

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

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the July 15 interview with Ryan Langdon that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/rSINhgyNaOO>. 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

0:00 Ryan: Are we ready?

0:01 RTH: I am ready. So this is day eight.

0:04 AK: Day 8. Yeah.

0:08 RTH: And anything we should be talking about before we go for it?

0:12 Ryan: No, I think I am able now to differentiate what you meant by, um, speaking into a recorder and then hearing it played back. [RTH: Uh huh.] And I think that's what I mean by initiating and not initiating, like I'm hearing it rather than producing it.

0:34 RTH: And, and are you going to have examples, examples in this series of beeps that are going to show that?

0:34 Russ comments: We will spend considerable time during today's interview discussing initiated and not-initiated inner speakings and whether those speakings are innerly heard. Here we note an important aspect of the DES procedure: Ryan gives a general characterization ("I think I am able now to differentiate what you meant by, um, speaking into a recorder and then hearing it played back"), but rather than ask Ryan what he had (in general) discovered, RTH prefers to discuss specific examples where that new differentiation skill might display its results. That is, DES always goes from the particular to the general, not from the general to the particular.

Spoiler alert: Non-initiated inner speaking will *not* turn out to be a "hearing" phenomenon.

0:41 Ryan: Yes. And I'm going to be using words, um, like hearing, um, instead of saying, or like it's passive instead of like active.

0:52 RTH: Okay. Well, when that, when that happens, we, we will, no doubt want to clarify those, those words because this exercise is fundamentally not about the words, it's about the experiences. And so we're, I guess, as you probably know, by now that we were pretty picky about trying to make sure we understand what people are saying. And it, and it's almost never about saying, "well, I'm going to use this word." And then we, and we accept that because, because we *think*, rightly or wrongly, that words are elastic and they have a range of convenience [gestures a small and moving rectangle] in there and we have to, we have to figure out exactly what that range of convenience is. And so when we get, when we get there, then we'll, we'll, we'll have to explore.

SAMPLE 8.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

1:35 Ryan: Alright, beep one. [RTH: Number one.] Um, I was looking at something, it said (Oh, hold on, let me read this). [pause while Ryan reads] I was looking at like, I forgot what it was. It was on my phone and it said "10%." And I was, I was directing my eyes at that. Um, but it wasn't like present to me at the moment, so my eyes were directed at it, but it wasn't part of my experience. Um, and I was saying the words "and the." I don't remember what I was talking about or what I was even gonna say. It was interrupted by the beep. Um, and I was hearing the words, not saying them.

1:35 Russ comments: "I was hearing the words" is an apparent reference to Ryan's comment about now being able to differentiate hearing (at 0:12).

2:30 RTH: And the words were "and the"? T-H-E the?

2:32 Ryan: Yeah. And I don't remember what it was about or what I was even planning on saying, but it was more of like a distracting thing taking me away from reading "10%" or whatever I was looking at.

2:45 RTH: Okay. And, and so when you, when you say that you were saying this [inaudible], I'm understanding that the primary experience is of *hearing* it. Is that right? [Ryan: Yeah. Yeah.] And you could say that you were saying it because it's in your voice. Do you hear your voice?

3:01 Ryan: Yeah, it's, it's, it's my voice, but it's, I have referred to it as like chatter or quieter. Um, I said that, like, if I'm reading, this pulls me away from what I'm reading and distracts me, um, as a [inaudible] experience.

3:19 RTH: Okay. And then now we're, we're using the term "hearing." And, and I don't want us to use the term hearing and, and just assume that we know what we're talking about. So, so when we're having this conversation that the three of us are having right now, some of the time you're speaking and some of the time you're hearing. Like right now, I presume that you would say "I'm hearing Hurlburt talking."

3:42 Ryan: Yes. For sure. Yes.

3:44 RTH: Is that what you mean by "hearing" in this beep? When I hear my voice say "and the," it's the *same* kind of a,

3:53 Ryan: Yeah. It's not like an active process. Like I'm not, um, actively trying to say it. It's just like coming in, in the background. Like I was reading. I'm sure I said "10%" in my head when I was reading that. Um, but then, "and the" popped in, pulled me away from the, whatever I was looking at. And I was, I was hearing it, not saying it.

3:53 Russ comments: RTH asked (3:45) about the phenomenon of hearing, and Ryan (3:54) replied about "not ... an active process." That "hearing" vs. "not-active" is the kind of potential discrepancy of communication that DES seeks to clarify.

4:17 RTH: Okay. So, so, um, I, I like to make sure that I know what I'm talking about here. So the, do you, so hear, hear, I understand hearing as a phenomenon that I recognize that as I go through the world, and sometimes I hear things. So I hear a car going down the street, or I hear a thunderclap, or I hear somebody talking to me, or I hear the pencil [holds up and drops a pencil] fall on the table, or... Those, I would call auditory experiences, hearing, hearing experiences. And, and, and they all seem sort of in the same class to me. They seem like more or less the same thing. Different sources: thunder is different from cars, different from pen-dropping and whatever. But phenomenal, phenomenologically, they seem like the same kind of thing.

That's... And so that, that's what I want to know: whether this hearing is like the hearing of a car going by or a thunderclap or, or whatever, except that it's inner. And the distinction that I want to make sure that I'm clear about is it's possible for words to be present in my imagination that are neither heard nor spoken, but yet I *know* that the *words* are there somehow, like, the word, the words present themselves to me. But they don't present themselves to me in an *auditory* way, they present themselves in a, nor in a *speaking* way, they present themselves in some other way.

5:44 Ryan: It's not like an external hearing. Like, it's not like I'm hearing a car drive by. 'Cause I know that's like not part of like, what's going on in my head. It's not like a sound. If that's what you're asking. It's, it could be neither of those explanations, but... I, I, I can't wrap my head around it being similar to a sound of a car driving by. [RTH: Okay.] So I'm pretty confident it's *not* like that.

6:20 RTH: Okay. So when, so when I say, if I, if I had dropped my pen [lifts and drops the pen on the table], I could, I could say, "well, I *heard* that fall, and it was a clacky kind of a sound. And it was quite short. The, the sound was a, an initial loud sound, and then it was followed shortly by a softer sound. I could describe the auditory characteristics of [drops the pen again] that event.

6:20 Russ comments: Note that RTH is trying to teach Ryan what "hearing" means. Is that really necessary? Ryan is a smart guy who has been using "hearing" adequately all his life!

Yes, it is absolutely necessary, because whereas Ryan's talk about external events has been adequately differentiated by the verbal community, his talk about inner events has had no such differentiation practice. So it is absolutely not safe to assume that Ryan's use of "hearing" when applied to his inner experience means the same thing as when "hearing" is applied to the external world. So we do have to start with the basics.

I emphasize that this is not a peculiarity of Ryan—people in general have not adequately differentiated their talk about inner experience. Such differentiation can be done (as here), but it requires skill and patience.

- 6:48 Ryan: It just sounds like my voice.
- 6:51 RTH: And does it, and that is, that is exactly the question. Does it *sound like* your voice?
- 6:56 Ryan: Yeah, it's it sounds like the one that I use for actively trying to initiate self-speech, except it's just chatter; it's like in the background. But it still *sounds* like the same thing. And by "sound," like, it's not like my, it's my thought voice. It's not like what I'm hearing when I'm speaking out loud right now. It's, it's just it's I know it's my thought voice. I know there's words attached to it. It's not exactly the same sound.
- 7:25 RTH: And, and does the voice of "and the," saying of "and the," does it... So I would, I would describe your voice that I hear as being a bass or a baritone....
- 7:37 Ryan: No. No I can't describe the sound of it. So like, I can't. So like when I'm saying out loud right now, or when I listen back to these recordings, I don't hear that when I'm thinking. It doesn't sound like that. But it is unique to me and I just know it's my thought voice--that's what I've just always considered it.
- 8:04 RTH: Okay. And, and so is it fair to say then that you have a thought voice that doesn't have speaking characteristics? I don't feel like I'm speaking in it, but also doesn't have *hearing* characteristics. I don't hear the baritone. I don't hear the accent. I don't hear the, whatever. Is that true?
- 8:26 Ryan: I guess, maybe. Yeah. Maybe I'm contributing, just knowing that I'm saying words to a sound when there's actually, it's not that phenomenon.
- 8:36 RTH: That's *exactly* what we're trying to figure out! And that's a, that's a tough deal! I mean, which, you know, nobody's ever asked you to differentiate that stuff before, so it's a skill that we've got to figure out how to master.
- 8:49 Ryan: There's no sound to it. It's just words that are flowing.
- 8:56 RTH: And including no imaginary sound?
- 8:56 Ryan: Um, yes. Including. Yeah. [RTH: Okay.]
- 9:04 AK: And Ryan, you sound kind of confident about that. Do you mean to sound confident? Or is this sort of a, like, I'm exploring this possibility and I'm leaning toward it, but I'm not,
- 9:15 Ryan: No. I'm confident. I just thought that was the norm, or that's just what self-speech is supposed to sound like or experience the experience. Like that makes sense. Like, it's still words. I could like rush it and like say things faster and slower. Um, I don't think I can like yell or change the pitch or anything. It's just like, it's just words.

9:15 Russ comments: Ryan says (9:15) “I just thought that was the norm, or that's just what self-speech is supposed to sound like.” That can give us powerful insight into why investigating inner experience is difficult. This is the eighth sampling day (a lot!), and during much of those interviews we have been trying to describe self-speech with fidelity. And today, we have spent the last six minutes or so (since about 2:45) still trying to grasp the phenomenon of self-speech as it occurred in this particular sample (and we’re not done—we have several more minutes upcoming in this sample and will return to the topic pretty much throughout today’s interview). Despite all that, Ryan is just now coming to recognize that his “hearing” is not really an inner auditory phenomenon.

One of the reasons for the difficulty is, as he says, that he had a presupposition of what self-speech is supposed to “sound like,” and that presupposition has colored or defeated all our previous attempts to grok what the phenomenon actually was for Ryan. It is not our interest to try to understand the source of this presupposition. Instead, here we wish to notice how insidiously taken for granted such presuppositions are, and how much skill, effort, patience, and respect are required to help Ryan consider the possibility that what he has always thought of as hearing, and which he claimed with greater clarity at the beginning of today’s interview to be hearing, may not really be an auditory phenomenon.

We have not completed, by a long shot, our grappling with this phenomenon.

9:40 AK: So my, am I understanding this, this last, well, this sort of long interchange, right? That that were thinking maybe these are, there are words and they seem like Ryan is saying them, but they don’t have sound. They don’t have auditory qualities like when Ryan speaks aloud. Is that...?

9:57 Ryan: Correct. Do people actually hear sounds with their voice?

10:04 RTH: Yes. Some people do.

10:06 AK: I think so, yeah.

10:06 RTH: So, so, so for example, you had some visual imagery (let’s change...) where, where you have seen things clearly in your head. [Ryan: Mm hm.] And I can’t, I can’t remember a good example. Well, I guess the doctor on the knee... That wasn’t a particularly clear to... Can anybody remember a clear example of...

10:27 Ryan: The parking lot that I was walking out of?

10:29 RTH: Yeah. The park, the parking lot. So I think you could say, I, that, that experience was entirely in my imagination. I was not, um, there was no parking, real parking lot out there. And yet it had the characteristics of *seeing*. I could *see* the car, I could see the *color*, I could see the whatever. And so when I used this, the word *see* in the external world, I could use the same terminology--the same terminology makes sense to describe this experience: It’s got color, it’s got extent, it’s got borders, it’s got

whatever it is that seeing has, I can, I can say, well, either it does or it doesn't have that in my imagination.

11:06 Ryan: Yeah. Yeah. I *definitely* see it!

11:10 RTH: Right. So now the question now, the question is, well, we have this word *hear*, [points to his ears] hear, hear. In the external world, we've got the characteristics of what hearing is. And the question is whether those same kinds of things applied to "and the." And I'm, I'm understanding that the answer to that question is mostly, No. There's some characteristics that overlap--maybe like speed or rhythm or something like that. But the, the auditory characteristics like nasal-ness or not [Ryan: No, nothing.] are basic, basic, bass, bass-ness or baritone-ness or whatever. Those, it doesn't have that characteristic.

11:52 Ryan: Okay. So this might fascinating to you, or it might be helpful. But when I was younger, I had a speech impediment and I couldn't say *R*. And my inner voice or my, when I was saying words in my head, I *could* say like, I didn't have a speech impediment.

12:07 AK: Hmm.

12:09 RTH: So that's one of the, one of the many areas that I would very much like to explore. I have never sampled with people who have seriously speech impediments ongoing. And I think that would be *totally* interesting. And, and the difficult... So we've been talking now for 12 minutes and 49 seconds, according to my timer. And, and we've been talking about basically one little tiny phenomenon, it's taken this long to make, to take a step forwards in this [inaudible]. [Ryan: Mm hm.] Because it's, it's not easy. It's we, we, if we really want to understand each other, we we've got to take this kind of care. And I don't think there are very many other people on the planet, at least the *western* planet, who are taken that kind of care. [Ryan: I agree.] I don't think we know much about the phenomenon of inner speaking and people who have speech impediments or who had speech impediments. [Ryan: Who stutter...] Yeah! It would be totally interesting to, to know the answer to that, and, and quite useful, I think, probably in some way, I don't, I don't know that I know exactly how it could be useful.

13:19 Ryan: I agree.

13:22 RTH: But the, the way this... If we look, if we look at the, at what this conversation.. This conversation started out by, Ryan's saying, "well, I know what the deal is. It was inner hearing!" Now, 12 and a half minutes later, we have said, "well, it's *not* really inner hearing." [Ryan nods affirmatively] And that is, I want to emphasize, this is not a criticism of Ryan in the slightest. [Ryan: Inaudible] This is the way this process has to go. And I'm pointing it out now because it's a, it is of fundamental importance to the science of inner experience, it seems to me, because you just can't believe a guy like Ryan, even though Ryan is clearly a motivated guy, and clearly an honest guy, and clearly trying to do the best, the best he can. He, he's just not in a position to be able to answer the, to give a good description. And that's, that is not a failure of Ryan. It is the human condition because, because words have to be differentiated and they have to be differentiated in action and opportunity and whatever. And that requires this,

what we call the iterative, the iterative process. So this, to my way of looking, this is a beautiful example of why it is that what we're doing is interesting and also why it's difficult and also why it's not impossible. [Ryan: Okay!] I think we are making progress here.

13:22 Russ comments: That paragraph points at the heart of DES.

14:48 Ryan: I agree. And I have lot more questions about certain aspects of your research, um, that I hope to ask eventually, but I want to finish this whole thing, so I'm not like skewed.

15:03 RTH: Okay. So, so now I'm, I'm, I'm finished with the phenomenon, but, uh, except in one aspect. And that is, is "and the" a stand-alone thing? Like I am experiencing "and the" and that's it? Or am I experiencing some longer thing of which "and the" is a piece, but I've forgotten what the rest of it is.

15:27 Ryan: Um, I it's like almost as if I was dreaming and then the alarm goes off and it wakes you, and it cuts the dream and it stops. So like I was saying, or the w, or the words were passively being said, and then it beeped, and then it just pulled me out of it. So it was like a daydream in, in words, um [inaudible] cut it off.

15:49 RTH: So your, your sense is it is, and I want to make sure I understand it. Your, your sense is, it's *not* the case that out of the blue came the words "and the." Instead there was some kind of a stream of words that I wasn't really much paying again, paying attention to. And the beep happened to catch me and pull me out of where I was at, "and the."

16:11 Ryan: Sure. Yeah. I mean, I can't say this for fact, but it was probably gonna lead to like a full sentence of some sort, but it, it snapped me out of it. And so it didn't happen.

16:24 RTH: Okay. Then I think I'm good.

SAMPLE 8.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

16:28 AK: Me too. Number two.

16:30 RTH: And I want to, I want to reiterate the, 'cause it may seem like I've been sort of critical, which, which is *not* the case. I think we're doing great. And, uh, and you're doing great.

16:46 Ryan: I don't feel as though you're being critical, you're just being diligent and that's what you should be doing. [RTH: Alright.] Um, I was watching a video on YouTube and a guy was referencing something that happened earlier in the video, and it like triggered a memory of what happened earlier in the video. And I got a visual of the house that he was talking about. He was referring to a house and I got a visual of the house in the exact same vantage point as I saw earlier in the video. It was very vivid. Um, I could tell it was night. There are people like harboring the front door, kind of. Um, I saw a view of the front of the house. I was pulled away from the video in this daydream, so like, I wasn't listening to what he was saying anymore. Um, and I heard the words as in passively, I heard the words, he said that triggered my memory, um, of, uh, what the

house looked like. So I was like repeating what he was saying about the house. And I said what he said, which I don't, I didn't, for some reason, didn't write that down (I don't know why) um, that triggered my memory. And then that, those words were attached to the house that was like, bringing me back to remind me, I guess.

18:11 AK: Okay. So is the primary, uh, portion of your experience, the visualization?

18:21 Ryan: Um, [sighs] it was very vivid. I know that. But I was also saying the word, so I can't ever tell if it's like a one thing that's happening at the same time or two different things that are like overlapping. Um, so I don't know. They were both happening and I was both aware of both that were happening at the same time [Alek: Okay.] are part of each other.

18:47 RTH: Could I ask you to start with the words, do the hearing of the words first?

18:54 AK: Yeah that's fine. [RTH: Thanks.] So there are words present. You didn't write down what they are. Is that right?

18:59 Ryan: Right. Yeah. I wish I did.

19:02 AK: Okay. But are we confident words are present? Or like I didn't write it down because I forgot? Or I don't know if they were there?

19:06 Ryan: Yeah. I was repeating what he said, for some reason. I didn't try to do it. It wasn't something that was a goal of mine. Uh, I uh repeated the exact sentence that he was saying and was seeing the house at the same time. [Alek: Okay.] And I was...

19:24 AK: Something on the video. And now in your imagination, you are saying that same something, [Ryan: Yep. (nods affirmatively)] Is that right? [Ryan: Yep.] And how are these words experienced?

19:35 RTH: Can I interrupt? I think I've heard two different versions of that. I'd like to make sure I've got it right. Are you repeating the words yourself? Or are you hearing him say the words again?

19:46 Ryan: I'm not hearing him say. It's my voice. It's the same exact voice from the first one. [RTH: Okay.] That's like my daydream voice. It's quieter pulls me away from the situation. It's not, I'm not actively trying to say it. Um, and it was my same voice that I, I mean, we've learned that I don't have a voice, but it's that same process.

20:10 AK: So it's me saying it, I guess. So in the, in the last one we said that, it's you saying it, but it doesn't have, it's not like you hear sound.

20:23 Ryan: Yeah. It's just the words that are in a row.

20:26 AK: And how does this one compare to that?

20:29 Ryan: It's this, it's the same thing.

- 20:32 AK: So again, the words are there, are they clearly apprehended? Is this, are they clear to you?
- 20:37 Ryan: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. And that's what pulls me away. Like sometimes I could, like, if I'm trying to read and really focus, I could like suppress that chatter and like really focus. Um, but this one, like actually pulled me out of it.
- 20:52 AK: Hmm. And does it make sense to call this a speaking? Like, does it seem like I'm saying it, does...? [Ryan: Yeah.] There's no, there's no vocal...?
- 21:04 Ryan: It always seems like I'm saying it. [Alek: And..] My thoughts are, are verbal. Like just, they come out as words instead of unsymbolized, sometimes, or instead of visual, they just come out as words. And it's very distracting.
- 21:25 AK: So it seems like I'm saying it.
- 21:28 RTH: So I'm a little worried about, about that word "saying." Can I ask a question about that too? [Ryan: Yeah.] So let's, uh, accept for the, uh, possibility that words can happen without being said and without being heard; that it is possible to have the experience of a row of words, words in a row, I guess, is what you, what you said a bit ago. And, and what I'm worried about is the, well, if words are in a row then I *must be* saying it. I don't want us to fall into that trap. So when I *say* things, I, I somehow have a experience of myself as the speaker.
- 22:11 Ryan: That's when I say "I initiated it," that definition right there.
- 22:16 RTH: So these, these words in a, these words in a row don't have any feeling of being produced?
- 22:25 Ryan: It's like speaking on autopilot, kind of. Like I had no direction or goals or I never, I'm not trying to say it, but the words are coming out in fluent sentences.
- 22:38 RTH: But not voiced...,
- 22:41 Ryan: Not voiced. Um, I guess according to what we discovered, um, but that it represents speech. Like it's, it's *clearly* speech. Like it's...
- 22:58 RTH: And why do you say that it's clearly speech. I'm not disbelieving you, I...
- 23:03 Ryan: Just because the, the flow that they come out is just like similar to how someone would talk. But
- 23:12 RTH: So it has the rhythmic sequence of speech.
- 23:16 Ryan: Yeah. And it kind of feels like it would be sentences I would say, even though I'm not actually actively trying to produce the words.

23:33 RTH: Sorry, Alek. I'm [inaudible].

23:35 AK: No, that's fine. I, I'm still trying to understand that. It seems to me like every, every different angle you say it still sounds like you're trying convey *No, they're coming out of me like a saying*, even though this isn't like an initiated speech, even though there isn't a voice, you know, you're saying things like they're coming out, that I'm, it's like speech, which I, so I want to get that. I don't want to hold you to the words. [Ryan: Yeah.] I understand that this might just be an experience that kind of, you know, evades language, which would be fine and great. But I'm just trying to get like a, is it just, I experienced, there are words present.

24:17 Ryan: So it happens all the time to me. So like, I could just, when it happens, I could try to focus on that and write it down and then email it to you. But right now I can't. Like, it's obviously something that I don't try to do and it just comes out. So like, I will try to focus on that going forward to see if I hear anything or in,

24:40 RTH: So I'm not sure I think that's a good idea. I think we should just be patient about that. And if it's, if this is an important for us, we're going to get beeped at it. Because the, the advantage of the beep is that it defines a moment, whereas if you set out, *I'm going to go looking for one of these examples*, that sort of puts you in a different frame of mind. [Ryan: Alright.] So I would say relax about that. But this example has a, has a seeing component. And what you're seeing is *not* what your eyeballs are aimed at. It's what your eyeballs used to be aimed at a while ago. [Ryan: Yeah.] But now you're seeing something that's in your imagination.

24:40 Russ comments: DES goes to great lengths to limit the influence of bias, including, in this moment, by remaining neutral about Ryan's (perhaps presuppositional) self-characterization instead of accepting his offer to seek evidence to validate it. DES argues that, if you're seriously and genuinely interested in understanding inner experience as it actually is, then random sampling in natural environments is a necessary starting place. That, like many worthwhile endeavors, can demand great patience.

25:21 Ryan: Yes. I think it would be something that some people call photographic memory, but it's not like looking at a picture, but it's definitely very detailed. And

25:32 AK: It seems like the same house they showed me before.

25:35 Ryan: Yeah. It was like, I, I could have drawn look the pictures to whatever that was there previously. And you could like go back and look and it would match.

25:44 AK: And do you, do I see the house? Or do I see like my computer screen and the YouTube window and the house?

25:52 Ryan: I see just the house. It's not like through a screen or anything,

25:57 AK: Even though in reality, it was. [Ryan: Yeah.] Okay. Okay. So I'm seeing that. And at the same time, there are words present. These are words that I've created, even though

the guy... So the guy had just said them and I'm recreating them. [Ryan: Mm hm.] We're not totally clear on how, but they're in [Ryan: my inner voice.] In a sentence they're in order, they seem to have [Ryan: Cadence.] like a rhythm, a cadence. Okay. But the, but this is also, well, this is a question: Is there a voice? And I'm totally fine if the answer is, *I don't know*, I,.

26:51 Ryan: Like when you was describing like hearing like the baritone in my voice and like the nasal-ness, I don't, that does not exist. But it's, it's there. It's, it's definitely something.

27:06 AK: Hmm.

27:10 RTH: So this, this is a, this is a good example of our process here, because there's an imaginary seeing going on and you've got absolutely no doubt about that. You'd bet the ranch on that, it sounds like. This is what I'm seeing. It was nighttime. I see the house, I don't see the YouTube frame or whatever. All of those things sound like you'd bet a thousand to one or a million to one or whatever on that, those being the characteristics of your inner experience. And yet when it, and, and so that, so there's nothing, there's nothing about the *inner* of inner experience which leads you to be not sure about it. But there's something about the speak-y word-y, whatever that we, that we don't sh, that doesn't, doesn't share that confidence.

28:02 Ryan: Yeah. Just hard to explain. [RTH: Right.] Has no one explained it, like I have been explaining it to you before?

28:13 RTH: Well, we've had lots of people who have trouble putting into words phenomenon that don't easily get put into words. And so I think that's sort of where we are here. And, and we have people who describe the presence of words without [Alek: Mm hm.] speaking or hearing—we call it “words present” usually. But, but *your* phenomenon, and what I think we're worrying through here, trying to figure out, is whether you're phenom, whether your phenomenon is basically, *I'm just, I've got words with cadence and that's it*, but it seems to Ryan, *well, if I got words with cadence it must be spoken, and therefore I'm going to talk about this as being speaking*; or whether there is some kind of a characteristic of speaking even though it doesn't have a voice to it. I got to, I have a speaking cadence. And so it's not just words, it's *spoken* words, even though it's not spoken with a *voice*, it's maybe we're creating the words, but haven't articulated the voice to it or something. And I don't think I know the answer to that. I'm not sure, you know, the answer to that. And so we're trying to figure it out.

29:28 Ryan: Hmm. This is fun. [Alek: It is.]

29:33 RTH: It is, because it is, is a matter of trying to differentiate language which you have never tried to differentiate before. And we have never tried to differentiate before. And that is, that's pretty much the epitome of the human challenge, as it seems to me. And it is an interesting game. [inaudible]

30:02 Ryan: Interesting. It's almost like I am daydreaming in words, and it's really frustrating, obviously if I'm trying to focus on something, and it happens less if I take Adderall, so it's definitely associated with my focus, that phenomenon. Um,

30:21 RTH: So I would, I would encourage us to bracket the causation implication in that as well, because it could very well be that the words are *the* result of the failure of co, of, of, uh, concentration rather than the cause of it. [Ryan: Yeah. I get that.] And I'm not saying that that's what I think; I'm just saying, well, let's wait and see. Maybe we'll, maybe we'll, maybe we'll discover something about that. But let's just not *presume* that the causation goes in one direction.

30:52 Ryan: Alright.

30:54 RTH: Shall we go on to number three? Yeah.

SAMPLE 8.3 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

30:59 Ryan: Uh, this one is pretty easy. Uh, I was reading a text that said "you're moving further, at least." Um, it was internal monologue as I define it. Um, I was *saying* it, I was actively *saying* this one. Um, and it wasn't like hearing. It wasn't like a daydream. I was, I was reading this and saying it.

31:24 RTH: And when you say you were saying it, does *this* have a voice, voice quality to it? I'm saying this in my baritone-y voice?

31:33 Ryan: Uh, no, no. It's not like, I don't hear the tone of my voice. Like there's no tone to it, but they are words being said. Almost monotone kind of, but it still follows the rhythm of the speed that I was reading it. So saying every single word that I was reading.

31:55 RTH: And so by monotone, do you mean [speaks in a monotone] "you're moving further at least," or something like that?

32:06 Ryan: I'm saying it in my head and it's not really a sound. Maybe it's like a whisper. I don't know. It's not like I don't hear my voice.

32:17 RTH: So even, so even in the inner monologue *initiated* speech, you don't have a, it doesn't seem like it's a voice thing.

32:27 Ryan: It sounds it's sounds the same or it's the same, uh, experience as the other one, except the other one is just less controlled. Not controlled. It's just free flowing. [pause; smiles] [RTH: Hmm.] What's wrong with me doc?

32:51 RTH: Well, I think, I think it's interesting. So, so on this beep, 8.3 here, that, am I understanding that you're saying that "I am speaking, but I don't actually experience a voice while I'm doing the speaking. I'm innerly speaking and there's no question about that. I've initiated it.

33:14 Ryan: It's a voice, but I don't know if I could actually say that there's sound to it. That I could like differentiate.

- 33:23 RTH: So, so let's set the sound aside, 'cause we've already decided that's a hard topic for us, but are there vocal characteristics to it?
- 33:30 Ryan: Yeah, like I f, I feel like I'm saying it. But I'm just saying it in my head instead of out loud. [RTH: Okay.] I I'm, as I'm talking now, it's the same thing, except it doesn't sound the same. It *feels* the same. It doesn't *sound* the same.
- 33:49 RTH: Okay. And what distinguishes this one from the previous one is that it doesn't, the previous one doesn't feel the same.
- 33:56 Ryan: Yeah. This one is more of like the center of my focus, where the other one pulled me away from this thing I was trying to focus on.
- 34:11 RTH: Right. Then I think I'm good.

SAMPLE 8.4 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 34:14 Ryan: Okay. Um, okay. Cover your ears. I gotta swear coming. Uh, I read a post on Facebook that said, "Fuck you dot, dot, dot, feed me" (in quotations like it's a quote) dash Ralph, the cat. Like it's like a quote. Um, and, uh, it was odd that it was my eighth grade history teacher that was posting it, um, that wasn't present at the time, irrelevant at the time. But, um, and then I scanned down to a picture of the cat that he was talking about in the post, um, that was like getting near his food. And I was passively saying just like the first two are just exactly like beep two. Um, I repeated what I read, "Fuck you ... feed me" in my head. Um, and that took me out current focus of a cat. The cat was irrelevant at the time. It was kind of like a quick little daydream that happened.
- 35:19 AK: So by the cat... Okay. So of all that, what exactly is in your experience, caught, caught by the beep?
- 35:26 Ryan: Me passively saying, "Fuck you ... feed me."
- 35:31 AK: Okay. So it's the *words*. [Ryan: Yeah.] Okay. Uh, so I, my eyes are *aimed* this picture of the cat, but I'm not even into that anymore.
- 35:39 Ryan: Yeah. So I read, it said it actively when I was reading it, scanned down, and then when I was about to look, I looked at the cat and then it pulled me out of the situation of looking at the cat and I repeated what he said.
- 35:54 AK: And the re, the time it's repeated, it--am I understanding right--it does *not* seem initiated? [Ryan: No.] It seems like a passive daydreamy chatter thing?
- 36:03 Ryan: Yeah. I did, um, this experiment at night, so all my medication was worn off, so my brain was much more active than it usually is.
- 36:14 AK: Hmm. And so how exactly, how exactly do you experience the "fuck you ... feed me"?

- 36:23 Ryan: (I like when scientists swear.) [they laugh] Um, it's, it's the same exact thing as the second beep, where, like, I was repeating what he said for no reason at all. Like, I didn't need to do that. I don't know why I did it. I didn't have to do it. I had no control.
- 36:41 AK: So I'm not initiating these or this. And how about here. Is, is this spoken?
- 36:52 Ryan: It, it, I want to say it *feels spoken*, but then I don't want you to confuse the active and the passive, like me actually trying to do it and not. it feels spoken, but I'm not controlling the speaking. [Alek: Okay.] Like, it *feels* like I,
- 37:16 AK: And when you say it feels spoken, do you mean that, like phenomenologically, like I have the sense or whatever that this feels like a spoken kind of thing? [Ryan: (nods affirmatively) Mm hm.] Or do you just mean these are words in a sentence that is *like* something I might say aloud, so therefore it *seems* like a spoken kind of thing.
- 37:37 Ryan: It *feels* spoken, [pause] but it isn't...
- 37:41 AK: But not *initiated* spoken like, somebody else is controlling it, but it's me.
- 37:46 Ryan: Yeah. Like, I didn't *want* to say it. Like, I didn't *have to*. There's, it serves me zero purpose to say it, and I don't know why I did it, but that's what happened.
- 37:56 AK: And are there any vocal qualities here? [Ryan: Um] like we've said in the past, maybe there was some rhythm, cadence, characteristics.
- 38:07 Ryan: Just how I would say it out loud. Same speed. No sound, obviously--we've determined that. But my, my, my thought voice, I'm going to start calling it that. It's easier.
- 38:22 AK: And the thought voice seems to have a rate of speech.
- 38:26 Ryan: Yeah, for sure. So fee, it *feels like* speech.
- 38:32 AK: Does it make sense to, to further describe the rate here? Like am I saying, is this coming out fast? [inaudible]
- 38:39 Ryan: I don't think it's important. Like the actual experience of it.
- 38:46 AK: Okay. [RTH: (inaudible)] So how does this, how does this differ from the one right. How does this differ from number three?
- 38:57 Ryan: In three I'm, I'm *trying* to say it. It's like my, the goal. Like I am, I'm putting in, I have a direction and a destination, whereas here I don't have a destination. They just, they do what they want.
- 39:12 AK: But are they otherwise the same? So one I have, I'm the initiator, this other one, they're just...

- 39:17 Ryan: Sometimes they could occur at the same time. So like I could be reading and then also have the passive one going on in the background.
- 39:28 RTH: Let's not do with the passive, [corrects himself] let's not do *sometimes*. Let's stick with 8.4 and 8.3. [Alek: Mm hm.].
- 39:35 Ryan: All right. What do you, what do you want to know about those?
- 39:37 AK: So aside from the initiation aspect... At 8.3, I am the initiator of the words. No doubt about it. 8.4. I don't have control over these--they're just happening. [Ryan: Yep.] Are the words otherwise experienced in the same way? Like this, this no voice, but kind of seems like speaking kind of thing?
- 40:02 Ryan: Um, so it was similar in (I used the word "intensity" before), um, it was similar to intensity there, but it's usually not. I... you told me not to talk about usually), but that time it was similar in intensity to the number three. Three was definitely more of like a louder, more focused-on word.
- 40:29 AK: Mmm. So what, what do you, what does *intensity* mean?
- 40:34 Ryan: I think it's more part of the footlights of my imagination, instead of like me focusing on other things and multitasking. It's like the one thing that I'm doing. [Alek: Okay.] Multiple things could be occurring at the same time. [Alek: Okay.] As in four, multiple things could be occurring at the same time with that intensity, where you [inaudible], like three is 90, a hundred percent, where four--at that time, it was like 70, but okay. [Alek: Okay.] it's not always like that.
- 41:09 AK: So I'm more into focused on the words in 8.3 than I am in 8.4? [Ryan: Um] Or did I not get that?
- 41:18 Ryan: No, it was... Yeah. So four is, is, is mostly what I'm focusing on. I'm focusing on the speech, but it was still like the passive version.
- 41:34 AK: So is that that 90, 70 difference? Does that mostly refer to the passivity versus initiation-ness of it? [Ryan: (shakes head negatively) No.] No. Okay. So it's not how [laughs], it's not how prominent it is. It's not how, how driven by me it is, but there's still some difference between these two.
- 41:59 Ryan: Um, just one feels like I have a destination at the end of what I'm trying to do. And the other one has no destination. It's like one I'm sitting in the front seat of the car driving and the other one I'm in the back seat and I'm just along for the ride. [Alek: Okay.] And the intensity is tough to explain, but...
- 42:30 AK: Yeah. Well maybe future samples will help clarify that. [Ryan: Mm hm.] Okay. But at, at 8.4 I'm gathering, it's just these words. Like the history teacher is not part of my experience, the picture of the cat--that all has passed and I'm into the words, [Ryan: Mm hm.] and we're doing our best to describe that. Okay.

- 42:52 Ryan: Yeah. I guess a good way to describe intensity is the amount that it pulls me away from like the external reality that I'm supposed to be like focusing on or dealing with.
- 43:08 AK: Hmm. And which one of...
- 43:10 Ryan: Hence it is like, intensity can also be related to the visual. Like sometimes it's super intense, super visual pulls me completely away--it's almost like I'm *there*. Where other times it's just like quick to be undifferentiated. It's not like super intense.
- 43:31 AK: And between 8.3 and 8.4, which one pulls you away from the world more?
- 43:38 Ryan: So three is almost I'm interacting with the outside world, where four is moreso internal, like more pulling me away from, from the outside. [Alek: Okay.] Are we making progress? Are we hitting roadblocks?
- 44:04 AK: Well, I think with this kind of stuff, part of the progress is hitting is, really is hitting all the roadblocks. So you can say that you've, you know, held all the balls in the air and considered everything. And then, I mean, this is a lot of newness for one day. Like the word-speech stuff we're seeing today, I think will really, you know, it's going to clarify some stuff if we can keep doing this and stay on it. [Ryan: Mm hm.]
- 44:30 RTH: And I agree with that, but I've got one, one more question here. And I may have been distracted by the workmen in my house a little bit ago, but so did we just conclude that number four has distracted me or taken me away from the world more than number three?
- 44:51 Ryan: Yeah. It's almost like three. I am interacting with the outside. Like I'm reading what's in front of me. Like I'm taking a piece of paper and I'm reading it where like, I'm, I'm actively involved, what's going on. But the other one's more spacey and like I'm, I'm in my head.
- 45:09 RTH: So it seems to be that back in, back in the days and the number of days ago, or maybe it was even earlier today, we had said that, uh, one of the characteristics of this passive speech is that it pulls you away from the world, but here we've got an example of passive speech that doesn't pull you away from the world as much as an act of speech that pulls you away from the world. So pulling away from the world is apparently not a constitutive characteristic of the passive speech.
- 45:09 Russ comments: RTH is mistaken here. He apparently has confused details of the two samples.
- 45:36 Ryan: I think I just understand today more than I did in the past.
- 45:43 RTH: Well, I think, I think that's probably right.
- 45:46 Ryan: If we went back to the earlier beeps, I think I would be significantly better at explaining. Like I looked back at the first beep, um, where I was editing the video and I thought that the video would be better if I said something or if I have like a wild

thought, do you remember? “Juicy” was the word I used. [RTH: Right.] [Alek: Yeah.] Um, that was unsymbolized thinking. And like, I know for a fact that was because from just doing this over and over again, and I had such trouble explaining that, but now, like I know exactly what that was.

46:23 RTH: And I, I don’t doubt that that’s true. I *would* recommend that we bracket that kind of speculation. ‘Cause...

46:29 Ryan: [laughs] I would like to count how many times we have...

46:30 AK: You knew it was coming!

46:34 RTH: I’m a radical bracketer! [Ryan: Mm hm.]

46:37 AK: Ryan, how are these passive speech things different than unsymbolized thinking?

46:46 Ryan: Unsymbolized thinking just happens like that. [snaps fingers] And like, it was just so much information. And then I would elaborate with speech to describe those thoughts. [Alek: Mm hm.] Or like, I would have just a huge, I could probably think of an entire plot to a book and just like that [snaps fingers], but I would have to like attach words to it and that would take time to organize.

47:09 AK: Um hmm. And so the unsymbolized thoughts don’t *come* with words. You’ve got to attach words after the fact [Ryan: (inaudible)] what that all was. [Ryan: Yeah.] Okay. And I’m understanding, whereas here, there really are explicit words, you know, it’s quote unquote, [Ryan: Yeah.] even though not spoken

47:25 Ryan: It takes time, it’s there, it follows same direction of time as my speech out loud would.

47:33 AK: Hmm. Okay. Okay. I’m good for number four then.

SAMPLE 8.5 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

47:35 RTH: Me too. Number five.

47:39 Ryan: Number five, uh, I was playing the guitar and I was using a pick that I made, um, out of folding paper. So it felt weird in my hand, uh, and it beeped when I was looking down at my strumming hand and simultaneously I could feel the pick slipping out of my grip. Um, and I wasn’t really hearing what was being played at that time. Um, but I knew I was falling off beat ‘cause my attention was more focused on like the, me feeling, the pick slip out of my hands than it was on like the rhythm.

48:21 RTH: So at the, at the particular moment, there are two things going on. One is I see the, I see the picking stroke and the other is I feel the pick slip.

48:32 Ryan: Yeah. So, um, I can’t remember right now, like, which was if they were both present at the same time or if I was feeling it more than I was like looking at it. But I know for a

fact I was definitely feeling it slip out of my hand and I could like, and I knew that I had to like fix it or address it.

48:55 RTH: Okay. And so is the, well, tell me what this experience of the pick slipping is?

49:04 Ryan: Uh, just like I could just like, feel it slipping through my hand, like, like I had to like keep squeezing tighter, 'cause like if I held it like loosely in my hand, it would would've fell out of the hand. So I was like squeezing tighter and like trying to like focus on not dropping it.

49:23 RTH: So that's the distinction that I would like us to be as clear as we can. So does it, do I feel the pick sliding? Or am I into holding it tighter so it doesn't slide? Or both or neither.

49:36 Ryan: I mean, I know like I I'm aware that it's slipping and like I was thinking about the fact that it was slipping kind of like an unsymbolized thought where there's no like visual or words attached to it. I just knew that it was slipping and I needed to address the situation. Therefore I reacted by squeezing harder.

49:59 RTH: And is the squeezing harder in your experience or is that an after the beep thing or?

50:03 Ryan: Uh, that was after the beep. Yeah, that was after the beep. I wasn't like *squeeze tighter, squeeze tighter*. It's just like a reaction to,

50:12 RTH: So I feel the paper pick slipping. [Ryan: Yeah.] And now I would like to know whether this is a tactile sensation--I feel it. Or am I thinking a thought-y kind of a deal where *Oh! My, my pick is slipping. I got to do something about it*, even though that's unsymbolized.

50:35 Ryan: It was.... Can you explain that a little bit differently?

50:41 RTH: The difference that I'm trying to get at is whether I, whether I feel what's happening in my fingers, that's a sensation in my fingers with the pick. [Ryan: Yeah.] Or am I thinking about it? Which I guess would be a cognitive activity that would be *aimed at* my fingers.

50:58 Ryan: It was, it was both. 'Cause like it pulled me away from focusing on the beat or the rhythm of the song. So like I knew it was no longer focused on like the sound that I was producing and I was focusing on addressing what I was feeling in my hand.

51:18 RTH: So the addressing portion is present at the moment of the beep, as opposed to just this slippy feeling.

51:28 Ryan: Yeah. Like I knew that that something had to be done, but there was no words or, and it say, I gotta fix, I gotta fix this. I didn't do that. I just fixed it. I just, I could, I could physically feel it slipping out of my hand and I was conscious of, of it sliding, like,

51:50 RTH: So *that* much--I physically feel it and I'm conscious of it sliding--*that* sounds to me like a sensation-in-my-fingers kind of a deal.

52:00 Ryan: Yeah. Yeah. But then how would I know to react and fix it?

52:06 RTH: Well, let's assume that it's poss, that that's possible: that, that you're a skilled enough guitar player that, you know, what happens when this kind of sensation while that I got to do it, but I don't have to think about it. *Or* you could be thinking about it. And I'm not, I don't, I'm not trying to discourage our having a thought about it. I just don't want us to fall into the trap of saying *well, because I felt the slipping* (and I'm, the fact of the world is that if I don't do something about it, it's going to fall out of my fingers) *then I must have thought about it*. That's the part that I don't want us to automatically do. If there's an experience of thinking about it, then let's go for it.

52:50 Ryan: There was. I knew that I, I knew that it was, uh, something that I, I was focusing on fixing the problem. Like I knew that I needed to fix the problem.

53:04 RTH: So it's not just, it's not just a slippery feeling. It's just a feeling and a problem solving [Ryan: Yes.] think-y kind of a thing.

53:13 Ryan: Yes. And that problem-solving made me not, no longer focused on the rhythm. Like I wasn't even thinking about it or it pulled me away from that. And I was thinking about my pick. I was hyper-focused on my pick.

53:34 RTH: All right. Then I think I'm good. And so let me review and make sure that we're in agreement about this. What I've got is that there are really sort of two aspects of my experience related at the same thing. One is a finger-y thing where I feel a slippery in my fingers; and the other is a more analytical, conceptual, [Ryan: Problem-solving] problem-solving thing that sooner or later I've got to do something about it.

53:34 Russ comments: There is reason to be somewhat skeptical about whether there actually was a think-y aspect of Ryan's direct experience at this beep. Ryan's descriptions suggest that presuppositions may be at work. For examples: "But then how would I know to react and fix it?" [52:00] suggests that there *must* be thinking; and "that problem-solving made me not, no longer focused on the rhythm" [53:14] suggests a belief that causation *must* imply the existence of a thought. And the apposition of "thinking" and "hyper-focused" in "And I was thinking about my pick. I was hyper-focused on my pick" [53:23] suggests the likelihood (or at least the possibility) that "thinking" might really mean (in this context) sensory awareness—"hyper-aware" is not a term that is usually applied to a cognitive experience. Furthermore, RTH did not do a highly skilled job of distinguishing the possibilities during the interview. Certainly Ryan *knows* at some level that he needs to grip harder or regrip; the question is whether that knowing is directly apprehended before the footlights of consciousness. Maybe so, maybe not.

54:01 Ryan: Yup.

54:05 RTH: Okay. And I'm good.

SAMPLE 8.6 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

54:06 AK: Okay. Me too. Number six

54:07 Ryan: Six. Um, I was about to respond to a comment someone like posted about internal monologues, like on one of my posts. And someone said about how people can't live without internal monologues, because they would be brain dead. And I was thinking about that comment and passively said, "Actually, that's not true."

54:43 AK: Sorry. I missed it. Did you say passively or actively?

54:46 Ryan: Passively. That's not true. Like I wasn't... We'll get there. Dr. Hurlburt. Don't worry. [Alek: That's (inaudible).]

55:00 RTH: I'm happy as a clam.

55:01 AK: Um, okay. So the words "that not, that's not true" are there. [Ryan: Yeah.] How about the comment? Is that still present to you at the moment of the beep?

55:19 Ryan: Well, it was... Yes, but it wasn't like I wasn't looking at it or reading it. The "actually that's not true" was like, just like a response to, to it. Like, so it was a thing that (uh, God, I'm talking to myself into a corner). Um, yeah. I just knew that, that it was something that I was gonna address.

55:48 AK: Okay. So I'm responding to the comment, but I guess..., Well, let's just start there. Okay. Let's go to those. Let's go to those words. Are the words "that's not true" or "actually, that's not true"?

56:00 Ryan: "Actually. That's not true."

56:02 AK: Okay. And how are these words experienced?

56:06 Ryan: Um, my thought voice. I didn't *try* to say it. There is no destination. It just flowed out, um, almost like my brain was starting the sentence for me without like me actually having to actively think about how to start it off.

56:33 AK: So this is another of the non-initiated, I'm in the back seat here. [Ryan: Mm hm.] Totally passive.

56:39 Ryan: Yeah.

56:42 AK: Is this also a non-voice like, I think we've understood the others as? Like, it's not like I *hear* my voice with it with tone and volume and

56:57 Ryan: No, maybe not tone, but it's, it's, it's got the, the, the *feeling* of speech.

57:05 AK: Okay. Which I understood was also there for, uh, beep three and four. They felt like speech. Is that right?

57:12 Ryan: [looks at notes] Three and four, um, yes. [Alek: Okay.]

57:17 RTH: Is there any way that these are different from three and four?

57:22 Ryan: Um, it is similar to, well, I'm trying, it's not that it's not similar to the other ones, but it's like, so like, um... Three, I was reading it, so that was different. Four, I was repeating what I already read, where this is like a new thought, but it just like float out. So yeah. So it it's, it's the similar experience to one, the voice in two, and four. [Alek: Okay.] Same characteristics.

58:14 AK: Okay. Does this one have any cadence or speed? That's...

58:25 Ryan: Um, yeah, it's almost like I was, it's like, [said in a sing-songy voice] "actually that's not true." Like, you know, have you ever seen like science videos where they're like super giddy and they're like, [shrugs his shoulders back and forth and speaks in a sing-song or Valley girl voice] "Well maybe if you pour this and that!" It was like similar to that, but it was, I couldn't like hear the voice, but it was, it felt like that.

58:48 AK: So, by, by the little imitation you did there, there's like some intonation and there's a little pause like "Well!..." or "Actually!...that's not true!"

58:54 Ryan: Yeah. "Actually!...that's not true!" As you could tell, I'm not good impressions probably because I don't actually hear my voice (I just found out).

59:05 AK: So am I gathering, right, that I don't hear any voice, [shrugs her shoulders back and forth] but this voice is being kind of, I don't, it has some I don't know what to label with that intonation, but I think I get what you're describing. [Ryan: Yep.] Okay. Cool.

59:29 RTH: It's a voice with vocal characteristics, but those vocal characteristics are *not* imaginarily heard.

59:36 Ryan: That's exactly why it's so hard to explain like. Yeah, it's, it's not my voice, but it is strangely like a voice that is mine. [Alek: Mm hm.] It's the same throughout my entire life. Like, it didn't change when my, my voice changed through puberty. It's just always been my thought voice.

1:00:10 AK: And so we said it's not imaginarily heard. Would it also be accurate to say it's, it's not imaginary spoken? [Ryan: See that's like...] Or does that just get too complicated. [Ryan: Yeah.] I mean I understand you're not initiating it. I get that.

1:00:29 Ryan: No, it feels spoken. [Alek: Okay.] It feels... But it's almost like there's someone driving my brain and like, I'm not in control of that.

1:00:39 AK: So spoken, but not by me, but it is my voice.

1:00:42 Ryan: Yeah. And it feels like I'm speaking, but I, it's not something that I'm trying to do.

1:00:47 RTH: Spoken by me, but not under my control. [Alek: Yeah.]

INFORMAL Q/A STARTS HERE

1:00:50 Ryan: Yes. Do I have schizophrenia? [They laugh.]

1:00:56 RTH: No, no you don't.

1:00:57 Ryan: What do I have? [laughs]

1:00:59 RTH: Well. we haven't figured that out yet. [Alek: Interesting.]

1:01:02 Ryan: Yeah. You have like an inkling, like, are you like hovering around ideas that you're testing out with how you're asking questions? Yeah you are! I can tell! [smiles].

1:01:14 AK: In terms of like...

1:01:16 RTH: Y'know, I [Alek: Go ahead.] Go , go ahead.

1:01:18 AK: I was just going to ask: you mean, like, in terms of like some group you must belong to because of this?

1:01:23 Ryan: No. Like, are you just like trying to narrow in your hypothesis on what's happening? So you're phrasing questions in a certain way to, to test your hypothesis.

1:01:36 AK: Uh, I have no hypothesis about this. I don't, I am just trying to wrap my head around it. And I don't think I'm there yet either. I don't think I, I really understand this today, but I think we're getting a little closer and it's helpful to say, well, this is kinda like this. And then I think, well, I almost thought I got that one. So it's, it's a work in progress.

1:01:55 Ryan: I'm going to be thinking about this for the next day or two, trying to like focus on it.

1:02:03 RTH: And, and I would say I'm, I'm, I'm agreeing with Alek. I don't have any hypothesis about this. I, I, for sure I'm not in the diagnostic mode. But, but it's, it's much more than that for, for me. And I think I'm going to be saying the same thing that Alek was saying. And, and, and, and that is, it's interesting enough in its own right, just to try to get at what Ryan's experience is like. And not to put him in a category with George, or Sally, or, or schizophrenia or, or ADHD or whatever, that, that's not very interesting to me. For whatever reason, it's not very interesting. What's interesting to me is to try to make sure that Ryan and Alek and Russ can refine the conversation in a way that it's believable, that I and Alek and Ryan have a shared understanding of what Ryan's experience is like as best we can do. And that, there's really, there's nothing behind that. That's, [Alek: Yeah.] that as far as I can see is, is what it is is what you get. And, and, y'know, maybe, maybe in the long run, people will say, well, y'know, who cares?

And maybe even *I* would say that in the long run. But, but at the moment, it seems like that's the *basic human science thing*. That's the way it seems.

- 1:03:45 Ryan: How many, um, active participants do you have right now doing this?
- 1:03:55 RTH: At this particular moment in terms of actually sampling, you're the guy. You're, you're the only one at the moment. Is that right, Alek?
- 1:04:01 Ryan: Yeah. We just, we've just wrapped up with a handful of people in the last couple of weeks. I think this is it, that *I'm* a part of.
- 1:04:11 RTH: We generally don't do more than a couple at a time. 'Cause it's pretty hard work. It's
- 1:04:17 Ryan: Yeah. It's still,
- 1:04:19 AK: It's a lot to keep straight. I find when we have, you know, five, six, 10, whatever, which we have at sometimes have a lot going, and it's, it's hard to have enough mental energy to home in on one person.
- 1:04:35 Ryan: Did you, are you like the creator of DES? Like, are you the original person that thought about this and is doing it in the world right now? Or are you the only one?
- 1:04:47 RTH: The answer to the first question: Am I the creator? That's easy to answer. Yes. The second question is a little bit harder to answer. The, the group that we are a part of, I would say, is the only group that is trying to do it in the same way as we try to do it. There are other people who say they're trying to do versions of DES.
- 1:05:11 Ryan: So how many people are currently trained under your, um, guidelines or your, um (what's the word I'm thinking of?) uh, standards of...?
- 1:05:24 RTH: And that's a hard question for me to answer as well. So we don't do a certification thing (for good or bad reasons--I'm not exactly sure which of those is the case). So, so far it's a matter of what, from my, or our point of view, it's a matter of, let's see whether we can, let's see how good a job we can do this. And let's not worry so much about the real-world trappings of it, whether that's, you know, can we train it? Can we scale it? Can we diagnose with it? Whatever. Let's just see whether we can *do* it.
- 1:05:58 Ryan: Yeah. I'm just trying to figure out if I should start calling it the Hurlburt method. And I think I'm going to,
- 1:06:07 RTH: Well, I think it's more than that, but... I think there's, I think there's a group of us who are trying to figure it out.
- 1:06:18 Ryan: Would you trust Alek to do it alone without your guidance?
- 1:06:26 RTH: Alek is very good at it. And you could ask her whether she should trust me to do it without her guidance. [Alek and Ryan laugh] And the answer would be pretty close to the same, same kind of a thing. [Ryan: That's good.] She's got her blind spots and I've

got mine. [Alek: Mm hm.] Arguably, I've got maybe fewer blind spots, but I'm not even sure that that's a fair thing to say, y'know. When my blind spots come up, they're gonna be pretty brutal.

1:06:48 Ryan: And you've been doing this for a while.

1:06:50 RTH: But I've been doing it for longer than Alek.

1:06:53 Ryan: Well, part of the method is to do it with multiple people, uh, so that we can point out each other's blind spots. You know, that's *huge*. You can't know what you don't know. So you need other people there to say, well, that's not what I heard or why am I not getting this? You guys seem to agree on this and... It's much better to do it in pairs or more.

1:07:13 Ryan: Do you feel like some people understand what you're doing as a job? And some people can't like, comprehend, like what's going on? Like, I guess, yeah, that's my question.

1:07:29 RTH: So is that, does that, is that question: Do I, do I think that some people understand what the real motivation of DES is?

1:07:40 Ryan: Do they just like understand what you're looking for? And just the fact that everyone is experiencing different things? Or do they, is it tough? Is it a tough sell to some people?

1:07:58 RTH: You're asking hard questions today, Ryan. [Alek laughs] I would say, I would say most everybody has some inkling of what we're trying to do. When we explain what we're trying to do, I think people, people *connect* with that. They say, "Yeah, I have inner experience! I can see why it might be hard for you to figure out how to do it. And, and I can see, why you're [inaudible]." I think that's pretty common. Whether people, whether, whether people really understand what it requires or, or why you would actually care to spend so far eight days trying to sort out Ryan's experience, I'm guessing there's a fair divergence of opinion about that. [Alek: Inaudible.]

1:08:50 Ryan: That's all I have.

1:08:54 RTH: Alright. Well, sounds good to me. We're going to do this again, and you all are gonna figure out what it's gonna be and let me know.

1:09:00 Ryan: Yeah, that sounds good.

1:09:03 RTH: It sounds good to me. And, and, and let me, just out of an abundance of caution, I I'm, I'm not the slightest bit critical of your lack of skill here. This, this is perfect, as far as I'm concerned.

1:09:17 Ryan: I don't feel like pressure or I don't feel like you're being too, too mean about it or anything. It's just, you're being diligent and that's what you should be doing. You

don't want to just skip over things when it gets difficult, then you're never going to figure it out.

1:09:34 RTH: That's the truth. [Alek: Yeah.] All right. Thank you very much.

1:09:41 AK: Alright. See you next time.

1:09:42 Ryan: Alright. Bye.