

Transcripts of Carl Rogers' Therapy Sessions

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Volume 16

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Carl Rogers – Vivian [code name] -- 1984

T1: I don't know what you might wish to talk to me about, but I would be glad to try to hear.

C1: Well, uhm, I've done a lot of thinking about the problems I could conjure up for today, and in the process, I began to realize how frightened I was of the non-structured nature of this interaction. And I think I would like to stay with that fear of uhm.. I somehow would rather.... It sounds crazy... face Fritz Perl than Carl Rogers. And I have to ask myself why, uhm, . . . uhm, It's easy for me to come up with a problem, I have no trouble talking. In fact I use talking as a way of controlling situations. I think the non-directiveness of your approach is very frightening for me.

T1: Sounds as though the, the fear of not knowing where this might go . . . and the fact of your being in charge of the direction, . . . Both of those things are really scary.

C2: That's right. It's like I would like you to take over now and ask me lots of questions . . . and I don't want to have to do much work. In fact, the fantasy was... I would rather have volunteered for a hypnotist (laugh) than for you. (T: Mhm) So it's saying something about my uhm, not wanting to be as active as I probably will have to be with you.

T2: It really does say something about the, the deep fear you have of initiating something entirely on your own.

C3: Yes.... it's very contradictory .. because if you look at my life, if you looked in my life from an outside observer, the one thing that would be, uhm, most apparent, has been.. is my independence and my initiative. So, uhm, it's a contradiction. (T: Mhm) But that, uhm, down deep I am very frightened of . . . non-structure, and yet resist structure when it's imposed.

T3: Mhm, how do you understand that? That in dealing with the external world, uh, you're quite willing to take initiative and uh, and organize things and so on, but when it comes to revealing your internal self, then that becomes much more frightening.

- C4: Yes, I, I should tell you, I, I, and perhaps let people know here, that I'm a behavior therapist.
- T4: (Laugh) I did know that.
- C5: You did know that (laugh). And a rather successful behavior therapist (T: Mhm). And I prefer to work directly, (T: Mhm) so coming here was an experiment (T: Mhm) for me, and I've been very uncomfortable with the non-directive aspects of the workshop and the interview . . . just highlights uhm, this problem.
- T5: So when I said it was a risk, that's an understatement.
- C6: It's a real risk. Uhm, maybe I should tell you a little about my life. Uhm, I don't know, that's.. maybe that's imposing structure, but I think it might be important. Uhm, I'm very angry at how my life has turned out. Uhm, I feel like I've been gypped in some sense. Uhm, I, I went to graduate school... I come from a very poor family and educated myself -- I'm the only person in my family who's gotten an advanced degree. Uhm, and somehow knew what I wanted professionally and, 'cause I'm a woman, I also knew the sort of husband that I wanted and chose the best looking, most intelligent, most interesting man I could find at age twenty-two and settled down, thinking I had found two tracks to go along. And everything seemed to be working out until that whole marriage fell apart when I was, uh, thirty-two. And since then, I've had to structure my own personal life -- the professional life has just continued to go along very well. But the personal life has been very difficult. And I've been feeling like I've been gypped in some sense. Like I wasn't meant to have to raise two children along, to have to continually seek out relationships and be in charge of supporting myself, my children, and providing all my own structure.
- T6: I catch that sense of being cheated, (C: Yes) but I'm also interested that you used the term that you have to "structure" your life. You use a term like that rather than "create" a life, or "build" a life. I don't know whether that has any significance or not.
- C7: Well, there's a feeling of being lost without a structure, and I mean, I mean a structure of uhm, a family, a husband -somebody to come home to every night after work. (T: Mhm) Or not even... a, a, uh.. (T: Someone) ..someone. And who, who . . . is just there. Yes.
- T7: And that does bring a real sense of loss even to think about that.
- C8: That's right, that's right. So I guess, uhm, having to structure this interview is like more of the same. I guess I just don't feel comfortable in sitting and letting things happen. 'Cause when they happen, they haven't turned out so positively.
- T8: So this interview is a part of the whole sense of being lost.

C9: Yes, yes, I feel very lost in my life.

T9: And the same carries over to the interview... a little bit.

C10: Interestingly enough, I feel.. I think less lost here than I do in my personal life.
'Cause there's enough of the structure of my professional world here.....
I feel that you're waiting for me to say something else (small laugh). I have trouble
with silences.

T10: Mmm, I don't have that trouble, I'm perfectly willing to wait until you know
what you wish to say.....

C11: I'm just feeling very uh, hot -- my cheeks are burning. And I'm not sure... that I
know what I want to say.

T11: Mhm, I, I wonder if you aren't sort of experiencing that sense of being lost right
now "What the hell do I do?"

C12: That's right, exactly. I'm usually pretty good at using words, and uh, I feel left, it's
like.. so now what do I say? I've opened.. I've made a good opening, and I don't
know where to go from there. (T: Mhm) Uh

T12: After you've said "hello" and told a little bit about your life, where do you go then?

C13: That's right, I then expect someone else to take over. Maybe it's partly being a
woman...

T13 : Being...?

C14: A woman, or being... or feeling I have to entertain and then I get, um, taken care of.
Yeah, that's it, an "entertain" analogy. (T: Mhm) And not quite knowing what to do
after the introductions. And feeling that I just can't.. just be.

T14: That's the essence of it, that you ought to be entertaining or you ought to have
something well in mind. The notion of just being... that doesn't seem possible.

C15: I just have trouble just sitting quietly.....

T15: I think I see in your eyes a sense of "Please, please guide this!"

C16: Do something (laughing), that's right.

T16: Do something.

C17: Do something. Uh, yes, I've had a hard time with you this workshop. My feelings for you have, uhm, been on a roller coaster. (T: Mhm) Uhm, I, I wondered, I had curiosity about how you could just sit there and just... what did you do while all this was going on with yourself because... there was so much going on and I kept wanting something to happen. I was very angry at you for not uhm, realizing how many people were in pain, or not creating a plan. Uhm, uhm, at one point, if I could have been more active, I would have just ranted and raved at you and I was in a fury. I didn't do that. Uhm, and I think it was partly the group, but then it's very hard for me to be angry with someone who sits there so benignly. Uhm, and uh, and wants things to sort of be nice and good and, and then it became harder for me to be angry at you when you said.... were nice to me or uhm, started making contact... So I really had a hard time with you. Uhm, I keep wanting more of a response.... uhm, than you give.

T17 : So you've been very angry with me in the workshop... Perhaps not expressed, but nevertheless the feelings have been there... (C: Yes) Being very angry toward me... "Why the hell don't you do something, why the hell don't you see what's going on?" (C: Yes) And part of that anger carries over right here.

C18: That's right, right now...

T18: ..."Why the hell don't you do something?"

C19: Do something. Uhm, yeah, do something, bedon't just let people sit and uhm, struggle(Sigh)

T19: And it isn't only "Why do you let people sit and struggle, why do you let me sit and struggle."

C20: Yeah, why are you letting me sit and struggle like this. You set up this interview, interview me. Uhm, it's a contradiction that I have with... in terms of my feelings with you. And then I say, "What's the use." I mean you are who you are, this is the way you are and I have a hard time dealing with it, so what's the point of even expressing the anger since it's not going to do any good. Nothing will change, nothing will change.

T20: It's hopeless, you can't change our relationship.

C21: That's right, if I can yell and scream at you it's not going to change.

T21: You haven't tried it yet.

C22: I know I haven't. I'm not feeling the rage I felt in the workshop... at one point I was furious... You organize a workshop like this, uhm, and so many people are upset and, and right now I think you're sensitive to me, but you can't be sensitive to a

hundred and fifty people, and there ought to be more plans for say a drop-in clinic or some structure in the meantime while we're all trying to get ourselves together. So I was more angry about that. What I'm feeling now is, uhm, you know, it's like... Obviously, I mean, my, my problems with you really relate to my problems in dealing with my father who was not a responsive person. And, uhm, one of the problems that I have is that you are very different than my father in that you would accept whatever choices I made. And my father doesn't respond... hardly ever responds, but when he does respond, it's with disapproval -- "I don't like what you're doing."

T22: So you really are, in a sense, dealing with your father in dealing with me, and yet it's with a different father who is more willing to accept.

C23: And it's confusing. It's confusing.....

T23: It makes it very hard to know how the hell to relate to me.

C24: That's right. Exactly The man I'm involved with uhm, is very structured. I'm very angry at him and he's always setting rules and I'm very good at getting angry at him and he gets angry at me and we fight a lot. And for me that's new. And, uhm, I enjoy that sort of energy, it's different than the way I was with my father. Uhm, I have a hard time with you. A very hard time Mh.

T24: You really just don't know how you want to deal with me. (C: Yeah) Whether to be in a rage or ... or what.And the one point where I somehow felt you, was where you were talking about the difference between your relationship with your father, and this relationship. (C:Yeah) I felt then I was sort of in touch with you. . .

C25: I guess I'm confused... the non-responding on your part I confuse with my father's non-responding which is judgmental and negative. I have not turned out the way he would like me to have turned out.

T25: And so if I don't respond to you, you feel, "He must be judging and disapproving..." Just like your father.

C26: Yeah, but my intellect knows it's not the case and I've seen it differently, and it's still... I haven't sorted these two ...response patter... I don't know, a certain pattern comes out.... That I'm uncomfortable with your not responding and I know you're different and I don't quite know how to uh, to be with you.

T26: And I guess I'm sensitive to the fact that you feel I'm not responding to you?

C27: Yeah, that's not true, actually you are responding... I feel your presence, I feel your sensitivity, I... You are responding, I see the tears in your eyes. I guess I'm just not

used to a man who is sensitive. I have a hard time with sensitive men, I am not used to sensitivity in men (crying).

T27: The fact that I might be sensitive makes it twice as hard. It makes you feel I guess it would be a lot simpler if I judged you and . . . disapproved of you and . . .

C28: Controlled me.

T28: Or controlled you, or structured the thing. But to find that I'm simply sensitive to whatever you are, that's rough.

C29: It's rough (crying) because you give me a taste of something that is so way out of this world. There's a few sensitive men who don't want something and there's a few sensitive men, period. At least in my experience, that, that I have the taste of something and then I go away feeling....

T29: It gives you a taste of something that you feel is impossible... really. "I can't... there is no such thing as sensitive men."

C30: It sounds ridiculous, doesn't it? You exist. It's something about having a different response from a man than I usually have that's very uhm, very frightening, touching,

T30: Unsettling, it sounds like.

C31: Yeah, it's like uh yeah There's a chance of getting really close.

T31: Mhm, and it's part of what's frightening you is there's a chance of real closeness I feel that, too

C32: What?

T32: That there's a chance of real closeness

C33: (?) I get close and then we can get close for twenty minutes, and "goodbye."

T33: So what is there to be afraid of? Sensitivity for twenty minutes, and then that's all? And it doesn't mean anything?

C34: Not really, I want more. I get my appetite whetted... (T: Mhm) And then I'm dissatisfied with what's out there.

T34: Mhm, that's what's so awful about having a taste is that then you can be so disappointed about what's out in the real world.

- C35: I have to learn.... I have to learn to accept the good experiences that are presented to me without wanting more... and making myself miserable and depressed.... (T: Mmm) ...when they're not there.
- T35: Mmm, . . . well perhaps if you could accept what is good and sensitive and enriching for what it is, without feeling, "Well, but it doesn't last forever, and it's.. so it's no good." That's something you would wish for in yourself.
- C36: I mean here I am having a good experience with you and I'm crying and I'm sad. And we're not playing together, it's like . . .the closeness for me is a sharing of sadness... (T: Mhm) ...and pain. And, uh, as a comp..... ..
- T36: I can sense that sadness and pain, and I feel in touch... myself.
- C37: I see that, I see that, oh, I'm very touched by this, it's like the rest of this audience is like really (?) And I have a hard time staying with that experience, and it's like I feel like I.. you and I are just sitting here like this . . . isn't sufficient.
- T37: It isn't enough. Does it also feel just artificial? Or real?
- C38: I can only speak for myself I'm having a real experience with you right now.
- T38: So am I. For me it's real, too..... ..
- C39: What comes up for me is this push to do something different and stay with what this experience is. It's like, uhm, sitting here and feeling close to you creates an urgency to move or to do something different. It's like I, I'm so uncomfortable with just sitting and being, that even when I, I can meet somebody and I get close to them, my body is in an urgency to run or to uhm, to do something different. It's like, uhm....
- T39: I'm not sure I got all of that. It's harder to sit here and be and your body wants to do something. But to run away or just to be active?
- C40: To be more active.
- T40: To be more active.
- C41: To be more active.
- T41: Do something about it.
- C42: Yeah, yeah. Well, it's not, no it's uhm... But you're going to get tired of just sitting here just being, which is really crazy, since I'm the one who's tired already, but it's like...

T42: Do you speak for yourself?

C43: I speak for myself, yes. 'Cause I know that this is what I'm thinking. "Well, how long can we just sit here and just be, we have to like, do something else." I guess I'm in touch with this little like emotional hyperactivity... It's like an old friend. Uhm. . .

T43: The emotional hyperactivity...

C44: The emotional hyperactivity..

T44: ...is the old friend?

C45: ...is an old friend.

T45: Old friend of yours?

C46: An old friend of mine. (?)

T46: And I could sit here for a long time this way.

C47: That's right, and I'll get more and more anxious about "Oh, my god, I have to do something... what do I do now?" So whatever level we go into, (laugh) it just pops up again. (Sigh) .. Oh, that's interesting, I would like you... that's interesting... I'd like you to teach me, to tell me, how you can just sit and be. How did you learn this? I mean I just can't just sit and experience something without feeling . . . like I have to do something more. I'm asking you to be a behavior therapist right now, but it's more like, how, how do you learn it?

T47: I don't know, it's taken me a long time to learn as much as I have, and I haven't learned too much yet.

C48: Uh, it just flashed as... My father taught me very little. My, my father taught me very little, I learned very little from him....except my modeling, of course, but I mean he taught me very little and I'm certainly in touch with... there's an aspect of... I lack your ability just to sit there and it's like you must know how to do it, so teach it to me.

T48: And you wish I would teach you...

C49: Yeah, more directly, like give me a set of behavioral rules, like uh, ...

T49: Condition you for it.

- C50: Not No, I don't condition (laugh) I teach
- T50: I get the feeling you'd like me to give more to you that would help you along that road.
- C51: Yes, that uh, . . . you can sit here and do this and I'm having trouble with it. And uh, . . . your style of learning, this.. for me to just sit here and struggle and, and I'm saying I want more help. (T: Mhm) It's like I'm impatient. (T: Mhm) I'm impatient, you know, I don't like to have to struggle by myself.
- T51: You wish there would be more rules that would keep you from having to struggle so much for what you learn...
- C52: Yes, everything, everything I learn I had to teach myself, and now I'm having to teach myself about my body, it's like my learning for now about my emotions and my body. (T: Mhm) And I had to teach myself how to work and to study and to work with patients.
- T52: Mhm, it looks as though that it's been a very hard struggle to teach yourself all of those many things.....
- C53: Yeah (Sigh)I'm very angry that the world has not been there more, more for me in that way.
- T53: It's one of the ways you've been.. you feel cheated. (C: Yes) "Why hasn't the world helped me more to learn the things I needed to learn?"
- C54: And I guess right now with you it's like, (?) your technique, of -- it's more of the same, more of the same, of just sitting here struggling alone.
- T54: This is the sample of your life, just struggling, struggling, struggling to learn . . . with what you feel is an unsympathetic world.
- C55: The difference is I experience your sympathy. (?) and your empathy, uhm, in that, I mean, I don't know, I really don't know much about you, I really haven't, I must admit I haven't read your books, just the summaries in the text. And it occurred to me just now, that maybe you understand more.....more about the struggling alone than I give you credit for.
- T55: Maybe I know something about struggling alone, too.
- C56: Yeah, it did occur to me (laughing). That's interesting. When I first learned behavior therapy I really liked it very much because I was working in a mental hospital and there were all these people who were freaking out and uh, I was very attracted to the relaxation techniques because it was preferable to medication, but

there wasn't anyone to really teach me. There was a place where we had a tape of Arnold Lazarus' and that was it.. And I was very proud of having to learn it myself, so I guess there's the other side of it, of uhm, suddenly realizing you're in charge of a movement (?) the other side of it.

T56: So you're seeing some new elements there.

C57: Yeah. I certainly see you somewhat differently.... I feel much closer to you now, than I did a few minutes ago when we were sharing tears, (T: Mhm) and I suddenly see you as a person who's a... [END OF SIDE ONE] ...had to struggle.. alone in your work.. without anyone to tell you what to do. And I feel closer to you now.

T57: I appreciate that. I see that our time is about up, too.

C58: Ok.

End of Session

Comments on Session

T1: What I would suggest is that we both sit here for a minute or two and sort of digest what's gone on and then perhaps you'd be willing to share with me and with the audience some of what you felt, and I'll try to do the same. But first it's only fair to just sit and digest things for a minute or two. Is that alright?

C1: Yeah, yeah... (?) Can you go first?

T2: As usual, I trust people more than I trust machines. (Laughter) I'll be glad to say a few words about my reactions in this interview, and then uh, I hope Vivian will be willing to share some of her reactions. After the first moment or two, to tell you the truth, I was completely unaware of the audience. Uhm, I felt I wanted to catch the meanings that were real to her. And she can say whether I was successful or not, but at least my own intent was to really sense what some of these words meant to her. Uhm...

I was very pleased that she felt open enough to tell me how angry she felt toward me because I felt that put the relationship on a real basis, and I appreciated that. Uhm, I don't blame her for being angry at me when she was expecting something, or wishing for something, totally different. Uhm, I admit it seems so different to me, from my side, than it does from her side. Uhm, I wasn't trying to make her struggle. I was simply very willing to listen to whatever struggles might be going on within her. Uhm, and it really, it really hurt me some to know that it felt to her as though I were sort of, at least I think it did, as though I were sort of pushing her to struggle without any help.

Uhm, what I was trying to do, whether successfully or not, was to really be a companion to her in her search. Trying to go just as far as she wished in the direction she wanted to go. She could have moved in any direction and it would have been Ok with me. And, uhm, I felt that we touched some portions of your life that were quite real, quite meaningful.

Uh, to me it was a good start. There was one thing, one kind of thing that I didn't feel, that sometimes I do feel when I've worked with a client longer, and that is that sometimes I feel something quite impulsive, I don't know where it comes from, just something I feel I need to say, it doesn't make any sense in the situation, and I say it and it turns out to be helpful. I really didn't have much of that kind of experience here. I think because it was an experience where we were just beginning to get acquainted. I may have more to say after whatever you have to say, but I'd like to give you a chance if you're willing, Vivian.

C2: Yeah. One thing is I also became unaware of the audience, and really unaware of time.. I cannot believe that that was... half hour to me was like five minutes, I felt

like we were just beginning. Uh, I was really quiet... brainstorming before the interview, all the various problems I could bring up, uh, 'cause it would have been so easy to come up with a problem and I decided not to do that because it was much harder to just deal with the issue of the lack of structure which is really, I think my major problem in my life.. of my resisting uh, my very strong independence drive, and behaving like a little girl, and wanting someone to take care of me. I think it's my major issue. Uhm, which I think surfaced very quickly because of the structure. I had not sought out non-directive therapy for myself whenever I had been in need of help. I have much more active therapists.

Another issue that surfaced for me, which was very real, is my inability to just sit with a feeling and, and.... I'm almost a performer, feeling like that I have to be cute or do something or to do something more to hold someone's attention. And it's like work just to be. And I'm doing a lot of gestalt training lately and getting more in touch with that, but it's.. the level of awareness... You can be aware of something at one level and it really surfaced much more clearly with me.

I really felt I was beginning to know you as a person. And it was only at the end that I began to think, "Oh, how could he, Carl Rogers, know what I'm talking about?" You know, and it just clicked that life is maybe the same for everyone, particularly when one decides to uhm, be more creative and not to just go into the easy structure.

Also just beginning to accept the fact that I haven't been in another relationship like a marriage for nine years now, and there must be a very good reason why, uh, uh, I mean reason that I'm not sure I want that structure. That's very hard for me to really accept, and I'm beginning to see that.

Uh, I like... I had trouble, I guess the issue I had the most trouble with is realizing that you're there when you don't say anything. And in the group I was sitting very far from you in a large group so I never could see that you were probably experiencing a lot of pain. But when I'm sitting close to you, and I can see your eyes and I can see your body and face, I feel your thereness more than I did in a large group where sometime you weren't even in sight. I have to really accept presence as thereness. I mean someone's presence and understanding of me as thereness as opposed to someone putting out there hands and touching me and pulling me along as thereness. I see that as an issue that really got well articulated. (?)

I mostly didn't realize there was an audience there until I turned back, uhm. I'm also very ready, you know, I feel like, "Oh, wow, now I'd really like to go on." And do more.

Thank you.

T3: And, as I've told you before when we arranged the interview, we can go on if you feel you'd like to, as long as I'm here.

I felt very keenly the -- what seemed to me to be a struggle between your, your desire to move ahead on your own, do things your own way and at the same time wanting someone else to structure things for you. And it seems as though that must be uh.... those two tendencies must come in conflict quite frequently.

C3: Yes, yes.

T4: The rebel who wants to be guided.

C4: That's exactly it. The relationship, I'm in a relationship with someone that is just about ending. And he's a very, he's a fine test. He's very controlling, very structured, and I'm in constant rebellion against him, but I chose him. Uhm, I mean he's even someone I've known 17 years. It isn't as if this was just an accident. I'm very much of a rebel. That's the contradiction.

T5: One thing you said that touched me, too, is that you were very much aware of my presence and uhm, I realize I don't know how to be present to a large struggling workshop group. When people start to listen to each other, then I know how to be present. But when chaos reigns, I suffer along with everybody else. I'm present as a sufferer, but I don't know how to be present in any other way. And so I can quite understand your feeling where the hell was I when all the chaos was going on. But I guess the only other thing that I would say is that to me the relationship seemed very real, that it opened up one or two small new doors that you hadn't quite looked into. And that it was just a taste of what might be.

C5: Yeah, yes it is. Thank you for giving me this chance.

T6: Thank you for being willing.

C6: I appreciated this.

T7: Ok, anything more you want to say?

C7: No, I've said enough. I didn't use up as many Kleenex as I thought I would.

T8: Well, it's interesting, that's the one therapist's tool that no therapist can get along without is Kleenex. I don't think I have anything further to say. Except that I hope that what we were together will have some meaning to others, but I really... In some deep sense, I don't give a damn what meaning it has to others. It had meaning to me in the moment. And if it has meaning to them, ok, good, if not, ok, that's life. But I do hope that.. I'm sure people must feel critical, questioning, sympathetic, objective, analytical, all kinds of different ways. And I hope they have a real chance to share all those attitudes and feelings with one another. So, for whatever it was worth or not worth, I think our contact here is finished. Thanks.

C8: Thanks.

T9: And I will be willing to see you more if you would like. And I think you may want to escape from this room as much as I do, I don't think you like the big crowds...

C9: No, want to go and just... I noticed a nice shady place under a tree..

T10: Let's go out together, then.

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Carl Rogers: Demonstration Interview with David [code name]
Neighborhood Club -- November 30, 1984

T: I'd be glad to hear about it.

C1: What sort of concerns me right now is the direction I want to go in uh...regarding school (T: Mhm, hm) and my profession (T: Mhm, hm) and, my profession is I'm a youth and family counselor as well as a community organizer at an agency called _____.

T1: Is there any chance of shutting off that noise? We're having a little difficulty hearing. But, I do understand it's, it's a question of where to go in school, where to go in your career as (C: Mhm.) a counselor.

C2: Right.

T2: Marriage and what? What kind of counseling did you say?

C3: Youth, youth and family

T3: Youth and family counseling. Okay.

C4: And I've been doing that at this agency for approximately four years and prior to that I have been a uh... peer counselor, peer counselor supervisor at another agency and I've worked there for three years.

T4: So you really feel, "I've had a lot of experience but still I'm not, not quite sure now where I want to go." Is that...

C5: Right. I have a lot of experience but, I don't have the academic credentials (T: Uh, huh) that match (T: I see) with the experience. (T: Uh, huh, uh huh) And that's been an issue as well as a concern for me for...and something I've been working on, for quite a while.

T5: Am I getting it right that you really feel quite competent in your work but, you don't have the paper credentials, the academic credentials that would stand back of that.

C6: Exactly.

T6: Mhm, mhm. That sounds like a dilemma.

C7: Uh...yeah. Sometimes it is. Uh...and those times when it is, is when I want to do things that I know that I'm qualified for and I have the skills for ... and I feel some limitations. Um...some things I do right now is with my agency um... with my agency is I do what we call "New Agency Counseling," which is above and beyond the scopes and services of our agency, above my forty hours a week. And uh, it's like doing private practice (T: Mhm.) under the auspices of the agency, except I don't have a license or um... the um... the, a degree. And the limitations that I feel sometimes is that I can't... um... a couple things. Sometimes with clients I don't feel comfortable and definitely can't accept insurance. And one reason I'm doing the "Agency" is to make more money (T: Mhm, hm) based on the skills I know I have.

T7: So it's frustrating to have so many limitations when you really feel a good deal of personal confidence but you uh... but you find yourself limited in the things you can do.

C8: Right. So I realize that one thing that I would, I need to do is go back to school to get the credentials to do that but, I have a lot of resistance to doing that.

T8: Mhm, mhm. So, intellectually you know the thing to do is to go to school and get the degree. But inwardly you feel, "The hell with that."

C9: Right. (Pause 5 seconds) And at times it makes me angry that I have to do that.

T9: Mhm, mhm. "Why should they be demanding that of you?"

C10: Right.

T10: It does make you mad.

C11: Mhm, mhm. (Pause 20 seconds) It's making me mad thinking about it.

T11: Mhm, hm. Just thinking about it makes you really feel, "damn it. ... it's frustrating, it's unfair or, something like that.

C12: Mhm, hm. Well, part of me feels like I need to do that and it's gonna be a pain to do. (T: Mhm.) I hear this quite often from the trainees and staff that I work with. (T: Mhm.) "Well yeah, you're good at what you do but, you got to go back to school and pay your dues." And you know, I can laugh at that and at times I agree with that

but, still it's frustrating to feel like I'd be backtracking, (T: Mhm, hm) regressing to go back and do this. And it feels like a tremendous sacrifice.

T12: Mhm, hm. Yeah. It's gonna cost a lot and you feel as though you're really going backwards, like going backwards to elementary school (C: Right) or something to catch up on paper. Mhm, hm.

C13: Yeah. I don't feel like it's going to be catching up; I feel like I'm just gonna be documenting, verifying what I feel like I already do well.

T13: Mhm, hm. Yeah. I see. Mhm, mhm. So the most it could do for you you feel is simply to show that you can do what you already know you can do.

C14: Right. And I've attempted to do that in a lot of ways. And, uh... in a sense have at times overcompensated for not having the educational background to back up um... the skills. And that's been what's gotten me more into the things I do out in the world which, I always feel are much more important than the academic requirements.

T14: Mhm, hm. I'm not quite clear on that but partly because of your anger and frustration you do more things out in the world uh...demonstrating your competence. Is that what you're saying?

C15: Right. Mhm, hm. Part of it is demonstrating my competence and part of it is doing what I would do with the degree anyway. (T: Mhm, mhm) And part of, when I mentioned compensation... what I really meant was um...that I, what I do with the anger is go out and do (T: I see) instead of feeling limited. (T: Uh, huh) Since I've been 21 I've been on several boards of directors of local organizations in the South East as well as um...working at a Master's level position at this point, and got that job through a grueling interview session. (T: Mhm, hm) Three sessions of six people. And I felt good that I was able to accomplish that. I'm also kind of angry that I had to through six sessions. I mean uh...three separate interviews (T: coughs) to verify the skills because I didn't have the degree.

T15: So that, that um... I get the feeling that you're saying too that uh... you don't really expect anything out of the academic aspect except just to prove that you are who you are, that you are somebody, that you've held good positions, that you are competent.

C16: Mhm, hm.

T16: That you don't expect to learn anything new.

C17: Mhm. I do. I do. I see that there are a lot of things I could learn. I know how I am when I am a student, um... very um... inquisitive. In fact my name is David [Code name. He gives his real name] and what it means is "inquisitive" and "questioning."

T17: Searching and questioning?

C18: Mhm, hm.

T18: Mhm, hm. Mhm. So your very name is a learning name.

C19: Yeah. Mhm, hm. But, I've chosen, often chosen to do that learning and do that in through other regions. You know, real life kinds of practical situations working with um... people and you mentioned you're always living with what your knowledge is and for me it's living with my knowledge and what my experience is. (T: Mhm, hm) Sharing that with other people. (T: Mhm, hm) Um, I don't know that the academics is going to give very much more. In my life, it's that tug and pull from my own self and yeah, I can get more out of that and yet, it's a lot of bullshit.

T19: Part of what I hear in all that is you're saying you're not a conforming person, "I do things in my own way. And I can get there in my own way. I don't have to conform to fit in with the academic framework. That really pisses me off."

C20: Yeah. (pause 6 seconds)

T20: "I'll learn. I want to learn. But, I want to learn in my own way, not in some conforming way."

C21: Right. (pause 20 seconds) That learning in my way you know when you say that touches something for me that has a lot of significance for me. (T: Mhm.) Um... but when I think in my way, I'm thinking of what I want to do, what I want to accomplish as a self-determining person and that very event of choosing this scene for the last eight years was a... self determining event, has lots of significance for me (T: Mhm, mhm) in terms of who I am. (T: Mhm, hm) Uh... I give you that history just to say a little bit more about how I feel about school. Um... I've been going to school um... college level off and on for like the last ten years. And I say college like state college. I've taken some classes at state college um... and have not completed a B.N degree to this point. Um... sometimes I feel badly about that especially when I measure myself with my, with my peers (T: Mhm, hm) the people who I work with who have MSWs and Ph.D.s. Um... intellectually, it's awfully laughable... Sometimes they're teachers um... but other times in terms of possessing the document that says, "You are what you are," it feels less than... I've avoided, I realize now through this personal work I've done thinking about this in retrospect, some of the reason why I avoid uh... have avoided to this point going to school, you see, even though I'm in school right now, I'm still working on this issue of going to

school and have aspirations of going on to State next semester. Uh... but still, it's a hard struggle.

T21: You've gone to school, you're taking classes right now but a little less underneath is the feeling, "I avoid school when I can."

C22: Right.

T22: "I don't like it."

C23: Right.

T23: "I'm self-determined and then that doesn't fit in with my kind of person."

C24: Right.

T24: And yet, you also feel frustrated when your peers have a lot more credentials than you do.

C25: Uh, huh. Even more frustrated, is when I see people who are inadequate and inept (T: Uh, huh, uh, huh) who have the credentials. (Audience laughter) I say, "Why can't I do that?" I know it's not a matter of not can't, can't, not being able to (T: Mhm, mhm) it's... sometimes it's a choice. (T: Yeah) a... sometimes a clear choice and sometimes it's just, "Ah...I don't know what I want to do about that." I mean, I'll go for a while and then I'll stop, you know.

T25: You haven't made up... there's no real basic choice that, "I'm going to finish this." Instead, it's a kind of, kind of I'll take a little of this and a little of that.

C26: Right. Yeah.

T26: But the determination to finish it, that hasn't been there.

C27: It has, sometimes. But sometimes, but sometimes more powerfully than at other times ... Um... but it's a back and forth movement usually for me. Right now I feel very, uh... kind of mediocre about that. (T: Mhm, hm) I've been going to school for the last semester and I'm getting kind'a tired of it, (T: Mhm, hm) of balancing a job and ah- working has always been more of a priority than school anyway. (T: mhm, hm) Um... and relationships, community activities that I'm involved in that often have um... taken the place of the kind of gratification I probably would get or could get from school. (T: Mhm, hm, mhm, hm) Um... I mentioned being on some boards of directors, that I started a mediation center, a credit union and those kinds of things that um... certainly also give me some value but, at times I've realized they also keep me from um... completing the school.

T27: Yeah. Because if you're getting enough satisfactions outside that you can't help but feel, "Oh school. The hell with it."

C28: Right. (Pause 5 seconds) So I put it aside and deprioritize it. (T: Mhm, hm, mhm, hm) but I sometimes have a simultaneous feeling that some of the things I'm doing feel real incongruent with the educational level or the indications of my educational level, and what I should be able to do.

T28: Mhm, mhm. There is a real, a real mismatch between the amount of education you've had and what you're doing. (C: Right) And the education thing is way low and what you're doing is way high.

C29: (Client nods) Mhm, mhm. (Pause 70 seconds) There is another piece, but I don't know if I feel comfortable sharing with you.

T29: I'd appreciate it if you would. If there is a little piece that you haven't brought up. (Pause 30 seconds) I guess it's a real puzzle to know whether you dare to bring it up.

C30: You're puzzled?

T30: Mhm?

C31: You say you were puzzled?

T31: No. It sounds like you're puzzled as to whether or not to bring it up... this other piece.

C32: Yes. I am.

T32: Mhm, hm.

C33: (Pause 10 seconds) Part of it in someway has to do with, not who I am but, who you are.

T33: Mhm, hm. Mhm, hm. Mhm, hm. Part of me... the fact that I'm white or, that I'm well known or, what?

C34: The fact that you're white.

T34: The fact that I'm white. You don't feel comfortable bringing up something that really has a lot of meaning to you, because I'm a different color.

C35: Mhm, hm. (Nods)

T35: Will you take a chance?

C36: I don't know yet. (Group laughs) No,

T36: I guess I'd appreciate it if you'd try me out.

C37: It's a little hard, a little difficult for me cause this is a live issue for me, something that I'm dealing with now. (T: Mhm, hm) It has to do with you, the fact that you're white. It has to do with, plus, how I feel about school. (T: Mhm, hm) And the fact I've always felt about school, being a student um... predominantly in America (T: Mhm, hm) um... and dealing with white educational systems (T: Mhm, hm) that never taught me anything about me. (T: Mhm, hm, mhm, hm) And for instance learning history and not learning anything about black contribution to American history, (T: Mhm, hm) world history in fact.

T37: So part of the resentment against school is that you're in a white system, they haven't taught you anything about yourself or, about your background or, your race, your history. Then that makes you mad.

C38: Yeah. It makes me mad but, it also motivates me to go and get it (T: Mhm, hm) myself and not (T: Uh, huh) expect white people...

T38: If you can't get it through the white system, you'll get it yourself.

C39: Right. (T: Mhm, hm, mhm, hm, mhm, hm.) So some of my resistance with school has also been avoidance of acceptance, avoiding accepting... all information that is transmitted in white institutions.

T39: Mhm, hm, mhm, hm. Yeah that makes it... that helps to clarify it. So, underneath some dislike for school is the fact that you're saying, "I don't like to take information or education from the white system. I resent that."

C40: Mhm, mhm. A totally white system with what felt like totally white interests at heart. (T: Mhm, hm, mhm, hm) I never felt like it had my interests at heart.

T40: Mhm, hm, mhm, hm. They were interested just in the whites. (Client nods yes) Mhm, mhm. (Pause 5 seconds) So that's much deeper than just a dislike of school isn't it? I mean it's a real, (Client nods yes) real strong feeling about, strong feeling against a system that doesn't have your interests at heart. (Client nods yes)

C41: Right. (Pause 22 seconds, nods yes) And I feel that with the experience I've had in the public school, kind of been of the belief that the higher in this white educational system you went, ah... the more assimilated.

T41: More?

C42: The more assimilated... (T: Mhm, hm, mhm) that one became. (T: Mhm, hm) So part of my avoidance is to being assimilated.

T42: Uh, huh. The higher you go, the more likelihood of being assimilated. You don't want to be assimilated. (C: No) You want to be a black person.

C43: Right. (Pause 8 seconds) And learn and teach about what are my interests now. (T: Mhm, hm, mhm, hm) And assist and help and heal my people (T: Mhm, hm) And there's very few places where that's being taught. (T: Mhm, hm) Or where that interest (T: Mhm, hm, mhm, hm) is a priority.

T43: It narrows down a lot of the places where you might get the kind of education you would want. (C: Mhm, hm) Very few. But you want to be of service to your people, and help them, heal them and you would like to get the education for that, not a white education.

(C: Nods) (Both client and therapist take a drink)

C44: (Pause for 15 seconds) Some of those pieces have always been there, some of those pieces of information have always been there but, I think it's probably taken me... I turned 30 yesterday, (T: nods) probably all this time to feel set in myself and set enough in my identity that I could take that on with a probably greater strength. (T: Mhm, hm, mhm, hm) and to know that I won't necessarily... lose me.

T44: Uh, huh. Uh, huh. I think I'm getting that. That you feel now sufficient strength in your own identity (C: Mhm) that perhaps you could even take what you want from a system you don't like. Um... and not lose your identity, not be assimilated. Is that...?

C45: And I realize I've been doing that all my life because white people are on top, (T: Mhm, hm, mhm, hm) you know? And white institutions and white information everywhere.

T45: "Now a white counselor."

C46: Now a white counselor. You know (Smiles, reaches forward and touches therapist's knee) I've always chosen a black counselor.

T46: Uh, huh. Sure. Uh, huh. Uh, huh.

- C47: And a part of me I think is that a black counselor will understand me better (T: Mhm.) but, I've often times found myself in strange situations of being very understanding of white people in a counseling relationship.
- T47: Are you saying of white people or, by white people?
- C48: By and for.
- T48: By and for. Mhm, hm. Mhm, hm. So understanding between black and white isn't impossible. You've experienced that.
- C49: Right. No that never really was the primary issue. That is, understanding between races but um... race is why I felt it to be a racist system. (T: Yeah) Um... which included education.
- T49: Mhm, hm. Mhm, hm. So, with white individuals you've been able to understand and be understood but, a racist white system, that's a different matter.
- C50: Yeah. Yeah. And even with the way it's been with white people (gesturing between himself and the therapist) that's been an evolution, very unfolding kind of thing for me also. (T: Mhm, hm. Mhm, hm) Which has just been tied to my own personal development you know? _____ mentioned being angry Mexican. A lot of times I'm angry BLACK, and can't stand white people. (T: Mhm, hm. Mhm, hm) Don't want to be around them. But it also, when I'm feeling like that, about white people in general in general, there may be people who I have close relationships with who I'm excluding from that general hatred, you know. (T: Mhm, hm) I hate all white people except... (gestures in several directions) (T: Mhm, hm. Mhm, hm) (Audience laughs) And I can recall having done that since about age twelve.
- T50: Mhm, hm. The feeling is that, "I hate all the whites except for so and so and so and so and so and so."
- C51: Mhm. That has been a feeling (T: Mhm, hm) that's not so much where I am now. But the issue with school, that's still something I deal with. (T: Mhm, hm) I know that there will be changes, there are changes um... happening for me. now. Um... how much I want to um... accept or, how much I want to um... open up to those changes is still something I'm not certain of and still work on.
- T51: But there are changes in you going on that will make a difference.
- C52: Now I have a real keen interest in becoming a therapist. I view myself as a therapist now. But I need to have the credentials. (T: Mhm, hm) Um... I have some similar beliefs as you in peace making. I mentioned being involved with the Center. (T: Mhm) I really believe in that (T: Mhm) um... and I was at the lecture that was held

on the University of Peace three months ago. (T: Mhm) I'm really into that ah-. Sometimes I think about school, I say, "Well, do I really need to have this education to do this?"

T52: Yeah. So you want to be a therapist. You want to help the in peace making process and for that... maybe you have to have an education, um?

C53: Yeah.

T53: Mhm, hm. Mhm, hm. I can see our time is nearly up. Is there anything more you you want to say?

C54: No. (Pause 10 seconds) Well, I'd say I feel like I've learned a lot about myself going through these struggles about whether to go to school or not (T: Mhm) and looking at how I feel about first the (T: Mhm) racist system that we live in, and also, how I feel about my relationships with white people in general and white people specifically. Um... what that means to me, not only as a person on the planet, but also as a therapist. (T: Mhm) You know, I've been involved in some organizations that have been real pan-africanist leanings and where some of the teachings (T: Mhm) were to basically hate white people. (T: Mhm) And as someone who is aspiring to be a therapist, one of my conflicts has become well, how do I feel if I choose not to work with white people? (T: Mhm, hm. Mhm, hm. Mhm, hm) And only third world people. (T: Mhm, hm. Mhm, hm) They really are my primary interest. Um... but I've also come to the belief that white people need to be healed too.

T54: Mhm, hm. So there is... you have faced the possibility of excluding white people, hating white people and so forth. But, you really have come to the conclusion, "Well, they need healing too and, and it's... you don't want to have a complete exclusion of, of white interests.

C55: Right. Not just that white people need healing, but they need some of my and other's like my, (T: Uh, huh) particular kinds of healing. Maybe more so.

T55: Okay. You realized within yourself, "I can make a contribution to the white person from myself." Okay. Shall we call it quits?

C56: Yeah.

T56: Okay.

END OF SESSION

Commentary

T1: What I'd like to do is when you feel ready is if you would tell the group how our interview seemed to you. I'll tell them how it seemed to me. And then we could take questions to you or to me. Does that seem okay? (C nods.) When you've thought about it a little, then how did this, how did this half hour seem to you?

C1: Long. (Said with a big smile.) (The microphone begins to screech and so they are left waiting for the noise to subside. Because of technical difficulties, when C resumes speaking, his first few sentences are not audible.) I was thinking about a lot of things that need to be said... Between that and a lot of things ... (T: Mhm, mhm.) I, I said I had some discomfort about how much I wanted to share, um, other parts of me with you and in public. I work with some of these people. (C smiles amid audience laughter.)

T2: Took a lot of courage. Mhm. Can we? (T gestures a switching motion with his hand.) I think to me it seemed, uh, one thing I felt keenly, I felt with you and for you, more than you might even know because I'm a rebel too. (C: Mhm.) I'm not black but I'm a rebel. And, uh, so I could very well understand you, your resentment about having to catch up on the paper credentials when you feel you already have the competence. Um, then I was very much interested in your silences because, uh, after each silence you went into something more significant and after the longest silence was when you were debating and debating whether to really talk about the issue of color. And, uh, I, I, I felt they were real working silences. I knew things were going on in you all the time that weren't being said and I didn't need to know them. Um, uh, I appreciated the, uh, fact that you didn't try to come to any false conclusions. You were still uncertain as to just where you'll go but you were thinking it through more clearly. I liked that, uh... And I was, I, I, I appreciated the fact that you were willing to talk with me even though I was white. Um, I really appreciated that. And, uh, I don't

know whether you felt understood. I felt that I understood you pretty well, um, but anyway, I felt, I felt in half an hour we did a half an hour's worth. I felt good about that. Shall we let them ask us questions?

C2: I just wanted to thank you for the opportunity to do this.

T3: Well thank you for the courage of being here. Let's see if they have any questions they'd like to ask either of us.

Discussion after Carl Rogers' Demonstration Interview with David (Code name)
Neighborhood Club -- November 30, 1984

Woman: I'll ask one. Let me see. Um How did, how did the silences feel to you?

C1: At first I felt a little bit like that, the nondirective boot counseling we sat in, in San Francisco, that training. And I said "Ah, what is this? Ask me a question," you know? (audience laughter) "Do something with that," you know? But, what it did was it, it, felt kinda intense. Not kinda, it felt very intense. You know... and...there were...decisions about whether I wanted to...(inaudible), you know? Or whether this was something I was gonna get out of this... you know, if it was worthwhile to really get any deeper. Cuz that's what...that's what responsibility is about to me, conforming. (T: Mhm, mhm.)

Man: Yes, are there times when you're, um, you're doing your therapy when you, you sort of are going through something and it's almost, and a client might pick up on it. For instance, um, you know, like they, they might be going for some type of relation, and you might wanna just really support their (unintelligible) you know, some positive regard. They can do what they want. But you know that at an initial extra level, but you know that you, you're really going through something.

T1: I'm not sure you could all hear that. The question was, suppose something emotional is going...on in me, what am I—but, but doesn't relate to the client particularly, what am I going to do about that? Uh, my feeling on that is fairly clear. If I have a persistent feeling that, uh, doesn't seem therapeutic...If I'm annoyed at my client or, bored or whatever, in the long run I had better express that. I don't need to express it right off the bat, but in the long run I'd better express that because that will keep the relationship real. It will introduce, it, it'll, it'll, put us together as two persons, maybe unhappy for a few moments, but it, it makes it a real relationship. So, if I had any strongly persistent feeling I would, I would want to voice, anger, annoyance, boredom, whatever. Um, question back here? Or...

Woman: I just wanted to know if you could give an example of how you would express that. Because what I see is that you're trying to be, have a positive approach, and how would you confront a client or show annoyance without being very directive.

T2: Well I can remember quite clearly one of the first times I tried that, and that's why I suppose it sticks in my memory. I had a client, who, uh, always talked in a pretty flat tone of voice. What he said seemed significant, but, uh, really was pretty boring. And, uh, after a number of interviews, I'd see him coming in and I'd think, "Oh my God, here we..." (audience laughter) Uh, that's, that's not being a therapist. So, in the middle of things, I said, "I don't like to interrupt, but, I really am bored by what you're saying." (audience laughter) And, uh, he was shocked, he was hurt, uh, and we had quite a little discussion about that. And then finally he said, "But maybe I think I know why my voice is so boring.

I never thought anybody would really hear me.” And that, you know, that changed the whole relationship. After that, even when his voice got flat, it was easier for me to listen to him. And, uh, he understood better what he was doing, so did I. It, it improved the relationship a lot.

Woman: Well this is more of a statement than a question, but, I found myself listening to you and, almost blamed myself that I see, um, everything that you related I have felt myself a million times before. And your long silences, I was almost jumping out of my flesh, you know, because I could feel whatever was going on in your brain there, what you were thinking, and one thing you said that, uh, actually both of you sa—made that was interesting to me, um, that affected me, when he mentioned the anger against white society, and refusing, or won—not to go along as he said with the program, you brought up the point about the real contribution that he could make to heal those who may need the healing. And it’s something you never stopped to think about before. So it was, I really, you know, I really, I know what was he was going through because I’ve been through it myself and you did do something to contribute. I, I, I enjoyed it.

T3: That’s one thing I’ve learned about interviews is, is that no matter what the problem, no matter what the feelings, (coughs) they, they resonate in the experience of a lot of people in the group. And when, no matter what you talk about, uh, anger, fear, frustration, whatever, uh, there are a lot of people who’ve had the same kind of feelings and so they are really

into the experience, not, not only, not just listening from the outside; they're really listening from the inside. Mhm.

Woman: Did...

T4: Yes, the person over here.

Woman: Um, when you're silent are you trying to make the other person think. Is that a technique or something...?

T5: No. No. I feel um, if, if at anytime he'd said, uh, "I'm stuck. Why don't you ask me a question?" I would've. Uh, but it seemed quite clear to me that those were working silences. Uh, he made no indication that he wanted me to say anything and, uh, so I felt quite comfortable during those silences. There's, there's...I don't know, to me there's such a thing as ownership of a silence. And these were his silences. And I felt he could do with them what he wanted to. If he wanted to break them and get some help from me, for me to ask a question, or something, he could ask. Uh, but he didn't, it just worked. Mhm?

Woman: Did you feel any anxiety when he didn't (T: Louder) Did you feel any anxiety when he didn't wanna share the second issue with you? Because it seemed like he said, "Oh, well, appreciate it if you'd tell me this," What would you do in with the rest of it if he wouldn't say anything?

T6: Uh, The question was when, when he was debating whether or not to bring up this other piece that he spoke of, uh, suppose he hadn't brought up the other piece, what would I have done. Is that your question? Um, I would have felt "That's his right." I wouldn't have pushed. I, um, I realize I kind of lean over backwards on that. A lot of people don't agree with me, and it might not be the style for anyone else. But for me, uh, the client has a right to bring up whatever he or she wants, but he also has the right to withhold things he's not ready to talk about. And I respect that, and I wouldn't push. Um, I did come...I tried to let him know I was willing by saying "Do you want to take a chance?" Uh, I do remember saying that. But, uh, I wouldn't for the world have said, "Oh, come on, come on, tell me!" (audience laughter)

C2: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I would have been very oppositional to that. (Makes an exiting motion with his arm) Tchoo! You know, no.

T7: Yeah, you would've been, you would've been out of the room with that. (laughs) (audience laughter)

C3: Right. Yeah. I think, that, um, the silences gave me the opportunity to decide, you know, what I wanted to share and...being nondirective like that, that does increase, did increase my anxiety, did increase my, my, uh, level of tension, me deciding, "Do I want to?" you

know, “Is it, is it safe? Do I want him to *know* that much about me and how other black people may feel?”

T8: In some respects, it would be much easier if I was asking you questions and things so that you didn't have time to think all of those things. But to have to think for yourself, “What do I want to share? (C: Yeah.) Am I willing to share this? Is this too frightening? Is this too...embarrassing?” Whatever. Uh, it feels, it makes it really tough for the client but it's, but it's also very constructive, I think.

C4: It's all my stuff. It's all my stuff. (T: Yeah.) I wasn't responding to simply, (T: You were...) just simply, though it was interesting you wanted to know.

T9: You were as self-determined in the interview as you are in your life, and I like that.
(C: Yeah.) (audience laughter)

Woman: I have a question. How you ended the interview with a certain, um, topic... If you were to continue next week would you, would you take off where you left off, or would you begin (inaudible)

T10: I don't know. It'd depend on where he took off. If, if he came in next week and never made any reference to what we talked about today, that would have been ok.
Uh, I really have a great deal of trust in the client's, uh, I'll say a word or two about

that. I think the client knows what the problem is, what the difficulties are, the sore places, the painful spots and so on. He doesn't know it consciously, but his nonconscious mind really knows where to move. And, uh, I trust that, uh, and I want to go as a companion to my client wherever he or she is willing to go right now. Uh, and when I speak about the nonconscious mind, I'm not speaking about the unconscious, I'm speaking about the kind of thing that uh, we know about in biofeedback, for example. If you ask me, uh, please, uh, raise the temperature in your right index finger, I would say, "I don't know how. I don't know how to do that." But if you hitch me up to a machine that shows the temperature in my finger and say "See if you can make the needle move." I can do it. How do I do it? I don't know. I don't know. But my nonconscious mind knows how to regulate different aspects of my body, the bloodflow and so on, uh, in a way that my conscious mind doesn't know at all. And it's that nonconscious mind that I feel knows, "Over here is where it hurts." Or, "Over there is where the conflict is." And, and, if you work as a companion with the client, the client leads you to the places that he or she deeply wants to go without knowing that they want to go there. Mhm?

Woman: I wanted to make an observation that excited me about the process of the therapy in terms of the themes of disempowerment and empowerment, because, and that's what client-centered therapy seems to be about to me. It's a movement toward and from. And that's exactly what felt to me like happened in there (inaudible) was about disempowerment, nondegrees, the white culture and so on. And the last statement

that came out was about nonempowerment. I have something to contribute (T: Mhm.) to white society. And it just seemed such a sustained expression of client-centered work, and what it felt like. (T: Mhm. Mhm.)

T11: (pointing to person) All right, right back there.

Man: Dr. Rogers, in your therapy you're doing a lot like biofeedback and you're giving feedback that was (inaudible) You're in sync. Now I notice in the process of giving feedback sometimes you would tend to repeat the words that are, do them in a different order. But then all of a sudden you would zoom down to a deeper level. I remember the first time that you did that. You said, "You like to do things your own way rather than the client's (inaudible) academic schedule (inaudible). Now when do you decide to do a surface feedback or when to go to a deeper level of feedback?"

T12: I'd, I'd phrase it a little differently. I'm trying, as I listened to him, trying to catch the feelings. And, uh, that was a feeling that was coming out very clearly in the, in the different things he was saying, and that's what I wanted to respond to. Uh, sometimes it is true, I, I, I...I think that the, the best of responses are responses to feelings that are just at the edge of consciousness. Uh, if, uh, if I say something and the client says, "Yeah, that's, that's what I just said," Um, I know that I didn't get anywhere. (audience laughter) If the, if the client, if the client says, "Yes, that's right," then I know that it felt good to be understood and I was understanding the

feeling. (C: Yeah.) If the client says, “Well, yes, maybe, I think that *is* how I feel,” then I, then I sense that I’ve struck a feeling that is just at the edge of consciousness, um, and, and I think that’s, probably advances therapy the most.

C5: For me those are the times that I feel like, uh, my close connection to you is not so much when you were, if you were asking me questions, you had to ask me a question. But it was, like, maybe just before my silences and a feeling, you know, from you that you have some understanding for what I was willing to understand (T: Mhm.) um, was what made it easy for me to share the white/black part (T: Mhm.) with you was beginning to feel that, um, not so much you would understand my, my anger (T: Mhm.) But, that, you could handle it (T: Mhm.), and, um, handle it enough for me to do what I need to do with it.

T13: Mhm. Mhm. Yeah, it’s interesting the way trust gradually builds up in a relationship. (C: Mhm.) Can you trust me enough (C: Mhm.) to say some of those things.

Woman: As I was watching you, it’s, it, it seemed like there’s an unwavering intensity that you pulled from, absorption, with the whole process. And I’m curious to hear what’s that like for you, or if that’s just a natural (T: Mhm.) gift, or, if you’d say something about that.

T14: I, I, feel for example, in the few moments before the interview part of what I'm asking myself is, "Can I be really present to this person? Can I be really present?" And this intensity that you speak of is there. I wanted to be with him every minute of the time, uh, with his feelings, with his attitudes, uh, so that it is, it is real, and, uh, also, that leads me into another thing, just a little bit different, but may throw light on it. Um, it seems as though a half-hour interview, what, what's that? I suppose I've conducted 20 such half-hour interviews in the last couple of years, and it astounds me the number of people, the number of those people that I've heard from six months or more later, saying, "This really started something for me. This was very meaningful, um, and I've puzzled over that because I, when I do therapy, not every half-hour is meaningful, by any manner or means. (audience laughter) And, uh, I've come to this conclusion: That when there is a whole group of people, expectant, full of energy, of expectant energy, wondering, "What's going to happen?" And when the client is wondering, "What's this going to be like?" When I'm wondering, "What *is* going to happen?" Uh, there is a kind of a focus of energy that puts me at my best and the client at his best and the audience at its best. We're, we're all, uh, somehow there's, there's more constructive energy present than would be true if, if we were just sitting in a room talking for half an hour. It's a strange phenomenon.

C6: I think the part for me where I, I feel the energy of the group, but still felt outside of the group, it was, it was you and me.

T15: Mhm. Yeah. During the interview, I don't really feel you, it's just you and me, but afterward I think about it, and think about the impact, I realize, yeah, there was a lot of that energy coming in, part of which shows up in my intensity, I think. (C nods.) (Various audience voices) Okay. (turning around to someone who is speaking) I don't have eyes in the back of my head, unfortunately.

Man: Thank you, I appreciate that. I, I was in myself wanting to encourage him to go on in, and, and get his education (Audience laughter) (C Smiles) (Audience laughter) (Audience: Yeah.) I was wondering if you had that feeling that in some ways you wanted to encourage him (T nods) to go on to get his bachelors or masters or whatever. And if you did have that feeling, how do you, how do you deal with that? (inaudible)

T16: My mind said the same thing his did, that of course he'd be better off if he had a degree or two. Uh, but no, I wouldn't do that. Instead, I, I feel it's, it's more important to recognize that all the feelings against doing that, because if, if those really come out in the open, then he's more likely to make the choice, "Well, I think I will go ahead." Uh, if, if you try persuading people like that, but my experience with that is, if you examine the results, uh, you won't do it very often. (audience laughter) Then I, I think, I think if I'd said, "Well, now I know a school, uh, where I think you would be happy, and, why don't you join it?" (Audience laughter)

C7: Happy! (Smiling) This is not about happy. (Audience laughter)

T17: You think the interview would have been better ...

C8: I would take his suggestion

Woman: That's not the answer that I wanted to hear from you when I asked my question.

Thank you for the adjustment.

T18: Okay, okay. (Laughs) Sorry. I did not answer yours.

Man: Yes. (inaudible) Is it hard for you, is it, is it, is it tough for you to do that? To deal with tiredness and exhaustion after having been with the client, is it hard for you, is it, is it, is it tough for you to do that?

T19: I only feel tired and washed out if the interview doesn't go well. If I feel somehow I didn't understand, nothing happened, uh, I'm off the beams somehow. That can really drain me of energy. But when an interview goes well and I feel the relationship is sound and good, I think that energizes me. Of course it, at the end of a number of interviews, sure I feel physically tired. But it isn't, it isn't psychologically draining for me, no.

Woman: Did you ever become uh, overtly emotional during your interview?

T20: Yeah, I would say I'm overtly emotional all the time. (Audience laughter) That was, that was not a passive, dull look. That was a fascination and an interest. "Can I get to know you? Can I really understand you?" Uh, it's emotional.

Same woman: No, I mean did you ever cry or anything? (Audience laughter)

T21: Uh, I have been known to, but not often. Mhm. So that uh, I'll tell you one situation in which I felt quite emotional. I was interviewing a woman from West Germany and, uh, as she told me about her problem I thought, "This is not a psychological problem." She lived in a polluted city, she moved out to the country, she found she was in the middle of, of uh, uh, nuclear missiles, the U.S. was gonna plant a whole lot more nuclear missiles right around her home. Uh, she was terrified that she'd be blown up any minute. Part of her feeling was, "I'm not willing to have a child in this situation." Uh, so on. But I kept thinking, "My God, what can I do for *her*?" Uh, this is a *real* situation, it isn't psychological." But I listened, I tried to understand, I tried to be a companion to her in her despair. And she's one of the ones who wrote me a year later saying how much help that had been, because she said, "I had tried to," uh, uh. I mentioned that at first because I was very emotional during that, I thought, "My God! How awful it is to live in that kind of a situation!" Uh, but I didn't express that to her, I, I went with her and her feelings. And a year later she wrote back: Uh, "I've tried to talk to other people about it, but they

always would say, 'Oh, my situation is just as bad, uh, no, you don't need to feel so despairing.' And they always had nice, comforting words of one sort or another. She said, "You really heard me out and somehow that freed me, since then I've joined the peace movement, I've done things, and she said, "And I'm gonna have a baby." (Audience laughter)

Woman: In the beginning you had a moment of silence. What were you thinking at that time?

T22: During that I was, I was really trying to shut out the group, forget the microphones, I, I have enough interest in mechanical things that I want them to work right. And so I have to kinda consciously say, "To Hell with those." Uh, and another thing here was trying to shut out those voices next door which I, finally had to speak about. Uh, but mostly I was thinking, "Can I be present? Here's a person I don't know at all, I've never met, can I make any kind of contact with him? Uh, Will it be possible that anything will happen?" It's that kind of thing I'm thinking about.

Convener: I think about two or three more questions and then it's getting near four o'clock.

Man: (inaudible) I was thinking about this man and you know about those unresolved feelings and the sequel as you were saying. They also felt the same way. But it appears to me that, uh, that a lot of things that we feel complicate our lives are, are things that we hold in common. I'm wondering in what way does your institute, uh, teach people how to detect

when uh, they're being either manipulated or going down the wrong pathway. In what way can we, uh, see those signals?

T23: Well, that sounds a little bit, uh, like asking how do we diagnose people.

I would, I would feel that the...most help we would give, uh, uh, the most help we would give on that would be in the self renewal groups, where by sharing things with each other, uh, he finds that somebody else is facing the same problem he is, somebody else shares the solution that they found to the problem. Uh, in that way, we really, are therapists for each other, in a very real way. Mhm. (pointing to someone in the audience)

Woman: How should someone with this approach be with individuals who are mentally ill, and maybe need a little more direction?

T24: I only heard the first part, how people who are mentally ill and what?

Same woman: Yeah, who may need more direction.

T25: (sighs) Well, uh, I worked for a couple of years with, with a schizophrenic population in a research project, uh. I would say that, uh, the process is slower with people who are mentally ill, but I feel the same kind of principles and philosophies still hold. But I could say a lot on that, but I think that's a short answer.

Man: In all your work over the years, one can, I have a question. I've been reading an article about you meeting for peace. Are there any, uh, (inaudible) groups in higher positions (inaudible)? Are you moving in that direction? Could you tell us a little about...

T26: I'm sorry, I didn't get, I, I missed about half of your question.

Same man: Okay, um. Your interest in the peace movement (T: Yeah)

Are there any physicians –persons or groups that are in positions that are moving in that direction? Do you observe some kind of trend in that direction?

T27: Oh gosh, yes! Uh, one of the most encouraging things I know is that, uh, people all over the world are getting involved in grassroots, peace movements, and physicians for social responsibility, psychologists for social responsibility. Uh, now we're working on a peace project in cooperation with the United Nations University for Peace, uh, where we're trying to, what we would like to do, would be to hold a workshop of internationally influential people, uh, so that they might experience the reconciliation of differences that can, that we *know* can take place in, in intercultural and international groups. And, uh, I don't know whether we'll be able to do that, but, uh, whether I feel, I feel deeply encouraged about the fact that the only thing I know that will really stop this stupid arms race is when enough people at the ground—at the Grassroots level feel, “We've had enough of this, stop it!” That, that's going to stop it. That's what stopped the Vietnam War. Uh, that's the kind of thing that even very unresponsive government officials, and I

could name one or two, (He smiles. Audience laughter.) uh, finally respond to grassroots opinion, they *have to*, that's what they, uh, that's what they...are supported by. So I, I, as far as...my personal opinion is concerned, I feel it's a fifty-fifty chance whether we're going to blow ourselves up or not. But the, but the forces on the side of constructive change are forces that are starting from the grassroots in Germany and England and this country, and the physicians, among psychologists, among educators, all over the place.

Convener: This person has been waiting a long time. Where'd he go? Here he is. So he's been waiting a long time. That's the last question.

T28: Okay.

Man: Thanks for the following question. Um, I do work with a population that is slightly schizophrenic. And although my approach is client-centered, my attitude and philosophy is such that I find myself working much too hard just to make contact. And I was wondering if your way of being in those kinds of relationships differ at all. Are you more active? Are you more

T29: Yes. In working with schizophrenics, we found that we were more active in, uh, expressing our own feelings, even though they were inconsequential feelings, uh, just to, just to show that there was relationship, so that there wasn't complete silence, uh, and the other thing was that, if the, uh, schizophrenic was, uh, off in a world of his own, we tried

our very best to understand that, to understand whether he, where he was, or she was, and we found that, the more we could understand, the more rational the talk became. And, uh, it was interesting that in that research, uh, one of the, uh, there, there weren't very many clear results for, for a lot of reasons. But one of the clearest was that, uh, the highest degrees of empathic understanding were most closely related to improvement, in, in uh schizophrenic status. Okay.

(Applause).

End of discussion

This transcript is available for purposes of research, study and teaching. It may not be sold.

Throughout this interview the responses of the therapist (T) (Rogers), and the client (C) are numbered for easy reference.

Carl Roger's Interview with June -- 1985.
Royal Marine Hotel, Dunlaoghaire

This interview was recorded in front of the participants of the International Cross-cultural Communications Workshop being held in Dunlaoghaire during the week in which this interview was recorded. The interview was video recorded in addition to being recorded on several audio tape decks.

T: 1,2,3,4.

C: 1,2,3,4.

T: 1,2,3,4.

C: 1,2,3,4.

T: With all the mechanical arrangements, I always feel sort of, I don't know, fragmented. And uh, I'd like to take a moment or two just to be silent and get connected with myself. Maybe you'd like to do the same. (Pause 26 seconds)

T: Okay?

C: Mhmmm.

T: I know I haven't had a chance to get to know you and I have no idea what you might want to talk about, but I would be very glad to hear whatever it is.

C1: Um, I think what I want to talk about is the way in which I find it difficult to say, "No." Uh, I work as a counselor, but not only in my work, but outside my work, I find it really difficult to say, "No," to people. It's like I care too much and . . .

T1: Mhmmm, mhmmm.

C2: If I say, "No," I feel guilty.

T2: Mhm.

- C3: It's like I'm only there for other people. It's very unusual for me to take anything for me as a person, as an individual.
- T3: Does that mean that you find it difficult to protect yourself?
- C4: I think it means I find, yes, I find it difficult to protect myself outwardly. But inwardly, I think I have built up a shell; so that I don't, it's like nobody really sees who I am any more.
- T4: So you don't say, "No," and you do a lot of caring things but somehow inside you, you do say, "No." You build a shell that, that . . .
- C5: Mhmmm. Mhmmm. Yeah. It's sort of a, (Pause 7 seconds) it's, it's like a sort of wall around me.
- T5: A wall.
- C6: Uh . . . emotionally. Ummm ... so that nobody sees what I really feel. I see what they feel. I give to them.
- T6: Mhmmm. Mhmmm.
- C7: They drain me dry . . .
- T7: Mhmm. Mhmm.
- C8: ... but nobody sees me. Nobody, nobody listens to me.
- T8: Nobody listens to you but that's partly because, you put up a wall so that they can't see you or listen to you. Is that it?
- C9: I guess so, yeah. yeah,
- T9: So, yes, you give up and you listen and you help and you care; but for you, there's nobody that listens, nobody that gets through to you.
- C10: Yeah. That's right.
- T10: It must be sort of lonely in there.
- C11: Yes. It is . . . I don't know why. I don't know what to do to stop it, to prevent it. I don't know what to do to reach out to people from that, that loneliness. I don't know why I feel like that. I haven't always felt like that. But, yes. I have always felt like that. (Client coughs) Ummm . . . But not all the time.

T11: Hmm. Mhmm, mhmm.

C12: Just some of the time I feel like that.

T12: It's become a more pressing problem, is that what you're saying?"

C13: Yes. Yes. It's more pressing now because I am beginning to realize I need time for me. I need explore that loneliness, that isolation.

T13: "I need to let somebody in." (Pause 5 seconds) Maybe that's not right.

C14: Yes, yes. But it's like that frightens me.

T14: Uh, huh. That's a little too much. At least you want to explore your loneliness to find out, "why," but is it feasible that people who hear you would listen to you and be with you?

C15: Hmm. Yes, I sort of . . . friends see me as . . . they call me, "Mother Earth."

T15: Why do they call you that?

C16: 'Cause I give all the time.

T16: Mhmm, mhmm. Always available.

C17: Yes, yes, night, day, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what. It doesn't matter what I'm doing, or when. I'm always available.

T17: "I'll always give to you."

C18: Yes...

T18: "Call me in the middle of the night. That's okay."

C19: Yes, but like, you know, I don't feel anybody gives that back to me and that's lonely.

T19: There isn't anybody that you feel you could call in the middle of the night?

C20: I guess not. No, no, no. Not really. No, not any more.

T20: Anybody can turn to you for help, but where do you turn for help? You don't know.

C21: No. I've got lots of good friends. But, my husband is very good. We're very close, but (Pause 5 seconds) it's like nobody really hears me, the me, the me that's inside.

T21: Nobody really hears the person behind that fence.

C22: Yes.

T22: Not your husband, not your friends.

C23: I don't think so, no. I'm not sure whether I hear it. (Client laughs).

T23: Uh, huh.

C24: I'm not sure whether I'm really in touch with that loneliness and isolation.

T24: Maybe you don't even know the person who is behind that fence. Maybe you're not really in touch with her.

C25: No. I don't think I am. I think I have of sense of her.

T25: Mhmm.

C26: But I'm not really in touch with her. And I think the sense of it is that . . . it's like that person is not really any good.

T26: Oh, that sounds like her.

C27: You know, not really any value . . .

T27: So you're not really well acquainted with that person behind the fence but you do have a sense that she's no good. She's not worth anything much.

C28: Yes. She's selfish, self-centered, arrogant, wants things for herself. I guess she comes through sometimes, but not really, not often, it's rare.

T28: You are sort of ashamed of that selfish, arrogant and miserable person that's inside.

C29: Yes.

T29: Even though sometimes she pokes her way out through the fence.

C30: Yes. But then I feel even more ashamed and push her way back down and push her back inside.

T30: Mhmm, mhmm. Terrible. Mhmm, mhmm.

C31: Yeah, it's like I need to (Pause 7 seconds) I need to experience that part of me . . .

T31: Mhmm, mhmm.

C32: ...'cause it's unknown.

T32: Mhmm, mhmm.

C33: It's just a, a sort of vague feeling.

T33: You would really like to experience that sort of selfish. . .

C34: Mhmm, mhmm.

T34: ... greedy, arrogant person; get to know her.

C35: As you say that I think, "Oh no. I don't want to know her."

T35: She doesn't want that.

C36: Yeah. (Client laughs) Yeah.

T36: Stay away from me.

C37: Yeah. Yeah. I don't want to know you. Go away. I have to be good. I have to be kind. I have to care. I have to give. I haven't got to be any of that person that's not nice and kind and caring and giving and never takes from anybody else but always continues giving, giving, giving.

T37: So that's the person you have to be. you can't get acquainted with this selfish, worthless person.

C38: No. I just . . .

T38: Somehow that would be frightening.

C39: Yes. I guess it does frighten me. Yes. It does frighten me. It's like, like the dark side of me.

T39: Mhmmm, mhmmm. "I don't want to look at that dark side."

C40: No. I turn my back on it all the time, but I know it's there and it keeps sort of prodding me, saying, "I'm still here."

T40: You may not want to be in touch with it but it keeps telling you, "I'm still here."

C41: Yes.

T41: "And don't you forget it."

C42: Yeah. Exactly.

T42: It sort of won't let you alone.

C43: No. It won't. No. It sort of turns on . . .

T43: Mhmm, mhmm. Mhmm, mhmm.

C44: You know?

T44: You can't shake it off.

C45: No. When I try to uh . . . to care; it's like it's there clinging on, saying, "You know, I'm still here, what about me?"

T45: When you are caring for somebody else, it nags away at you.

C46: Yes. It's clawing at me, it's pulling me. It's after me.

T46: Clawing at you.

C47: Yeah. So I sometimes wonder whether I really do care, at all, about anybody whether I'm capable of caring about anybody.

T47: Maybe, "that person inside keeps me from really caring about anybody."

C48: Yeah. I guess so. But I don't know what to do about that. I don't know how to integrate it, how to make it whole, how to accept that, that person inside of me.

T48: How could you possibly accept that, that kind of miserable person?

C49: (Client coughs) I can't. I can't accept that miserable person. I don't like that part of me. I guess I don't like it so I try to push it away, try to reject it and force it down and push it further and further and deeper and deeper inside.

T49: "It's not a part of me. I won't have anything to do with it," and still, it claws at you.

C50: Yeah. It keeps coming back and clawing, yeah. Mhm, Mhmm. Pulling me, pulling me down. Yeah. Sometimes it makes me feel, sometimes it does pull me down. It depresses me and I end up feeling really, really low, depressed and I don't want to talk to anybody. I don't want to see anybody. I just want to be left alone and sort of like, leave me with my misery and sadness and I don't want that.

T50: "Don't come in because I'm alone with this dark part of me and I don't want anybody..."

C51: Yeah.

T51: "... in touch with me." You're also saying, "I can't possibly accept that miserable person. How can I accept someone who is . . ."

C52: I can't understand that because I accept misery from other people all the time. If I can't accept my own, how can I really accept theirs, I guess?

T52: So if somebody else says I'm greedy and selfish and arrogant, "I could accept that."

C53: Yeah.

T53: Sure.

C54: Yeah, sure. I would say that's okay. It's okay to be like that. We're all like that. But I don't accept mine.

T54: You seem to be a good counselor for somebody else.

C55: But not for me.

T55: But not for you.

C56: No. No. I have . . . yeah, I have to sort that out, because I don't think I'm genuine in saying, "That's okay. You can be like that." If I don't accept that in me I have to...

T56: There's something wrong with that.

C57: Yeah. It's a mis-match.

T57: Mhmm, mhmm. "How can it be that I can say, 'it's okay to be selfish,' I understand that, like everybody." And then, "But I can't possibly accept that I'm like that."

C58: (Quietly) Yeah.

T58: If someone, it strikes me you're so much harder on yourself than you would be on a client.

C59: (Quietly) I am.

T59: Much more judgmental.

C60: (Quietly) Yes. Yes.

T60: That you can be a miserable person.

C61: Yeah.

T61: "Selfish, greedy and arrogant and clawing at me."

C62: You need stamping on.

T62: That's right. "Stay down there, take a deeper place."

C63: "Yeah, you're a naughty girl."

T63: Uh, huh. Uh, huh.

C64: "You're naughty. You should not be here."

T64: "I don't have any place in my life for a naughty girl."

C65: Mhm, mhm m. I have learnt to be good and kind and gentle and giving and I don't want you in my life.

T65: "Quit sticking around."

C66: Yeah. Yeah.

T66: "Quit hanging around."

C67: Yeah. "Leave me alone."

T67: "Go away."

C68: Well, I guess if it did, I would lose something. I wouldn't understand that. In other people, I guess I wouldn't understand that when they are like that, selfish and . . .

T68: So it's that part of you that helps you to understand the misery and the selfishness and the arrogance in somebody else.

C69: Yeah. But I don't show mine. That's okay.

T69: Nevertheless, it's a precious part of you because it helps you understand others. It sounds like that's what you're saying.

C70: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yes, it's like I can only really understand others when I'm in touch with that part of me as well. And. . . well, I suppose if I get rid of it, if I push it out then I can't get in touch with it. So how can I get in touch with it in other people?

T70: You realize that if you could put it away entirely, that would be a real loss for you.

C71: Yeah. I think it would?

T71: So in some sort of crazy way, you do value it in yourself because it makes possible being helpful to other people.

C72: Mhmm . . . I never realized that before. I never realized I needed it. I thought it...

T72: That you were better off without it.

C73: Mhmm.

T73: Then you realize . . .

C74: Something I had to grow out of and I had to grow and to be more caring and more kind and more good.

T74: Now suddenly you realize that, "I need that person."

C75: Because if I haven't got it, I can't be. I can't be caring and good and . . .

T75: It's pretty helpful.

C76: ... Mhmm. (Pause 25 seconds)

T76: Mhmm. "That sort of hits me."

C77: Yes. It's sort of saying, "How do I," I mean if I need it, I've got to stop abusing it.

T77: Uh huh, uh huh. If you need it you've got to stop hitting it.

C78: Yes. I've got to start . . . caring for it as well.

T78: It's hard to say that, but you realize, "If I need it, I've got to start caring for that naughty little girl."

C79: Yes. I guess that's going to be hard to do.

T79: Uh huh. Hard to say it, but even harder to do.

C80: Yeah. Mhmm. Yes because it means I have to make demands on people.

T80: Mhm, mhmm. Mhm, mhmm.

C81: I've got to say, "No."

T81: You would have to say, "Make room for all of me, not just my good caring, helpful, kind generous self."

C82: Yeah. Yeah. I've got to start saying to people, "Look. I'm shitty as well." You know take that as well, not just, look I have to start saying, "I'm not going to listen to you right now."

T82: Mhm, mhmm. Mhm, mhmm.

C83: I have to break, I have to break into conversations when someone is talking to me and they start telling me their problems even though I'm with them socially, 'cause that always happens to me, I, I have to start sort of changing the subject or something and doing something or saying, "I don't want to hear this right now."

T83: Yeah. You'd just be tough enough to say, "I'm not ready to listen to you now. I don't want to listen to you now."

C84: Yeah.

T84: "I need the time to myself," or, "I need something different for myself."

C85: Yeah. Yeah.

T85: Wow.

C86: Oooo.

T86: "Who me?"

C87: Yeah. (Client laughs) It's a bit scary.

T87: It is scary.

C88: Mhmm. I guess it could go two ways. I guess I could affirm that in me when I've done it, or I guess I could feel guilty and (Client coughs) start pushing back down again and that's my choice.

T88: Mhmmm, mhmmm. Suppose I told somebody, 'No. I can't listen to you now,' then I could feel very guilty about that. 'Oh, I'm not a helping person. I'm not a good person,' or you could feel, 'Oh, that's okay. That's human.'

C89: M hm mn mhm m. I guess it's more me as well to say that.

T89: It's what?

C90: More me . . .

T90: Mhmm mhmmm. Mhmmm mhmmm.

C91: ... To say, to say that even if it hurts them.

T91: Mhmm, Mhmmm.

C92: It's still more me.

T92: It would be more you if you said that, than to pretend, "Oh yes. I'm always feeling I don't want to."

C93: Mhmmm, mhmm. Yeah. And I've done that lots of times.

T93: You have.

C94: Lots and lots of times . . . yeah. Now I guess I've got to go home and practice.

(Audience laughs)

T94: It's quite a job, isn't it?

C95: Mhmmm, mhmm. It's not going to be easy. Yeah. It's not going to be easy. I've got to start letting more of me through.

T95: Mhmmm, mhmmm. You need to open up that fence or something and let more of you come out. Even that shitty person, that no good naughty little girl; find a place for her. So it comes into mind. Maybe you should adopt her. (Audience laughs)
Sounds like it's your homeless waif.

C96: Yeah. Yeah. I feel like almost like giving birth to her. (Pause 8 seconds) Yes, but she sort of is homeless.

T96: She's what?

C97: She is homeless.

T97: Homeless, mhmmm, mhmm. That's right.

C98: Sort of wandering down the other side with no real place to go.

T98: She hasn't got any real secure home at all.

C99: (Very quietly) No. She hasn't. Yeah, mhmmm, she didn't when she was little and she still hasn't.

T99: Mhmm, mhmmm.

C100: And it's got to be in me somehow.

T100: Mhmm, mhmmm.

C101: It's like, yeah. I knew her when I was little. She was there. I was there with her. In fact, I wasn't good and caring and nice then. I was just her.

T101: Mhmmm, mhmmm.

C102: But now she's left wandering round somewhere and I've left her out and I ought to take care of her because she's my history. She's my background.

T102: Mhmmm mhmmm. She's you.

C103: Yeah. She's me, yeah. To me she's very . . . it's the insecure little child in me, and she's about 6/7 years old, and she's still there.

T103: You used to know her and be her, yet she's become really unknown.

C104: She's not known now.

T104: A little girl without a home. You're not known, you're not accepted, you're not loved.

C105: Yeah. She's sort of . . . (Pause 13 seconds) she's the little girl that has put up the, she want's to put up the shell . . . shell to protect herself.

T105: Uh, huh. She needed to have some protection that she wouldn't be completely homeless, rejected person so she put up that shell and hides behind it.

C106: Yeah.

T106: Oh, but she needs a lot of loving.

C107: (Very quietly) I think she does. (Pause 33 seconds) Yes. I guess that's me that's saying I need a lot of loving.

T107: Mhmmm, mhmmm.

C108: But I never knew that, I thought I could do without it.

T108: I'm sorry, say it again.

C109: I didn't know that. I thought I could do without it. I didn't need love.

T109: Mhmmm.

C110: All I had to do was give it.

T110: Just give, give, give.

C111: And like if I give, give, give, then maybe somebody will give me some back.

T111: Now you realize that it's got to start with you. It's got to start with you loving that little girl.

C112: I've got to love me before I can . . .

T112: Before your love means very much to somebody else.

C113: Yeah. Before I can really love anybody else, I have to love me. It's like, Oh, I've said that before. I've said it to people and it's like a theory when I say it, but to actually...

T113: There's nothing new about it, except in your gut.

C114: Yeah. Yeah. It's like I'm feeling that. I've never felt that before.

T114: You've said it, you've heard it, but to feel, "I really need to love myself in order to love somebody else!" You really feel that in you, that's new.

C115: Yeah. It is that, I've got to start liking me.

T115: Mhmmm. Mhmmm.

C116: I've got to start giving my nice self . . . something of me.

T116: You've got to be this caring, giving person, but now you want to be this caring, giving person with you.

C117: Yeah. I want to take care of that child, as if she was one of my own children. Oh, I'm going to protect her, I need to protect her.

T117: You say as if she were one of your children, it seems to me she is your child.

C118: She is, yeah.

T118: She is your own child.

C119: Yeah, she's my first born.

T119: That's right.

C120: Yeah.

T120: And she's led a kind of sad existence and needs to be . . .

C121: Oh. Yeah. Yeah. Ever since she was about 7. You know I sort of felt like isolated and cut off and not really as if anybody ever really knew who I was and wanted to know who I was, so . . . there are sometimes people who didn't want to know and it hurt so I started protecting I guess and building up layers.

T121: Put her away and became the sort of person you wanted, a nice, giving, generous, lovely person.

C122: And then everybody would like me. Yeah, if I was good and kind and generous and smiled then people would like me they would . . . it's like banging . . .

T122: Mhmmm, mhmmm.

C123: And I can't do that. People have to learn, they have to accept me as I am.

T123: They are going to have to accept all of you. That you're a little girl and some of your selfishness, oh . . .

C124: Yeah. I think that some of the . . . yeah, may be then some of the sadness will leave that little girl.

T124: Uh, huh.

C125: Because she's very, very sad, you know like nobody, nobody loves her. That's how she feels.

T125: That's right.

C126: She knows that that's not true but she feels that nobody loves her.

T126: It sounds as if nobody had loved her.

C127: Mhmmm.

T127: But you realize, "that's what I've got to start doing."

C128: I guess. Yeah. I've got to start loving her, then maybe I might really realize that other people love her as well. Because it's always a sort of, er, they only care for me for what they can get from me. They don't really care about me. It's just what they can get, it's just that I'm always there and I have an ever-open ear. You know.

T128: But if you're a whole person maybe then they'll begin to love you, not just this generous . . .

C129: Yeah. Yeah.

T129: I think our time is almost up. You have something you want to say?

C130: I don't know, this is incredible. (Client laughs)

T130: (Laughing) It's incredible to meet you. But I'm very glad to have made the acquaintance of your little girl.

C131: I'm glad to let her out.

T131: Right, mhmmm, mhmmm.

C132: Yeah. Yeah. I think I knew I was sort of fighting to let her out but I wasn't in touch with that. I was talking to somebody last night and I was trying then to let her out.

T132: And now you've had this impulse, it's something that hasn't quite happened.

C133: Yeah. Yeah. It's not quite happened but maybe now I can go home and be my child.

T133: And take care of your personal . . .

C134: Yeah.

T134: Well certainly thank you very much.

C135: Thank you.

T135: Pleasure, and I wish you all the luck in the world as you go home and try to look after her. I think she's worth looking after.

C136: Thank you.

(Both Client and Therapist kiss)

Commentary

T1: Would you like to say anything to group about how the experience felt to you?

C1: Er, I think the word really is, exploration. It felt like an inner exploration of me. It's kind of wonderful. It's like at first I was a bit frightened. I didn't think I could do that but, it was like an unfolding. I could feel the unfolding inside but everything sort of, like, you know, defenses coming away.

T2: Like peeling an onion.

C2: Yeah. yeah. yeah. And then I sort of got scared again because I was in touch with what it was. I was in touch with that little girl and I can see her now, I could see just what she looks like and I couldn't sort of, I was scared to let her in. I guess I tried to push her out again, shove her away at first, but then I sort of, I think I let her through when you recognized her as a little girl. That's when I let her through because you'd seen her and I sort of couldn't do that before that I think she may just sort of gone and hidden in my big toe or something. But I had to sort of let her out, and sort of give her recognition and that, it felt a bit scary, bit risky, but it was okay just because she was accepted. But I felt she was being accepted by everybody, not just you. That was so good, that it wasn't just you it was I felt, everybody in the room was accepting this sort of scared little kid. It was good, I felt that you were with me all the time, even though there were times when I felt I was so, I wasn't with you. I was in me. Sort of getting in contact. But I felt you were with me all the time, sort of stayed there and didn't, you're still there, not obtrusive, not pressuring but there, ready, open and yes, sort of something wide open. It's all like that, that felt good.

T3: I know for me I felt that very quickly that I could get in tune with you, I don't know it wasn't difficult and I felt there was one time when I got a little too deep with what I said and you were frightened a little and pulled back.

C3: I don't know.

T4: But, uh . . .

C4: It might have been when I sort of, sort of, "Hang on a minute," you know, "I'm going to look after her."

T5: And then when you began to use the metaphor, you began to use metaphors particularly about this dark side of you, the shadowy side. I thought, okay it's going to be alright and then the little girl was very real to me and I, I just felt well, I felt what I often do in what I have mentioned I think, in this group. I felt a sense of awe. It really is incredible how given the opportunity a person does put aside layer after layer after layer. If this is a safe plus, acceptant relationship; and what you said, you

described what I want to be, a companion to a person, in a search I want to be there with them, not pushing ahead, not looking behind, but just be there with them where they are and I felt good about the way I did that with you. (Pause 6 seconds) I don't know how to make the transition to the large group but I think this is not the time for a lot of intellectual questions about therapy. There will be a group on client-centered therapy this afternoon but I hope maybe now the group could pick up again with its own process. I don't quite know how we go from here to there, but I do appreciate it very much, talking with you.

C5: Thank you.

T6: Let's pull back into the group.

This transcript is available for purposes of research, study and teaching. It may not be sold.

Throughout this interview the responses of the therapist (T) (Rogers), and the client (C) are numbered for easy reference.

Carl Rogers and Peterann:

Interview at Evolution of Psychotherapy Conference, Phoenix, Arizona 1985

T: Ah, I don't know, what might be of concern to you, but I'd certainly be very glad to hear.

C1: Well, uhm, my problem kinda is old and new together. I, uhm, lost a set of twins about two and a half years ago, and for me that was the first pregnancy. And working on my career and what not, I kind of put pregnancy aside, thinking, "When I'm done with my career, I'll have children." And so that first pregnancy didn't work out very well. And with my age, I'm thirty-five, now, as I'm getting older and I've been trying for two and a half years to become pregnant, and have not done so successfully, I've kind of, you know, started to feel one, like a failure, uhm, and, and I think it came from once I read a poem, and the poem said that to have a child is to have your only chance of making a miracle with God. And I never looked at it that way before, I always thought pregnancy was the pits, you were fat, you were ugly, and I didn't enjoy my pregnancy at all, and when I did start to enjoy it, that's when I lost the twins. And so now I'm upset that I can't become pregnant, and, and, but right now at this very minute I could be. And that's scary to me, too.

T1: But it's really a sort of a double problem, that you would like pregnancy to be something you would enjoy, and, uh, yet when you began to enjoy it, you lost the twins. Ah, and now it really is a confusing situation, isn't it? Wanting a child very much, wanting that miracle, yet not being sure.

C2: Well, I think I'm sure that I want that, (T: OK.) I'm, I'm more afraid that if I am pregnant this very minute, that there's loss down the road.

T2: Ah, that's where the past comes in.

C3: Right.

T3: It might end in tragedy again.

C4: Right. (T: Uhm, hmm.) And it's, it's one of those points now where every month I wait to see if I'm pregnant and every month I'm disapp-, disappointed.

- T4: Uhm, hmm, so it's a recurring issue.
- C5: Right. It never seems to get any better. And I don't, I don't really discuss it with anybody. I don't talk to my husband about it because he has the pain from the past as well.
- T5: Uhm, hmm, uhm, hmm, so it's something that really has been quite bound up in you. You haven't felt free to talk about it.
- C6: Right. And, and I guess I question myself in a lot of ways, too. "If I had made attempts earlier, would it have been easier?"
- T6: "Should I have laid aside my career a little earlier and tried to become pregnant?"
Uh..
- C7: Yeah, because now, I mean when most of my friends are having children and raising them, I have a job to go to, that's fine. (T: Uhm, hmm .) And it, you know, four or five years ago to me, to me, you know, I'm out in the world, I'm making money, I'm doing a good job. (T: Uhm, hmm.) But now there's a lot of things that I don't have. Nobody to leave anything to, and it's, it's a sad thing. Christmas is coming. It's probably on my mind more because uh, I would have had somebody that's two and a half. I would have had two little kids two and a half years old.
- T7: And so you're asking, "Did I make a mistake?"
- C8: Yeah (T: Uhm, hmm.) You know, that's, I guess that's, that's a scary thought to think that your whole life has been a mistake along the way. (T: Uhm, hmm.)
- T8: "Did I make a very grave error in not having made the attempt sooner?"
- C9: Right. And, and I look at it that more and more things seem to play on it., the pressure from my family. Uh, I'm an only child, so consequently my, my mother always would, always, you know, wanted to have a grandchild. Uhm, she has a terminal illness, now, and could possibly die. I mean it could go on forever, (T: Yes.) for a long time. But, you know, as if I haven't given them what they'd like, too. (T: Uhm, hmm.)
- T9: There's a lot of pressure toward, "You must have a child, you must."
- C10: Yeah. And I, but I, I guess I, .there's, I think of so many things that go on with that, with me. It's, I, I believe in "you either win or you lose", and to me right now, I've lost.
- T10: I'm not quite sure, it's just "win or lose", and you have lost?

C11: Yeah, to me, to me. I always, I, I play games. (T: Oh, I see.) I do things to win. And in the pregnancy, you know, I wanted to win, to have the child, and instead I lost. (T: Uhm, hmm.) And I don't like to play things that I can lose.

T11: So that's one game, a very important game, that you feel you've lost.

C12: Yeah.

T12: And you're the kind that likes to win.

C13: Definitely, definitely. And I, I like to make people happy, as well. And I know my husband, my parents, all of those other people would want, you know, a child, an offspring, grandchild, as well as I would like one. You know, it's, it's not like I'm just trying to do it for somebody else. I think there is that part of me that says, you know, "This is normal, this is proper, you lost twins, how can you replace, what can you do to have that?"

T13: So you'd like to not only satisfy yourself, but all these other people, too.

C14: Yeah, I think everybody would be happy in the long run, (T: Uhm, hmm.) and me especially. (T: Uhm, hmm.) Uhm, hmm.

T14: It just means a tremendous lot.

C15: Yeah. I, I don't think there's anything that, I could, if I, if I cannot have children, I guess I would have to deal with that. But I don't think there's anything I can replace that with, (T: Uhm, hmm.) I don't think. Career used to be extremely important to me, (T: Uhm, hmm.) and now that's not the ultimate thing in my life.

T15: So that if you don't have a child, that really leaves a, a terrible gap.

C 16: Uh, yeah, a very big void for me.

T 16: A big void, uhm, hmm.

C 17: Right, I, you know, I have a very loving, nice, wonderful husband, and I care about him a great deal. But there's that extra thing that we could share together. (T: Uhm, hmm.) You know, out of the love that we do have. (T: Uhm, hmm.) And somehow I feel cheated. (T: Uhm, hmm.)

T 17: You feel cheated out of something that would enrich your marriage as well as you.

C18: Yeah. And like I said, with the possibility of being pregnant right now, (T: Uhm, hmm.) there's just, it's like I don't want I don't believe I'm telling a whole crowd of

people this, but I don't really want to tell anybody because I'm afraid of, you know, of the loss. And yet it bothers me tremendously.

T 18: Yeah, yeah, yeah, no, I can understand that. That, uh, it's the kind of thing where mentioning it might, might be, superstitiously wrong or something, I mean it might, uh, . . .

C19: Well that, and I guess if I am pregnant I would like it to be, nobody knows until they can really, really tell, and that maybe it's going to last that time.

T19: Uhm, hmm . So that in many ways it's something you still want to keep to yourself. And yet find yourself telling a lot of people.

C20: Yeah. As far as, you know, as far as telling anybody my possible condition, that, that I haven't done. And I don't know, it's something I'm not going to tell my parents. I don't think I'll tell my husband for quite a while.

T20: Uhm, hmm, so it really is something highly personal and kept within, and easier to talk about with strangers than it is to people who mean a lot to you.

C21: Yeah, because people that mean a lot to me could also end up hurt again.

T21: Uhm, hmm.

C22: And..

T22: You don't want to lead them on and then...

C23: No.

T23: ...then go another tragedy.

C24: No, not like the last one.

T24: Uhm, hmm. That was very hard.

C25: And I, I don't know, maybe I should just, see what comes of it, you know. Accept if something good comes, fantastic. If something bad comes, then I'm hurt again, nobody else is.

T25: Ah... I see, uhm, hmm. If you keep it to yourself, then it it all works out, great for everybody,

C26: Right.

T26: But if it's a tragedy again, that's for you alone.

C27: Yeah.

T27: Uhm, hmm.

C28: I, I guess maybe I think that I have some guilt left over from the last time. I think whenever you, you know, even thought it was a premature birth, if you lose a child, I think you place some guilt on yourself. (T: Uhm, hmm.) And, uhm, . . . I don't know, I guess I just do, wondering if I shouldn't have done certain things and what not.

T28: Uhm, hmm. "Could I have made a difference, could I have done something differently?" Uhm, hmm.

C29: Right. (T: Uhm, hmm.) And I try to, you know, in my head say, "NO, YOU, you had a less, schedule that you usually have, you had, you were more calm, you were resting more." I say all those things to myself logically. But when you go through the loss, (T: Uhm, hmm.) and there's no answer, (T: Uhm, hmm.) then you're kind of stuck with, (T: Uhm, hmm.) "Well, I was the keeper and didn't do well."

T29: Uhm, hmm. So your mind says you were doing as well as you could possibly do, but something in you says, "Well, but, maybe, maybe you could have done something. You were the keeper, and you did lose."

C30: Yeah. And I think that's part of that, thought, is the reason that I, I still want to have the child—not only do I want one, but I want to fight back and say, "Hey," you know (T: Uhm, hmm.), "this doesn't happen to me."

T30: Uhm, hmm, "I'm a winner."

C31: Yeah. And, and see then it comes again into things like, I've always had everything I wanted, you know. I was an only child. I was probably a little spoiled. I had a job. I had a career. I've had money. I have a house. You know, I have a decent marriage. I have all the things that sometimes people make comments about, "Oh, well now she has everything." (T: Uhm, hmm.) And that one thing that I wanted, I didn't get. (T: Uhm, hmm.)

T31: So it would look as though, "Oh, you've got everything." Not quite, not the important thing you want.

C32: No, which then turns things into, or me into, being the failure aspect, not doing well, of being the failure.

T32: Yeah, yeah... uhm, hmm. So that at some level, to yourself you're a failure.

- C33: Yeah. But I suppose all I can do is keep working at it, maybe. (T: Uhm, hmm.)
'Course then there's a biological time clock. (T: Uhm, hmm.) And so not
everything is in my corner.
- T33: That's right.
- C34: And usually I can work on things or put things in perspective and do things that I
have some control, and this is something I don't have control of.
- T34: That's right. There are some things you can't manipulate, you can't control.
- C35: Nope, not this one. At least I don't see that I can.
- T35: And you're the kind of person who's accustomed to controlling things, getting
things your way.
- C36: Yes. Hasn't worked out bad so far, except for that aspect.
- T36: Uhm, hmm. In a lot of ways that's worked fine, but not here.
- C37: No, and I, I, there is no way to have the control. I mean, I don't know if it's God or
Fate or whatever, is going to make that determination, but it's out of my control,
and..
- T37: I didn't get the last..
- C38: It's out of my control. (T: Uhm, hmm.) Even though I have different kinds of
medical support that say that I'm healthy and normal and everything is fine. And,
you know, I go to a specialist at this time so I can try to make things work better.
Uh, nothing seems to be working right anyways. So, you know, then I'm back
inside my self again with, "Well, what's wrong with me? Why isn't this working?
How hard can it be?"
- T38: Uhm, hmm. That seems to be evidence to you, "There must be something wrong
with me."
- C39: Yeah. (Pause) It's nobody else's body that's not functioning correctly, it's mine. (T:
Uhm, hmm.) (Pause)
- T39: So this body of yours is something that in this respect you really can't control.
- C40: No. And I mean, I, and I do everything to even try, you know, I do everything the
doctor says. (T: Uhm, hmm.) I eat the right foods. I try to stay in halfway decent
shape so that I'm healthy. And even that, with the loss, nobody could understand

how I would lose a child being as healthy as I am. (T: Uhm, hmm.) You know, and active, and not the sickly type.

T40: That there's no reason at all for not having a child except that you don't have one.

C41: So they tell me. (T: Uhm, hmm.) But, uh, you know, no matter how logically even the doctor tells me, you know, "It's a matter of time. It's a matter of time." Something's not functioning properly. Otherwise it would be right, it would be there. (T: Uhm, hmm.)

T41: So that brings that sense of failure.

C42: To me, yes. (T: Uhm, hmm.) And I, I guess I want to succeed and I want everything that I want. (T: Uhm, hmm.) And I look at things and I say that I would give up, I'd rather give up my career to have a child. If I didn't have a house, that's fine, I could do something else. But, uh, I can't seem to, to win at that aspect.

T42: Uhm, hmm, if there were some sacrifice you could make in return for having a child, sure, you'd make it.

C43: Yeah, I would, I would. (T: Uhm, hmm.) I would do whatever had to be done. You know, and I make my vows that if I do have a child I would be the best little parent and all this good stuff, but (T: Uhm, hmm.) Which then... (C weeping).

T43: That really touches you, that you just promise to do everything right,

C44: Yeah, I do. (T: Uhm, hmm.)

T44: *If...*

C45: Yeah, if... (Pause) And, I don't know, without the, without the control, I just have to wait, I guess.

T45: But it's hard not to have the control.

C46: Yeah, if I had the control, you know, it would be done. And everything would be fine and (T: Uhm, hmm.) I'd push the clock back and I'd have a nice little family. A little boy, a little girl, everything would be perfect. (T: Uhm, hmm.)

T46: Hmm, that sounds as though there's some grieving over what might have been.

C47: Well, I, I think there is to a degree, I don't think that, I think that I dealt with that loss fairly well. That, you know, it's not something that I totally dwell on. And yet, with the thought of a pregnancy there's the thought of what happened. Um, with the thought of Christmas there's always the thought of that we visit the grave. (T:

Uhm, hmm.) And yet all those things, all those things come up. (T: Uhm, hmm.)
And it creates some sad feelings.

T47: That tragedy keeps being lived over again.

C48: Yeah.

T48: Especially perhaps at this season.

C49: Yeah.

T49: So the grief is still there.

C50: Well, the grie-, I think the grief comes and goes. (T: Uhm, hmm.) You know, there are some times that are fine, that, (T: Uhm, hmm.) that it's very rational and logical to me. And then there's other times to me that, depending on where I am and whom I'm with and what's about and what children are there, you know, things pass through my mind.

T50: It can hit you.

C51: It does, it comes and goes. (T: Uhm, hmm.) (22 Second Pause) I have to say that you've made it easy to talk about this stuff.

T51: Mm, sorry?

C52: You've made it easy to talk about this. Somehow I get the feeling that you, uh, you know I don't think you can understa-, I mean I don't think you can feel, that same feeling, but I think that you can be empathetic with the situation.

T52: You know I can't feel it in my body what you feel in yours, but at least I have made it easier for you.

C53: Yes, and just, you know, thinking about it in respect to my control and I guess I've come to my own decision or conclusion that I've got to kind of just sit and wait and let what happens happen. (T: Uhm, hmm.) But. . .

T53: "But I realize I really can't control this. As much as I'm accustomed to controlling, much as I'd like to be able to control it, I cannot control this."

C54: No, no matter hard I try. I can make the best efforts, but I can't control it completely. (T: Uhm, hmm.) And yet that doesn't mean that I don't still don't feel like I've made some failure along the way. (T: Uhm, hmm.) You know?

T54: You say that doesn't keep you from feeling something of a failure.

C55: Yeah, I m-, I mean I c-, I can, I can rationalize and say, (T: Uhm, hmm.) "I can't control, there's nothing I can do about it, that's the way it's meant to be." And yet, down in here [places her hand on her chest/heart] it still feel like, "Well, there's something you could've done, " (T: Uhm, hmm.) "or should do," or whatever. [Strokes her chest with her thumb]

T55: "In some sense I've failed."

C56: Yeah, maybe not me, exactly (T: Uhm, hmm.) (Pause) I don't, I don't... [Continues stroking her chest.]

T56: Maybe not you.

C57: No, not me exactly, I mean I'm not totally responsible, you know. (T: Uhm, hmm.) I didn't have the control..... [Continues stroking.]

T57: "I did what I could do so I'm not the failure, that isn't it exactly."

C58: Well, I, I kno-, I, I guess I know I'm not exactly a failure, but there's still that feeling inside me that says that something else could have been done. A, and maybe... [Continues stroking and sometimes patting her chest.]

T58: Almost a bodily feeling, isn't it?

C59: Yeah, because it's not a thinking thing. (T: Uhm, hmm.) You know, because I realized that. (T: Uhm, hmm.)

T59: But something in you says something might have been done.

C60: Yeah, I, I maybe it's the loss feeling. You know, maybe it's something that says, "I don't have this and I still want it." (T: Uhm, hmm.) And so it's failure of not being able to fulfill that. (T: Uhm, hmm.)

T60: Feeling that you're not really fulfilled.

C61: Yeah, not complete.

T61: Sounds like a real sadness you carry around with you.

C62: I think it's a sadness, and yet I think sometimes it, it helps me in some of the things that I have to do, (T: Uhm, hmm.) and some of the things I do.

T62: Uhm, hmm. Uhm, hmm.. Are you saying in some ways this made you stronger or more able to meet life?

C63: Yeah, I think, um, through all the things I've gone through, even with the relationship with my husband. I think through that episode that we shared there was a lot of strength, (T: Uhm, hmm.) between the two. (T: Uhm, hmm.) And even though there has not been a lot of discussion, you know, (T: Uhm, hmm.) as far as how we felt in relation to the loss, I saw a side of my husband I had never seen before, (T: Uhm, hmm.) which showed me a great strength in him.

T63: Uhm, hmm. So that in spite of the grief and the loss, some good things emerged from it.

C64: Oh, definitely. (T: Uhm, hmm.) If anybody can say something good came from that, (T: Yeah.) I think the, the love and the strength are, are good. (T: Uhm, hmm.) I guess I would like to complete that, though.

T64: I'm sorry?

C65: I'd like to complete that, though, (T: Yeah, yeah) by being able to give him a child.

T65: That's a very deep wish.

C66: Yeah.

T66: I see that our time is almost up, is there anything more that you want to say?

C67: No, just that I appreciated talking with you.

T67: OK, thank you.

C68: Thank you.

Commentary

T1: Hold it. You, because they may want to ask you questions as well as me. Um, after we've, uh, when we've sat here for just a minute, uh, possibly you'd be willing to think back and say how the interview seemed to you and I'll say how it seemed to me. And maybe we could let them in and let them ask questions of us. Would that be okay? (C: Sure.) And can, uh, maybe Ruth can join us too and we can all take part. Do you want to say how the interview seemed to you?

C1: When I first came up here I felt very, very tight and I know that I cross my legs a lot when I sit. Somebody may interpret that as closed. I think this is just comfortable for me. I know that after we took the minute to kind of get a little composure I felt a lot better. And then as we started to talk, just your facial expression and some of the things that you repeated back to me made me understand some of the things that I was feeling and saying, as well as, I think I became more comfortable because I remember, I remember touching my chest (C laughs.) when I was talking about my feelings. And it wasn't an angry touching or an upset. It was kind of warm and soft. (T: Mhm, mhm.) I felt that way. Um, and I guess the only thing else that I could say is that as I think about it now, and since I teach at a university level about you and some of my students always wonder how, you know, where do you move and how do you go with just "Uh-huh" and moving on. (Audience laughs.) Um, I found it very easy to want to talk with you. I, I didn't feel like I had to prove myself, that you had any judgmental type of attitudes towards me. And I felt very comfortable.

T2: Okay. I think, uh, as far as I'm concerned I felt, um, a little clumsy at first in getting into your world. But then I began to feel more and more comfortably there as though I really did understand. And, um, I don't know. There was a feeling of being really privileged to, uh, enter into your sense of loss and what you'd been through, and your hopes, your characteristic of being the one in control and that here you'd run

into something you couldn't control. And, uh, I too was moved. And that, I'm not sure I know all the significance, but your putting your hand on your chest was, uh, it was as though your body was speaking and I was trying to hear that. Uh, I felt that, uh, in terms of, uh, movement, uh, yes, there was some movement, not, not fantastic but, uh, it was, it was a half hour of exploration. That's what it seemed like to me and of getting into different aspects of it. And I felt, uh, I felt good about the relationship. One thing, too, because they have turned down the houselights so, we were just alone for me. There just was no one there. And, uh, I felt very comfortable in the relationship.

Discussion

T1: Ruth, do you have any comments you want to make? Then we'll open it up to the audience.

Ruth 1: There were things which seemed important to me. The silence, (T: Mhm) um, the way in which Peter Ann, uh, was silent. But it seemed to be a working silence. Twice I felt that cause she came to something different at the end of the silence. (T: Mhm) And, uh, it was not interrupted. (T: Mhm) I don't know whether Peter Ann felt that or not.

C1: I know that when the silence occurred I know that I was kind of trying to think and feel what was going on with me and so, (T: Hm.) I guess I was trying to draw some kind of closure to where we had been, find what I had touched upon.

Ruth 2: Get more, uh, familiar and more comfortable with the, your own feelings at that time. (C: Yes.)

T2: Mhm. Yes, I felt those were definitely your silences and that you were quite obviously working during the silent, during the silences.

C2: I think part of the time I was looking into your face and looking into your eyes to see what I was getting from you. I think that helped me as well to come to some decisions or conclusions based on the niceness that I saw coming back. (T: Hm.)

Ruth 3: I think I, I have a question, Peter Ann, if you are willing. Um, it seemed two or three times you came around to that this is a real loss and there was something wrong and somehow you'd failed, um, and yet another time "It wasn't all my fault." But

there was something wrong and, um, I was sensing for myself some feeling of angry about the loss and not being able to do anything about it. Was that off the track?

C3: No. There's definitely, there's definitely some anger that I can't control that situation or that I could not control at the time. But I think there's always the guilt, if there was, if the doctor could say you lost the twins because... that would be acceptable. They can't give me an answer, you know. It was just a premature birth and so you're kind of left without any answer. So with that I think I have feelings of maybe I shouldn't have washed the dishes or maybe I shouldn't have swept the floor. But I don't know the answer. (T: Mhm.) And so I think that's something that's gonna be out there forever unclear.

T3: Mhm. Now, if you'll turn up the house lights some we can get questions from the audience. (pause) I don't know that I can see well enough to really select people but if you'd come to the center microphone... If you do have questions, at one of the center microphones. And you can ask questions of me or of, of Peterann or just make comments. Whatever.

Woman A: (faintly – mic not turned on) Can you hear me?

T4: Turn on the center mics, please.

Woman A: There it is.

T5: Okay. Try it again.

Woman A: Peterann, this was a question for you, um, and Carl, maybe you can comment on it. As I watched the interview I had a sense that as you started out you were at one level of talking about your experiences in the moment, of your fears about being

pregnant, um, and, the excitement and both the fear about that and as the interview progressed, um, my sense was that you went from a stance where you were more, earlier on you felt, you were blaming yourself, and calling yourself a failure. And I noticed or I felt that during, toward the end of the interview you seemed to be more able to entertain the notion that something was wrong. And that it was not necessarily you who were wrong. And to me that felt like one of those maybe not so miniscule changes that someone was commenting about early on in the therapy. And I was wondering if you would make some comments to that.

C4: The, you want me to make comments to the feeling...

Woman A: That, did you feel that was an accurate perception or did you see a change from the beginning to the end?

C5: I, I think I saw a change from the beginning to the end to... I started out with my narrow scope of that I had a loss (Woman A: Mhm.) and then I think there are so many more things that play on that that I saw myself changing to not only the loss aspect but all these other things that affect me (Woman A: Mhm.) in relation to the loss. And, yes, I don't think that it is my fault, (Woman A: Mhm.) you know. And I think I, I tend to blame myself. I do and I'm not sure that I'll ever get over blaming myself. And yet at this very moment I realize more and more that it's, there's nothing I can do about that.

Woman A: I guess I felt the shift from blame to loss during the course of the interview. (C nods.)

T6: I, I was impressed too if I can comment on that, when you, when you, uh, said toward the end, when I said, "You're a failure." And you said, "No, not me exactly." That was a, that was very impressive because I felt you were realizing, "No, it was a

limited, limited part that, your part in it, as far as any possible blame was very, very limited, in that it wasn't a failure of you.

Man A: Um, I have been a little puzzled by the remark you made, uh, uh, Peterann to Carl Rogers, about him being not empathetic. Uh, and I think I understood that and, uh, Mr. Rogers you tried to clarify that by saying, "I did not understand, I'm not understanding with my body what you are feeling in your body. But I don't think Peterann was talking about your body as being different. I think she was talking, she was just strictly saying that you were not really understanding what she was feeling. (T turns to C.) (C: And I...) I'm sorry. I'm going to be very presumptuous, uh. And I hope you'll forgive me for doing so. But I think what you were saying, Peterann, is that you made a decision years ago to have a career rather than have children. And now you're thirty-five and your biological clock is ticking away. And the guilt you're feeling, I think, is about having made that decision and there's nothing you can do. You are willing to trade anything you have to not have made that decision. But you made that decision years ago and you don't know what to do. The doctors, if the doctor is telling you, you know, you lost your babies for this or that, uh, you're looking for an answer, and in fact you have the answer.

T7: (Turning toward C) Do you have any, do you have any comments you want to make or not?

C6: Yeah, I'll make a couple. One, when I made the comment to Dr. Rogers, I think I was, I was coming from a point of thinking that, and this is (Laughs.), and this is gonna sound terrible and sexist, but this is a woman's loss, that you could not, you know, understand that aspect. And not, and it wasn't that I didn't think you were empathetic with me, but that kind of a feeling. The other aspect about feeling guilty about my career, definitely I feel that way to a degree and I know that, and yet, um, if I had it to do all over again (Man A: Would you?) knowing what I know now I

might change it. (Man A: Would you?) Knowing what I know now, I might change it. (Man A: Right.) But I'm not positive that I would. Because what I have gained and what I *am* is important to me. It's just not as important at this point because what I want I can't have. And I think that's what draws it out in me the most is that now I want this and can't have it. And so yes, I'm angry that I did this. But I'm not sure I would change that.

Man A: Okay. You were angry that you did this and I think that decision you did years ago was a decision about what comes to my mind as a selfish decision. And when now you would like (Audience: Ohhhh!) I'm sorry! (Audience: Boo!) All right, all right. (Audience laughs.)

T8: I think what they're, I think what the audience is reacting to is the finality of your judgment about this. As though here is the real truth. (Audience claps loudly and hoots.)

Man A: Well, I think from confronting some part of our decisions, and I'm not saying that the decision you made was wrong. I'm not saying that at all. But I think by facing those, th, th, this, th, the fact that you made some decision years ago, um, anyway, there's nothing much I can say.

T9: I think that most of what you've said she already said in her, in her interview. (Man A: Yes.) But then when you sum it up in a very final way as though "here it is," that, I think maybe it's the tone of voice that rubs people a little the wrong way. (Man A: Maybe. I'm sorry.)

C7: (Audience laughs.) And I guess I look at it that he's entitled to his opinion. I would give him that much. (Audience laughs.) (Woman B: I was...) No! (Smiling and

laughing) I didn't mean that nasty. (T chuckles) I mean I could understand his side.
(Woman B: I was...)

T10: Also, also, I was glad that I really did understand when you were saying, "Yes, it was, it was a woman's problem." I couldn't full understand it no matter what, just from a physiological point of view.

Woman B: I was very struck that, uh, most of the time, Dr. Rogers, the words that you used when you talked back to Peterann were her words. And I was thinking about the way I do therapy where I often change the words or say something different. And the feeling that I began to get was that, that was a very effective way of tuning in to you, Peterann, in terms of just that flow of real positive energy and love between you, because you were hearing very explicitly the same things that you had said, said in a very sympathetic and loving way. When you talked about Dr. Rogers looking you, or you looking at his eyes and his face and experiencing and that kind of feeling. I certainly experienced that in the audience as well. So, I guess, my question really was for you, Peterann, is what that felt like for you to hear your words coming back to you and not something in addition, particularly during the first part of the interview.

C8: I used to always think that would be frustrating, but in that experience I think it made things clear, and it pointed out to me what I was thinking and feeling and saying. That maybe sometimes I speak and don't really think what I say. And it helped me to understand.

Woman B: Thank you.

T11: One thing I would say on that is that you're quite right, there was more of that at the first of the interview and had we gone on to other interviews, probably I, I

would have used less of her words. It would have been more catching the underlying feeling, some of that was beginning to go on. Um, I've, my, my intent in the interview was to really be a companion to Peterann in her world and anyway I can get inside that world is, okay by me. And sometimes it is by, uh, repeating, uh. Sometimes it's by trying to sense the feeling that underlies the words, um. But I, but I do want to be enough of a companion to the client so that the client feels released to go forward. And, um, also, I want to make the relationship so safe that things that can't be said, can be said, and feelings that can't be experienced, can, that cannot be experienced, can be experienced in the relationship. And, uh, that is my intent, uh. We only had half an hour's worth, so, uh, only to some degree was that, uh, could that be achieved.

Man B: Dr. Rogers, um, it seems to me that, that when I heard Virginia Satir speak this morning, that and later on, her and Ms Rossi [or Mr.?], and now you, that all of you are making reference to kind of a physically experiencing self that somehow's separate from the intellect, and that, um, the intellect and this physically experiencing self aren't as close of friends as they might be. Um. Now we all know that, that we spend small fortunes and many many hours developing that kind of intellectual self, um. Could you speak to the development of that physical experiencing self?

T12: Well, let me say first that I think you're quite right. That uh, our intellectual processes often go off in one direction and our experiences in another. And there were one or two, small examples of that in this, where your mind was telling her you're not guilty, for example, and yet you experience guilt. Uh. I think that, um, our educational institutions do a great deal to help us develop persons who, uh, are guided by intellect and rational thought and so on and who often get further and further from the actual things that they are experiencing and it is that gap which makes for a great deal of, uh, psychological difficulty and maladjustment. Um, I, I think there is no fundamental reason why we couldn't be educated to trust our

experience as well as our intellect. But unfortunately, uh, that's not often the case. And many of us grew up to trust the intellect and the rational and the reasoning and get quite out of touch with what we're actually experiencing, so that, uh, yes, I do feel that's an important thing And is, and something that probably ties together a great many rather different therapeutic points of view. Which reminds me of one other thing I want to say about my style in responding to a client. I'm not saying that's the way you should respond. Uh, I feel that, uh, each person has to develop their own mode of therapy, uh. My feeling is if you, well, I'll, I'll put it very specifically. If you record your interviews and study them later, you will find things that you do that are very helpful and perhaps they're very specific to you. And you'll also find things that you do that really don't seem to advance the process at all, uh, and that perhaps get in the way of it. And those you can drop. So that I'm not talking about just doing what you feel like doing. But after carefully studying what you do, then gradually developing your own way of being with another person which is helpful. And that I think is, uh, I don't, I don't ask anybody to do what I do. I do it because that's good, that's the way I found to be helpful to people. Your way may, might be different. But examine what you do so as to make sure that what you are doing is helpful and not unhelpful.

Man C: At, at some point, uh... (Audience applause.) At some point along the interview there seemed to be a, and it was exciting to me to hear, uh, that sort of a change of valence whereby this tragic event began to take on some positive aspects. I think Peterann mentioned that she saw a different side of her husband, uh, a sense of strength. And I was just wondering how each of you experienced that. Whether there was anything in either of your experiences that antedated that change, and, and, was there any selectivity in how you were reflecting back the information that Peterann was giving you. (T and C gesture back and forth in askance about who'd like to respond first.)

C9: Uh, my comment would be that I, I believe we were talking about the failure aspect. And we were talking about the loss and it came to me as it did then and does periodically that there was some very good moments even though it was tragic. And that makes me feel good. That may have even been when I put my hand on my chest. I'm not sure, it may have been in the same area. But there are some very good points of thought and, I guess I'm not sure how we got there except I think we were talking about the failure aspect and I think, I, I'm not totally a failure and that there were some good things that came from that. And I helped with those and learned some things through those.

T13: I just wouldn't be sure at this moment how we arrived at that point. I'd have to see the videotape or listen to the recording to, to find out. But, uh, and I, I certainly felt that shift in evaluation of it. But I wouldn't want to, um, but, but both sides were there, that is the grief and the loss and the tragedy and the fact that some good things came out of it. And I wanted to be respectful of both sides. But it is true that that positive side came out.

Woman C: I saw the interview as starting out, uh, broadening in scope as it went on, becoming more exploratory and more things were dealt with. But I guess, Peterann, my concern is that you'll go on exploring, uh, the scope will broaden. Do you think that the client-centered approach will be enough to resolve your conflicts?

C10: I think that had we had more time or further interviews that we could have explored the avenues that I mentioned. I think they all play a part for me. And maybe it did seem like it broadened and yet I think those were things that I felt more safe to bring in, that this bothers me too, and so does this in relation to that. And I would hope that we would eventually deal with those and I could come to some closure on them.

Woman C: Thank you for that, but I guess my further concern would be that, you were a very vocal client. You could say what you wanted to say and you had, you had all your feelings out in the open. I have to go back to a culture in South, I have to go back to South Africa, and I know that most of the clients that I will work with won't be able to express themselves that well. Dr. Rogers, what do I do? (Audience laughter and applause)

T14: I think I can answer that very briefly, but it's not easy to put into effect. You can be very, very present to your clients. I think to be really present in the relationship is one of the keys to therapy. How you will be present, I don't know. It's quite true that Peterann was a very articulate person. Uh, but the difference between an articulate person and a silent person, uh, isn't all that great. I, I recently had occasion to go over the, uh, some of the recorded interviews that I held with a schizophrenic client in the, when we were doing our research on working with schizophrenics. And the length of some of those silences – 16 minutes of silence! My God! And yet that was a working silence and at the end of that some very important things came out. I guess I would say that the significant themes in any interview are usually very few, very few. They can be stated in a few sentences. And some people who are very silent and not articulate and nonverbal may only utter a few sentences during the time you have with them. But if you've made it a safe place, a place where they can feel free, those sentences will have real significance. The more articulate person also says a few very significant things but also gives many of the details and helps, helps us to understand the context and so on. Uh, but the difference between dealing with an inarticulate and an articulate client is not as great as it's sometimes, uh, supposed to be, in my experience.

Woman C: Thank you. (Audience claps.)

Man D: The primary thing I've come to this conference looking for is, uh, commonalities between one practitioner and another. And I think I, uh, saw those, saw one of those today. In the hour before this, I sat in with, uh, Dr. Ernest Rossi talking about hypnotherapy and he emphasized there, uh, the minute rapport between a therapist and client. Uh, I saw you doing it, uh, very much in tune. I, I want to use a word larger than empathy. Uh, empathy seems to me to relate to the content and the emotion. What I saw was in, in your very, uh, physical processes. I sensed an exquisite sense of timing and skill that, uh, that I don't do in sessions when I am nervous. That I didn't do when I was less experienced. Uh, it seems to me that perhaps what you do well is something that hypnotherapists have put under the microscope and talked about. Um, have you ever thought of yourself as doing something very much like hypnotherapy? Have you ever analyzed in that when you talk about analyzing the minute moment to moment fluctuations? Are you aware of your sense of timing, of your respect for her, uh, broken eye contact while she's thinking and you, uh, you recognize it. I don't know this in any Rogerian therapy I've ever been taught.

T15: I guess I would say that, uh, I've come to place a larger and larger emphasis on the intuitive aspect of the relationship. I don't know that that was, uh, you feel you saw some of that here. I'm not sure, uh. But I, I do feel that, uh, that is one commonality that I share with, uh, the work of Erickson, for example. Uh, I, I am not one who pays attention to things like you said the broken eye contact and so on. Uh, I'm sure I take account of that at some intuitive level. But no, that's not something I think about and I'm not sure that it's helpful to think about it. People might differ on that. Uh, at any rate, I, uh, I appreciate your comment and I applaud your search for finding some of the commonalities because I think there are commonalities between different therapists and different therapeutic, uh, points of view.

Man E: I thought I detected throughout a large portion of the session, a, an emotional message in the shakiness of Peterann's voice. And my question to you, Dr. Rogers, is was there a specific reason why you chose to respond to her words as it was mentioned earlier. You, you responded very often in her words and you did not choose to respond to the nonverbal message that she was giving you in her shaky voice. And I wonder if there was a reason for you making that choice.

T16: I guess I responded to it in my way. I certainly noticed the shakiness in her voice which came and went. But I, I responded to it in different ways. I remember at one point saying, "That was very, very hard." And uh, uh, I was responding to the fact that, uh, she was close to some very deep emotions. I might have responded differently or perhaps better. But I was not unaware of what you're talking about. Do you have any comment on that, Peterann?

C11: Not really. Although I knew that I had tears in my eyes and I know that I had the shaky response. And yet, I felt that I was being responded to in being allowed to do those things.

T17: Perhaps one more question and then (Man E: I think it...) Is there another question?

Man F: Yes. Um, I, the picture that you get on the screen is a little different than I get when I'm looking right here. But when you were first starting and when I was looking at, uh, Peterann, I was seeing her face and, I was seeing the colors that she chose to wear and my first impression was (T looks over at C) "This is a woman in mourning." And (T smiles) I'm wondering if sometimes therapist...

C12: My luggage didn't arrive. This is what I flew in yesterday. (Audience laughs and T smiles and laughs.)

Man F: I can often be wrong with my wonderings. And I'm wondering, (Audience laughter) Dr. Rogers, if you ever have those kinds of first impressions and do you wonder out loud about them with your clients at all?

T18: I guess I'd put it more broadly. Uh, some quick impression I probably don't voice. Any persistent feeling if I'd felt for example, that, uh, uh, she was always on the verge of tears or something like that, yes, I would. And, wait a minute. Any persistent feeling in myself I would express. So that if I became concerned, or, uh, had a certain feeling, yes, I would express that to her. Uh, but, um, in wonderings of the sort that you're mentioning, I don't do much of that. Uh, that may be a loss to me, but, uh, uh, I was really, for example, to be specific, I really was not aware that, uh, when she'd begun to talk about her loss that she also was wearing dark clothing. So, I'm quite interested (laughs) to find that, well, uh, (laughs) that's due to lack of luggage, not necessarily due to lack of choice. So I think, uh, such wonderings perhaps are useful, but, uh, they can be overdone. I think perhaps now we've talked enough about the interview and I certainly appreciate, Peterann, appreciate that very much your willingness to come up. (Applause)

End of discussion.