

Transcripts of Carl Rogers' Therapy Sessions

Edited by Barbara T. Brodley and Germain Lietaer

Volume 7

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C. ROGERS - Mrs. DEM (According to Nat Raskin 1st session unlike Rogers)
First Interview
[1946-48]

T1: That's your grip.

C1: Yeah.

T2: That seems like quite a heavy load but I know you came from quite a long way.

C2: Yeah.

T3: Well, if you want to come in whenever it's ...

C3: Now I don't know. Perhaps I don't have a problem at all. It is to me. I'm forty-three years old and married--very happily. Up until the past year I led a very active life, as active as the little things that mothers do. I have worked off and on through all my married life, not much, a little bit. But suddenly last year, ... not suddenly, it came on very gradually. I began to realize that my daughter'd be gone at the end of this year. My husband's very self-sufficient. He doesn't ask a lot of me. And uh ... I have friends, but uh ... I don't know. I just feel, I just feel (strong feeling) up against a stone wall. There's no future for me as I look at it now, and sometimes I get in the depths pretty bad about this thing.

T4: It sort of knocks the bottom out...

C4: It's just uh, all of my life up to this point I've been going forward. All at once I have a feeling that there I am. I have a body that's healthier than the average. I have a little grey matter, but there's nothing, I see, nothing that I can turn to that will fulfil my desire to do something. And I think that's exactly why I came here. The idea appealed to me, of the little service rendered here (very rapid flow).

T5: You've always gone forward, and now suddenly there's no ...

C5: That's right.

- T6: ... forward hmmm?
- C6: That's right. (Pause) And I've become hard to get along with. And I've lost friends. That's what's worrying me. I haven't made a friend in the past year. And I take myself entirely too seriously I know that.
- T7: That is you feel that this other business has affected your relationship with your friends and with other people.
- C7: That's it-definitely- and with my husband as well. Nothing serious, sir. But it's made me very unhappy and my husband - he's not going to undo it --- (inaudible). I'm not either because it's one of --- things that can't be.
- T8: Probably that relationship has (fades) ...
- C8: Yes, it has. I've become fanatical I think on certain things for lack of anything else to let my mind run on.
- T9: From having so few things to do you've gone too far in some directions.
- C9: I'm very opinionated. I was never that way before. And it's not physical because I talked to my doctor --- for people think at my age.
- T10: You think that in many situations this might be physical but not in yours it isn't.
- C10: And if I don't have a problem, and if you don't want to go a bit farther than this, that's all right. There is no future, maybe when you're forty-three years old you're supposed to climb on a shelf someplace and sit.
- T11: I wonder if maybe we should find out if this point ... it's not the thing you want to do.
- C11: Well (Pause)
- T12: You feel as though you ... some people might say that that's just the inevitable thing but ...
- C12: Is that it do you think?
- T13: Well I think that it's more important than what anyone thinks is the fact that you're trying to find something for yourself ...
- C13: Well I've always felt very strongly that any progress had to come from within--the precepts of the people I've associated with, and yet it just isn't there with me.
- T14: That's what you believed in and now suddenly you come to a stop in your own capacity to carry forward.

C14: Yes.

T15: Is that it?

C15: And in my better moments I see myself just as ridiculous. And yet I've been to the point where I've thought if there is no future, all right, so I'll insure my life well and get hit by a train and leave my daughter alone.

T16: You really have thought of that kind of possibility. (Pause) It isn't the kind of thing that you're happy about. Do you want to tell me some other things that you've thought about in regard to the whole business.

C16: Well I could go on ... there are some personal things ... I don't see much point to it ... That's the general picture of the thing. I don't think they give a better picture. There's just nothing there. I've never felt this way before. Here's a perfectly good body just walking around with no place to go because I can't interest myself in a lot of the little things that some women do. I'm interested in a lot of things that are really important, and yet there's no outlet for it.

T17: Your interest is there and your strength is there, but where to use it, that's what has you stumped.

C17: That's right. I would welcome hard physical work if it were satisfying. But I don't see any sense to even keep my house nicely anymore. I just give up.

T18: You feel as though there's not much purpose to that ...

C18: No. I'm thinking of letting our house go and moving into a small apartment. It's just immaterial to me. I don't care.

T19: It just doesn't seem worthwhile, is that ... uh...

C19: Yes, I don't see any future. I can't get that view of the thing. I feel that I have good active years ahead of me.

T20: You feel that certainly you're not ready to say that you're old and ready to quit ...

C20: No.

T21: What to do with the coming years ...

C21: That's right. (Pause) I'm terribly interested in world affairs, but I take a morbid view of things. I despise myself and that's why I say that I'm opinionated. I just feel so strongly that all my friends should concern themselves about conditions. And uh ... I just feel

that the only thing worthwhile is whether we're going to have another war and yet I know there's nothing I can do about that except that it's making people mad at me by telling them all what's back of things they say and do.

T22: That's an area of real interest for you. Yet you feel ...

C22: It is.

T23: The way in which you try to utilize it has made you seem opinionated.

C23: That's all there is to it. I don't mean to do it. I belong to a club and we discuss things of general interest. Not little silly things. We read good books and discuss them and that sort of thing. We discuss things and they don't all agree with me. I feel very sure that I'm right and everybody else is wrong.

T24: You feel the whole world is out of step but you and that even to you pooh-pooh at that ...

C24: That's right. My better judgement tells me it's crazy and yet at times ...

T25: Intellectually you know it's a bit ridiculous and yet you actually feel that way.

C25: That's right. (Pause) I'm interested in a lot of things. I like children and I like young people, but I have no special contacts and I don't know how to make any. Satisfying I mean.

T26: You'd like to find some outlet for your interests in younger people. But so far can't ...

C26: Yes. I talked this over with my friends and all and things they suggest are silly. (Pause)

T27: You don't like the "pat" ways that anyone has been able to point out to you so far (Pause)

C27: I've considered going away by myself and probably working at something. I'm not sure what I'd be good at, but something that would make a complete change because I can't go on with my husband this way much longer.

T28: Mhm. You thought at that time you might pull out and start somewhere else.

C28: Yes- I have no family connections other than my husband and daughter that would make a bit of difference. Maybe that's the thing for me to do, I don't know--a little bit ridiculous.

T29: At times it has a good deal of appeal and other times it seems like a silly notion.

C29: And then I'm practical minded, I realize that wouldn't be the thing to do ...

T30: You think there might be plenty of difficulties in getting established...

C30: (Pause) I don't know. If you feel that this is a waste of your time. Why it's just all right. I don't feel it's a waste of mine, in any sense. (In a hurt tone)

T31: (Words lost) but you do feel sure ...

C31: I feel sure, I think I feel sure that someone some place has an answer to all this.

T32: You feel that after all plenty of individuals have wondered what to do when their families have grown up.

C32: But I think I must be different in that respect, because I can't adjust myself the way they do. It's no use for me to join a bridge-club and take up one more day a week and go to an extra show now and then. So what?

T33: In other words it isn't just a question of filling in your time...

C33: No.

T34: ... It's deeper than that. (Pause) You're just wondering where to pick up.

C34: (Pause) Maybe there isn't anything. Maybe I should take that view of it. Well all right. It's all over.

T35: (Words lost) but as I gather, you don't feel very happy about it ...

C35: Well, I'm ashamed of myself at times. (weeping)

T36: Dissatisfied with yourself.

C36: Yes, I feel troubled right here.

T37: The trouble is in you but how to get at it, hmmm.

C37: Yes, sir.

T38: Well I think that's where, uh, talking it through may help both of us to see where the ...

C38: I hope. Do I make it clear that, me, that I seem to have ... for certain ... anything if I really felt a service that is needed.

T39: That is you really want your life to be useful.

C39: Yes. (Emphatically)

T40: You want to do most anything if you thought it was...

C40: Yes ... The money angle is secondary. It probably should be more important than I make it, but I just never lived by the dollar sign and I have no desire to start now. But that it looks like a need for something to feel that you're of use. When I wake up in the morning I can think that it does not make one bit of difference in this world whether I come to life or whether I just don't.

T41: That feeling that-uh-really it doesn't make any difference whether you exist or not.

C41: I don't feel it does. I'm conscientiously honest about it. I don't see. (Pause)

T42: That sense uselessness that really bothers you.

C42: Yes. (Pause) And I can do things. Maybe nothing well, but I can do a lot of things. I've taught school and I've done some freelance writing. There's nothing there. That's what I always thought I'd turn to when the time comes. I've always looked forward, but there's just nothing there.

T43: I'm not quite clear about that. You feel there's nothing to do ...

C43: Nothing comes. It's just all gone. I just let it go to sleep.

T44: It's within you that there's nothing there...

C44: Yes. That's what I mean.

T45: Yet you know that you have capacities and you have done things...

C45: I think I am. (Strongly) Maybe I don't know. Maybe I just think I've had a rather colourful life for a housewife up to this point, but somehow the doors are all shut behind me, and--I want to be satisfied. I can take care of tomorrow. I can take care of all next week. But I don't think it's going to get any better because it's gotten steadily worse. This whole year, and this winter and having to stay in, I just can't take it. (Voice lowers)

T46: You just feel pretty close to desperate as you look toward the long future, is that right...

C46: Yes. There are days when I'm ...

T47: You feel it's getting worse rather than better.

- C47: Oh yes! Of course there are days when I'm down and days when I'm up. This is one of the days when I'm up. I'm really forcing myself here to give you the morbid side of the picture.
- T48: You fluctuate quite a bit. But it seems there's plenty on the down side. Is that it.
- C48: Coming in here was an experience for me. I liked it. And so I have some nice days.
- T49: It really meant something looking forward to the fact that you'd be coming in.
- C49: I can find things to do, jumping from one thing to another, but that can't go on. It's too much time.
- T50: You can't fill in the whole future with an old patchwork...
- C50: That's when I think of the past it's----I always thought I was building for a happy old age and storing away nice memories and all but what happens? The things that are not nice come through. The things that I'm very unhappy about.
- T51: That is- your memories now are not of the positive things but the unpleasant angles, is that it?
- C51: I can control that somewhat, a little but still it keeps creeping up on me and I'm not sure I always can.
- T52: The unpleasant aspects magnify...
- C52: Yes, and I magnify them. They don't need to be magnified ... (Pause) but it's just ... I don't know. There's really nothing more to say. It's just because there is nothing. If I could just pour out my heart and say that my husband beats me, and a whole lot of things like that. Then I'd be getting someplace myself. But there's nothing.
- T53: Your present situation is not all bad but your feeling about the future is really the issue ...
- C53: Well, it's pretty much the present because just the time I came in here I realized right at that time that I was in a crisis with my husband. Because I'm critical and it's unfair. He isn't perfect of course. But he's probably just as perfect as he has been for all these years.
- T54: Probably he's no worse right now and why this should be a crisis right now--that troubles you ...

- C54: Yes I know that he isn't going to live with me after our daughter's gone unless there's some drastic changes. That's all right. That's with my approval because there's nothing to it to go on that way.
- T55: You feel that when your daughter leaves he'll probably ...
- C55: Yes.
- T56: ... leave you.
- C56: Yes. I suppose that there's something in me that ... there's no outlet for. I try to make people over, including him.
- T57: You feel there's something pent up in you that...
- C57: Yes.
- T58: ... can't find any other outlet and so it insists on holding him...
- C58: Yes. It isn't just him. If it were I'd have a different feeling about it. but, uh, the same thing's happening with my friends. I can see it and I'll be fair. And yet they're wrong and I'm right. (laughs) when it comes to things.
- T59: As you look at it why, uh, it looks differently, but actually you feel a drive to make them over. (Pause)
- C59: As an example of that uh I have a friend. We've been friends for twenty years I guess. Our children grew up together. We have everything in common. She's one of the sweetest people that anyone ever saw. At least I've always thought so. And she's not only sweet, she's intelligent and she's ambitious and she's really accomplished things. And she happened to be county chairman of an important department in our country. Well, I have been so unkind to her. I don't know what makes me. But I feel that there is something I can drive I think in a certain measure I have. I wonder sometimes when I think the thing over why she doesn't just uh, bang me over the head or something. And yet I have no ambition in that particular line. But I feel that she does have an influence that she isn't using and I feel that it's my duty to make her use that influence in the right direction. (With increased tempo and emphasis) (laughs) Now you can't do that.
- T60: So that even though you realize you're foolish, still you feel a drive to make her do the things she ought to be doing ...
- C60: That's right. And yet I look at all these other years, these nice years we've had together the way we saw things eye to eye and yet now---before I know it we won't be good friends anymore.

- T61: You feel you are really doing the things which cut off your friendship.
- C61: Yes, and I can't afford that, because it's been too important all my life. And that's just one. It happens to be one of the more outstanding things that I've done.
- T62: One example of your doing things that actually hurt your relationships.
- C62: Yes and you can see what that does. She and her husband are friends for all these years and there, how does my husband look at that? I can see, and that's just one instance of -----
- T63: You feel that a lot of these things are perplexing to others who see you do them ...
- C63: Not perplexing. That's not exactly the word. I think it's disgusting at times. Yes, yes, and yet I'm right. (laughter) It just seems I must have expression.
- T64: In being yourself you feel I've got to do this, this is right.
- C64: And all of my life I suppose there has been a certain amount of that drive. But it's been pretty much in the right direction in general. (Rising pitch, perplexed) And then the energy, and the follow up is used up in other lines, too--
- T65: But there's been some of that, some sort of thing, earlier but not to the point where it did all the damage it's doing.
- C65: That's right. (Low subdued tone) (Long Pause)
- T66: You've been a real problem to yourself.
- C66: Yes. (Pause) Do you think I'm different from other people or does everyone go through this and do some people-- oh I don't know what-- doesn't matter (Voice fades dejected).
- T67: You seem to think it would be nice to know whether others face the same thing or whether you're different. (Pause) Would you say what your own thinking is on that?
- C67: I just--there again, oh, what should I say. I think I have maybe a little more ambition (laughter). Now that's the height of conceit to say that and I know it.
- T68: You feel that perhaps you really have more drive than a number of other people.
- C68: Yes (Pause). I've considered everything that I know of as an outlet and it just seems nothing quite satisfies. That is, when it comes right down to it there isn't anything. I wonder what there is. I think about these things but when it comes to carrying them out it's just not there.

- T69: You've explored and thought about different things you might try but none of them satisfied. (Pause)
- C69: I hoped that there would be something you could say to straighten out my--the way I'm looking at things because there must be something wrong. There must be or maybe there isn't. Maybe it's just a matter of reconciling myself.
- T70: You think that you're looking at it wrong; that really perplexes you, somebody ought to straighten you out.
- C70: Yes. (Pause) It just doesn't make sense to me. That with my abilities such as they are there isn't someplace that they can be directed and be of use. And yet I don't really think there is such a place.
- T71: Surely there ought to be outlets for the kind of abilities you have, but you feel rather hopeless about finding these outlets.
- C71: That's right. Naturally I've exhausted my own possibilities of finding those outlets or I wouldn't be here. (with finality)
- T72: You've done about all you can as far as you're concerned in trying to find such outlets. (Pause)
- C72: I went to the doctor. I just sincerely hoped that he would say well now that's too bad there's something terrible the matter with you. You're just going to have to coddle yourself the rest of your life. But he didn't say that, by any means.
- T73: You hoped you'd find the answer from him even if it was an answer ...
- C73: That's the truth honestly.
- T74: You really would have welcomed it if he had said well now ...
- C74: That's right.
- T75: ... you can't do much more.
- C75: That's right. (Pause) But he just made fun of me. That's what I need. I didn't go into details or anything like that. I just consulted him about the physical aspects of the thing.
- T76: You were a bit disappointed that he gave you...
- C76: Yes, I was to be real honest or he might have said that at your age people think these thoughts and you may just imagine things and all. But he said wait a few years you're a young woman yet. (laughing)

- T77: You felt that he just confirmed that you had abilities and so on to use.
- C77: Yes. I didn't discuss that side of the thing at all. I just wanted to satisfy myself that there wasn't a physical reason for me feeling this way. Because when I am down, I am sick. There's no two ways about it. I get to that place and I guess these things are connected up with imagination.
- T78: When you are blue you feel you really are ill.
- C78: Oh yes! (Pause) I can't see people. I can't talk to them when I'm like that--
- T79: You really are fearful of having anything to do with people.
- C79: Yes. I know its not good judgement to. I'm not afraid of people. I'm afraid of myself.
- T80: You are afraid of the way you could react.
- C80: Yes, there's no two ways about it. I envy the way other people are. I can't see why they have so much and I have so little. I'm not talking about pocketbook now .
- T81: You wish you had the satisfaction they have.
- C81: And I've never in my life envied anyone up to this last year or two because it never bothered me. Wasn't important in my life--and I haven't envied them. Maybe I should take that--that side of it more seriously.
- T82: You felt that these attitudes are real changes in your own way of looking at things.
- C82: It's not a change. I think I would have looked at these things in exactly the same way if at eighteen years old or twenty-eight or anyplace along the line I had been as completely cut off from any sense of being of any use in the world. I don't think that-----
- T83: That is, you doubt that it has anything to do with age at this particular time ...
- C83: Yes. I don't think it does at all because just remembering my thoughts and actions at that time I'm sure I would have been just as unhappy because I have always been able to turn to something and go on from there.
- T84: If you had been cut off from satisfying action at any age you probably would have felt much the same.
- C84: Yes, I think it would have been just exactly the same. I'm sure it would because there have been times when I was more or less faced with the same thing, but there's always been something to turn to.

T85: Always before you found a channel in which you could put your energies.

C85: Yes. I lost a child and I faced a little bit of this same thing. At twenty-two, but I adjusted myself and found things to interest me and went on from there.

T86: That was a real blow but you did find a way out.

C86: It was one of these things. I thought I would never recover from. That was the feeling I had but I had to go on.

T87: You felt at the time that it had knocked all the props out but ...

C87: Exactly.

T88: ... then you were able to go forward.

C88: (Pause) At that time we moved to a different community and the change and all seemed to make it up to me. In a few more years there was the other child, and other things which pretty much stopped me. But it isn't a new feeling exactly. I've had it before ...

T89: In other words you have experienced before this feeling of being shut off from satisfactions but each time before you've been able to find a way out.

C89: I've never just folded my hands and waited for things to come to me. But there I'm envious of other people. But that again is different from me. I've never felt like that before. I've been very satisfied with my life up to this point. There again I believe I'm a little different from some people. Because the things haven't come to me. I've gone after them.

T90: You've really planfully directed yourself, to get what you want (Pause).

C90: I want you to tell me.

T91: What you'd really like is for me or someone to point the way out.

C91: Tell me if it's hopeless and I am just at an age that I do have to sit and wait while life passes me by--maybe.

T92: You feel you'd accept bad news or good news ...

C92: Yes, I have that confidence in you. That's why I'm here--if you tell me that--that's it. (With finality)

T93: Well I think that my feeling would be that uh I wouldn't know the way out for you, but I think that if we can explore this situation, there is a chance of your finding the kind of answer that you're looking for. It probably will be within yourself.

C93: I believe that.

T94: Our time is up for this morning uh, would you like to come back next Monday, or was that the next time I suggested? I don't know whether that's feasible or not or whether you want to come back.

C94: Well Friday's a much better day for me.

T95: Next Friday wouldn't be possible.

C95: Let's see about Monday. I could come in this Monday I think.

T96: You could come in Monday. Do you want to do that?

C96: Yes.

(End of First Interview)

CASE OF MRS DEM
Second Interview
(Three days later)

- T97: Well, where do you want to start in this morning?
- C97: Gosh, I wonder. I can't think of anything to ask. What I told you before ... to get into what I told you before in detail works me up to sort of an emotional jag and uh, from my point of view I don't see any particular object to it.
- T98: Uh, going into it really uh, gets you a bit upset, is that it?
- C98: It certainly does. Maybe there's some line which you'd like to pursue. I'd be glad to answer any questions if there ...
- T99: You'd be glad for me to take the lead. You feel as though you're sort of played out.
- C99: That's it. Yes.
- T100: Well, I think the thing that we've found is that a person really gets the furthest if they explore their own situations, and I don't know but ... I don't know if you wish to do that but if you do why you could talk about any angle of it that ... that you'd been thinking about or...
- C100: Well, I wish there were some angle that was outstanding that would show that was the one to pursue. But there isn't. I've gone over this in my own mind ever since I was here. And I just don't think there's much to say further. It's just that "This is the end" feeling.
- T101: Up against a stone wall kind of a sensation.
- C101: Maybe I'm being rather dreamy about this thing. I'm avoiding reality do you think ...
- T102: Did you wonder if you're avoiding reality by ... I'm not quite clear...
- C102: Well, should I get down to cases of facts more instead of abstraction.
- T103: Maybe some of the more specific aspects might uh have more to do with the case, is that it?
- C103: Well, it's possible (Pause). The things I've considered doing and haven't done. Well there's a number of things of course ... that I get out and get a job, get to work. When I went in to that, there's very little that I can do. I can't think of a thing. I've gone over the list. I know what I could earn the most money at, if I'd gotten down to that point.

But I'd hate it. And I won't do it. I just ... that's just out. And uh, I don't have the right contacts for anything I really want to do. And uh, I considered either adopting or taking some children into the home. I went as far as writing to an agency for foster children, or, uh refugee children. I don't know the first thing about it except that there just is such a thing. And I thought that might be the thing. Well, I don't know. My husband isn't especially anxious to do that although I don't think he'd oppose me if I really wanted to do it. He'd go along with me on it. But I don't know whether that's the thing or not. I've considered getting into school someplace and taking a course and preparing myself for something. Oh, I simply lack the knowledge to know - I'm hoping these tests, something will come of them that might give me a little lead along that line. Cause I don't know.

T104: You've wondered about a job, but the things you think you can earn at, you can't do. You've considered being a foster parent, and you're not quite sure how that would work out in regard to your husband.

C104: Yeah. The complication of the daughter uh, almost nineteen and then my preference would be smaller children.

T105: You're also wondering about the training but you're not sure there what direction that would take ...

C105: Yes.

T106: You really have been trying to work out what the possibilities are ...

C106: Maybe I'm being a little impatient, but I don't think so.

T107: You feel time might handle it, but you're doubtful.

C107: Yes (Pause) I know if I let myself thumb along those morbid lines that I don't seem to be able to and avoid the prospect of getting of less use all the time. I ...

T108: I know that does to a person ... just waiting and hoping that it will clear up, makes things if anything worse.

C108: I believe so. (Pause) Maybe it's childish for me to sit here and think that you're going to come forth with a recipe for the cure to all this and yet that's what's going on in my mind.

T109: That's what you'd like awfully well ... for someone to come out and say now here's the recipe and the ingredients ... and come out with a nice cake.

C109: Sure (laughter) But I know it's not that simple.

T110: You feel that really is childish and yet you can't help but feel that way.

C110: Yes. And I've talked to other people whose opinions I respect. I don't know. They don't tell me what they're thinking and that's what I'd like to know.

T111: It's been pretty hard to get advice from those you respect.

C111: Well they give advice of a kind, depending on who it is. I probably don't give them, well I don't give them all the facts. Enough that I think they could probably help me.

T112: So that you've been able to get some advice is that it ...

C112: Oh, yes.

T113: ... but actually that hasn't ...

C113: Yes.

T114: Been too ...

C114: Actually it hasn't been too hard for me to talk about it in front of people. In some instances I haven't had too good of an explanation. So I try to be objective in it and say "what would you do?" But in all these things I'm not convinced that I'm wrong, and yet I can't feel that I'm not at fault, and yet I must be.

T115: And that's where your own thinking really ...

C115: That's where I just go in a circle.

T116: Mhm. Feeling that somehow you've got an important part in what has happened, and yet feeling that that isn't so.

C116: That's it. (Pause) I've even thought of going a little deeper into religion. I'm a liberal in religion but ... I could devote myself to my church a little bit more. If somebody asked me. But there again I see myself going toward radicalism - I feel that.

T117: You're a little bit fearful that if you did give yourself somewhat more to religion you might go too far ...

C117: Yes. I read, I read a great deal and it seems that all the things along that line that I read just prove to me more that I'm right and the whole world's wrong. I'm up against that thing.

T118: Everything that you take in, just seems to, uh, prove more and more strongly that, uh, the whole world is out of step.

C118: That's right. (Pause) And yet I don't feel it as far as individuals are concerned, the people I come up against. But the general trend or something, I'm going one way and everything and everybody else is going the other way.

T119: You feel at real odds somehow with the world in general.

C119: Yes. (Pause) It isn't uh, what shall I say ... I shouldn't say the world's all wrong. Or should I? Yes, I think that's just what I think.

T120: You sort of hesitate to put it that way when it just comes down to it----

C120: I don't think it's a bad world. I don't mean by that that I've been badly treated. There's a difference there.

T121: It hasn't been bad to you, but it's wrong in its direction, is that it, and you're right. Even though you hesitate to say it a little bit to put it that way.

C121: Oh! I'd never put it that way. Oh, I have a friend and she and I think along the same line a little bit and uh, we both agree that (laughing) we're right, and as long as we can look at it that way (laughing) we don't think we're losing our minds.

T122: As long as there are two of you that are right that gives you assurance.

C122: (laughter) As long as we can laugh about it we feel that there's hope for us but is there something wrong, I don't want to treat it lightly.

T123: It bothers you.

C123: (Pause) Yes.

T124: You don't like that feeling that the whole world's wrong and you're right. But still there it is.

C124: I'm interested in politics. Deeply interested. I feel that it's all wrong. There's no party with which I can ally myself that isn't completely off the track and that I believe sincerely. They're going nowhere fast.

T125: There's another whole area in which ... you feel out of step with what is going on?

C125: Yes. (Pause) I could fall in line there and uh do things that I really enjoy. But not with sincerity and I couldn't do it any other way. I don't know if they've always been that way. I used to think of, for freedom to do the things I wanted to but have it now. It's a different picture altogether.

T126: The freedom that you used to look forward to so much you have now and it has turned sour sort of ...

C126: Yes. (Pause) I can't say that I especially wanted freedom. I never thought that I was restrained but I just didn't have the freedom to go ahead I considered running for public office and now I do and my chances are ... were very very good, and I'm not sure that they would be now. Unless I kicked over the traces with my party or something. (laughter) Maybe that is the thing I'd really enjoy.

T127: You had goals along that line and now ...

C127: Yes. In that my husband's just in complete agreement with me. He's held public office and he feels well, that he was more or less disillusioned. I didn't feel it at the time he did, at all. I just felt it was factions and perhaps he was a little bit right and a bit wrong something like that, but uh it's a different thing now.

T128: In other words, you could accept this sort of difficulty when the public office involved him but uh ...

C128: Oh, yes. It was just a good fight. At least that's the way it looked to me then, I don't know. Perhaps in a few years with experience and more general knowledge and all, there really isn't any difference there. But I don't think so.

T129: Your situation might really be the same now, but that isn't the way it looks to you ...

C129: It's possible. But I've heard too many other people think as I do along that line.

T130: You feel it really is rottener than uh, it was ...

C130: And it's in such a hopeless state. Then, I felt there was a place for honest people in politics. (Pause) But I don't know.

T131: You don't feel there is a place for the honest person.

C131: No. (Pause) That isn't important to me. It isn't a disappointment or anything like that. I don't feel it any more than it's just one of many things.

T132: It isn't as if that was any chief goal or single aim, but the same thing I take is happening there in your feelings that is happening in other areas.

C132: Yes. It's, uh, that same thing that, uh, there would be a possibility of service there. But there isn't.

T133: There isn't. There might be an outlet or a channel.

C133: Yes. If there were any possibilities at all.

T134: You feel that that is cut off too.

C134: Yes. By my own choice.

T135: Something now that you choose not to go into.

C135: Yes. But instead I go around making over my friends ... Really, oh, I don't know. It's just important to me, and I can't see why it isn't to them ... why don't they go ahead and be a part of something that really deep down I know that they don't believe in things.

T136: The alternative from these other activities has been making over your friends, and uh that produces trouble for you too.

C136: I wonder if it's even kicking back on me in that I'm making over myself too, too I'm critical of myself. Whether there's two goals there.

T137: Mhm ... it's just possible that in trying to remould your friends you're also in some deeper way very critical of yourself.

C137: Yes. Well I don't think there's any question. I am. I can see. But I must be at fault, and I must do something about it.

T138: You really feel that somehow you've got to get at yourself.

C138: Oh yes. (Pause) But I just don't have, uh, a thing to offer as to what to do about it.

T139: In other words, how to go about that remodelling job is something uh you just don't feel sure of, (Pause) you're sure of the goal but the method ...

C139: Well, I'm not sure that I'm sure of the goal.

T140: Only sure that it should be done perhaps ...

C140: Something should be done (long pause) how sure I am, the world's right and probably wrong. Now you probably know what's right about this and I don't at the present time. Coming in I realized I was late and I didn't want to lose any time ... getting off the South Shore and that I should get off at 63rd and Woodlawn but I asked the conductor and he said 53rd and Hyde Park and I think he was wrong and I was right. (laughter) Now that I go back and think about that little thing.

T141: A minor instance but you feel it's symbolic of the fact that other people are wrong in your judgment.

C141: Yes.

T142: Uh huh.

C142: Well he must be right. He was the conductor without question.

T143: There too. Intellectually you feel perhaps he was right, but emotionally you're pretty darn sure he was wrong.

C143: (laughter) I vowed I wasn't going to take that way back (long pause). Now have I convinced you that I am trying to work out my own problems?

T144: You're wondering whether I'm convinced that you're really trying ...

C144: Yes. Or am I just being helpless without trying to do something about it.

T145: You're really wondering as to how it impresses me as to whether you're working on your problem or whether you're saying ... I'm helpless you take over.

C145: Yes.

T146: Would it be true that there's some of both involved?

C146: Well I just wondered what your impression was - it's possible yes of each of these two elements involved.

T147: It might be that there's some ...

C147: Well, I am sure that there's not enough within me to work this out or I wouldn't have come. (Pause) I had arrived at that point.

T148: You're really quite convinced that there isn't within you the capacity to work it out.

C148: That's right. (Pause)

T149: You feel that's really back of the coming in is the fact that you feel helpless to do anything about it.

C149: Yes it was for that reason that I came here. I was just grasping at a straw.

T150: You're pretty hopeless in regard to yourself and you feel that there might be something that would help.

C150: Yes. (Pause) I've wondered, to go back to that working thing. I've tried to look at all sides of that and uh, I think there was something in one of those questionnaires that

made me think of this. Maybe I'm on the wrong track there. Maybe, maybe I do feel that I'm just a little bit too good to do the things that I can do. That isn't it because there's ... I don't think that's it.

T151: It's made you question a little bit the fact that you might feel too good (S: yes) too superior to fit in where you actually could get a job.

C151: Yes. But I just can't ... while additional income would be welcome and I think I could put it to very good use. Yes I can't look at it, that's the important thing. And I just can't see myself, where I'd better myself going into the surroundings where I know before I go into doing work that's just work.

T152: As you look at it you just can't see yourself going into a... at a fairly modest level, in surroundings you wouldn't like just to bring in a little more cash ...

C152: Just to put in my time - well to put in my time I'll say.

T153: You just wouldn't want to do that.

C153: I don't think ... I wouldn't mind that is if it were-well prescribed to me as a cure, something like that. I would go through with it, but to decide within myself to believe that's the thing to do, I can't do it.

T154: If someone were to tell you to do it, as a step to something else, that might uh ...

C154: Yes.

T155: You could accept it, but to take the responsibility yourself, no go.

C155: Uh huh. Just like a lot of other things it seems just a little bit silly. And there again, am I being superior ... I can't afford to be.

T156: You're raising the question with yourself again that some of these things look silly and uh useless. Is it because you feel yourself a little superior.

C156: Yes. Am I not seeing clearly, looking at this thing straight. Maybe I overrate my ability. I've always thought I could look at things and judge them from all angles, people as well, and arrive at the right answer. But maybe I can't work it out myself.

T157: It's possible you might be rating yourself too high ...

C157: Yes. Maybe just pursuing the wrong course altogether. I don't feel in the past I've ever made any grievous mistakes. All the way through my life I've figured things out pretty much without trying to do this ... But I just never got in to this kind of a spot before.

And I've always arrived at what I believed was the right conclusions I think. And I sort of have a faith that I will this time, some day. (laughter)

T158: You always have been able to find an answer, haven't gotten into a jam like this. You just have a sneaking occasional faith that maybe you can find out in this too.

C158: That's right. But I do know that I have to have something that hasn't entered into it yet or that I don't see.

T159: You think the situation as you have realized or seen it up to this point ... you're stuck, you need something new that you see or knew must enter in to make it possible ...

C159: Yes and the only way I can look at it from where I am now is another year is just going to make it a lot worse and not difficult.

T160: In other words, it's pretty darned important that you do something about it fairly soon.

C160: Yes it's the most important thing in the world to me. (Pause) I wonder sometimes, I occasionally run into someone who seems to think a little bit as I do about things in general. Maybe I need to someday or other make new contacts. Maybe if I found that there were people thinking along these lines ... there again I'm rather up against it. I don't know how to just do that.

T161: There again there's just a question ... Maybe you should try to find other people with similar views and ...

C161: Yes and I'm not talking about the morbid twisted views but I mean people who write some of the things I read.

T162: People with whom you would be congenial.

C162: Yes. People who read the same things I read.

T163: Possibly, you ought perhaps to develop that kind ...

C163: Yes.

T164: But there again you don't feel sure quite how.

C164: I'm definitely liberal in my views. And I'm sure I'm right. (laughter)

T165: You're both liberal and right.

C165: Because people I respect very much feel the same way and I don't think they're wrong and that part is sort of a conflict up to a certain point. But it seems to be putting those beliefs into action is where I encounter the problem.

T166: But you're much more sure of what you believe and feel is right than you are of how to devel... implement these beliefs.

C166: And they just pop out. And when I'm around people regardless of what I know absolutely just what's going to happen. An explosion -- just like that.

T167: You find yourself saying things even though they create a storm.

C167: Yes, and I don't enjoy the storm. That isn't the object of the thing. I'm very unhappy but I don't retract, because I still believe it. (Pause) And I can't see looking back. I've, uh, gotten off on this angle that I'm different from the people I associate with. I've had practically the same friends for twenty years.

T168: One of the real puzzles is how ... you've come to feel differently.

C168: Yes. And maybe on one issue one friend goes along with me and on another issue someone else. So there again that rather convinces me I'm not entirely wrong. But I don't believe the rest of them are having the struggle that I am.

T169: In other words, not all of them agree, and some of them agree with you on different specific aspects.

C169: Yes.

T170: But there doesn't seem to be quite as much conflict about their being different about their viewpoint.

C170: No. But now on religion I have a few friends that are with me on that entirely, and a few others that feel altogether different. And then the same way with politics, world affairs. I guess friends feel exactly as I do. However I seem to be the one that's always on the other side.

T171: Even though some of them agree with you on one specific angle, still you're the one that has the feeling that it's always you against a great many others.

C171: Yes. (Pause) Maybe I just lack the courage and if I'm so sure I'm right and want to make people over, go through with it. And suffer the consequences just be brave about the whole thing. I've wondered about that. But that's not a very happy way to live.

T172: You have the feeling that perhaps if you had the courage of your convictions you'd uh, go ahead and take the consequences.

C172: Yes.

T173: But that doesn't appeal to you as a way of ...

C173: Well, I've pretty much done that during the past year and I don't like where it seems to be getting me. I can see these women fifty and sixty years old who know the whole world's wrong and they're right. And I can see just exactly what's the matter with them.

T174: In other words you in a sense you've tried to act that way, but you don't like the way it's coming out.

C174: That's it. (long pause) I can see exactly why some people are like they are when they are sixty years old. And yet I can see myself taking that same course. And yet I can't see my way off of it.

T175: You know people of those ages whom you don't like the answer they've found and you see yourself going the same direction, and you don't see how you can get off that track.

C175: And then I've given it a lot of thought because I had a grandmother that was very much that type and I don't want to be like her. She spent her last years alone and there was a lot of those years too. And I don't want to let myself in for that. And yet, away down deep I have a certain sort of admiration for her. I know how unhappy she was. I know the whole thing. And yet I sort of take my hat off to the old girl. She never backed up in any way.

T176: You really feel two ways about her.

C176: Yes;

T177: On the one hand you'd hate to become as estranged from other people as she was and yet again you admire her guts because ...

C177: That's it. I just wonder if I would have thought more of her had she been one of these sweet old grandmothers whom everybody loved. I don't believe I would because she lived long enough for me to know what was behind it. But she was unhappy.

T178: You have a pretty deep respect for her stand and still it disturbs you that she was so unhappy.

C178: Well she was a woman to be admired. Looking back, if I could fill her shoes I'd be very happy. Well, up to a certain point. I don't know what her life was like as far as, well she must have had many friends at one time. But she just held her head high. I know how she took it exactly ...

T179: You feel that she really took it on the chin, but she took it with head high.

C179: Yes. (Pause) She fought back at them as long as there was anything left to fight with.

T180: She was a fighter for what she stood for.

C180: Yes. But she got no pleasure from it that I know. The only pleasure was in the inward satisfaction of thinking I'm right and now whether that is a pleasure or not ... I never, never felt that she was happy.

T181: You feel that although she must have had a good deal of inner satisfaction along that line, still it isn't what you call happiness.

C181: Well, she, her husband and her two sons ... she lost them. She felt that she gave me, and she did in a sense and yet I certainly wasn't happy with her.

T182: You feel that she really cut herself off from her husband ... and even in the association with you it wasn't too happy for you.

C182: No. It was hard to define whether it was personal or the difference in ages, because she was my grandmother. As I say, I admire a lot of things about her.

T183: You admire her and you have a question mark about her.

C183: Yes. But whether that's enough and I think some other people admired her. When I think of her acquaintances and friends. But at the last there was no happiness for her.

T184: She really led a pretty unhappy life.

C184: Yes. Not the crying kind of unhappiness, but the real kind.

T185: Not just the sentimental unhappiness but ...

C185: Oh no.

T186: ... the kind that cuts pretty deep.

C186: The kind that just doesn't ever laugh.

T187: The kind that really feels no joy.

C187: Yes, and that's what I feel coming - I feel that it's coming harder for me to laugh.

T188: That same sense of a deep unhappiness that troubles you ...

C188: Yes. Maybe a person's just twisted up before they're ever born and can't overcome these things. Maybe it is something that has to be endured in the best way possible. I always get around to that place it seems.

T189: It's a possibility that you're just on a groove and you can't possibly get off.

C189: I don't believe that about other people.

T190: You feel pretty sure others can ... change their direction.

C190: Yes. Now it doesn't make sense, but there it is.

T191: It isn't logical but there again it is the way you feel.

C191: That's right (very faintly) (long pause) and I keep thinking - surely there's something written, something someplace that will - at least give me a clue. Where this leads to. But just seems ... everything points in the same direction.

T192: I'm not sure I'm clear about that last, but at least you feel somewhere in a book or somewhere there is ...

C192: Yes.

T193: There are answers to some of this.

C193: Yes. I've found answers to other things. But I'm getting so in that groove just for example I went to see "State of The Union" this week. Well the rest of them saw all the fun in it and all but I saw just bearing out that same thing, that belief. I think it was a grand play but I saw a sermon in it.

T194: In other words it really frightens you a little bit - the extent that you are in that groove.

C194: Yes.

T195: So that you are really kept from enjoying the funny aspects of the play because ...

C195: Yes. I won't say I didn't enjoy them. I did but that wasn't the outstanding thing. But I listened to the rest of their conversation and what they saw and they just didn't see what I did there.

T196: There again you felt out of step with what others saw and felt.

C196: I just wish, I wish someone would tell me a cross-section. I wonder if everyone who has seen that play - what their reaction was.

T197: You'd like very much to know how you compare with others.

C197: Yes. I would in that one thing. In fact I think it would be a rather good check on whether I am warped or not.

T198: You feel that there you might get the evidence ...

C198: Yes.

T199: ... to tell you ...

C199: Yes ...

T200: Whether you're really out of line or not. Well, I see our time is up. I did make a note of the time I have free. Uh, would you want to come back again in about a week. Would that ...

C200: Well, I'll tell you I'm due for a bout of hay fever just any time now and whenever that time comes I'm going to disappear for three or four weeks. And I'm not sure whether it will be before another week. I don't have much warning but the time is here.

T201: Well, uh, I could see you a week from tomorrow at 1 o'clock. That would be Tuesday. If you'd like we can leave it that way and if your hay fever is worse you could drop me a note or phone in ...

C201: All right. And it would be all right if you received a note most any time before then.

T202: Yes.

C202: Because I just don't know.

T203: Yes - because I know how that is; ... Then next Tuesday, a week from tomorrow at one o'clock.

C203: Well all right.

(End of Second Interview)

Letter

Four days later:

Dear Mr. L.:

I cannot see how further counseling can be of any value to me. I would like very much to know the results of the various tests given to me. I will not be in Tuesday.

Yours truly,
Mrs. Dem

Dear Mrs. Dem:

I have your letter saying that you feel further counseling cannot be of value to you. I do not know whether this is because it seems like a discouraging process to work toward a solution, or whether there are other reasons. I am sorry if I have failed to be of help. I can only say that I would respect your wishes in the matter, and would add that if at any time you wish to come in to discuss the matter, I would be glad to talk with you.

The tests were given as part of a research project as you know, and the results on them may or may not be of specific help to you. I would, however, be pleased to tell you of the results on several of them if you care to come in and discuss them.

I am to be out of town next week and the earliest I could see you to talk over the test results would be at 1:00 P.M. If this is not convenient, or if for any reason you do not wish to come in, simply drop me a line.

With sincere best wishes,
D.L.
Counselor

Letter
Two weeks later

Dear Mr. L.:

I have decided to take an extended vacation and I will not be at home until after October 25th. Would you please tell me of the test results as soon as possible after that date.

Yours truly,
Mrs. Dem

Dear Mrs. Dem:

I am glad to know that you are having an opportunity for a long vacation. I will be happy to talk with you when you return and discuss the test results with you.

If you will drop me a note when you get back, I will give you an appointment at that time.

Sincerely,

D.L.
Counselor

MRS. DEM
Third Interview
(Eight days later)

T204: Come in. Been on quite a trip have you?

C204: Yes. I spent about three weeks down at X ---- It was different to say the least.

T205: Mhm. Quite a change.

C205: Yes. I suppose I owe you an explanation as to why I don't want to come in any more, and I'm just going to be very, very frank about it. The last time I was in I just felt that desire to tear into you the same way I have everybody else and I was so close to it -- and I didn't want to do it and I'm not going to.

T206: Mhm. Just felt as though you must have that desire and want to ...

C206: Yes.

T207: Rip into people. And this time into me you mean.

C207: That's right.

T208: It really bothers you to have that--

C208: I just felt that I was just so close to it--and I don't want to do it.

T209: Sort of almost more than you could control.

C209: Yes, that's right.

T210: Felt that you didn't want to let yourself go: then that--

C210: No; no good comes out of it, ever.

T211: You're sure that it isn't a profitable thing to do, but still you--

C211: At the time when I'm near that then I'm so convinced that it is the right thing to do. That's why I can't keep from doing it.

T212: Mhm.

C212: All at once I--I see all those things. I'm just being honest with you.

T213: Mhm.

C213: I saw a hundred things that I could have jumped at right then.

T214: Mhm.

C214: So you're all wrong and I'm all right, and I can tell you why.

T215: Mhm; mhm.

C215: I can see them now; so I can talk about it.

T216: Yeah, mhm. But at the time it just comes over you that "You're absolutely wrong and I'm right".

C216: Yes. That's just as true as can be. (Pause) I'm thoroughly convinced that there's nothing from outside going to do me a bit of good; it'll have to come from within me. If I have it, all right; if I don't, it's sink or swim.

T217: You feel that it's got to be something inside and that nobody can help you on that. Is that...

C217: Yes; I'm thoroughly convinced of that. (Pause)

T218: ... Well, I think--I think I could say two things on that. I don't know whether they will help or not. But--one is that thinking it through with someone else is--even though you find the answer within yourself--is sometimes different than mulling it over by yourself.

C218: Well, I felt that at first.

T219: And the second thing I was going to say is that certainly you're free to say whatever you think, whether it's toward me or toward someone else.

C219: Well, I've certainly convinced you that I am just as honest as I can be, and I wish you would be with me. You're not going to hurt me. There is nothing you could say that--I'd welcome it if you would tear into me the same way that I have into a lot of other people. Nobody does.

T220: You mean it would really feel good if somebody would tear into you.

C220: Yes; that's right. Of course I know there's something wrong.

T221: You feel sure there is something wrong within you that--

C221: There must be. I think probably I don't have enough occupation. I have a little too much time on my hands. But I can't--I've seriously considered going to work and every

time I get close to it I know what would happen. I'm not equipped to do anything. Well, I have to work for somebody-- .

T222: Mhm.

C222: And--just wouldn't work.

T223: Feel that working for someone that--

C223: That's not the idea. It isn't working for them; but I mean just subordination,--that sooner or later I'll get out of hand and I'll just bring humiliation to myself, and maybe to other people--too.

T224: Mhm. That is you feel sure that in that situation too that this--it would just work into something which would ...

C224: Yeah.

T225: ... work out badly for you and for other people.

C225: It would happen just sure as the world.

T226: You feel that would be inevitable.

C226: I'm afraid it would. (Pause) I've wondered if the tests would indicate that I have any ability in any particular line. I've also thought of possibly taking some work at one of the extension universities in X----, just for occupation; and I don't know whether I'm worth the time that they would spend on me if they would accept me.

T227: Mhm; mhm.

C227: I can't do anything just simply to fill up time. I have to feel that I'm getting someplace.

T228: Well, I can show you the results of the tests. You're wondering whether they might turn up some special ability ...

C228: Yes.

T229: ... or something. You feel that just--just filling up your time isn't what you want.

C229: No: it's no good. If I could convince myself that I had ability in some line, or that I was needed in some place--if there was just some little direction in which way to go.

T230: If you had some inkling where your abilities could be used that would be the--

C230: Maybe I'm just hopeless; maybe I don't have any ability. If you could tell me that--if you'd say, "All right, you're just at the height of your capacity if you sit at home and read the Saturday Evening Post, and keep up with that sort of thing". Maybe that is all there is for me. But I'm not satisfied to--I can't convince myself of that. But is that's what it is, I want you to say so.

T231: In other words you feel you could accept the judgment from someone else.

C231: Yes.

T232: But it's your own conviction about your ability one way or the other that you can't make up your mind in regard to ...

C232: I think that I have some ability, someplace, judging from past accomplishments; but if I haven't, yes. I could accept it. (Pause) There is nothing any worse than this going on. I feel it's such a waste. It's just like waste of anything else.

T233: Just a useless energy and ability--not accomplishing--

C233: Ability, question mark: but the energy's there. (Long pause) Sometimes I think maybe it's just a form of laziness, when I consider doing something that I could do on my own. I've edited newspapers--advertising sheets.

T234: Mhm.

C234: I'm--I don't know. I have no desire to do that again on my own. I'm afraid of it. But I believe that's--it's just good business judgment.

T235: You mean you feel that the fear of doing that sort of thing is just preventing you--

C235: Yes, I do. I believe that I'm right.

T236: That--that isn't a fear of the activity so much but that it's just ...

C236: No.

T237: The feeling (words lost)

C237: No, if I could go into it without risking the money that I'd have to go into it on my own, I would do it in a minute.

T238: Mhm.

C238: There's no opportunity for anything like that.

T239: Mhm.

C239: And that's the hardest work in the book when you go out and sell advertising.

T240: But you know within yourself that it isn't that you would be fearful of any amount of work, or ...

C240: I don't believe-I don't believe that's it. I've argued with myself on that point and wondered if that might be it--I am just a little bit lazy. I've had it quite easy. But I don't believe it is.

T241: You've raised that question but it seems to you that laziness isn't the main thing.

C241 I don't think it is. (long pause) I wish I knew what to make--to do to make you say just what you think, because I think you have formed some kind of opinions in the course of these interviews.

T242: You really feel that somehow I'm sort of holding out onto a judgement that I must have ...

C242: Yes.

T243: In regards to you.

C243: Yeah.

T244: Well, I can--I can really understand how you might feel that. Actually I've learned that it's very genuinely presumptuous of me to suppose that I can know more about the other person than he knows about himself. I can help him discover some of these things about himself; but I can't judge him: I-I don't know.

C244: Well, that's hard for me to believe--that you aren't judging.

T245: Mhm. You feel that actually I am judging, no matter what I think.

C245: Putting myself in your place it would be utterly impossible.

T246: Mhm. You feel that if you were me you would be making judgments. Is that it?

C246: Yeah. You have measurements to go by; you know other people, where I have only myself.

T247: You feel I have more of a basis for making judgments.

C247: Yes.

T248: And when one finds out how completely individual people are, the effect it has on me is to make me far less willing to make judgments.

C248: Yes; but you must be equipped to make them; otherwise this would all be useless.

T249: Then it seems to you that unless we were able to make judgments about people, then ...

C249: You don't have to call it 'judgments', call it 'opinions' if you like.

T250: "Opinions," mhm, but unless that were a part of it then talking things over would be entirely futile.

C250: Well, I can see that with some people they don't think it out by themselves and face things squarely. I believe I can, I think I can--perhaps I'm not.

T251: I'm not sure that I understand that--but you feel that for some people who don't face things squarely, then opinions on the part of some one else might not be helpful? Is that it; --might not be necessary.

C251: Mhm--Yeah. Well, a person who doesn't get down to the truth with themselves and by themselves, they need someone to help them get down to it. But I just can't quite feel that I did need that.

T252: Mhm.

C252: Either that, or I'm not down to it yet. Now I don't know which.

T253: I see. That is if the person is not down to the truth by themselves then counseling might help them get there.

C253: Yeah.

T254: But in your case you felt you are down to the truth about yourself.

C254: Yeah.

T255: And that--that sort of a system isn't necessary.

C255: I talked this thing all out with a very good friend of mine who has very, very good judgments, and she had problems of her own--

T256: Mhm ...

C256: And we had no secrets on these things; and I'm sure she has been of help to me. But that's what - say now; I have never told you anything that I haven't told her.

T257: Mhm.

C257: Now have I seen it in any different light that I did with her.

T258: You feel that as far as you're concerned this has merely been a reviewing of things you've already known and already ...

C258: Yes.

T259: ... talked over.

C259: Yeah. (long pause) I wish there was something more to say, but there's just not. And as I say, I'm just thoroughly convinced that it has to come from within me.

T260: You feel you just find it within your self.

C260: I'm neither strong enough or understand--

T261: Feel you've really said all there is to say. Now would you want to see the results of the tests? I have the information here.

C261: I'm very curious about them, yeah.

T262: Mrs. -----, she's no longer on the staff: otherwise I might have arranged for her to talk with you; but she's having a baby and has left the staff.

C262: Has she had her baby?

T263: No, not yet--and here are the results on the three tests? (Gives her the two sheets) I think you can--that's--this is from low to high and the quality or trait is listed here. This first quality is mentioned, and you're in the seventh decile. You're familiar with that term, decile? And then on this sheet I have the results on the two other tests.

C263: Well, I don't think I know enough about them to interpret them intelligently.

T264: I might say--you might not remember the tests. I can show you which was which; that might--that is based on these three questionnaires that you took.

C264: Yes.

T265: And then the Rosenweig test is this one with the pictures.

T266: And the Rorschach test you probably know--that's the one with the ink blots.

C266: Yes. "She tends to solve frustrating situation by demanding the services of some other individual to undertake the responsibility". That's certainly true.

T267: You feel that one clicks somehow.

C267: Yes--well, that explains entirely why I'm here (laughing).

T268: (Laughs)

C268: "Intellectual efficiency seems to be somewhat below capacity". Is that just what I've been talking about?

T269: (words lost)

C269: That I'm capable of more than ...

T270: Capable of more than you actually achieve. Is that what you feel?

C270: Well, is that ... Do I understand that right?

T271: Mhm.

C271: "Constructive-creative energy is being drained off in fantasy". (Pause) "she would probably prefer to work under supervision". I've wondered about that myself. It's a question in my mind.

T272: Mhm. Well I am sure Mrs.-----would say if she were giving you that, that all those descriptions are very tentative. That is, we don't feel that tests of that sort ...

C272: No; I understand. "The subject seems to be more strongly influenced by her external environment than by her own internal creative resources". I wonder about that.

T273: You kind of question that, you mean.

C273: Mhm. "Emotional development seems to be at an immature stage". I have never thought that of myself. Maybe it is true.

T274: You doubt that---

C274: Well, I don't doubt it, because that's where I have more confidence in someone else's judgment more than - do my own.

T275: You'd be more willing to take the judgment of a test or a tester than your own judgment.

C275: Yes. Oh yes, on that particular point. (Pause) It seems to me that I just pretty well hit the average on these--on these sheets.

T276: You feel that they are lined up pretty much in the middle.

C276: Yeah. (Pause) Well surely you have formed some opinion as to what you must think you would do if you were me. And because you say for me to do it certainly doesn't mean that I would go out and follow any particular course. But just as a matter of satisfying my curiosity I wish you would tell me what that opinion is.

T277: You just feel sure that I have some opinion about ...

C277: Yes.

T278: ... About what you should do.

C278: Yes.

T279: I suspect you would find it hard to believe that I have really--have learned to follow people's thinking and help them in making their own judgments,--and have found that--found them so far superior to my own opinions that I--I do not--I don't have an opinion about what you should do. I feel sure on this.

C279: I wonder if you realize what the disappointment is to me in--If I just had one person's opinion. If you think I'm just foolish and should forget everything and go out and take things as they come, and let it go at that---Maybe that's it.

T280: You just wish someone would give you an opinion of some kind.

C280: Yes. I know myself well enough to know that I won't take other people's opinions, as far as just accepting them and acting upon them--so I'm not trying to kid you in that respect, that I would if you expressed an opinion.

T281: You feel that you wouldn't follow the opinion but somehow just the fact of an opinion seems to have--

C281: The weight of it, yes.

T282: A great deal of weight with you.

C282: "Inertness". Now is that a synonym for 'laziness'? It would be wouldn't it? ...

T283: That might be somewhat similar.

C283: And would that mean both mental and physical, or--

T284: Just whether you feel a lack of physical activity, or lack of the mental activity.

C284: Yes, because that's been a big question in my mind.

T285: That is, the question as to whether there has been some element of laziness there.

C285: Yeah; and especially mental laziness; I'm not too worried about physical laziness.

T286: You feel that possibly you might be in some way mentally lazy.

C286: Yes. (Pause) I am little bit surprised that this self-confidence might lean in the other direction.

T287: You felt that you leaned---

C287: To self confidence.

T288: More toward self-confidence.

C288: And yet, of course the fact that I am here indicates something else I suppose; but judging by other things that I have done it seemed to me that I've possibly had a little too much self-confidence.

T289: In your own judgment you felt you were rather--

C289: Yes.

T290: High on that.

C290: Because I told you how sure I am that I am right.

T291: Mhm.

C291: And as I sit here I know that I am on a lot of things that you call confident.

T292: You just feel as if--a complete confidence on some of those points.

C292: Now I'm--I'm mixed again on which test is which here. Which one is the picture test?

T293: The picture test we have done nothing with. I'm sorry we haven't had time. That one isn't really a scorable test. That's more of a tentative thing. I've just done nothing with that. That's where you told the whole story about each picture. You know that one.

C293: Yes: (Pause) I wonder if this is good or bad--"this tendency to handle frustrating situations is a glossed over or avoided or handled by just waiting".

T294: You don't know whether that's a good way of handling them or a poor ...

C294: Because I do handle them that--that's exactly what I do, if I have a little forethought and do what I know and approach these things in a right way; but it's these things that I just don't seem to be able to wait a minute to meet.

T295: Sometimes your frustrations you do meet--plan for rather carefully and wait--

C295: Yeah.

T296: And others you just can't wait to--

C296: Well, it's--I don't know--I don't understand other people. When I have one of these marking-over sprees I wonder why they even countenance me at all. But it seems as if no one I come into contact with comes back at me the way they should. But I'm right, that's why they don't. But--

T297: You feel--if I get this--you feel that when you're out on one of those making-over sprees that really you should be quite unbearable.

C297: Yes, they should. If I ever come up against a person that's my own make-up they would surely-we'd just have a battle of words. But that never happens. I don't quarrel. That isn't it. I do all the talking, and that's what I mean.

T298: You feel that after one of those one reason they do not come back at you is that they tend to agree that you're right. Is that what you feel?

C298: Yes. I honestly believe they do. And yet I make them very unhappy, and as a result I'm unhappy too.

T299: You feel it causes pain on both sides.

C299: Yes. (Pause) Well, I-I-it seems to me there should be a little clue here as to what to do about it; but I don't know that I understand it; however, "intellectual efficiency seems to be somewhat below capacity". Now 'intellectual efficiency', if I understand that, is that something acquitted or--in other words what should I do to bring my intellectual efficiency up to capacity?

T300: In other words, how could you get your mind to function more effectively.

C300: Well-- is that--yes, is it mind functioning? Is that--I just don't quite understand that term, 'Intellectual efficiency'.

T301: As I--as far as I know, I expect that it means the--well just as we speak of a--an engine might run, but one wants it to run efficiently--does it do its job?--does it function up to its full-horsepower. I guess that's the term.

C301: Mhm. "And seems to lie in emotional factors". All right then; I'm overemphasizing the emotional side of this thing; I'm letting it get away--run away with me. Is that the way you'd interpret that? And therefore defeating my own purpose?

T302: You feel that might be the thing that's getting in your way.

C302: I've wondered about that; and yet you've seen a display of emotion that just isn't here, as far as outward appearances, because I don't carry this on my sleeve.

T303: Mhm.

C303: I go around among other people and I'm really surprised that I really do get along, to be honest with you.

T304: Considering all the feelings you have inside--

C304: Yes.

T305: It really surprises you how smoothly you can get along with others.

C305: Yes. (Pause) "Constructive-creative energy is being drained off in fantasy". Well now I wonder how to get away from that. Seems to me a definite thing's wrong there, and to me--that's gratifying to find something.

T306: You're satisfied then that there seems to be one--

C306: Yes. Now would you say that's because I'm spending too much time alone, too much time thinking about these things?

T307: You wonder if that could account for--

C307: Yes.

T308: ... the draining off of energy.

C308: Because I recognize that fantasy. I can let my mind wander in some of the queerest places. (Laughs)

T309: You realize there is some truth in that angle of it. Is that it?

C309: Yes. (Pause) And this rather baffles me; "She tends to over-compensate for her inability to achieve self-fulfilment by intellectual drive and ambition. And now if I had that intellectual drive and ambition why don't I have self-fulfilment?"

T310: The thought that you have the push and still not finding the satisfaction--

C310: Yes.

T311: Is that it?

C311: Now that's the heart of the whole thing. That's the question that--

T312: So that really is the question you're struggling with too.

C312: Yes. Because I can see people almost exactly like me all around and the only difference I can see is that they don't mind this just getting no where, being nothing, doing nothing. That's the only difference. And they're happy, and I'm not.

T313: Mhm. The only basic difference is that some how they've accepted not getting very far and--

C313: Yes.

T314: Consequently find some happiness.

C314: Of course this fantasy thing--in the writing that I've done a little bit, I've felt that was an asset and not a liability. But I can't use that anymore.

T315: You felt that was an asset and was constructive at one time.

C315: Yes.

T316: But you don't feel that it is at the present time.

C316: "She tends to conform to the thought pattern of her group". Now I can't see that at all.

T317: You feel that's one place where it's all wet.

C317: Do I, and don't know it? No--I hope. I know I don't. Yes. (Pause) Now I question this: "The subject seems to be more strongly influenced by her external environment than by her own internal creative resources. "Well I can't see anything wrong outside of me. Now really, when I size up the...

[Number omitted]

T319: You feel that is a pretty basically wrong evaluation because you feel you don't have difficulties from outside.

C319: Yes. Well it would be so simple if I could make myself believe that there was something wrong outside of me; then I'd just blame someone else and go on; but I don't believe there is.

T320: That really that would be a simpler way--

C320: Oh yes.

T321: Of looking at it.

C321: Yes.

T322: But actually that isn't the way you see it.

C322: That "emotional development being at an immature stage". I just wonder about that. (Pause) It's very hard for me to believe and yet I can see that many probably believe that about themselves.

T323: It really doesn't seem to you to click; and yet you can realize that that would be ...

C323: That's so.

T324: ... true of--in some other case.

C324: Won't you tell me your opinion of that? Now you know me in that respect, as well as anybody, I suppose, that there is. Is that your reaction? Just yes or no, and I don't care.

T325: You still feel that some opinion would somehow help.

C325: Well I feel that there is something I might be able to do something about it if I'm around here acting like a child. Maybe I am. There's a question in my mind or I wouldn't ask you.

T326: Because, you know, some of these other things that you don't feel sure about yourself.

C326: No.

T327: One way or the other.

C327: I don't-- (Long pause) "Feeling that human relationships are constantly a struggle". Doesn't everyone feel that more or less? And if you really felt that they were too much

of a struggle wouldn't you have a desire to get away from them? And that I certainly don't have.

T328: To some extent even relations with others would be a struggle for everybody, and-

C328: Yes.

T329: And the fact that you don't feel they're too much of a struggle is shown by the fact that you don't try to get away from them.

C329: Isn't that right? Wouldn't--don't you try to escape anything that is too much labour? And that's the thing I don't want. That's part of what's bothering me now is how to get to the right and satisfying relationships instead of just cutting them off one by one until I'm out on a limb.

[Number omitted in original]

T331: Part of your really deep goal is to keep human relationships—

C331: Yes.

T332: Rather than--

C332: Yes.

T333: Chop them off one at a time.

C333: And I don't especially crave the kinds that just go along so nice and easily, those haven't been the satisfying ones, looking back through my life.

T334: You're not asking that they should all be smooth and rosy.

C334: No, that isn't my idea at all. (Pause) I can see a little--a few things there that possibly I can work on. (Pause) Well I imagine that's all there is.

T335: You feel that's all ...

C335: May I keep these?

T336: Yes, I think that'll be all right. Would you like to come back and talk over things more or not?

C336: As I feel now, no; but I'd like to leave the door open so that if a time comes ...

T337: If at any time you'd like to come in and discuss anything I want you to feel free to do so.

C337: I appreciate the time you've taken with me. And maybe when I think this thing over I'll realize that more has come of it than I see at this point.

T338: At this point you don't feel that we've done very much.

C338: Oh, I'm sorry; I wish I could say otherwise, but I'm just too honest for my own good.

T339: It seems to you that it hasn't been worthwhile.

(End of interview)

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.

THE CASE OF MRS. SAR (Circa 1950)

[Source for Rogers' Comments: Carl Rogers Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.]

Introduction

This is the case of a client who was counseled in front of a group of people and consequently some introductory explanation is needed.

At the beginning of an advanced course in counseling, composed entirely of graduate students some of whom were counselors, the question was raised as to the type of experiences they would find most helpful. One suggestion, which the group seized upon, was that it would be very helpful if some counseling interviews could be carried on in front of the group so that they could observe either through a one-way vision screen or mirror or perhaps could observe directly. The instructor in the course stated that he was not sure such a case could be found among those coming to the Counseling Center. One of the members of the group, Miss North, a school counselor, stated that two mothers had recently come to her in regard to help for themselves and their child, and she thought that perhaps one of them might be willing to be counseled in front of such a group, particularly since she comes from a neighborhood which is not near the Counseling Center. She talked to this parent, Mrs. Sar, and found that she was willing to come in for help. Miss North told her nothing about the counseling procedure nor did she tell her the name of the counselor except that she would be counseled by the instructor of the course, who was an experienced person and that she thought that this counselor might be able to be of help to her.

When Mrs. Sar came in, the issue had not definitely been decided whether she would be observed by the group through a one-way vision screen or mirror, or whether she would be observed directly. The counselor talked briefly with Mrs. Sar before the interview opened and asked her if she would object to being counseled with the group observing directly. She seemed a little hesitant, but said she was willing to try it. Consequently, all of the interviews of this series were conducted in front of a group of eighteen people.

CASE OF MRS. SAR

First Interview

- T1: I appreciate (word lost) certainly... I appreciate your willingness to come in and I can assure you that people in the group are just interested in working with people (words lost). Would you like to tell me a little bit about...?
- C1: Well, I feel that I have quite a problem inasmuch as I'm living with my mother who is seventy, seventy-one almost, and who has been ill all of her life. She had... twelve years of active tuberculosis and finally had surgery and recovered. However that seems to change a person's character when they've been so ill for so long, and she's been arrested for ten years, but in the meantime had quite a serious cancer operation... along with high blood pressure, it's about two-forty. And having been the mainstay of a large family and ruled the roost, mostly by... threats of... (Sighs) "My heart, and if you don't do this, I'll die, and you know how sick your poor old mother is," and everything that she had to go through. So after I was divorced when my little girl was about a year old – she's ten now – my family thought that I should move back with my mother in a home that was owned jointly by my mother and myself. So... I, of course, had to go to work, inasmuch as my former husband sort of skipped around – wherever the racetracks were, why, there he was. And we couldn't catch up with him. So... I put Carol in a school when she was four years old. It was a church home. Carol was always a child who rejected anything new, any new idea. To get her shoes on when she was eighteen months old was a full time job. She'd clench her little feet. And... so... she was the youngest child out there. And I didn't realize it at the time, but during those four years I was allowed to see her on weekends. But she needed love and security and she built up quite a defense mechanism of some sort, which now, after having her home three years is just now beginning to break down. But... she was regimented and ordered to do things, and she wouldn't do it. She'd climb under the bed when it was time to get up and hang on to the bed (laughs) and they'd move the bed over, and she just simply wouldn't do it; she wouldn't respond to anything. In her first year in school, there was a... some sort of an emotional block, where she simply would not learn a thing; she wouldn't read, she wouldn't do anything, she wouldn't cooperate, she absolutely could not play with children. And... so during those four years, she developed a lot of odd little things. Now, in my contention, it's ... an average child would be able to adjust themselves to that, but she seemed to be pretty nervous and high-strung. So... any questions?
- T2: Well, I'd just like to see if I'm getting this. That is, you... I get the feeling that for quite a time, you felt... very much controlled by grandmother's physical

- needs. And that then out of that situation, and out of the situation surrounding the divorce and so on, and the placement of Carol, that you feel she's begun to... she has more than begun... she has quite fully developed a lot of highly fighting sort of attitudes. Is that...?
- C2: That's right. And... it... this was... she...I brought her home from the school when she was eight. She's... she was ten in April. And... she absolutely couldn't make an adjustment at public school. She was... she's large for her age and, I might add, a little precocious. She... this is just my own idea. I've given it a lot of thought but just being a mother; I'm probably biased. But my mother would cause such an upset every morning before she would go to school by continually nagging at her, criticizing her, never giving her a word of encouragement, that the child was a nervous wreck when she'd start for school... as to, "Look at the way you're eating", and, "When I was a child, my grandmother didn't allow that", and "You've spilled your milk, you... you little fiend", and things of that sort, because she herself was ill, and so forth. But Carol would arrive at school in such a belligerent state of mind that she'd pick on the littlest child on the school ground and let him have one right in the chin, and sort of get rid of all that emotional thing that she couldn't get rid of around mother. Or mother would say, "How dare you speak to me", and clutch her heart, and then of course Carol would feel guilty and... which I have felt all my life. I grew up feeling guilty because everything that I did I felt was a... in some way affecting my mother's health.
- T3: It's not too hard for you to understand how Carol might feel in that...
- C3: Why, I've...
- T4: ... same situation.
- C4: ...done the same thing myself. In fact, a few years ago, it came to the point where I was having dreams at night about...shaking my mother and... I'd... she'll stand in a doorway, and I'll say, "Excuse me, please", and she'll just stand there. And... I got the feeling that I just wanted to push her out of the way. And...I can understand how Carol might feel. She doesn't dare... and neither did I; didn't want to, but...
- T5: Neither of you could actually do it, but the feeling of wanting to...
- C5: Wanting to...
- T6: ... push her, or do something to her.
- C6: M-hm. So now it's come to the point where Carol at ten years old is making a quite... cutting, nasty remarks to her in quite a sarcastic manner, which is...

- children shouldn't do because most children, as far as I know, simply don't understand sarcasm. But... she does, and...
- T7: You just sort of feel she's developed what is usually a more adult pattern just because...
- C7: Very much so.
- T8: ... it's her only way of... (C: M-hm.) getting at her grandmother.
- C8: Very much so. And she also feels that... the thing that really worries me, and what I thought I needed help about was that she doesn't seem to be improving any; only periods when we're alone or by ourselves... and... is that she's developing this persecution complex... actually. And she feels that..."Oh, I don't have a daddy, and I have an old sick grandmother", and... and that sort of thing. "And everybody picks on me, and that it wasn't my fault that that little boy got hit in the head with a baseball." She said, "I just threw it in that direction and he happened to step in front of it." And that sort of thing. I'm not so worried now as what she'll be at thirteen or fourteen if this continues.
- T9: M-hm. It would seem too bad that (word lost) continues but what concerns you is, if she feels that... she's gotten the raw of every deal, what that will do to her as time goes on. Is that...?
- C9: Well, she does it quite a bit already. And... financially I'm... I depend upon my mother. I... was working at Marshall Field's and had quite a nice position, but... and Carol was home and going to school, and I could see which way the wind was blowing. They were training me to send me abroad as their picture buyer, and when mother found out about that she had a very severe heart attack and was in bed for three months. I was forced to give up my work, and come home and take care of her. This sounds a little bitter but it's the truth. That I had every sort of an examination made: electrocardiograph and so forth. And her heart... there's absolutely nothing organically wrong with the function of her heart. She complained of severe pains and so forth, which two or three doctors said was from nervous tension caused by... I think the subconscious feeling that she was going to be left alone because... being the oldest daughter I've always been with her – even when I was married there wasn't a day went by that she didn't call me or have me come up for something.
- T10: M-hm. You think it may sound a little bitter to describe those conditions in her, but actually that's the way it is. You do feel a little bitter about the...
- C10: I do. I had to see a psychiatrist to find out actually that I disliked my mother intensely. I love her, but I don't like her very much... if you can see the

difference. And, it isn't exactly her fault either and I realize that. But she absolutely has to be the queen. That was the way she was raised. She was an orphan. Her parents died when she was ten...and she was raised by a grandmother, who sat in starched taffeta and pounded a cane on the floor, and everyone just bowed. And she was raised that way, and I feel that she sort of subconsciously pictures herself that way. Well, we don't respond somehow. And that makes her very unhappy. (Pause)

T11: Feel that you don't quite fit into her picture of queen and subject, and that's ...

C11: That's right. And yet if I were to say that to her, why she would remind me of all she's sacrificed for us, which is true. And I think any mother goes through quite a bit when they raise five children. But nevertheless, I've been hearing what she's sacrificed ever since I was old enough to understand what words meant. And I don't want that to happen to Carol because I'm practically a psychopathic case myself. I feel so guilty about the feelings that I have for her. (T: M-hm.) When I first learned that I just didn't like my mother, I could hardly face it. And... I really have developed a terrific guilt complex.

T12: You want very much that Carol shouldn't feel that...

C12: Should be spared that.

T13: ... way about you. M-hm.

C13: And I don't... I've tried being very firm and ignoring the situation, and... mother will contradict something. I'll say, "Carol, eat your so and so first." And mother will say, "Well, I don't know why she should. As far as I'm concerned, she can have her fruit first." And... so I'll just walk away rather than cause a big scene, because I know if I contradict mother, her stock phrase is, "I demand respect in my own home." But I've tried to explain to her that you don't demand love and you don't demand respect; you sort of earn it. But she demands it because, I guess, her grandmother demanded it and got it. Well, Carol is a year behind. She had to repeat the... her first year in school. She's certainly capable of doing fourth grade work. She's in the third grade now. However she is going to summer school and repeating third grade work and she's a year behind. She loves summer school because it's a smaller class and, I believe, she gets more personal attention. And she's applying herself and getting just excellent grades, so of course that spurs her on to more study. But the same thing happened last summer. She had straight A's in summer school and then she started in regular school, and she wouldn't read. She can. She reads at home. But...

T14: You're afraid that this good record in summer school may be no more permanent than it was last year.

- C14: Last year. That's right. And since she knows the work... but she... she refuses. She rejects and refuses anything. She will... any new food. It's just in the last year since I've practically had to stand over with a ball bat to get her to try new things. (Pause)
- T15: Feel as though it takes every bit of your...
- C15: Strength.
- T16: ... strength that you can possibly bring to bear to get her to do anything of that sort.
- C16: And then she'll say, "Mother, other mothers stick up for their children; why don't you?" Well, here I have my old sick mother on one side, and my little young child on the other, and I'm right in the middle. And I can't say in front of mother, "Well, you're right, Carol." Because that's sort of breeding disrespect for her grandmother, and on the other hand, Carol feels that I'm not taking her side when she's right, and what's the use of being right if... you know...
- T17: M-hm. M-hm.
- C17: So... it's a terrible problem.
- T18: Is this it? That you feel right in the middle between the two to a point where you can't possibly be genuine...
- C18: I can't. I'll take Carol aside sometimes and say, "Well, you know, grandmother's old and she's ill and she doesn't understand quite the way... she's forgotten how it was when she..." and sort of make excuses that way. And Carol at first worried herself sick about... "Oh, do you think grandmother's going to die? Oh, is...." She'd wake up in the morning and say, "Is Grammy still alive?" But now she says, "Oh, that old... that sick stuff; I've heard it for years." It's worn thin. It doesn't have any effect on her. She's becoming sort of callused. And also another thing is that she has an abnormal love of animals. She'll love them and kiss them and pet them. Horses. Even little bugs. And I tried to figure it out in my mind, why that would be? And I felt that, well, she could just love them, and they weren't able to... you know, to scold her or criticize her or anything of that sort.
- T19: M-hm. If I get it, you feel that that attitude on her part is something that somehow you don't quite like, but you feel as though you can understand it. That there she's got some outlet that doesn't criticize her and so on.
- C19: M-hm. A just natural childish exuberance over... oh, running around or yelling or something... my mother thinks she should be in learning to embroider or

- something. (Pause) She's repressed in everything that she does. When... when...
- T20: Feel that she's just walled in on every side.
- C20: She's walled in and I am too.
- T21: M-hm. M-hm.
- C21: And... I just was down for four days and when I came home, why, honestly you'd think that I'd thrown mother into a prison or something. She was with my other brothers and sisters and had a nice time while I was gone. But I've never walked out the door but that she hasn't said, "Well, kiss me because I may not be here when you come back." And I'll say, "Oh, mother don't say things," "Oh, you know I was joking." But nevertheless there's that thought, well... you know, should I have left her?
- T22: M-hm. M-hm. You feel she can always do enough, say enough along that line to just make you question your own...
- C22: Yes. Whether...
- T23: ... behavior a little.
- C23: M-hm.
- T24: "Should I really have done this?"
- C24: M-hm. I've never left that I didn't feel guilty about it. Now the other children – I have two sisters and an older brother, and... it doesn't affect them in the least. They just... just doesn't affect them. Well, it does me, somehow. And I rationalize with myself and say, "Well, now you know she's been doing this for years and she's lived twenty years and nothing's going to...." But nevertheless I still have that feeling that, "Oh, perhaps I shouldn't have left her, and she's afraid of fire, and she's...." All these things. And I hate to see my child grow up that way. Yet as far as I can see, there's nothing else to do right now. I would have married five years ago, had I felt I could leave my mother. Guess I'll come to the point where I guess I'll have to make a choice, if it isn't too late.
- T25: You can tell yourself that... well, these things she says and so on aren't so serious, but still they do hit you in your own feelings, and have kept you from... kept you from marriage, kept you from a lot of things.
- C25: Kept me from a normal life.

- T26: Still you feel that... somehow you've got to come to some kind of choice in regard to this if it isn't too late.
- C26: Yes. And by the same token I know that if I do leave her, that I couldn't possibly be happy, I'd be so worried about her. And I'd feel so badly about leaving a poor old lady alone. 'Course people have said, "Well, she has two other daughters and a son." But the two other daughters and a son, when she had to have this emergency surgery for cancer, they said, "Oh, but are you going to all the trouble of mortgaging the house and everything? Why shouldn't you send her down to the general hospital?" And they fought me every bit of the way. Well, she would have died at that hospital, I feel sure, because she had a pretty tough time with... a blood pressure of two-forty and undergoing surgery and seventy years old. And... so I don't trust them to watch out for her properly.
- T27: So that any thought of leaving her just makes you feel, "But no one would really care for my mother..." I mean that...
- C27: That's right.
- T28: ... it just seems impossible that way.
- C28: And... on the other hand, she's sweet and generous and... and has a sense of humor and she's clean and she's... you know, has a lot of wonderful qualities but...is just a hypochondriac.... It just almost drives... and that... clinging and this making us always feel so sorry for her, and... all that. Well, she can't make us feel sorry any more. She's just building up a resentment. (Pause)
- T29: So you just...
- C29: I may be all wrong... you know.
- T30: M-hm. M-hm. That you don't feel too sure...
- C30: I'm not sure.
- T31: ... in a lot of these things but at least at the moment it seems as though this clinging type of effort on her part no longer seems to make you feel sorry. Instead it makes you feel more and more...
- C31: I resent it.
- T32: ... resentful.
- C32: I resent it because since I was seventeen I've been... or even before that... I've been... doing everything for her. And for my father, too, who is dead now, and

has been for nine years. But he was ill too before he died. He had a series of cerebral hemorrhages and was mentally incompetent for a few years before he died. But I was the one that took over. The others lived their lives. And... (Pause) so I resent the fact that I haven't... that I haven't been allowed to have any fun, ever.

T33: M-hm. Seems to have... since you were seventeen the full burden has been on you...

C33: Well, even before that... even really before that...

T34: Even before that. M-hm.

C34: That at seventeen I financially started to... oh, well, practically support the family.

T35: Even longer than that. You've just felt that you had to be the one to carry the burden...

C35: I took mother's place. (T: M-hm.) With two younger sisters and a little brother who was killed in the war before he was twenty. But he was just a tiny baby. Mother had him when she was forty-six. And she was flat on her back with tuberculosis at the time. So I raised him just like he was my own. In fact, I was just the mother in the family while she was ill. And... however, that sounds rather self-pitying; I don't mean it that way. It was just the way it was, but I want... I want to save Carol from... from any complexes that she might get. And she... she, instead of being sympathetic, the way I was through all the years, she's building up this defense. Like if anyone's ill, why, she, "Oh, I don't want to talk about it. I don't want to see them. I don't care."

T36: M-hm.

C36: "So and so has the mumps. I don't care." And she's... she doesn't say, "Oh, I'll have to send her a little book to read", or anything of that sort. It's just the opposite. She resents it. (Pause)

T37: Feel that instead of the reaction that...

C37: That I had, she...

T38: ... you have had all along, she has...

C38: M-hm

T39: ... just the...

- C39: She's taking the...
- T40: ... reverse.
- C40: ... the opposite. And... there was a time about two years ago that I was quite ill – in and out of the hospital for about five months – and she said, "I'm so sick of seeing your white face laying there on the pillow." Well, she probably was, you know, but I wouldn't have said that to my mother. But she was... just sick to death of me being sick, you know.
- T41: A little disturbing to find her so resentful of illness, and even your illness.
- C41: M-hm. And she's resentful of any discipline and also she's horribly resentful of any criticism. And...I can flatter her into being a little angel. But I don't want her to have to be flattered all the rest of her life.
- T42: M-hm. M-hm.
- C42: Anything unpleasant, she just simply rejects. And daydreams. She'll go off by herself and..."Oh, I was having the most wonderful daydream. I dreamed I was out on a big ranch and there were dozens of horses. And I... and I had this and I had dogs and chickens and everything." And... and I said, "Well, where was I?" Said, "Oh, you were dead." (Laughs) I said, "Well, who took care of you?" "Oh, servants. I had a lot of money." You see? That is kinda nice. Can't you hear that? (Both laugh) "Oh, you were dead." Well, when my mother heard her say that, she said, "I would just whip that child until..." Why, what good would whipping do? That would just make her wish all the more I was dead.
- T43: It may be a little disturbing to think that she has daydreams like that, but certainly your mother's methods don't supply any answer.
- C43: No. (Pause) And she's smart but her grades in school... well, are about average, I should say. But on the other side of the sheet, where it says, character traits and cooperation and avoids needless talking and all the important things, I feel, are N, failure.
- T44: Seems as though all of the things that you really value, I mean, the personality side of it, she just doesn't measure up.
- C44: Seems that she deliberately... and I mean, with actual deliberation, will do these things. Now whether it's to get attention because she can't get attention any other way, I don't know. She deliberately will set out to break every rule that there is. And punishment certainly doesn't seem to correct it. Reward for good behavior

- works sometimes if the reward is big enough, but punishment doesn't. I think that you could actually beat the child to death and she would never give in.
- T45: Sounds as though you feel pretty sure that that's one procedure that just would not work with her. She would battle to the death rather than...
- C45: That's right.
- T46: ... accept punishment.
- C46: That's right. She would. In fact one time when she was a tiny, tiny baby, she knocked a pillow off the bed and she was just learning to toddle. And her father told her to pick it up. She said, "No". And he asked her several times to pick it up and became (word lost). Finally he picked her up and he gave her the worst spanking. Said, "Now, pick the pillow up", and she wouldn't do it. And he lost his temper and he spanked her twice as hard. "Pick that pillow up!" She just wouldn't do it, and she never did. I had to interfere. I was afraid he might actually hurt her. But she wasn't old enough then to realize why she was defying him, why she wouldn't do it.
- T47: Seems that it goes a long ways back in her that she just will not give in to someone else's...
- C47: Will.
- T48: ... will.
- C48: She wouldn't even about being born. (Laughs) I carried her three weeks overtime and finally had to... (laughs) so she just was born being that way, I guess. I don't know whether...
- T49: Looks as though she was stubborn even about coming into the world.
- C49: Yes. She also... contracted typhoid fever at six months... She was... I had a housekeeper who was a typhoid carrier. Of course we didn't know it. And... for three months they... none of the doctors diagnosed... could diagnose the case. They just didn't know what it was. And so I nursed her through those three months and she had a terrifically high temperature, hundred and six, and so... and then it fluctuates in typhoid. It would go down and she'd...it'd be subnormal and chills and so forth. And someone suggested to me that the high temperatures might have... had some effect on the essential nerve system and I... I've... she's a very nervous, high-strung child. She's now in the last two years beginning to sleep well at night. Before that she was restless even in sleeping. And... so I do want to have some tests made to see if there is any damage there.

- T50: So you can't help but be a little concerned that a fever that early and that prolonged...
- C50: Well...
- T51: ... might have done some sort of...
- C51: Well, I don't know. It was suggested to me that it might be one of the reasons that she is so high strung and nervous.
- T52: That's one of the things you would like to check on.
- C52: Yes. M-hm. (Pause) There are so many other little things that I can't think of... right at the moment. (Pause) Another way that she's stubborn is that when I say, no, she can't have candy or whatever it might be, she never gives up. She'll maybe wait an hour and come back. And she'll never... never accept the fact that it's no. And I don't think it's because I have given in consistently. It's simply that she can't accept the fact that she can't have her own way.
- T53: Feel as though she just never gives up really in the intent to have it her way.
- C53: Her way. I sorta... I'd... I've tried to... to think the way she would think or feel. 'Course I can't do it, but I can at least try. And it might be because she wants to sort of prove to herself that she's right, having been criticized so severely and punished and everything, being in school, away from a mother or a... a family. Never being commended about anything. It might be that she won't give up because she wants to feel that she's right in asking for a certain thing.
- T54: That is, you wish you could see it her way or the way it seems to her and this is at least one possibility, that maybe having been wrong so much in the eyes of other people, she's determined that she will be... that this is right, what she wants. Is that...?
- C54: Yes. She's trying to, I think, to justify herself in some way.
- T55: M-hm. Feel as though somehow it's sort of necessary to her to build herself up...
- C55: Yes. M-hm.
- T56: ... or to justify herself somehow.
- C56: Yes. She always has to build herself up. Now, about lying, she doesn't lie. I have yet to find her lying to me. She'll say, "I won't tell you," and she won't. But she won't lie about it. And... that's a quality that I admire inasmuch as I tell

so many lies around the house to smooth things over, which perhaps I shouldn't do, but...I do. That I admire that in her at least.

- T57: One quality you really respect in her because you feel you haven't been able to live up to it yourself, actually.
- C57: That's right. And... she'll... maybe she'll know she'll be punished. But she still won't lie about it. She won't lie about it to get out of being punished or to lose a reward or anything of that sort. So... I've heard people say, "Oh, all she needs is a darn good beating; just once a day, on general principle." Still on the other hand, my two sisters each have two children and to my mind they're just as bad as Carol is. However, they're... I like to feel that they're... it's just stages that children go through, stages of development. But Carol has not been allowed to just go through stages because every stage, according to mother, seems worse than the one before.
- T58: If I get the feeling there, as you look at her and compare her with... your sisters' children and so on... you don't feel hopeless about her, and you feel these are perhaps just stages any child would have to live through. But in her case, those stages are made so much more difficult by your mother's attitude.
- C58: Well, they're magnified and they're enlarged upon, and... they're... she's criticized so severely for... oh, everything that she does. And... radio. All kids like cowboy radio programs now. And according to my mother, that shows a low mentality. She should be reading little educational books and things of that sort. Well, I have yet to see a child who doesn't know about Hopalong Cassidy and all that... Tonto and the Indians and who likes that kind of excitement. When I was her age we didn't have radios... well, little crystal sets or something although we didn't. But I used to get the same sort of fun out of actually doing it. I was raised in the country and I had a horse, and I roamed the hills all day long by myself when I was eight and nine. And I was down along the waterside all day, and mother didn't worry about us then. She had five of us to worry about so she couldn't possibly have worried as much about it. But if she has a radio program, I almost have to sneak it, which is bad. She has a radio in her room by her bed, and I'll say, "Well, if you go in there and close the door and be very still and keep it down very low, you might be able to hear one radio program." Of course, mother listens to soap operas all morning long. You know, the other type of thing. But this doesn't seem fair to her. And I feel that my hands are tied. Perhaps I'm at fault... more than mother is. In fact, I know I am, but I've sort of become a coward where mother's concerned. I'll do anything to avoid one of the scenes that she puts on about little things. Such little things.
- T59: Makes you feel badly to think that you really have to protect your child to have a little... foolish amusement.

- C59: Certainly.
- T60: It makes you feel as though... you are a mouse in your relationship to your mother and...
- C60: Oh, I definitely am.
- T61: ... yes...
- C61: I know I am. And yet I don't know exactly what to do about it.
- T62: Simple enough to say that, but to see how in the world it could be otherwise... that's really perplexing.
- C62: Well, it is to me because... if I left her, I'd just be tormented with the thought that she's not taken care of and unhappy and ill, and...
- T63: Just seems as though leaving her wouldn't be the answer for you or for her.
- C63: No. It wouldn't. Unless I... 'course it all comes back to, if I had about a thousand dollars a month income, everything I think would just work out fine. But... I don't. (Laughing) And there's no hope of that. So I can't even dream about that.
- T64: You can't help but feel that that would be a big help in the solution of the difficulty.
- C64: I think that it's just wrong for the three of us... the three generations to have to live together. I think it's wrong for any old person to have to live around a young child. I think it's difficult for mother. I think that all the little things that I sort of take for granted, and the yelling and screaming and the running in and out and the slamming of doors and... I'm young enough to... it doesn't bother me. To mother, it sends her into a spasm and it's difficult for her.
- T65: Just isn't easy for any of you and you do wonder whether the three generations can possibly live together comfortably, all things considered.
- C65: Without any harmful after effects on the youngest. That's actually what I'm worrying about. This terrific resentment against criticism and rejection of any suggestion or... well, just a rejection of anything new.
- T66: I see that our time's up for today. I think Miss North has talked with you about possibly coming in twice a week. Would you like to do that?
- C66: Yes. If I have anything... worthy to discuss.

T67: Well...certainly would leave it up to you. Would you like to come in at 1:30 on Friday?

C67: M-hm.

T68: See you at that time.

C68: All right.

[End of interview]

THE CASE OF MRS. SAR
Second Interview
(seven days later)

Although Mrs. Sar had made her appointment for the second interview two days following the first, she called up on that date to say she was ill and could not come. Miss North contacted her the following day and an appointment was made the next Wednesday, which was a week from the day of the first interview.

T69: Well, do you know where you want to begin this morning? Or whether you would like to begin?

C69: Well, you get me started. (Both laugh) There is one thing I have been sort of thinking about a great deal and that is the reasons that there is such a strong conflict between the three of us living together. And I have been trying to figure out whether it is because I love Carol more than I do my mother and she resents that subconsciously. It's... there is some reason that every minute of the day when the three of us are together there is some tension.

T70: You have been trying to kind of sort out and figure out what are those reasons. I mean, is it...

C70: I think that the whole thing is that mother's authority has been sort of taken away from her, in a certain way...

T71: Seriously damaged.

C71: Yes. And that has been quite a problem. Every morning it is the same thing. This morning it was the same thing. Carol was late for summer school and happened to brush by mother rather hurriedly and mother just has a fit about it. "I'm older. I'm your grandmother. How dare you. Why didn't you ask me to step aside?" And that sort of thing. And so I have taken Carol outside and I said, "Now, Carol dear, just butter mama up, just see how that will work." But that doesn't work either so I don't know what will work.

T72: That is, you feel at a loss as to how to handle it, but you think that perhaps one of the basic troubles is anyway is that your mother feels decidedly deprived of some of the authority and position that she had or that she feels she should have.

C72: Yes. Now I could make her feel that she was the ruler as she so often speaks of herself as being the ruler of the family, if it were not for Carol and that the influence it has on her. Countermanding every order that I give her or any suggestions that I give her. I sort of have to laugh to myself. I went home last Wednesday and Carol had one of her fiendish streaks on, and I stood it for two or

three hours. So finally I grabbed her out in the patio and gave her a terrific spanking – beating her, I should say – with a switch and sent her to bed with no supper. The first time I ever done that in my life. And I thought that, well, that was what the child guidance clinic did to me. (Both laugh) But she responded very well to that because we had fried chicken that night. And so I had to go to sketch class a little later and Carol went to sleep finally. And I found out the next day that mother had gone in and wakened her for she still hadn't had any dinner and said, "You poor little thing. How does your poor little stomach feel? Does it burn from lack of food?" And pretty soon, Carol was saying, "Oh, yes, it burns. And I feel empty from here to here." And so mother brought her in Jello and ice cream and cookies. And when I came home at eleven o'clock, Carol was still up reading the funny books and listening to the radio and chewing on cookies and raisins and things. And so you see, it just didn't do any good. And Carol asked me the next morning, "Did you ever go to bed without your supper?" And I said, "Well, yes, a few times." Of course, there were five of us and it makes a little difference when there is more in the family. She said, "Well, grandma told me that you were just cruel." Well, that made me think maybe she is trying to turn Carol against me, subconsciously, without realizing it. She is trying to win her, let's say, approval or love or whatever you might call it by, in a sneaky way, I'll be frank. I think that's very sneaky.

T73: Is this what you're saying? You acted pretty spontaneously, almost explosively maybe and gave Carol a whipping, which... but as you look at the results of that you are sort of fearful that the only real result of that was that it gave an opening for your mother in quite a sneaky fashion to try to take Carol away from you. Is that...?

C73: Certainly. That's right. And I can't understand the reason for it. Maybe I shouldn't have put her to bed without her dinner, but I have to punish her somehow when she gets so – just mean. But still on the other hand, if I had her go drink a glass of vinegar, I should think that being that mother, I should be allowed to raise my own child the way I want to. Now, last year, a couple of years ago, every time I'd even say anything to Carol, mother would fly to her defense. I couldn't punish her in any way. In fact, that's one of the reasons that she has no respect for... for really either of us... is that, if I said something, my mother'd say, "How dare you talk that way to your little girl. Poor little thing." And she was in boarding school and made her feel so sorry for herself and... but now she doesn't... oh, if she'd have a heart attack. But... if I knew the reason, if I knew why this terrific resentment or... this feeling that she has, where she has to... And she does the same thing with me. I mean, she'll say to Carol, "Oh, your poor little mother. And she's sacrificing everything for you," and all that sort of thing. She just plays us one against the other. Carol plays us one against the other. And I certainly have to play them one against the other. And if I knew the reason... I'm certainly not faultless or infallible by any means, but if I knew the

reason that mother would deliberately do these things, maybe I could do something about it.

- T74: I get two feelings there. That you're saying on the one hand, "I have to be and I want to be Carol's mother with the responsibilities." That that means, both for praise and punishment and so on. And the other feeling I get is that... you feel that it's practically impossible to function in that way because of this three-cornered playing off of one person against another on Carol's part, your mother's part and your part, too.
- C74: That's it exactly. But I still feel that if I could somehow find the reason behind it all, if I could... I think that I know that mother was, as she says, the ruler, even over my father and there were five children and my father, and of course, she did have to sort of have to take over because my father was an artist, and a typical artist. He didn't know a dime from a dollar and cared less, I guess. But... mother had to do that, and now that the other children are married and have moved away, it's sort of like a chicken with one last chick. And... maybe the last chick is grown up and she can't accept it. I don't know.
- T75: M-hm. That is, you...
- C75: But what to do about it.
- T76: M-hm. At any rate, as you try to understand the why of your mother's behavior, it could well be that... as little by little, all of her responsibilities have faded away. Now she focuses on the one chick who is growing up, but perhaps she can't accept it. But that even understanding it that way, leaves you still very much up against it as to what the hell to do.
- C76: That's it exactly. I've tried... oh... in fact, this morning, I tried to talk with her a little. And she becomes... I think that she... she feels useless and... no one seems to need her. They get along fine without her. And I think she realizes that. But all old people should... even when they're young, should realize that some day, that the time will come when they will be old and their life is... life of a usefulness is over.
- T77: In other words, you can understand that she might feel pretty useless and out of it, but still it seems to you that... she should somehow have been prepared for that. That everyone ought to know that that kind of period is bound to come. Is that...?
- C77: M-hm. Well, don't you? Don't you look ahead and think, "Well, I'm eighty. I'm not going to be having a class and being needed and teaching and so forth and I... in the meantime, I will... make other interests so that when I'm ninety-five and can't walk any more, I'll have, oh, something"? I do. And when Carol doesn't

- need me to dress her any more, or to... that... why, something else will come in and take its place. I feel that's the normal way of life.
- T78: Seems as though anybody should be that playful, should be thinking ahead to that degree.
- C78: I sometimes feel that I have two children. That Carol is ten and mother's about five. Just at the spoiled age. I think I'm right there, too. And...
- T79: Really feel as though... that is, quite a true description of your situation that actually you're dealing with...
- C79: Two children.
- T80: ... two children, and your mother is the youngest by several degrees.
- C80: (Laughing) Oh, yes. They'll sit and argue about, "You said it first." "No, I didn't. You said it first." "Well, how do you know." "Well, don't you..." And they'll argue like two children. I've heard people say, "Well, how are your two kiddies coming along, Rita?" And it's sort of an accepted fact. And yet she isn't a childish person. She's intelligent and she can carry on a conversation, and she's well-read and she isn't... childish in the way that old people, we sort of associate the word childish with... she's... I would say, immature emotionally rather than chi.... She never grew up.
- T81: M-hm. It isn't childishness of old age. But...
- C81: No.
- T82: ... you feel it's more a basic immaturity that she never has grown up.
- C82: I don't think so. I feel like just saying to everybody, "Well, what should I do?" But, you know, they tell me what to do. I've been told a hundred times, "Well, move away. You shouldn't be living with your mother." But as I explained last week or a couple of weeks ago, that isn't the answer to my (laughing) problem because if I left her alone, I'd worry myself sick about what was happening to her and... so forth.
- T83: M-hm. In other words, you just feel very much like asking the world, "What shall I do?" And yet you've gotten so many answers.
- C83: They're all the same.
- T84: All the same answer. But still it is not the answer for you.

- C84: I can't change myself. I mean, I can't make myself be hardboiled and say, "Well, she's lived her life and I have my life to live and I have my child to consider. And... this is having an affect on her, and... causing complexes in you and..." I can tell myself all of that and rationalize, but then when it comes time to leaving poor old sick mother at home alone, well, she won't even make herself a cup of tea.
- T85: That if you were somebody else, why, maybe you could be this hardboiled person who would look at it in that way, but somehow in your own feelings, that isn't you, and you just can't handle it in the way that somebody else thinks would be fine.
- C85: I... have been going with a man for six years. Poor guy. We're always waiting for a change. So he told me last night, he certainly couldn't move in there and as long as I couldn't move away, we better call the whole thing off. Which gave me a sort of a funny feeling, inasmuch as I'd been thinking, "Well," and I... (laughing) been thinking, "Well, if mother dies and..." then that gives me a guilty feeling, thinking, "Well, gee, I must be hoping that she dies", which I'm not of course. Or maybe I am, I don't know. Being very honest. And so then that sort of little hope for the future is removed. And... (Pause) it sounds, the way I tell it that, "Oh, poor child. I'm sacrificing my life for my old sick mother." Well, it isn't that exactly. Really. I don't mean to give that impression. But I am trying to find out the reason. And we could go on for a few more years if there was just some way that I could appease mother and obey her and build her up and everything, without it affecting my child because it doesn't matter to me. I understand enough that... that I could do that.
- T86: M-hm. That is, if you were the only one involved, you feel as though, well, you could kind of submerge yourself and build her up and so on...
- C86: Certainly.
- T87: ... and get along on that kind of an appeasement basis.
- C87: M-hm.
- T88: But with Carol there that doesn't seem so possible. And then the other feeling that you seem to be expressing is that, it is kind of a shock to think that you may be giving up this man simply because you can't find a real solution to the whole problem at home. Is that...?
- C88: That's right. Although I'm not giving him up. He's given me up.
- T89: M-hm. M-hm.

- C89: So... (Pause) Well, that's the problem. Then I thought quite seriously about putting Carol back in school again. Well, I went through that... before, for four years, she was in school and it certainly didn't do her any good. So it's the lesser of the two evils. Keep her home in that atmosphere, or put her in a school where maybe other things will develop. Or just walk out on mother and then I think that would more or less destroy me. I don't mean physically, but...
- T90: M-hm. So that... you explore various alleys and they all look as though they had stone walls at the end of them.
- C90: Dead-end.
- T91: Maybe you could place Carol, and you feel sure that would do her no good. It didn't before and you don't think it would this time. Or you could walk out on your mother, and that might be perfectly lovely from somebody else's point of view and would just be hell for you.
- C91: That's right.
- T92: Or you could try to go on as at present and that seems equally undesirable.
- C92: Well, it's just a constant battle twenty-four hours a day to try to keep peace in the family. And to be honest, it's making a nervous wreck out of me. And I feel helpless... absolutely helpless in the face of it. There's no question about it. Carol is an unusual child, little different, but not too much so. All of her little faults are exaggerated and enlarged upon and I think that mother does it so that she can say, "Well, if I had had my way, she wouldn't be this way...." I think...now, that's a real mean way of thinking, but I've tried every other avenue of thought as to... as to why she feels that way. And...
- T93: It may sound mean on your part, but it seems to you that she really exaggerates Carol's faults so as to build up herself in that, now, "if I had Carol's (word lost) it wouldn't have been true."
- C93: Yeah. M-hm. M-hm. That's right. And... I... it took me a year to get her to stay in her room until after I'd given Carol her breakfast because it... yackety-yack at the table. So the last few days, she's been coming out and saying, "Well, I have to come out because someone has to take the initiative to give Carol a decent breakfast." Well, Carol has a decent breakfast... I feel. And... so, that was just untrue. But she wanted to get out there and be useful, I think, and feel like she was helping and running the place, and telling Carol to use this spoon for her grapefruit and that and... so forth, you know. Seems like she always has to be telling people what to do. Or... I mean, really telling them. Demanding that they do it. Demanding that we love her. Demanding that we show her respect.

- T94: So that for a time you thought that you had the breakfast issue at least, partly...
- C94: Yeah.
- T95: ... handled, only to be defeated by your mother's need to feel useful and her need to feel that, "Now you do thus and so."
- C95: M-hm. Carol used to leave the breakfast table, run to school and beat up on six little first-graders, you know. I think to just get it out of her system. And I had a terrible time with her the first year she was in school. It was awful. I went over to talk to the teacher about it, and while I was talking to the teacher about it, why, in came two little tiny boys. "Carol beat up on me." Well, you see, even while I was there and everything. And she isn't mean. She isn't a mean child because I've felt like doing the same thing. In fact, I do with my painting. I go out and paint so fast and furiously that I get it out of me that way.
- T96: M-hm. M-hm.
- C96: So...
- T97: You beat up on the painting, where Carol beats up on...
- C97: Yeah. (Laughing) Children.
- T98: ... children.
- C98: Anything that's available, I guess. Well, I realize too that it's up to me to... make the decision. I've seen some people go into a tizzy about what dress they're going to wear for the day. And it... you just have to make a decision... one way or another and stick to it. And I've done that. I do that every morning, but by ten o'clock, why, I'm... I'm undecided again. (Laughs)
- T99: M-hm. M-hm. But you realize that... some of the... that the responsibility for that choice... for some of the choices to be made is yours. There just isn't any way of getting away from it, even though you look somewhat disappointedly, but yet the fact that... yeah, you make all those choices now, but they melt as rapidly as they're made.
- C99: Then too, I might be exaggerating my own sense of importance. Maybe I'm following in my mother's footsteps and assuming responsibility for the whole thing, and thinking that I have to settle. There, that comes in, that comes in under indecision and lack of self-confidence and... all that. You know? Maybe I think I'm too important. And I get those feelings. At night, I get those.

T100: I'm not quite sure I get it. Let me see if I do. That... one possible way of feeling about it is that maybe you regard yourself as having too much... place in it. Maybe you look upon yourself as being too important.

C100: Well, I'm afraid...

T101: And when you get those... when you get those ideas... and here's where I'm not quite clear: then that makes you feel more indecisive and lacking in confidence and so on?

C101: M-hm.

T102: M-hm. M-hm. Oh, yes. I see. 'Cause that would sort of undermine any of the thinking you had done that maybe it doesn't amount to anything; you're just looking at yourself as...

C102: M-hm.

T103: ... more important than you really are.

C103: Yeah. You have to look at it that way or else you just go overboard. I mean, let's see, I'm not being very clear, I guess. But... maybe I'm exaggerating the whole situation. May...

T104: That you're just seeing problems where none exist, and so on... now... where, at least...

C104: Well, I'm...

T105: ... where they aren't as large as you...

C105: ... wondering if I am. I'm to the point where I'm wondering if I am. I see other families and there's quarreling and fighting and all this, and it's over with and everything goes on smoothly. Maybe I'm too apprehensive about Carol's future. Maybe I ta- am too intense about it all. Or... maybe I'm not, you see?

T106: M-hm. That you feel very uncertain really as to how to feel about the darn thing. I mean...

C106: M-hm. That's right.

T107: Maybe you take it too much within yourself, maybe you see it in too magnified terms; maybe not; maybe both things.

C107: But if I were sure of myself, if I were really sure that this would be the right thing to do, then I would do it, regardless of consequences. But I rationalize with myself, and I talk to myself and I wonder. Now, I have this train of thought: mother would be a hell of a lot better off without Carol and I, she could get her little old ladies in, they could paint watercolors and they could do this and they could do that. And Carol and I would be having our own lives and so forth, and she'd be a lot better off, and the other children would pay more attention to her, knowing that she was alone and that would make her feel better. And on the other hand, I go away for two or three days and I come back and she's sick. She's had a heart attack. She's been too weak to cook for herself, even make a cup of tea or something. So... and it's too much of a problem to try them at all.

T108: M-hm. M-hm. It just isn't feasible to try every possible course of action, but you realize that if you could come to an assurance in yourself that this is really the best thing to do, then you know you could go through with it, if you felt sure within yourself. Is that...?

C108: That's right. But how... how do we make ourselves feel sure? I mean, how are we sure that it's the right thing?

T109: How do we get any sense of assurance inside?

C109: I've never had too much of it in any event. I've always been rather... wondering because I grew up about the same way Carol is growing up, you know, criticism. And... I'd think I was doing something wonderful and... and it would turn out that it would be entirely the wrong thing and through the years, why, it's... left a mark on me, I guess. I got up extra early the other morning and made biscuits because mother loves them. And she just bawled the heck out of me because we still had a loaf of bread left. Though I thought that would be nice for her but, you see, those little things that happen through the day, every day, sort of grow into big things without you really realizing it.

T110: That both back in your childhood and in, at the present time, in your relationship with your mother, there are all kinds of things to make you feel less sure of yourself. I mean, that something that to you seems fine or good or a...

C110: M-hm.

T111: ... nice idea, is all of a sudden no good, and...

C111: Uhm. Yes. Even as a child, I can remember trying to do things to please mother and it just happened it was the wrong thing. And then things that I've done that were of no consequence to me, why, mother would praise. So it confused me as to whether I... and then she's always saying, "You don't use the right judgement. It's going to be cold today. You must be crazy to let her go to school without her

coat.” And... I’ll say, “Well, is it going to be cold? I didn’t think so, but... well, maybe it is.” You know? And then all the time, Carol’s hearing this, “Well, is my mother crazy not to put a coat on me.” You know? And... so she’s growing up not having confidence in her mother, which she should have. And...

T112: That all kinds of things have happened to make you feel, “Gosh, I don’t really know what’s what. I mean, my judgement isn’t any good” and so on.

C112: M-hm.

T113: And you don’t like the effect that that has on Carol any more than you like it in yourself. I mean, that it doesn’t give her a feeling toward you of the sort that you’d like.

C113: That’s right. (Pause) And yet, way down inside of me, I do feel that I’m right. (Laughs) I don’t know how you can feel both ways. Well, I do feel that I’m right. And that, I feel that even if I’m not right, “Let me learn myself.” And that’s a resentment.

T114: M-hm. M-hm.

C114: I’m always being told to do things, how to do things.

T115: So that somehow below this level of feeling, “I don’t know anything,” is some kind of deeper feeling, “But I really am right.”

C115: Right. M-hm.

T116: “And why shouldn’t I have a chance to...”

C116: M-hm.

T117: “...learn what’s right in my own way, even if sometimes I’m wrong.” Is that...?

C117: That’s right. (Laughs) It’s... sort of mixed up.

T118: Sort of contradictory.

C118: M-hm. I think though that it all comes back and it all boils down to... our ego, which is (laughs)... not only mine, but mother’s, is almost a sense of... oh, it’s sort of relative to self-preservation, you know – our ego. And that they say is the strongest instinct we have. That mother has to be... the... she has to be the... the big shot. And there must be times when she’s known that I’ve been right. That she’s caused a scene and a quarrel and so forth, just to prove that she was right.

Now, I feel that way, too. I mean, I want to be right, and I want to... I... everything, but not to the extreme that she does.

T119: Feel that in a sense that each of you have to try to preserve yourself. She's trying to say, even when you're right, "Well, you're wrong" because that builds her up.

C119: So it'll make her seem right. M-hm.

T120: And you know that you sometimes react in, perhaps, somewhat the same way, though not quite to that... extreme.

C120: Well, I've submerged it so many years. I haven't come out and said anything. And it's just been lately... the last year and a half that I have even tried to take a stand against her. And I think it's making it worse.

T121: Feel that in the last year or more, you have made some attempt to really... what? To be yourself, even against her. But you're afraid that's made things worse than ever.

C121: Yes. It's made her try more to be always right, you see. It's put her more on the defensive, let's say, against me. And over such trivial, little tiny things like whether the windows should be open on the south side or not. Ooh, it's a great big issue. People have said, "When I walked into your house, you'd think that having dinner was the Lord's last supper." (T: Laughs.) Everything is so important as to where your place is... you know. And... "why did you do this", and... I've trained her to do this, and... always... wanting... the center of attraction, let's say.

T122: So that you feel that this... trying to stand against her has really made.

C122: Well...

T123: ... the whole business such a battle ground that every little thing is...

C123: Oh, yes.

T124: ... extremely important.

C124: Oh, yes.

T125: A big issue.

C125: And as to how long the potatoes boiled. And... how to cook certain foods or something. It's always... she's in and out of the kitchen a thousand times, looking to see how things are getting along. And that gives me a feeling of, "Oh, why the

- h--- don't you get out and let me..." You know, turning up the fire. I turn it down. She turns it up. I turn it down. It goes on through the whole meal. (Laughs)
- T126: Attempts... her part and then your part, trying to have control of the situation until you just feel, "Why the hell don't you get out."
- C126: Yes, I do. And that's a terrible way to feel about your own mother, but I do.
- T127: Don't feel very proud of that, but that is the way you feel.
- C127: Well, that's right. For Carol's sake, I feel. And my own, too, of course. But it just can't go on. (Pause) I still wish I could find out how I can make mother feel like a queen and... and still not have it affect Carol. I think that would be the answer if I could do that. But I'm not much of a diplomat, I'm afraid.
- T128: M-hm. Feel that if you could sort of appease your mother without its having an effect on Carol, that would be... lovely.
- C128: Well, then it would be worth it to make the last years of her life... make her life... make her... I know how it is to feel, you know, not needed and useless and so forth. Must be terrible. And... but when it has such an effect on the child, I don't think it's worth it.
- T129: That is, you can understand enough of how your mother must feel that... you really wouldn't have any objection, as far as you're concerned, to doing a number of things that would submerge your own interests for her. But... when you think of the effect on Carol, that's a horse of a different color.
- C129: M-hm. (Pause) Mother and I never had a cross word or a... difference of opinion as far as she knew. There was, but I never said anything until Carol came home to live. Because it's easy for me to give in to her and let her think she's right. What difference does it make? (Pause)
- T130: With just the two of you, you got along comfortably because you were quite willing to submerge yourself.
- C130: M-hm.
- T131: M-hm. But when Carol came into the picture...
- C131: Oh, brother. Fireworks. (Pause) I don't know. (Laughs) It's really, real serious with me.
- T132: Cuts very deep.

- C132: Yeah. (Pause) If Carol were fifteen or so, maybe I could... maybe she would understand more how it is to be old and sick and so forth. But, as I said, before, she's so sick of this old and sick deal that she's growing up to even not like old people. And she used to say, when she was a tiny little girl, she'd say, "Oh, look at the cute little old lady." And she just loved old people and dogs. And... now, she's saying, "Oh, that old person, so he's old." Not liking old people.
- T133: That you kind of like to hope that... things would be so much better if she really had some understanding of your mother. But...
- C133: At, just turned ten, she can't... I mean, right is right and wrong... is wrong... in her judgment. And... either it's hot or it's cold, and... you know how kids are. So... I'm hoping to get mother down to the Dunes for a month this summer. That's another thing, I... whenever she goes any place or is away for dinner at night or even to a show, I feel so happy. And then I feel guilty about feeling happy.
- T134: M-hm. M-hm. It seems to you as though you have no right whatsoever to be happy that she's away.
- C134: That's right. (Laughs) M-hm. And that things just are so fine, you know, with Carol and I when she's not there. And I get to feeling, "Well, this isn't right that I should be so glad that she's gone." And then that sort of puts a damper on things for me, too.
- T135: Makes you feel as though, "It's very bad and very reprehensible that I should feel pleased and to be having such a good time just because she's gone."
- C135: M-hm. And I think... I sort of have a complex about death anyway. And then I think of when, not to myself, but with other people, then I think of, "Oh, well, when she's dead, why... oh, I'll... gee, I'll be sorry for the way I talked to her that day, and..."
- T136: Just feel sure that you'll feel very guilty about the things you've done and the kind of relationship that you had with her.
- C136: M-hm. Well, when I was seventeen, a man who was quite a good deal older than myself, shot himself in front me because I... he blamed it on me because I wouldn't marry him... sounds like a true story or something. But... I realize now that he was an alcoholic and was on his last... I don't know. He would have done it anyway. But for years, I blamed myself for that. And so... then I feel sort of... am inclined to... to blame my, blame myself for... for things. And everybody else blamed me, too. And particularly my family because he was a very wealthy man and it could have answered a lot of problems.

T137: So that for a long time you fell really that you had caused this death, and that you were blamed, not only by yourself, but by your family...

C137: M-hm.

T138: ... and... that that has made it...

C138: Did I tell you this? I haven't told very many people, I don't think.

T139: I see.

C139: But then my little brother was killed overseas. He wasn't even twenty. He's the little brother that I had practically raised myself. And mother said in her hysteria, "Oh, it should have been you. And, oh, he had his life a-..." So then there was another's feeling of, "Oh, it should have been you, really." And then there have been several instances that have been sort of more or less... connected.

T140: In connection with his death, you were kind of given the feeling that, "Well, you were the one that..."

C140: Oh, it's... yes...

T141: "... should have died instead of him."

C141: ... it... M-hm. If either of us had to die, why... I should have... been the one. And... that, of course, is foolish, but... the baby of the family. And I can sort of understand her feeling that too, in a way. Although... not exactly either, but...

T142: M-hm. In a way, you can understand it, but still... not quite.

C142: But still, I don't like to understand it. So with this complex that I have, and this feeling of indecision and of... lack of confidence... and it's made it doubly hard to... to make up my mind what to do.

T143: It's all of these things that made it just that much tougher for you to gain any of this assurance within yourself... that you don't...

C143: M-hm. That's because when mother has a heart attack, you know, I keep thinking, "My gosh, you know... I better... I better not let Carol cry or this... because she might die." And she has been sick all of her life. And the very thought of her dying affects me more than just her loss would. Because I feel that I would be the cause of it, let's say, again, sort of subconsciously.

T144: M-hm. M-hm. It's that feeling that, "My golly, I might again be responsible for somebody's death."

C144: Uhm,hmm. And she's used it. I think she understands about that a little bit. And then I lost a child, too, when I was first married, through a... well, I guess, it wasn't really any fault of my own, but I didn't particularly want the baby and I didn't care a lot while I was carrying her. But then at birth, after she died, why, then I... hated myself for ever having thought that... that... you know. 'Course I didn't want it to die or anything, but... the reason I didn't want her was simply because of my husband. He was a louse that I thought...

T145: There was another situation in which you felt terrible guilty...

C145: Several. M-hm.

T146: ... about death and...

C146: M-hm.

T147: ...somehow sort of a feeling as though...

C147: And... yeah. And that's why I just can't walk out and leave mother, which I know is the best thing to do: the best thing for all of us. So actually the problem lies with me.

T148: M-hm. Least it's for reasons like that that walking out on her just has a very different meaning for you than...

C148: Yes. M-hm.

T149: ... for anyone else.

C149: Time's up.

T150: I'm afraid we're going to have to stop this morning. Would you like to come in again Friday at 1:30? Would that be feasible? Or next week at this same time, whichever you want?

C150: Well, let's see... would you like to know now?

T151: Don't have to.

C151: M-hm. Well, I'd like to come if I can possibly make it.

T152: M-hm. All right. Or... here's one other thought. It could be... if it's the 1:30 hour that's difficult...

C152: It's the afternoon that's difficult for me.

T153: Would eleven o'clock Friday suit you better?

C153: Yes.

T154: Would you be able to come at that time?

C154: M-hm. Eleven o'clock...

T155: Well, that would be all right.

C155: Eleven o'clock would be better and then I can get Carol in school and...

T156: I see. All right. Well, then, let's make it eleven o'clock on Friday.

C156: M-hm. All right. Fine.

[End of second interview]

THE CASE OF MRS. SARS
Third Interview
(two days later)

T157: Well, how goes the battle?

C157: Well, I've made a stupendous discovery. I... let's see, what is the discovery now? I had it all out in my mind. Oh, that... sort of occurred to me that a ten-year-old and a seventy-year-old wouldn't be as mentally alert as someone between them, and that perhaps it's been my fault entirely in overcompensating to mother, in fact... in other words, spoiling her. So I made up my mind like I do every morning, but I think this time it's gonna work, that I would try to... oh, to be calm and quiet. And... if she does go into one of her spells to just, more or less, ignore it as you would a child who throws a tantrum just to get attention. So I tried it. And she... over some little things. And she jumped up from the table and went into her room. Well, I didn't rush in and say, "Oh, I'm sorry." And beg her to come back and I simply just ignored it. So in a few minutes, why, she came back and sat down and was a little sulky, but she was over it. So I'm going to try that for a while and... I'm going to look more within myself rather than trying to analyze why mother is this way, and why Carol is this way. And... see if... if it isn't within myself. That I am actually the one at fault for allowing the two of them to control me and emotionally upset me and put me in such a position that I'm filled with fears.

T158: That does sound like a discovery. Let me see if I really get it. That... as you've thought it over, you feel as though really when you come right down to it, you're the most responsible or potentially the most responsible individual of the trio.

C158: That's right.

T159: And that... as I get this that maybe you can... maybe you can be responsible for the attitudes you have rather than looking to them to... just reacting to what they do, that you can look within yourself and... take a stand in terms of the way you feel, or do things without them... without being quite such a tennis ball for their feelings. Does that... that catch it at all?

C159: Yes, that's right. And then still my resentments that I have, although I try to hide them, must be apparent. They, in turn, react upon mother, I'm sure. And... then her reactions, in turn, will react upon Carol and then it comes right back to me again. And... so...

T160: What are you saying there? That, in other words, you never can get away from the fact that your resentments do enter in to the situation...

C160: Well, why not face it? You see, I've been feeling so horrible and thinking what a horrible person I was to resent my mother. Well, let's just say, okay, I resent her and I'm sorry, but let's face it, and I'll try to make the best of it, say...

T161: It just is one of the facts in the situation. Is that...?

C161: Yes.

T162: "And let's deal with it as a fact."

C162: As a fact. And I'm afraid that I have been more or less an escapist, inasmuch as I've tried to escape the realization that I do resent her. And I resent her interference. And so why not... anyway, I'm going to try it.

T163: M-hm. That is, you sort of felt that somehow you could, you could dodge that or you could avoid it...

C163: Smooth it over.

T164: ... and now you're saying, "All right. I have those feelings. I'll try to accept them and set in terms of them." Is that... quite sure of the last part.

C164: Well, just to accept it, as you would, say, a physical defect and make the best of it. To realize that it's there. Possibly in accepting it, I won't feel that it's such an issue and... and feeling that it isn't such a big thing, why, it might diminish. Who knows?

T165: M-hm. It just doesn't seem quite so... quite so awful to accept it as an aspect of yourself, is that...?

C165: Yes. Doesn't... I don't know whether it's the talking about it or getting it out of my mind, or what it is, but it doesn't seem so wicked that I resent her any more than I would resent some stranger who was the same way. Now... there's nothing in the world that requires me to love her. Actually when you come down to it, tradition and training and all that, respect thy mother and so forth, but there's nothing that requires me to love her. I think the only true love in the world is a mother for its child. That seems instinctive, that you love them through thick and thin, even in animals. But, so if I try not to love her, and just accept it as she would a rainstorm that... it was inevitable, and maybe it will... so then that in turn, I believe... well, I sort of feel it a little bit now... will make me less tense and watchful for what she's going to say and how Carol will react, and if I can accept that, then maybe she will learn to accept the fact that I'm a little calmer and a little... anyway, I'm going to try it.

T166: Sounds as though lots of things have gone on in you. And if I get part of this last, it is, "I don't have to feel a certain way toward her."

C166: Right.

T167: "I can just feel as I feel toward her." I mean that "I can..."

C167: Yes, and I'm not...

T168: "... and... and then I won't have to feel so tense and so on guard and..."

C168: So guilty and so... overcompensating and if I... contradict her then I feel like I'm a cad and I... I quick go and try to do something for her, which is against my instinct, really. But then, on the other hand, I feel like I should and that way it's made her well... it's made her sort of expect all this... attention to... it's sort of like lovers' quarrels: it's so fun to make up. I mean that sort of principle, you know.

T169: M-hm. M-hm. Feel as though by acting as you feel you should act rather than in terms of your instincts or your natural way of reacting, you've sort of built up in her a certain expectation that you will... run to her as it were, and you don't...

C169: M-hm. It's been more or less subconscious all these things that I've done, that I'm sort of trying to bring out now. But... people do overcompensate when they feel guilty, I feel. And... and I know that I have been doing that all my life. And she's the one that made me feel guilty in the first place for all she went through to bring me into the world, you know. But I don't... I certainly don't feel that way about Carol.

T170: You can see that a lot of the things you've done have been because you have felt so guilty and yet as you look at that, she's really the one that had made you feel guilty.

C170: In the beginning. But actually, I should have had enough intelligence to... if I hadn't been... so... let's say... if my emotions hadn't been so vulnerable, let's say... I would never have gradually, through the years, come to the point where I am now. If she said, "Oh, I'm sick and you've made me sick, and you bad girl," and all that when I was a little child like Carol, if I had thought, "Well, if I hadn't made her sick, someone else would have." Which is exactly what happens, you know. (Pause) Well, anyway I'm going to try... it all comes back to me. I think that... I'm the responsible one. I'm the one to make a definite change in the situation there. And... if mother actually does have a heart attack, why, I'll just have to accept it that she would have had it anyway, as I did with this man who killed himself. He would have killed himself anyway, but it took me years to

- learn that. And so then I won't be afraid that she'll become ill and die and all that sort of thing. I'll just think, "Well, she would have anyway."
- T171: That is, you feel that you can realize that there are realistic things that may happen. She may have a heart attack... or serious things may happen.
- C171: Really.
- T172: But that... feel as though perhaps now you could look at that as something that happened, not something that you were personally responsible for. Is that...?
- C172: Yes. I think it all boils down to ego or something, that I feel that. Why should I feel that I'm responsible for everything that happens? Why should I praise myself for something wonderful and condemn myself for something bad? Because no one person is that important.
- T173: Feel that in that sense you really have been... seeing yourself as more important than you are, I mean, as responsible.
- C173: Well, certainly...
- T174: ... for lots of things that...
- C174: That I have nothing to do with because I'm not that important. And then another sort of change I've often been thinking for six years that... eventually, I would marry this man I've been going with. Well, that has... been removed, and it sort of hurt and that's hard. But that's probably for the best too, because it seems that he's been my objective before, thinking, "Well, when we're married it'll be this way." And it sort of kept me actually from making a definite decision. I've been putting it off until things would work out themselves and so forth. Well, now that I know it's not going to be "when we're married" so that I've been forced to make that decision, to control myself and in turn sort of control mother.
- T175: Is this sort of it? That you've been thinking for a long time that... "Well, I don't really have to have the strength to make these decisions because... when we're married then that'll take care of itself" and so on.
- C175: M-hm. M-hm.
- T176: Now it has sort of hit home, "I am the one who's somehow got to make these decisions and meet the situation."
- C176: And face life as it really is. I don't know if it's because I'm from a family of artists and I visualize things in lovely colors or what. But I don't like to see the ugly part of life. But it's there just the same and I have to see it and accept it.

- T177: Feel that part of this whole experience is facing life as something that has disagreeable and ugly aspects to it as well as nice colored ones.
- C177: M-hm. I was talking to a member of Alcoholics Anonymous last night. And I'm sort of interested in everything and serious about things and they were... he was explaining... oh, sort of the program and certain things that they do about self-honesty, which is one of the things that they try to practice. So... he went on to explain exactly what self-honesty meant to him. And it seems that they take an inventory of themselves, of all the bad things and all the good things and that usually it pretty well evens up. Well, I've been taking an inventory of myself for years, but I have only listed the bad qualities. But surely on the other side of the ledger there must be some good qualities to balance it, and so... in thinking of, I mean, it comes back to self-honesty. You have to be honest with yourself, and not fool yourself, which I've been doing.
- T178: M-hm. And you feel as though the way that you've been dishonest with yourself is not in your listing of the debit side: that's been very complete. But it's that you haven't been willing to face and admit the fact that you have lots of good qualities.
- C178: Yes. I thought they were just... you know, that everybody had them and...
- T179: Shouldn't give yourself any credit for those.
- C179: No. No. Uhn-uhn. But I am going to give myself some credit from now on. I don't know what for yet; I'm going to have to...
- T180: Just haven't made out that list yet. (Both laugh.)
- C180: No. But I've been doing really an awful lot of thinking and... even though I feel that I am responsible for the situation there, I somehow don't feel like I'm a heel. I mean, I've just made a mistake.
- T181: You can see yourself as having brought about some aspects of the situation but it doesn't make you feel guilty: it's just that that's the way it has been and now you see ways of handling it somewhat differently. Is that...?
- C181: M-hm. And of course, I've sort of thought these things, but... they go by the wayside as the day progresses. But this time it seems a little different.
- T182: M-hm. They're not new. And you've had them in the back of your mind before, but there is something about the assurance you feel in regard to them that sounds a little different.

- C182: Yes. And there's a lot of things that I've wanted to do for years and that I'm just going to start to do. Now, mother can be along till ten o'clock at night there. She has a telephone by her bed and Carol also has one by... I mean between our beds. And... gee, two telephones. (Both laugh) And... if a fire starts or something, there are neighbors, or if she becomes ill and... so I'm going to take some night courses through the public schools, you know, and I'm going to do a lot of things that I've wanted to do all my life and have sort of been a martyr in staying home, resenting it... that I had to, and thinking, "Oh, well," and not doing it. Well, I'm going to now. And I think after the first time I go, why, she'll be all right.
- T183: M-hm. You can just... somehow for the first time feel comfortable about doing something that you want to do, and making suitable arrangements for her. But that, that's that.
- C183: Sure. M-hm. That's that. I don't know how it'll be next Tuesday. (Laughs)
- T184: Might be all very temporary; might not even last over the weekend.
- C184: No. But... we'll see. Anyway, I think that I really do feel less... less to blame, less guilty about it, and less, let's say, apprehensive about Carol. And... so...
- T185: There just isn't so much fear and guilt in the whole way you approach your mother and Carol and the whole situation.
- C185: Uhn-uhn. Have you ever been ashamed of yourself? Well, that's the way I've felt all my life. Just ashamed for I don't know what. Even as a little girl, I felt, mmm, sort of ashamed. And that's a horrible feeling.
- T186: Just ashamed of yourself, hm?
- C186: M-hm. And then of course, mother always taught me that God watched everything I did, and that gave me no sense of... (Laughs) well, just having no privacy whatsoever. (T: Laughs.) And if I... oh, and that he punished very severely, that... and God is a rational(?) God, and if I'd stub my toe, why, I'd quick try to think, "Well, now, what have I done bad? Oh, I must have done something bad because God's punishing me." Well, that's another thing: being raised to fear God. As... whatever God is, I don't know. And... that's one thing she's teaching Carol. Well, I don't believe in that. And that's another thing I'm going to have to... to do because... I think maybe God's a swell guy.
- T187: Uhm,hmm. That is, really as you think it over, it changes your notion of God as well as changing your own feeling of...

- C187: Yes. I've gone through something terrific the last couple of days. I don't know. My whole outlook seems to be changed. Now whether it'll last or not, I don't know. We'll see.
- T188: It's so new and so kind of striking that you don't really know whether you can believe in it or not, but... but you do feel as though something has happened inside of you.
- C188: Yes. That's right. And... maybe it's getting this all out. I... I was thinking this morning, "Oh, gosh, what a whiner I am." And all that sort of thing. But I do think that it's helped, inasmuch as if you go to a friend, it's too... well, you know, sort of like that this isn't right. And... you keep a lot of these things that I've told you inside of yourself and it's a kind of a relief to... sort of understand now why the Catholics have confession.
- T189: Just seems as though it has... there's been something different about getting it out here then in the kind of partial thing you can do in talking to a friend or something like that. Seems as though a lot of it has really been kept inside.
- C189: Yes. I've kept so many things inside all my life. And... you simply don't go around talking about your mother to friends. It isn't done. It doesn't do you any good anyway.
- T190: Just isn't good form and it doesn't help.
- C190: No. No. And... so I have kept a lot of those things in and I suppose that I would have gone on till the end of my days if it hadn't been for Carol and her life getting all fouled up too.
- T191: M-hm. Really was the concern over what was happening to her that made you feel that, by gosh, you had to do something about yourself.
- C191: Yes. And I'm going to start making Carol feel real important and... that's another thing that... I feel that if mother had let me feel a little important when I was younger, you know, that it would have been a happier childhood, and maybe I'm learning from mother's mistakes. I don't know. But there was not much praise ever for anything that we did - but lots and lots of criticism. And that's all Carol's getting now, criticism. And I'm going to make her feel important and even if I have to just go overboard for awhile and flatter her and make her feel that she's wanted and needed; and I'll try to do the same with mother too where it doesn't interfere with Carol. But I think that with my changed attitude probably mother's might change.
- T192: And you particularly want Carol to feel that she really is somebody, somebody...

C192: Why, certainly.

T193: ... that counts. And you're perfectly willing to try and make your mother feel that way, too, but that's a little secondary to...

C193: It is secondary to Carol, and if Carol straightens out and responds and is happy, why that, in turn, will make me happy and so it'll work that way.

T194: M-hm.m. It's kind of a spiral. I mean, that... it works.

C194: Commonly called a... either a vicious cycle or the opposite. I don't know.

T195: That is, think that what you're describing is the opposite of a vicious one.

C195: M-hm. It'll work. That's for today.

T196: Really is, isn't it.

C196: M-hm. And... (Pause) well, we'll see how it works.

T197: And are you saying there that that's the way you'd like to leave it too... to see how it works?

C197: Yes. I'm going to try my best to do the things that I told you about, and to see if it won't... mean, even though it will be difficult, I know, at times, to take a firm stand, and... but I'm going to try it. And then if that doesn't work, I'm going back to work myself and find a good school for Carol because I'm going to give up the whole thing. I'm not... never, never, ever going to go through what I've gone through the last, say, two years. While I've been at home.

T198: So that you not only feel... well, you feel a certain amount of assurance about what you're going to do; also, realize it's going to be a tough job and you don't really know if you can do it, but if you can't, you also feel sure about some of the other things you might do, like getting a job.

C198: M-hm. Well, and I'm fortunate inasmuch as I always can go back to where I was working before. And if this doesn't work out, that's what I'm going to do because I'm no more than a housekeeper there. And... well, really worse because I...I don't even have Thursday afternoons off, you know. (T: Laughs.) So... that's what I'm going to do; I'm going to be firm, I think. (Laughs)

T199: Gonna really do it, you hope, you hope.

C199: (Laughing) M-hm.

T200: And if I really understand your attitude, it is that way. I mean, you feel, you think you can and yet... there's a little uncertainty about it. I mean, you don't feel a hundred percent sure that...

C200: Oh, no.

T201: ... it will work. It's just that you do feel enough differently to give yourself some hope in the situation. Is that...?

C201: I'm still... I mean, it still lies within me to do it and I still don't have the confidence in myself. I know what I want to do and I think I have it sort of figured out, a little bit. But let... the thing is that now... I do get panicky, you know, when mother says... and she's old and she is sick and she's been through a lot and I love her and I'd... even with all this, I love her, see.

T202: M-hm. M-hm.

C202: And... then I never know when it's real and when it isn't because she has been sick. It's like people who are threatening to commit suicide: you never know when they're fooling because one out of a hundred's...

T203: One's going to do it.

C203: ... gonna do it, see. Well, it's the same way with mother. And... that's going to be my biggest battle... I know, is being firm with her and then she'll go into hysterics and the doctors have told me that she could die any moment. And to keep her quiet and to keep her this... well, I notice she goes to the guild and to luncheons and to lectures and to picture shows. And... can do all that sort of thing and that's excitement. Whereas, you know, the least little thing around the house just...

T204: That you know you're going to be scared to death at times as to whether or not, maybe this time, this is something real with her.

C204: M-hm.

T205: But you also feel that...well, she has strength enough to stand lots of other kinds of excitement... that perhaps you can look at this... a little more in that whole context. Is that...?

C205: M-hm. Well, it's good in theory in any event, that's... I think it is. I always have to say to myself, I think. Maybe I'll get over that too, where... I'll say, it... it will be, or it definitely will happen, God willing, sort of. But this feeling of not being so... not being sure of yourself, never knowing if you're doing the right thing and... that's a horrible feeling, too.

- T206: You don't quite like the tentative sort of assurance that you feel now. You wish and hope that maybe some day it will be more definite that you've...
- C206: Well, I'm anxious to see the results. I'm impatient. I'm anxious to see if it will work. I need a little proof.
- T207: M-hm. That's it. When you really you... you think you see a way of operating in this situation. But so far, it's just thinking you see it. Then you'd like awfully well to have some evidence that it really does work that way.
- C207: M-hm. That's right. And... (Pause), oh, my brain ticks all night. I mean, I... plan on this and I think, "Well, the best thing to do is to just put Carol in the school right now and just do it right now." But I want to give it another chance because I am coming along nicely in my painting and that's of course what I would love to do and what I've wanted to do all my life, and never been able to. And now that I don't have a love life to interfere, not that it was very much, believe me, but (Laughs) I think that I can devote more time and thought to painting. Oh, and another thing that I'm going to put my finger down on. I'm going to be firm. We have a studio... on the same property as our home that my father built when he was living. And I'll go out and paint and mother will call out about every ten minutes. I think she's lonesome in the house, and yet she won't come on out. And she interrupts me and interrupts me and interrupts me about little things. And I'll sigh and put down the brushes and walk in and will be about, "Oh, did you see this picture in the paper," you know I... something in the past. And that's another things I'm going to tell her, "Don't interrupt me while I'm out there." And she's going to be real hurt about that, but she's going to get over it. I'll say, "Just feel that I'm away at work some place and you can't reach me by phone." And she can manage.
- T208: I get the feeling and I don't know that you are saying it, but I get the feeling that... that you have a sense of the right to have your own feelings.
- C208: Certainly. I've been a step. And there was no reason in the world why I had to leave school before I even finished the ninth grade... looking back, except that mother just wanted somebody to... to fuss. And I always thought, "Well, I'll go back and I'll go back," but I never was able to. Now I'm going to do all the things that I've wanted to do and there's no reason why I shouldn't.
- T209: You can give yourself enough on the credit side of the ledger to feel that, "I have a right to..."
- C209: Certainly.
- T210: "... try and complete some of these things that I've always wanted to do."

C210: Yes. (Pause) My brother and two sisters certainly do. Why can't we divide the responsibility among them? They each have two children and... and respective husbands and a wife, but why should the whole thing be with me. I went away for...

T211: "Why should I always be the goat?"

C211: Well, not exactly the goat. I don't... I don't feel so put upon them because it's been my own fault.

T212: Been self-imposed, hasn't it?

C212: Yes. M-hm. And... but...

T213: "Why have I made myself the goat?"

C213: Yeah. And it's just coming to me that it is all my fault. But then I'll repeat that I don't feel guilty about it because it was done with the best intentions... believe me. And I don't feel that guilty feeling. There's no reason why mother couldn't go down to one of the other children's house and spend the night. They all say, "Oh, she drives me crazy. My gosh, the boys'll be so spoiled. I couldn't manage them." And, "Oh, she interferes and she...." Well, I don't care. I've put up with it for years, now let them do it for... say if I want to go on a sketching trip or something, which I did over the fourth, and... and I came home and... poor mother hadn't the strength to feed herself in all that (word lost). She has too. And I think that she did feed herself. I think that she just wanted to make me feel sorry for having left her, which I didn't.

T214: Somehow you can see the whole situation rather differently than it looked at the time.

C214: Yes. The whole thing looks different to me now. And maybe I'm getting hardboiled about it. But maybe I should. (Pause)

T215: It's possible that maybe you have the right to feel a little more hardboiled.

C215: Yes. It's sort of like, "Are you a man or a mouse," sort of thing, you know. Or a woman or... I don't know what the... (Both laugh)

T216: Couldn't be a woman or the rat.

C216: (Words lost) mice. (Both laugh)

T217: At any rate, you're sorta deciding that maybe you're a woman and whatever else you're compared, maybe a mouse or whatever.

C217: Yes. Mrs. Milktoast. (T: Laughs.) But the thing is that I'm not...

T218: Mrs. Milktoast, it was.

C218: M-hm. The thing is that inside of me, I'm not really Mrs. Milktoast: I'm just the opposite. And... so those things have to come out somehow, don't they?

T219: I have a feeling...

C219: You either are broken under it or else you come out somehow. I don't know.

T220: M-hm. M-hm. Have a feeling that maybe you can be you as in pretending you're Mrs. Milktoast.

C220: M-hm. And having to be she... her. (Pause) I feel real brave. (Laughs) But... I do feel that I'm seeing things a little more clearly and... I haven't started to think why yet, and I don't really care why at all.

T221: Doesn't make much difference as to how this happened. The important thing is that somehow you do feel differently and see a good many things differently.

C221: M-hm. If I want to whip Carol, well, I'm going to. I mean, whip her. Heavens, she's as big as I am. I can... really can't get very close to her, but I can... you know. But if I want to, I'm going to... if I feel that she needs it.

T222: So you can let yourself be guided more by your own feelings. I mean, if...

C222: M-hm.

T223: ... you feel that's what she needs then that's what you'll do.

C223: M-hm. The last time I did, mother swore I fractured her hip. (Laughs) And of course Carol limped for three days afterwards. (Laughs) I hardly gave her a swat. But... now, that's another strange thing. Mother seems to resent Carol. And she's always complaining about her lack of reverence for grandma and her rudeness and her this and her that. But then on the other hand, every time I go to do anything about it, it's so inconsistent. She keeps saying, "Rita, you must make Carol do so and so." Well, then I go ahead and I try to do it my way and mother flies to her defense and makes me look like a cruel old witch or something. And Carol gets real hurt about her poor mother who abuses her so. This morning she said, "You certainly run through this house in the morning." And I said, "Well, so do you." And she said, "Aha, that's the answer I suppose you're learning in

school.” (Both laugh) “Study. You’re going to cause resentment,” she said, “Going to that class.” I haven’t told her what it was or anything about it, you know.

T224: Is this Carol speaking here?

C224: M-hm. (Both laugh) That’s Carol. “That’s the answer they told you to say.” (Both laugh) Well...

T225: Getting a little suspicious of what you’re learning. (Laughing)

C225: Yes. I think she sees that. I think she sort of notices the change in me. Oh, dear.

T226: Feel that she really senses a difference and that was one way of putting it.

C226: M-hm. “That’s what they told you to say.” (Both laugh) She’s scared to death for fear she’ll have to mind. (Pause) I can’t think of anything more to say.

T227: Feel as though that really is about the end.

C227: Well, it’s sort of the end until I... till get back in the midst of it again. Let’s see what happens. I know I feel a lot better. I feel like I had a load lifted from me or something, somehow.

T228: M-hm. M-hm.

C228: Not sure. Oh, sort of...

T229: Not so weighed down...

C229: ... depressed.

T230: ... or oppressed or something.

C230: M-hm. Depressed. And unsure, and fearful and yet trying all the time. (Pause)

T231: Well, I think that... I’d like to say a couple of things. That if... during... I’ll only be here for the next two weeks, but if during that time, why, you feel as though, “Hey, wait a minute, this isn’t working out” and so on, okay, come back in and I’ll be glad to see you again. And... whether or not you find it necessary to come back in, why, good luck to the ex-Mrs. Milktoast.

C231: Milktoast. (Both laugh) Well, it may not. And could I call Miss North if I have to rush in next week?

T232: M-hm. Sure. Sure.

C232: All right.

T233: Any... Monday, Wednesday or Friday in either week, I'd be glad to see you.

C233: Monday, Wednesday at...

T234: Or Friday. I mean, I'm sure we could work out a time. Miss North could arrange a time.

C234: All right. Fine.

T235: And I think about the only other thing I'd like to say is that I always feel that... really very grateful to someone who's letting me share a part of their experience... feel...

C235: Well, I feel grateful for having had someone to... let off steam to, so to speak.

T236: Spill to?

C236: M-hm.
[End of Interview]

THE CASE OF MRS. SAR
Fourth interview
(two weeks later)

Note: This follow-up interview, which was held at the request of the class group, was conducted differently than the first three since the client and counselor both faced the group and the group participated in some degree in the discussion. In the earlier interviews, the client and counselor had faced each other with the group off to one side. (Questions and comments from members of the group are indicated by "Q".)

T237: I don't know... I'll tell you what our interests are and then you do whatever you wish. We're interested in knowing how in the heck you help people when they need help on problems. And... we feel that people we can learn the most from are those that we've had something to do with. And I know that the group is interested to the extent that you feel comfortable in doing so, in knowing any reactions you had to the interviews you had. Then... it doesn't have to take that form. I mean... I don't know. You may want to turn it into something quite different. But... if you'd like to give us any reactions that you had to that experience, why, I know that we would be sincerely interested in them.

C237: Well, yes. Because I've been thinking quite a bit about the reactions that I had and... before I go any further, let me say that everything is working out fine. In fact, much better than I thought. So... well, as you know, I went to Miss North with the problem and she suggested this, which I was very happy to do. And she stressed the point that I would get exceptional help. Well, the first time I came, I thought... as I left, I thought, "Well, he didn't tell me a single thing to do and... I don't know what to do and... well, I'll go back of course because it's interesting." And then I began...

T238: A little feeling of letdown, a feeling...

C238: Well, yes. Well, nobody told me that I should do this, and that I had to do that. And there was just no advice given. And there was a little feeling of, "Well, we'll see what happens anyway." So then as time went on, I began sort of making up my mind to do certain things and it dawned on me, "Well, this is the first time in my life that I've ever actually made up my own mind without any outside influence or any help whatsoever." And I began thinking about that and why I would... it was as if, you see the situation has been in existence so long. And I never felt this... oh, sort of a confidence. And then I realized that it was a lack of subconscious resentment that I feel when somebody – and I think everybody does – tells you, "You must do this." Now when someone tells you that – or me, I don't know – I... although I know it's the right thing, I... there's a subconscious

reaction that sets up where you know it's the right thing, but you're not quite sure because somebody else told you. And... then... I have a friend who is a psychiatrist whom I've talked with. And he always asks me... oh, questions about my reactions to different things and this all came within... I mean, since I've seen you... I mean, these little feelings, was that even questions will set up some sort of a barrier... subconsciously. And... that actually, then through the weeks, I've been very interested in knowing why, I, at least, after all these years, knew just what to do and it apparently was the right thing. And I realized it was because I... I made up my own mind. But then I thought, "Well, why did I?" Was it just discussing it? Or... and I still don't know the answer to that. But I know that questions and advice and all that sort of thing do set up a barrier so that a person will distort the actual truth. I mean, they'll... maybe not knowingly, will they do it, but they want to cover up a little bit of this and... "Well, maybe he means this and I better not say that." But when you're just... left to say whatever comes into your mind with no outside influences whatsoever except a feeling of sympathy and understanding, to me, that's the thing that did it because it comes right down to what I said at first – that I did it myself. I feel. But of course, I didn't.

T239: That... and on that, as I get it, you feel quite clear as to why other kinds of things don't work very well. I mean, advice and questions and so on. A little more uncertain as to what the positive thing was that did work, except that it seemed to have been... a couple of things: chance to talk freely; some sympathy and understanding; and a feeling that you were doing it yourself.

C239: That's right. (Pause) Of course everybody differs a great deal, but I think that some... oh, there's a certain something in everyone that makes them feel that they... let's call it ego... want to accomplish the thing themselves. And... gives you a little more self-confidence. And of course, I wanted... before I said anything or even wanted to make any... pass any judgement on it, I wanted to see how it would work out. Well, things are just working out fine. My mother had a very severe heart attack the other day. And I said, "Well, you'd better go to the hospital and... and you certainly need hospitalization." And I whipped her down to the doctor and the doctor said her heart was fine and she oughta get out and have a little fun. So she... took her down this morning before I came over here and she's going to visit a friend for a week and see the shows and have a good time. So... actually when it came down to getting ready to go to the hospital because of the confusion and how cruel I am to her by contradicting her in front of Carol and all that sort of thing, why, then she backed down. And when she was faced with the fact that she... and her heart's just as strong as a bull's, why, she thought she might as well use it to have some fun with. So that's fine. Working out fine. Carol's working out fine. I... took a yardstick to her yesterday and I never could do that before, and she occasionally needs it. And mother just looked at me and didn't say anything. And so things are just coming along swell. (General laughter) When I can beat my own child, I feel I've accomplished

something. Oh, dear. But... I don't know really what you expect me to say with the exception that I do have a lot more confidence in what I'm doing and it's turning out to be the right thing. And I'm getting rather hardboiled... with it all. I mean, I say something and never go back on it because it isn't that somebody else told me to do it.

T240: Then you say, you're not... you don't know what we'd like you to say. We're interested in exactly the kind of thing that you're talking about. There is one other... and probably questions some of the people in the group would like to ask, although you don't have to answer anything you don't feel like. But one question I'm curious about – and this is a little aside from what you've been talking about. How did you feel about the group? Did that make any difference for better or for worse or...?

C240: Oh, you mean having...

T241: The fact that, yeah, ordinarily... reason I ask is that this is only the second time in my life I've ever tried talking with someone as we did, but with a group looking on. And I know a little about how I felt about it, but I'd be interested in knowing how you felt about it.

C241: Well, I was very surprised at myself because I've always been very shy and more or less an introvert. And I don't know if I told you? When I was in the eighth grade I had to get up and read an essay and I held my breath and fainted. And... (laughing) in front of the class... I really did. And I held my breath, just talked like this (simulating) and I fainted at the end of it because I'd forgotten to breathe, I was so frightened. (General laughter) But ... I have sort of... well, I was placed so that I wouldn't see anyone and I... that calendar up there, I see it in my dreams. (General laughter) But... the train coming over the trestle... and... but I was surprised that I... that it didn't worry me more to have a lot of people, but I... I felt that this was my problem and I was getting help and... it didn't bother me too much. You said something about a screen, you know, a one-way screen, like in police stations, I guess. (General laughter) But...

T242: Didn't know they used them in police stations. (Laughs)

C242: You know, for the line-up...

T243: Oh, yeah, I see. M-hm.

C243: ... and (words lost). Well, it would be the same thing because I would know that there were people out there, and I just said to Miss North, "Well, my, there are a lot of people here today." Well, you see, I had made up my mind I wasn't going to notice them because it probably would have distracted me. But it didn't seem to, too much.

T244: Did you ever... in other words, as you felt it, it wasn't any particular hindrance as far as you could really see. Is that the...?

C244: No, it wasn't to me.

T245: Did it ever seem like a positive help? (Pause)

C245: No. It just didn't... didn't seem to... be one way or the other, with the exception that I felt... and I think it was very kind of you to make me feel that I was helping you a little bit by being an example or something.

T246: Did you think that was a joke or not quite true, hm?

C246: Well, I don't know. But I certainly hope so because I've really found the answer to... apparently, to my problem. And so I certainly hope that it has been. It seems sort of silly to sit down and talk about your troubles, you know, to someone and then expect to be helpful by doing it. But I hope that I have. Well, that gave me a feeling of... of perhaps... I ha-, you know, feeling that I was helping someone; you know, when you're doing right, why... feel a little that way, guess. (General laughter)

Q1: (Comment about being helpful to the group.)

C247: Well, good.

Q2: (Words lost) because we are following the counselor's (words lost) the way he does counseling, in the way that works. And that you were a live demonstration that it works so it was very effective and (words lost).

C248: Well, I feel that... I didn't feel at first that it was counseling. You know? I thought, "Well, I'm just talking." But... by giving it a little thought, I realized that it is and of the very best kind because I've had advice and excellent advice from doctors and family and friends and... it's never worked. And I think in order to reach people, you can't put up barriers and things of that sort because then you don't get the true... Well, that's my feeling in it... or that was my reaction after a little thought.

T247: That's been our feeling, too. One reason why we really try to make the situation just as much yours as we can, I mean, that, well, it isn't counseling in the ordinary sense, but it's just...

C249: And yet... I'd just say something and then you would repeat to me just the main point, which would make it clear to me, hearing someone else repeat my thoughts

in a concise manner, don't you know. That was helpful, I found. You didn't... put any of your personality or... anything into it as far as I could tell. (Pause)

T248: Change the subject back to the group for a moment. One reason I asked how the experience with a group seemed to you is that... that there's no doubt that the group got to feeling with you and... I suppose very genuinely pulling for you. And... we didn't know whether that would really be experienced by you because after all there was no reason, no way really that you could know that. And yet we wondered if that was sensed or if it was... that evidently it was pretty much just really conversation between the two of us, with the group kind of in the dim distance

C250: I don't know how a group would affect me if I came to you with a rather personal problem and a thing that was rather shameful in the telling. I don't know. Say, for instance, I'd been immoral and my child was going to be taken away and what was I going to do, and all that sort of thing. I think that it... a group then would tend to...

T249: Might depend on the kind of things...

C251: On the sort of problems that one might have. In that case, I should think that perhaps maybe a screen or something would work out. And never get a glimpse of the faces. (Pause) But I've given it a great deal of thought and I'm sort of working it with Carol a little bit now (laughing) or trying to, you know. And... grandma says, "How can you be so mean to your poor sick old grandmother?" You know. And I just know how Carol feels. She just wants to hit her because she's so ter-... But I sort of haven't been saying too much to Carol or trying to guide her. But I've been trying to draw her out... let her feel that I'm with her and behind her, no matter what she does. And let her tell me how she feels. She has told me, "Oh, grandma's been old and sick for so long, mother." And I said, "Yes." And I don't condemn her or praise her. And so she is, just in this short time, beginning to... oh, get little things off her mind and... without my probing or trying to... so it's sort of working on her. And it seems to be working on mother a little bit, too. Well, I feel that I've just been privileged no end and I appreciate this very, very much. Miss North said to me... that someone said to her, "I wonder if she realizes how lucky she was." Well, at that time, I didn't. But I do now. I feel that it was a ... just a wonderful thing that I was allowed to come here. Because it... gee, it's giving me a lot of confidence and I still don't know why I was the exception that... oh, you know, I sort of made up my mind without any influences.

T250: You see, that's one reason why we're interested in having this chat because we don't know why either. I mean, I've put it this way – that, like you with Carol, we've learned certain ways of dealing with people that do seem to be rather deeply helpful in helping to see themselves and have more confidence in what

they feel and so on. And... yet, exactly why does that happen? There are a lot of mysteries connected with that. But... and that's one of the reasons why we feel very appreciative to you because, in a sense, it's given what is rarely possible a chance for quite a number of people to see and observe what's happening. And then to do the same kind of thinking you are as to why the heck does that happen. Well, that's... we're not too sure about a lot of the whys, but it's as gratifying to us as it is to you that... somehow that seems to come about.

C252: I think one of the whys is just, as I said, lack of questions and lack of advice and just a complete lack of any... influence, any outside influence. It... I suppose it all comes back to ego, actually. That a person just resents those things because they're not doing it themselves.

T251: M-hm. M-hm.

C253: Probably the basis of it. I don't know. (Pause)

T252: Any of you have some comments you'd like to toss in?

C254: Maybe they need a screen. (General laughter)

T253: I strongly suspect that truer word was never spoken. (General laughter)

Q3: (Words lost) comments in your conversation about one of your discoveries (word lost) of your feeling about God. I was wondering if you would relate that a little bit, if you care to, to what happened to your major discovery whatever that was. I learned a lot from that (words lost). Now as a result of talking it through and then (words lost) that you had a new idea about God without anybody having told you to have it.

C255: Well, that just comes back to the... as I don't exactly recall what I said, but... I was raised to fear God. I mean, I did and I thought that he was, as I said, spying on me all the time. That's the way I felt and... no sense of privacy at all. And feeling that he was quite a wrathful God, I guess, that's what it says in the Bible. And... I just learned that there was no mention as you say, of God. No one mentioned anything to me about anything really. And it came to me that ... (Pause) that in thinking for myself without any... trying to make this clear. It's a little difficult... that in thinking for myself for the first time, I also thought about God in a different way. In the way that I'd always wanted to feel about God. So that... say if a minister said to me, "Why you can't treat your mother that way because God," so and so, you know. I would have thought, "Well, there's that old God again, you know." But... well, people do have resentments about God. It's shoved down their throats, you know, and God's either mean or he's awfully good or something. But my conception of God is just good. And so now for the first time, I'm just allowing myself to think that God is good. And that he's not going

to punish me or anything for any mistakes that I might make. But it all goes back in being allowed to think for myself. Does that answer your questions at all?

Q4: Yes. That's fine.

C256: I don't remember what I said, but I know that that's the feeling that all my life I hadn't liked God very well, to be perfectly honest. I mean, I think... you know, a wonderful thing and everything, but, you know, He seemed sort of a personal enemy of mine. And I don't think it should be that way. Do you?

T254: (Laughing) I remember one of the things you did say on that and then as you were expressing this newer notion, you said, "I've come to think that maybe God is a pretty good guy."

C257: Yeah. That's it. (General laughter) Well, that... I don't mean to be sacrilegious or anything of that sort, but... I remember that I had to go to church and I went to church and I... well, I just... why, I feel like I can just talk to Him now. Well, I mean, that He's just a part of me. And that's the way actually that I've always wanted to feel and I think that that's the way everyone wants to feel. Down in their hearts, I think that they want to feel that... that God is good and helpful and... that He will help you if you're sincere and ask for it rather than, "Well, you go ahead and do what right. But if you do anything wrong you'll be punished." And that's the conception that I have, not whether... whose fault that was, I don't know. And probably no fault at all, but simply that ... it just, I just started thinking for myself. That's the answer to it. It's a wonderful feeling. I mean, you feel a little safer. I feel a little safer. I was all wound up in all sorts of apprehensive fears of this and that. I mean, not actual punishment, like, "Oh, I'm going to burn in purgatory" or whatever it is, but just a feeling of, "Oh, I was all alone," you know. But I don't feel that way now.

Q5: Has your mother changed her attitudes in sensing your new feelings and... either for (lost words) that are not such good results or for better results? I was thinking now of her and how she's responding to this.

C258: To this? Well, it's hard for an old dog to learn new tricks, you know. But she is... she had quite a severe heart attack and as I said, and so forth. So instead of in, as I've done in the past and kow-towed to her and babied her and fussed and so forth, I said, "Well, let's go to the doctor's." And I whipped her down there, you see. And so then after I actually took action and did that and she found out, why, then her whole attitude has been entirely different. Now whether it was... oh, and in little things... she doesn't interfere. For instance, the potatoes: I turn the fire up; she turns it down, you know. And that goes on all through the meal. Well, she doesn't do that any more. And... the last few weeks. So whether it's because I'm... as I said, I felt that I should be normally and naturally the hub of the wheel, you know, whether she feels that I am or not, I don't know. I haven't discussed it

with her, because every time anyone says anything about child psychiatry or... anything of that sort, why, she says, "Hhm, I raised five." And that's her answer to everything. You see, doesn't matter that I'm a neurotic or anything, but.... (general laughter) So I haven't discussed it.

Q6: So from what you said about her behavior, in your observation it has been worthwhile.

C259: Yes. She's beginning to have a little more confidence in me, because I have in myself, let's say. Which is a natural reaction. (Pause)

Q7: Could we have, those of us who do teaching from (words lost), have your permission to use this material without identifying you in any way, for teaching and research purposes?

C260: Certainly.

T255: We appreciate that because...

C261: M-hm.

T256: ...it would be very helpful.

C262: Yes. (Pause)

T257: Well, I think this is awfully nice myself. You don't always have a chance to sit down and chat afterwards, and we really have appreciated it.

C263: Well, I've enjoyed it and appreciate it very much myself. And... I just wish that in some way in a couple of years I could let you all know how everything really did turn out. (All laugh) Whether I'm just on a... you know... I'm still wondering if I'm going to be able to... to be strong enough because it's rough. It isn't just... it just didn't turn like from black to white and I have to... be kind of hardboiled and it's not like myself because I'm really sympathetic, but I can't let myself be any more. I think it's... I think that mother's just used my sympathetic nature, actually used it. And... (disc turned)... that's a fascinat- now, there's a fascinating little gadget. (General laughter)

T258: It is fascinating.

C264: M-hm.

Q8: Actually, you did describe yourself as being more sympathetic in the beginning.

C265: You mean...

Q9: You said you could be...

C266: Well, I sa-- ...

Q10: If I understand you.

C267: Oh, now you mean?

Q11: M-hm.

C268: Oh, yes. But I'm speaking of with mother.

Q12: Oh, I knew that. But I just thought you were generalizing about yourself...

C269: Oh.

Q13: ... which was (words lost).

C270: Well, I have to be hardboiled with her, too. I mean, I have to punish her for things that I let fly before rather than have a scene. That's what I meant. It's so much easier, you know, to just dismiss things and go on. And... it really is. But... I didn't mean that I was unsympathetic exactly, except that I have a stronger feeling of right. You know, that I'm the one that's right and that mother says, "Oh, don't do that just..." you know, why it doesn't seem to reach me like it used to. That's what I meant. And I still am very, very sorry for mother. I would hate to be like she is. But I can't let that feeling... "Gee, it's wonderful to feel this way. (Laughing) It really is. It's swell." And, oh, and another thing, you know, I just got to the point where I just hated mother. I couldn't stand to touch her or... I mean... brush against her or something. I don't mean, just for the moment, while I was angry or anything. But... I've also found myself, oh, feeling a little affectionate toward her. Two or three times I've gone in without even thinking, kissed her good night and I used to just holler from the door. And... I've even [been] feeling kindlier toward her; that resentment that I've had is going along with the hold that she had over me, you see. So... that, I noticed that yesterday when I was helping her get ready and so forth. I fixed her hair and there was the longest time I couldn't stand to touch her; and I was doing her hair in pin curls and so forth. And I... it suddenly came to me, "Well, now this doesn't bother me a bit. In fact, it's kind of fun." It's either... it builds up without, no matter how you don't want it to... it does.

T259: That is, you don't feel controlled by her. Then you can feel sort of cross at her sometimes but affectionate too.

C271: M-hm. Just normal. I was getting so I just hated her and it worried me to death. And looking back, it was all my own fault, you see. Yet... it... seems to be... just coming along fine. I sold a picture last night. I can get some gas for the jalopy. (General laughter) And a new window, I think. (Laughs) So... kinda (words lost).

T260: Life is sorta looking up.

C272: M-hm.

T261: Well, we're very happy about it. I think that... I don't know. You know, when you have a change to... get inside another person and see what their own feelings are, you feel as if you know them very well. And I think this group feels that they know you very well and they wish you luck.

C273: Well, they should. (General laughter) They heard my all. Practically, I mean. But it's been a great help to me and I will be interested to know how the theory – what do you call it? This new theory of counseling progresses. I don't see how it could fail, really. I imagine there'll be a lot of opposition from the... (laughs) a lot of opposition from the psychiatrists with their couches and... (laughs; general laughter) no doubt.

T262: (Words lost)

C274: Well, why, certainly. I mean, because this is so simple and it doesn't take five or six years.

T263: Would you like (words lost).

C275: Oh, yes. I... (fault in recording. Apparently, question in here about Carol.) Yes, she is. And another thing is that she's sort of getting like this: I've only done it twice, but I think that she's... I mean, I've only spanked her twice, but I think that she thinks that that's a good... you know... thinks that it's...

T264: Good act?

C276: M-hm. Good act. Oh, she's an actress. But... I have punished her before, and then in five minutes I'd be back giving her candy or something, feeling guilty. I don't feel guilty any more and that is the most wonderful feeling to be free of that. And... I gave her really a shillelagh yesterday. And (you?) her legs. (Laughs) I was seeing myself giving it to her. And she came to me and she said, "Oh, mother, I'm so sorry I acted that..." - it was about an hour later, "I'm so sorry I acted that way. I just can't live with myself until I apologize." Well, I... maybe I told you about how you could never, never force her to do anything, and that her father beat her when she was a little child... little, little tiny baby. And you can

never force her to do anything. But she came to me of her own free will and she said, "Do you forgive me, mother, dear?" And she really was naughty. And I said, "Well, I certainly do, and don't you feel better now that you're sorry, and I'm sorry and we're all sorry." Well, that just staggered me that she would come and sincerely say, "I just can't live with myself until I apologize." So that must be a reaction of some kind. I... I don't know what, the why of all that, but it must be some kind of al...

Q14: (words lost)

C277: Well, she... yes, this time. Whereas before she... I told you about the time she said, "You're just building up resentments by punishing me this way." And she's listened on the radio to some of (words lost) that the only way you should punish a child is by putting them in the corner with funny books and a radio. (General laughter) And that otherwise you'd start a fixation and a resent-, ten years old telling me that. And... but, no, this way very normal, in fact most of her reactions, little things that you notice... And I'm trying to be very alert to them too... have changed. They're, they're more normal, I think; and I'm more normal too. Everybody's more normal.

Q15: (Question about guilt; words lost)

C278: Yes.

Q16: (Words lost) How did you get rid of this feeling of guilt?

C279: Well, I haven't really gotten rid of the entire thing. But... before... it all comes back to this one thing: I was never sure that I was doing right. So consequently there was a feeling of, "Gee, did I do the wrong thing?" And... feeling of having done the wrong thing would in turn make me feel guilty, you see, whereas now I feel that I'm doing the right thing. And... there's no reason to feel guilty. Now, why I feel that I'm suddenly doing the right thing is... I don't know. But just being more sure of myself and more sure that I'm right automatically eliminates the feeling of guilt because there's no wrong to feel guilty over.

Q17: Very helpful to me. As I get it just the (words lost)

C280: That's right. M-hm.

T265: And more of a feeling that you can trust yourself and your reaction is the sense that I get to it, even spanking Carol or whatever it is that you can trust your own reaction and it works out fairly well.

C281: That's... M-hm. So there's nothing left to feel guilty about, and all these other things in my past that I've felt guilty about and so forth, why, I just have to

eliminate those from my mind, and I think that as things go on, and my general life becomes happier and more optimistic, that those will leave too. And... there's nothing like a little encouragement to overcome the... oh, the things of the past. They should automatically dim out; I should never have felt guilty about those things in the first place. But it was just that I never had been allowed to do anything or never had... let's say, the courage of my convictions... before. But suddenly I did it.

T266: What happened is that you have in some way acquired the courage to be yourself and look at things from your own point of view.

C282: M-hm. (Pause)

Q18: (Words lost) This entire going on, was there any resentment or any sense of discomfort or anything of that sort?

C283: Well, I used to be... I used to wonder to myself, coming over, "Oh, what am I going to say? I don't have anything to say." And... so forth, but then as soon as I would get in to the class and sort of... get involved in myself that's just... you know, the most important thing to everybody, why I didn't feel much, and then leaving I'd always feel, with the exception of the first time... which I had a slight let down. You know, because no one told me to do anything... I felt elated, and then very stimulated between times and looking forward to the next time really.

Q19: (Words lost)

C284: Oh, no. No. I've always been more or less grateful that I did have the opportunity to come over here, although I didn't know how it would work out or even what was going on. I thought it was... Well, Miss North was so mysterious about it (general laughter) that...

Miss North: I tried not to be.

C285: Oh, I was a little uncomfortable about that. I thought, "Oh, dear. What is this? Are they... sort of... mass psychoanalysis (laughs) or something?" You know, I didn't really know what it was all about or what the outcome should be or if I was reacting properly or if I wasn't or if I was doing what was expected of me or... but I guess there was nothing expected actually, was there?

T267: Just the expectation that maybe you could be you here.

C286: But that's the only thing and I don't mean to blame you, Miss North. It was simply that you were so cagey about it all. (General laughter) You know, I have such a... I have such a... I want to know, you know, about things, and... she'd

say, "Oh, well, we'll... it's been a lovely day, hasn't it?" (General laughter) She was a master at evasion.

Q20: (Words lost)

C287: Well, I called her in regard to, I think, camp for Carol, wasn't it or something? And she said, "How are you feeling?" And I said, "Oh, just fine." and I started rattling along; and so she agreed with me on several points, as to... well, she still hasn't told me anything. I'm going to get her after today. (General laughter)

Q21: (Question about "this type of counseling.")

C288: I've never heard of it before. Never even given it any thought. I just thought that the question/answer deal was about the only type of counseling that... No. Miss... I'm still kind of mad at her at that... (laughs) She really didn't let me in on a thing. I hadn't the vaguest notion what was going to happen or go on.

Q22: I was wondering, did you have any feelings of hostility because you didn't get the answers in the first interview? I mean, we all understand that... I mean that...

C289: Well, it wasn't exactly hostility. It was... Oh, you mean, toward anyone here?

T268: Toward me, or...

Q23: The counselor or...

T269: Mean, did you feel hostility or any of that feeling...?

C290: Well, I did. And it wasn't a hostile feeling, by any means. It was sort of, "Well, counseling, hmm. Humph." You know. (General laughter) It wasn't exactly, "Well... here, I drove all the way over here and what did he do?" or anything. It was just simply... well, I was more or less puzzled, and in the dark rather than... there was no resentment or any feeling of that kind. I can imagine where somebody might be, knowing no more about it. Now if I probably had come to you knowing a little bit about it (Pause)... Mmmm, no, that wouldn't work either, because... well, no, I didn't feel hostile in the least. But rather, let's say, disappointed. But it was... it was a dis-course the wrong disappointment because... I was just expecting to be told, you see. As I have been all my life. And as most everyone, always, when they ask advice, they're told. Except here. Then you tell yourself, I guess. (Pause) No, there wasn't... there wasn't any discomfort or... resentment or... about, I mean, about the class, at all. And after the first couple of times, I... my mind began to realize, I think, what... what it was all about. It started me thinking. You started me thinking by not telling me, "Now you think that over", but just by myself. (Pause)

T270: Well, I know we're very, very grateful to you. (Words lost)

C291: Well, I'm grateful to all of you. And... I'll just be anxious to know how the thing will work....

(General hubbub as C walks away and is approached by members of group.
Recording ends.)

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.

Mr. Zak
37th Interview with Carl Rogers

- T0: Thanks for leaving me those records.
- C1: Okay.
- T1: Are those all the ones (C: Yeah) I noticed...the second one that had the material in it (words lost)
- C2: I'd forgotten whether you'd wanted the last one too.
- T2: No...or if I do I'll (words lost)
- C3: Okay...Well, I've thought it over too. Since I'm not...ah...I'm not really using them any more. I just, huh, don't find the time...one, and more than that I just don't think I have any real need to listen to them. It's probably due to a change in me, or...some reason, all right...
- T3: Okay. Whatever you want.
- C4: Okay. (Sighs – pause for 41 seconds) I wish I had something to tackle/ ...seems to me something (pause 34 sec.) Isn't it odd, maybe I don't have anything to tackle. (both laugh)
- T4: Ah, that possibility scarcely comes to mind.
- C5: Yeah, I just can't (words lost) (pause 18 sec.) But...it (pause 30 sec) seems that I, I wanta/think through... ah...every little...ah... approach... or...thing that I wanta discuss before I get it out, Now... (words lost) ...seems that, well, I get (words lost)...ah ...and it feels to me like it's, ah...it has to take it's course... inside of me, before... and then I have to feel that this is... ah, somehow... really meaningful... It certainly must, well, meaningful, I guess, to someone on the outside. / (T: uh-huh) Ah...oh...I have to
- T5: Screen it to see if/ it would – would this seem important to somebody else. If so then...

- C6: Uh-huh... And also important in the sense that...it would ah...(20 sec) mean something to me, yes, but more than that...ah...(25 sec) this whole process I guess is...really...being questioned or something... I don't like, ah...doing that for some reason...So now if, ah... I've given myself that kind of introduction, before I begin to discuss it... I don't feel too sure that this is...what I really wanta be doing, or...it has a...an old beginning to it, so...
- T6: Sound like a while back (words lost) seems like an old beginning.
- C7: Yeah, yeah. Ah...that's what I mean...but, right now it just seems that every – as soon as I, I'm not sure of exactly what it's... what it means... (50 sec) (Sighs) Ah, how true, this really is about me but I think that...that again, in a way it can be...innermost...caverns of my conscious brain...I, ah...I must be over striving, I mean I feel that...I must be...I don't do this...ah...outside...I don't really...appear to be over striving to myself...but, ah...it seems to be true internally...in a very real way... And I think this, this has a lot to do with it... Ah... kind of tension that I have here. Ah...I put it in terms of overstriving...it's just as though I internally am pulling myself real taught...and, ah, for no...I can't satisfy me you know, I don't have any real burning ambition, I mean, ...for...anything specific. I can see where I might feel that way, and know why...but...I get a peak into this, I mean, as I...all during the day...
- T7: Way down deep there's sort of...trying too hard some way...
- C8: Yeah, that's...
- T8: ...why, why... there isn't anything you're aware of...consciously striving to do, but...
- C9: Yeah...I keep...bringing you into this..ah, and I don't have to...I feel...real...free to do so. Now, it may be if I really did I would just come in or something. Oh, I think that I – it's still true. That ah, as I was riding up here I still had the feeling, I kept what does it mean, what does it mean, ah, still have that feeling that, ah, that you...might, ah...break a continuity. I mean that you... the constancy I feel, even though I have been very critical of what I've been doing, isn't ah, something has kept me coming, so...I, I, just had a, I suppose I just thought at that level, the same level of this striving...that same kind of feeling, that well, Carl may, just, shift, somehow, and say... Now this...ah...gets me scared, ah...it has the same tone...the same kind of thing...
- T9: There's something alike in the two feelings, and the second one is frightening feeling...I may...shift on you somehow... You're not too sure that I wouldn't...do something that was frightening....

C10: Yeah. I, ah...guess it could be expressed – in a way...one part of myself, of, one way I interpret this is that...well, ah...how...how can anybody be so patient. Yet at time I feel that I'm behaving in such a way that... that I shouldn't be here. Yet I want to... Ah...and then if this is true, how could someone just...go along with me. That's ah, one thing that...that I feel...that isn't entirely... (drops voice to a mumble) just everything. I mean as I was – I didn't shave this morning, but I looked in the mirror, and I...thought, well, I can get by this morning, I have to hurry. But...I, ah, I anticipated our session, I said well...ah...this may be the morning... ah...it really took over me and I slowed down, and everything, I think that was one reason I was late...ah...and then... I thought well...you know this is not much different from...a lot of other things that you...that you go into, I mean, in such a way that you are the focus of attention...somehow that I do have a kind of a fear that...someone will pull the rug from under me or something of that kind. Ah...

T10: A feeling kind of came over you...Carl couldn't be continually patient and the fact that maybe I shouldn't be coming anymore or... so and, this is the day, maybe next time is the day when bingo... I will somehow be thrown for a loss the feeling too that that ties in too with other areas

C11: Yeah...then was but, of course, this is really...

T11: Would this be putting it too strongly, sort of a feeling...ah...I'm going to be let down some time, at some point he's not going to...like me or so on. It's only a question of when...

C12: Yeah, and though I (Pauses 10 seconds) gie [?] I get an idea, right, I can't... right now something else you said it before, that you shouldn't be expressing monotonous... it gets tiresome, boring...ah...ah...but I have the feeling that...that I could, ah... I have a feeling that I don't...that I couldn't really finish...I mean that I wouldn't know when I was finished, that I... No, it's more like that I just couldn't finish.

T12: Couldn't ever really conclude this or relinquish...

C13: It becomes a ... (???) I either, something...I ah (30sec) as long as I remain this blocked up of course...so difficult for me to...say what I feel...feel and talk about these things...just doesn't seem any end to it, I mean...

T13: Still seems just as hard to feel what I feel and express what I feel...as long as that exists, there's no...

C14: And then when I...feel...these...that something's really happening that I'm glad that I did something, looked at something one way or the other (Sighs) then I, it

seems that I feel well this is one step up, I can't go back...as though this kind of thing keeps me from...it's just a break...that I should be...going another step up, and I think this has a lot to do with it, internal striving. And I like it when I...when I'm just the free, now ... Yeah. See that's what it's been, it's far from me anyway or at least I have to feel that I'm that safe...The mere idea...oh, sometimes I lose the organization is what, what I'm really talking about. I didn't say I was a little boy I said that's how I felt, but I guess...it's been hard for me...to look at myself like that, and apparently I was never a little boy, I was thinking of that ah...it's more like,...I...I was always older than the...boy, somehow.

T14: Is it as though, "I could never let myself really be...a very little boy...?"

C15: Yeah, that, that dependence, or that...that helpless...ah...ah...but I don't, really don't have the need...it seems now...or at least it isn't...as strong...mind you, every time something comes out of me like this that's so definite...ah, it's...it's like just a small earthquake...because ah...in general, I can't be sure really, even though things come out...and then they, they do hang up in the air for me to, ah...

T15: This says something, to be sure, but whether this is the meaning it really has, or where it fits at all...

C16: It's almost pleasurable, in a way...it has a real satisfaction...ah...in a way that I do see, I'm able to...to see it...away from myself, and yet...the lines are clear...for me to evaluate it. No that isn't it, it's ...the fact that I'm unsure of, of ah...really unsure, isn't fraught with danger...ah...so much, it doesn't have a lot of consequences

T16: You can say something that you're not at all sure of, and it still...seems safe

C17: Yeah... ah.....ah

T17: "I just...I'd like to hear this record... but, ah...that's all..."

C18: This is, this is very significant, I mean I feel that, this...all these things that have come out, I mean, with ah...no preface or anything, I mean just...just boom...ah, and they're out...I mean, I didn't even explode, just...

T18: Just rolled, never even any fortresses to break down...

C19: Yeah...I want to understand this better, that's all (Sighs)

[End of Interview. Rogers' notes on this session follow.]

Mr. ZAK Interview with Carl Rogers
11-4-50

[Source: Box 141/10, Carl Rogers Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC]

C 1: The thing that I was thinking about as I rode down here was – how differently I see our little girl – I was playing with her this morning – and – we’re just, ah, well – why is it so hard for me to get words out now? -- This is a really wonderful experience – very warm, and it was a happy and pleasant thing, and it seems that I saw and felt Judy so close to me and – I think she’s just a wonderful little girl and – it’s just wonderful to watch her grow and become more and more aware of herself and others – and this morning she got out of bed herself and jumped in bed with me and hugged me and said "good morning daddy" – and all this is very pleasant and wonderful and – this represents a change in me – but I don’t know how to say it – really – I mean it’s – because I am so much in this experience with her – I mean I felt like I really loved her and I wanted to – I just felt like I wanted to live with her and watch her grow up –

T 1: Somehow you experienced very vividly, and very deeply, the relationship that you have with her as good and enjoyable.

C 2: Yes. The only thing I could say about it. And I think recently this has happened. And it has been until just recently that I could feel this way. Now – and really our neighbors and all the people who see her think she is a remarkable little girl, and I never looked at her that way before. I was always inwardly critical of her – either that – well, maybe my wife – is not firm – not consistent enough with her – I would always feel critical even when she got – when people noticed that she did things remarkably well – or seemed to socialize very quickly and be friendly with people – people would remark how wonderful this was – just general compliments – I think over and above what people usually do – about certain things – it was –

T 2: At that time you just couldn’t take those in, it sounds like.

C 3: No. Now I see that this is really true and I don’t have to have people say that – I mean –

T 3: Because you are experiencing the same kind of thing yourself – Would this catch anything of what you’re saying. Excuse me for interrupting but it’s the feeling I have. The experience this morning sounds as though you are appreciating her and the relationship for what it is and it’s good whereas before the way you describe it sounds more as though well, yes – here she is – and the relationship – but it isn’t what it might be maybe there is something wrong with it.

- C 4: Yes, I have something else to add to it now – it seems that that’s how it really felt but it’s – here’s what I think what is significant too – before I could talk about Judy. I talked about her to maybe Miss _____ or some of the people here who work with children and I could say positive things about her and funny little things she’d do and just talk about her as though I were and felt like a real happy father, so that I was aware of these things. I would never deny that I wasn’t aware of them. I could communicate them to others but it did not feel like – it felt like I was – there was some unreal quality – as though I was just saying these things because I should be feeling this stuff and this is the way a father should talk about his daughter but somehow this wasn’t really true because I did have these negative and ambivalent and mixed up feelings about her. Now I do think she is the most wonderful kid in the world – I mean –
- T 4: Before you felt as though I should be a happy father – this morning you are a happy father –
- C 5: It certainly felt that way this morning. She just rolled around on the bed – and then she asked me if I wanted to go to sleep again and I said OK and then she said well I’ll go get my blankets – and then she told me to close my eyes and then I said well you’ve got to tell me a story and she told me a story – about three stories in one – all jumbled up and – it just felt like this is what I really want – I want to have this experience. It felt that I was – I felt grown up, I guess, in this way. I felt that I was a man – now this sounds strange, but it did feel as though I was a grownup responsible loving father, who was big enough, and serious enough, and also happy enough to be the father of this child. Whereas before I did feel weak and maybe almost undeserving, -- no ineligible to be that important, because it is a very important thing to be a father.

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

MR. ZAK - Carl Rogers
Interview on 1/20/51

[Source: Box 141/10, Carl Rogers Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC]

C 1: It's interesting that I don't have the desire to – (pause – sigh) – think of what I talked about last or – (Pause) – go through anything that I have talked about more thoroughly. It just – (Pause) – gosh, it seems sometimes that no matter what I finally end up talking about – (Pause) – if – (Pause) – I just get to the point where I can talk about it freely why then that seems to be – (Pause) – what in the last analysis I really want to do – (Pause).

T 1: It isn't so much a matter of developing a topic or carrying it on from one interview to the next but if you can experience pretty fully this thing that you wanted to bring up – while we are talking about it, that –

C 2: Yeah.
(Silence for approximately 2 minutes and 16 seconds.)
I still have this – (Pause) – inability to – (Pause) – remember – (Pause) – remember and to – (Pause) – even when I remember the topic that I wanted... for instance I do think of things that I want to express – (Pause) – out side the interview – and this has happened many times before. But now I'll see if I can – (Pause) – get it more specifically what the difficulty seems to be. (Pause) There's something about – (Pause) – the climate that I create that – (Pause) – in here for myself, that really blanks out – blanks out is too cognitive, I mean too, ah, - (Pause) – maybe it's just the way I feel about myself, or something – that keeps me from really developing – (Pause) – and just crystallizing – ah – some of these things that just – (Pause) – have such force – really – such clarity, it would seem to me outside the interview. And I was just scanning my – (Pause) – I just get glimpses of that, the things that I want to talk about, and then – (Pause) – and then I get weak, I mean I just don't dare step into this, whatever it may be. And it can be either – (Pause) – things that are – that I value, positively. I mean it doesn't seem to matter whether it's something that I am afraid of or a – or any emotion –

T 2: Outside something will hit you with real force as very real or important – good or bad – either positive or negative. But in here often there's the feeling that you

can't get into that or can't bring it to life the way it existed outside, as though you sort of dampened – something in here sort of dampened you down. Is that the way –

C 3: Yeah. (Pause) It's more than just something – I just feel – that it's – (Pause) – but I also feel that – (Pause) – that recently, here a – maybe this is just a certain part of what I am undergoing in myself – but I can engross ah – (Pause) – myself, my thinking self, more completely. I mean a – (Pause) – I feel a pretty strong – (Pause) – push in that direction, (Pause) – kind of courageously sticking to – a – a – (pause of approximately 50 seconds) – one of the real doubts or a – (Pause) – reservations I have about – (Pause) – my success in reaching some kind of ending – (Pause) – is that I won't – let's see – I seem to say to myself – well, I've a – (Pause) – I've been this way and that way and I've – I've shown myself in a variety of ways so that – all the material should be there and I can't, --maybe I don't have the – (Pause) – the ah – (Pause) – intellectual – strength to, ah – to, ah, -- synthesize it. I mean I get this feeling that I'll go along helplessly just expressing things and – and I'll be happy about it at times. Ah—ah, I'll come back and – (Pause) – I'll feel helpless and lost – not knowing where – how far I must go and so on. And – and the feeling of well – (Pause) – 'maybe you just don't have the power – the strength to make sense to it all and therefore you won't ever feel – (Pause) – finished.'

T 3: You mean in a sense you won't ever come to an end, because here you are expressed in all kinds of forms and ways and yet you feel as though that must somehow become organized – you question whether you have what it takes to – to organize that – is that – anywhere near it – (long pause) -- so that there's the feeling of helplessness – (pause approximately 1 ½ minutes)

C 4: How much different I am right now this minute than I was last night or all day yesterday, and maybe before I got here – the difference is simply – (Pause) – astounding – (Pause) – that I should look at myself as being such an – (Pause) – inadequate – person – in this respect – I guess there's just one angle – just one way of describing this disability in general – (Pause) – yesterday I just seemed to be quite confident – (Pause) – and productive and warm – it just seems that – (Pause) – I can at least say – (Pause) that that's what I am – or can be or something – (Pause). What the heck is it about me just coming in here – (Pause) – that just.....

T 4: How could it possibly be that yesterday you were feeling great competence and confidence and so on, not only yesterday but a good many other times, yet coming in here, clear to the other extreme – helpless – inadequate and – how could such diverse people be contained in the same frame in 24 hours – huh.

C 5: Yeah. It's a – (Pause) – and as I talk about myself in this way – I mean – (Pause) – I feel like a cocoon. I mean – you're here and – but insofar as – (Pause) – really

- feeling your presence, I don't feel it. Ah – (Pause) – that's just a way of describing, I guess, ah, -- (Pause) – how much to myself and how closed off I can get. And this really seems to – (Pause) to ah – (Pause) – magnify – to force this kind of thing. And then – ah – I say well, is this the kind of foundation that I have, really and the – (Pause) – and all this other stuff that – is not really me. But that – I don't go for. I mean –
- T5: So that here you almost feel as though you were back in a cocoon kind of and not even (Pause) – the relationship with me doesn't even seem very vital, it seems as though it's really just you – (C: Uh-huh) – and yet such a – helpless and inadequate – you. Is that in any way related to this confident self you kind of have to admit you seem to be outside of here?
- C 6: Yeah. (Pause) Sometimes I – I get the feeling that maybe I'm one of the – (Pause) – maybe I'm the only one – who can look at myself, this – (Pause) – worthless sort of – cold – (Pause) – unresponsive – inadequate – almost depressed individual. I mean a – (long pause)
- T 6: Maybe you're the only one who could ever sense fully this – cold – depressed – inadequate kind of worthless person – (Pause)
- C 7: Well, you can't wallow in that. (Pause) There are just sparks of – intellect or different kind of (?) That tells me that (Pause) – this is inaccurate – (Pause) – in fact maybe this wait – (Pause) – I mean I can feel that when I come here and think and feel this way that I am just sinking myself down into a shaft and – (Pause) – and I can stay there a long time – (Pause) – and then it feels like a fight too, I've said this before – (Pause) – sometimes I can frame it in terms of how much patience will you have and – ah – (Pause) – and yet another way of framing it is – ah – (Pause) – ah -- -- well you just won't look up to see the light shining down in this shaft. It just – you got your head down. And – ah – (Pause) – now it seems that I have the inclination to – (Pause) – to be reasonable – see, like, well look, you can be down – down sometimes – but most of the time be up – and this is one way of putting the final chapter – or the final paragraph to this chapter, we'll say – but everyone will know – and especially myself, that this is hurriedly written without too much real – feeling – just putting the top – the ending before it should be, and – ah – artificial – (Pause) –
- T 7: So that when you come in here you find times, recent times, when it feels as though you are letting yourself way, way down. And there's some kind of a struggle involved. In part it seems to be – (Pause) – how long can I stand having a person like that here, how long can I be patient with this – somebody that – other times it seems as if the struggle was partly in you. It just seems – are you going to look down and down into that shaft or are you going to look at the light – up above? But when you try to tell yourself well – you have good feelings and bad and so forth – after all – kind of compromise the thing – it doesn't seem as

- though that's the way the chapter ends. (C: Yeah.) Or at least if it does, it ends in a kind of superficial note.
- C 8: That feeling that I have – I don't – it's as though in a way I'm saying – (Pause) – I could make a million interpretations – (Pause) – I've got too many of them. But – in a way it feels that – really this – ending – does have to come – I can't hurry it. Ah – (Pause) – it's got to come really from inside. I mean – I can't tack on labels. I can't – you see it has a feeling of just being compressed into something – I mean this reasonable thing I am talking about – but – it's got to begin from the middle and sort of spread out – and the middle is something – ah – from within. (Pause)
- T 8: You feel it just has – it must have its own rhythm – its own time and – you can't hurry it and when it comes it'll come from inside in a way that – (Pause) – it'll be quite clear – it wouldn't be a superficial ending of a chapter.
- C 9: Uh-huh. I guess I wouldn't have this feeling of – (Pause) – not being – shoved or – put. (Pause) It's a little like having someone – something else put the last – the ending – (Pause) – or a borrowed one. (Pause) That was a dirge.
- T 9: I feel in some way that that was an – expression of what is – deeply – bad – (C: Yeah) deeply buried within you – way down at the bottom of the shaft.
- C 10: (Long pause) These two varieties of – extremely – oh, almost opposite – experiences – (Pause) – seem to be central – right here. (Pause) Yesterday I had a client and as I went – out of the house to come here and meet her – (Pause) – I had the – (Pause) – well, I don't know – I mean I had the feeling – I said well, here – (Pause) – well, I can tell you the ending. We had a – almost – about an hour and a half – (Pause) – well – I don't know whether it's stupid or it's a – but I had the feeling that – (Pause) – this sounds too unscientific.
- T 10: It's hard to let it come out.
- C 11: Yeah. If – I mean I had some – (Pause) – feeling for what might happen in that hour or something I – well I couldn't tell you then – I also felt – well almost – maybe like an artist or something and I had a certain private confidence – not private in the sense that I wouldn't talk about it – but even if I talked about it I couldn't really communicate – but – (Pause). Then I felt so complete – and yet I felt this urge of really – (Pause) – of really – knowing how she felt ah – (Pause) – and I knew I could do it, too. I mean it was – it's funny because really – (Pause) – maybe this is something rather new, too – I can go in to a session with that feeling about myself – really. Ah – this – well the focus of the thing – that I could ah – ah (Pause) – really be – ah – fully expressive of myself – in relation to her – somehow – and that I knew we had only one direction – and that was – really opening up certain things. But – now – (Pause) – I mean – this – kind of convincing – (Pause) – I mean this ah – (Pause) – this undeniable kind of

experience, really – that I had – (Pause) – about whatever – I don't know – call it psychotherapy – whatever it may be – there's the uniqueness of feeling about the experience – ah – I knew there was something really – ah – big happening – that felt – I mean at the beginning I don't think I'd have been disappointed if – ah – at the end of the session – I don't think I'd have necessarily been disappointed if – ah – if at the beginning – or at the middle of the session of something – I felt that things wouldn't work out just right or so – ah – (Pause) – but this these two things that I felt – first – that I had really something to give – I guess – too – something – real positive – and a – and a good deal of force to it in a way – ah – and then secondly that – due to – a variety of things – something really seemed to occur – to me too. I think this business works that way. Well – this really – (Pause) – how can I say that I'm worthwhile – I mean that I'm not worth while. How can I keep my head down and so on. In the face of this kind of – of real – forward kind of – experience. Real – ah – (Pause) – real goodness – that I felt for myself – (Pause) – this leveling off that I felt too about – I mean this is the same client I was worried about – had tensions about – feeling sexually excited about and so on (T: Uh-huh) I mean I had all these – ah – (Pause) -- well those kind of feelings that make you wonder if you are going to get anyplace no matter how much you try – or the kind of case – where personally – you kind of wait – I'm just talking about myself – the things that happen – (Pause) – I don't know –

T 11: I hate to interrupt your own thinking yet I'd like to – it has a lot of meaning to me too – I mean here's this absolutely undeniable kind of experience last night – of a vital confidence in yourself – in the wholeness of yourself in that relationship and the fact that you have something to give – and that there's an artistry to what you do. Not on a conscious level, but that there's something good to give and you do it well. And how in the world could you possibly have that experience last night and be clear down to the bottom of the shaft this morning.

C 12: Yeah, and I guess the thing, ah, -- (Pause)

T 12: I can't help but wonder if – (Pause) – here you experience the height of you and the depth of you – and you can't hardly believe that they both belong to the same person.

C 13: Yeah. Yeah. And as you were talking – (Pause) – I ah – I guess I really feel now how necessary this was – (Pause) – this exploration – 'cause I did feel pretty low – lower than what I talked it seems – (Pause)

T 13: So – within a few hours you can feel so complete – so – so whole – really you can't put that in words – the words don't do it justice – and almost at the same time you can feel so – low – and down – way down – that words wouldn't do that justice either – really can't ah – (Pause)

C 14: But I seem to also sense a new power about myself – regardless of what level of feeling I’ve gone into, whether it’s depression on one side – or wholeness or positiveness on the other – good feelings – I think I just mentioned it last time – (Pause) – don’t – have a labyrinth, I don’t have a consciousness of all kinds of little – spots of feeling and thinking going on when I concentrate on something. It seems to be a certain amount of – a stronger grasp and – and even my silence and so on is – ah – isn’t fraught with a lot of doubt and – ah – (Pause) – I don’t get flashes of extraneous – oh – ideas and feelings. It seems that I – that I will get there, wherever it may be and that I don’t have to be worried about this moment in time –

T 14: Whatever you are at any given moment it seems as though you are more fully that – more freely that.

C 15: Yeah. Not with a lot of “Well, wait, what should I be thinking about?” and so on.

T 15: OK. (Time is up)

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MR. ZAK
Portion of a Later Interview

[Source: Box 141/10, Carl Rogers Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC]

1C: I like it when I...when I'm...I'm this free, now...right now, I mean I-I...
open up and talk with my whole body...ah

1T: This is a taste of what you'll really like...

2C: Yeah. (Long pause) I mean this whole experience of...of exploring myself...of
being here with you, ah...is...ever so important, really I...ah...it has a great deal
of meaning somehow...(Pause)

2T: A sort of special meaning...

3C: Yeah. It...but I guess it feels oftentimes that...ah...it-it's just too much,
too much for me...then, you see I build up notions...

3T: "Too rich for my blood..."

4C: Yeah...(long pause) I just feel like just burying myself...(Pause) stop
working...stop thinking...

4T: It's just like you're running away from something, it seems to be...

5C: And even as I shut my eyes there's something...(Pause) well, I just get the
feeling that..."yeah, this is your feeling but...you're here, you wanta do
something...you wanta..." What is it?...just what is it, that I'm here for?... You
can put it in a thousand ways and it all seems to make sense, it...you can discuss
it with other people...as to what happens and so on...but even more important is,
you ask yourself. I can...structure that...I can...tell myself...about how I'd like
to do it...or how I'd like to be and...

5T: You can think about, you can put it into words...and yet none of it seems to
catch...whatever in the world it is here you want to...run away from...and yet
want to do.

- 6C: Yeah...(Pause)
- 6T: Whatever it is you want to do...or want to experience...maybe...(long pause)
- 7C: When-when I get this...when I feel this small and tight inside that's the-ah...every time I talk this way things...it rings back in my ears because I never really talk this way...it's a new way, I guess...a different way of looking at myself. I get these kind of images...but...I wonder...what they mean...what...ah...when I do feel so small and tight inside, like I do now, I feel as though...I feel...ah...that...what is...it strikes me now that the images I have are...I see a small...boy...nude...and it's as though...either he has been given some medicine or...in such a way that the thing that's...ah...he feels dried up and a...(Pause)...and he feels like he can't cope with...anything, ah...feels ah...he just has a midget brain, just...just totally awkward, and yet, painfully so. He's not ignorantly helpless...ah...
- 7T: He just feels tiny...and shriveled and...helpless and tense and aware of his helplessness...
- 8C: And that's the only thing he can be aware of...ah...(Pause) And then I think over this whole thing, that's...that's happening here and...it's terrific in a way because...(Pause) It's just that, I don't know, it's just that...it's simply how could...how could anyone be at all interested in...in these little prattles...I mean...in this I...I check myself in even admitting this, because I felt well...Oh...maybe you'd think that I'm just praising you or so on...it has...there are always qualifications I guess when I...when I discuss your part of what's going on...but...but it is true that that feeling...
- 8T: It isn't indirect flattery to me or something...it's a very real feeling of, "how could anyone possibly be interested in the prattle of this...little...helpless...contracted..."
- 9C: Yeah. That closes it up.
- 9T: "Surely, there's nothing there that anybody could really be interested in..."
- 10C: And if I go backwards...in time, we'll say to...the first third, we'll say of the interviews...I can imagine myself...completely unable...to...ah...to...I could ah... if I did look at myself in retrospect in this situation, I could imagine that...at that time I would be almost, well just completely unable to imagine...that I could be this small...ah...that I could...ah...ah...and now it seems that I can...talk about myself and look at myself this way and be...hard and...wonder what it all means and everything, but-but still...ah...safe enough, for some reason...ah...I

do need that safety, I guess, every time I...I...talk about myself in places like...I'm hurt or confused or degraded...why...(long sigh)...

10T: Is this what you're saying, that at the present time you can...with difficulty to be sure...ah...look at this little...helpless person and feel...that that's a part of you, where before you couldn't possibly have done that but that you need an awful lot of safety to take that look.

11C: Yeah.

[End of transcript document]