aware of the problem and like what it contains a little bit, but I haven’t, I hadn’t like put much effort into really diagnosing the patient until I, until after the beep.

14:07 RTH: Yeah. The term *aware* is a problematic one, because obviously you're aware not only of the test, but you know, black lives matter, and the fiscal, fiscal ramifications of the COVID-19, and all that. You, you're aware of all that stuff.

14:25 Ryan: It was in the, the, like it was in the footlights. What, what's the saying that you use footprints or ?

14:31 RTH: Footlights.

14:31 Ryan: ...foot lights of my consciousness that I was looking at a problem. Whereas black lives matter was not in the footprints of my imag, my consciousness at that moment.

14:42 RTH: Fair enough. Then I think I'm good.

14:45 AK: Yeah. Me too. Number four.

SAMPLE 5.4 (skipped) and 5.5 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

14:58 Ryan: Mmm. So this is, oh, a situation that happened last time where it beeped and then it beeped again immediately after, however, this time I'm going to do the second beep instead of the first beep. And you'll see why. [Alek: Okay.] Um, so the beeper went off and it like took me out of the situation. And I couldn't really remember what happened, like what I was thinking about that moment. And I was trying to think back at like what I was doing to, to trigger my memory of what was happening in the moment. Um, and then the beeper went off at that moment and I said out loud, um (am I allowed to curse on here? [RTH: Sure.] Okay.) I said, "I don't even fucking remember what happened." Um, I said out loud because I was like thinking about the beep. I don't need to remember what happened. Um, except I knew that it happened when I was on Twitter, so it went off and I was like, visualizing Twitter, trying to think back at like what I was looking at to spark my memory and then it beeped.

15:59 AK: Okay. So, okay. I think I, I get the sequence and why you're giving us the, both of these beeps. Is the, "I don't even fucking remember what happened," is that caught in flight by the second beep? Or is that triggered by the second beep in a sort of after the beep or during the beep? [Ryan: It was like...] Does that make sense?

16:25 Ryan: ...at the end of the sentence or like right after, um, I was saying that.

16:30 AK: So that is naturally ongoing and this other beep comes and catches it. Is that right?

16:36 Ryan: Yes. Yes. Correct. So the beeper goes off, I'm thinking about it and I'm like, "I don't even fucking know what happened" and then it beeped again. And while that was happening, I was also thinking about the thing I was looking at on Twitter and I was trying to get that to, to, to bring me back.

16:55 AK: Okay. So it seems like we can probably discard the fourth beep of today.

17:01 Ryan: Yeah. Yeah.

17:03 AK: And use this fifth beep, which has your experience happens to be related to the fourth beat, but it sounds like we can't say at all what was happening at the fourth. [Ryan: Exactly.] Okay. So we'll just say this is beep five? [RTH: Right.] Okay. And so am I understanding, right, that at the moment of beep five, there's the, "I don't even fucking remember what happened" and trying to recall Twitter, see Twitter or something like that? [Ryan: Yeah.] Okay. And the you saying, "I don't even fucking remember what happened." That's out loud?

17:35 Ryan: Yeah. I said it out loud.

17:41 AK: Okay. And in, is there anything more to say about that experience?

17:46 Ryan: Other than the visual of me trying to think back at, at what I remembered to try to get it, to trigger it,

17:54 AK: Right. I, yeah, my, that was a bad question. I meant anything more to say about the *saying*, like if there, no, it sounds like that's just is what it is.

18:01 Ryan: Yeah. It was just there.

18:03 AK: And so then tell me about the visual part, what exactly, what's going on there?

18:09 Ryan: Um, so it was just like a vague again, vague, um, visual of like the feed. Like I didn't see any words, I didn't see any names, nothing. It was just like, that's how I helped me. That helps me remember things is like visuals, I guess. [Alek: Mm hm.] Um, and I was just thinking about that and I was hoping it would trigger a memory, but the thing went off and then *completely* took me out of the whole situation.

18:35 AK: Okay. So I don't want to assume that you're using "vague" in the same way here as you did in the other ones or even the one yesterday. So help me understand what we mean by vague for this one.

18:51 Ryan: Um, okay. So it was not defined. It was definitely, um, more prominent than the leg one where, like I said, that was just kinda just like drifting around in my consciousness, where this one, it was definitely like the forefront of my experience. Um, but when I say vague for this one, I mean, I didn't, that wasn't like seeing what I was reading prior to that. Um, or just like pictures or anything. It was just the feed, like the color scheme.

19:28 AK: Um hm. So I see my Twitter feed, [Ryan: Mm hm.] but not really any details. No people's Twitter handles or names or words or pictures. I kind of generally have the color scheme...

19:38 Ryan: Yeah. And like where the pictures would be as a different color. Most of it is black because that's what it is on my phone. And then there's like whiteness representing colors or letters or words. Um, but I couldn't, there's nothing I could have like visually read or anything.

- 19:55 AK: So you see whiteness as if those were like the words of somebody tweet, but they're not actually words.
- 20:02 Ryan: No, it's not that they're not words. It's just, it's not clear enough for me to like pick out what it would be. [Alek: Got it. Okay. Mmmm.]
- 20:23 RTH: So I had a couple of questions. So you, you said you saw the Twitter feed colors. Is, is this, where, did you mean to say, well, I see the Twitter feed as it was, and these are the colors that it was? Or had you zeroed in on the color as I see the blue and (I'm not a Twitter person, so I don't know what...). Are you into the *colors* of it? Or are you in just a Twitter-feed-ness of it?
- 20:45 Ryan: Um, more of the feed, but there, I, I knew it was the feed because it was the color, I mean, huh.
- 20:57 RTH: So you've had a couple of beeps, I think where the, where the *color* was the deal. I don't actually remember. I think, but I may have you confused with somebody else, but
- 20:57 Russ comments: RTH is mistaken here. Many people are frequently interested in the sensory aspects of things (for example, of the particular shade of blue in a Twitter logo), but Ryan has not had such experiences. (Neither did Lena, by the way.) DES refers to such interests as *sensory awareness*.
- 21:07 Ryan: The colors were definitely prominent in that it helps me like as much detail that I could put in my brain for a visual, the better I could remember things. So like, um, um, w the color were just like, there, as in those were prominent, the colors were more prominent than like the words or anything, if that makes sense. Like the location of the colors and everything were, were, were accurate, but there wasn't detail as in terms of like content.
- 21:39 RTH: So the question that I'm trying to answer is, if you're looking at me right now, you could, you could say, well, I see Russ and he's wearing a red shirt, but I'm really interested in Russ and what he has, what he's saying. Or you could say, I'm, I don't really care about *Russ*. I'm just interested in that *color*. I'm, I'm obviously seeing Russ, and I know who he is, but for whatever reason, I'm drawn to the redness of his shirt.
- 22:02 Ryan: I was more interested in finding the content or like what I was reading about than the actual color, [RTH: Okay.] but the color was, was there, which like set the foreground to help get my memory there to remember. [RTH: Got it.] So I was more interested in, in finding out the content, if that's what you're asking. [RTH: Yup.] The content I was reading. [Alek: Mmm.]
- 22:02 Russ comments: This illustrates the "stubbornness" of experience and the reliability of Ryan as a reporter. Even though (in his 21:39 turn) RTH has (mistakenly) led (gently, to be sure) Ryan in the direction of a sensory-awareness interest in the colors, Ryan sticks

to describing the role of color as a perceptual detail rather than a particular sensory interest.

22:27 RTH: And then I had a question about the words too, the, “I don’t fucking remember the”

22:32 Ryan: Watch your mouth! [they laugh]

22:37 RTH: Yeah. I would never say such a thing on my own. [Alek laughs] So the, the question I had is when in the third beep, I think you made a distinction between initializing the speech and whatever. How does, how does the words fit in? Are these words? Are you initializing these words?

23:00 Ryan: Yeah. Yeah. It was more like, out of frustration. Like I was, I was talking to Alek last, or the first time where I said, like, it’s kind of like, if you stub your toe and you’re like, you swear, it just like comes out. It was, it was, it was more so like that, rather than me actually like wanting to say it.

23:20 RTH: Okay. So this is different from the, “I have to go figure it out.” [he refers to sample 5.3] “I have to figure it out what was that first,” or,

23:26 Ryan: Yeah, that was more of me working myself through the problem, where this one, it just, it just came out out of frustration. [RTH: Okay.]

23:38 AK: I think I’m good, then.

SAMPLE 5.6 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

23:41 RTH: Me too. Number six, I guess we’re calling it.

23:44 Ryan: Yeah. That one was pretty complicated. Um, okay. So you want to label this one “six”? So I did seven in, just for the sake of that one [RTH: Okay.] beep not working. [RTH: That’s good.] So your six. Um, my upper back was hurting and I was noticing where it hurt. Um, and I was like differentiating the area of pain from the area that didn’t have pain, to like locate the pain in my upper back.

24:16 RTH: And so is this exper, this experience then mostly about the location as opposed to the pain?

24:22 Ryan: Uh, it’s a combination of both. So like I was, I was feeling the pain. Um, and then I was like, without con, I wasn’t consciously doing this, but I was trying to feel the area of where it wasn’t hurting compared to where it was hurting to like contrast the location of it exactly. This one, that ones, that was a bad explanation. And I’m aware.

24:50 RTH: Is this, is this a sens, primarily a sensory deal? My senses for whatever reason are zeroing in on the location?

24:58 Ryan: Yeah. I’m focusing on the pain.

25:02 RTH: as opposed to a cognitive-y think-y kind of a thing that says, *well, I'm going to try to figure out where my back hurts. Let me zero in on this.*

25:09 Ryan: Yeah. It's more so the first one. [RTH: Okay.] I wasn't like trying to like diagnose anything or determine what was the cause. I was more so just like feeling where it was.

25:20 RTH: Following the borders of the pain [Ryan: Yeah.] or following them, following the presence of the pain and it's, it is here and it isn't there kind of a deal.

25:27 Ryan: Yeah. At the moment of the beep.

25:32 RTH: Okay. And I'm gathering, that's all that's in your experience at this particular moment?

25:35 Ryan: Yeah. Nothing else was, was in my consciousness at that point.

25:44 AK: Can I ask how the... You said something at the beginning, I think, that it's like, I'm noticing the area that's in pain and, and the area, or, and like what parts are not? [Ryan: Mm hm.] Is that, does that mean there are like simultaneous sensations or something? Like I'm, I'm feeling the pain and I'm also feeling non pain and I'm, and I'm, I'm noticing the areas of these? Like the location of these? Is that...

26:09 Ryan: I think just when I, I guess I was saying I was, I was feeling the areas where there wasn't pain. It's more so just the contrast of the pain that I was sensing to the absence of that pains elsewhere. It's not like I was, my consciousness was on the fact that there was parts that didn't have pain. It was definitely all on the area with pain. [Alek: Okay.] But it was like delineated where, like I knew where it stopped, if that makes sense, [Alek: Mm hm.] based on the fact that there's no pain below that area.

26:42 AK: And I know the location where it stops. This is about like the boundaries of this pain. [Ryan: Yeah, exactly.] Okay. So it's not like I feel the pain and I feel areas of non-pain. I feel the pain and its boundaries. And so the contrast, okay. [Alek: Okay.]

27:00 RTH: I feel the edges of the pain? The boundaries of the pain? [Ryan: (nods affirmatively) Yeah.]

27:07 AK: Is there more to say about the pain sensation itself? Like, is this a stabbing pain or a dull pain or...?

27:13 Ryan: It was a dull achy pain from like clenching my shoulders. So it was like my upper back and my neck area.

27:28 AK: Okay. Sorry. I have one more question. And like, are these boundaries like really discrete? Maybe? I don't know if that's quite the right word. Like it's like I am feeling and right there, right at my... (I don't even know bones or muscles or whatever), but, or is it a little more diffused, like, Oh, it's generally over here on the left and not over here.

- 27:50 Ryan: Yeah. It was diffuse. It's not like I could feel exactly the exact spot where it stopped, but, um, it was moreso just the general area that I was aware of. [Alek: Okay.]
- 28:08 RTH: I guess one more question about that. So does it seem like my interest is in the *boundaries* of the pain or does it seem like my interest is in the pain and I'm just sort of exploring the pain and that includes where the boundaries are?
- 28:24 Ryan: Yeah, I was, I was moreso exploring the pain and like, um, not like consciously trying to, uh, figure out where it was coming from, but, uh, it was definitely like targeted towards it, like exploring it, trying to like figure out, um, not like where it stopped, but, but just the general, like stuff that was involved. But I wasn't thinking about that at that time. Like what muscles were, were involved--I wasn't thinking about that.
- 28:54 RTH: I think I've got it.
- 28:58 AK: Yeah. Thanks. So there's a number seven?

SAMPLE 5.7 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 29:06 Ryan: Yeah. This is the last one I had. Um, I was sitting outside in the sun and I was, my eyes were closed. I was listening to music. Um, I was conscious of the music. Uh, and then I was feeling the warmth. I was conscious of the warmth of the sun on my arm, my right arm. Um, and I was also conscious of a loud plane that was flying over. Um, my eyes were closed, but I was like sensing all three of those at the same time at the same intensity.
- 29:39 AK: Um hm. So three sensory deals all simultaneously present. And equally present? [Ryan: Yeah.] The last part is equally intense or whatever?
- 29:50 Ryan: Um hm. Maybe not the lyrics of the music, but I was definitely like, like enjoying like the sound of it, like the beat, I guess.
- 30:00 AK: Okay. And I couldn't tell if you mean that like as an afterthought *maybe*, or you mean like, not really, my experience is more of the beat than of the lyrics or the message or whatever.
- 30:11 Ryan: It was more of like a physical feeling of the music than it was actually consciously listening to the lyrics and analyzing it.
- 30:22 AK: Okay. So let me, so, okay. Let me start here. Do, do I hear the music at the moment? [Ryan: Mm hm.] Okay. And I'm mostly into the beat as opposed to the lyrics. ([noise in background] Sorry. My children must be running upstairs.) And then, and then is there also, or as part of that, there's a physical feeling?
- 30:47 Ryan: No, I wouldn't say it's physical. Like, I, I could like bob my head to it. I don't know if that counts as physical, but like, I wasn't like feeling the music.
- 30:57 AK: Okay. I'm into the beat, and, and that's not an *explicitly* physical thing.

31:05 Ryan: I don't know how to explain it because it *might be* physical. I just, I genuinely don't know how to explain it if it is. [Alek: Mm hm.]

31:14 RTH: So divide, if we divided the music up into two aspects, the rhythm and lyric, what you're saying is, I'm more interested in the rhythm, I'm more attending to the rhythm than to the lyric.

31:28 Ryan: Absolutely. Yeah.

31:31 RTH: And how your body does that, whether it it pulls..[inaudible].

31:35 AK: And then I feel the warmth of the sun on my right arm.

31:38 Ryan: Yeah. I was like, half of my body was like under a, an umbrella, and my right arm was like on the outside and like I was feeling the warmth on my arm. [Alek: Okay.] I was moreso consciously, I guess they aren't, as even as I thought it was. I was, I was feeling, I was thinking about the, the warmth on my arm, and I was definitely hearing the music at the same time and hearing the plane.

32:04 AK: Okay. So when you say they may not be as equal as I thought, what, what do you mean?

32:11 Ryan: Um, I guess my attention was more directed to the warmth on my arm then than the others. But everything was still present for sure. [Alek: Okay.] But to say how much, I'm not sure, but it, they, they were all there at the moment of the beep.

32:26 AK: Okay. And of the three, it sounds like I'm slightly or somewhat appreciably more into the warmth.

32:32 Ryan: Yeah. More drawn to, to that.

32:35 AK: Okay. And does this seem like I feel the sun on my arm? Or I feel warmth?

32:41 Ryan: I'd say warmth. Wait. [looks quizzical]

32:44 AK: And maybe it is both. I don't know, but I can imagine the experience be like, no, this is a *sun* experience. I feel the *sun*.

32:51 Ryan: Yeah. So I was thinking.

32:52 AK: I feel a warmth, and I can tell you after the fact that, well, it's from the sun.

32:55 Ryan: I was thinking about this after the beep. And like, after I wrote it down where like, there was a point where I was uncomfortably hot, where *this*, it was like moreso feeling like the rays of the sun. So like, it *was* associated with the sun. It wasn't like the feeling of just heat on my arm. It was *the sun* causing the heat. [Alek: Mm hm.] 'Cause

it's like, it's a feeling that that's unlike other things. Like you could like go to the beach and lay out on the sun. You could like feel the sun. Sure.

33:25 AK: So it's [RTH: (inaudible)] the sun...

33:27 Ryan: What's that, Dr. Hurlburt?

33:29 RTH: *Radiant* heat as opposed to bodily...

33:31 Ryan: Yeah. Yeah.

33:36 AK: Yeah. And, um, any, is there anything more to say about that sensation? Like does it, is it in a specific place on my arm? Or when I say rays, do I really mean that I'm apprehending it as like a ray, a ray, a ray? Or do I just mean, I kind of generally feel radiant heat on my arm.

33:51 Ryan: Yeah. I feel the radiant heat on my arm. Um, and I was like drawn to that. It felt like good kind of. So like, I was like drawn, that's what drew me to it. It's like, it was, it was refreshing to be outside. 'Cause I've, I've been inside for the last week. [Alek laughs] So it's, it feels good to be outside. It was more of like a, a euphoric.... Hmm, now you're gonna ask me about that.

34:17 AK: You're right! [they laugh].

34:18 Ryan: It was more...

34:20 AK: Well, you're saying all of this about I'm drawn to it. I like it. I just, is that part of the experience? Or is that just sort of another way of saying it's the most prominent thing? Or something else?

34:36 Ryan: Um, I just think that experience was just like encapsulating all of those other things that I was explaining about like enjoying being outside and stuff like that.

34:46 AK: Okay. Okay.

34:49 RTH: And you at one point said that you were "thinking about" this heat on your arm. Did you mean that as a cognitive think-y kind of thing? Or just drawn to the...

35:00 Ryan: Um, I was drawn towards it. And I knew from a cognitive standpoint that it was the sun. [RTH: Okay.]

35:10 AK: I'm understanding. It's not like I have a th, like a thought process or something, of *Oh, that's the sun*, but I recognize this to be the sun's warmth. Is that,

35:19 Ryan: Yeah. Just from...

35:20 AK: This is really a sensory kind of thing.

35:23 Ryan: Yeah. Okay. Just from like experience, just like going outside and just feeling the sun hiy you. It was, it was just like that. Right. And I was drawn to it on my arm because it was like hanging out and that was getting, like, feeling it and the other one wasn't.

35:40 AK: Yeah. And then there's also the plane flying overhead. [Ryan: Mm hm.] And is that just a hearing phenomenon? I hear the plane flying by? [Ryan: Yeah.] Anything in particular that I'm interested in about that sound? Or I just sort of hear it as it [inaudible].

35:59 Ryan: It was louder than like a normal plane, but I didn't open my eyes to like look at it or anything.

36:07 AK: Mm hm. And are you noting the loudness? Or I just hear it. And after the fact I can tell you, it was really loud.

36:13 Ryan: I'm noting it, but I'm not like commenting on it verbally or anything.

36:18 AK: So I hear it and I notice that it's loud.

36:21 Ryan: Um hm, at the same time I am also noticing my arm is feeling the sun and at the same time...

36:28 AK: *And* hearing the music.

36:29 Ryan: ...hearing the music.

36:31 AK: Okay.

36:33 RTH: So I'm not sure that I understood that noting of the loudness. So I'm understanding that the plane is louder than usual.

36:41 Ryan: Yeah. And I'm aware of that.

36:44 RTH: And you're somehow aware of that in the moment. [Ryan: Yeah.] But this is not a think-y thing. This is not a, *Oh, that's a loud plane*. This is a sensory thing, where in the sensing and I'm, I'm sensory, sensorially aware that this is a loud plane.

37:04 Ryan: Correct. Like, it wasn't like that big of a deal to me where like, I was gonna like open my eyes and look at it. It just it's more so just the loudness caught my attention and made me hear it as like, actually like listen to it along.... See, I don't know... When it beeped, I don't, I can't tell you if like it drew my attention away from the music at that moment. Or if the music drew my attention away from that, or if it was happening at the same time, I genuinely just don't know.

37:36 RTH: Well, my experience is of a loud plane, not just of a plane that happens to be loud.

37:41 Ryan: Yes. It's a loud plane. [Alek: Okay.]

37:47 RTH: I'm good.

37:49 AK: Yeah. Me too.

INFORMAL Q/A STARTS HERE

37:52 Ryan: Do you mind, are you guys learning anything from, from me?

37:55 RTH: I think this is totally interesting. [Alek: Yeah. I agree.] I think we should do it another couple of times and see what happens.

38:02 Ryan: Am I a an exciting subject? Or am I a boring subject?

38:07 AK: Subjects worry (subjects--I never use that term, but) people worry much more about their interestingness than we *ever* do. I think I can speak for both of us. They, every beep seems interesting to me of almost everybody.

38:21 Ryan: Yeah. Some are [inaudible] boring though. You could admit that. Come on. The guy that just like did laundry and had nothing going on?

38:30 AK: it's still, I don't, I don't know. It's still totally interesting to see people sort of at their rawest like this.

38:39 RTH: We, I think we had a little bit of a conversation a couple of beeps, a couple of sessions ago. It's not only the content of the experience that's interesting, but it's the, it is the eliciting of it, in the sense that I take you as trying to tell us what's going on in your experience. [Ryan nods affirmatively] And you're doing that with your words, your way, your sensitivities, your whatever, and our job is to try to, is to try to hear those things the way you intended. And that is a, that is a whole-body challenge for me (and I'm guessing for Alek as well). And it's, and that is, that is interesting as well. And that's not like I'm noticing myself but reacting to it, but yeah, but it is it's, it was, uh, the whole thing. The whole thing is interesting [inaudible].

39:38 Ryan: So I feel like just more, the more I do this, I feel like it's more complex than like I originally thought. And like, it's difficult to truly explain everything accurate. Do you feel like you're getting an understanding of what's going on at all? Or do you feel like you're not even close and you need a lot more sessions?

40:01 RTH: Well, I, I think we're getting, I think *you*, I, I think that, I think that's... I think you're getting a clearer understanding of what's going on in your experience. And that may be for me more interesting than what your experience is. And I'm not, I'm not actually a hundred percent sure why I think that's interesting, but I do think that's interesting and valuable for people to, to apprehend their own inner experience in what we call high fidelity. And so, for example, it seems to me we're doing a pretty good job of distinguishing between *I'm feeling the radiant heat of the sun* and *I'm thinking, Oh, that's the sun*. Your experience was a feeling the radiant heat and *not* of thinking, *Oh, that's the sun on my arm*. [Alek: Mm hm.] And I think we're, we are refining our communication about that. And for reasons, which is not entirely clear to me, I think that is a valuable exercise, for *me* to do it and for *you* to do it (and for Alek to do it too,

but she can speak for herself [Alek: Mm hm.]). And, and so I, I, I think it's worth doing, let's put it that way.

41:17 Ryan: It is sort of therapeutic in a way. I don't know if anyone else has told you that, but

41:23 AK: it makes sense, right? Like if so much of what goes wrong, psychologically, is like a disconnect with reality. Like think about schizophrenia. That's what that is. [Ryan: Yeah.] (You know, I'm not trying to compare you to someone with schizophrenia, but to get *right* about reality, to get closer to reality, seems like a pretty therapeutic, healthy thing to do.) [Ryan: Yeah.].

41:44 RTH: I would say our average participant says this was therapeutic. And, and some people would say, "I've had years and years of therapy and I've gotten more out of this talking about 34 beeps than I have out of, y'know, however many years of therapy experience." And there's something that's, there's something remarkable about that. And, and there's also something that's not particularly surprising about that, because I think we, the three of us together, are trying to get a few glimpses of Ryan's experience the way Ryan's experience actually is, as best as... (well, "actually is" might be a little strong), but high fidelity, high-fidelity glimpses of Ryan's experience.

42:26 Ryan: Yeah. I'm trying to do my best I can to actually like genuinely give as much detail as I possibly could, because I feel like I could easily just be vague and avoid the questions. But like...

42:38 RTH: I think that's okay. You're good. But what I would say is, I think that's, I think it's therapeutic for *Ryan* to know what's going on in his experience, and it's therapeutic for *Russ* to know what's going on--or it's therapeutic for Russ to try to grasp what's going on in Ryan's experience. Yeah. Those two things are [Ryan: Fulfilling.] parallel values.

43:01 AK: Yeah. I totally agree.

43:04 RTH: It breaks, it breaks me out of my biases and whatever. I mean, it... People, people including me are, are blind to the way the world is. You look around, you can see a whole lot of blindness [laughs] going on in the world. And this is a, this is an exercise in not being blind to what is actually going on, either *with you for you*, or *with you for us*. And all of that stuff is of value.

43:35 Ryan: Now, from doing this for so long and talking to so many people and seeing so many different, like possibilities of how people could think, has this affected your personal relationships or anything at all? Like when you meet someone, does it affect how you interact with them?

43:53 RTH: I'm sure the answer is, yes. I don't think about it very often. Like if I'm not experience sampling, I'm not in the experience sampling business. But I would say people that know me pretty well think I'm *always* in the experience sampling business and, uh, y'know, I would probably be the last person to notice, notice that. I'm sure, I'm sure it's affected me in the sense that I, when people say things to me, I'm interested in what they actually mean. And sometimes I ask them and sometimes I let it slide,

y'know, in the non-sampling world. But I'm sure that pisses some people off that I let it slide and other people off that I did that I asked too much. [Alek: Mm hm.] So the world is a complicated place. But [Ryan: (inaudible)] I, I am genuinely interested in what, what the world is like from a point of view other than mine.

44:49 Ryan: What about you, Alek?

44:53 AK: Yeah, same. I think the most I know of how it has changed me is...Well, I know some things, but my husband will point out that I'm pretty skeptical of most things people say about themselves or their theories. And I tend to write 'em off and it consistently drives him crazy. And I just kind of think, I don't, I dunno, I've seen a lot of people who had a lot of theories and, um, so I think it, it cultivates a little skepticism in me, but a healthy kind, not a outright kind.

45:31 Ryan: Healthy depends on who you ask.

45:32 AK: Yeah, that's right. I, I want it to be healthy! [they laugh]

45:36 RTH: Well, we did this whole exercise started with Ryan saying "I have constant chatter in my head, constant internal monologue in my head. And we have seen *precious little* of that, actually. We have seen, we have seen Ryan speaking, but I would say that it was quite different from the way he characterized it *in the*, at the outset, at least as, as it seemed to me. [Ryan: Mm hm.] And, y'know, that's the kind of thing that makes you, makes Alek skeptical of what people say about themselves, because people have mistaken views of, of what they actually do. And we have, we encountered uh, I would say more than routinely, I would say most, most of the time we encounter that.

46:23 Ryan: I would be genuinely interested to see what the girl I interviewed would get out of this. 'Cause I, I still think about that. And I'm like, is she actually, does she have an accurate assessment of what's going on? Or does she genuinely not have vocal thoughts?

46:43 AK: And she said, am I remembering right, that she had sort of no verbal experience, [Ryan: Nothin'.] nothing, no words, that kind of thing.

46:50 Ryan: Nothing at all. Like she couldn't even force it if she wanted to.

46:53 AK: That would be interesting. And I would add that it's been cool to learn about you that, like, if monologue is, I know it's not the same as like narration, but when people talk about internal monologue, at least like what I'm seeing now on the internet, it kind of seems like they're referring almost like an internal narrator, [Ryan: Yeah, like a (inaudible)] not like a true monologue, like a Saturday Night Live monologue, but like this running narration? At times, it seems like you almost have that with *images*. That's a, that's a really strong statement, but you will *often* have an *image* to sort of populate or illustrate like what you're dealing with or what you're planning to do or whatever. That's, that's not true of everyone. And that's pretty interesting and potentially very valuable for you to know about yourself. I don't know how, but it might be.

47:39 Ryan: Yeah. That's one thing that I I've learned from doing this is like almost every single beep there is a visual attached to like whatever's happening. And I do have a lot of verbal stuff going on, but those verbal things are also connected, like they're associated with visual stuff. So that's fun. [Alek: Yeah.] But we'll bracket that!

48:01 AK: Yeah, we'll bracket that out.[they laugh] That's right!

48:05 RTH: So I what I, what I remember about the interview is (with the girl) that she was confident. And I discount confidence. And I remember, well, you know, she could be like that or not. But we sample with a lot of people have no, who *never* have an inner speaking of any kind. They never have words of any kind. So that is not at all a surprising deal. So she, so she could be absolutely correct about that. [Alek: Mm hm.] And, and it could be that she is correct in that detail and incorrect about the rest of her experience. I think people just don't know until they go through this kind of, or *some kind* of an exercise that would allow them to figure it out.

48:52 Ryan: Have you guys ever thought about monetizing this experience?

48:58 RTH: I've thought about it some, but I don't think about it much. I'm a university professor, which from my point of view is a pretty, uh... [pause] I'm I'm given, um... I'm paid by the state to try to speak the truth about things.

49:22 Ryan: Yeah, and you don't wanna [inaudible]

49:23 RTH: And I don't want to screw that up. So I take that, I take that pretty seriously (maybe too seriously or whatever. I don't know.) But the, but, but money screws things up, I would say.

49:41 Ryan: I do see value in what you're doing now. So I appreciate what you do and I'm sure a bunch of other people do as well.

49:48 RTH: Well, I think, I think this series of stuff is gonna make, make people think about it.

49:54 Ryan: I hope so.

49:58 RTH: So you all are gonna figure out when we're going to do this again, [Ryan: Yep.] [Alek: Mm hm.] and then you're going to tell me. [Ryan: Yep.]

50:06 AK: You got it.

50:08 RTH: That sounds great. That'd be.

50:09 AK: Good to see you again, Ryan.

50:10 RTH: Thank you very much.

50:11 Ryan: Bye.

50:12 AK: See ya.