

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF PETER G. OSSORIO



VOLUME VII: *Seminar on Clinical Topics*

SEMINAR ON CLINICAL TOPICS



Peter G. Ossorio

DESCRIPTIVE PSYCHOLOGY PRESS
ANN ARBOR

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PREFACE TO THE SERIES

The Collected Works of Peter G. Ossorio

Peter G. Ossorio's works are unique.

In a trivial sense the same can be said of anyone's work—it is Jones' work, nobody has the same interests and style as Jones, thus the work is unique. But Ossorio's works are unique in the most profound sense possible and on several counts: in the breadth of his subject matter, the depth and rigor of his analysis, the power and clarity of his exposition, and the absolute coherence of his conceptual framework. Most importantly, they are unique in their significance. Peter G. Ossorio has accomplished what nobody else has seriously attempted: he has articulated a rigorous and coherent framework for understanding persons as persons.

If past experience is any guide, this claim will strike some as impossibly overstated, while others wonder why that would seem to be a worthwhile accomplishment. These reactions say a great deal about the intellectual climate of "behavioral science" in the twenty-first century—and they are substantially the same reactions which greeted Ossorio's first book, *Persons*, in the early 1960's. To those who doubt the possibility of such accomplishment, this series serves as a reality check: read the works and judge for yourself. The second group may be reassured by scanning the list of Ossorio's publications; you will discover that the concept of "persons as persons" includes behavior, language, culture, the real world, and the doing of science, psychotherapy, computer-based simulations, and many other significant social practices.

Indeed, Ossorio's work—which has become the foundation and core of a discipline called Descriptive Psychology by its practitioners—has had profound influence in a remarkably broad and diverse set of arenas. Directly, Ossorio has influenced the practice of psychotherapy and the conceptualization of psychopathology; the teaching of numerous aspects of behavioral science including personality theory, projective testing, and multi-cultural studies; the understanding of language, verbal behavior, and its technical implementations within computer environments; the practice and philosophy of science; the understanding of cultural differences and their implications; the technology of information storage, retrieval and utilization; and the creation of robots that exhibit increasingly the important characteristics of persons. Indirectly, through his students and colleagues, Ossorio has influenced many other fields; among them are the theory of organizations and the practice of influencing organizational culture; the development of computer software and artificial persons; economics and behavioral economics; the conceptualization of spirituality; the theory of consciousness, hypnosis and altered states; teaching of ethics and moral judgment; and much more.

Any editor of a series of “collected works” faces an obvious question: why collect the works? Why not let them stand on their own, as published? The answer in this case is simple to give: the large majority of these works have been published only in limited circulation working editions. These works, with few exceptions, were unpublishable within the “mainstream” of behavioral science when they were written. Ossorio was making, literally and intentionally, a “fresh start” on the doing of behavioral science, for reasons which he clearly articulates in *Persons* and elsewhere, and which have become increasingly cogent over time.

Metaphorically, Ossorio was talking chess to tic-tac-toe players, who responded, “That’s all well and good, but does it get you three-in-a-row?” Suffice it to say that the tic-tac-toe players decided what was worthy of publication in mainstream journals and books. And to extend the metaphor a bit further, it is evident that the mainstream of behavioral science has progressively realized that tic-tac-toe is a no-win game, and we perhaps should have been playing chess all along.

For those who have tired of the trivial insularity of tic-tac-toe behavioral science, the present series represents a substantive and substantial alternative.

Anthony O. Putman, Ph.D.
Series Editor
Ann Arbor, MI, 2013

Editor's Note

Descriptive Psychology is a living, growing tradition. Many of its most important concepts and methods—and much of its craft —were presented by Peter G. Ossorio only in spoken, interactive discourse in classes, seminars and talks. We are fortunate to have transcriptions of three seminars given by Ossorio in 1976 to graduate students, primarily in the Clinical Psychology program, at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Dr. Ossorio specified that these three – Seminar on Clinical Topics, Personality and Personality Theory, and Positive Health and Transcendental Theories – be included in his Collected Works.

Transcriptions of seminars published as books pose special challenges for both reader and editor. In the Seminar on Clinical Topics ideas flow, but not in the orderly sequence of written material; instead, questions and challenges arise, misunderstandings are identified and corrected, one thought leads to another and to yet another. This is simply the ordinary give-and-take of live, unscripted intellectual discourse, and the wonder is that Ossorio consistently, patiently responds until clarity is achieved and then moves on. Add to this the fact that Ossorio was presenting much of this material publicly for the first time, and you have the recipe for an exciting, exhilarating expansion of our viewpoint on what psychotherapists do, and specifically how they do it. It also demands of the reader an engaged attention to keep track of what's going on.

One unusual convention: from time to time it proved impossible to decipher a word or phrase from the tape, even with Dr. Ossorio's help. In those cases we use the elliptical form ### to mark something said but not transcribed. Even when a good guess can be made regarding what is missing, the editor followed Ossorio's famous prescription for case formulation: Don't make anything up.

Anthony O. Putman, Ph.D.

Editor

Ann Arbor, MI, 2012

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Introduction

The world of clinical psychology has changed dramatically since Dr. Ossorio offered this seminar in 1976. Behaviorism was on the rise then, and the reign of psychoanalysis was drawing to a close. In its second revision, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (American Psychiatric Association, 1975) was the subject of intense controversy: critics were fiercely opposed to its basis in psychoanalytic theory. Today, behaviorism is being displaced by neuroscience. A fifth revision of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5) has been released, and critics are now vehemently opposed to its basis in the medical model.

Despite these changes, this seminar is as fundamentally different, both conceptually and methodologically, from anything in the field today as it was almost 40 years ago. Unfortunately, it is also as intellectually challenging as it was then. It calls for a shift in thinking that does not come easily to most of us.

The challenge is immediately evident when the first session opens with a quote from the 18th century Scottish empiricist, David Hume. Dr. Ossorio treats it as an appeal to see: “What happens at one time isn’t logically connected to what happens at some other time.” He makes a symmetrical move for place (“What is in one place isn’t logically connected to what is in any other place.”), and then points out that we need a powerful logical framework for representing all the actual and possible connections.

“What in the heck is he talking about?” a clinician is apt to wonder. “What do logical connections and logical frameworks have to do with clinical practice?”

Sadly, I've seen clinicians' eyes glaze over at the mere mention of logic. For some, it brings to mind logical syllogisms, in which inferences are made based on premises: "All men are mortal; Socrates is a man; therefore, Socrates is mortal." For others, logic connotes impeccable mathematical proofs, proceeding step-by-step towards a triumphant Q.E.D. And for others, it conjures up logical calculus, in which propositions are recast using functions, variables, and quantifiers: "The cat is on the mat" is represented as $P(x)$, for instance. But Dr. Ossorio is not talking about inferences, proofs, or propositions in this seminar. His focus is on the logic of persons and their behavior.

"The logic of persons?" our clinician echoes doubtfully.

A first step in understanding that kind of logic is to think of "person" and "behavior" as concepts in a conceptual system, just as "pawn" and "checkmate" are concepts in chess, and "line" and "circle" are concepts in geometry. In chess, the system of concepts is given by the rules of the game ("Each player has eight pawns at the beginning of a game." "A pawn can promote to a queen, a rook, a bishop, or a knight." "A pawn can check a king."). In Euclidean geometry, the system is given by means of axioms ("All right angles are equal to each other.") and theorems ("The square of the hypotenuse of a right triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides.").

The rules of chess transcend all the actual relationships among actual pieces that take place on the board in the course of an actual game. We need the rules, under which all the possible board configurations are systematic possibilities, in order to play the game, to represent what we observe, and to evaluate how things are going. Likewise, the axioms and theorems of a geometry, under which all the possible figures of geometric interest are systematic possibilities, enable us to work with particular lines, circles, spheres, etc.

Imagine articulating a conceptual system for the "person game," in which all the possibilities in the lives of persons are

systematic possibilities. Such a system would enable us to represent what we observe within the world of persons, in the same way that the rules of chess, or the axioms and theorems of a geometry, enable us to represent what we observe in those domains. What concepts would we include in the Person system? What methodology would we use — a set of rules, axioms and theorems, or something else? What would be the scope of the system?

“You’ve got to be kidding,” our clinician says. “Who would even think of such a thing?”

In making friends with the idea, knowing a bit of its history may be helpful. David Hume, the philosopher quoted by Dr. Ossorio to open the seminar, made a distinction between reasoning based on the logical relations between ideas, and reasoning concerning matters of fact. Relations of ideas can be known *a priori*, “by the mere operation of thought.” In contrast, matters of fact can only be known *a posteriori*, through experience; they can never be discovered *a priori*.

In *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, Hume (1748/2008) illustrated his point about matters of fact using the collision of billiard balls:

When I see, for instance, a Billiard-ball moving in a straight line towards another; even suppose motion in the second ball should by accident be suggested to me, as the result of their contact or impulse; may I not conceive, that a hundred different events might as well follow from that cause? May not both these balls remain at absolute rest? May not the first ball return in a straight line, or leap off from the second in any line or direction? All these suppositions are consistent and conceivable. Why then should we give the preference to one, which is no more consistent or conceivable than the rest? All our reasonings *à priori* will never be able to shew us any foundation for this preference. (p. 21)

He concluded that *a priori* reasoning, with the exception of mathematical reasoning, had no place in science. He ended his *Enquiry* with a famous prescription:

When we run over libraries ... if we take in our hand any volume; of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, *Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number?* No. *Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence?* No. Commit it then to the flames: For it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion. (p. 120; Hume's italics)

His criteria, stripped of their Inquisitional trappings, are now widely accepted in the scientific community. As part of our professional training, we are taught to be properly suspicious of anything *a priori*: "What empirical evidence is there to back up the claim?" we ask automatically. It is a given for many of us that the only connections we can rely upon are factual connections; these are the only kinds that should be used in evidence-based practice.

"Is there something missing in that approach?"

The great German philosopher and contemporary of David Hume, Immanuel Kant, asked himself that question. He recognized that for empirical knowledge to be possible, we must have the concepts in terms of which empirical observations are made: all empirical claims involve "constitutive *a priori*" principles. While many of Kant's ideas did not survive the test of time, his concept of the constitutive *a priori* did survive (e.g., Kuhn, 1996). Scientific (and garden-variety) observations are made in the context of a constitutive conceptual framework. To observe that "she moved her pawn to Queen 4" requires the constitutive framework given by the rules of chess; to observe that "the orbits of the planets are elliptical" requires the framework given by the axioms and theorems of a geometry; to observe that "the eight ball dropped neatly into the corner pocket" requires the framework given by the rules for billiards.

Thus, we hear echoes of Kant's insight when Ossorio points out—in response to Hume—that we need a powerful logical framework in which to represent matters of fact. In Descriptive Psychology, that framework is the Person Concept. Its major components are “person,” “behavior,” “language,” and “reality,” and it provides formal and systematic access to the full range of facts and possible facts concerning persons and their behavior.

The students in the seminar, including myself, had spent a previous semester learning about the Person Concept. We had heard Dr. Ossorio build up the logic of three of its components (“person,” “behavior,” and “language”), but we had not yet learned about “reality,” the component that is presented in *What Actually Happens*. Dr. Ossorio therefore makes reading that work the initial assignment for the seminar.

If this is your first encounter with Descriptive Psychology, I strongly encourage you to read one of the other volumes in *The Collected Works of Peter G. Ossorio* first, one in which the basics of the Person Concept are presented. Either *Persons* (Vol. I) or *The Behavior of Persons* (Vol. V) would be good choices. It will be easier to understand this work, as well as *What Actually Happens* (Vol. IV), if you have some prior experience with “person logic.”

“But why would I do the mental stretching that this entails?” our clinician asks. “Why would I even want to make a shift in thinking?”

The participants in the seminar had a variety of reasons for tackling the material. For those of us who understood the chess analogy, the idea of learning the rules of the “person game” was motivating. If clarity about the possibilities in a chess game would make someone a better chess coach, wouldn't clarity about the possibilities of the “person game” make us better therapists? If thinking systematically about a player's board configuration was a

boon for coaches, wouldn't thinking systematically about a person's world be a boon for us?

Others took on the challenge in light of the ongoing theory wars. Modern psychological theories are like Hume's theory: they have to have a place within a larger framework to make sense. But most psychological theories simply ignore the larger framework; they treat persons as those objects out there labeled "persons," and focus on the processes that cause those objects to behave in the ways that they do. Given the plethora of theories, and the speed with which they fall from grace, it was empowering to learn a conceptual system within which all the theories had a place. Operating within that framework, we could be clear about the ways in which the theories made sense, as well as the ways in which they failed to do elementary justice to the facts about people.

Some of us were sensitive to the lack of connection between standard diagnostic categories and treatment. Regardless of their conceptual basis, the categories had been developed for statistical and administrative purposes; they were too crude to tell us what to do with clients. As therapists, we wanted a diagnostic method that guided our treatment of particular individuals.

Research on therapy outcome was another motivating factor. Over and over, outcome studies had shown that the authenticity of the therapist was a critical factor in therapeutic success. But thinking about clients in terms of traditional theoretical concepts is implicitly degrading. If the client's pain is reflective of psychological determinism ("Given your parents and your life history, no wonder you're crazy."), fragmentation ("The parent part of you has trampled the child part of you."), or existential absurdity ("Your crazy behavior enables you to express your unique self."), the client does not make sense. Those of us who recognized the pejorative nature of these formulations were therefore in a quandary: how could we be genuine with clients if the way we thought about them was degrading?

Dr. Ossorio's framework offered us a possible resolution to both the diagnostic and therapeutic difficulties. With his approach, we could tell a client exactly how we formulated the problem, the formulation connected directly to the solution, and the package as a whole was accrediting.

These kinds of factors carried different weights with different students. What we had in common was the recognition that Dr. Ossorio was an extraordinary therapist. We wanted to acquire some measure of his sensitivity, competence, and creativity with clients, and we knew that these were intimately related to his system. Could we acquire his competence if we mastered the system? We were willing to do the mental stretching to find out.

After making the initial assignment, Dr. Ossorio does a quick review of the fundamentals of status dynamics. "Dynamic" explanations are familiar to clinicians. Freud, for example, formulated psychological conflicts in terms of the dynamic interplay of the id, ego, and superego; Adler in light of the dynamics of power and compensation; Jung in terms of the dynamic tensions of the archetypes; and so forth. These approaches involve forces, impulses, or desires that cause people to do what they do. So it's natural to think of status as something (else) that causes people to do what they do. But status is logically neutral: it is simply a place in a context, and it does not coerce, force, drive, or impel anything.

Dr. Ossorio then focuses on two logical constraints involved in giving status dynamic explanations: "A person can't do what he can't do," and "A person has to have a place within some context that gives him relations to things in terms of which he behaves."

"More logicals," our clinician sighs. "Logical frameworks, logical connections, logical neutrality, logical constraints..."

Understanding the notion of a logical constraint is crucial for understanding the seminars, but it is not difficult. Consider the rules that govern how chess pieces are moved, e.g., "The King moves

one square at a time.” That rule logically constrains how players can move the King if they are playing chess. Of course players can push the pieces around the board any way they want, but doing that would not count as playing chess; they’d be doing something else instead. Dr. Ossorio is teaching students to give status dynamic formulations of human behavior, so he explains the “rules of the game,” the logical constraints on what counts as an explanation of why people do what they do.

The practical value of a codification of logical constraints is illustrated in the second meeting, which focuses on what we mean when we say, “He’s distorting reality” or “That’s a distortion of the real world.” (An employee insisting that the boss wants to hear ongoing, unsolicited, well-intended advice is an example of a distortion.) Dr. Ossorio presents a status dynamic formulation that clarifies what we’re doing in using that form of description, and what we’re taking for granted in talking that way. The formulation starts with two logical constraints (“You have to find out about the real world by observation,” and “If a situation calls for a person to do something he can’t do, he’ll do something he can do.”) and makes its way to a third constraint (“If, for a given observer, the real world is such that it would leave him in an impossible position, he will not see it that way. Instead, he will see it as a world that does have a place for him, and he will act accordingly.”). For therapists, that simple, logical formulation can make an enormous difference in behavior, e.g., in deciding when to say that someone is distorting, and in directing our attention to what is unthinkable for a particular person and what can be done about it.

Dr. Ossorio next responds to a student’s comment about someone “disagreeing with himself,” and clarifies what is wrong with talking that way. He introduces the Judgment Diagram, and shows why using that form of description—of having reasons for and against something—is preferable to talking about “parts of a person”

disagreeing. In the remaining time, he raises the question of what is involved in common diagnoses like, “She lacks the ability to form close interpersonal relationships,” or “He’s unable to trust people.” By the end of the discussion, students not only have a status dynamic way to understand and treat relationship problems. They also have a better appreciation of the complexity of the concept of ability in relation to pathology.

The third seminar looks at the questions, “Why did he do that?” or “Why is she doing that?” In answering those kinds of questions, our behavior is governed by a principle that can be stated in two different ways: “A person will not choose less behavior potential over more,” or “If a person has a reason to do something, he will do it, unless he has a stronger reason to do something else instead.” Dr. Ossorio reminds students that these principles are conceptual tautologies, like “A circle is round,” or “A weaker force will not overcome a stronger force.” (If the figure were not round, we wouldn’t say it was a circle. If this (weaker) force overcame this (stronger) force, we wouldn’t say it was a weaker force.) The status principles articulate what is inherent in the concepts of behavior potential and reasons, and direct our attention to what carries weight with a particular individual.

Pace Hume, imagine that I see a ragged man moving in a straight line towards a freshly-baked pie, which has been placed on a window ledge to cool; even suppose that stealing the pie should by accident be suggested to me, as a result of the man’s beeline approach; may I not conceive, that a hundred different events might as well follow from that cause? May not both the man and the pie remain at absolute rest, the man lost in poignant memories? May not the man return in a straight line, or turn away from the pie in any line or direction? All these suppositions are consistent and conceivable.

A neighbor watching from her porch chuckles as the man slowly backs away from the pie. “I thought that pie was a goner, but

there must've been something he valued more. I wonder... What counted more with him than eating that tempting pie?" Her musing reflects the logic expressed in the principle, "A person will not choose less behavior potential over more." Because she does not know his character or his circumstances, she cannot fill in the content, but the principle provides the logical form for an explanation; it's part of the logical framework in which we make sense out of people's behavior.

To give a better understanding of the notion of behavior potential, Dr. Ossorio introduces the concepts of degradation, accreditation, and status assignment, and illustrates how the behavior potential principle works in the analysis of a paradigm case of displacement. (If someone gets chewed out by the boss, stands there and takes it, and goes home and kicks the dog, what's he doing by doing that?) He concludes the seminar by explaining the longevity of emotional motivation, as well as a therapeutic policy ("Choose anger interpretations over fear interpretations.") in light of status dynamic principles.

Goethe "compared the experience of reading a page of Kant to the feeling he had when entering a brightly lit room" (Kitcher, 1996, p. xxvii). I feel a joy akin to that in reading these seminars. But sometimes that joy is diminished by the sheer number of comments, questions, interruptions, and challenges from members of the seminar. This is especially true in Seminar 4, where Dr. Ossorio elegantly lays out the logic of depression. If you are reading the seminar for the first time and find it hard to follow, I encourage you to skip some of the distracting dialogue. Because Dr. Ossorio's remarks are set in regular font and students' remarks in italics, this is relatively easy to do.

In Sessions 5 and 6, the focus shifts to understanding two particular people, Shirley and James, whose lives are described in a psychoanalytic casebook, *The Experience of Anxiety* (Goldstein & Palmer, 1963). After presenting the facts of the case, Dr. Ossorio

identifies key questions that need to be answered. He points out that two of the questions—“Why does Shirley stay with James?” and “Why does James hang himself?”—involve facts that at face value seem to violate the constraint, “A person will not choose less behavior potential over more.” By showing what sense both Shirley and James make, and how their choices do not violate the principle, Dr. Ossorio powerfully illustrates how status dynamics can be used in doing justice to unique individuals.

Session 7 opens with sensitization about how a therapist’s task is different, depending on the answers given in a case formulation. If the formulation shows that the problem is how the client is, then the therapist needs to change the person; if the formulation shows that the problem is what the client is doing, then the therapist needs to change the behavior. The central thrust of status dynamics is on personal change rather than on direct behavioral change, but both have a place in the system.

The session also marks the beginning of the formal presentation of a set of therapeutic devices, including images, heuristics, internal dialogues, scenarios, etc. Dr. Ossorio has already used some of these devices in teaching status dynamics: “The Face in the Wall” (Session 1), “Spitting on the Sidewalk” (Session 2), “The Two Mayors” (Session 3), “You can’t kill yourself by holding your breath” (Session 4), “Checking with City Hall” (Session 6), and “Move 2 pre-empts Move 1” (Session 6). Now he explains how images are used for personal and behavioral change, and presents “Little White Balls” and “Balance” as examples.

Dr. Ossorio was deeply opposed to the images being taken out of context, stripped of their connections to the Person Concept, and used as pithy truths for the sake of popularizing Descriptive Psychology. He wanted them to be used by those who had acquired enough competence in the logic to use them well. In addition, he wanted them to be used in accordance with three fundamental

policies that are explained in Session 8: “Be on the client’s side,” “Treat people as persons,” and “Legitimize.”

For legitimizing—for *showing* clients what sense they make—status dynamic principles are a valuable resource in the immediacy of a dialogue with a client. For example, if a client is upset over snarling at a controlling spouse, the therapist can acknowledge, “It’s hard to put up with constant advice.” That legitimization identifies the degradation (constant advice) in response to which a snarl is appropriate, and reflects the logical form codified in the principle, “Threatened degradation elicits self-affirmation.” If a client berates herself for making a bad choice, the therapist can point out, “Based on what you knew then, that was the better opportunity.” That example reflects the logic of our friend, “A person will not choose less behavior potential over more.”

Most of Session 8, as well as Sessions 9 and 10, are devoted to images involving a two-person logic. “A criticizes B,” “A makes B do C,” and “A changes B into C” are the basic schemas, and they are exemplified by the images “The Hanging Judge,” “Director-Actor-Act,” and “The Poker Player.” The images are designed to clarify what happens when one person is filling both statuses, i.e., being both A and B in a two-person schema, and one status is hidden from view. In these cases, therapeutic change is accomplished by focusing on the values, satisfactions, and significance of the hidden status.

Larger packages are the focus of Seminars 11 and 12. Dr. Ossorio shows how relevant images and heuristics can be put together to form a package that makes sense of a client’s whole life; he gives a detailed example of how he put things together for a young man with pervasive self-doubt. He also explains internal dialogues and scenarios, packages that reconstruct sequences of thoughts or behaviors that a person cycles through over time. The “Uniqueness Dialogue” and the “Despair Diagram” are examples.

In the final two seminars, Dr. Ossorio wraps up the presentation of therapeutic devices by covering formats, exercises, and miscellaneous slogans and images. In addition, he honors two seminar participants by having us present our work. I share the formulation of “inside” and “outside” views of being a mother developed for my master’s thesis, and C.J. Peek presents the conceptualization of faith and skepticism articulated for his doctoral dissertation.

The ideas presented here have lived for many years in the hearts and practices of those who had the privilege to attend the original seminar. Although a systematic presentation of status dynamics is now available in *Place* (Vol. III in *The Collected Works*), a great deal of the clinical material covered in this seminar appears nowhere else in Dr. Ossorio’s writings. The publication of this volume makes the ideas available to anyone who appreciates exemplary clarity and extraordinary competence in clinical practice.

Mary K. Roberts, Ph.D.
Boulder, Colorado 2012

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Session 1

January 20, 1976

The logic of places or positions; status as place and as relationship; relationship formula, feelings, status dynamics; what is it for a person to be *unable* to do X or have X?; unthinkability, behavior potential, and status; loss of behavior potential.

Attending: Laurence Aylesworth, Reg Garcia, Sonja Holt, Charlie Kantor, Ned Kirsch, Lane Lasater, Jane Littmann, Dan Minerva, C. J. Peek, Bill Plotkin, Terry Pulver, Tee Roberts, Cory Sapin, Mary McDermott Shideler, Joseph Silva, Wynn Schwartz, Walter Torres, Gideon Weiss.

PGO: [Reference to Hume's statement to the effect that if you know that something happened, you can't tell what happened before or after.]

And that's true—it's a decisive argument, except its being decisive depends on your being able to see that it's so. If you can't see it, the argument won't convince you. That's how it is with short arguments. [laughter] Basically, they're an appeal for you to see that it's so. You can see that what happens at one time really isn't logically connected to what happens at some other time. If, in fact, it's connected, it's connected in fact, not logically. So certain consequences follow from this notion of the independence of things at one time and things at another time.

Think of a corresponding statement for place: that if you know what's in this place, from that you do not know what is in any other place, including: you don't know what's next to it. So that every place is independent, and what is at a given place is independent of what is at some other

place. Now this independence, you might say, is one of the boundary conditions for status dynamics, because place is static. The notion of status has the same kind of emptiness, it has the same kind of logical neutrality as the notion of place. In fact, status—I think—is the Latin for “place”, namely, where you stand. So the connection between these two notions is not at all accidental.

One of the things that follows from the independence is that when it comes to filling in patterns that involve elements in different places, either you have to discover them or you have to make them, because they’re not already there. I recall we had some discussion last semester, [in the class on Personality and Personality Theories] I guess in connection with existentialism and the issue of “being in the world,” and whether the world was already out there and we’re merely spectators; or whether one creates. We’re getting into the same kind of notion here in the notion that what is at different places in the world is independent. Now because it’s independent, we need some powerful descriptive apparatus to specify that certain things are in fact in particular places, and that those things have particular relations—just like, for certain purposes you need a powerful system to represent the fact that there is this kind of figure which involves things being at certain places that have a certain relation to one another. For example, a set of names will not do the job. You can’t have a set of names that will enable you to represent all possible configurations. Because there’s a whole lot of different places, and a whole lot of possibilities, and you’re never going to be able to cover all of those possibilities simply with a set of names. So instead of that, we have geometry, and we have formulas for describing certain possibilities.

For behavior, we have social practices and more complex behavioral descriptions. Those are ways of specifying what kinds of patterns occur. Now the basic set of notions that are equivalent to the geometry here is the State of Affairs System which is one of the central topics in “*What Actually Happens*.” Which is why that’s one of the first things for you to read. That is the equivalent of the geometry that enables you to talk about squares and about lines and planes and rectangles and so forth. That’s the logical framework for representing these things. So the State of Affairs System is the logical framework for representing objects, processes, events,

and states of affairs—in effect, anything real. And since it is only a logical framework, just like geometry is only geometry, you can use it to specify any reality, any kind of reality, any sequence of events in reality, any set of objects in reality, any process, any state of affairs. Just like you can use a geometry like this to represent not merely any kind of figure, but any kind of line, any kind of pattern, any kind of sequence. And you need to have that neutrality in order to have maximum freedom both ways—to find what’s there, or to create something of that sort. A defective geometry will not enable you to represent all kinds of figures.

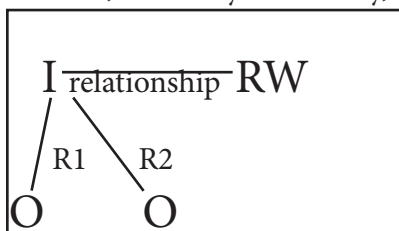
Q: *What do you mean by “neutrality”, Peter?*

P: That it doesn’t say *what* is there. You see, the geometry doesn’t say that there’s a circle or square, etc., but using it, you can represent any of these. But that’s why you can use it to find out what’s there, and use this to represent what you’ve found out was there. Because it doesn’t tell you what’s there. And yet, whatever you might see, you can represent here.

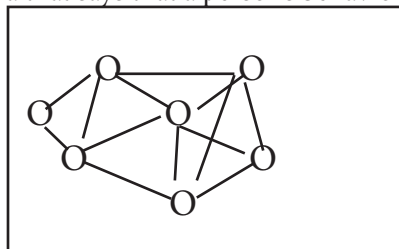
Well, with respect to behavior, with respect to realities and real worlds, the State of Affairs System does that for you. It opens up formally all of the possibilities, leaving it up to you to specify what, in fact, is the case; or what, hypothetically, could be the case. That notion of “hypothetically” is what connects this to the research methodology. In research, you specify hypothetically what you think is the case. You generate a good representation of it, and then you look to see that representation exemplified by observation. And if you do, you say, “Well, you see, I told you that’s what there was.” If you make the right kind of moves, and there are technical details, but basically that’s the thrust—that you have the representation of how you think the world, or some part of it, is. You do a rigorous representation—and by rigorous, I don’t mean detailed: I mean as detailed as you need to say exactly what you want to say and not something else. And that’s what you go look for. And of course, if you can’t recognize any such thing when you look for it, there’s not much point in all that. So anyhow, that’s one of the connections to research, to hypothetical worlds, to logical possibilities, etc.: that you can represent those within the same framework.

Because of that, you can also represent your own plans, your own future, which are hypotheticals: here’s what I intend to be, here’s what I

hope will happen, and so forth. You can also relativize this to a given person. You can use the apparatus of reality to formulate anybody's outlook on the world. And the outlook that you formulate and attribute to somebody else needn't be at all yours. It merely has to be something that you can understand, because after all, you formulated it. So again, it gives you the technical bridge to talking about somebody else's frame of reference, somebody else's world, somebody else's reality, and so forth.



Okay, with that much background, come back to a review of the standard presentation of the notion of status. You remember, we start with the notion of relationship. Say, here's an individual, and here's some part of the real world, and there will always be some relationship between those two. Whether or not we have names for them, there will be a relationship of some sort, because any two things that are in the same world have some relation. And we said: for any given individual, we have ways of recognizing some of his relations to things, including some of his relations to other people, and it's from that, then, that we generate the relationship formula that says that a person's behavior



will reflect his relationships, unless—.

Figure 2 reflects the fact that the same person has other relationships to other parts of the world, and just knowing about this one does not tell you about the others, including it doesn't tell you which of these he's going to act on. And so when you find out this much, you have a legitimate expectation, namely, that he'll act in a way that expresses this. But then you have

the “unless” clauses, which represent your recognition that there’s a whole lot of other things that you left out, and that may have a bearing.

Now, from that, you generate the notion of the elements, and a person’s relation to all of them simultaneously, including their relations to one another, and then we talk not about “his relation to this, this, or this” but rather, “his place within this domain”. So the notion of a status, the notion of a person’s place within some domain, is an alternate way of talking, alternate to talking about his relation to some elements of that domain. So, for example, you could talk about one person’s relation to another person in a group, or you can talk about that same person’s status within the whole group. You can talk about a person’s relation to this or that element of a work situation, or you could talk about his status within the work situation.

There are some linguistic conventions, namely, when you say “a person’s status”—the convention is: you’re talking about the whole world, and his status within the whole world. If you want to specify a status within a narrower range, then you specify: his status within his work situation, his status within the university, his status within this group, etc.

So, status domains are divisible. You have a whole world, but then you have segments or sub-domains; and within some sub-domain, you may have still smaller domains. So long as you can place an individual in relation to the elements in that domain, you can talk about his status in that domain.

Then back to the relationship formula, because I think it shows up better there, namely, that it’s an individual’s relation to something else that both gives him the opportunity and the reason to act accordingly. For example, it’s my being this close to the can of pop that provides me the opportunity of just reaching out and picking it up. If I were standing over there, I couldn’t do that. So it’s by virtue of this relation that I can do that. Now it’s because of a different relation, namely, that I like it, that I’m willing to act on this relation rather than on some other ones. So that when I drink, it reflects both. So again, your relations will both give you the opportunities and the reasons for engaging in certain kinds of things, and that’s why you can have legitimate expectations about what somebody’s going to do as soon as you know some important relationships.

Now the next move is to again review. Recall that emotions reflect

relationships. Being afraid of something or somebody, being angry at something or somebody, being guilty about something, being jealous, these kinds of things reflect relationships between me and some part of the world. So we have picked out, as being of particular interest, certain relationships which we give priority to in talking about people. We give priority in describing a person, in understanding him, to what he's guilty about, what he's afraid of, what he likes, etc.

Q: *When you say what he's guilty about, what he likes, etc., are you talking about he has feelings ### or relationships?*

P: I'm talking about relationships. You see, whether a person is guilty about something is a matter of the relation and the behavior. Whether he feels guilty is a matter of whether he knows about it. You can be guilty without feeling guilty if you don't know that you did anything wrong.

Q: *I thought you were talking about feelings.*

P: No. We give priority of sorts to these kinds of notions, to emotional notions. You see, when it comes to surveying a person's relations to things, particularly to people, we tend to give priority to emotional notions; and as psychologists, we deal, I think, almost exclusively with emotional relations—not necessarily because they are the only or the most important, but sort of a historical accident: that by virtue of certain kinds of theorizing, that's part of our customs, that's part of our tradition, to make a big thing out of emotions. And you can trace it mainly to Freud, I think, whose explanations of psychopathology involved three paradigm case emotions, namely, fear, guilt, and anger. I recall, we do have a justification for that, namely, that emotional behavior represents an intrinsic social practice, and, therefore, it is the kind of description that is methodologically suitable for giving a final account of the behavior. Now this justification or explanation contrasts markedly with, I think, most traditional explanations that say, "Emotions are crucial because there's something peculiar about the experience—very peculiar," and that *ought* to leave you unsatisfied.

Now one of the things that you get from status dynamics is a different kind of explanation than emotional explanations. And you get it mainly by introducing some boundary conditions on what a person will do, as a function of his status. For example, an explanation that has this

form, namely, “He did X because that’s all he could do,” is not an emotional explanation. Instead, it’s a Maxim 5 type explanation. He can’t do what he can’t do, so he will do what he can do. Recall the details of the “distortion of reality” derivation; [see p. nn p.2 session 2 “Unconscious Motivation”] it hinges exactly on that. If a person is unable to see the world the way it is, then he’ll see it some other way. And at that point, you have one of those interesting, tricky little notions, namely, “unable”. If when we say of a person that he’s unable to see himself as really having done wrong on this occasion when everybody else can see clearly that he’s guilty as hell, what’s involved in saying, “He can’t.”? Because the clinically interesting cases are not the kind where he just doesn’t have the concept of wrong-doing, and that’s why he can’t recognize that he’s guilty. It’s something else, something that is weaker logically, but has additional elements, and we usually use language like, “Well, he wouldn’t be able to live with himself if he saw himself as guilty;” “He wouldn’t be able to cope with the situation if he had to admit that he did that wrong.” That’s the kind of way that we elaborate on the notion that he was unable to.

As a matter of fact, we pretty much had this kind of example this afternoon [in the class on projective testing]. Recall, we ruled out that this person whom we see as having an IQ of 130 simply couldn’t tell a story with a beginning, middle, and end. It’s not that kind of “unable”. We say, “He was bothered by somebody or concerned, or something like that, and that’s why he didn’t.” You could say, “That’s why he couldn’t.” But notice what a peculiar notion of “couldn’t” we’re dealing with here.

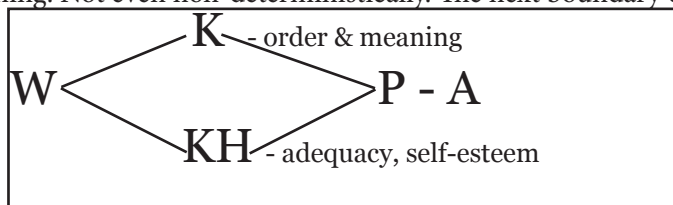
Q: *That kind of notion rests on an emotional description, again...*

P: Again, you’re also dealing with the two different general accounts of emotions. Remember I said that, in the one, you have an intrinsic social practice. In the other, you’re saying that there’s something peculiar to the quality of the experience of that emotion. Now the language you’ve just used is of this sort. The thing would be terrible and overwhelming. And you have to ask, “So what?” People can experience terrible and overwhelming feelings. They can have experiences that they describe as terrible and overwhelming, so then in what sense *can’t* one have that, when we say, “He can’t.”? This loses plausibility. And if you’re talking about avoidance, then

he has to know that he's going to have it, and how can he know that? And then he has to do something to avoid it, and what does he know how to do by way of avoiding? You see, that's why I say that you find that it's *very* peculiar.

So when we say “unable”, it isn't, as I say, simply lack of ability in the usual sense. But neither is it simply voluntarily avoiding something that you want to avoid. If it was that, there'd be no point in saying “can't”—you'd say, “He doesn't want to.”

Well, at this point we introduce some more boundary conditions, to see what kind of dynamic we have. Because the reason we call it “status dynamics” is it explains why people do what they do. Anything that does that, you can call “dynamics”—even though it's not dynamic in the sense of a push that causes one to do what one does. You recall in that analysis of unconscious motivation, there's no cause. There's simply a set of principles that guarantee a certain kind of result, but there's nothing that causes anything. Not even non-deterministically. The next boundary condition is



here.

Remember, the definition of a person is “an individual whose history is a history of intentional action.” And I think we talked about needs and basic human needs, and the definition of pathology. Again to review: a pathological state is one in which there is a significant restriction in the person's ability to engage in actions. A need is a condition which if not met, will result in pathology. Then I said, you can generate basic human needs by specifying conditions which, if you push them to the limit, behavior—intentional action—is impossible. And that's how you generate the need for order and meaning, the need for adequacy or self-esteem, the need for belonging, the need for all kinds of things. “Belonging”, by the way, translates directly into having some status somewhere. Without having a place anywhere, there is no way for you to behave.

All right—that’s what we need here. If a human is an individual who behaves, then he has to have the conditions for behaving, namely, a place within some context that gives him relations to things in terms of which he then behaves.

Now any condition that would eliminate that behavior potential is one that’s going to leave the person in an impossible position, and therefore he won’t see things that way. Recall, when we were talking about need and its being non-motivational, I said, “As soon as you *think* you have a need, whether that’s correct or not, you will have a motivation.” If you think you need something, you’ll be strongly motivated to get it, whether you actually need it or not. The same thing goes here. If, as far as you can see, something would make behavior impossible, then you won’t see things that way. Whether or not it’s actually correct, that would make your behavior impossible.

At this point, we have something that gives us leverage on what is this notion of “unable”? If, as far as the person sees, he’s guilty, then that’s the end of things, so that he has no more behavior potential. We know that’s not true, but since as far as he is concerned, it is, that’s where you will get the distortion. That’s the ground of the inability to follow that up. Because he will have lost all possible K values, and so for him there will be no possible behaviors.

Q: ###

P: You have here the same pattern that we went through before, about the notion of pathology, the notion of need in relation to pathology, and the notion of a basic human need—the way those are linked. And the way that needs can become motivational, depending on whether you think you have one or not. The same goes with behavior potential, and specifically the notion of zero behavior potential. In certain respects, it will operate in the same way if you merely think that that’s so, whether or not it really is so. If seeing the world in a certain way, including seeing yourself in a certain way, would as far as you are concerned leave you with zero behavior potential, then you won’t see it that way.

Q: *What about the person who says, “That’s pretty good for a ###?”*

P: Yeah. You see, somebody who's unable to accept that status will be unable to see himself as doing that. Somebody who can see himself as having a low status, that's the ### he will take. He will change his mind about what kind of person he is, and that will correspond to what he sees himself as having done. Somebody who *can't* see himself as having a lower status, then he also won't be able to see himself as having done what corresponds to the lower status.

Q: *It sounds very much like the avoidance thing you were talking about... If he could see something happening—you said that's the idea of avoidance, that he can see something happening and do what would produce that, and here you're talking about seeing something happening—seeing a particular state of affairs as having particular characteristics that you wouldn't be able to operate in; therefore, you avoid it.*

P: You need to refer to the written-out formulation, because that's exactly what it avoids. The principle is couched in the subjunctive: "If the state of affairs is one that would leave the person in an impossible position, then he won't see it that way." This doesn't mean that he sees it in that impossible way, decides that there's no way he can handle it, and so sees it differently. It says that *if* that is the case, this is how he'll see it. If, as far as he's concerned, it would leave him in an impossible position, then whether it really would or not, the same principle will operate. If, for him, it would be impossible, in the sense of how he sees things. Consider the case where you have Steve and me, and we're both looking at that wall, and all of a sudden, a grotesque face materializes out of that wall, and then recedes back in. Now, me being who I am, that's not a possible happening, so I say, "You know, I just had a brief hallucination." Whereas him being who he is, that is a possible happening [laughter]—and he says, "Hey, you know, I just saw an ugly face come out of that wall." Now it's not that I have to know that for me the ugly face is impossible. In fact, if I did know that, it wouldn't be impossible. It's just that me being who I am, it really is impossible. As far as I'm concerned, there couldn't be any such thing, and so I won't see it. Now you might say, "He thinks that," or "That's as far as he's concerned", but I bet you if that face stood out there another ten seconds, you'd see him report a face and be very unhappy about it. He really—it really isn't unthinkable,

but as far as he's concerned, it is. So you have that kind of differential. And it's that kind of notion that enables us to say "can't" in a meaningful sense, rather than "won't".

You see, what happens is that you get this result by introducing that very same principle, the general one about distortions of reality, and relativizing it to the person. And it's that kind of relativization that you have when you're talking about self-concept. There is a difference between who you are and "who you are as far as you're concerned". The latter is your self-concept; the former is simply who you are. And we recognize that there can be a gap between the two. That's why the people who talk about "experience" also have to talk about something else, namely, your organism, and then about the congruence between the two.

Q: *about avoidance.*

P: Think of your walking into my office and seeing this on the desk [the can of pop], and you say, "Hey, that's a good-looking can of pop you've got there." And I say [laughter]—or "a delicious-looking one". And I say, "Oh, you mean my paper weight." And then you ask, "Well, is it a paper weight or is it a delicious-looking can of pop?" Particularly if I say, "You know, I hadn't really thought of it as a can of pop." For me, it wasn't. Before you reminded me that it was, you might say I was unconscious of the fact that it was a can of pop, because I was so busy treating it as a paper weight that I'm simply not exploiting its possibilities as a can of pop. On the other hand, that's not because it would be unthinkable to me that it be that way. It's simply that I'm so caught up in exploiting these aspects, that I really don't have a handle on and am unaware of the other. So you can say: in that sense, I can be unconscious that it's a can of pop, even though it's not unthinkable. That's a quite different sort of thing than the other.

As a matter of fact, you get inklings of some such difference in the classic Freudian description of the difference between unconscious, pre-conscious, and something you just don't happen to remember now. If it's something that you can get me to see just by reminding me, like when you say "That's a delicious-looking can of pop", then it's not repressed. Then I'm not distorting reality in taking it as a paperweight because it really is that, too. On the other hand, if you say that, and I say "What do you mean?"

then you begin to suspect that I'm repressing, that it's that I can't in some stronger sense.

Q: ###

P: Yeah, that's why the relativization: if it's unthinkable for him, or if as far as he's concerned the world would come to an end if that were so. And then you'd say, "Well, not everybody faced with that would take that view. It isn't for everybody that having those kinds of feelings would represent the end of the world." And so you will get individual differences of who can and who can't live with that. It doesn't matter what you anticipate. If you see it, you're not distorting it. If you don't see it, then it doesn't matter what you anticipate or didn't. You may misjudge your endurance or your capability. You may walk into a situation and say, "Oh, I can take it," and then discover that you can't. And likewise, you may anticipate the temptation to distort in that situation, and walk in, and then distort. And then you walk out saying, "I was wrong—it really was that way."

Q: *The case where I could say—and it's an absurd statement—"That's unthinkable for me". Because I am thinking of it, it is thinkable. And the other case where I can't even say that.*

P: That's why you need this diagram. [ABQ diagram] unthinkable—this is the elaboration on it. That is not something you can act on, in this one. Now there is a weaker sense of "thinkable" in which you can talk about it as a hypothetical possibility. It's a hypothetical possibility, not a real one. So "unthinkable" means "I can't think of it as real and act on it."

Q: *Any system would have to have two people, then: the person who's saying, "That's unthinkable for you."*

P: Yeah. Exactly. That's why the distortion of reality, unconscious motivation, is a form of description that requires at least two people, because you can't give that kind of description about yourself. That's why we plug it into the ABQ diagram. There has to be a person, and somebody else over here giving a description of that person. And that kind of description can only be given either of somebody else, or of yourself at a different time but not right now.

Q: *It seems to me like somewhere in the middle, like—even if only instantaneously, I considered that, and it was so foreign to me, I can no longer let myself think about that, and so I distort it or I misperceive it or whatever. I was conscious of it long enough to start, so I don't ever have to be conscious of that again.*

P: You mean you see it for a while, and then it becomes impossible, and you stop seeing it.

Q: *Is that possible?*

P: Why not? You see, the general sequence doesn't specify those initial conditions, and it doesn't specify when it becomes unthinkable, and so it doesn't rule out any such case. As a matter of fact, we generated a case of that sort where it's a matter of enduring the pain. When is the pain unthinkable? And the answer is: well, you can stand it up to a certain point, but at some point it does become unthinkable, and then you don't experience it any more. Either you blank it out or [change tape]

Q: *### about if the situation could be seen as making behavior impossible for that person.*

P: No, it would be The End if things were that way. That's why some of the ways that we describe it is, "He wouldn't be able to cope with it." It's not a matter of thinking in the abstract; it's not a matter of considering hypothetically. It's a matter of "Can you live that way? Can you act on it as real?" That's what we're getting at when we say "he couldn't live with himself if he thought that such-and-such"; "he wouldn't be able to cope with it if—". That's why, again, it's the action involving that state of affairs. If action is not possible involving that state of affairs, then it's unthinkable.

Q: *We're not talking about physical existence particularly, then.*

P: We never are. We're talking about people, and what's unthinkable for somebody is something he's not going to think. And that goes for thoughts about physics—

Q: *But clearly something does happen. Sometimes it does happen that it goes to that.*

P: No. If he thinks it, then clearly it wasn't unthinkable.

Q: ...*thinks about it, discovers that the consequences would be undesirable, and then avoids it?*

P: Not "undesirable"—that's too weak a term. For example, try that Face in the Wall. Suppose I'm a little bit euphoric, and I look over at that face, and it doesn't faze me, I just say, "There's a face." And then as I sit here, some of the further implications of that face begin to [laughter] sink in, and then after about ten minutes, during which time you see me fidget and turn pale, I say, "You know, I had a strange hallucination." If I see enough that it then becomes unbearable, that may be what does it. It switches it from being "merely a face" to "what the hell kind of world is this if a face can come out of the wall?". *That* may be what's unbearable. And one may have that kind of connection without realizing it.

There's an interesting heuristic example that way: "Were you thinking of Oxford?" Imagine that you and I are walking down the river and walking along the bank, and I say, "Were you thinking of Oxford?" And you say, "No, what do you mean?" And I say, "Well, what were you thinking about?" And you say, "Well, I wasn't really thinking. I was just watching those guys over there." And down there, there's a bunch of guys rowing a boat. I say, "What were you thinking about then?" And you say, "Well, I was thinking that they were rowing too slowly." "Too slowly for what?" "Well, too slowly to win the race next Saturday." "What race?" "The race against Oxford." "So you were thinking about Oxford." Now somebody who answers that way, in some sense, was thinking of Oxford. Well, think of the same kind of elaboration that I generate when I first see the face and then start thinking and begin to realize what it was I saw; and the more I realize, the more unthinkable it becomes; and about the time when I see that this affects the whole world that I'm in, then you see me say, "Hey, that was a hallucination." If it was merely unpleasant, it wouldn't happen.

Q: ### *about zero behavior potential.*

P: Well, if I only know how to operate in a normal world, and if I recognize that that face, with respect to my normal world, is like a contradiction in a logical system—namely, it undermines absolutely everything—if

everything is undermined, I no longer have behavior potential. I no longer know any of my relations to anything; therefore, it's the End. Well, if that's the way things work, I'm not going to see that face that way. I'm going to see it as a hallucination. And I don't have to know that any such thing is happening. I will merely see it as a hallucination or something else. What I won't see is myself in a world that makes things impossible, that leaves me with no options, no behavior potential.

Q: *So if a schizophrenic knows that he can repress and deny like crazy, that makes all these things thinkable. Can you work it—*

P: No, because this is not ### [laughter]. Knowing that I can forget doesn't enable me to forget. I know I can forget anything, but if you say, "Try to forget that that's a can," I'm not going to succeed. And yet I could—I might—I'm able to. Likewise, I'm able to repress the fact that it's a can under suitable conditions, but I can't do it now on demand, just because I see that it might be convenient for me. It isn't a matter of unpleasantness or convenience; it's a matter of unable.

Q: *What do you mean zero behavior potential? ...because you wouldn't be yourself any more. You'd still have behavior potential, but it would mean losing your status.*

P: No, but if that status is not ###. Yeah, that's why somebody else can say, "No, he really has that potential, and it isn't really the end," but for him it is.

Q: *But people don't have to go through that calculation.*

P: No. That's why I say that what you have is a set of boundary condition principles that simply specify under what conditions something is going to happen, and there's no causality, there's no reference to self-awareness. In fact, this is the paradigm for non-self-awareness. Since if I distort, as a result of this, I don't know what it is I'm distorting. Nor do I know that I'm distorting. I simply see the world in this way, and it takes somebody else to see it differently and to say of me that I'm distorting. As far as I'm concerned, this is just the way the world is. So I don't know that I'm doing.

Q: *Not knowing it, somehow you manage to not know it—*

P: No, you don't manage to not know it. You can't succeed in knowing it. It's a deficit, a limitation-type explanation, not an ingeniousness-type explanation.

Q: ###

P: Yeah. That's the trouble with the psychoanalytic explanation. It makes it sound too much like a clever, ingenious being there who sees what would be wrong and somehow wipes it out. But to do that, he'd have to see it first.

Q: *You can act as critic of yourself, though.*

P: Yeah. That's why I say that I can say of myself that five minutes ago, I was distorting, but I can't tell you right now that I'm mistaken in what I think.

Q: *The notion of needs comes in there, right?*

P: Well, it follows the same paradigm as needs. What you can say is that a person needs "belonging", because he needs status in order to have any behavior potential, and without that, behavior is impossible, so the need for belonging is a basic human need.

Q: *I was thinking of the face again, and the notion of positive construction, that a person might need to see faces coming out of the wall to fit with his world—*

P: In that case, I'd see faces where there weren't any, if that's the way it worked. Because it could work either way.

Q: *Since my asking, "How does Pete manage to not see that face?" is like asking "How does Pete manage to walk?"—it seems like...*

P: No. Or—yes. My walking is an expression of an ability I have. My not seeing the face is not an expression of a peculiar ability to not see things. It's an expression of my not having a certain ability. So there's that difference, and that similarity.

Q: *It sounds like an ability. It's an ability to put things in a framework such that you retain the same status through a lot of different situations.*

P: It's not an ability. It's an inexorable boundary condition. And it doesn't work out that you always maintain the same status. Some status changes are thinkable, and if the right things happen, one will accept those. Some status changes are unthinkable, and specifically, in the limiting case, the change to no status is unthinkable. It's unthinkable because you can't act on it, because you can't act without behavior potential, and you can't have behavior potential without any status.

Q: *[a question about "inexorable".]*

P: It's inexorable because there's no way to avoid that logical constraint, that you can't do what you can't do. You can't behave if you have no behavior potential. Those are constraints, and there's no way out.

Q: *So that's why it's not an ability to see yourself...you've got some behavior potential.*

P: To be a person at all, you have to have some behavior potential, because you have to act or have potential for acting. So you won't see it that way if that would be impossible. You can see how this generates explanations of the form, "He did X because that was all he could do. He did X because he had no choice." And how it gives you a variation, and a richer one, on "He didn't do X because he couldn't." And then the in-betweens: "He didn't do X because it would have been unendurable. He didn't do X because it would have been inauthentic." Once you anchor some of these notions, then you find that there's all kinds of in-betweens that we have a lot of language for, that we haven't really been able to pin down previously, as to what is somebody talking about when he says "can't" in this sense, when he says "unendurable", when he says "inauthentic" and various things of this sort. What is it to say, "He couldn't do that because of his integrity. To have done otherwise would be inauthentic." What's the "can't"? By using these notions, you can put in the in-between steps, that his self-concept of the kind of person he is has that much force; that he's literally unable to do something that (as far as he's concerned) violates that; that he can't be *him* and still do that; and he can't *not* be him; and so his own self-concept, then, is that binding. And then, from that, you water it down: it may be binding only in these respects, but not in others. We don't have too much trouble,

once you catch on to that kind of logic of imagining clinical examples that fit any particular pattern—to fit the pattern in two respects: he couldn't not be himself there, but he could sure, in these respects, he could do something that was out of character, and it wouldn't faze him much. And partly, it's because of that independence notion, that being unable to accept this kind of change doesn't at all imply that you will or you won't be unable to accept this kind of change. So you have the possible patterns of being unable here; of being perfectly able here; being somewhere in between here; and any of the gradations for any of the other possibilities. So it merely, then, remains for a given case, a given person, a given situation, how much of this can you tell about him, how much do you want to specify. But all of the possibilities will be there. And they will all make sense, because they're all connected in this way.

Q: *Somewhere in here, I think there's a significant distinction between "I can't do that" and "I can't imagine doing that".*

P: Yeah. It's like the gap between you and your self-concept. Saying "I can't imagine doing that", the most attractive paraphrase is to assimilate it to your self-concept. And yet, given the situation, you might perfectly well be able to respond to and handle that, and then I'd say, "What do you mean, you couldn't imagine doing that? You did." Then you say, "I did, but I just couldn't imagine it."

Q: *But it seems, in clinical things you have people saying, "I can't even think of doing that."*

P: That's right. And one of the things you want to have a sense of is when is it phony; when is it honest but wrong; and when is it true, because depending on which it is, you want to push in different ways.

Q: *When is it true?*

P: When it is unthinkable.

Q: *You mean, when you share—*

P: No. Think of this common situation where you've got a coach with a runner, and the runner says, "I can't possibly do the 880 in that time," and the coach says, "Sure you can. All you've got to do is try, and believe in

yourself, and you can do it.” Well, sometimes in a situation like that, when the coach says that, indeed, the kid has the confidence, he gets it from that, he believes in himself, and does it. Other times, when the coach says that, the kid has the confidence, etc., and he doesn’t, and about that time you say, “The kid was right. He couldn’t do it.” Whereas, in the first case, you say the coach was right—he did have it in him even though he didn’t think he did. And somebody who says, “I couldn’t possibly face my parents and tell them that I’m my own man, because—”: it may be true, it may not be true. It may be conditionally true: It’s true only because of certain things that themselves can be taken care of; and so, if you take care of those, then he can. So not inevitably, but reasonably often, one is in a position of making that kind of judgment in a therapy session. Because, as you can see, when it comes to justifying what you do or don’t do, saying “I can’t” is very appealing, and so people have a tendency to over-use that, and that’s one of the things you want to watch out for.

Q: *But in one set, you’re acknowledging a physical limitation, that the kid cannot run that distance—*

P: They’re not physical limitations, but personal limitations.

Q: *For that particular kid—okay. And then when you move into a therapy ###, “I can’t tell my parents I’m my own person,”—*

P: That, too, may be a personal limitation. But it may not be.

Q: *But I think that your set changes. Given these circumstances, you can’t; but in the future, you will be able to. On the other hand you’re saying, “No, you cannot run the 880 in three seconds.”*

P: Yeah, but look. Think of what’s happening when the coach says, “All you’ve got to do is believe in yourself. I know you can do it. Now go out and do it.” To himself he might say, “Yeah, in these circumstances, you can’t do it, but ###.” He’s going to create the circumstances under which he does, and he does it exactly by telling him that. Well, you have the same situation as the therapist, although instead of exhorting him, say, “No, you can do it if you—Try thinking of it this way, and see how it works.” And maybe if the person does think of it that way, it does work, and then you’ve helped him. And it may be true that at the time he said that, given the circumstances

then, he literally couldn't do it; but you can change those, and that's why you want to be sensitive to that kind of possibility—that you're in there to do something, not just to talk or to observe. Or to predict. So your own behavior potential as a therapist hinges on how you see things.

Q: *Is something unthinkable when a person finds all his relationships undermined, so he has no relationships, or is it the majority of relationships? It has to be all?*

P: Yeah. That's why one is so usually wrong about it.

Q: *So if you're a therapist, you have to look at the situation and try to see if he behaves as if...*

P: It's not nearly so much a matter of prediction as it sounds when you say that. It sounds like you observe what the effect is, or you second-guess ahead of time what the effect is going to be. That's not what happens. It's more like: "Is his doing that compatible with the way he sees the world and himself?" If it is—then if he actually does it, he may find it unthinkable that he did do that. But that's not the usual notion of a predictive consequence. It's an analysis of the psychological consistency. The whole notion of a self-concept is a way of getting at the logic of A's relation to B, where A and B are the same person. And a lot of times, for those, you need to look at the two-person relation, and then introduce a special case where the two are the same person. We want to get into that specifically, and that's why I'm assigning the chapter on the self-concept. ["What Actually Happens" Chapter V-D "Selves without Paradox"]

Q: *There are some things that are ###, and I'm wondering if the words "possible" and "impossible" would shed some light, in giving us ###. The man or woman who was going to run the 880. There are certain times with their own physical limitations that they can't run the 880 in the times. That's impossible.*

P: Well, if you happen to know that it's impossible, that would be good grounds for thinking that it's impossible for a given person; and that, in turn, would be good grounds for thinking he's not distorting reality when *he* says it's impossible. Again, practically speaking, nobody's going to get into hassles about whether he can run the 880 in one second. Where

you get into hassles is where there's some realistic uncertainty. Because otherwise, it's a foregone conclusion, and nobody argues about it.

Q: *When people talk about its being impossible—*

P: Impossible—but remember, there's various senses of “impossible” corresponding to the various notions of “can” and “can't”.

Q: *More often, they're casting the improbable as an impossible.*

Q: *But then you wouldn't say, “I can't do it.”*

Q: *But it is possible—it's just highly improbable.*

P: What would somebody be telling you if he said, “It's highly improbable,” and then follows that by saying, “I can't”? Is he contradicting himself? Is he giving you a stronger statement second, or is he promising you something, or what? ### but that's why it contradicts saying “It's highly unlikely”. If it's only unlikely, it's not impossible. If it's highly unlikely, you would follow by saying, “And therefore I'm not willing to take the chance, because there's such a low probability of success.” That's different from saying, “I can't.” If I try, I might succeed if it's a low probability. From “I can't”, it follows that if I try, I won't succeed, unless it's sheer luck. So again, there are two quite different statements, even though if you were betting, and “can't”, rather than probability estimates. Again, separate the usage from what it is they're saying. A person might use the words, “I can't do it” to say that it's highly unlikely. That doesn't mean that the one means the same as the other.

Q: *To that, or to another person?*

P: No—just flatly “means”.

Q: ###

P: That's why I say that that is likely to be over-used, because it's so handy in justifying your not doing something.

Q: *Going back to what you said can't.*

Q: *I'm thinking of people who use “can't” to say “it's unlikely”, and that the end result is that that person is limiting himself each time he talks in that kind of way.*

P: To speak that way is to set limits to the clarity with which you can get something across, to the likelihood that you'll be able to communicate successfully. It may not be serious limits, but they're there.

Q: *I'm talking of actually doing the thing, not only communicating to the other person.*

P: Well, if it can be confusing to somebody else, it can be confusing to him. If what he tells himself is "I can't do it", on the basis of facts that would justify saying it's unlikely, he may thereby talk himself into thinking he can't do it. And then he won't try. So he will be limiting that way.

Q: *...the frequency of using that for "unlikely" or "improbable"—*

P: Not just frequency, but the way he's using it. If he is as confused about the usage, then he'll talk himself into it, just like he'll confuse somebody else into thinking that he can't, when in fact it's just unlikely. And then you might counter, "No, it's that you won't," or something like that. Then you have an argument going. Okay. I think that that's a good start on reviewing, and laying some foundations for status dynamics.

Session 2

January 27, 1976

Derivation of Unconscious Motivation description; observation and experience; distortion of reality; judgment diagram for reconstructing behavior; self concept and behavior potential; behavior as expression of relationship or status; powers and abilities; status and the Process Description; priority of status over fact.

PGO: [Handing out copies of Unconscious Motivation sheet and Images sheet.]

The one on unconscious motivation represents an example of a status dynamic formulation. It is a status dynamic formulation of a certain kind of explanation of a certain kind of phenomenon, namely, when someone does something and doesn't know that he's doing it. Or, in general, what falls under the heading of distortion of reality. Distortions of reality include, as a special case, distortions regarding what you yourself are doing or have done. So this is a formulation of the general notion of a distortion of reality and has direct application to distortions about your own behavior; and at the bottom, there is a commentary that shows the parallel between this and the psychoanalytic formulation. And hopefully, it shows you that this accounts for all of the major characteristics of the psychoanalytic one.

Q: *Would you put some of this on the board?*

P: It's too long to put on the board, but let me just briefly go through it. Oh—how many by now have read at least through Part II of *What Actually Happens?* Okay. Well, if you have, you'll recognize that the beginning line, that you have to find out about the real world by observation, is a paraphrase of one of the conclusions there, that appears in the section 3 on

Chronological Descriptions, in which very briefly there is a pre-empirical basis for empiricism developed. And this principle is simply that conclusion, paraphrased. And the Empiricist Principle is that you have to find out about the real world ultimately by observation. So we begin with that. Why? Because that's a fundamental statement about the reality that's going to get distorted. The beginning line has to do with our knowledge of the real world, and that's what's at issue when you say of somebody that he's distorting reality. So we begin with that line, and give it four paraphrases, which either preserve the content—that is, are logically equivalent—or are weaker statements. And in order to get it into a perspicuous grammatical form so that you can see why the rest of it follows.

Unconscious Motivation

Empiricist Principle:

You have to find out about the real world by observation.

Paraphrases:

1. For a given observer, the real world is the one that includes him as an observer.
2. For no observer is the real world one that does not include him as an observer.
3. For no observer is the real world one that has no place for him.
4. For no observer is the real world one that would leave him in an impossible position.

Maxim 5: If a situation calls for a person to do something he cannot do, he will do something he can do.

Conclusions:

If, for a given observer, the real world is such that it would leave him in an impossible position, he will not see it that way. Instead, he will see it as a world that does have a place for him, and he will act accordingly.

A second observer, P, who sees the world differently from O and knows it, can count that difference as O's distortion of reality, and account for that distortion of reality by reference to some real condition that O would find unthinkable (because it would leave him in an impossible position), and therefore be unable to behave with respect to it.

Interpretations:

1. Among such unthinkable real conditions would be that O's behavior was a particular behavior, or that it had a particular motivation or significance (hence unconscious *motivation*).
2. Because the derivation above is a statement of logical constraints, the conclusion and the phenomenon are non-voluntary and automatic (hence one could speak of mental *mechanisms*).
3. Because the effect of the logical constraints is that the person continues to function still more or less realistically when otherwise he would be unable to function, one could speak of the mechanisms as preserving realistic functioning, or as *ego defensive*.
4. The second observer, P, might set up a taxonomy of the kinds of distortions O was engaging in. If the distortion were explained by the operation of mechanisms, the taxonomy could be identical to that for *ego defense mechanisms*.

So the first paraphrase is: that for a given observer, the real world is the one that includes him *as* an observer. Which is a paraphrase on that the real world is the one that you're able to see, touch, and feel. It includes you *as* an observer. Then the grammatical paraphrase: for no observer is the real world one that does *not* include him as an observer. You see—just introducing a double negative. Then you introduce a paraphrase on the word “include”, and you say, “For no observer is the real world one that has no place for him.” So for “includes”, you're substituting “has a place for”. And

then finally, another paraphrase where in place of “has no place for him”, you substitute, “leaves him in an impossible position”. So the paraphrase is, “For no observer is the real world one that would leave him in an impossible position.” And notice the switch to the subjunctive: “that would leave him in an impossible position.”

Okay, that’s the form in which you can see some of the things that follow. So the purpose of those paraphrases is to get it into this form, from which other things seem clear. At that point, you introduce the second major statement, and that is simply Maxim 5, which says that if a situation calls for a person to do something he can’t do, he’ll do something he can do. Now it’s from those two—the Maxim 5 line and the one just preceding—that you draw conclusions. And the first conclusion is that if, for a given observer, the real world is such that it would leave him in an impossible position, then by Maxim 5, he will not see it that way. Instead, he will see it as a world that does have a place for him, and he will act accordingly. So there’s the statement of the distortion of reality: that he won’t see it the way it is. He won’t do what the situation calls for him to do, namely, see it the way it is. Instead, he will do something he can do, which is to see it as a world that has a place for him. And he will then be able and will act accordingly.

Recall last time: we said a person is an individual whose history is a history of intentional action. Therefore, a person needs an environment, needs a place within some larger setting, in order for behavior to be possible. So here we’re doing the inverse, saying: a setting which has no place for a person would make his behavior impossible. Therefore, no person will be able to see the world that way. He will have to see something that has a place for him and, therefore, permits some possible behavior on his part.

Q: *As an observer of that person, can you give a description of a person’s place in the world, where he would—*

P: No. You see, you and I, like everybody else, have to see the world as a place that makes behavior possible. So neither you nor I can portray a world that makes behavior impossible. But that’s because we’re subject to exactly the same limitation. Now if you’re talking about a world that has no place for somebody else, then you’re just talking about a fictitious, nonex-

istent person. But that's not who we're talking about. We're talking about a real person, and what the boundary conditions are on him. And he has to see there being a world, and one that has a place for him, and that therefore makes some behavior possible. So what you have there is not a causal push that generates a behavior. Rather, it's a logical constraint on what could possibly happen. And what could possibly happen is that he sees the world as having a place for him.

Q: *But things like that presume that the person has already made a distortion of reality in seeing that he cannot see the world as it is, because to do that—*

P: No. He doesn't think that he can't see the world as it is. On the contrary, he thinks he is seeing the world as it is. That's part of the thrust of this derivation, is that you don't have to postulate that he somehow really knows it, but then doesn't really know it. You see, the notion of a censor invites the reconstruction that you first see it accurately, see that it's objectionable, and then do something so that you wind up not seeing it. It doesn't work that way. He doesn't have to conceptualize the impossibility in order to follow—or to act in accordance with it. What this says is, he will not construct a world that is impossible. So he doesn't have to have the impossible world, and say, "No, I won't do it that way; I'll do it this way." He can't. Instead, whatever he does will be a possible world, and it won't be an impossible one. And the joker is that if the real world is one that for him would be impossible, he's going to have to distort. Because for him, it won't be possible.

It's like saying, "Look, if I can't see green, and you show me something green, I'm going to have to see it some other way, in whatever way I can see". And that's true. If I can't see green, I won't see green as green. I'll see it some other way.

Q: *It seems like the fact that seeing the world as it is would leave him in an impossible position ### the initial distortion.*

P: Why does it seem like you—

Q: *Because the world never leaves anybody in an impossible position. [laughter]*

P: — that you will always construct a world, you'll always see the world as not leaving you in an impossible position. *That's* why the world never leaves people in an impossible position.

Q: *It's the umpire's ### who calls them as he sees them.*

P: Well, that's why there's a second paragraph here, a second conclusion.

The first one simply says, if he can't do it, he can't do it, and he'll do something he can, namely, see the world as having a place for him. Now the second one gets at the thing operationally. It says, it takes a second observer to say this. It takes a second observer to say, "*He's* distorting reality." And for that second observer to do this, there has to be a contrast between how *he* sees the world, and what he understands about how *you* see the world. Then because of that difference, he can say, "Well, since this is the way it is, and that's the way you see it, you're distorting it." Now you can't do that, you see. He can do it with you, and you can do it with him, but neither of you can do it to yourself.

Q: *Well, you can say, "Well, I'm probably distorting."*

P: Distorting what?

Q: *Then you can describe what you think you're distorting.*

P: But then either you were distorting, or you've got a world-construction that you take to be correct, but you're contrasting that to your perception, which is secondary. Your perception is secondary to how you know the world is, because if you get drunk or something, and things start looking fuzzy, you don't take it that they're fuzzy. You say, "I'm seeing double," or something like that, and you know it's how it really is.

Q: *This sounds more like a state or a state of affairs than a process.*

P: That's right.

Q: *It's not something that happens—it's something that is.*

P: Yeah.

Q: — *the argument that the first statement is an assumption: "You*

can't learn about it through observation. You have to learn about the world through seeing and living in it—" [laughter]

P: What is the alternative?

Q: *You have to learn about the world through experiencing the world and being in the world.*

P: Isn't "experiencing the world" observation? What other form of "experiencing the world" do you know of than observance?

Q: *Like the Zen people say, detaching yourself from the world—*

P: Are you detaching yourself when you look over there and see a chair? Are you detaching yourself from the world? You're right in there with it, eyeball to eyeball.

Q: *Observation implies conscious thought, and experience implies not really—*

P: There's nothing about observation that implies any kind of thinking.

Q: *How about the distinction between Observer and Actor as between experiencing and observing?*

P: How would that apply?

Q: *Well—being in the world as an Actor—*

P: But that table is in the world—unless it's an Observer, it doesn't even know it's a table. It doesn't even know it is in the world. A human being not only is in the world; it experiences being [in] the world; it observes its being in the world. And so it knows that it is in the world. Without that, it's like a table.

Q: *—saying that the Actor would qualify as what these people are talking about, being in the world, experiencing the world.*

P: Well, not in the usual sense of being in the world, because the usual sense of being in the world includes knowing about it, experiencing it. Everything that's in the world is in there, but not everything knows it's there.

Q: *Doesn't it depend on what you mean by "find out about"?*

Q: *It becomes either "you observe the real world by observation" or "you experience the real world by experience."*

P: But experience is observation. That's the point. Whenever you observe something, you have an experience. Whenever you have an experience, you have observed something.

Q: *Then this would deny something like experience without discrimination.*

P: Well— [laughter] experience without discrimination—how is that different from no experience?

Q: *I think this is what that Zen concept is getting at—removing that need to differentiate, discriminate—*

P: But then what could you find out about that way?

Q: *You're not finding out anything.*

P: Okay, but look: this says you have to find out about the real world by observation. If somebody's interested in finding out about something other than the real world, then there's no argument about how you find out.

Q: *Why do we make the distinction between Actor and Observer, if experiencing is observing?*

P: Remember that each is a special case of the other. To observe is a special case of acting. To criticize is a special case of observe and describe. So they're not distinct categories. They're related as special cases. And I've said, time after time, that normally, a person is doing all three simultaneously. So you can't characterize a person as a being in the world in terms of only one of those. You've got to deal with all three simultaneously.

Q: *It seemed to me when they were making that argument that even if you wanted to ### [laughter] it would follow anyway, because even if you make the distinction between being and observing, you still would ### the world in order to ###.*

P: But again, remember we're talking about knowledge, and that's

why we start out with the notion of observation, because that's where knowledge starts.

Q: *What's the observation being contrasted to? I don't know what the counter-argument is that you're providing.*

Q: *People say that's an assumption, because you don't have to learn about the world through observation. You can learn about the world through experience, meditation.*

P: As you can see, you can say, "But that is observation, and if you were in doubt about what I meant when I said 'observation', the fact that I include those things under it ought to relieve your mind." On the other hand, surely the people who say that meditation, etc., is important, would not deny that I find out that there's a table there by looking. I don't find that out by meditation over there. I come over here, and I look. So if observation covers both things like meditation *and* coming here and looking, that should cover all cases.

Q: *Does the concept of observation, as you develop it, also give a place for observations that aren't heeded?*

P: There is and there isn't. Logically there is, but in terms of actually carrying out a social practice in saying that, there is nobody who would then be in a position to say that.

Q: *So you could demonstrate learning in some person, and yet that person might claim that he didn't know that, never saw that, yet was clearly responding to a distinction that involved that.*

P: That's already in the basic diamond. You don't have to know what distinction you're making in order to make it. Now the second paragraph is a way of simply getting around all of that argument, because this is not an argument! It has no assumptions. That first line is not an assumption.

Q: *They also said it's an assumption because you couldn't prove it.* [laughter]

P: It would also follow you can't know anything, because even if you can prove something, you can't prove that you proved it.

The second paragraph does something quite distinctive that you will not find elsewhere. It puts it in the framework of PSO, and says an Observer of a certain sort can use this form of description. Now you can make a statement like that even if the form of description did involve an assumption. *You're* not making that assumption; you're saying *an* observer who gives this kind of description is using this kind of notion; and if it takes him using an assumption, then it takes him using an assumption; but it doesn't take *your* making that assumption in order to say that. So what we're doing is, we're backing off one more step. Instead of saying, "This is what distortion of reality is"—that's the phenomenon—we're saying "This is a form of representation called 'distortion of reality' or 'unconscious motivation.'" That form of description, if it's to be used at all, is used by an observer. It is a concept that he uses in giving his description, and here's the kind of description it is. And you could do that even if there had never been a case of unconscious motivation. Even if it were in fact impossible, you could still do this job. So in doing it, you're not committing yourself to actually giving that form of description. You're saying, "Here is what somebody is doing if he gives it."

And one of the things you can point out is that it's not the kind of description that you can give of yourself here and now, that it is something that has to be used on somebody else or on yourself at some other time and place. Because, intrinsically, it involves a disagreement, and you can't disagree with yourself right now. It involves a discrepancy. Neither are you underwriting that when somebody gives a description of that sort, he's correct. Because, indeed, the person who says you're distorting—he may be the one that's distorting. So you're not underwriting the correctness of any of that. You're simply elaborating what kind of description it is, and what is embodied in it; and what's embodied in it is: if anybody is not willing to talk about the real world, he's also not going to have any use for the notion of distorting reality.

So the form of description called "distorting reality" is something that's usable only by somebody who's willing to talk about "the real world". So we don't have to assume a real world for that. On the other hand, there are very few of us who are not willing to talk about a real world. So this has a lot of potential utility.

Now this is a characteristic move. We're not engaged in saying what the real world is like. We're elaborating on the kind of thing that people do, whether correctly or incorrectly, because we are familiar with our forms of behavior. And one of our forms of behavior is to give this kind of description of other people. And all we're doing is systematizing and making clear and explicit what's involved in doing that—what a person is saying in saying that, what he's taking for granted in talking this way. And this, then, will help you decide when you want to talk that way. It will help you be a better critic of when there is a point in talking about that—talking that way; and when somebody who does talk that way is doing it correctly. But those are answers that you generate by being in the world, as it were. They're not written here in this derivation. So there's no statements, no assertions, no assumptions. This is simply portrayal, representation.

Q: *How is this different from just saying, "For him, the real world—this person sees the real world the way he sees it, and this person sees the real world as he sees it, and they're disagreeing?"*

P: Who would say that? A third person? Okay. And his account of the world would either agree with one or another of them, or that here's X's account and here's Y's account, and here's my account—that Observer has options of saying, "X and Y are wrong, and I'm right," or of saying, "We have three different accounts, and who knows who's right?" or something else. Those facts don't force him to say "X and Y are wrong, and they're distorting." Nor do they force him to say "I guess I'm distorting, and X and Y are right."

Q: *Talking that way is the same, makes the same sense, as talking this way?*

P: No. If you say we have three different accounts and they really are different, that's quite different from saying, "He's distorting, and I'm right." They're a very different approach. That's part of the choices that Observer-Describers make.

Q: *I see. There's nothing in those facts that forces you to choose one way or the other.*

Q: *As rules of thumb, what would be the grounds for discriminating between “he simply sees it differently than I do” as opposed to “he’s distorting”?*

P: Remember the heuristic of “the can seen from different places”? And there are certain differences which we not only will not be bothered by, we require in order to say, “You’re seeing the can correctly, and I’m seeing the can correctly, even though we see them differently.” Now there’s a lot of behavioral phenomena of which we’re quite willing to say, “Well, he sees it this way, and I see it this way,” and that’s legitimate: it can be seen both ways. On the other hand, just as if you describe what you saw there as a cube, I’d say, “No way. One of us is wrong.” So with behavioral phenomena, even some of the most ambiguous ones, some of the descriptions you might give might be of that sort, and I’d say, “No. Either you’re wrong, or I’m wrong, and if I have to choose, it’s you.” You see, you have routinely this notion of how something could be seen by somebody else from a different frame of reference, etc. And those kinds of differences are the ones you say, “Well, they’re different ways of seeing it, none of them wrong, and he’s using it this way, and I’m using it this way.” Remember the example last time [in the Personality and Personality Theories class], of the ash tray and the paperweight. One of those two wasn’t wrong. They’re both legitimate ways of seeing it, and I might be seeing it one way and you the other, and then I would simply record it that way. In contrast, talking about a cube here, I’d say, “Hmmm—distorting reality.” Or, “He’s kidding me. He’s not serious.” You see, there are still choices, even there.

So every description is somebody’s description, and the giving of that description represents a choice that is not determined and not forced. No matter how much information there is, it never guarantees that there’s only one description that you could give.

Q: *about distorting something, and not talking about the same thing.*

P: Talking about paperweight and ashtray, or paperweight and can—in a sense we’re talking about the same thing; but in another sense, we’re not. I can use it as a can; I can use it as a paperweight, and talk about it accordingly. And if you see it as a can, and I see it as a paperweight, why would either of us be wrong?

◆ 35

Q: And if a person said, “It’s a paperweight and there’s no way that could be a can”?

P: Then you'd have disagreement.

Q: What about the possibility of the Observing part [of a person] disagreeing with the Criticizing part?

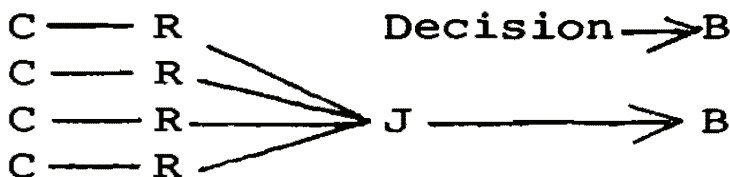
P: You can't. There can't be disagreement, because the nature of the judgment is categorically different, and observation *can't* disagree with a criticism.

Q: *There would be things that would look like disagreement if you didn't—*

P: No. If there was something that looked like a disagreement, it wouldn't look like a disagreement between Observer and Critic. It would look like a difficulty in deciding what conclusion to draw as a Critic, or difficulty in deciding what description to give as an Observer. For example, I might look at the can and say, "Is it blue, or is it blue-green?" and that would be an uncertainty as an Observer. Or I could say, "Well, it's blue, but is it beautiful?" Well, that would be an uncertainty as a Critic, but it wouldn't conflict with saying as an Observer that it's blue. There's no possible conflict there, because they're different sorts of operations.

Q: *I was thinking of the kind of experience where one is watching oneself, in a way, and there is something that's usually described as having two perspectives at the same time, from one of which you see the other as being wrong.*

P: But those are not conflicts between Critic and Observer. [blackboard]



Separate that from using the language of Actor/Observer/Critic, to talk about disagreeing with oneself.

Q: *But should one avoid talking of disagreeing with oneself, altogether?*

P: It's probably a good policy to avoid that unless you can't. Talking that way has so many obvious drawbacks, that if you can dispense with it, you're probably better off. If you can't dispense with it, you'd better explain it. My impression is it could be dispensed with, but sometimes it would be awkward, or sometimes it wouldn't carry the kind of punch that you could carry by saying, "He disagreed with himself. He's at odds with himself." And given conflicting reasons for either talking that way or not talking that way, you make a judgment. What I'm saying is that there are definite reasons against talking that way which suggest that if you're going to talk that way, you'd better have good reasons for it.

Q: *—the judgment diagram you put on the board just now is at least part of the key to what's being talked about, because it seems that—I can't conceive right now of a real case of a person disagreeing with himself that wouldn't instead be a case of a person being indecisive or having a variety of reasons so he doesn't know what to do.*

P: Yeah, this would be the first thing you'd think of in asking, "What could you do instead of talking about a person disagreeing with himself?" You'd talk about having reasons both for and against doing something or saying something or concluding something or believing something. And in general, I think, any disagreement that you could identify between a person and himself, you could put in this form, of having reasons for and against something-or-other

Q: *When you talk about someone having internal conflicts, aren't you talking about someone ### with himself, or—*

P: "Internal" is one of those redundant adjectives. An internal conflict is simply a conflict. And this is a way of representing certain kinds of conflict—reasons for and against will give you a conflict.

Q: *That's a very different thing from a person reaching two mutually exclusive judgments.*

P: You can't. Again, that's carried by the diagram, that there's a one-to-one relation between the judgment and the behavior. If you've got mutually exclusive judgments, you can't have a one-to-one relation to behavior, so you wind up saying, "He didn't really make a judgment. He's talking in mutually exclusive ways, but precisely because of that, he hasn't yet arrived at a judgment."

Q: *What's the relation between this and "doing and undoing"?*

P: They're different kinds of things. This is a way of reconstructing a behavior, any behavior, so it has no special reference to the behavior of undoing. Instead, what it reflects is that a behavior is something that takes account of a number of different things, in principle, and that those things may produce conflicting tendencies, give conflicting reasons. And in that case, the behavior requires resolving the conflict one way or another, and that's what one routinely does. There's hardly anything you do that you don't have some reasons [to] not do, and normally that doesn't create problems because the preponderance one way or the other is so clear that you simply don't have a decision-making problem. It's when they're fairly evenly balanced that you have decision-making problems and where you start laying them out explicitly and thinking them over and coming back and saying, "Well, I'll think about it some more"—all of those things for the sake of not going wrong.

Q: *If you're ### always perfectly balanced.*

P: Yeah, but that's why it's pathological. If somebody is so perfectly balanced that he always has to think and make difficult, hair-line decisions about what he's going to do, there's something wrong with that, and one normally doesn't. And couldn't. It's very hard to do that.

Q: *—description of different ways of representing different methods of deciding?*

P: There aren't different methods. Again, you've got a set of logical constraints, not a process. Whatever does count for more with you will be reflected in your judgment, but there isn't a way of assigning weights to the reasons and then calculating a result and knowing that that's going to be the right result. Instead, what happens is that in the face of these, you make

your judgment, and from that one tells what got more weight. The giving of the weights is the reconstruction, not the process of getting there. There is no way to give those weights, any more than there's a way to render stimuli functionally equivalent. As an achievement description, you can say that. With an achievement description, you can say, "You weighted these reasons and drew a conclusion," but not as a process description, because you don't really do it: it's simply a result.

So the making of a judgment, like the making of an erroneous judgment, is not a process. It is something that is governed by some regularities that we can state, but those regularities don't have to do with a process that produces it. Instead, they are logical constraints on what it is that could happen. And all of this reduces to saying that what's impossible isn't going to happen, and that whatever does happen must fit one of the possibilities. It's that kind of tautology. And that's pretty safe. You see, the question is: which phenomena are governed by this kind of—you can say in general, "Yeah, whatever happens is not going to be impossible, and that whatever particular thing happens must be one of the things that were possible." That form of talk is safe; the question is: to what level of detail can you carry this kind of talk? Can you carry it to a level that's informative? I'm suggesting with this, and some other formulations, that you can carry it quite a long ways, in ways that are very informative.

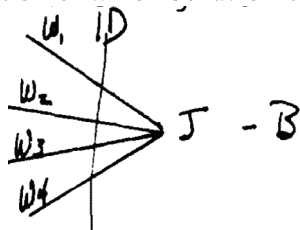
Q: —*the situation where you choose not to take the course of action which is particularly one's own and decide instead to take somebody else's judgment.*

P: There's really two diagrams: one has a D and one has a J. J is for Judgment, and that has to do with descriptions. You make judgments about what is the case. D is for Decision, and decision is the one that connects directly to behavior. And you might decide that something is the case, but decide to act in a way that's in accordance with somebody else's judgment. But that's a decision about what to do, rather than a judgment about what is the case. And you have to be doing both in order to have the discrepancy that you just mentioned. I have to judge that something is the case, and that's different from what you say is so, in order for me to decide to act on what you say is so, where that isn't my judgment. This one, you see, the

decision to act on your description—for that I will have various reasons pro and con. One of the reasons con is, “That’s not what I believe.” So there will be other pro reasons that outweigh that one, in order for me to arrive at that decision. You remember that time-honored principle that coercion elicits resistance. Coercion applies to behavior, and if somebody forces you to behave in a certain way, they can’t make you believe that way. You can still resist in the form of keeping your own judgment about what’s the case, or what’s the right thing to do. They can’t force that.

Q: ###

P: That would only be a problem if this was a process, because then you would interpret what I said as: the process may be interrupted here and not result in behavior. If you can form the judgment but not act on that, but rather act on some other one instead, then there isn’t the one-to-one connection. But remember, this is a reconstruction of behavior, so if there was no behavior of this kind, you wouldn’t have this reconstruction. If the behavior was of this kind, you’d have this reconstruction, and there is a one-to-one connection. You see, this reconstruction would simply be part of the statement of my ID characteristics, not a reconstruction of my behavior. That is, I believe all kinds of things that I’m not now acting on, including some things that contradict what I am acting on, but then that will appear here as my having a reason not to act on it. If there’s a behavior, then the reconstruction of that behavior will put either a decision or a judgment or both in one-to-one correspondence. This is not a process. As I say, if it were a process, you could talk about it’s being interrupted here, and not resulting in a behavior. In effect, this is a reconstruction of *what* behavior it is, not of a process that resulted, but *which* behavior is it. Because the reasons for doing that are part of the behavior itself. [blackboard] So they belong to a specification of which behavior it was, not what produced it.



Now we've talked about weighting these things, and I said there's no way to do it, partly because this is not a process. But you can say, "There are some weights." And those weights will characterize individuals; and different individuals, given the same circumstances, will weight the reasons differently. So for one person, the fact that there's a snake there—for all of us, it gives us a prudential reason to get out. For some of us, that prudential reason is overwhelming, and for others, it's not. The difference is in the weights that we give to these reasons relative to one another. Now it's because of that, that when you criticize somebody's judgment, you're also maybe criticizing his character, because what that judgment reflects is his character. Conversely, this kind of thing takes us back to what we were talking about last time, namely, that as clinicians we often say, "He couldn't do such-and-such." And last time, we had an initial go-round on the question of what are we talking about, what are we saying, when we say "can't".

This gives us a new—when we talked about it last time, we were using the notion of ability, and saying, "In some places, saying 'he can't' simply means he lacks the ability." But there are many places where that's clearly not what we have in mind, and we still say, "He can't," and we do have some inability in mind. We do have some defect in learning in mind. Now this gives us a different version of "He can't." Look: given these circumstances, if you say, "Why the hell did you do that?," and I lay this out for you. I say, "Look, there were these circumstances, and there were those reasons; and given those, I couldn't do other than to judge that way and act accordingly. [change tape] Now this is not telling you about my competence. And it's not telling you about a deterministic set of causes that cause me to act that way. What it's telling you is that I, since I am me and have these weights, couldn't have given different weights to them. So it was not open to me to do these things, unless I wasn't being me—unless I was acting out of character, unless I was drunk at the time, or confused, or something else. But I couldn't not give those weights and be me.

Q: ###

P: There are many times when you say, "I could have done this, too," but you don't say, "I couldn't have," and you don't say, "If I had done it, it wouldn't have been me."

Q: *[discussion among the students which the mike didn't pick up]*

Q: *—I could go or not go—I'll flip a coin. I don't care what the outcome is. I have nothing invested in it.*

P: Then I think you're talking as though it was a way of assigning weight, that those generate the judgment, and that since you have a definite set of weights, they determine what your judgment will be, and therefore you couldn't judge differently from the way you do. Remember, I said there *isn't* a way of doing it. The weights do not produce the judgment. The weights reflect the judgment after the fact. This is a reconstruction. And sometimes, when I make the judgment, I will say, "Well, if I had decided the other way, that would have been okay, too." But other times, I say, "No, I couldn't have done otherwise and still be me. My integrity was at stake." And we sometimes do one and sometimes do the other. The reason is that the weights don't determine the judgment. The judgment determines the weights. So if I say, "I could have judged otherwise, I could have done otherwise," I'm also saying, "I could have given these different weights and still be me." It's only sometimes that I say, "I couldn't have given them different weights and still be me."

So here again is a different way in which the self-concept sets limits on possible behaviors. The thing that we talked about last time is that if I don't think I can do a certain thing, then it may be that I really can, but I still won't do it, because I won't even try. And in that sense, in the ability sense, the self-concept will set a limit. Here, it's not an ability that's at work; it's a different kind of limitation. It still comes through "self-concept". And we make statements like this as clinicians. We make statements like this when we write dynamic summaries, when we do diagnosis. Think of that famous statement, "This person lacks the ability [to] form close interpersonal relationships." You find that in about 68% of all clinical reports. It's a way of talking that just rolls off the tongue—for clinicians. And now let's examine what's involved.

Number one: is there such an ability? Is it a matter of ability to form close interpersonal relations? And if there is, is that what we mean when we say "this person can't do that"?

Q: *Is there competence maybe in terms of social skills or something, so*

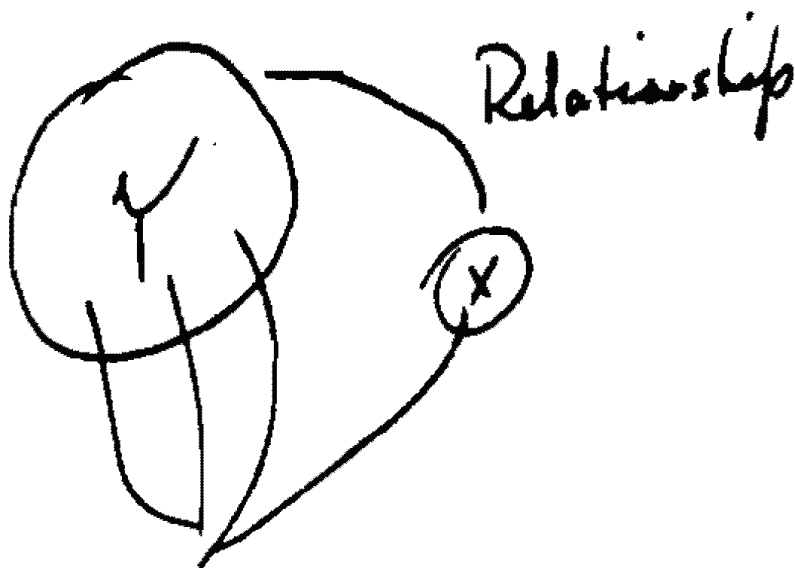
you're saying this person has not acquired whatever social skills are required to gain close personal relationships?

P: Well, notice there's a little gap there. Whatever those other skills may be, are they identical to this one? Or are they merely an explanation for why you don't succeed? And the same question holds for those other social skills—is it a skill, or what? Let's take another classic one like this: Here's a person who's unable to trust people—another common clinical statement. Somebody who can't trust other people—is he lacking a certain kind of ability, namely, the ability to trust people? Think that one over carefully before you say, "Yeah," because there would be something strange here, wouldn't there? It seems strange to think of that as an ability that you exercise whenever you trust somebody. And yet, certainly there are people who can't trust people, and if it isn't a matter of lacking a certain ability, what is it? Or what is it the lack of?

Well, we could start by asking what's the phenomenon? What's the phenomenon when A trusts B? And as soon as you put it in that form, you say, "Aha! A relationship." That's the phenomenon. For A to trust B is for A to have that relation to B. Then you say, "Okay, then somebody who can't trust other people is someone who can't stand in that relation to anybody." A person who can't stand in that relation to anybody is somebody who isn't eligible to engage in trusting behaviors with anybody; or conversely, the person for whom other people—none of them are eligible to participate in that kind of behavior. So, in effect, you have a person who has disqualified all other people from being possible recipients of trust. Now that's not an ability, it's not a lack of ability. What is it? What is it to disqualify other people as eligible to be trusted?

Q: *Status assignment.* [laughter]

P: I wasn't even thinking of that. [laughter] But clearly, that's an apropos answer, and it is very unlike "lacking an ability". And yet, it's certainly plausible that somebody who has disqualified everybody does so by virtue of his learning history, which is why it's so easy to assimilate to his lacking an ability, to his not having learned how to do something, namely, trust.



Let's develop that notion of relationship back into behavior potential. Think, for example, of a person in the world, and of his behavior potential, and greater or lesser being indicated by the size of the circle, so that the circle represents his possibilities and a bigger circle represents more possibilities. Now think of what happens when there is another individual in that world, and you have a certain relation between them. One of the interesting things that may happen is that X gains behavior potential by virtue of that relation. You might say, in general to have a relation with somebody who has greater behavior potential gives you greater behavior potential, and for a classic, recurring case, think of the relation between a child or infant and an adult. A child can do many more things with an adult than he can do by himself, because what he does with the adult is a joint enterprise, and the adult provides a lot of the skills, without which the child couldn't do it. Since he lacks the skills, he's got to have over here somebody who has them, and so what a child could do with another child is less than what the child can do with an adult. And this is true even though there are some things that a child can do with another child that he can't do with an

adult. So it's not a completely one-way thing. But since the adult has more behavior potential, the child gains—has a net gain in most relationships with an adult over what he has all by himself. Think of a person having only material objects around, like chairs and tables, and what his behavior potential is then, as contrasted to there also being another person there and what kind of behaviors then become possible for each of those persons. There's a—you might say—a gigantic increase in behavior potential, because there's all kinds of behaviors that you can only engage in with another person. And so both persons gain in behavior potential, then, over what they would have just by themselves.

Q: —*I can think of restrictive kinds of relationships.*

P: Yeah—### in general, most relations that an infant or child has with an adult.

Q: —*the relations in which Y's behavior potential is increased by having a relationship with X.*

P: Yeah. If you're thinking of simple addition, that Y doesn't lose anything but gains whatever he can gain from this relation, then it's always an increment. And the increment may be zero.

Q: *It can be negative as well—I was thinking that whatever X or Y gains or loses doesn't depend on the size of the behavior potentials, but the nature of the relationship that they have.*

P: No, it's a joint function, because if the behavior potential isn't there, then the relation won't generate it. Because the behavior potential includes, hypothetically, all possible relations. So it's got to be there as a potential for this relation to bring it out.

Think of being ten feet away from something, as a simple relation, and then think of being ten feet away from a table, and ten feet away from another person, and what's possible in those circumstances. The relation of being ten feet away doesn't generate it. It's your potential as a person in your whole world that includes possibilities for behaving toward another person, and that's what's actualized when in fact you have another person who stands in the right kind of relation to you. Then you can actualize that potential. But without that other person in that relation, you have only the

potential, but you can't actualize it.

Q: *Is that one of the ways that one can gain greater behavior potential?*

P: Yeah. One of the things you get from this is, again, this notion that different people will evoke different of these things from you. Different people will evoke different potentials from you. And indeed, a therapist will usually evoke different potentials from clients than most of the people in the client's life will. Some of the behaviors will be the same, and that's why you have transference and generalization, etc.; but others usually will not. So depending on who else is around, you will exhibit different ID characteristics. Depending on the relation, on the conditions, different of your ID characteristics, different of your behavior potentials will come to the fore and be actualized.

Then you bring to bear the relationship change formula, and say: to the extent that some non-usual potential on your part has gotten actualized, you will change in that direction. And so this is one of the pathways of personal change. And it's probably the major pathway. I think. Because we're talking about personal change, not change of behavior. We're not talking about change of performance; we're talking about either change of ID characteristics or change in the full behavior including the ID parameter.

Q: *You said the pathway to personal change is—*

P: Probably the major pathway is to have some of your less salient characteristics evoked by the relation with the therapist or with some person, and since you then actualize things that have not been salient, you become more that way, so that your ID characteristics change.

Q: *How are you using the term 'salient'?*

P: It's not the way you usually are. You see, for example, if your normal style is to be easygoing, and a certain situation brings out your assertiveness, to the extent that this happens, you're going to become more assertive. And it's something that wouldn't have happened normally, because normally you would have just gone on being easygoing. But because of the special circumstance and person, you are—not just are more assertive, you become more assertive ###. That's the relationship change formula, that since you're acting in a certain way that doesn't fit how you normally are,

that your characteristics will change in the direction of that being a genuine expression.

Q: —*what about saying that you were that way already?*

P: If you didn't have that potential already, it couldn't be evoked.

Q: *But what is the ### in communicating that to a client?*

P: Policy-wise, what you often get—where you can see potentials for change, the client can't, and that's by virtue of the self-concept. Now given that kind of resistance, you get around the resistance if you can point out to the client that he already is that way, that he has shown it, that you have an actual example that just happened there, and so there is no question of his being unable to. Whereas if you say, "I know you can do it," he'll just sit back and say, "No, I know I can't." If you show him he has, the argument that he can't tends to go by the board—unless he wants to argue that he wasn't really being himself. [laughter]

Q: *And then what do you do?*

P: Tell him, "Bullshit." Or words to that effect. Anyhow, you can see why it's more effective, if you want to put that across, to demonstrate that he's done it rather than to argue that he could.

Q: —*if he says, "I'm being different," that would make it more solid?*

P: That is judgmental, because sometimes you can go either way. Sometimes you want to emphasize, "No, you're really being your true self now." Other times, you simply agree with him and let him be ###.

Q: *It sounds like an accreditation ceremony—you really were this kind of person.*

P: Yeah. And the accreditation gives him that potential. It really does, at least with you. So you're not describing something that you might be wrong about; you're creating the phenomenon, because that phenomenon hinges on your relation to him. That, in turn, hinges on your status assignment to him. So you're controlling the realities of it, not talking about it. You make it so, at least between you and him. And controlling the reality is a lot less hazardous than talking hypothetically about what could be the

case. The limitation is that it's a limited reality. It holds between you and him, but not necessarily between him and other people. With that, you can't have that kind of control. Since he is that way with you, he clearly is eligible to be that way with at least somebody. And then the question, which is a more or less empirical one, is: with whom? And then the next one is: why not with everyone?

Q: *Suppose it's only within therapy?*

P: Well, that's one of the ways it can go wrong.

Q: *—in joint therapy, how would you try that ###?*

P: Well, mainly by redescribing what they're doing, so that it still comes out that you're doing these kinds of things that you probably didn't think you could do, and you really are, and it's there, and that's you, and try doing more of it, and here are things that will help you do more of it.

Q: ###

P: It's pretty hard to have the same relation with each of the family members. It'll be different. As a matter of fact, C. has one where they're working with a couple, and the husband and C. get along well, and the wife is jealous of C. because of that, and she doesn't like C. It's a very different relationship. You can see why it would almost always in general be different. So it's not the same relation—it's not some general thing called "a therapist-client relation". It's a particular relation between you and that person, and between them and them.

Q: *Going back to what you were saying about the inability to trust—once you've seen an example of trust in a relationship, I can see it written out in a report: "not trusting to the extent expected" or something like that, and you have an entree into developing that non-ability. [laughter]*

P: Now we'll develop the non-ability. You can do that by modeling for ### the client. You can do that by being somebody the client really can trust, and then pointing that out to him, that it's not that he can't, it's that he doesn't, or that he won't, or that he's got ulterior motives. But it's nice to have at least one case, one counter-example to work with, so he can't just say "I can't". You see, the difference between none and some is critical. The

difference between some and more is not so critical. And eligibility tends to work along those lines. Somebody who says, “I’m not eligible for such-and-such,” you can show him he’s wrong by showing him one case. Because if it’s a genuine case, then he is eligible. The same way with modal statements: “I can’t”. Show one occasion on which you really did, then it’s not true that you couldn’t or you can’t. So single examples tend to have a much stronger force when you’re dealing with eligibilities or modal statements—that is, statements concerning possibilities or impossibilities—than they do in the context of practice, where one case is just one among many.

Q: *This ties in with the self-concept, though. You’re presenting a fact, and working toward a change of self-concept, which—*

P: That’s right, because you’re trying to deal with a fact generated by his status assignment, and you use the fact to get leverage on the status assignment. But it’s not a proof.

Q: *This fact indicates that the status assignment you’re holding on to isn’t accurate.*

P: What you have to do is get him to see that you know he did that, then he will see that he really had that eligibility.

Q: *That it’s not a case of “that’s different”.*

P: That’s right.

Q: ###

P: In general, it’s implausible that you can only do it with a particular person. Very few people would say that it could only happen with one person. What you usually do there is start off with, “Well, that shows that you can do it. You have that potential. It isn’t something that’s out of the question for you. There is at least somebody.” And then you get into, “How come only me? What’s special?” And the usual answer is, “Nothing. It isn’t just with you.” And if there are some good suggestions as to why you are special, you have something to work with.

Okay, come back to these two related notions: that there is some carry-over of one person’s behavior potential to another via a relation between them; that different people will evoke different characteristics,

different behavior potentials. And consider that the range of variation here has almost no limits in principle. That is, you could gain a whole lot of behavior potential given the right person with a lot of it and the right relation. You could lose a lot, also, that way. There is no way of setting limits to what kind of hidden resources some person in some circumstances might be able to evoke from you. And then think of a normal human life in which you're dealing with all kinds of people, and some work this way and some work that way, and you're sampling from that whole range of possibilities. And that whole range of possibilities gives your total behavior potential. It's all of these different relations that you have with all of these different people, and that is your total behavior potential. So it's that that's at stake in that definition of pathology: a significant restriction on a person's ability to engage in intentional action. You could now paraphrase that as "a significant restriction in a person's behavior potential".

Q: ###

P: It's like saying that if you have this relation, then you can have any or all of the behaviors that express it. Now this range of behaviors is not the same thing as this relation. On the other hand, you wouldn't really want to say it's more. You'd want to say it's different, and it corresponds. And the same way with the potential for those behaviors: it's different from the relation, but it corresponds. It's because of this that you have that. That's the nature of the correspondence. And it's because of this potential that you have this relation. You have to have the potential for having that relation in order to actually have it.

Q: *Does a person who has few relations with other people have less behavior potential than another person who has more relations?*

P: It depends on—what you might say, the level that you want to operate with. Recall, in the developmental schema, the difference between capacity and ability. Ability is one of the ID characteristics which, given the right circumstances, explains the behavior. Capacity does not do that. You can have the capacity to learn to play the piano, and if somebody brings a piano here, you can't play it; whereas, if you have the ability to play the piano, if somebody brought a piano here, you could play it. In both cases, you could be said to have the potential for playing the piano, but when you

have the ability, it's a potential that's more developed than when you merely have the capacity. Now somebody who has few relationships may have a lot of potential in the capacity sense, but there's not a hell of a lot he can really do here and now. You could say that it's just that he lacks the opportunity, because he has so few relations. You could work that either way, I think. Because the notion of potential is such an umbrella term that you can use it in various contexts like this, and so it's not unambiguous.

Q: *Is there any other way that we have access to someone except by our relationship?*

P: Through his behaviors. It's hard to observe relationships without observing behavior, because what you observe are behaviors that are expressions of the relation. You see, relations like being ten feet away from her are, you might say, directly observable, but a relation like "being friendly toward", or "being friends of", or "trusting", it's pretty hard to establish that by observation, except by observing what these people do together, and what they do in relation to one another. That's why the ID characteristic is a complement—a parameter of behavior. What a person is like is expressed in the behavior itself. You don't have a different access to it. You don't have some kind of direct access. You sample behaviors. The same goes for a person's relationships. You sample the behaviors, and from that you say what kind of relation it is.

Q: *It seems like the relationship becomes more than just an observation of certain behaviors. Is there anything beyond relationship that you—*

P: Yeah, ID characteristics. You might say, ID characteristics set limits to what relations you can have. A person who is "suspicious" is one who "can't have a relation of trust".

Q: *Are you talking about the same thing in two different ways, or are you talking about two different things?*

P: In a way. Remember the explanation for the transition: "ID characteristics plus circumstances gives you behavior" versus saying "a person's relations to something gives you behavior unless—" And there we saw it was the same pool of facts that we're dealing with, but we're packaging them differently when we talk of relationship, and that shows up in the

unless clause. Whereas when we're talking about ID characteristics and circumstances, we don't have an unless clause. Because there, we're referring implicitly to the totality. And you could set up a resemblance by taking only some ID characteristics, and some of the circumstances, and running that formula; but then you'd need an unless clause, and the unless clause would, in effect, say, "—unless there are some other ID characteristics that I didn't take account of, that are relevant; unless there are some other circumstances that I didn't take account of, that are relevant." By the time you do that, you're pretty much doing the same thing as talking about a relation.

Q: *If I lack the ability to play the piano, but have the capacity, is playing the piano a behavior potential for me?*

P: Yeah.

Q: *But if I can't play, what could I do that would count as playing, then?*

P: That's why we distinguish between capacity and ability. Both of these are potential notions. To acquire the ability, you have to have the prior capacity to acquire that ability. And since from the ability it follows that you can play, given the opportunity, then you already had the potential for playing—given the opportunity. But what it took to actualize is different, because in the one case, all you need is the opportunity—the piano—and in the other case, you need the prior learning and the piano.

Q: *What I'm reacting to is from "What Actually Happens", about statuses logically limiting the behavior potential, and if I have the status of non-piano-player, then it seems like the behavior of playing the piano is logically incompatible with that status.*

P: Save that, because some of those images are designed to get at just that: that you can be a piano player who doesn't know how to play the piano. The one that you have to be a poker player is that kind of thing.

Q: *Is there essentially a difference here between "I can't play the piano" and "I can't ###."*

P: Yeah, and that's exactly the difference between capacity and ability. See—look: consider my saying, "I can grab that can of pop and drink from

it.” And you say, “Wait a while. You’re ten feet away. To do that, you’d first have to go there. Then you could.” Well, how different is that from saying, “Look—you’d first have to learn to play the piano. Then you could play it if somebody brought one in.” From where I am now, I first have to do something, then I’m in prime position. But from where I am now, I first have to do something, namely, learn. Then I’m in prime position.

Q: *But you already have acquired the concepts and skills to be able to go over and pick up that can—*

P: I still have to first do it. I still have to go there, because even with all of that, I am not now in a position to actually do it. There is a condition attached, namely, I have to get myself there. Remember the notion that abilities sometimes have conditions attached. The behavior potentials are not all simply “you can do X”. A lot of them are in the form of “he can do X, but only in Y way, and only if he first does Z”. So the package will give me the potential for doing X, but not just any old way, not just in any old circumstances. You see, behavior potentials are not unqualified. And so having to learn the skill first is simply one of the kinds of qualifications that there may be on exercising or actualizing some potential. And there may be various kinds of qualifications. That’s why just to say that a person has the behavior potential for something is relatively ambiguous unless it’s clear from the context what kind of contingencies you’re allowing.

Q: *—the dilemma of discriminating any two normal people’s behavior potentials apart; because, presumably, if there are social practices available to all fully-functioning individuals to learn how to play the piano, then everybody has the behavior potential to play that, and you wouldn’t be able to discriminate the two if your language was simply one of behavior potential. So you have to have those refinements.*

P: But you also have to have ### behavior potential because ###.

Q: *The problem is that I’m beginning to lose the distinction between behavior potential and capacity.*

P: But that’s why we have also the concepts of ability and capacity, in addition to the more general notion of behavior potential.

Q: *How is capacity different from behavior potential?*

P: It isn't. It's a different kind of behavior potential than ability is. It's a different kind of behavior potential than relationship.

Q: *What term do you use for the range of behaviors that a person can currently engage in? The word "can"?*

P: The word "can" has exactly the same ambiguities that "behavior potential" does. "Can" in the sense of having ability, "can" in the sense of not logically impossible—

Q: *There's a parallel between capacity and behavior potential, and there's "ability"—there should be a term that's parallel to "ability", that has some of the same features of "behavior potential" but—*

P: "Behavior potential" is the cover term for all of those. It isn't that capacity is parallel to behavior potential, then you need a fourth term to be parallel to ability. Behavior potential also covers ability.

Q: *—a term for the concepts and skills he already has, or his present status. That would mean that non-piano-players ### Do you have a term like that?*

P: "Power." You remember, there's a list that I call "Powers", and it has Abilities, Values, Knowledge. And that's what a person has right now, and that's what sets the limits to what he can do now. And that's different from the Powers that he has the capacity to acquire.

Q: *The Powers are under ID characteristics?*

P: Yes. Dispositions, Powers, and Comparatives. Those are categories of ID characteristics, and "power", I think, would be the term you're looking for.

Q: *Do powers correlate with behavioral repertoire?*

P: Yeah. Those behaviors that you could engage in, those behaviors that are not outside your possibilities. But even so, even if you deal with ability—there are still the contingencies. You have the ability, but only under certain circumstances, only in certain ways. I have the ability to add ten-column figures, but only if I have it down on paper. I can't do it in my

head. So even when you restrict yourself to “what I can do here and now”, you still have the problem of when there is a contingency, and of all of that.

Q: *Earlier, you said that a person doesn't trust because they're suspicious, that their ID character is suspiciousness. Is the reverse true? They don't trust so they are suspicious? So the ID characteristics and abilities—there seems to be some relationship there that's not one-directional, that's bi-directional.*

P: There's a logical correspondence. The one explains the other one. If I don't trust him, and him, and her, and him, and him, you say, “That's because he's suspicious.” Now you find out that I'm suspicious by observing that I don't trust him, him, her, and him. But that's a question of how you find out, not of what explains what. So you say, “I say he's suspicious, I decide he's suspicious, because he doesn't trust anybody.” But then, in terms of what explains, my being suspicious explains my not trusting people. In effect, you have one sequence in finding out about me, another in explaining what I do. And it's the same connection worked in a different direction. It's precisely because you can draw the conclusion that I'm suspicious by seeing that I don't trust, that you can also say, “It's because he is suspicious that he doesn't”—because you're working the same connection. Working one way, you find out. Working the other way, you account for what you saw.

Status assignments. So far, we've been talking about statuses as though they simply were there. We've been talking about them as though they were simply facts which limit a person's behavior potential, or generate a person's behavior potential. The fact is, it doesn't really work that way, because those kinds of things are not given. Status assignments are like appraisals. In fact, appraisals either are equivalent to status assignments or are a special case. Appraisals have to be made, and the facts don't force any given appraisal. And it's because the facts don't force any given appraisal that you have all this language in the existential literature about freedom and choice and responsibility. That you choose what statuses you give people, you assign them to various statuses, and you then treat them accordingly. [change tape] It is something you do, and you are free to do it or to do differently. Now what's at work—I hardly want to say “what determines”—in what status assignments a person makes? What's at work? How

come a person will assign certain statuses and not others? How come when he does assign certain statuses, he treats them in one of the ways he can treat them, and not some of the other ways he can treat them? At this point, we have some more apparatus. This is one of the main reasons for having you read “*What Actually Happens*”—our friend, the Process Description:

Q: *Is there any reason why you couldn't simply use the judgment paradigm?*

P: Yeah. What's the basis of the judgment?

Q: *Would the set of circumstances, the observation of your behavior or someone else's behavior?*

P: No. The circumstances themselves are subject to reinterpretation, depending on your status assignments.

Q: *Meaning—which circumstances they are is already ###?*

P: Yeah. As a matter of fact, we went through this in class, I think, last time, with the social practice description, where we had stages, [black-board]. These two parts [Stages and Options] reflect the sequential structure. Stages are the sequence, and options are the different ways it can be done. These aspects reflect the constituents, the ingredients, how the various parts fit together, what the various parts are. And the prime heuristic model for this is a drama, where Elements would correspond to roles or characters—probably better to think in terms of characters. Individuals are the real-life actors, and eligibility connects a particular actor to the one or more roles that he plays in the drama. Now this is helpful to see that the structure of the practice depends only on the elements, not on the individuals; that it is the practice it is, it is the process it is, because of the elements. On the other hand, you can't have an actual occurrence of that process without having some real individuals. And those real individuals will have their own characteristics, independently of the elements in the drama. And this is why you have contingencies: that some characteristics will make an actor unable to perform properly. Sometimes you can say, “Certain characteristics are required in order for an actor to perform properly.” Beyond that, given these, you say, “Of the actors who can perform properly, some characteristics will lead him to do it one way; other characteristics will lead

him to do it a different way.” The contingencies, then, have a bearing on who could do it properly; and given that it’s done properly, which of the options are selected.

Okay, now: elements will correspond to status. That’s why you need ### character.

Q: *What do you mean—that’s why you need ###?*

P: Because “roles” is too restrictive. It’s like having a recipe and talking about the ingredients. If you talk about the ingredients, you’re not talking about how those ingredients enter in. You’re just saying that these are what it takes. Whereas when you have a play, you have an actual script, and that preempts all of the possibilities for each of the characters, because they are given lines. So think of something that has the general structure of a drama, but not to the point where you’ve got the lines written, only to the point where you have the characters and the relations among them. So that when you put real life characters in there, they can write their own lines. And when you put different actual characters in the same drama, they will indeed—in general—write different lines and work it differently.

Q: *Do the lines they write have to be expressions of those relations?*

P: No. At this point, you come to that feature of status assignments that they antedate facts but they don’t coerce facts. And one of those heuristic images is “Spitting on the Sidewalk”. It’s on your list, I think. If not, add it to the Images. Now the image of “Spitting on the Sidewalk” stems from the common notion that you can’t change behavior by passing laws; and, specifically, you can’t keep people from spitting on the sidewalk by passing a law against it. And in one way it’s true; and in another way, it’s misleading; and we’re interested in the way that it’s misleading. Because imagine that people do spit on the sidewalk, and that we pass a law against it tonight, and tomorrow morning they’re still spitting on the sidewalk. Well, under one description, namely “spitting on the sidewalk”, their behavior hasn’t changed, and our passing the law hasn’t made the slightest bit of difference. Under another description, though, their behavior has changed remarkably, because now they’re criminals, and they’re committing crimes. And they weren’t doing that yesterday. And so their behavior is very significantly different, and we accomplish that by passing a law. And

notice: the law does not coerce what they do. That's not the way that it makes this dramatic difference in what their behavior is. The way it makes a difference is in how what they do gets counted. Yesterday, what they did only got counted as spitting on the sidewalk. Today, it gets counted as committing a crime. That's the way that passing the law makes a difference, and that's the way a status assignment makes a difference. It doesn't force a behavior. It determines how the behavior that does occur will get counted. So when you write the role of "Hamlet", it doesn't force the actor to say any particular words; but if the guy playing Hamlet says, "Alas, poor Yorick," you count it as a boner. [laughter] But it doesn't force him. It doesn't determine his behavior. It determines what his behavior is because it determines how what he does counts.

Q: *We had an interesting example of that in dance class today, when the teacher told us to move in certain ways, and some of the men wouldn't do it, and the dance teacher said, "If you do it, it'll be done in a masculine way,"—*

P: When you do it, it's different, eh?

Q: *Yeah. And one of them said, "Well, no," or something. They still wouldn't do it.*

P: This is one of the central facts about status dynamics, because status assignments can make tremendous differences. They can make life-and-death differences, but not by coercing, not by forcing, not by causing things to happen, but rather by determining *what* it is that happens, by determining *how* the world is, *what* world it is, what person you are, what it was you did or didn't do. That's what hinges on the status assignments. Not something that brings about something, not something that causes something.

Q: *You talk about determining what happens—*

P: Determines in a logical sense. Think of passing a law. That determines that if you spit on the sidewalk, you're committing a crime, and that's not a causal determination; it's a legal one.

Q: *Did you say that prior to a status assignment, a person couldn't be out of character?*

P: There's nothing to prevent—yeah. “Status assignment” has the same umbrella character as “behavior potential”. You can talk about assigning an individual to a status that pertains to him, and he's either out of character or not.

Q: *“That wasn't like you to do that.”*

P: Yeah. Or you can assign a person a status as a member in a group, and then that applies to all members. Or you can just assign him a status within the world at large.

Now the important thing about status dynamics, again, is that because of the way it works, changes in status assignments can generate tremendously large changes in short periods of time. They can re-structure your whole life. Except that it's also very tricky to work them, because it's a set of considerations that is not causal, that is not a process; and therefore, when you try to achieve a particular result, it doesn't fit into a process which, if you engage in it, you'll get that result. It's remarkably resistant to technology because of these general characteristics. So it's hard to come up with a cookbook for how to achieve status changes, how to bring about personal change of that sort. It's relatively easy to write cookbooks over how to get performance changes or behavior changes in people. So you might say that the central thrust of status dynamics is ID changes rather than, directly, behavior changes. Indirectly, behavior changes; because what that behavior is will be different.

Now I think from there, with a little bit of bridging, we may be able now to get into some of the stuff on this Image sheet. The stuff there is sort of an interim cogitation of some of the ingredients in doing psychotherapy, a large part of which is dealing with status notions and status dynamics. So we may just move on in that direction next time.

Session 3

February 3, 1976

Status changes; Two Mayors; Status principles as tautologies, as constraints on possibilities, and as “dynamic explanation;” Principle: A person will not choose less status over more status; Reformulation of the facts of “displaced hostility” and similar phenomena; degradation, accreditation, and status assignment; anger vs. fear interpretations.

PGO: Does anybody recall where we left off last time—what we were talking about at the end of the hour? [several answers]

Q: *I'd like to know more about why—in what way you meant that ID change is resistant to technology.*

P: Think of a situation where you're going to change some important status-assignment.

Q: *In terms of myself, or as a therapist?*

P: Either about yourself or about some important thing in your life. Since the status assignment antedates facts, that change is going to correspond to a different way of looking at things. Now the question is, how to get you to do that? That's why I say we don't have a technology for it. We have something like a technology for how, within a common set of status assignments, I can demonstrate some facts to you. But that's because we're already looking at things in the same general way. If you're not already looking at things in some way, how do I get you to do that? It seems like a very intangible sort of problem, and in fact, as I was saying, we don't have a good handle on it. So far, it doesn't reduce easily to even the promise of a

technology. Just consider the task of getting somebody to see something in a certain way, and you'll see that it's implausible that there's a set recipe for doing it. Partly because you can practically guarantee that what you have to do will depend on what it is you're trying to get the person to see, also on how he already sees things. By the time you have to take even those two things into account, it's hard to think of any general principles.

And I must say that in practice, in the course of trying to accomplish such changes, it has really been (to a large extent) trial and error, rather than the development of a technology, and what we have are something more on the order of rules of thumb than recipes. And rules of thumb, like all rules, have to be applied, and so you have to exercise judgment in their application. And the more trivial they are, the more their application calls for just as much exercise in judgment as the original problem. So I would say that the state of the art is such that we have some rules of thumb. Secondly, we have a number of devices, and that's what the Images, Heuristics, etc., on this mimeographed sheet are. But they're not recipes for how and when to use them. Now in part, this may be because the whole notion of status and status dynamics is not systematized. As you saw last time, we kind of went around and touched this notion and that notion, and this aspect and some connections, and that's still a fair distance away from a really systematic presentation. So it may be that if we can get more systematic, we can get something closer to a reliable set of recipes. I have my doubts, but I doubt if things are going to get any worse from having a better systematization of status dynamics.

Q: *Could we—now or when it's convenient—go into what makes up status dynamics?*

P: I can't tell you what makes up status dynamics. All I can do is mention a lot of things that involve status, show how those are relevant to why things happen the way they do, and to personal change, but you're asking for exactly what's missing, namely, a simple systematization which will enable you just to say what status dynamics is.

Now, we encountered a couple of principles in connection with unconscious motivation, because we used Maxim 5, and we used the empiricist principle there to generate an understanding of this notion of

distortion of reality. Now let me introduce another principle today. And I'll do it by referring to one of the images here, but we'll only consider the image but not the application, and that is number 10, the Two Mayors.

Now imagine yourself as a newspaper reporter who's going around interviewing candidates for mayor. And there's two candidates, and you go interview them both. So you go to the first one, and you say, "Hey, Mr. Jones, you know mayors do A, B, C, D, and E. Are you that anxious, are you that eager, to do those things that you're putting out all this effort and spending all this money to get yourself elected?" He says, "Well, of course, why else would I do it?" So you say, "Well, I can understand that," and you go away. You go to the next one, and you put the same question to him. You say, "Hey, Mr. Smith, you know mayors do A, B, C, D, and E. Are you that eager to do those things that you're breaking your neck and putting out all this effort to try to get yourself elected?" And he says, "Oh, no, I'd have my assistant do that. I just want to *be* mayor." And you say, "Well, I can understand that," and you go away. And the moral is: you can understand that, that it does make sense for somebody to just want to be mayor and not care that much about doing what mayors do. Now that's a status dynamic for you. Think of what's implicit in that example and then consider this kind of status principle: that a person will never choose to have less status rather than more status.

Q: *I don't know that I'll buy that.*

P: You've got to worry about what I'm saying. Remember that less status and more status doesn't mean lower status rather than higher status.

Q: *What does it mean?* [laughter]

P: It means less behavior potential rather than more behavior potential.

Q: *Are you saying that status equals behavior potential?*

P: Maybe, maybe not. But you can certainly take it as an approximation, and help to understand what's in the statement that a person will never choose less status. If you think of why he wouldn't choose less behavior potential, you'll see why he wouldn't choose less status.

Q: *I don't even know that I'd buy that.*

Q: *It seems that the two ways to get out of the bind are having enough more that you can handle whatever's going on; or, if you have less so that whatever problem there is, that you'd want less potential [so you wouldn't have to handle it]. These are two ways to wipe out the problem, aren't there? Is that what you're thinking of?*

P: Tell us about the two ways.

Q: *Well, the person is wishing that he has more behavior potential in order to solve a problem or in order to get somewhere else. He might be able to do it if he had more ###. The other way is not to even have that choice, not even have that problem, and someone might wish that they had enough potential, but that wouldn't be the issue.*

P: You'd have to at least have the choice about whether to have that choice. Otherwise you can't make that choice.

Q: *You might want to have less responsibility.*

P: The less responsibility, the less behavior potential? You see, don't confuse behavior potential with anything else.

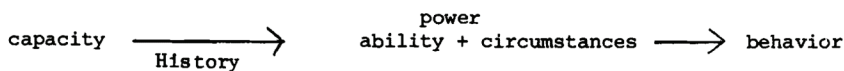
Q: *Some things may be up to me, but I can't do them.*

P: You may be in that frame of mind where it is up to you, and you can't do it. Remember, I'm not talking about wishing. I'm talking about choosing, and there's nothing hypothetical about it.

Q: *It seems that to choose to have less status is to have ###.*

Q: *Isn't it like choosing an ID characteristic?*

P: No. We may be involved in the same thing that we did last week with ability or behavior potential versus power, that is, what you have immediately versus what you have maybe in the long run. There we said—[blackboard]:



The difference between a power and a mere capacity is that power fits into this formula, and capacity does not. You do not have a corresponding formula of that sort:

capacity + circumstances \longrightarrow behavior

You do not have capacity plus circumstances gives you behavior. You do have power plus circumstances gives you behavior. So behavior potential-power-ability is different from capacity. There's an additional step from here to here, namely, capacity plus history gives you ability or power. So this is a kind of behavior potential, and this is a kind of behavior potential, and this kind [capacity] is a step further removed from behavior than this kind [ability-power] is. Capacity doesn't connect directly to behavior. It connects through the development of capacity into powers, which then connect directly to behavior.

Q: *I still don't see the link between what you said a person never chooses to—*

P: Hold on. That's what we're getting to. We want this, and then we're going to do something comparable here. Now consider Maxim 2, that says, "If a person recognizes an opportunity to get something he wants, he has a reason to try to get it." That's comparable to this [**ability + circumstances + behavior**]. And notice the connection between opportunity and behavior potential. To have an opportunity is to have that behavior potential. And that maxim says that whenever you have that, you'll have a motivation; and remember, the motivation will govern your choice—via Maxim 3.

Q: *But people seem to limit their opportunities, so that in some way they are limiting their behavior potential.*

P: But remember, only for a stronger reason will they give up the one they—you only fail to act on a reason you have now if you have a stronger

reason to act on something else, so indeed you do give one up, but only for something that counts for more. So this is the paradigm for doing the same thing in terms of behavior potential. You will always go for more rather than less. It works very similar to this, except with one step removed. Because now you can say, in terms of Maxim 2, “If a person has an opportunity to gain an opportunity, he has a reason to do that.” And the greater the opportunity, the more reason he has.

Q: *On the face of it, someone who chooses to commit suicide has chosen less behavior potential.*

P: No.

Q: *If he’s dead, he has no behavior potential.*

P: If you commit suicide, that one behavior is worth more than all the others. In the same way, the one thing that you have strongest reason to do may outweigh a whole lot of others, and you’ll give those up in favor of this. And if it doesn’t count for more, you don’t give them up.

Q: *It seems as if you’re weighting the behavior of committing suicide as an ultimate kind of behavior.*

P: No, just that if, in fact, the person chooses that over the others, then it’s like if, in fact, I choose the coffee over tea. Once you see that, you’ll say it’s clear that the coffee counted for more. If I choose suicide over living, then that one behavior and the opportunity for it counts for more than the other; however, at that point, you might wonder how much “other” I saw. And remember, the Maxim says “if a person recognizes an opportunity”. So in the same way, if I don’t recognize other behavior potential that I really do have, suicide may be my only behavior potential.

Q: *You may recognize that life is useless or absurd.*

P: In which case, this is the one meaningful thing I can do, as against all of the meaningless, absurd ones, and so this counts for more.

Q: *A la the existentialists—you might say that suicidal behavior is itself absurd and inconsequential.*

P: Then you’d have no basis for choosing. So in effect, it’s exactly

the same logic, that you have more reason rather than less, and that the more reason goes directly with more behavior potential, because the more reason goes with the greater opportunity. And what you're choosing there is an opportunity to get something you want, but the thing that you want is itself an opportunity. That's why it has this character of being an extra step removed. But that's why just wanting to be mayor makes sense to us. It makes sense that a person would want to have an opportunity, which itself is only a promissory note for something-or-other—it doesn't really matter what it's the promissory note for.

Q: *How does judgment get in here?*

P: In the choice.

Q: *Let's say, in suicide: someone so often regrets the act right after they've taken the step that they can't reverse, and then they start to see all the reasons for living.*

P: Yeah, but you get that anyhow—all those cognitive dissonance experiments, where I buy a Ford and then immediately I start regretting that I didn't buy the Chevy. But that may only mean that I made a bad choice, that I misunderstood what reasons I had. Or it may just be that in the long run, I come back to Ford and say, "Yeah, those are good things but I'd really rather have this." But second-guessing yourself is normal human behavior. And the basis on which you would second-guess yourself is: "Maybe the other was a better opportunity." So you're appealing to this principle with the second-guessing. It's by appeal to this principle that it makes sense to second-guess yourself. That's the terms in which your second-guessing is done. Maybe I gave up a better opportunity for a worse one. If I did, woe is me.

Q: *With Maxim 2, would you say there's an unless clause attached?*

P: There's no unless clause with Maxim 2.

Q: *I'm having trouble accepting that there is nothing more important to a human being than behavior potential.*

P: I didn't say that. I said a person will not choose less over more behavior potential. Anything you have reason to do—if you have reasons

to choose this sort of thing over this sort of thing [blackboard]—it follows that you see this [XYZ] as representing a better opportunity, a greater behavior potential, than this [PQR].

X	P
Y	Q
Z	R

Q: *But suppose I'm operating on something like some other criterion.*

P: This is by your criterion, whatever criterion you may have. You are always going to choose what looks better to you in your terms. Remember, the language here—if one says, “You choose,” that’s your behavior, that’s your discrimination. It’s not mine or somebody else’s. It’s not a third-person description. It’s your discrimination. So it’s in terms of your discrimination that you choose. It’s in terms of your criteria for what’s more rather than less, that you choose.

Q: *What about a masochist orientation, the person thinking “this will give me less behavior potential”?*

P: Who says that? As a matter of fact, that reminds me, let me make an assignment. I’m offering you an opportunity. [change tape] [reference to Goldstein & Palmer, *The Experience of Anxiety: A Casebook*, 1962.] In that case, Shirley is somebody who might very well be described by a psychoanalyst as being masochistic. And I think we can show with that example that masochism is not a case of choosing less behavior potential over more; but on the contrary, it fits this principle.

You see, in effect, I’m saying this is a tautology, not an empirical generalization, and when you see something that seems to violate it, you’ve got to work it through to see that the tautology doesn’t imply that. And that helps you understand the nature of the tautology. And I’m offering you as a paradigm Maxim 2 and Maxim 3, which I think are relatively non-problematical this way.

Q: *As another example, somebody who becomes psychotic, and, relative*

to their perspective, gains behavior potential that way?

P: ###. Again, the difference between the choice and the result. Nobody would choose to have all that smog hanging over Denver. If the choice was between having it and not having it, we'd choose not to have it. On the other hand, that smog hanging over Denver is the result of choices that we do make. Now I may make choices in accordance with this principle that would in fact result in my having less behavior potential, but I wouldn't have chosen it under that description. It wouldn't be a case of me choosing less behavior potential over more. It would be me choosing something that looked like more, over less but which, in fact, had a different consequence than I thought. And that, too, is built into the notion of action: you have no guarantee of success; in general, you have unexpected, unknown consequences that you're stuck with once you've done what you've done. And you couldn't possibly choose your behavior on the basis of all possible consequences.

Q: *In addition to that, it sounds like when you say "greater" behavior potential, sometimes you say "one that counts for more" or one that you prefer—*

P: Not prefer. That's getting too far away from ###. "Counts for more" is a paraphrase I sometimes use to indicate that it carries weight.

Q: *And "greater" is just a way of saying "carries more weight", rather than something that ###?*

P: It's not another way of saying it. It's a logical correlative. I'm saying, "a stronger reason carries more weight," but saying it carries more weight is not a way of saying it's a stronger reason, it's a logical implication. What does "greater reason" mean, or "stronger reason" mean, when you say that if a person has a stronger reason to do X than to do Y, he'll choose X? What does "stronger" mean?

Q: *Does it mean you have the potential to do all the things you could do before, plus other things?*

P: No. There's no calculus, there's no metric, there's no nothing there. It's just more rather than less.

Q: Does “more rather than less” ### metric?

P: That’s right—there’s no metric in “more rather than less”. You have to reconstruct it in mathematical terms to come up with a metric, and when we do these things, we’re not dealing with mathematicians.

Q: But “more rather than less” in any sense that would be—you mean you’re leaving open in what sense it’s more rather than less.

P: No. More behavior potential rather than less behavior potential. That’s the sense in which it’s more rather than less.

Q: Then what’s the criterion—

P: There are never criteria, never. No criteria for anything, because things are what they are and not something else that would serve as a criterion for it.

Q: Okay, but if I were in second grade and came up here, and you said “greater behavior potential” and I understood what you meant by “behavior potential”, how would you explain to me—

P: I wouldn’t.

Q: Yeah. At some point when you could teach me what you meant by greater behavior potential, how would you do it?

P: The way I’m doing now.

Q: Will you do it some more?

P: I don’t know. [laughter] You’ll have to ask something different. You’ll have to ask it in a different way.

Q: My problem is simply that you said, “greater”, and somebody said a couple of times that it looks like sometimes people are choosing smaller, and your reply tended to be, “Well, for him that counted for more.” And the difficulty is—

P: For him, that was the greater potential.

Q: So “greater” sounds like it’s almost synonymous with “counts for more”.

P: It's not synonymous. If I say, "For him, reason X was stronger than reason Y. For him, reason X counted for more than Y," I'm not talking about synonyms. I'm offering a paraphrase. It's not that "stronger" is really "counts for more".

Q: *If that's a paraphrase, then that should make it clear when—*

P: Hopefully, it does. When I say "it counts for more", when you ask, "What do you mean—stronger reason?" And if you say, "What do you mean—counts for more?", you go back to the original choice-judgment. And in a case where I can take either A or B, and I take A, then A counts for more.

Q: *It's a stronger reason, it counts for more and ###.*

P: More behavior potential counts for more than less behavior potential, when it comes to choosing. You're dealing in part with a difference in grammar, depending on whether you're talking about choices, judgment, reasons, or behavior potential. In one place, you say "greater"; in some place, you say "more"; in some place, you say "counts for more". That goes with the grammar of the different categories, that they're not just synonyms. They're not ways of saying the same thing.

Q: *What would somebody do, if they know the consequences of their choices are in fact developing less behavior potential, but they continue to make that choice? You can work it according to Maxim 2 that they're acting on stronger reasons, but given that the choice is acting on that reason versus doing something that would give them greater behavior potential, and they may be able to say, "This is the thing to do to get me out of it, but I'm still going to keep acting on that reason." And that really looks like somebody opting for less behavior potential.*

P: I'd be inclined to say he doesn't really know, or he doesn't really believe this, precisely because he doesn't act on it. Secondly, to the extent that he sees it clearly, you can also say he probably isn't making that choice. He's choosing between X and Z, and Z is what has this unpleasant consequence. But he's not choosing between X and the unpleasant consequence. He's choosing between X and Z, and X counts for more.

Q: *You say there's no choice, in that case?*

P: No. I'm saying that *what* you're choosing between may not be what it seems to somebody else that you're choosing between. You see, you, the outsider, see clearly that if I go this way, I'm hurting; and if I go that way, I might be okay. For you, that's the choice—between hurting and being okay. But why would you suppose that *I'm* making that choice when I'm probably making the choice between “feeling better this way” and “feeling worse that way”? And making that choice has the further consequence that if I choose this one, I'm okay; and if I choose this one, I'm not. A kid who winds up with a stomach ache is not choosing between a stomach ache and not eating the apple. He's choosing between eating the apple and not eating it, and eating it counts for more. But eating it has the unpleasant consequence which he then suffers. But that's not what he's choosing.

Q: *To say that people always choose to have more or greater behavior potential—those are Actor's terms, those aren't Observer or Critic terms, right? Because the Observer—*

P: No. It's Critic language, but it applies to the Actor. That's a principle for deciding what about Actor. When you see somebody doing something, you use this principle in understanding what he's doing, but you're using it as an Observer-Critic.

Q: *But you don't observe it. It's a—a something.*

P: Yeah, it's a tautology. It's conceptually there. And it's because it's conceptually there that you can make sense out of his choices. And the same reason that—it's because the fact that you act on a stronger reason rather than a weaker one is a tautology that you can make sense and interpret what people choose. From that, you decide what counts for more. From that you get their personal characteristics. Without that tautology, you wouldn't be able to draw this kind of conclusion. Because then *any* characteristic, *any* value, might go with any behavior. So the tautology connects these.

Q: *You work backward from that principle and say what kind of person must this be in order to pick the values in more behavior potential.*

P: Right. In the same way that you work your way back to “What kind of person must this be who, in these circumstances, has most reason to do that?”

Q: *One thing missing there is a time-frame, because some people do what seems like restricting behavior potential, for their future benefit.*

P: That simply goes to what they’re choosing between. Remember the Maxim 4. That gives you an alternative here of saying, “On this end is A followed by B followed C followed by D, on this end is simply A, and this will give you a stronger reason than this.” So if it’s for something future, then you’ve simply got a larger package involved as what it is that’s chosen among. And that will be part of the discrimination that’s made up here.

Q: *Is it logic that gives the tautology—logic that supports tautologies?*

P: No. Tautologies are logic. Tautologies aren’t supported by anything. They are examples of logical connections.

Q: *It seems to stop us in our tracks whenever one of us says to the other, “That’s a tautology—that means, it means what it says.”*

P: Tautologies are stoppers—that’s one of their values.

Q: *I want to know what gives tautologies that power.*

P: Nothing. It has that power. It doesn’t need something else to give it that power. You don’t have infinite regresses. If you had something else that gave it that power, and had to, then that X that gave it the power obviously has the power to give it the power, so what gives X the power to give Y the power?

Q: *What do we do in those particular instances where we don’t find the tautology? What are the ways—what are the alternatives?*

P: You don’t use tautologies. You don’t use these. You act in accordance with them. These are not tools for your behavior. They are principles that govern your behavior.

Q: *They’re tools you use to understand behavior, if you’re an Observer or Critic. No?*

P: Yeah, but they're also—

Q: *They don't govern behavior.*

P: Yes, they do.

Q: *Except they can't, because they're Observer and Critic words, and not Actor words. Actors don't say, "Gee, I'd better do this because I'll have more behavior potential."*

P: That's right. But neither does a circle say, "I can't be a square," but its being a circle is governed by the logic of circles and squares, and there's no way out. It's not a matter of choice. It's simply inherent in the concepts that a circle couldn't possibly be a square, and that's a logical tautology. Or that it's a tautology, conceptual, not ontological. Likewise, that a person chooses on the basis of a greater reason over a lesser reason is a tautology.

Q: *Can you give a case of someone who is not motivated to choose the greater behavior potential, as opposed to a—*

P: It's not a matter of motivation. The choice of more rather than less is not a matter of motivation, any more than the choice of distorting when you have no other option is a matter of motivation. It's simply a constraint on the whole system. This is how the thing operates. You see, you don't choose to choose the stronger over the lesser. You simply do. And the statement that you choose the stronger over the lesser is not a statement about your motivation. It's a statement about a principle that governs your choices, which involve your motivations.

Q: *I'm just thinking of one more case, which is that of somebody who might decline what would ostensibly be a position of higher status. Now I can explain it either way—that he doesn't see it as—*

P: Higher status is not the same as more status.

Q: *I mean—more status. Something that would offer more opportunities, more—*

P: More behavior potential is not the same as the potential for more different behaviors. Not all reasons count equally; not all behaviors count equally, either.

Q: *Would “more behavior potential” be the same as seeing more?*

P: No. Consider the options of eating a bar of candy versus eating three pieces of chalk. Would you be inclined to say, “Well, here you have a chance at three, and over there you have a chance of one. You ought to choose three.” There’s something else in the picture than sheer numbers. So you say, “It’s a better opportunity to eat the one bar of candy than to eat the three pieces of chalk. It’s a greater opportunity that offers more behavior potential than this.” It’s not a matter of numbers of behaviors. Keep in mind that in general, the number of behaviors that you have available is indefinitely large. It would be awfully hard to make that kind of comparison.

Q: *It’s also hard to calculate ###.*

P: Yeah. And you see, it’s precisely or in part because we couldn’t possibly operate with that kind of comparison and that kind of counting, that we have a very different notion, namely, a better or worse opportunity that has some resemblance—that includes some resemblance to that, but is not that kind of concept.

Q: *Doesn’t “opportunities” imply numbers?*

Q: *Different opportunities will have different statuses, that’s what you’re saying?*

P: Yeah, because different opportunities will represent different behavior potentials. For an in-between notion, remember the difference between two things different in range of behaviors, versus number of behaviors. For example, suppose that I have a choice between counting numbers, and counting odd numbers. There’s the same number of behaviors—they’re both infinite, yet the range of one exceeds the range of the other, because any odd number I can count in the second set, but I can also count even numbers in the first set. So there you can tell, qualitatively, not by counting how many, that the one is a broader, a greater opportunity than the other. This one includes behaviors that that one doesn’t. So you say, “This is an opportunity for a broader range of behaviors, not for a greater number of behaviors.”

Likewise, if over here I have ham sandwich, and then another ham sandwich, and over here I have a ham sandwich and a fried chicken, how

many different behaviors can I engage in with respect to these two, and how many different ones can I engage in with respect to these two? Well, the numbers are probably essentially the same, but since over here one half is a duplicate of the other half, and over here it isn't, you'd say I have chances over here that I don't have here, and anything I have here, I have over here, so there's more chance that it's a broader range, even though it's not a greater number.

Q: *Sometimes you don't want a broader range.*

P: No, I'm offering that as an in-between notion, between the simple notion that a better opportunity is simply an opportunity for more different ones, versus what it really is, and this notion of a broader range is an in-between. You see, over here you have more behaviors—simple numbers. Here you have broader range. And here you have greater opportunity. And if you can see the difference from here to here [more behaviors to broader range], you might be able to extrapolate from there [broader range] to there [greater opportunities]. This is not simply a matter of “more”. There's something different here, when you extrapolate over here to greater opportunities. “Greater opportunity” isn't just a broader range, either.

Q: *And if somebody doesn't care about having greater opportunities?*

P: I'd say that he cared—that's the principle that governs choice. Somebody who doesn't care whether he distorts reality or not is beside the point, the principle that “if he can't do correctly, he'll do it incorrectly” will apply anyhow. As I said, these are not matters of choice. They're not matters of motivation. They are principles that have to do with choices. They're principles that have to do with what one does, and therefore of why one does what one does, rather than something else. Tautologies are not always intuitive. That's why mathematics often gets difficult. Sometimes you just have to use something as a tautology when a guy says it's a tautology, even though you might have other ways of reading it. So if you don't intuit this, then just take it that this is a tautology.

Q: *What does it get you to think that it's a tautology? What does it give you access to?*

P: Something comparable to the thing about motivation, that you

will always act on the stronger reason as against the weaker one. It enables you to make sense out of the person's choices, and to interpret what he does and doesn't do, and explain why.

Q: *How does it explain why, when you're back with the tautology?*

P: That's the function of tautologies, to give you the logical form of the explanation. When you say, "He takes the tea over the coffee because he likes the tea better," that is explanatory because it has the same logical form as Maxim 3—if a person has a reason to do something, he will do it unless he has a stronger reason. That's what you're appealing to, in saying, "He took the coffee because he likes it better than the tea." So the maxim, which is a tautology, gives you the form of the explanation that makes it an explanation. And it is explanatory precisely because it is a tautology.

Think of Maxim 5. I said this reduces to "you can't do what you can't do". But that explains why, on a given occasion, you don't do something, when the answer is "he didn't do it because he couldn't". That's explanatory, because it's a tautology that you can't do what you can't do, and therefore you won't. So it's because it's a tautology that it explains, and that anything that has that form will explain. So here, what we're setting up is a general schema for explaining what a person does, and it will have the form of, "Well, after all, this is a case of choosing more opportunity over less."

Q: *Somebody's going to have to make the choice that it's a tautology and doesn't lend itself to infinite regress.*

P: No more than somebody has to make the choice to see the blackboard as a blackboard. You either see it or you don't; and if you don't see it, you can't make it up. If you can't take this as a tautology, you can't pretend that it's a tautology.

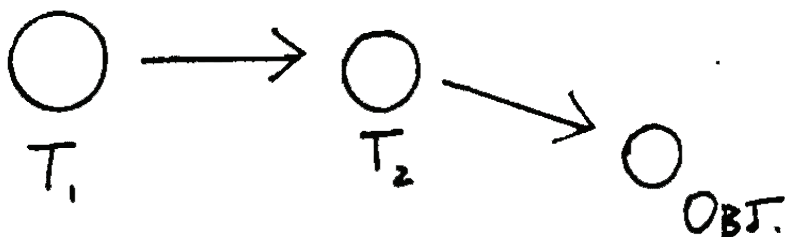
Q: *We're to take it because you say it is.*

P: Then you can use it as one, which means to use it along the lines of Maxim 3.

Now let me give you an example of a more or less general formulation that's comparable to the unconscious motivation, using this particular principle. And this formulation bears equally well on provocation/hostility, but also on the classic psychoanalytic notion of displacement and how that

works. The other two principles gave us an alternative to the psychoanalytic formulation of distortion of reality and unconscious motivation. This one will give us a parallel to the psychoanalytic formulation of displacement, and specifically, in this case, displacement of hostility. Okay, think of that paradigm case of the guy who's on the job, who gets chewed out by the boss, stands there and takes it, and goes home and kicks his dog or beats his wife. That's the classic paradigm case of displacement of hostility.

Now the model for that explanation is a reservoir, that the hostility is a quantity that is produced on one occasion, is carried around with you, and on another occasion it—the quantity—is discharged toward some object. [blackboard]



That's the model behind the psychoanalytic explanation of displacement: that you accumulate psychic energy here; you carry that pool, that quantity with you; and you discharge it here. And until you discharge it, you are carrying it around with you. And this is the source of all kinds of cathartic therapies. Not only cathartic therapies, but prescriptions for ways of living that say, "Express emotions. Don't accumulate them,"—a tremendously broad set of consequences stemming from this model of what it is to displace emotion, and what it is to have an emotion.

Q: ###.

P: Because it's got counter-cathexis, it's under ego control, and that continues to be the case unless it gets out of hand; in which case, it is discharged reflexively.

Okay, now, let's take that paradigm case and reconstruct it in status dynamic terms. What is this episode of the boss bawling him out, and the guy standing there and taking it?

Q: *Degradation ceremony.*

P: Okay. Ingredient one, we're going to have to digress, because we're going to have to review Degradation Ceremonies. So put this aside for about five minutes, and let's get into Degradation and Accreditation.

I think I mentioned this very briefly last semester, in passing. This analysis is a very slight paraphrase of one that's presented by Harold Garfinkle. It's based on a general notion of accreditation and degradation, and the paradigm case of that I can think of that's familiar to just about everybody, of a degradation ceremony, is something in the army that you often see in motion pictures, where you have a picture involving army life. On some Saturday night, the sergeant goes out and gets drunk, and raises hell, and gets into trouble. On Sunday morning, the captain assembles the company and marches the sergeant out front, reads him out, rips off his stripes, and then marches him back. And the ripping off of the stripes is the overt ceremony that reduces that sergeant to a lower grade. It's a degradation ceremony. And the force of the degradation is he's now a private, is that his eligibility to participate in that community is now limited in a way that it wasn't before. He has less status rather than more. He has lost status. Now in that case, he also has a lower status in the hierarchy: that's the difference between "lower" and "less". In this case, he both has lower status and less status. The important thing is that he has less. And what goes with less is a limitation in his eligibility to participate in the social practices of that community. So it is a loss of behavior potential. Okay, that's the paradigm case of degradation as a loss of status, as a loss of behavior potential.

- 1. Community, values**
- 2. Denouncer, Witness, Perpetrator**
- 3. D & W act as members**

- 4. P committed the Act**
- 5. Genuine expression**

Now Garfinkle presents a general analysis of what it takes to accomplish

a degradation, and there are five conditions, of which three are preconditions and two deal with the doing of it. Condition one is a community, a community of individuals having a set of values such that adherence to those values is a condition for being in good standing in that community. Second, there are three roles involved, and the three roles are: Denouncer, Witness, and Perpetrator. Third, the Denouncer and the Witness act here as members in good standing in that community. Now they act as members in good standing in two senses. One is: they have to be in good standing in order to be denouncer and witness. Secondly, they act as representatives of the community rather than out of personal interest or motivation. So in both senses, they act as members of the community, not just as particular individuals with particular individual motivations. These are the preconditions.

Now the action consists of meeting two further conditions. [blackboard] Condition 4 is that the denouncer tells the witness that the perpetrator has committed an act. It's necessary he redescribe that act so that under the redescription, it's a tautology that that act is a violation of those community values. So, for example, if the community value is not murdering, the original act might be killing, which then gets redescribed as murder. Under the description "killing", it's ambiguous as to whether it's a violation, since the violation says "no murder". As soon as the act is redescribed as "murder", then it's a tautology that under that description it's a violation. So this is what the denouncer does here. He describes the perpetrator as having committed an act. If necessary, he redescribes the act in such a way that it follows logically that it is a violation. You might say that what he establishes is that at face value, you have a violation. [blackboard]

The last condition: the denouncer makes whatever case may need to be made to the effect that the act, as redescribed, is a genuine expression of the perpetrator's character. It is not to be explained away by appealing to such things as extraordinary circumstances or atypical states. The act, as redescribed, is a genuine expression of the perpetrator's character. Now notice what that implies up here. These values are such that adherence to them is a condition for being in good standing. According to the denouncer, the perpetrator has committed an act which is in violation, and

violating that value is a genuine expression of his character. So it follows that the perpetrator is not “one of us”. He is not a member in good standing because he has violated the condition for being in good standing, namely, adherence to those values.

Q: *What is the denouncer getting out of this?*

P: He is representing the community. He’s not getting anything out of it personally. He’s acting in the interests of the community.

Q: *Could they all be the same person?*

P: You run into problems when you start making them the same person. Think of this as a paradigm case formulation, and then worry about those things separately. As a paradigm case, this is overt. It’s public. These are actual people. The guy actually says these things. So the whole thing is public and visible. And the force of this degradation, if it succeeds, is to show that this person is not simply “one of us”. Now the “not being one of us” is not eligible to participate in the life of this community as a member in good standing. He may, depending on what’s involved, still be eligible to participate in a more restricted way, like the sergeant who’s degraded to private. But the limiting case is that he’s not eligible to participate in any way, and then either you expel him from the community, or you kill him. Those are the two ultimates here. So the force of the degradation ceremony is to reduce the behavior potential, to reduce his eligibility to participate in the practices of that community.

Okay, that’s a degradation ceremony. Now consider a paradigm case where you don’t have three people; you have two—these two [denouncer and witness] are combined into one. And this person simply confronts this person and tells him off, says, “I don’t want to have any part of you. You’re no longer my friend,” and then treats him accordingly. In that case, you have a two-person community which one of those people has violated, and the other has performed both of these functions. But he has still done it overtly. He has still gone through this kind of thing. Now think of another transformation where you don’t do it overtly; you simply point out that your friend has let you down, and you say in your own head, “He’s no longer a friend of mine,” and from there on out you treat him accordingly. We call that a private degradation ceremony. The value of this as

a paradigm case is that it gives us an explicit formulation of what it was you did in your head when you just said to yourself, “He’s no longer a friend of mine.” In the same way that being able to do arithmetic on paper gives us the public representation of what I’m doing in my head when you say, “How much is 45 and 63?” and I say 108. What was it I was doing in my head? I was doing this kind of thing [points to sum on blackboard]. What was it I was doing in my head when I say, “He’s no longer a friend of mine”—when I say it to myself and then give him the cold shoulder? I’m doing this kind of thing [points to diagram of degradation ceremony].

Q: *How’s that different from what he does in his head when he throws a football?*

P: How is it similar?

Q: *I’m just trying to see why this is a process description.*

P: It’s an achievement description. What I have achieved is a degradation, and I can do that just by doing it in my head. When I do it in my head, I don’t have to go through the same procedures that I do on paper—I may just say 108.

Q: *So it’s an “as if” statement?*

P: No. It’s an achievement description. What I accomplish is the kind of accomplishment for which this is the paradigm. That’s the kind of accomplishment it was. And what I do when I simply suddenly start avoiding him, I have accomplished something for which this is the paradigm.

Q: *Why do you speak of “doing it in his head”?*

P: Because that’s colloquial.

Q: *That I can live with.*

P: In a case where I don’t visibly do anything, I just start treating him differently, how do you account for my behavior? What you say is, “This is what he did in his head”—not because I went through each of these steps in my head, but because the net result is what I accomplished, and that achievement is one that makes sense for me to have had as a goal, or had as the result of a behavior. I *have* reason to degrade him, and you see me

acting accordingly. What you don't see is any visible degradation, so you say, "He did it in his head."

Q: *Even though that isn't really where he did it.*

P: Don't worry about whether he *really* did it in his head, because you're dealing with the achievement. So you only get into what really went on in the head if that's specifically what you're interested in. It doesn't take that to understand that somebody performs a degradation ceremony in his head.

Now come back to the paradigm case of degradation and construct a parallel ceremony in which you increase somebody's behavior potential, where you promote him from private to sergeant, when you induct him into this community, when you say of him in your head, "He's my friend."

Q: *In the example you're using, the sergeant ###.*

P: Not only that, but he can give orders to corporals and privates. A private can't give orders to corporals and privates.

Q: *But also, he isn't allowed to fraternize in the club for privates, so I'm thinking—*

P: You're back to more and less. Since there are some things that privates can do that a sergeant can't, and things that sergeants can do and privates can't, how can you say that a sergeant has a greater opportunity, and that's because it isn't more, it isn't a greater number?

The ceremony when somebody gets promoted, where he increases behavior potential, we designate as an Accreditation Ceremony. And promoting is one of the more colloquial paraphrases of that. You promote somebody to be your friend. Now the neutral term that covers both degradation and accreditation is Status Assignment. A status assignment can be simple, namely, a single accreditation or a single degradation, or it can be complex and include ingredients of accreditation and degradation in any combination you want. That's one way of taking account of the thing about the private and the sergeant. A guy loses something when he gets promoted to sergeant, as well as gains something. You can say that contains elements of both degradation and accreditation. Likewise, think of when you say that somebody is a psychologist. He gains accreditation, but he

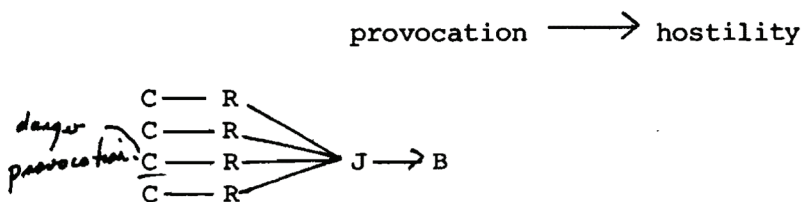
loses something. You wouldn't want your sister to marry one. So the general notion of status assignment, then, is one that can carry any degree of implication of purity or complexity of degradation or accreditation.

It's these notions of degradation, accreditation, and status assignment, and what it is to lose status—this gives you now an additional understanding of what's this business of a greater opportunity or less. Having this to look at does something for that notion. This is an elaboration. [change tape]...It's the achievement that counts.

Q: —the parallel between what you learned versus how you learned it, it's the same logic.

P: Where you got, versus how you got there.

Okay, now let's come back to this paradigm of displacement. Here you have the boss telling you off, and you're standing there and taking it, and then you leave. Now what is going on there in the telling off? [blackboard]



One of the things that's going on is something that generates hostility: a provocation. It's stipulated in the example that you get angry at the boss. So whatever else goes on there, it is a provocation that generates hostility. Now we go two ways from this. We go to this one [judgment diagram]. So far, what we've represented is that this circumstance gives you this reason to engage in a certain behavior, namely, hostile behavior. On the other hand, this circumstance [danger] gives you a reason not to. The reason you don't just respond with hostility to a boss is that you're

afraid, and again, that's stipulated in the original example. So that what you have, then, is this reason [provocation] for, and at least that reason [danger] against. Since the outcome is known, namely that you didn't express it, this one counts for more than this one [danger more than provocation].

So that's one reconstruction of that original episode. For this one, we need something else, so let's digress for a shorter time, this time. And that is this: that a status assignment has to be accepted in order to be successful. When the captain rips off the sergeant's stripes, the sergeant has to accept that he's a private, because if he can go around claiming he's a sergeant and make that stick, he hasn't been degraded. So for the degradation to be successful, it has to be accepted. And between the attempt at degradation and the ultimate acceptance and rejection, there may be some period of time during which it's up for grabs, during which it hasn't yet been successfully rejected, but it also hasn't been accepted, so it's up for grabs whether that attempted degradation will be successful.

A second reconstruction is that it's a degradation. When the boss is telling you off, he's demoting you from being in good standing to being in worse standing, from being trustworthy to being untrustworthy, or something of that sort. So he's being the denouncer and the witness in telling you off. Furthermore, you don't accept it; because if you did, that wouldn't be a provocation. You have to, at that time, be rejecting the attempted degradation. Otherwise, it wouldn't be a provocation. If you simply agreed with your boss that you weren't trustworthy, and all he's doing is telling you that, why would you be angry? So one of the key implications of the fact that it's a provocation—

Q: *It would be an external reason that you could be angry.*

P: Remember, this is stipulated, and it's a paradigm case. That's why there's no unless clauses. There's no possible historical accident in hypothetical cases with stipulations. So it follows that the attempted degradation is rejected, otherwise it wouldn't be hostility.

Q: *But don't you know, sometimes—I just hate it when people tell me I'm wrong, even though I know I'm wrong.*

P: But that's a degradation ceremony, not a piece of information. If he was simply giving you a piece of information, it wouldn't be a degradation ceremony. Nor would you be angry. If he says, "You're no good. I can't trust you. I might as well fire you, but I'm going to take pity on you and not—" that's a degradation, not just information. If you accepted the degradation, it would end there, and you wouldn't be angry. On the other hand, at that point you let him get away with it, because of this [danger]. So on the face of it, on that occasion you have accepted it, and if you never do anything else again about it, you have accepted it. Because performatively, he has got away with it, since you did nothing to defend against the degradation. Even though you didn't [go] along with it, you didn't do anything about it, and in this kind of thing, silence gives consent. But now, accepting that degradation pure and simple, like that, would be a case of choosing less status over more status, which is why you don't do it. Which is why it's a provocation. Which is why, as long as you don't, you're in this intermediate period where it's not clear what's going to happen and how it's going to turn out. But what you are doing is, you are now carrying around with you a reason for defending against and successfully rejecting the attempted degradation.

Q: *Would you give that over, from "silence gives consent"?*

P: Yeah. Look—if I order you around, and you do what I say, then on the face of it, I've put myself in a position where I'm the guy who orders you, and you're the guy who does what I say. If that's all that ever happens, you've accepted that status. It's not until you say, "No," or until you do something else, that you've rejected it.

Q: *On the surface, it appears that way to the other person?*

P: Well, to anybody around. You see, if I start ordering you around, and you just did it, everybody else would draw the same conclusion, namely, we stand in that kind of differential status. So I'd be one-up, and you'd be one-down, and that's what's going on here. When you degrade a guy from full membership to something less, with respect to him, you're one-up and he's one-down. It's a degradation. So as long as he doesn't do anything about it and goes along, he has been degraded. As I said, you're carrying around

a reason for rejecting that attempted degradation. You're not carrying that reason inside of you. The reason stems from the circumstance of the attempted degradation, and as long as that circumstance doesn't change, you continue to have that reason. In the same way, for example, that if I'm in danger in this room, and if I haven't done anything about the danger, as long as I'm in this room, I will have a reason to try to escape that danger. And I'm not carrying that reason in me. It's not a quantity of something, it's the fact that I am in those circumstances.

Q: *When you say "circumstances" here, are you referring to the—*

P: The circumstance is the attempted degradation. That's the circumstance that gives me the provocation and that provides the danger.

Q: *As long as the circumstance surrounding the degradation is there—?*

P: Then I have that reason.

Q: *What is the reason you're carrying around with you?*

P: That reason [provocation elicits hostility], and this reason [degradation]. I defend against the attempted degradation. I reject it.

Q: *He wants to reject, but he hasn't yet rejected it outwardly?*

P: As long as he hasn't rejected it outwardly, you might say the implication is that he hasn't rejected it. That's why, as you leave work, you're burning, you're mad, you're mad at something that happened, and as long as that something continues to be what it is, you continue to be angry—whether you feel angry or not. That's part of the trick, that to be angry, you don't have to feel angry. You can carry this around for years. If the relevant circumstance doesn't change for five years, during that entire five years you will have a reason to get back at him. Again, as I say, it's not a matter of having something strange that you're carrying inside of you. It's that your situation is stable in the relevant respect.

Q: *So if you do not see it as a provocation, even though the degradation ceremony occurred, then there'd be no reason to ###.*

P: That's right. Now, given that I'm motivated to do something which, in fact, will reject or negate this effort, now you ask, "What sort of things

could I do? What sort of things would constitute a rejection of or defense against the attempted degradation?" The most obvious one is the one we ruled out to begin with, namely, telling the boss off. Had I done that, I might have gotten fired, but I wouldn't have been degraded in the way that I was. So that is one of the possible ways of rejecting this degradation, but it is the one which, by hypothesis, by stipulation, I have some reason not to do. So you say, "What else would do the job?" That's the single most obvious one, as you can see from the fact that that's the other term in the formula. If that's not open to me, what other recourse do I have?

Q: *Would telling the boss off be degrading him?*

P: You might. You might be disqualifying him, you might simply be denying. In any case, you'd be rejecting his degradation.

Q: *Denying that he has the status to do this to you?*

P: If you disqualify him—yeah. Or you might disqualify him as a witness: "You wouldn't know a good worker if you saw one." You see, there's various ways of defending. So you can see that given the conditions of the problem, it amounts to what other course does one have in the face of attempted degradation than immediate, overt rejection?

Q: *I'm thinking of a pathological case where you could have a covert rejection—*

P: Don't bring in pathological cases.

Q: *Okay, what about a case where the person simply sees himself as waiting for a better opportunity to get back at the boss?*

P: Okay. At this point you have to think quantitatively of how good a way each of these alternative ways is of rejecting this. Because some of them are better, and some of them are worse. The one that's guaranteed is the one that's given by the formula. Others may succeed as well, but they're probably not guaranteed to.

Reconstructing this as your behavior is a fairly good way of doing it, because what you're saying, in effect, is that this behavior and this judgment do not directly reflect a response to this. "I'm not just somebody who stands and takes it. I am somebody who counts danger as well as

provocation, and in that situation, the danger counted for more, but I don't have to go along with this [the degradation]. It's just that this other one [danger] counted for more." Now you can do this privately. You can do it in your own head and have a private self-affirmation. Or you can complain to your friend about what your boss did, and cuss the boss out, and say, "Boy, he's lucky that I need the job." Then what you've done, you see, is you've reaffirmed your standing with some other member of the community, because you've announced yourself as somebody who does not have this low status. Instead, you're a full member who has various reasons, and one of these counted for more than the other and *that* is not grounds for degradation. You're simply prudent. So you can re-affirm that way. Or, for example, you can fantasy what you feel like doing to the boss. And as long as what you feel like doing to the boss is appropriate to your status, that will serve as an affirmation. If it was appropriate for you to really chew him out in return, and you see that and say that to yourself or rehearse, and it feels authentic, then in effect you also have affirmed that you are not somebody who would just stand and take it, that doing that is inauthentic except that it can be explained away. But just standing and taking it without any other reason would not be authentic. So this serves as that kind of explanation.

Or, you do this kind of thing—you do the one-up, one-down—with you as the one-up, but with somebody else. And that's the one where you come home and kick your dog or beat your wife. So operating in the one-up status, with somebody else in the one-down, is a way of affirming that you are somebody who dishes it out and aren't just somebody who takes it. And that will have a self-affirming effect, too.

Q: *It has the effect of self-affirming, but it doesn't have the effect of self-affirming via the status that's been lost.*

P: There is such a thing as compensation. You don't have to get back exactly what was lost, as long as you don't lose status.

Q: *The question I wanted to ask was about compensation and rationalization. I was wondering what the important distinctions were between a character who says, "Well, it's dangerous for me now," although he never carries out the threat; versus the situation where you'd apply the term*

“rationalization”, because it seems to me this case goes either way. Either we see this character as intelligently weighing his options and lying in wait for a better time, or we may say he’s making excuses.

P: Well, that’s the critique of a judgment. Was this reason enough? Was the danger enough reason to make this a reasonable decision?

Q: *So the difference would be the Observer’s difference of whether the danger struck him as reason enough.*

P: Yeah. You can affirm by just fiat. You can just say, “I’m not that kind of guy.”

Q: *To whom?*

P: To yourself. It’s less likely to do a complete job. It’s less compelling than some of these others. But it is the kind of thing that a person might do, and that some people do do. They simply say, “I’m not that kind of guy.”

Q: *You’re provoked and you’re angry, but you don’t express it in any of the ways that you’ve listed so far, but just being aware that injustice has been done—does that also do the job, even though to a lesser degree?*

P: Yeah. Your knowledge of your dissatisfaction is your way of saying, “I don’t go along.” To not be satisfied with it is to not go along. But again, that’s a weaker way of not going along than some of the more overt, some of the more direct ones. But it has the same tendency. You can do it by compensating—for example, afterwards you make the boss dependent on you because you’re the only guy around who can keep the books, and he has to count on you to keep his books. So you gain status in one place, even though you’ve lost it in another; and by the gain, you can compensate for the other loss. And that may do the job, too.

Q: *Couldn’t you just refuse to see it as provocation?*

P: You’d have to not see it as degradation or see the degradation as justified.

Q: *Well, what about if you think that the boss gets paid for degrading somebody—that’s his job.*

P: But then he's not degrading you, because that is your status as an employee. That is part of your job, to stand there and take it. If it's his job to do that to you, it has to be your job to cooperate.

Q: *In any case, he's eligible to take your status away, if that's this job.*

P: But again, you're treating this as a historical example, where there are all kinds of possibilities for what may be in fact the case; and that's the wrong approach. This is getting at the logic of it, not actual descriptions.

Q: *Would it be something like: it makes me feel shitty when he yells at me, but I understand—he's really got problems.*

P: Okay, then you're disqualifying him. He doesn't really know what he's doing. He really isn't responsible for what he's doing. It's not a real degradation. He's just saying that. You see, there's all kinds of ways, although we've covered most of them, in which you can recover status and wind up not having lost it in the face of this event, which if you didn't do anything about it would result in your losing that status.

Q: *Well, for the most part they don't sound very satisfying.*

P: I said: they may be more or less effective.

Q: *No, I'm saying, all—it sounds almost like a bind.*

P: Well, this isn't satisfying, either, but that's the way behavior goes. When it comes to a choice, if you have to choose, you choose the stronger reason over the weaker one. And if that's all there is to the picture, indeed, you lose. But you gain. If it's just this, you choose and you lose ###. That's why I say, if there are other options, you will be motivated to take them.

Q: *What about the rational approach?*

P: This is the rational approach. [laughter]

Q: *I'm talking about the bind—his degrading you or whatever, and then that's one option that we do have is to be able to—*

P: Directly defending. Part of the stipulation is that you don't. That's why I say: this is a standard example, a paradigm example, and it is stipulated that you don't do anything of the sort, that you stand there and take

it. Because if you did that, you wouldn't have to go home and kick your dog. So it's a given that you don't do what one might do about it then, from which it follows that you have other reasons.

Q: *That sounds like the healthiest way, to do something like that—for the most part.*

P: You can get into trouble that way. It's not, per se, more or less healthy to do it this way. The other reasons may indeed count for more, and justifiably.

Q: *Does it make sense to set up some sort of rule of thumb, "If you observe his behavior of going home and kicking the dog, then for him, these other methods—like saying to himself, 'The boss was wrong'—didn't work?"*

P: No, you might have a combination. The guy might say, "That son of a bitch," which is one, but then go home and kick his dog, too. If he did, you might say that just saying "the son of a bitch" didn't do the job. But then the combination might.

Q: *Sometimes it happens that the character accepts the degradation and then reaffirms his status vis-à-vis something that doesn't take that into account, by changing—by making a claim to its significance being different.*

P: Yeah, that's why I say compensation. If you gain somewhere else, that may compensate for what you lost here.

Q: *But you have, in fact, lost.*

P: You've lost this, but you haven't lost status because status is convertible. Behavior potential is convertible. What you lose in one place, you may win back in another; and, in that case, you haven't lost behavior potential.

Q: *Something like the parallel to redescription, like a reaffirmation, of sorts.*

P: Yeah. In one way or another, all of these responses would qualify as affirmation or reaffirmation. Because the face value of this attempt is degradation, anything you do to counter it is a reaffirmation of your status.

Q: *Would you go into the notion of status being convertible?*

P: Well, I said as long as that circumstance is there, you have a reason, and that's why you can act one day, two days, a year later on the basis of something that happened now, because if the relevant circumstance hasn't changed, you'll always have that reason. And sometime, you may not have the counter-reason, and then you act. The guy who bides his time—

Q: *The guy affirming his status in a different circumstance—going home, kicking the dog—how does the same thing ###.*

P: Compare it to losing money in one place, and getting it back somewhere else. It's not the same bills, but you wind up with the same amount of money. In many respects, status is convertible that way, like currency. What you lose in one place can be made up for in another place.

Q: *Can—but in such a case as here, you're making an appraisal that kicking the dog—the status in relationship to the dog is as great or as meaningful as the status in relationship to the boss, which (as a reconstruction) doesn't hold water.*

P: No. It's not that the relationship is equally significant, it's that the action has that significance. The action of being in the position of the kicker rather than the kickee is what does the job, that you affirm that you're not just the kickee, that you're the kicker also.

Q: *That's sort of like a vacuum theory instead of a hydraulic theory—that you have a status vacuum so you need some status to fill it up.*

P: You don't have a status vacuum.

Q: *—the aggression extra, whatever you call it, where it leaks out because there's too much of it.*

P: One of the things it does is account for the cases that this doesn't account for, namely, where you find out that it wasn't a degradation after all, that you were mistaken, that it wasn't the provocation, and then you lose this motivation. On this theory [the reservoir], you can't lose it. Once it's there, it's there, and you have to ### it. I think you've all had that kind of experience, of finding out that you thought somebody made a nasty comment, and you decide that no, it wasn't; your anger disappears. You no longer have that motivation. And you didn't have to discharge it. This one

will take care of the odd cases like that; this one [reservoir] will not.

Q: *That's a great explanation for why insight sometimes feels good in psychoanalysis.*

P: Yeah, you find out that you really don't have anything to worry about. But notice: what gives you the logical dynamic here is that principle that we're talking about, that tautology that says a person will choose greater over lesser, and will not choose lesser over greater. The only time he'll accept lesser over greater is when he has no choice, when he has to. This is applicable not merely to the notion of displacement, but also to the notion of hostility. And from that, you can translate to any other emotion. If I'm in danger as long as I'm in this building, then I will continue to have a reason to behave in a certain way throughout that time. And I'm not carrying it around inside of me; and, should the time come when I have no stronger reason to do otherwise, I will act on that reason. And unless you know that I've been in danger all the time, it may seem strange to you why I do that sort of thing then, the same way that if you didn't know about that put-down and that I had never accepted it, you don't know why, a year later, I stabbed the guy in the back. Then you see it as just irrational, whereas if you had the relevant facts, you'd say, "Aha! That's why."

So one of the things that the status notion gives you is a general explanation of how come certain motivations last and last and last, and that is because they will not change until and unless the relevant circumstances change—which is to say, unless your status changes.

Q: *You already said that you can act on a discrimination without knowing which discrimination you're acting on. Does that fit in here also? It could be a provocation which you've discriminated, but you haven't been able to get your finger on it?*

P: Yeah. You don't know why you kick your dog. You just know that suddenly you have a flash of temper. So it may be mysterious to you. Or why you no longer like him [your friend].

Q: *In fantasizing a deficit case of a degradation ceremony, in which the person wasn't aware that the ceremony has taken place, but has, in fact, ### an interaction he isn't fully cognizant of, walks away with less behavior*

potential. I'm trying to think of an example—

P: Walks away wondering what happened to him.

Q: *It seems like depression sometimes is that case, where a person loses something in terms of a relationship, and loses a lot more with that, can't understand why he has lost that other stuff. There's the case of the patient whose husband left her, and when he left, she said she could hardly walk. She couldn't do anything, hardly, and she couldn't figure out those things until it was tied in with the significance of her husband having left her.*

P: Actually, depression was the thing I wanted to move to, more or less, next, because the status dynamic analysis of depression, historically, is the first status dynamic analysis that we have of psychopathology, and that also connects to psychotherapy. And that analysis was done before we had the notion of status dynamics. In retrospect, once we had the notion of status dynamics, it was clear that what we were doing back in '67, when we came up with a very—at that time—peculiar formulation of depression and ###; and again, the contrast was to the classic, i.e., psychoanalytic, notion of what happens with depression, which is that it's anger turned inward.

I don't think I want to start that right now, because it takes a while to lay out, so for the time being, keep in mind the additional principle that we introduced today; namely, we do not choose less rather than more; and how that works out in the analysis of displacement as a defense mechanism; and also of how it relates to emotions and the longevity of emotional motivation and certain other motivations. And the principle there is: as long as the relevant circumstance persists, you will continue to have that reason, and you don't have to do a thing to keep it going.

Q: *Historically, the psychoanalytic formulation of depression as hostility turned inward, was verified, because as patients come out of depression, they begin to get angry. But the logical basis for this would predict just that, because as a person is beginning to act angry, he's beginning to act on a different status.*

P: Yeah. You see, the clinical observations concerning depression are some of the things that an alternative account has to account for, because

one of the virtues of the psychoanalytic account is how neatly it accounted for some of the visible features that you find in clinical depression—one of which is that as you start getting better, you start showing anger.

Q: *But diagnostically, a whole variety of disorders in schizophrenia will perceive anger in the presentation as having a better prognosis. because the anger is seen as an affirmation of status.*

P: You see, this will connect to the general principle for doing therapy, which is that other things being equal, you give anger interpretations rather than fear interpretations. And the reason is that an anger interpretation implicitly gives the person greater status than a fear interpretation. And since, in general—remember, the definition of pathology is that it's a loss of status, a loss of behavior potential; and even there I made the point that all you have to do to bring a person from being pathological—in a pathological state—to a non-pathological, you simply have to increase his behavior potential. You don't have to undo the particular thing that initially you diagnosed as that's what's wrong with him. So remember that famous example of the guy who had a twitch, and was through three years of psychoanalysis, and he still had his twitch, but he no longer was bothered by it. Well, that's used by behavioral therapists to burlesque psychoanalytic therapy as "it doesn't do anything about overt behavior." You can work that the other way around. If you have a twitch and it really doesn't bother you, why would you call it pathology? If it isn't a handicap, if it doesn't restrict your behavior, why call it pathology?

So if you can get the person to a place where he has a normal amount of behavior potential, and whatever he has isn't that much of a handicap, then it isn't pathological any more. So there you have an example of the convertibility of status. You don't have to restore status at the place where you decide it was missing. You can increase status somewhere else, and that may do the job. But of course, just as this is the most obvious way of rejecting, making good the status deficit at just the place where you decide it's missing is the most obvious therapeutic strategy. It's not the only one. So add to your notes this general principle, that other things being equal, anger interpretations are preferable to fear interpretations. And notice how easily you can substitute one for the other. As soon as you see that, whatever looks visibly like avoidance you can redescribe as rejection; and

therefore, in general, move from a fear interpretation to a rejection/anger interpretation, limited only by how plausible you can make it, in fact, to the person you're dealing with.

Q: *That's the most common way in which other things aren't equal.*

P: Well, but this is a principle, and it has substantial utility in that fairly often, you are able to, because it fits the facts. Very often, an anger interpretation fits the facts just as well as the fear interpretation that the client presents. In effect, you're not a magician. You can only make it plausible either if you have a golden tongue or if it really does fit. And if you only have a golden tongue, you won't be able to carry it off, so why bother?

Q: *—really disturbed clients for whom it doesn't matter if the facts fit.*

P: It *does* matter if it fits. It doesn't matter if they don't understand it, but if they can see the difference between fitting and not fitting, it does matter. And you never know for sure what they're going to understand.

Q: *Anger is much more threatening to some clients than fear.*

P: Well, I didn't say it wasn't. I just said "other things being equal" it has this advantage, and like all principles, you use judgment in its application. But it's a good principle to have available, because it often is of substantial help.

Q: *It seems that by making that sort of interpretation, what you in fact do is you grant a wider range of responsibility to the client, because it's the same kind of interpretation, covering the same subject matter—at least this one is giving him the reminder that he's at least at some point in control.*

P: Yeah. One has much more control over one's anger than over one's fears.

Q: *It seems to me that, in general, the kind of interpretations that you suggest are interpretations that directly translate into some action or some reminder of responsibility on our clients' part.*

P: Mainly, you back it up by reminding him of the reasons he has for being angry. That's what makes it plausible. If he sees those reasons as reasons for being angry, then it's plausible to him that he is angry. It would be

plausible to anybody, because why not? What else does it take to have anger other than to have the reasons and to be acting on them? Okay, so review that, do the case of Shirley K for both James and Shirley, and next time we'll talk about that case, or continue with depression.

Session 4

February 10, 1976

Review of status choice principle; Analogies in existing systems; Status dynamic analysis of depression and therapeutic indications; anger and affirmation of status; Comparison with psychoanalytic formulation.

PGO: [at blackboard] Colin Turbayne—*The Myth of Metaphor*. Here's a good book that I just came across. I recommend it.

Last time, you recall I introduced the principle that said that a person will not choose less status over more status, and one of the things that seemed a bit murky was what's the nature of the choice, and what do you mean, "more" status? We went through a number of possibilities on that. We eliminated that "more status" meant "higher up on the social ladder". We eliminated that "more status" meant more behaviors that you were eligible for. We eliminated that it meant a broader range of behaviors; and finally just said, "Well, more." Has anybody any further thoughts to clarify?

Q: *How about you?* [laughter—prolonged]

P: You see, when I throw it to her, I throw it hard. When she throws it at me, I throw it soft.

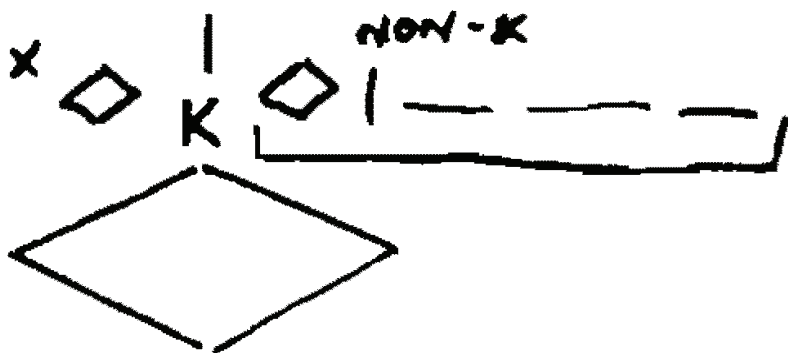
Q: *Steamroller.*

P: Right. As it happens, I did do some worrying about that, to see if there was anything further that we could say. A couple of things: one, it's pretty clear to me that other people have thought of the same thing. This is not something new. And one of the places where somebody has said the same thing...part of George Kelly's system—remember that huge, two-volume thing where he's got it all laid out—he has a corollary, and guess

what it's called: it's called the Choice Corollary, and here's how it reads: "A person chooses for himself that alternative, in a dichotomized construct, through which he anticipates the greater possibility for extension and definition of the system." You can see how, except for the idiomatic difference and the difference in the two systems as a whole, that this is the equivalent statement in Kelly's terms.

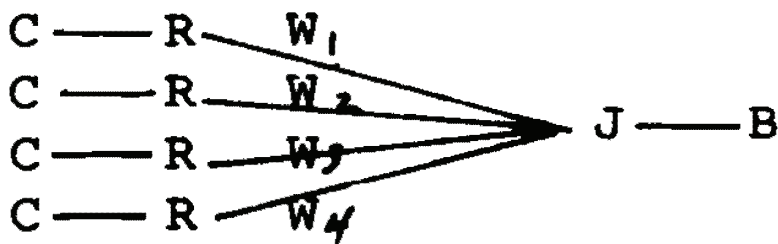
Q: *I never understood what sort of choice Kelly was talking about there—what it meant to choose one end of a dichotomized construct.*

P: According to his system, that's what you're always doing, that whatever you do, you've made a choice between a dichotomized construct.

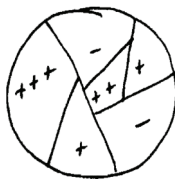


Remember this [blackboard]: lots of times I draw it that way, to indicate this particular behavior versus any other one. Now this—if you designate this as X, this as non-X. You take the range of non-X, and you divide it into this and this and this, and you can reconstruct it with a dichotomous construct. I agree that one of the points of awkwardness in Kelly—there are some sets that are obviously a set and not just a dichotomy. But that's the way he would deal with that kind of question. And in the same way that for this, for intentional action, you are always acting on a discrimination of something from something else, so for him you are always choosing one end of a dichotomous construct. Part of the logic of choice is that you choose A over B. You don't have a formula that says you choose A—there is always a choice to be made, and that requires two. Okay, so that's one place where you find it. Another thing I thought of in connection with the—

P: That was the thing I thought of—that in a reconstruction, you can impose an economic model, a utility model, and have the sum of the number times the value. If you think of every behavior that you're eligible for, and then give each of those a value, then you sum that up, you can get thereby a reconstruction of the basis of the choice. That choice which gets you the largest sum of the number of different things, times their value—this is straight economic theory. This is a simple utility function. Now the important thing is that it's a reconstruction, in the same way that in the other diagram [blackboard] these weights that you give to different reasons are a reconstruction and not part of a psychic mechanism that produces this.



Likewise, given the choice, one can reconstruct a set of values for the different behavioral options; and give them numbers; and perform operations like this; and in that way reconstruct the basis of the choice. However, if you do that, don't make the mistake of thinking this is what brings about the choice. It's simply a way of reconstructing it. So economic theory is another



place where you find this kind of notion.

Thirdly, and this one is a little more dubious, remember Lewin's egg-shaped life spaces, [blackboard] with regions and valences (both positive and negative) and with the valences quantified. And the principle that says that you will tend to locomote toward the place in your life space that has the greatest valence. So again you have a reference to something quantitative that is maximized. Here, it's the place. Now remember: place is status. And in Lewin's system, the place you are in, here, is what gives you your behavior potential relative to other places—here.

Q: By “place”, are you referring to something equivalent to a form of life?

P: No. A condition, a state of affairs.

Q: So that could be anything, then, the person's state at that time.

P: Yeah. You see, being over here may be a case of having that candy that I want, or it may be getting relief from a headache, or whatever. It's simply a state of affairs. So again you have a reconstruction in which you give value times something. To be in a place that has a lot of value is either because there's something good here or because of the potential it gives you for locomotions elsewhere. Part of the value of this place may lie in the access it gives you to other places. And indeed, there is a principle that says that if this does give you access to this, then this will gain value by virtue of its giving you access to that. And that corresponds almost directly to what we were saying about the opportunity to have an opportunity: that you value not merely behaviors and what they get you but the opportunity for

those behaviors; and then, by working your way back, you would also value an opportunity to get that opportunity. So you find the same kind of idea here in this system, again with characteristic idiomatic differences. It's the same kind of maximization principle.

Except notice that these principles are all stated in the positive, whereas the one I gave you is stated in the negative. One reason for stating it in the negative is to eliminate the implication that this principle is always operative. Instead, the way it's stated is that it's never violated, and that's quite different from having what amounts to a universal motive. Compare it, for example, to the rule in chess that talks about how the bishop moves, and then the statement that this rule is never violated in chess. The fact that it's never violated in chess doesn't mean that that rule is always exemplified by whatever goes on on a chess board. So putting it in the negative form takes away the implication that this is a universal motive that is always operating in your behavior. Instead, it is simply a constraint on what behaviors could occur, and it is not violated.

Now the next one is notions like self-actualization, which is another one of those universal motives. And this one has some of the secondary ramifications that we saw when it came to the status formulation, namely, even though there is a universal principle for self-actualization, you might be mistaken in what is self-actualization, and therefore, in fact, make a choice that is not maximally self-actualizing. We saw that with the notion of choosing more behavior potential over less—you might be wrong about which was which and therefore, in fact, make a choice that, in fact, gave you less rather than more. But that wasn't what you would be choosing. In the same way that if you choose one course of action over the other, and later decide that the course you took was less self-actualizing than the other, you wouldn't say that you chose less self-actualization over more. In fact, you chose more over less, but you were wrong.

Now, with self-actualizing, there isn't the implication of a quantification, unless you put it into the form of more self-actualization over less, but the usual form is: there is a built-in motive toward self-actualization. I think it's a kind of an open question whether it's a motive or a principle.

Q: *That would require identification of two sorts, both within the environment, the potential for its being self-actualizing, and for its fulfilling. There's some kind of strain of ideation there that's almost Platonic, or neo-Platonic, at least.*

P: Only if you think of it in terms of thinking rather than seeing. If you think of what happens when, if I go over there I just walk around, and just naturally don't walk into the desks and chairs—if you think of it in terms of a calculation on my part, it's going to have to be a very difficult calculation. If you think of it in terms of seeing opportunities, you have no difficulties at all. It's clear where the opportunity lies to get what I want.

In your normal walking-around state, I suggest that that's how you're operating. You've got your eye open for opportunities, and you see them. You don't have to think your way in it, and if you did, you'd be in trouble. So the self-actualizing gets at that thing that seems so ineffable, namely, the qualitative aspect of "more". More what? More self-actualizing. Notice that there's no criterion for what's self-actualizing or what's more self-actualizing rather than less. It's logic, not observation. But reference to self-actualization gets at part of the logic of it, namely, that it's not just something quantitative, not a greater number, not a greater range, that there is something that (in these other terms) is called "value".

There's at least one other thing. Recall, I started out talking about status by pointing out that places are independent of one another, and that from knowing what is at one place, you do not logically know what is in any other place. So that places are this way absolutely independent. Let me suggest a converse principle, which is that *concepts are all connected to one another*. And unlike places, concepts are completely connected. And that's a speculation, because you certainly couldn't show it; although you can make some plausible cases, like working through the state of affairs system, showing that, in principle, it includes all possible states of affairs; therefore, all possible concepts; and then that that is an interconnected system. From that, you could quickly make a case that all concepts, as well as all facts, are interrelated. And if you didn't want to push it too far, for some particular purpose, that would be good enough. On the other hand, it doesn't help practically seeing how things are connected.

Think, for example, of a notion like “force”—number one, how easy it is to reify a force as a something, and number two, that in fact it isn’t a something; it’s part of a calculational system, that the notion of force goes with a set of principles, chief among which is that other things being equal, a greater force will prevail over a lesser force. So the notion of force is simply a bookkeeping category for working some quantitative things. And that were you to deny that kind of principle, the notion of force would be senseless. Could you really make use of a system in which a lesser force would prevail over a greater one? You would simply have reversed the meanings of “less” and “more”. So that what goes with the notion of force itself is this calculation involving more and less. And what I want to suggest is that exactly the same thing holds with choice, that it’s part of the logic of choice that it involves and is a way of calculating something to do with more and less. And it would be just as senseless to say that you choose the lesser over the greater behavior potential, as it would be to say that a lesser force prevails over a greater one.

That gives us a number of additional perspectives on what this notion of “greater than” is, that’s involved in that principle. And somewhere along the line, any one of these comparisons may help, which is why I toss them all in.

Q: *What about cases in which we talk about self-defeating or self-destructive behavior, when you see a person choosing routes of behavior that appear even to himself as destructive?*

P: Then you’re wrong. You know that from his point of view, he’s choosing the greater over the lesser, and so that leads you to ask, “Well, what does it look like to him? Why would something that *we* see as lesser look to him the greater?”

Q: *“Greater” or “lesser” is an Observer’s choice, but the Actor’s choice is on the level of significance.*

P: Yeah. It’s like a maxim. Last time, I did draw the parallel between this principle of status, and Maxim 3. That’s not an Observer’s term; that’s a tautology. You use the tautology to check on your observation.

Q: *If I kill myself tonight and don't wait to find out what the mail brings tomorrow, then regardless of the fact that I'm—as an Observer—ending my behavior potential, I've chosen the more significant option.*

P: Yeah. That exemplifies the principle that I enunciated this afternoon, namely, “The whole world is more ambiguous than a Rorschach blot.” [laughter]

Q: *When I was trying to understand this “more” and “less”, you told us to write this down in the case of Shirley, and it didn't make any sense.*

P: Well, we'll get to it, but not quite yet.

Q: *I missed that, where you were saying something about “place” as being separate.*

P: Yeah. That was, I think, at the very beginning of our first session, where we were trying to get started and get into the notion of status and status dynamics. I introduced the idea that status is place; and that places are independent; and that that independence is critical in understanding what goes on in status dynamics. I haven't done much more with that. I think we may—.

Q: *That explains it, because I wasn't in this place at that time.*

P: See how that limits your behavior potential.

One other thing that isn't just addressed to the same issue, namely, how you use principles like the one that we introduced last time, and the one that gave us the unconscious motivation derivation. The way you use them--the way you use any one principle is with an assessment. The principle that says that a person will not choose lesser behavior potential over greater cannot be used in its pure form, because it's content-free. As soon as you make an assessment of a given person, that this course of action represents less potential and this one more, then you're going to predict that he'll choose that one.

Q: *Doesn't Kelly's thing have a little bit of that, in terms of something like: if you articulate something, that should make it more likely to be chosen? That sounds like content.*

P: No. That's still principle, and that's why I said that articulation or extension are equally good, and a person may choose to articulate more, or may choose to extend more. Both of them are grounds for choosing.

Q: *They're more like each other.*

P: No, they're both extensions of the system.

Q: *But it sounds like extension of the system is not something that's content-free, that you can deliberately extend the system—*

P: Remember, "content-free" is relative. Think of the relationship formula, and that's content-free, and then you introduce a special case, the hostility formula. Relative to the relationship formula, the hostility formula has content. Relative to a particular situation of behavior, the hostility formula is content-free, and that's what you're dealing with there. You're dealing with a general principle that's subdivided into two possibilities. It's still a general principle, but relative to—without the subdivision, it's more specific.

So with a principle, you have to assess in order to use it for expectation or prediction. Again, remember what I said about the physicists and how they use the notion of force. That, too—you have a principle that's content-free, and you have to assess. You have a principle that says, "An object will move in the direction of the force applied," and you have to assess what force is applied to this object. Otherwise you don't know a thing about what it's going to do. So principles go with assessments. Now if you multiply principles, the way you work these is as simultaneous equations. Each one of these, together with its assessment, provides a constraint on what could possibly be the case, just like an equation here provides a constraint on what the possible answers can be. The more constraints you have, if they're compatible, the closer you move to a single determinate solution. The looser the constraints, the more you simply have a new equation here that gives you all of the possibilities—that all are consistent with your constraints.

So when it comes to principles like this, in doing status dynamics, this is how it works: it works on the model of solving simultaneous equations, where you plug in the information you have, into the principles that

you have, and then you find out if that gives you enough to draw an unambiguous conclusion. Except that—unlike in math—there isn't a difference between an ambiguous conclusion and an unambiguous one. All conclusions, in behavior, are ambiguous. So you have to introduce the comparable qualification in another way: unambiguous enough for your purposes, and that's like having a determinate numerical solution for the equations. If it's not determinate enough for your purposes, it's like having equations and winding up with one that still leaves you with no specific answer. But you've narrowed it down. You can at least say, "Well, it's got to be one of the things that satisfies this equation." So you know more about what it is, or what to expect, than if you hadn't gone through this.

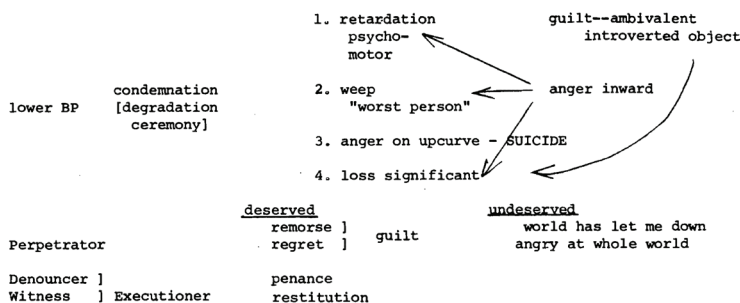
As with the kind of fancy process descriptions that psychological theorists are prone to invent, you can use this not merely as your way of [change tape—and some lost, perhaps five minutes]...

A neurotic depression almost always requires situational features.

Q: *So given that, you're just speaking about depression.*

P: As I say, if we can work it in that direction—I'm just thinking of simple fundamentals. Also, I'm thinking historically. One of the reasons why I thought of depression is that as with a lot of this stuff, the original formula came before the systematization, before there was any such thing as status dynamics. It was only in retrospect, once we had something called "status dynamics", that that formulation was recognizable as an early attempt.

When it comes to depression, you have (1) the observational picture of what it's like, of what the phenomenon is, and (2) the classic psychoanalytic explanation, which I think until very recently has really had no serious competitors, as far as what is the explanation of depression. So back in '67 or '66, if you were thinking about depression, you thought of the clinical picture and the psychoanalytic explanation. Now the clinical picture is (1), the person doesn't do much. The classic picture is someone sitting in the corner, weeping. So [blackboard] in the classic texts, that's called "psycho-motor retardation," which means that your thought processes are slowed down, and your motor behavior is slowed down.



You're not merely sitting there doing nothing, but you're not thinking much, either. (2) You get things like weeping, wailing, crying, and statements like "I'm the worst person in the world". (3) When the person who's depressed starts getting better, he starts showing anger. And (4), that what usually, normally, brings it on is a significant loss of something important.

Q: *You're not distinguishing between one kind of depression and another?*

P: No. You see, given this, you could certainly start characterizing in terms of severity, in terms of degree of distortion, etc. Given some kind of explanatory system, you could divide up in terms of what kind of explanation. But so far, that's ###.

So this is the kind of thing that you would see. This, roughly, is the phenomenon. There are exceptions: sometimes it's hard to see any significant loss, but the paradigm cases are: you lose somebody—somebody dies that's been close to you for a long time, or you're heavily invested in a job or vocation and you suddenly lose it—like the pianist losing a hand and then gets depressed. So it's a relatively sudden and very significant loss. That is what normally brings it on.

Q: *You say that the etiology is the loss?*

P: Well, descriptively, we don't say it's the cause; we simply say that's the occasion, because you usually find it there.

Q: *But that's only in some kinds of depression, isn't it?*

P: Yeah. That's why I say there are exceptions, because sometimes a person gets depressed, and we can't find any sudden, significant loss.

Q: *What about an involuntional reaction?*

P: Well—hold on for that.

Now the classic explanation is that of guilt, and that, in turn, is paraphrased as ambivalent introverted object. And the connecting link is ambivalence. In effect, you've introjected the person or the job or the activity or whatever, but you're ambivalent about it, and therefore, when you lose it, the ambivalence shows up in the anger toward that object, which since you've introjected, that's anger turned inward.

Q: *The ### formulation sometimes specifies that you don't have to have introjected the object prior to the loss. The losing of the object may set up the introjection.*

P: Right. The interpretation is that this directly accounts for this—it's the anger turned inward that's being expressed when you say, "I'm the worst person in the world. I'm just no good." And at the same time, accounts for that—namely, since the problem is that you've got this anger turned inward, and that's what's making you retarded, that the mark of your getting better is that you turn it outward, since that's the alternative to turning it inward. If you're not going to have it turned inward, you've got to be turning it outward, and that's what shows up here. You can see that this explanation also gets at how come it's the loss of a significant object that brings it on. And over here, you get the story about a punitive superego that's punishing you and forbidding you to do the kind of things that you would normally do. This one notion, then, does the job, essentially, of accounting for what you see in a clinical depression.

The traditional form of therapy with somebody who's clinically depressed was to be supportive, to be kind, to prevent him from committing suicide until he feels better. And by being supportive, to reduce the punitiveness of the superego; by being supportive, to encourage the anger outward; and traditionally, that's what you did with somebody who was depressed: supportive therapy. You can see how the explanation connects to what you would do. It's not that you can deduce that. If this is the correct

explanation, then being kind and being supportive is the thing to do, but there's a clear connection that makes sense: to do supportive therapy, given this way of understanding.

The fact is, there's something unsatisfactory about that, and I'm not sure what it is. That's why I'm telling this in a historical mode. It just happened that my own experience included a lot of suicides and depressions, and I became more and more unhappy about doing supportive therapy. Over a period of time, what I developed was something you might call "confrontive therapy". This required some thinking through, because when you're dealing with somebody who's potentially suicidal, and the conventional wisdom is that you've got to be kind and not put any stress, if it occurs to you that it makes sense to confront, you can see that that's a very twitchy position to be in.

Q: *One of the peculiar parts about psychoanalytic formulation is that it separates mourning out from depression. In mourning, you support the person for a natural period—whatever that period requires, the grief or the guilt—the energy from the superego will eventually dissipate because it's a set quantity. But in depression, those barriers should continue. There's nothing (as far as I know) in the theory that sets up "after a certain period of time, this will stop". So supportive therapy doesn't—by not changing the situation, should also continue the depression.*

P: That may be part of why I was unhappy ###.

Q: *Given the formulation, you wouldn't expect that to be too successful. You'd expect that the possibility would be, although the analyst argument would simply be a displacement reaction, by setting yourself up as a target.*

P: My recollection is that doing psychotherapy with somebody who's depressed was not one of those things that was counted as having a high prospect of success. So it wasn't that everybody thought that this would surely work, but rather, what else can you do but that? and here's an explanation of why that might work.

Q: *Even within the historical language, when ### in '49 was writing the textbook, he's building all this formulation; but side by side with it, he's talking almost purely in terms of self-esteem, about depression as damaged*

self-esteem. He builds all the logic, but he never talks as if self-esteem is the problem; and what you're doing is saying "it's okay, it's okay", but you're doing nothing to enhance the self-esteem of that person, and so the condition should continue.

P: Right.

Q: *In a way, if you can tie it back into the loss of a significant person or object, by being continuously supportive, you're in a way becoming the new significant object, toward which the person is ambivalent, and this would tend to reduce the need for more depressive behavior.*

P: Well, that's directly responsive to this. It doesn't work through this explanation, does it? If you knew that somebody got depressed because he lost a significant person, without ever having heard of psychoanalytic theory, wouldn't it occur to you that maybe the way to get him better is to provide him with a new significant person? So that's something that might occur to you, but it wouldn't occur particularly as a consequence of the theory. Except that winds up doing pretty much the same thing, namely, being supportive, and doing that long enough to become the other significant person.

Q: *In a way, you're also ### the committed superego. You're telling him he's not a bad person who needs ### of behavior and thought?*

P: Yeah, but again, that's not funneled through the psychoanalytic explanation. It's directly responsive to—if you contradict somebody who's saying, "I'm the worst person in the world," and you are there long enough to become significant, you may convince him that he isn't. So again, you don't need to have done the psychoanalytic type reasoning to guess that doing that would have some effect. But, you see, there you've got the germ of a confrontation-type approach.

Q: *Is there any evidence to the effect that after the traditional supportive therapy, that after therapy terminates, there's a higher rate of suicide than than at other times? Because you might predict that.*

P: I don't know about data, but this was certainly part of the folklore, is that the danger of suicide is exactly at the crossover point here—that at

the time when the person is just about to, or has just begun to show anger openly, that's when there's a maximum danger of suicide.

Q: *If therapy was purely supportive, and no reconstructive or no redescriptive aspects to it, and then it ended, with nothing done to change the circumstances of the person, now we've got a person with even more reasons for depression, and that's in the sense of resource, because therapy has failed.*

P: I don't know of any either folklore or data on that.

Q: *Is there something like a self-degradation ceremony, where—*

P: You're anticipating the reconstruction. You see, once you have degradation ceremony in mind, and you look at some of this, it doesn't have to be anger, because even descriptively, what it is is condemnation, and it's very easy to read condemnation as anger, but it doesn't have to be. It can be condemnation as a public but individual degradation ceremony.

Q: *Then you have the Witness and Denouncer and all of them in the same person?*

P: Yeah, and that's part of the interest, because it's by virtue of having this three-person setup of a degradation ceremony, and then putting all three as the same person, that you generate this suicide/anger on the up curve. But again, that's anticipating. So far, this is the background, that this was the state of affairs, this was how it was conceptualized, this is what one did.

As I recall, the first part of the reconstruction had to do with condemnation versus anger. This was seen as condemnation. Later, it's easy to see this as a degradation ceremony. [blackboard] The initial formulation, though, was something on the order of self-concept follows status, that you found yourself with that kind of loss, and your reconstruction in effect was that you deserved it. Well, today I think we object to that, because work on the notion of self-concept itself, plus the data, would indicate that the self-concept would not change simply and directly as a function of that. Given the degradation ceremony reconstruction here, you can see both the weeping and the self-condemnation as a natural form of expression of status loss. Both of them are ways of saying, "Woe is me, look where I am." Both of these are ways of lamenting one's own state, but also

of recognizing the difference between what one was and had, and what one is now and what one has now. And that difference is a loss of status, a degradation. So that the overt recognition of it amounts to, and would have to be, a degradation ceremony. And instead of your doing it for yourself, you're simply recognizing what the facts are. That is, if you don't have a choice, you recognize this as real, and so you express that fact—just as you cry when you're sad, you lament the loss. And lamenting the loss involves recognizing that the loss is real. Otherwise there's nothing to lament. So the lamentation here that is behaviorally expressed both in the crying, etc., and the self-condemnation, is a way of recognizing the loss.

So if what you're recognizing is the loss of status or a lower behavior potential, and if you're overtly engaged in a degradation ceremony that is the recognition of that, then indeed, on both counts, you will have less to think about and less to do, because both your thoughts and your performances have to do with your behavior. The less behavior potential you have, the less there is to think about, the less choices to be made, the less performances to engage in. That, together with the fact that what you are doing *is* a performance, is this degradation ceremony.

Q: *Are you offering that as an explanation for the psycho-motor retardation?*

P: Yeah. Now all you've got to do is to push this to the extreme of zero behavior potential, and given that, you'd have no thought and no behavior. So to the extent that the loss is extreme, to the extent that the loss wipes out all of your behavior potential, to that extent you will approach complete retardation. But recognize that that corresponds to being in an impossible position and being unable to behave at all. So that's the limiting case, and it depends upon how much of a loss, how central was it, what did you lose when you lost that.

Q: *What happened to guilt?*

P: Guilt is over here. It's part of this account. It's not part of that account at all. Remember, guilt was never part of the phenomenon. Guilt was part of the psychoanalytic explanation. The phenomenon is that people cry, they act sad, and they condemn themselves. So there is no guilt there

that needs to be accounted for.

Q: *### call it guilt. That guilt and superego is unconscious, it's an Observer's reconstruction.*

Q: *Well, don't depressed people feel guilty? [laughter]*

P: Somebody tell him. The guy says, "No."

Q: *One thing I've noticed, though, about depressed people, is that you do get a lot of guilt, but you get it as the person has been depressed for a while, and he's begun to bum out of all of his friends, and reduce personal relations, and starts to feel guilty for what he's done to his friends, what he's done to his community. It strikes me as a secondary feature.*

Q: *In terms of hospitalized people, I've read that recently they haven't been talking guilt nearly as much as they used to, say, 20 years ago.*

P: Notice how easy it is—if somebody says, "I'm the worst person in the world, just absolutely," how easy it is to think of that as guilt. If you don't have something like this as an alternative, you'd almost automatically say "guilt".

Q: *They're claiming a certain kind of status, but ###.*

P: Well, I'm not sure I'd even say they were claiming it. I'm saying they're recognizing the status they're in.

Q: *Sometimes they claim it—like an alcoholic would—*

P: Yeah, that's different.

Q: *What's behind the "one deserves the loss"?*

P: That was the only way we could make sense, starting from here and connecting to the loss—why would you condemn yourself for having lost that? And there is dissonance reduction that says, "If it happened to me, I must have deserved it." You come across cases like that, so it's not as implausible as it now seems to us. It certainly wasn't that implausible then, although we recognize it wasn't all that satisfactory, either.

Q: *Are you saying it's a convenient bridge that we're using right now?*

P: No, it's what we had to fudge in then, to give closure, that we recognized it was fudging it in, and that we now have a better one in place of [it], namely, the degradation ceremony. The degradation ceremony is clearly and directly a reflection of and a response to the loss of status. So that replaces the notion that you figured that you must have deserved it.

Q: *Would you say, then, that every loss of status is followed by some sort of degradation ceremony?*

P: Only if you remember the paradigm case formulation in which you may do it in your own head without any overt ceremony. Your simple recognition of it will, in effect, be a private degradation ceremony. It's like in the displacement example: if you get put down and you accept it, you don't do anything about it, you have accepted it, and that is a private degradation ceremony. Just as his putting you down is a public degradation ceremony.

Q: *In an actual loss of status, then, the person's recognizing what he has actually lost is fitting and proper, but it sounds like you'd be saying that it's fitting and proper that he degrade himself*

P: He has been degraded, and it's fitting and proper that he recognize it. Otherwise he's into delusions, and you get that sometimes, too

Q: *Okay, but are you saying that's equivalent to a degradation ceremony? It is a degradation ceremony.*

P: Yeah. You see, the ceremony is a way of recognizing the degradation that is present.

Q: *I think it would really help to be more explicit by us maybe going through—as we did with the ones in the past.*

P: You have to see the logic of the explanation first, before you can apply it to the case. If it doesn't hang together in the schema, it won't explain in the concrete.

Q: *What I'm saying is—is the degradation a formal device to explain, or is it something where you would actually—if not resembling the ceremony, but at least some kind of degradation that is self-imposed. I guess I'm seeing*

a long shot between somebody just recognizing a loss of status, and somebody actually putting their finger to himself and saying, "You're down".

P: That's something else, and that appears in about three of the images—the variations on Kissinger and the Hanging Judge will deal with that case, where a person is actively doing it to himself. That's not depression and that person will not be depressed. He'll be unhappy. You'll get a lot of the same things, but he won't be depressed. For example, he won't show this.

Q: *The final line on the degradation ceremony is something like, "And has always been this way." Would that tie into the feelings of guilt—that, for some period of time, I've been getting away with stuff I shouldn't have been, because really I am a shtick.*

P: You can extend that to this notion that you figure out that you must have deserved it. You don't have to do it that way, because remember that that degradation ceremony was only a paradigm case, and in a case where you don't have a community, you don't need all of the features of that. And "never really being one of us", you see, requires the community.

Q: *I remember clients going back, really searching hard back into their past for examples of, "Yeah, even back there I was like I am now. I just never recognized it before."*

P: Yeah. Let me remind you of a principle that I think is operative there, namely, that if a person has a given ID characteristic, his behavior will be an expression of it, *and* his behavior is an expression of it that requires no explanation. But if his behavior violates it, then *that* requires an explanation. And that's why, in a situation like this, you may make the whole thing come out even by changing your account of your ID characteristics, and that would amount to saying, "I really was this way all along; it just now showed."

Q: *It seems like a curious twist on the degradation ceremony, because I have a client who—although he's not depressed now—for a while, he was considerably depressed, and there were a lot of features, especially in relation to the psycho-motor depression, when he was in high school, and before high school, he was pretty unpopular and his response to that—he was also*

very, very bright—his response to that was to degrade everybody else, to see everyone else as primarily inferior and just being real worthless—people, in essence, are worthless. He gets to college, he gets a little older, and reaches the point where suddenly he wants some affirmation, he wants to enhance his status, or he wants his status confirmed. And there's no one around, because there's no one eligible. So he's got this claim without being able to bring it off to anyone, and that seems to be at least part of the feature of the overall depression, that he couldn't even make his claim good in his own eyes.

P: There, I think, you're on the borderline between depression and a manic state, because if he's affirming in the absence of anybody else to back him up, then that's like being in a manic state. Whereas if he's recognizing that, in fact, he has no one, then he's probably depressed.

Q: *What he's recognizing is that he can't use anyone that he has, and he's not sure that anybody could possibly do it for him. Because of that way of seeing things, he's actually in terms of behavior tried to get recognition, he's botched it so badly that it's been a further confirmation of both his worthlessness and theirs.*

P: There you're dealing with the knowledge versus fact. It's been the case all along that he had nobody, but he may not be depressed because he doesn't think of it. When he realizes that he has nobody, then that's like recognizing the loss. Then you get the depression.

Q: *But in relation to this murderous impulse, this guy wanting to kill himself—he's actually wanted to kill other people because he's seen them as the source of his depression.*

Q: *The only way that I can figure out that anger would tie into that—you seem to have two kinds of anger. One is the anger that results in suicide, which seems to be carrying the degradation ceremony—*

P: That's not anger. It's still condemnation. You might say, condemnation and execution. The hangman isn't angry at the man he hangs. He simply performs his function as the agent of society and carries out the sentence. Remember, I said: with degradation, the ultimate is "no remaining eligibility", and that means either that you expel the person, or you put him to death.

Q: *Okay, then the other part of anger, anger that gets directed outward, would that be an attempt to re-establish a higher status?*

P: No. It's a way of affirming status, not an attempt to.

Q: *A way of affirming—all I can think of is in terms of higher and lower—a higher status than at the bottom of the depression. "I'm not that bad. I'm only this bad, and I'm going to prove it."*

P: Not so much "I'm going to prove it". It's not that self-conscious. It's more a case of acting on status that he had all along, but wasn't using because he was tied into doing the degradation ceremony.

Q: *Prove it by demonstration—*

P: Not prove it.

Q: *Demonstrate it.*

P: Not even demonstrate it. As I say, you don't want to make this too self-conscious. Simply: he has the status; when it comes into play is when he stops being all caught up with this. Then he simply exercises the status that he has without trying to do it. He just does. No more than you try to distort when you distort.

Q: *Notice the correlation—frustration/guilt, frustration/aggression hypothesis. You might get not all, but at least some of the possibilities of the anger out of the fact that when the character either discovers or begins to act on relations that haven't been successfully degraded, and then either begins to recognize his total status or begins to act on a wide range of his status, he now has good reasons to be very angry, because he's been frustrated on acting on his potential relations in the past, while the ceremony was in effect.*

P: I think it's more all along, and particularly in connection with loss. Let me go into some detail there.

One of the interesting things that had to go along with this analysis, to make it come out even, is this: consider this loss, and then consider two possibilities: [blackboard]—that the loss is something you were responsible for, that was your fault, and so you deserved it; or that it wasn't, and so you didn't deserve it. The prediction that we made was in this case

[deserved], you would not get depression. What you would get is—surprise! That where you did have guilt, that was precisely the case where you wouldn't have a depression. That where you deserved it, indeed, you would see yourself as having done something wrong, and would be guilty, you would have these feelings [remorse, regret], and you would be motivated to do penance or make restitution.

Q: *What if you feel guilty, without seeing your way about making penance and restitution?*

P: There's always a way of doing the one or the other. Always.

Q: *How did we bring guilt in this?*

P: By introducing these two cases, where the loss is either deserved or undeserved. Where it's deserved, you've done something wrong, so you're guilty. And you feel guilt and remorseful, regretful. But then you do these, and you are not depressed.

Q: *Well, you're not depressed for two reasons. One is that you don't have any more psychomotor retardation, you're actually doing things. You're repenting and—*

P: Yeah, but the whole pattern is not one that leads to depression. It doesn't have the essential ingredients. Well, there's certainly a twist, that in contrast to the traditional explanation that says that guilt is the prime dynamic for depression, from here you get the conclusion that when you have guilt, you will not have depression. On the contrary, you'll have it in this case where the loss is undeserved. What would you expect in this case, where the loss is undeserved? What kind of redescription can we give to that state of affairs?

Q: *To parallel the remorse and regret?*

P: Yes. Or just start from here and say, "Okay, suppose you had this tremendously significant loss. It wasn't your fault at all. What's your reaction?"

Q: *Anger.*

P: Why anger?

Q: *Undeserved wrong.*

P: Okay, but what's the object of the anger?

Q: *The world.*

P: That's right. You see, in that case you don't have anybody to be angry at—unless you do, in which case you get revenge and you don't get depressed. If you can identify who done you wrong, you're going to be out after revenge and you won't be depressed. But in the case where you lose your hand in a sheer accident, it was nobody's fault; or where your wife, father, mother, son, husband, etc., die and it's nobody's fault, what do you do? You can't blame anybody. On the other hand, *you* didn't do anything to deserve it, so you might say that the world has let you down.

Q: *What about Shirley?*

P: Never mind Shirley!

Q: *I mean, that fits right in with the guilt they said she felt—or Shirley said she felt—*

P: Or didn't feel.

Q: *—after her father died and her not having seen him during his illness, and all this sort of thing.*

P: We'll get to Shirley soon enough. Let's see how some of these ingredients are applicable to some of the things in that case. [blackboard]

Q: *In addition to or instead of being angry at the world, would you just think that the whole world was an unpredictable place, and dangerous?*

P: No. If you did that, you'd simply be unhappy, but not depressed. You'd be scared, unhappy, wary, suspicious, but not specifically depressed.

Q: *So those are alternatives to depression when you have a loss, it sounds like.*

P: Yeah, except that that one doesn't occur—I don't think I've ever encountered that kind of reaction there. It's a possible one—

Q: *### psychotic depression with its distortion of reality?*

P: You'd have to describe a case, because there's a number of possibilities. Psychotic depression is when it's going to have to be this, or you wouldn't call it psychotic, I think. Just bad thinking here, I don't think—it would have to be pretty bad to call it psychotic in the absence of this. You'd call it an agitated depression, or schizoaffective reaction, or something else, to take account of the fact that one of the primary features of depression is there. That's one of the problems of diagnostic categories: you get these in-between cases, and then you have to start using all of these qualifiers: "A primary something with an overlay of something, and some expressions of X, and with a little bit of Y".

Q: *When they talk about psychotic depression, how would that fit there? What would be the special features of that?*

P: Well, look. Remember the definition of pathology: "a significant restriction in one's ability to engage in intentional action". It translates directly into "a significant restriction of one's behavior potential". So given a significant enough loss, you'd have a significant enough loss here, and that is pathology, and then all you've got to do is quantify it. The greater the loss, the more out of contact you are because of your limited ability to participate. And by definition, at the extreme you'll have a pathological state.

Q: *The features about the psychotic depression, though, are something along the lines that he didn't respond to the usual sorts of therapy intervention that the other one would; and whereas you may find somebody who is just lying in bed and not coming out of his house for weeks, and then you intervene and then he starts snapping out of it, with a psychotic, he doesn't. What's the difference?*

P: The difference in the effectiveness of therapy is the difference in your access—you, the therapist—your access to the client. If he's screening you out, then nothing you do is going to get through, and so it won't have its targeted effect. And if he's that much out of contact with reality, you're going to be just as unreal as everything else, and so your efforts indeed will not be effective.

Q: *Flamboyant efforts are sometimes of some use in this particular case, because one of the things that I've seen sometimes is that especially in a really*

great loss and the person is incredibly depressed, the problem initially is one of catching the person's attention. Even if, at that point, you've got sort of a delusional set of the person's being really weird, you can still get that, you can still participate for a while. But the problem can be of catching their attention.

P: Yeah, and one way of doing it is something akin to a hypnotic induction, namely, use Move 2's. That's, I think, essentially what I developed as the confrontive therapy, is to use Move 2's, and that was to establish the connection.

Q: *If someone's angry at the whole world, why not just express the anger at the whole world, instead of becoming depressed?*

P: How does one express anger at the whole world? If I'm angry at him, I can hit him, kick him, do things to him, but if I'm angry at the whole world—

Q: *You can hit some of its parts. For instance, you can take everybody you're in contact with, you're angry at them, you're angry at chairs, the whole thing.*

P: I know, but how do you express it?

Q: *How do people express anger? Let's start there.*

P: Well, how do they?

Q: *Yell, scream.*

P: Bite, shoot, destroy, avoid—there's all kinds of ways you can express anger, depending on the situation.

Q: *So why doesn't the person take that scheme—*

P: Because he has no target.

Q: *Get them one at a time.*

P: I can stick my tongue out—you get that in schizophrenia. Part of the ### is something called “world-destruction fantasies” and you often get it in dreams or fantasies of schizophrenics, and the paradigm case is that you're up on a hill, the whole world is there, and you've got a machine gun, and you just mow them all down. [laughter] Well, you can see there's a

problem, and the problem for the guy who's mad at the world is that there really isn't any good way to express it. At least there's no obvious way to express it, the way you can express anger toward even an institution, but certainly toward a person. And it's partly because there is no way of expressing it that you get, again, the loss of behavior potential. Consider the resemblance to a panic state, where the lion walks in the room, and we're up on the tenth story and there's no other way out. We have this strong motivation. The motivation takes priority over every other motivation, so we're not going to act on any other motivation, but we can't act on this one. We're immobilized.

Q: *Except that you can do the equivalent of jumping out the window or turning around and walking out.*

P: Would you? How many people would simply, calmly walk off when there's a lion right there?

Q: *In this case, you're angry at the world—*

P: You can't walk off because it's always there. You can't turn your back on it because it's always in front of you, too.

Q: *If you turn your back on it, you aren't depressed.*

P: Like I say, it's always in front of you, too. You can't turn your back on it.

Q: *You move your representation.*

P: Well, okay, you can see what a drastic solution that is, and it stems from the fact that there is no obvious, overt way conventionally to express anger at the whole world. That's why it's so very unsatisfactory a state to be in. It's frustrating, and you lose behavior potential. And the model of panic is a good one for why you lose behavior potential when you've got this one strong motivation that overrides everything else, and you can't act on it. [change tape] That's as close as you can come to being in an impossible position: you lose all behavior potential.

Now recall that at the end of the hour last time, I remember that this is what I did say, a good therapeutic policy is to use anger interpretations rather than fear interpretations wherever possible. And then I

pointed out that you can always do that, because escape from danger is always a case of avoiding something, but any case of avoiding something can be redescribed as rejecting it. Therefore any case of danger and escape can be redescribed as provocation and hostility. If you think then of avoidance and rejection as an expression of hostility, and then you look down here again and you remember this guy sitting in the corner, you say, “Aha, what do you know—this guy *is* expressing anger at the whole world.” He’s portraying very graphically the picture of somebody that doesn’t want a goddamned thing to do with any part of it. That’s why he’s sitting there doing nothing, paying no attention to it, and not letting any of it get through. It’s the rejection. And in that respect, it’s the equivalent of the world-destruction fantasy. He can destroy the world by shutting his eyes and just not having anything to do with it. And that’s about as much as is available to a person who is in that fix. But it is a way of expressing the anger. It is a way of rejecting the whole world, and overtly being—

Q: *It strikes me that it might be possible to have a character who is getting more and more angry at more and more things. As he’s angry at say, a third of his world, he’s got two-thirds of his world he can act on, and he can still find targets. So you might find that as his anger increases, he becomes angrier and angrier and angrier, then you have a qualitative leap where he’s no longer angry but depressed, because he’s reached the point where that anger has no possible effectiveness.*

P: That’s the inverse of this. That’s going down, and this is what happens going up.

Now the Move 2 that I had in mind was simply telling the person, straight, explicit, direct, that he’s mad at the world, has every reason to be, and is showing it very effectively and successfully. If you think of that as a Move 2, what it amounts to is an accreditation ceremony. And that’s why, even though it’s confrontive in style, it’s supportive in substance, and why it could be expected to produce some therapeutic effect. Furthermore, given this accreditation ceremony which says, “You’re angry, and you’re showing it, and you have every reason to,” lo and behold, after some amount of that, you’re seeing anger in a more individualized way, in a more explicit, a more self-aware, deliberate way. Because the person is then exercising the status

either that he had all along or that you gave him as a therapist by telling him that that's what's going on. So you may have just put him in touch with the status he already had, or you may have given it to him by this ceremony. Either way, you can expect this [3 – anger on up curve].

Q: *Isn't there the possibility or the probability that the person will just take that behavior for the other behavior, and then he'll turn into chronic anger, go through life just being angry, and finally he's reach the retardation, and now he has another way of—*

P: Again, the fact is: he has you, and his relation to you is not one of anger, so you're not dealing with a pure anger syndrome. You're dealing with an accreditation that legitimizes expressions of anger of various sorts. Now to strengthen the effect, you can tell the person that he can expect this [3] as he gets better, that he's not going to continue expressing his anger this way, in general, because he's not going to continue to be mad at the whole world indefinitely. As time goes on, he's going to be angry more at specific things and is going to pick his targets more, and he can expect that this will happen, and lo and behold, he finds it happening.

Q: *Isn't that one of the times when he takes the therapist as one of the objects of his anger?*

P: Sometimes, but usually not. Usually, there's plenty of other targets, and the therapist is a good contrast to them, and so the therapist kinda gets away for free. There is that possibility, and it's against that possibility that in that sheet [see Appendix III], the two primary principles for the therapist are to legitimize and be on the client's side. If it comes through to the client that you're on his side, he will not in general be angry at you when he has all kinds of other people to be angry at. The explanation that you've got, "You're mad as hell at the whole world, you've got good reason to be, and you're showing it successfully"—that is a case of legitimization. Because you're showing him what sense he makes. And that, in itself, is an accreditation.

Q: *A variation on Move 2, which you do as a matter of course anyway, is to simply explicate the person's situation. I remember one case where the girl lost her husband, and during that period of time, when she went home,*

she found she couldn't walk, she had to be almost carried at home, she came into the office just kind of rocky, she couldn't work, she said she couldn't think. And so what we did after about two weeks, when we finally got contact with her, was to explain pretty much this formulation and then ask this question, "What reason would you have to walk?"—because every time she went home, she was treated as a child, and everything was done for her. There was nothing for her to do. So after making the situation of retardation clear, I asked her to predict other situations that were like that in which that would occur. Here she becomes an active agent, and by doing that, she's in a position where she can't shy from the responsibility of knowing that's the way it works. So she's upped her status, because now she can confront her mother, or confront tasks the significance of which was purely her husband's before, or in which she lost her status because of her mother.

P: The only way she could avoid that is by disqualifying you, but that's what's going on with the psychotic who—you're already disqualified, and you can't get through with moves like that.

Q: *From the initial description, all these classic symptoms, yet making perfectly clear what was happening to her was enough, with the proviso that it was now time to develop intrinsic practices, practices that couldn't be taken away by losing a significant other. And that seemed, in a way, to complete the process of her getting better, was her beginning to focus on things that she could do for herself rather than just somebody she was likely to lose. She had a whole history of activities that weren't meaningful for her, but were done because they were meaningful to someone else.*

P: It's in things like that that it's crucial whether the person really has lost all of that potential and is merely recognizing it; or whether they're exaggerating and really have more than they think they have. Remember, we discussed this in our first session, on the issue of your thinking that you have less behavior potential than you in fact have, and in what sense do you really have it, and in what sense do you really not. This would be a case in point, and so giving interpretations like that would call to the person's attention that she really had behavior potential that she hadn't realized, and that she wasn't using. And that's in contrast to if she really had lost it. Then

the insight interpretation wouldn't help, because she really would still be down there.

Q: *Another thing we could have done would have been to look at the games that were involved in her not being able to walk at home, which was probably a way of being angry at her father and mother. Instead of building on that, build on the case in which she wasn't doing that, but use that to make sense of the rest of the case—that the significance was taken away.*

P: It pays to keep in mind with any reconstruction of pathology that there's always the issue of secondary gain, elaborations, further consequences, long-term consequences, that are always going to be present in a particular case. You never have just the pure dynamics directly expressed.

What about the case where there really is a significant loss, and the person is angry, but really has lost most of the behavior potential? What you get there is a growth principle. Remember, last time we were using the Developmental Schema of saying "if you have some ID characteristics, you act on those, and that gets you more." The same goes for status. If you have some status, enough to act on, your acting on that status, if it's low relative to the norm, will get you more; because from the other end, you are already eligible; you simply have to reach the point of accepting it. So, in effect, the red carpet is there, and that's why exercising the status you have will get you more. It's not as though anybody were resisting; it's not as though the opportunities weren't there. So expressing the anger is acting on the status that remains. That's what's left over of the person after the loss. The anger expresses the status, the behavior potential, that remains. So expressing the anger is a case of acting on the status you have, and therefore, in doing that, you gain additional status, you gain additional characteristics. You gain additional knowledge that you can act on. So, in effect, you recapitulate the normal course of socialization and development, where as an infant, you start out with very little status and very little behavior potential; but simply by using it in normal contacts, you acquire more, until you reach a normal adult level.

So the same thing happens here, except it happens much more rapidly because you are dealing with a person—although he has lost the behavior potential, he has not lost a whole lot of the powers, dispositions,

attitudes, interests, etc. So it's not like having to start with an infant and taking years and years. It's having a lot of the ingredients and then being able to do it fast.

Q: *Part of what you said had to do with anger increasing your behavior potential.*

P: Recall our reconstruction last time of displaced anger. You'll see that this essentially fits that paradigm, too. Displaced anger is a rejection of an attempted degradation. And if you do that successfully, you will have successfully resisted the degradation, so you wind up even. Here, the expression of anger is a response to degradation, but by the self-affirming aspects of it, you move up and regain status and behavior potential.

Q: *Does this reconstruction account for the fact of the suicide at the time of the increase in behavior potential?*

P: Let me deal with a couple of other things first. Just as, last time, when it came to the contrast between the status dynamic formulation and the psychoanalytic, we said that the status dynamic formulation can account for the instances, and particularly the ones that the psychoanalytic one can't, namely: where you find out that it wasn't a provocation at all, it wasn't an attempted degradation, and then you don't have anything that you still have to discharge. Simply, the thing disappears. Here, there's two cases. I think the psychoanalytic theory loses a lot of its plausibility, even though you can still fudge it, I think. One is where you don't have any visible, significant loss. Where there isn't one of these dramatic losses, you can still get a depression. Now you can see that in the status dynamic formulation, there is nothing that says that the status loss has got to either occur all at once or be sudden. It can be whittled away, and only when you re-evaluate, when you realize how much you've lost, then you get depressed. But the actual loss may take place gradually over time, so that for an Observer, there is nothing dramatically in your life to account for how come you suddenly got depressed.

Q: *It seems to me dangerous to attack psychoanalytic arguments this way, because within the psychoanalytic possibilities are two other ways of getting this depression without loss. One is to have an overly strict superego*

that's always present or is exacerbated by certain choices the person might be making that requires an energetic boundary, something to protect itself. The other would be extreme depression, such that there's no energy in the ego to—

P: Yeah, like I say, you can fudge it, but it loses plausibility when you have to go that ad hoc, as compared with a formulation that simply, directly allows for those possibilities.

Q: *The reason that's given is that the superego notion can be empirically worked, the way the psychoanalysts do, by showing that in childhood there were such-and-such frustrations, and it seems to me the way you attack psychoanalysis is the way you do primarily by the descriptive system, by showing what's wrong with mechanical language, and why the superego is the kind of concept that you don't need to account for—*

P: You could do it both ways. As a clinician, it's a significant defect if a theory requires you to formulate something extremely complicated and ad hoc. Then it becomes a disadvantage. Then the machinery is there, but so much machinery gets in the way.

Q: *The analysts would argue that that would be the mark of a good personality theory, is that in using this complicated machinery, I can explain everything.*

P: Remember, I said “ad hoc”.

Q: *Ad hoc, fine, but it seems to me that still the primary, logical criticism is the fact that he's using the word “machinery” rather than complexity.*

P: Yeah, but the practical difficulty is that it's too complex, and that it really becomes unhandy and a handicap. That, too, is one of the bases for saying “No”: if you have a simpler one that's equally effective, that's better; because even though you can't show this is false, that way, still it's unhandy. It's not illuminating.

Q: *I can think of a case where somebody would say that they deserved the misfortunes that befell upon them, but would already be depressed before they'd say that.*

P: It's easy enough, once you are depressed, to assimilate further losses.

Q: *Those would not qualify as those over on the left, on the deserved misfortunes. Because these here are depressed.*

P: Now the other case where the psychoanalytic theory loses plausibility is involuntal depression. Why would the loss of the ability to bear children generate guilt? Why would it intersect with a punitive superego? There's very little in the theory to make that plausible, yet that's what you'd have to say there, too. You would have to suppose that all kinds of women have these tremendously punitive superegos, even if there were not any particular sign of it beforehand.


Q: *You wonder how women become depressed, because as we all know, women don't get superegos in psychoanalytic formulations except by going through very severe gyrations. [laughter]*

P: Okay, that would be a secondary difficulty. But again, [laughter] notice how simply and directly that fits the status loss and the significance of it, for somebody whose identification as a woman depends heavily on the fact that being a woman, you can bear children. To lose that can easily come through as that kind of loss, that kind of loss of behavior potential; therefore, depression.

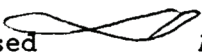
Now let me come back to the up curve, anger, and suicide. Here, recall the Perpetrator [blackboard—see diagram p. 6], the Denouncer, and the Witness. And there, what we said is that the Denouncer and Witness act as representatives of the community, in the sense that to be those, they have to be in good standing, and they're acting in the interests of the community and not in their personal interest. From that, you can generate the follow-through, namely, as members of community with respect to the perpetrator who has been degraded, they are committed to prosecuting, to executing, the degradation. They're committed to treating him as a degraded person—which is to say, to treat him as he deserves. Now, when you add this into the mix and put them all in the same person, you have a phenomenon that is represented here by #7a on your list of Images: "You can't kill yourself by holding your breath." And the reason you can't is that the logic of this is self-limiting, that the more you succeed in holding your breath, the more you lose your ability to continue to hold your breath, and at some point there's a crossover where you've lost

so much ability to hold it that you don't succeed in doing it; and therefore, you come back out of it again. And so you can never push that to the limit. You can't kill yourself by holding your breath.

The same goes with degradation. You can't degrade yourself to zero, because to do the degrading, you have to have some status. You have to be a member in good standing in order to be the Denouncer and the Witness. Or the Executioner. So this has the same kind of self-limiting structure as "you can't kill yourself by holding your breath". Just to set up a neat parallel, consider depression [blackboard]—that in the case of holding your breath, you go back and forth. You start consciously to hold your breath; that takes you down here to where you're unconscious. Once you're there, you stop holding your breath, because you no longer meet the conditions for being able to. Since you've stopped holding your breath, you've started breathing, and so you become conscious again, and that's the nature of the cycle. You go from one to the other. And the cycle itself will not let you

Unconscious  Conscious

push it to the extreme.

Depressed  Angry

You get the same kind of picture when you have status as Denouncer, and you denounce yourself and treat yourself accordingly, so that you are degraded, you've lost status, then you're depressed. But the more depressed you are, the more you don't have enough status to do any degrading. So you stop degrading, and you're here. You start acting on what status you have, and you move back up. You have a hysteresis curve ###.

Q: *Why must you swing back and forth? Just because when you hold your breath, you swing back and forth?*

P: I didn't say "because". I said, "This works the way that works," not "It works this way because this works this way." Now, no matter how depressed or how un-depressed you are, you are still all three. The difference between these two states is which of these takes priority. When you're depressed, the Perpetrator takes priority; when you're angry, the Denouncer/Witness/Executioner takes priority. Because you're affirming your status,

which is what a Denouncer would be doing; whereas here, you're recognizing that you don't have status. So depending on which of these is taking priority, you are either here or here. Executioner is angry; Perpetrator is depressed. As a Perpetrator, you are degraded, you are without behavior potential, you are depressed. As Denouncer/Witness/Executioner, you are treating this degraded person in the way he deserves to be treated, and you are affirming your standing, and you are angry, and that is an affirmation.

Q: *It strikes me that maybe you could have the balance that is talking about, in so far as you could have somebody who is depressed, and who is constantly putting themselves down, and it's not till you point out that they are in that role that they no longer see themselves as flat on their back but rather as executioners.*

P: That's like balancing the pencil on the point. In principle, you can do it; but in practice, it's going to be so unstable that you never, in fact, do that.

Q: *Okay, so the person, when he's phenomenologically depressed, he's just the Perpetrator, but—*

P: Not "just". I said it's a matter of predominance, priority. He is always all of those. He has to be.

Q: *Including he could be angry and depressed?*

P: Yeah. In the up curve, he's expressing anger because he's still depressed. At the time, when he starts expressing anger, he is still depressed. So what you get is a crossover between predominance of this and a predominance of this. Now, if the crossover point occurs at the right place, what you have is an Executioner who has enough status to execute; and the Perpetrator has a low enough status to deserve it; and that's when you get an acting out. Now that's an unstable point. That's why the danger does not last indefinitely, because you pass that point in a dynamic curve that takes you from one to the other. And as a therapist, you try to see to it that the person goes through that point as fast as possible, is never in danger because he has high enough status—that's part of the accreditation. The strong, confrontive move at the outset is to give him enough status boost that he is never low enough as a Perpetrator to deserve literally execution.

So when he comes out of it, he's not really in that danger; or if he is that low and is coming out of it, you take special measures at that time to try to get him through it fast. Again, that calls for strong moves, not sitting around waiting, making weak moves, figuring that sometime it's going to happen.

Q: *I think this could serve as at least a part of a rationale for the usefulness of professionalism—the usefulness of almost an elitism within the profession, because as a therapist [laughter]—I'm not buying this case; I'm just building it— if the therapist has a high status or has a very high status in the patient's eyes, and the patient can successfully fight with that person, he's increased his status considerably over what would happen if some schmo down the block got an argument he won.*

P: Yeah. That is an argument. There's no question that sometimes it helps to have status. And remember, that's by definition, that if you have more status, you have more behavior potential than if you have less. This is a case in point of what behavior potential you can have with more status rather than less. You can make moves like this and expect them to succeed—where they wouldn't succeed for somebody who had low status. So it fits directly.

From that picture, you generate this very interesting, but also potentially traumatic, clinical feature that when the person starts recovering is when the danger of suicide is greatest, and particularly when he is starting to express anger. Because that's where the crossover point here appears to be. Now the fact that it's down there, I think, is empirical. There's no way to derive that it had to be way down below rather than pretty high. In fact, you might find a case where it was pretty high. Because what you're dealing with is a relative balance here, not an absolute level of status. So you could conceivably get that cross-over point at any level of status and degradation. But in fact, it appears that it most often happens at a fairly low point. As I say, that's the prime rationale for confronting, for making strong moves rather than weak ones, and for doing things that stylistically look confrontive rather than look supportive, but in fact, given this rationale, are supportive.

Q: *In the degradation ceremony, there are two outcomes if it's successful. One is killing, and one is expelling.*

P: That's the extreme—not if it's successful. With success, you have a limited eligibility to participate, and it's just the limiting case where you have no eligibility, and that's either expulsion or death. Or ceremonial sacrifice, where at least you can do that for them.

Q: *Although they might not appreciate it. It struck me that extreme depression might be like expulsion.*

P: Yeah, or like total rejection of the world.

Q: *But in terms of this, like total rejection of the Perpetrator. If it's a perfect parallel, what's the community, and what is the community that this one person is a member of?*

P: Probably the world. Since he's mad at the world, that's included in the community that's let him down. But remember, the world includes all the people in it.

Q: *So it's not clear whether he's expelling the world or expelling himself from the world.*

P: What's the difference? Shutting your eyes is a way of wiping out the world, but you could equally well call it yourself escaping from the world.

Q: *In that sense it's not clear whether the world is being condemned, or you're being condemned, just as in some of the other cases—*

P: I know, but that's exactly the paradox that you find here, between the self-condemnation and the anger. Indeed, it isn't clear, and it isn't the case that just one of those—

Q: *There is condemnation, and there is anger, but it's not—it would be in exercising—*

P: But that's what's represented here. Those are exactly those ingredients, and that's why this provides a reconstruction. It isn't just one or the other, it's a particular pattern involving all of these things. You see, it takes that elaborate a pattern to really do a job on these, on this, and a few of the odds and ends. There's no simple pattern that will catch it all and catch it neatly. And the status degradation reconstruction is not ad hoc. It's not something constructed specifically to account for depression. It's simply

the application of these general principles. You put them in a particular pattern—remember, I said solving equations. When you specify certain conditions with those principles, you can generate something pretty specific and usable. Like the conclusion that where you have guilt, you wouldn't have depression. Like this—it's on the up curve. Like the fact that you have both ingredients of condemnation and anger. Like the fact that this doesn't have to happen suddenly, and that it includes cases like involuntional depression.

Q: *This formulation has another advantage over psychoanalysis: it involves all the research that's been designed to show the anger inward/anger outward, given the total reservoir of anger, which turned out zero or with effects in the wrong direction. This here, that's no bother.*

P: That's right. Again, you see, this is all formula. This is not a case description, this is not arrived at inductively. You do not have to have 30 years of clinical experience to generate these things, because you're working with formulas, and you're making formal moves. Now it does take clinical experience to check on it and to say that this is what you find on observation, or to make statements like, "In fact, it does appear that the crossover point is at a low level of status,"—it takes experience to do that. But to generate the pattern—no. It's a purely formal approach. And as I say, it's not ad hoc. It's some fairly simple general principles, that if you know how to put them together, and you're in a psychologist's head which is that you're trying to understand people and some of the things that happen, you can work it to some good effect.

In the case of Shirley (and maybe we can do Shirley next time), you get the opposite approach, where you're dealing with an actual case, and you've got to account for what happens there, whether or not it fits some of your general principles. If it doesn't fit this, you have to bring in others in addition and put that all together. So these are very different tasks—of reconstructing a form of pathology and the general explanation, the general derivation, versus understanding a particular person who may or may not fit any given pattern that you've constructed. You're approaching the thing from different directions, and that's why I thought that some of these reconstructions *and* a case analysis would be good triangulation for how some of these status notions work.

Q: *When you gave the psychoanalytic formulation over there, and Steve suggested that one of the things that you could do to be helpful in that formulation is to become a significant other by being supportive, and you said you didn't need that whole formulation just to figure that one out. Then suppose we look at number three, and we see that "anger up curve". How about just making him angry or treating him as angry and bring him up that way as a way to—*

P: You might, but that would be sort of counter-intuitive. That would be like trying to increase a person's intelligence by teaching him the answers on the similarity sub-test of the WAIS. If you see this as a symptom of an underlying pathology, then you're not going to cure the pathology by making moves here. You'll probably just disguise it or something of the sort. So although it doesn't hinge on the Freudian analysis, it does hinge on the medical model that says there's an underlying cause, and this is a symptom, and you won't cure the thing by glossing over the symptom.

Q: *The behavior would be the same that was reached by this way, and ### is angry and showing that he's angry, and make him express that anger.*

P: Yeah, but the point is not to have him express the anger but to have him increase his status. It just happens that given that pattern, to increase his status, the vehicle is the expression of the anger. But notice how that resembles that there is an underlying something of which this is an expression. Except that, you see, when you have logical reconstructions rather than process—these invisible process ones, the logic does not underlie the behavior. The logic is the form of the behavior, so you don't really have a medical model even though you could put it that way. You can even say the logic overlays behavior.

Q: *Behavior is the form of the logic.*

P: Logic is the form of behavior. Anyhow, you can see that some of that you could get if you were simply counteracting the visible symptoms, but you wouldn't do that if you thought of an underlying cause; and secondly, some of this you wouldn't need to think of. Well, how about preparing the case of Shirley next time? and if we can't find anything more illuminating to talk about, we'll get into that then.

Session 5

February 17, 1976

Depression and the dimension of dislocation disorientation, and status loss; Analysis of case of Shirley.

PGO: First, do we have any carry-over from last time? You recall we went through some patterns, and developed a fairly extensive pattern for thinking about depressions, what goes on in depression, and why it goes the way it goes, etc. Any further discussion along those lines?

Q: [about the surprise element]

P: I think there's something in it. At the same time, you remember we have cases of depression where nothing dramatic happens, but after the depression occurs, you can trace back that things have been going to pot gradually, and then I think what you have is a sudden realization, and so it's—there is something sudden there.

Q: *And the realization is something you wouldn't have anticipated or you didn't see coming, or it doesn't have a longitudinal nature to it.*

Q: *Like graduation. Most people know they're going to graduate, and when they do, they're depressed.*

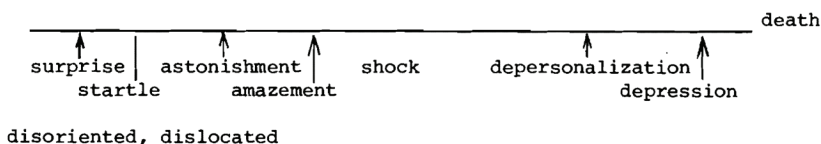
Q: *That's existential emptiness.*

P: That's right—people don't believe it. That's why it comes as a surprise when it happens.

Q: *It's status loss, isn't it? Yesterday you were a somebody, today you're a nobody—when you graduate.*

P: You climb to the top of the ladder, and then all of a sudden you find that you're starting at the bottom of another ladder. It's a status loss.

Let me draw [blackboard]



What would you call this dimension [the line], characterized by these on the low [left] end, and these on the high [right] end?

Q: *It might have to do with the speed with which things happen.*

Q: *It's a continuum of status loss and reaction to it?*

P: Status change—but there's all kinds of status change. Do all status changes fall somewhere along here? Or are they off on another dimension? Think of these as reactions to bad news, for example. Certainly bad news is a case of status change, specifically status loss. But then consider the fact that all of these can be reactions to good news, at least up to this point [depersonalization]. I'm not sure about depression as a reaction to good news, but think of depression as a result of graduation, and that might come as close as anything. If you took those two to be the major cases, namely, these are reactions to either good news or bad news, does that suggest the nature of the dimension?

Q: *about children who are disoriented.* [blackboard]

Q: *In some sense it's a state, how much you're buying into it? If you're talking about reactions to news, presumably you believe the news, or you don't have any of these reactions.*

Q: *What's at stake?*

P: That's why these terms [disoriented, dislocated] are good neutral terms for that, because they apply equally to good news and bad news.

Q: *All these imply something out there that is not incorporated.*

P: Yeah. Again, that's why—

Q: *There's also how much of you is involved.*

P: But that also can be connected here—the more you're dislocated, the more of you was involved in whatever the news was.

Q: *That's like more of you was dislocated.*

P: Yeah. Well, this is a little more general than status loss, because as I say, if you get good news, you can imagine yourself getting dislocated. For example, if you just won the Irish Sweepstakes, that's plenty dislocation, and you might indeed walk around depersonalized for a while.

Using concepts like this, there's a hypothesis abroad in the land that says, "Any change is stressful, and the greater the change, the greater the stress; and it doesn't matter whether it's a change for the better or the worse; it's simply the sheer amount of change that's important." And within some limits, there's evidence for that; and part of it is the fact that you can get this with good news, that it isn't just bad news that does it—it's the degree of change that's involved. What isn't obvious is that it's always stress. But if you have, again, a suitably non-committal notion of stress—for example, that stress simply consists in the amount of re-working of the world that you have to engage in, then the connection between amount of dislocation and amount of stress would be tautological. And also think in terms of recovery time, that mostly you recover from these states [on the left] more quickly and these states [on the right] less quickly, except for this [death] which is relatively permanent.

Q: *That continuum also applies to events like accidents, which have that quality.*

P: Oh, that's right. This [blackboard—he adds "shock"]—a common reaction to accidents is shock. Just plug that in somewhere in between.

Q: *Then all of those would be understandable reactions to an accident, too?*

P: Yeah. Okay, now, given that survey, you can see in what sense this represents a status loss, because whether it's good news or bad news, you're not prepared to cope with the world as it now is, given that change. So if you're not prepared to cope with being a millionaire, winning the Irish Sweepstakes is a status loss, because once you find out, you also can't operate the way you did before you won. So you have a net loss there, and it may be temporary, but it's there. It's basically the dislocation which creates the problem of acting. So long as you're dislocated, your behavior potential is limited. From there on out, it bifurcates depending on whether it's good news or bad news, because normally bad news is a more permanent status loss, whereas good news eventually comes out a gain. But right at the time you get the news, it's loss. Eventually it's a status gain, that's why it's good news. But your adjustment to it lags behind the facts, you might say, so at the time you get it, it's a big change, and you haven't yet adjusted, and so you've lost. Because once you get the news, you can't just keep operating the way you were, either, so you're caught betwixt and between. That's why the post-PhD depressions don't last more than a year [laughter].

Okay, now this will give us an elaboration of Joe's notion that there is something of a surprise here that's at work with depression, with status loss. You can see why, if it comes gradually and is foreseeable, the change is already thinkable at the time you first foresee it. As it approaches, you're already preparing for what your potential will be there, so that by the time it gets there, you're simply fitting right in. So you can expect that the maximum impact is where it comes suddenly, either the realization or the fact.

Q: *If you're seeing it come on gradually, how can depression just come on?*

P: No, you see the status loss coming on gradually, and you start adjusting to the endpoint, so that by the time it gets there, it may be painful, you may be unhappy, etc., but you're not depressed. For example, a loss of a relative: if you know now that somebody has a terminal illness and it's roughly a year, you're already preparing now, you're doing the adjusting now so that when the year comes, it may be just as grief-ridden, but it's different from if they just suddenly died, you went into shock, and maybe got depressed.

Q: *In change of status, as far as depression goes, what's the limit? [Peter points to the diagram, the word death]*

Q: *That's what you're anticipating and that's what you're preparing yourself for?*

P: Yeah. As a matter of fact, there's a real neat but grisly example of the connection between this and that—I heard some really astounding figures about people in nursing homes, and the home in question, I think, was located in New York, and they built a new facility and transferred all of the people who were in this geriatric home to another one, and within a month, something like 40% of those people had died. And the explanation was of this sort: that the dislocation was caused by the simple move to better quarters—that was the effect it had. And I've heard informally from people in nursing homes that kind of thing. In fact, I've heard that about people who go into nursing homes, that that change itself can be very destructive, and your life expectancy may change dramatically with the transition from being on the outside to being on the inside.

Q: *When people retire from working at 65, the curve goes up.*

P: Certain things are hard to adjust to.

Q: *You mention a reference in terms of terminal illness—you really see the difference between seeing it coming and its happening suddenly, in the loss of a love relationship, where if you see it falling apart, you can handle that a whole lot better than if all of a sudden—*

P: Because you're already preparing, you're already living like somebody who doesn't have it, at least partially, and the closer you get, the more you're living like somebody who doesn't have that relationship. Your life isn't destroyed, the way it is when it happens suddenly.

Q: *You work lineally toward death, and surprise is certainly a nodal point—just on this graph—and I'm wondering if you can work other elaborations to other directions from surprise. From surprise, there are other motions that seem to progress similarly to that discovery.*

P: I think the connection would be via this one—surprise dislocates you enough to give you something new, and you then explore, and you've

got a discovery, a creation, a something.

Q: *I'm wondering if surprise is logically—is necessarily a behavior—*

P: [at blackboard] The anchor here [left end of the line] is simply being in a rut, being a machine. If your life has no surprises, no dislocations, whatever the description, it's got to be pejorative. One of the values of this is to understand depression as part of a whole larger pattern of possibilities. Another is that in the case of Shirley, we have a case of depersonalization.

Q: *In a conversation in an earlier class, where we were talking about more and less behavior potential, that this kinda gets to that without saying "more" or "less" as to the degree of dislocation, but almost a neutral—it gets away from that quantitative "more or less" dimension.*

P: Well, you still have more or less dislocation. There's some kind of comparative here, and you can say more or less dislocated, more or less disoriented, greater or lesser behavior potential—there's some such notion. But you can say it's a comparative notion, not specifically a numerical or quantitative one.

Q: *Is there a surprise which comes with implicit gain—a recognition of sorts, but it could come as a surprise.*

P: It wouldn't have to be. A gain of that sort would be independent of its being surprising. So you might be surprised at realizing that kind of gain.

Q: *Within the space of time in which we're referring to a loss or gain, it's a formal notion, but the space and time in terms of psychological space becomes incredibly small. A person is surprised, and what he's surprised is something that he recognizes or is, in that recognition, prepared to act on, although he didn't expect this, and that kind of creative act—I'm wondering if that's properly, even momentarily, called a status loss. That's why I'm referring to surprise as a nodal point.*

P: No, it would still be a status loss, because you would only be surprised if you were in some sense not prepared for it. Relative to what you were prepared for, that is a loss, even though it's only momentary.

Q: *So the character that's prepared isn't really surprised.*

P: If what happens is exactly what you expected and are prepared to deal with, you're not surprised at all. Number 1, it would be surprising if that always happened; and number 2, if it did always happen, it wouldn't be good.

Q: *It's a neat discovery—if this character just suddenly getting a surprise, and he knew what to do, and had no familiarity with that—that concept being clear in the action of that surprise.*

P: You can see that the quicker it is, the less it's a human-type problem, that the fact that you recover from the surprise within three seconds means that it's not a serious problem to be surprised—unless you're constantly being surprised. So these here [surprise to amazement] do not appear in our stories about psychopathology, whereas these [depersonalization and depression] do, because it simply is not a problem per se. [change tape] One other thing, thinking of depersonalization and depression: what kind of emotional behavior would be possible, as you go toward this end? Because one of the characteristic things with depersonalization is that you don't have feelings, you don't experience feelings. The description is of being numb, of being ten feet behind yourself just watching your body go through the motions, or things of that sort. So at this end, with this kind of status loss, you also get the inability to engage in emotional behaviors and have emotional experiences.

Q: *I agree that the person can't have emotional experiences because that's definitional, but emotional behaviors, as an Observer watching, sometimes a person will be depersonalized or derealized, which are roughly equivalent states (depending on the element the person is focusing on) and be acting in a violent or a fashion that an Observer would suspect is quite emotional.*

P: As intentional action you can do it. As deliberate action, it would be ruled out by the status loss. So it would be like a decorticate cat that hisses and spits, etc., and in a sense is angry, but...Okay, keep this in mind for the case of Shirley, because one of the things we had at some point in

the case is depersonalization, the surprise that she wasn't feeling any feelings and the reaction of other people at how well she was bearing up and how brave she was being.

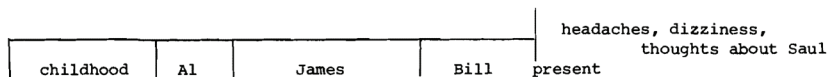
Q: *What's the relation between surprise and amazement, in that continuum? Is there any—*

P: I wouldn't make a big deal of the difference. I think you—if we all did it on our own, half of us would have reversed the order. The main fact is that they're both together down there toward the bottom.

Okay, let's talk about the case of Shirley. The last time, I said having these general patterns is one thing, but not everybody's going to fit that pattern; and even the ones that fit, there'll always be other things going on, and you may have to qualify, modify, etc. So there's a limit if you start out making patterns. The limit is where it applies and how cleanly. Most patterns don't apply everywhere, and where they do apply, most of it is not clean. There are all these other things. As I said, it would be interesting, then, to start from the opposite end, and take a person, and see what it took to understand that person: how many different patterns in what sort of relationship before all of the questions which (at first sight) we wanted answered got answered. So with respect to the case of Shirley, I guess the way to start is to ask, "What needs to be answered here? What do we want to know about Shirley and about James, in order to understand them and what they did?" Now, how many people here have not read the case of Shirley? How many people have the book here? How about passing those around so that those who haven't read it can give it a fast once-over?

Notice that, diagnostically, there is no problem here. If you just look at the first paragraph of the case presentation, Shirley would be diagnosed simply and directly as a case of obsessional thinking, some form of obsessive-compulsive neurosis. So it isn't as though the difficulty we have is in coming up with a diagnosis. It's right there, and it's trivial. The difficulty is in understanding what's going on. We get the thing sort of in reverse order, but that's the way it is with case histories. That is, we pick up Shirley's life at the time when she comes into a clinic, with these thoughts about something bad happening to her young son—I think with some thoughts of her doing something like choking him or stabbing him to death—so

these are the disturbing thoughts that she's having at the time when we first find out about her. Then we get a tracing backward of her history. [black-board] And the major periods are her three marriages.



Q: *She was only married twice. She wasn't married to James—she was just living with him.*

P: Common-law marriage. *De facto* but not *de jure*. So these are the major periods in her life, and the case history is kind of structured... So we pick up down at this end a childhood in which the whole family is special and didn't fit. According to the parents, or at least the father, they were a cut above all of the other people, so Shirley was isolated; they guarded her against contamination by those people, were very careful who they allowed her to play with, careful about where they allowed her to go. So this was the narrow pattern. She also had some bad experiences in getting mixed up with a crowd that was higher up on the social ladder and looked down on her, and she was out of place there. Then she transferred to another group where she was high and was constantly being surprised—maybe startled and amazed—by some of the things they said and did. Finally, when she got to the dating stage, she would have to argue her father into letting her go out, and they used to have a lot of heavy fights before she was able to do that. The way of relating there was that she'd go to sleep until something happened she didn't like, and then she would wake up, and that's how she managed that kind of interaction.

This is crudely a set of things having to do with her early childhood. The remaining thing is her mother, who used to let her do the work and tell her what she was doing wrong and what she'd better do. Her mother was sick constantly, and whenever things got tough, the mother would get sick. So Shirley would wind up doing the dirty work around the house and, one gathers, getting very little recognition for it. She didn't like it, but that's the way the world was, so she went ahead and did it. Now her not liking that combination led her to Al, at a young age (I think it was 16), and he was older, and she married him primarily to get out of that home

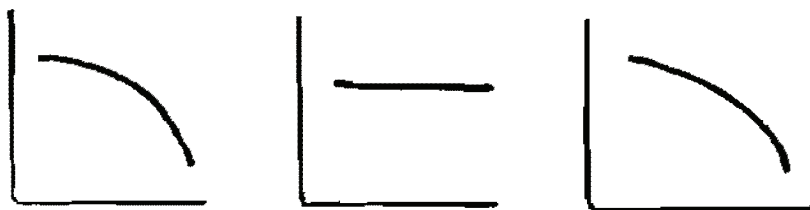
situation. And within a fairly short time, the thing just sort of fell apart, and she latched onto James. James was a significant period in her life, and he is described as a local musician of some repute. So when things went bad with Al, she moved over to James, and they had this peculiar relationship, and it's peculiar in that using ordinary standards, you have to ask why did she stay in that long? Because it was the kind that most people would have walked away from quite early. There's nothing that is described in the case history that indicates that there was something in it for her. What she had was a guy who would make no commitments and made a point of that—no strings attached. She had to work to support both of them. He would go out and have affairs with other women and tell her, "If you want to leave, leave," and when she was sick, told her to get out of the house and do some work. This was characteristic of what went on between them. However, their sexual relation was good. So that's the one plus, there.

Then a traumatic event happened, namely, that James expressed the wish to have either a child or a son, and immediately thereafter she got pregnant. And after that she was able to have some leverage on him and make some demands and have them met. On the occasion in question, they had a big argument because she wanted him to clean out the attic so that they would have a place to keep the baby, and he was refusing, and that was when he told her to go to work. His last words to her were, "Don't be mad at me," and when she came home, there he was in a spotless attic, hanging from the rafters. So this is when she had this episode of depersonalization, reported a slight feeling of relief but mainly no feelings at all, was able to cope with all of the practical details—everybody was amazed at how well she was holding up—and then after a while, met this guy, Bill, who was an attorney for some kind of corporation. They had a stormy relation but finally got married. And it turned out that Bill had a hard time keeping his jobs, and he had changed jobs, I think for about the third time in a year or two, and it was at that time that she started having what you might call "symptoms", among which were: she was very reluctant to ask for anything for herself and felt guilty about asking for anything for herself, but she did want things for the boy. She wanted a better neighborhood, better playmates, better this and that for him, got more and more disillusioned with Bill, so that at the time when he lost his third job, she reports that she

was wondering whether he would ever settle down and be able to support them. It was some time during this period, then, that she started having the thoughts about doing harm to the boy or something bad happening to him.

Also, in terms of the sexual relation, you could graph the quality like this: [blackboard]—that with both Al and Bill, it went down; with James it stayed high.

Q: *Why do you say that depersonalization came at his death?*



P: That comes from the history. That's what she reports, unless I've misread this. Can somebody locate that in the case material?

Q: *She had the depersonalization episode at the funeral. She reported that she recognized she should have felt a great deal of grief and just sort of went through the motions.*

P: That was my recollection—it was in connection with James's death that the major depersonalization occurred. What happened here was that a couple of times she tried to leave and discovered she just couldn't. She recognized that it was a bad situation, resolved to leave, tried it, and found she just couldn't leave him.

Q: *—the image of being on the outside looking in, and when you're describing other people as, "Well, he must be sexually attractive because all these other women find him sexually attractive," and that increases—it seems in some sense depersonalized.*

P: That's a different sense of "depersonalization". That's what you'd normally call "dehumanizing", which is quite different. Dehumanizing is degrading, whereas depersonalization is specifically the loss of affective tone, the loss of the feeling that you're doing things—as I say, one of the

classic descriptions is that you're ten feet behind yourself, watching yourself go through motions, and that you're numb. And that's a specific clinical pattern; whereas being degraded, being dehumanized, being downtrodden, etc., are a different sort of thing. You're right—it was degrading, it was dehumanizing, she was downtrodden, so that's why one of our questions has to be: why didn't she leave? And then in her terms: why was she unable to leave—given that it was that, and that most people, faced with something like that, would walk off.

Q: *Wanting to be abused—having these abuse fantasies—*

P: No. You couldn't explain somebody doing something by just saying, "Well, they like to suffer." There's no such explanation.

Q: *She had this masochistic tendency.*

P: That's what I mean—introducing the word "masochistic" doesn't explain anything. The problem is, why does a person stay with a bad thing, given (1) that they want to leave, and (2) as far as we can see, it really is bad, and they have stronger reasons to leave than otherwise. Why do they stay? And tossing in a notion like "masochistic" is simply a way of saying, "Well, that happens." Putting the label on it doesn't enable us to understand how something of that sort could happen. And you can bet that what we're going to do is redescribe that, because it can't just be that somebody is choosing something worse over something better. It's got to be a different description that does make sense. But that's what set our problem—that on the face of it, here is somebody choosing something worse over something better, and that calls for explanation. And even for Shirley, it called for explanation. She wondered about that. She was amazed. And she couldn't explain it.

Q: *If we could assume that it's possible intrinsically to connect a sense of the sexuality with the sense of punishment, or the appropriateness of punishment, almost an aesthetic balance, that—in order for the person to maintain sexual interest, there has to be a certain amount of degradation or a certain amount of pain in the relationship. From the facts of the childhood, then the facts of sexuality might provide her reasons enough to stay with James. James was the only person—*

P: You could move in that direction, but you will have a hard time explaining how that association could be. It's easy to say, but it's hard to make plausible. Also, you have evidence that it doesn't work that way for her all the time, so it isn't just a simple association of sex with pain.

Q: *Yeah, but Bill was having a hard time dealing with the relationship, too. It was a stronger relationship, so there might have—*

P: But Al wasn't.

Q: *Everything was a bad time before that—Al was the excuse for leaving home— that was exciting, that was—that would provide a reason.*

P: Okay, but you see why it looks awfully ad hoc if you take that—

Q: *These are psychoanalysts writing this case.*

P: I know, that's my point. Part of the history of status dynamic analysis was developing a psychoanalytic type explanation we were thoroughly unsatisfied with; that you can make the formal moves, and they are simply not compelling.

Q: *Which part of this isn't compelling?*

P: Well, none of it. [laughter] You see, the whole notion of masochism reverts back to this notion of connecting the sexual pleasure with some other kind of pain.

Q: *I'm suggesting that there is a state that she has to be in before sexuality is a possible fact in her world, and that's a state that comes after degradation.*

P: Okay, but you're getting away from psychoanalysis there.

Q: *No, I'm making a connection that's the same sort of connection ####.*

P: Even so, as soon as you say "degradation", you're beyond psychoanalysis.

Q: *What I'm trying to provide there is the reasons why sex could be a reason for her staying with James.*

P: Well, remember, you have to worry about that, but then you have

to worry that whatever explanation you adopt there either has to hold here and here, or you've got to explain why not; and it's about that time that it starts looking ad hoc.

Q: *It says that the relationship became “stormy”—we don’t know what’s compressed in that word “stormy”. A possible state of affairs—a state of affairs in which he’s beating her up, giving her a hard time, being some kind of weirdo. And she’s digging it. But then—*

P: But then, why would she—See, again, it’s—

Q: *He couldn’t keep it up, you know. [laughter]*

P: If you were buying explanations on the open market, you wouldn’t pay a nickel for that one. [laughter]

That’s one of the things that makes this an interesting case, because historically, what happened was that we were just zipping through this case book in a class in psychopathology, and came across this one and gave the usual kind of explanation, and looked—did a double-take and said “What?!” and then worked up something that had more plausibility, although it was crude. And the more plausible is a status dynamic analysis. But like with the initial formulation of depression, it had some strange ways of talking. Remember, at that time we didn’t have anything called “status dynamics”. This and the analysis of depression were the two actual, clinical pieces of work that (in retrospect) were status dynamic; but that’s how we got to a set of notions of that sort: by looking back at these and saying, “What were we doing here that, although crude, is more compelling than a psychoanalytic-type explanation?” And then generalizing and systematizing.

And I think I’ve commented before that that’s the history of the whole system. My clinical bias is not to invent problems in the abstract and then solve them, and then hope to encounter that kind of problem in real life and apply my solution. There’s plenty of serious enough problems in real life that you need to deal with directly, so we try to stick with those; and then if we succeed in solving or resolving them, then we look at what we did and say, “Hmmm—what did we do that was okay?” and then try to generalize that. You might say that the whole set of notions involving status

dynamics stemmed from this case analysis and the depression analysis, and both of them were crude, and in retrospect you could do it smoother and simpler. But that's how it happened.

Okay, now what questions? We have one question, which is: why did Shirley stay with James? What other questions do we need to have answers to in order to understand what's going on?

Q: *Explanation of the depersonalization—how come that?*

P: We had that—I think—except that the diagram we had before, that had depersonalization on it, we have to try it out for size to see if it fits. And it has other implications.

Q: *An alternative explanation for that, that she didn't want to get herself in that position again—the relationship she had with James, and one way is not to get that emotionally involved with another human being whom she needed as strongly as she did James, because she couldn't leave him.*

P: At that time, there was no issue of getting involved emotionally with somebody else. It was at the time of his death that she had the depersonalization, and at that time, there was no issue of her being involved with somebody else.

Q: *Yeah, if she would be depersonalized, then that opportunity doesn't exist.*

P: ### these things do.

Q: *But when she came into the clinic, wasn't she depersonalized?*

P: No. She was having these thoughts of doing harm to Saul.

Q: *She wasn't complaining of that—she was complaining of headaches and dizziness, so that might raise another question: what brought her into therapy?*

P: [blackboard—adding to original diagram] What brought her into therapy was headaches, dizziness, thoughts about Saul. And, I suppose you could say, that she was generally upset about the whole thing. It wasn't merely that she had these things, but that she was upset about having them.

Q: *Is that a question?*

P: No, that's the answer to the question what brought her in. There is another face-value question, namely: why did James hang himself?

Q: *And how come she had those thoughts about Saul.*

P: So far we have three—what you might call “face-value”—questions, namely things which on the face of it call for explanation: (1) Why Shirley stayed with James; (2) Why James hanged himself; and (3) Why Shirley had these murderous thoughts about Saul.

Q: *My reaction to—when you said it seemed unusual that she stayed with James—was: no, it didn't.*

P: No, not unusual.

Q: *Or when anyone else would have left—that doesn't sound right, either—that it seemed kind of that when you're in a relationship, it's very hard to leave, even if it's very bad.*

P: But those call for explanation, too. I wasn't putting stress on statistics about everybody else. I said “just about everybody else”.

Q: *Another question: Why did she want to screw her therapist?*

P: [blackboard] (4) Why thoughts of sex with therapist? What else?

Q: *Why did she marry Bill?*

P: [blackboard] (5) Why marry Bill?

Q: *Is there any particular significance in the sexual patterns, with Al and Bill being the same, and different with James?*

P: [blackboard] (6) Three sexual patterns.

Q: *And her getting off on these sexual fantasies, particularly the ones where she was assaulted, the violent sexual attacks, primarily—achieving orgasm under those conditions.*

P: Well, if we have answers to these questions, will we then understand what's going on? Or do we have other questions?

Q: *Do we ask why did James stay with her?*

P: Well, I don't know if it's that much of a question. James had a good deal going. She supported him. She provided the money, and a place to live, and kept house, and that's a pretty fair incentive for a guy who's not working and who likes to be independent. Furthermore, she did it without any commitment on his part. So you don't need to look for ulterior motives on James's part.

Q: *That's just the kind of relationship that people do leave, isn't it—it's just too easy.*

P: Well, he did. He had affairs with other women, but that was part of the relation of independence.

Q: *Yeah—that's what I mean, but he didn't end the relationship.*

Q: *The challenge in the relationship was gone.*

P: Well, but he stayed with her, because he came back to her all the time.

Q: *I think that's the point—at some point you can have all these material things, but there's no longer that deep human relationship. It's more like a servant or something.*

P: May be, except that their sexual relationship continued good.

Q: *On her part.*

P: Presumably it was for both, or it wouldn't have continued good for her.

Q: *On your question if we had the answers to all of those, that being the answer to what's going on—only if they all showed a pattern that fits together, if they hang together.*

P: The answers have to be compatible with one another.

Q: *And with her—I would imagine—and with her status in childhood.*

P: Do we have questions about all of this childhood stuff? You might say that the boundary condition here is that the answers to these questions

would have to hang together, and they would have to be compatible with all of the facts that we're given about the case.

Q: *I think we need to know what kind of relationship she had with her father—what was the result of her being an only child or how that affected her.*

P: Well, we'd better not, because there's no way to get that. We are told some of the things that went on between her and her father, some of the things she thought about him, and from that you could extrapolate something about the general nature of the relation.

Q: *How about also the effect of her father's death on her?*

P: It was guilt-inducing, we're told, as was her mother's commitment. She felt guilty because she didn't go see her father at the time when he was dying. She didn't do that because she was embroiled with James. She felt guilty about putting her mother in an institution. So the answers to those—unless we want to question them—are already given.

Q: *James was the only one who gave her the really good (experience) of never feeling guilty. [laughter] She needed that.*

Q: *That's the other set of paradigms in this case, that her father gave her this incredible superego that she had no right to have—[laughter]—she was frustrated by the man, degraded, and she had to go through that ceremony every time, so it's important to find out why she didn't go through it with James.*

P: It doesn't seem like she had that much of a superego. It looks like somebody with an externalized superego, as if you need somebody to tell you what's right and wrong, rather than having it in your head. You need to have somebody *like* your father telling you what's right, because you haven't got it internally.

Q: *Does the guilt hang together with her depersonalization about James? She didn't feel guilty, although she thought that she should, about James hanging himself.*

P: Why didn't she feel guilty instead of depersonalized? She felt guilty

about her father and her mother, and down here, at a late stage, she felt guilty about taking things [from Bill]. But for example, she didn't feel guilty about marrying Al just to get away from home. It isn't a strict superego there.

Q: *In all this formulation, if she has an appropriate figure—Al's more than that: he can supplant the authority of the superego during that period. This could still be in part why she wasn't particularly guilty about entering the James relationship.*

P: Well, but James is not an authority and a superego figure.

Q: *But he punished her, so you can take care of it that way.*

P: He may have created some pain for her, but not on the basis that she was doing wrong. Unless it has that feature, you wouldn't call it a superego.

Q: *That's the way we talk about an internalized superego, because she would simply be displacing that pain. It wouldn't have to be coming from the same source as going wrong. Her superego is used to operating under that pain.*

P: That one, you wouldn't pay two cents for. [laughter] If you have to do that kind of thing, forget it, because it doesn't really add to your understanding. There is a difference between an explanation that is formally adequate in that it's part of a consistent theory, and that you can make these formal moves—there's a difference between something that is merely that, and something that really explains.

Q: *Should we look for a reason why she stayed with James, that superseded all the reasons we have why she shouldn't?*

P: You could, and it would be a good exercise, but I don't think you'd find it. On the other hand, the only way you'd get the conviction you're not going to find it is to look for it and not find it. Suppose we look for a couple of minutes and see if we can think of reasons why she would stay with James, that would override the reasons that we know of for not staying.

Q: *James turned her on that much.*

P: Since that's the only positive feature.

Q: *I think she had a one-up on him.*

P: If there ever was a one-down, it's Shirley.

Q: *Why? She was supporting him during that time.*

P: That's right, and he was freeloading off of her. Guess who's one-up and who's one-down in that kind of situation. She wasn't staying there out of moral superiority, she saw how bad it was and tried to leave, and decided she just couldn't.

Q: *Was he considered a good catch by other women?*

P: I would gather—

Q: *A lot of women chased him.*

Q: *How long was their relationship?*

P: Something like three years. Anybody have the figure? Look, Wynn's suggestion has the virtue that the sex aspect of James was the one positive note that we're told, so using Maxim 3, you could construct an explanation saying, "Well, it was that good," which is what Wynn did. But saying that it was that good, again, is implausible. It just doesn't fit the kind of description that we're given.

Q: *Can you build a case under which, from those facts, we get an explanation why it could be good, and the only state of affairs in which it could continue to be good, and then use that as the basis for the answer?*

P: Very likely, that's the way it will work out. If you plug that formula in here, it doesn't give you any place to go.

Q: *Following Maxim 1, it seems that way, seeing that that's the information I have for that state, I'm now building possible ideologies backwards, and so it seems to me that way because all they tell us—*

P: Give us the prescription again.

Q: *James turns her on that much. That's the basic—the reason that James can do that is that the only way she can maintain eligibility for that*

kind of sexual excitement is in a degraded state. It's one of the few things that's really satisfying to her.

P: But remember, she did, more than once, reach a point where she said, “The hell with it, I’m leaving”—and couldn’t. And that’s not the pattern for somebody who’s being held there by a positive satisfaction.

Q: *Well, there’s a lot of relationships where people are satisfied ###, and the other things are so gruesome (they have) reason to be dissatisfied.*

P: Well, according to her, she had stronger reasons to be dissatisfied, she resolved to go, and couldn’t go.

Q: *I’m saying that the other relationships weren’t anywhere near as eligible for satisfaction.*

P: No, no, Al had his good points. She recognized them. All the way through, Al had a lot of good points. They just weren’t enough. But again, that’s one question we didn’t ask, that maybe we should have. How come Al’s good points weren’t enough? That’s the mirror image of “How come James’s bad points were not decisive?”

Q: *Was there any indication that James threatened anything before—like any fear that he might do something like he did?*

P: No.

Q: *She married Al when she was 16. Well, she figured him out after a while ###.*

P: No, because her view of Al didn’t change. It remained what it was to begin with, the good points that Al had to begin with were still there at the end—

Q: *Yeah, but the change from being 16 to being—what was she when she left him—18. [laughter]*

Q: *But that doesn’t require much explanation, because she wasn’t all that excited about Al to begin with. He was just a way to get out of the house. So as soon as something better came along, Al’s out of it.*

P: Her sexual satisfaction, sexual responsiveness went down [with Al], the same as it did over here [with Bill].

Q: *It says, "After a brief courtship which involved some abortive sexual experience"—so he wasn't all that good even at the beginning.*

P: Read on. You'll see that it's described as tailing off. [general conversation] This is at the time she comes in, and at that time, it was bad.

Q: *Well, but later on—*

P: As she gets better, presumably it gets better.

P: Again, remember that this is a textbook exercise case. Try any of the usual formulas for understanding people, try giving emotional explanations, and you'll find that you don't get very far. Emotional explanations are what psychologists almost invariably provide when it comes to psychopathology, and the source of that is Freud—anger, fear, and guilt. And you try anger, fear, and guilt explanations here, and you won't come out ahead. And if you don't come out ahead with those, what do you turn to? For example, did James hang himself because he was that mad? No.

Q: *Could you talk of her in a general sense being afraid to leave, in terms of not knowing what to expect—*

P: No. You see, she went out and ran that store and did it on her own, and there's no evidence that she's a shrinking violet who just has to have a feathered nest in order to survive.

Q: *about James hanging himself...*

P: Let's look at this and add a question: why did James clean the attic before he hanged himself?

Q: *Because he couldn't do it the other way. [laughter]*

P: Maybe he didn't want to hang himself in a dirty attic. Well, let's look at that question. One thing: James is a more limited figure in this case history. He appears in a more limited block of time. The facts about him are fewer, and they form a fairly clean pattern. What kind of guy was James? We're told a few things, and they all add up to a fairly clear pattern. What

pattern?

Q: ...

P: He was a musician with a reputation.

Q: *Bohemian?*

P: Yeah, but that's his social character, not his—

Q: *He's two-sided, I mean, he's anti-establishment but he taught a music appreciation course.*

P: He had some status, but also there is that, too.

Q: *My suspicion about James's character is that he's in school. There's not a description [laughter—general conversation]—There's no emotional description given about this character, and yet there is this extraordinary event, that he does kill himself. So I suspect she didn't relate all—she just didn't say very much about this character, in the sense of who he was, so I suspect—*

P: Remember—Rule One in working with cases is: Don't make anything up.

Q: *Probably.*

P: Okay, that's allowable, with a little bit of leeway.

Q: *He gave in—*

P: The question is: was that a case of giving in?

Q: *He cleaned the attic, and then he got one-up by killing himself.*

P: How many people would kill themselves just to have the last word? [general conversation]

Q: *### it won't decrease his behavior potential. If he hung himself, that had to count as not decreasing his behavior potential.*

P: That's right.

Q: *So he had to get one-up on her some way. Cleaning the attic ###—he*

was going along with her, but [change tape] he's getting one-up on her.

P: Let's start with what kind of guy James is, because remember, if this action is that significant, and it's got to be that significant, it better be a genuine expression of his character, which is why we want to inquire into James's character.

Q: *He's cool—uninvolved and non-committal.*

Cool: uninvolved, uncommitted

ON PRINCIPLE

**principle
motivation**



P: [blackboard] If you look at this, and read it as “cool”, I think you miss something that comes through pretty clearly, namely, that he is this way, but he isn't this way by default. He's that way on principle. Being uninvolved and uncommitted is his view of how things ought to be, and that's his personal ideology. It isn't by default, it isn't out of laziness.

Q: *Where does the child fit in? It seems that the child fits in somewhere in terms of his involvement. He has a little bit of involvement here.*

P: Yeah, but pursue that. Asking for the child—[blackboard]—

Q: *And getting it.*

P: Indeed, it does involve him, and particularly since he asked for it, so he can't go back on it, because he did ask. It isn't as though she just suddenly decided and got pregnant and faced him with this; because in that case, you'd predict that he'd tell her to go get lost. The child gives him some involvement which is counter to his principles, and that gives her leverage on him, which is different from what's been going on between them, and she uses it.

Q: *The question—why did James ask for a child?*

Q: *There's an interesting hassle in that question, because I can almost imagine what happened to James is that he's just flipping through ideas, and he comes to that one about having a child, and throws it out; and he keeps going, and he's not committed to that idea—it was suggested almost as a whim, and she goes through with it, and he's stuck. The alternative move is for him to decide to change his whole course of life to become involved, because he's a man of principle.*

P: Notice the tradeoff here: that to the extent that he was a man of principle, then he wouldn't have to want the child at all in order to be stuck with it after *he* expressed the wish for it. To the extent that he's not, you need to say that he really did want that child, and we're not in a good position to weigh these, except that we get some substantial part of this from this. On the other hand, it's implausible that he's that much of a purist, to do it without really wanting the child. It's too easy to rationalize the principle, if you really just don't want the kid.

Q: *But if he's really a man of principle, then at a certain level—*

P: Then he has to rationalize, because he can't just turn it off.

Q: *Then, in fact, he's committed, because he's not capable of that sort of rationalization effectively. A hassle that way may produce a lot of anxiety, but he's a cool character: he doesn't know how to deal with being anxious.*

P: Well, but it's not anxiety that's at issue.

Q: *We don't know.*

P: There's no evidence. That's why I said, don't make it up.

Q: *Okay, he's quiet, and anxiety can be quiet.*

P: Don't make it up. All we know is, he's quiet.

Q: *—principal motivation, by thinking of the child as an extension of him, and then there's no question there, and then if the child's going to be—*

P: You see, you can bring a general consideration, namely, that most people do want children—at least that was true up until recently, and it's not clear to what extent it isn't still true. But certainly if somebody told you that you had a 30-year-old guy who wanted a son, you wouldn't raise your

eyebrows in surprise and look for an explanation, would you? You'd just say, "So what else is new?"

Q: *If you wanted to be uninvolved and uncommitted, you might raise your eyebrows.*

P: Yeah, it's the combination that calls for explanation, but we have a general thing that says it's implausible that he had no motivation, so we had several things pointing to that. You've got both this [principle] and this [motivation] in substantial amounts. It isn't all principle, it isn't all motivation.

Q: *I can also see the child as a way of maintaining the status in the home, as a way of committing her to stay with him.*

P: But she's been committed all the way through. He's never needed that to keep her.

Q: *But she threatened to leave him.*

P: He said to go ahead.

Q: *James could easily be very pleasantly entertaining the thought of what it would be like to have a son, entertaining the thought—that would satisfy the motivation, and it would satisfy the circumstances, but he voiced the thought, and she went ahead, and so he's stuck.*

P: That's again putting it purely on principle.

Q: *No, it's providing her with reason not to believe that he feels that way, which calls his—*

P: Okay, how plausible is it that that's the way it comes across to her, if he's just voicing an idle thought?

Q: *Well, she might have other reasons to want to have a child, too, which would be to keep him. And a child could serve a lot of purposes for her.*

P: Again, notice that you're inventing things, and you see, we have enough to say that it looks like both of these are there [principle and motivation] in substantial degree. And pushing it all in one direction or the other is fraught with uncertainties, and you have to invent things.

Q: *You have to have information in terms of principle and motivation to generate it happening in that way.*

P: Yeah. Okay, now look at this combination, and what you see is James is in a bind. He's stuck with something that violates his central principles. So you might say, at this point James has a serious integrity problem.

Q: *So he hangs himself to keep his integrity?*

P: Well, hold on. You see the nature of James's dilemma, and you begin to foresee an explanation, not that he had a reason to, but that this was the only way out. As I said, you wouldn't find a reason if you looked for it, but what's shaping up is that here's a man in a serious dilemma of a life-and-death sort, because it involves his very concept of himself. And that goes beyond fear, anger, and emotions. This is a life-and-death matter.

Q: *So we speculate that he couldn't at first, and then seeing what he did, it was impossible?*

P: That's a variation that's less plausible than another one. The thing that inclines me to the other is that he's a man of principle. What happened is that they were hassling about cleaning the attic, and the thrust of having cleaned the attic is that that's his way of saying, "The attic, as such, was not the issue. There's your goddamn attic. That's not what's at stake." And that would fit this thing.

Q: *It sounds like there were emotions that went along with this.*

P: Yeah, but now—

Q: *But why—*

P: Because he really was involved.

Q: *What was his motive, if it's not cleaning the attic?*

P: "There's your goddamn attic" is part of it.

Q: *How would he justify going off and killing himself?*

P: "I'm hooked. I've got no way out." His principle is to be uninvolved, and here he is really, in fact, hooked. So there's no way he can live being hooked, and she's got the hook, and she's pulling it, and she just did in no uncertain terms.

Q: *So he's found that his conception of himself as uninvolved hasn't held up, because he's found himself involved.*

P: Yeah. He can't live this way and be himself.

Q: *But he's just gotten himself quite uninvolved—I mean, this killing himself dis-involves him, and it's that sort of affirmation.*

P: No.

Q: *Would this be the status dynamic principle of him finding that he had no place in the world, in the sense of his place in the world was uninvolved, and yet he's found that, examining the fact, he's involved, so he's lost all sense of ground in—*

P: Yeah. You see, we started out saying, "Here's a man who's in a bind." The more we look at it, the more we can see how it might be an impossible bind. Being involved, he can't simply split, and yet he also can't be somebody who is involved, because on principle, he's uninvolved. So this is shaping as the picture of a person in an impossible position. Now if that's all you had, you wouldn't go to that extreme. It's completed by the fact that he, in fact, did hang himself. That's the point at which you look back at this and say, "It looks like he wasn't merely in a bind; it was an impossible position," because look—

Q: *Being any one of those things was a contradiction in terms, so he couldn't be any one of them.*

P: Yeah. Then you trace back that what was involved here was that Shirley really was pulling now, in a way that she hadn't been able to before, and it takes no imagination to project that into the future, that he is now subject to this kind of thing, and that's what's unbearable—that's what's unthinkable.

Q: *In another respect, I can see James as like a real hardcore degrader, and Shirley as for the first time beginning to fight against that—*

P: But only because he's left himself open for it.

Q: *But none the less, she's testing, she's moving in that direction, and James can't give up his position as that cruddy an individual.*

P: It's not as a cruddy individual, it's as an uninvolved, uncommitted individual. He doesn't do the things he does out of malice. There's nothing in the record that indicates that. So he's not set on being a cruddy individual—he's uninvolved.

Q: *We're going to tie that into Shirley now?*

P: We're tying it into the fact that it was Shirley that was putting the pressure on him, and that morning, she was putting it on in no uncertain terms.

Q: *Could we also work into the thing where he was in a bind, but she was also?*

P: No.

Q: *She wasn't in the bind, but she was hooked in there.*

P: She was hooked somehow, but that doesn't need to enter in here. All that needs to enter in here is that she's the one who's putting the hook in him.

Q: *Do you think she might have resented him for having that hook in her?*

P: Of course. That's why she tried to leave. And finds that she can't, and it may be that now she's savoring sweet revenge that she can now have some leverage on him, and is overdoing it. Which just drives the message home all the more—that look what he's in for, look what the future holds, it really looks impossible.

Q: *She seemed to be saying, "You have no choice" and he said, "Yes, I do, and here is my choice."*

P: Again, think of the fact that he said to her, "Don't be angry at me," as she left. So he's recognizing that she has rights in the picture, that her doing that to him wasn't just being mean or being stubborn or being obstinate.

Q: *Is he telling her that because he's knowing already that he's going to kill himself?*

P: We have no way of knowing that. Now one thing you can say—he’s got a basis for being angry at Shirley, because she is doing that to him. She is the one who did him in.

Q: *Is the reason that he didn’t leave her because he’s a man of principle?*

P: And involved. He really wants that child.

Q: *Well, if you look at the whole thing as a power struggle, leaving her would be an admission—I’m starting to conceptualize—*

P: Leaving her would be leaving the child, it would also be violating his involvement.

Q: *Let’s say he’s somebody who doesn’t like taking orders—*

P: That wasn’t orders. That was just interpersonal pressure.

Q: *That’s what creates the pressure on the principle, because he doesn’t like to take orders and finds himself taking orders; and now he’s faced with the paradox of the commitment, and he’s on principle uncommitted.*

Q: *Leaving would be an admission of defeat in some sense.*

P: Leaving would violate his principles, too.

Q: *But killing himself leaves him one-up.*

P: That’s what we need to explore—in what way one-up?

Q: *That he can imagine that she would be racked with guilt, or that she can’t pursue him with child-support papers—there are a lot of involvements.*

P: If those were his motivations, he could accomplish that by taking off for Mexico. If he was going to welsh by killing himself, he could just as easily welsh by leaving. So that becomes less plausible.

Q: *But there’s more of a sense of revenge in the “see what you made me do” paradigm of suicide, than there is in the “See how you made me run away.”*

P: That doesn’t fit James’s character. Saying “see what you made me do” for a free, uncommitted spirit—a free spirit, nobody can make him do anything. Again, think of the fact that he has reason to be angry at Shirley

and not merely garden-variety angry. As I said, she's done him in. Can you read the suicide as an expression of that anger? If you wanted to, what's the internal dialogue? How is the suicide an expression of not an ordinary anger but what you might call a towering, bitter rage?

Q: *Could he have killed himself without being angry at all at her?*

P: Yes. Because he's in just as hopeless a position whether he gets angry at her for being the one who did him in or whether he just sees that he's in an impossible bind.

Q: *Then he's now got more reasons.*

P: Well, if you've got one decisive reason, adding other reasons doesn't make that much of a difference. It merely modifies how you do it, maybe. But again, part of how he did it was *this* way, and that goes with being angry at Shirley.

Q: *I see that as passive-aggressive.*

P: What's passive-aggressive about killing himself?

Q: *Telling her, "Don't be angry at me"—that's like suicide notes, when a person says, "I know I've been such a burden, please—forgive me—" and then they kill themselves.*

P: But that's not James's style. James is a cool cat.

Q: *Cleaning out the attic—he might have said later, "Hey, look what I did." It could have been the thing that broke him, and made him realize—*

P: That's why I say that's a variation but less plausible, because there's one that fits his principles better, namely: that cleaning the attic, his message is that he's not hanging himself over a goddamn attic, but he's doing it on principle.

Q: *Was it the shock of the realization?*

P: You can't rule that out, because indeed it could happen that way—that he decides to clean it and then sees where all of this is leading, and says, "My God, I'm in an impossible bind," and then he hangs himself. You also have to have an explanation of how come he cleaned it out. If he felt so strongly about it to hang himself, why would he clean it up to begin with.

Q: *It's for his son.*

P: But why then would he hang himself? You see, you have to postulate that his left hand doesn't know what his right hand is doing, that the time when he's cleaning the attic, it seems to him that he has more reasons that way than the other way, but then all of a sudden he realizes that he has more reasons the other way. And whereas that can happen, don't call on it unless you need it.

Q: *It seems like Shirley—let's assume that Shirley isn't really stupid, and she figures out that whole scene, that it isn't for that reason, and I'm wondering whether—depersonalization isn't the phrase they use there—and I'm wondering whether if, in fact, that knowledge—knowing that's why he did it—just changed the whole scene tremendously to her.*

P: Yeah, but we haven't yet arrived at why he did it, so it's premature to talk about her knowledge of it.

Q: *But the point I'm making is that what we just pulled out is a possible construction for someone to arrive at for why he did it. It could be the construction she arrives at, and that would give her reason to be very spacey and distant about the whole thing.*

P: No, I think not, because that's too ordinary. Think again of—making a point of the fact that it isn't the attic. That makes it a matter of principle.

Q: *If he wanted to make the point that it wasn't the attic, maybe he'd shoot himself in the basement, or something. I mean—why would he clean the attic?*

P: If he's going to kill himself, why bother to clean the attic first?

Q: *Because he knew he was going to kill himself.*

P: If he's killing himself as a way of rejecting the demand, why does he meet the demand?

Q: *Or—that makes the case, "Look what I had to do to clean your attic."*

Q: *He's setting the stage [general conversation]—a matter of principle, and to get back at—*

Q: *passive-aggressor. [laughter]*

P: What I said is that the other one fits his being a man of principle, and his being a cool character, and not somebody who goes around saying, "Look what you made me do." That in terms of the fit to his character, this does not give you a clean fit. Let me give you a message that's involved in the hanging that would be practically guaranteed to freak anybody out. The message is, "I'd rather die than live with you." Now wouldn't you get freaked out if somebody did that to you and really followed through? And that was the message that was there, and part of that being the message is the cleaning of the attic, to establish the principle that it isn't just the cleaning of the attic.

Q: *How does that establish the principle, "I'd rather die than live with you?"*

P: It takes the specifics out of the scene. It says, "Look, the particular argument that we're having about the attic is not the issue. Look, I cleaned the attic." If that was all that was at issue, that would be it. But it isn't. "I'd rather die than live with you."

Q: *I'd rather die than live with you, or I'd rather die than live with her? That way of reading it, he is in a towering rage.*

P: Yeah.

Q: *But it seems like it could go really either way.*

P: It could. You ask yourself what fits better. If somebody is doing you in, do you take an impersonal third-person view of it, or do you react with rage against the person who did it? And to whom is your message directed—toward her or toward unknown third parties?

Q: *Well, part of his message here was "Don't be angry with me."*

P: That was in the morning. As I said, that can be read as his recognition that she was within her rights, that she had a case. But that's part of what makes it unbearable.

Q: *It's personal in a way, because he did do it in the room he cleaned—it is intrinsically tied to her order. If it was a third-person scene, somehow it just—*

Q: *No, he might want to explode, and this was a kind of bizarre way of setting it up with a message—*

Q: *But if he could talk that way, he'd already be so much involved—*

P: Let me give you a rule of thumb there. As soon as you find yourself saying “might”, watch out: you're inventing something. What happens is that if you look at any particular place, you can think of a number of alternatives, and that will always be true, and what settles them is the over-all pattern. You don't work to the over-all pattern from the particulars, and by making arbitrary choices about particulars. You look at the over-all pattern and that enables you to pick, often, the particulars at particular points that fit that pattern; whereas the other particular choices that you might have made there, and that would be equally good just right there, don't connect to others to form a pattern. Now, I'm not saying that you always wind up with unambiguous results. I'm saying that you save a lot of this business of “Well, it could be this, it could be this, it could be this” by looking at the patterns.

Q: *You have to have a theme first in order to pick out a pattern.*

P: You have to be able to recognize—you have to think or be able to recognize it, yeah. The thing is that you don't work up to the pattern from the details. If you start that way, you'll get lost in all of the alternatives and all of the combinations—it could be three things here, and it could be three things here, then there are nine possibilities, and there's four more over here, that's 36, and six more here, and you're lost.

Q: *Are we looking for a pattern that accounts plainly for more facts than any other pattern?*

P: Yes. And whose loose ends are less serious than those that you get from the others.

Q: *Why not that he felt himself being a man of principle the way you have it before, and because he's driven in this position, it's also an expression*

of anger, but it doesn't have to be a towering rage particularly.

P: Wouldn't you be in a towering rage over being done to death?

Q: *Either that, or I might be hissing about it.*

P: Remember what I said about "might". As soon as you find yourself saying "might", watch out!

Q: *I'm saying that either one is just as plausible—*

P: Remember what I said, at a given point you can generate several alternatives that are just as plausible. That's not how you resolve for plausibility there.

Q: *But what's wrong with that point of view?*

P: I just told you. If somebody did you in, wouldn't you be in a towering rage instead of just annoyed? That's a more plausible pattern, to say that you're in a rage at being done to death, than to say you're annoyed.

Q: *Logically, you say you're in a rage because you're being done to death—*

P: No! I said, "Wouldn't you be in a rage at being done to death?" What I'm calling your attention to is that that pattern is a stronger, more compelling pattern than being annoyed at being done to death.

Q: *That makes being done to death prior—it means that the killing himself is prior to the rage.*

P: Quit working logic here. You're recognizing patterns. And if he's going to kill himself because he sees that he's in a hopeless bind, and he's in a hopeless bind because she's done him in, because he's left himself open to being done in, but she's the one who actually did it, it's all there at once. It's because she's done him to death that he kills himself.

Q: *It's because she gotten him to the point of killing himself that he's mad, because he doesn't have any alternatives.*

P: He has to see that he has no alternative in order for what she did to count as doing him to death. The one doesn't come first—it all goes together in one package. You don't deduce one from the other.

Q: *So that one is not an expression of the other.*

P: Remember symbolic behavior: one thing is an expression of the other.

Q: *How come he said, then, "Don't be mad at me?"*

P: As I said, that you would read as a recognition that she is on solid ground, that she really had that claim.

Q: *Would that not reduce some of his rage towards her?*

P: Somebody who does you in, no matter how good their reasons, you're not inclined to forgive.

Q: *The character of this James guy—I see him sort of caught up in what's easy to read into the whole novel of the '50s cool; and in the tradition, this sort of character is a character who is very cool, but who has access to tremendous rage and to these sorts of stands, and I think the name James is probably not accidental in this case.*

P: King James?

Q: *These are Los Angeles—the guys who are writing this book, in 1952.*

P: Yeah. So you might say, a character like this is much more plausible in Los Angeles in 1952 than in Elizabethan England or than in Boulder in 1976.

Q: *"Death before dishonor."*

P: Right.

Q: *But he's the one who brought on the involvement, because he suggested that—*

P: That's why he's in an impossible bind. If it had just been her, he would have—

Q: *Okay, but I'm just wondering how much of the—if the strong reason was rage against her—*

P: No, I said the rage is extra. He's in an impossible bind and that alone would do it. The way it happened gives you the rage, and that connects to

the way he killed himself. If it had just been a simple recognition of an impossible bind, he might just have shot himself or poisoned himself or something else. It's specifically the relation to her that leads to the attic and cleaning it.

Q: *I'm not sure what part the attic did play in this.*

Q: *It has rafters, which makes it convenient for hanging.*

P: Again, you know, he could just as easily have shot himself, put his head in the oven, or taken 20 sleeping pills, or something.

Q: *The attic was part of the issue.*

P: No. The attic was part of the message. It does connect that she was putting the hook into him in arguing about the attic. It's not totally unconnected. The attic showed that there was a greater issue, that he wasn't just objecting to cleaning the attic.

Q: *But what that symbolized, the kind of person who would clean the attic for his son is the kind of person who—I mean, cleaning the attic symbolizes the kind of person he doesn't want to be, and that she's driving him into being. It isn't the attic itself, it's what it stands for. So you were saying that the attic wasn't an issue at all—*

P: But that's the whole point, that this is a symbolic, self-affirming act. As such, it is the choice of the only self-affirming act that he had. Everything else, he's in an impossible bind. This way, he affirms himself. He expresses his anger toward her.

Q: *Why couldn't he ### the attic and leave?*

P: Because she had a legitimate claim on him. As I said, if he was going to welsh by killing himself, he could do that by going to Mexico.

Q: *It's not quite as bad.*

P: So at this point, you see, the act of hanging himself does look like choosing the greater potential over less, because it's his only alternative in a situation where he has no alternatives, where he is in an impossible situation, and this—doing it and doing it this way—is a tremendous self-affirmation.

Q: *It's a curious act of preservation, of sorts, because it finishes the story, it ends the tale.*

P: So in a way he does get the last word, but it's mighty tame to say that he just did it to get the last word. That wouldn't be compelling. When you see him in an impossible situation where he has one move that will be self-affirming, where he doesn't lose, then you say okay—he did it because that was all he could do. He did it because it had the positive value of affirmation, of expression of the anger he had, and he really did it up nice—namely, in the attic.

Q: *It seems a little far-fetched to me to imagine somebody in the process of building a towering rage, and preparing to do himself in, and thinking about the impossible situation he's in—*

P: You don't think about these things. Remember, all of the status dynamics principles are not self-conscious, deliberative-thought sort of processes. They're simply the constraints. And somebody who is in an impossible position except for one behavior that he can engage in, will engage in that behavior whether he thinks about it or not, whether he knows he's in that position or not.

Q: *Is that a way of saying that this is a way to account for his behavior, whether or not he accounts for it that way when he acts?*

P: Right. Just like unconscious motivation: it's a way for somebody else to account for your behavior, whether or not—in fact, specifically in the case when you don't.

Q: *It's quite thinkable to talk about "he found himself in these circumstances, and being the sort of person he was, he thought he had no choice."*

P: Now you could add to this by saying he really had an integrity problem. It wasn't that he found himself in one; he had one, because he really had the motivation toward involvement, and really had this principle, and they were incompatible, and he was split down the middle, and that's what he found out. That got at him, with that result. It isn't that somehow it got laid on him and was just an unfortunate happening. You could also

figure, no, he really was split. He wasn't that whole. He wasn't that well put together psychologically. There was this cleavage. The accident was that something happened to—you know, like hitting a diamond. You hit it in the right place, and it just splits in two. And this set of events, in effect, worked like that—just split him in half, and there was no way to hold it together, and that's the way it is. Now that would be going beyond this, but it's not implausible. He didn't want a commitment, but he did want it. He did *have* a commitment.

Q: *Could this have been just as likely if he had gone out and expressed his hostility first, and showed some sense of non-committal, and being un-committed, because—*

P: No, because he did express his hostility: they had an argument. And if he were able to get out of it by just expressing his hostility, I think you would predict that he would take off and leave her. Because it's the same kind of solution except better.

Q: *You don't have to express hostility to have an argument.*

P: Forget it. You know they had an argument. You know that it was hostile, or she wouldn't have described it that way. You don't listen to somebody describe an argument and then suppose that there was no hostility expressed. You could have an argument without expressing hostility, but that doesn't give you license to listen to this kind of talk and take seriously the notion that there was no hostility, just because it's a logical possibility. You just don't go inventing things like that.

Q: *The traditional psychoanalytic claim about this sort of stuff is that you can't explain—you couldn't possibly get an explanation of behavior on this order without underlying mechanical principles. And yet—without anything that is even eligible for the traditional notion of explanation—there's enough description so that everything's understandable.*

P: Now one last thing. I've been contrasting this to a psychoanalytic explanation, because this book was obviously written by psychoanalysts—look at the kind of questions that they ask at the end of each case. It's clearly a psychoanalytic orientation. And in effect, that gives us a conservative task, in that the *facts* of the case are the kind of facts that a psychoanalyst

would put in, that he would need, to understand it. So the whole case presentation, you might say, is biased in the direction of supporting a psychoanalytic explanation. So since there is that bias built in, I contrast it with the explanation that we've given so far—that's just the answer to this one question.

Q: *Except that the psychoanalysts as a group aren't that bad, because when they structure them, they've got the facts that are needed to build a case. They get the facts—Wittgenstein makes the point that the way he studied Freud was as a describer and as an explainer, and as an explainer he was full of crap: he was mechanical and his logic wasn't eligible for human description, but as a describer he did this sort of thing.*

Q: *One interesting thing was that anxiety—they asked several question and anxiety—*

P: The emotions do not play any central part here. I said the anger was simply extra. His being in an impossible situation is the key dynamic here, and that's not an emotional thing. The thing I wanted to mention is that in contrast to Freud, it's the existentialists who have dealt—with charity, you could say “systematically”—with this kind of notion of matters of life and death, of being and not being, of integrity, responsibility, choice. So that with status dynamics, the primitive formulations correspond fairly directly to the range of things that the existentialists have been interested in covering, and it's only when you use the special cases of relationship formula that it gives you the emotional dynamics that appear in classic psychoanalytic explanations, and so that one virtue of a status dynamic approach is that within one set of notions, you have access both to the life-and-death notions that the existentialists work with and to the emotion dynamics that Freud made famous and systematized.

Q: *Do you think the behaviorists could write up a case that would give you the range of facts that the writers of this book do?*

P: I doubt it.

Q: *Based on that, you could almost reach a point of asking which range of traditional psychologists who at least had an interest in the subject-matter of psychology—*

P: I give psychoanalytic theory highest marks for being detailed, for being illuminating, for covering everything that there is to be covered. I don't think any other theory comes close. On the other hand, nobody would want to be a Freudian today if you could just start fresh. The time has passed for that kind of thinking. We've outgrown it.

Q: *The Freudians know that, and they go around sort of apologizing—*

P: Or to paraphrase Stanley Cavell, if Freud were alive today, he wouldn't theorize like Freud did. He'd probably do something more like this. Well [laughter—following the double-take]—I almost put that one over, didn't I? Okay, let's continue on some of these other questions next time.

Session 6
February 24, 1976

Analysis of case of Shirley; Checking with City Hall; Preliminary analysis of humor; Status dynamic and theoretical explanations.

Father	Al	James	?	Bill
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P: I hope somebody has the questions we wrote down last week.

- Q:**
- (1) Why Shirley stayed with James*
 - (2) Why James hanged himself*
 - (3) Why Shirley's murderous thoughts about Saul*
 - (4) Why thoughts of sex with therapist*
 - (5) Why marry Bill*
 - (6) Three sexual patterns*
 - (7) Why weren't Al's good points enough*

P: Did I get these names right [on the diagram]?

Q: *The second should be Al.*

P: You know what—reliability and validity...Okay, this [(2)] is the one we dealt with last time. Any hangovers from that one? [laughter] Let's come back a little bit to this one [(1)]. That and James, I guess, are the most obvious puzzling things there. And aside from the symptomatology that comes at the end, these are the two things that you would probably point to most to say, "There's something wrong there." And what we

saw with Shirley and James is that there were all kinds of things wrong, all kinds of things that were objectionable about their association, enough so that you would more or less expect her to leave because there wasn't that much in it for her. So the question arises, "Why didn't she?" and the one good thing about it was the sexual aspect, so one suggestion was, "Well, the sexual aspect was that good." But then we saw that at a couple of times she tried to leave, and couldn't, and that's a very different state of affairs from saying, "Well, the sexual aspect was good enough to overcome all the others." So it doesn't look like the answer there is that the sex was good enough. So we're still left with the question why didn't she leave? And, particularly, why couldn't she leave when she tried?

We might consider: what does it mean to say "She tried", and that "She couldn't"? Think back to some of our earlier discussions about how clinicians use "can" and "can't", what sort of things may be involved. Okay, starting from that kind of dilemma, that kind of perplexity, what we've eliminated is a motivational explanation. Saying that sex was all that good, that would be a motivational explanation. And it would reduce back to Maxim 3, that she in fact chose the thing that she had the strongest reason to choose. If we rule that out, we don't have any other candidates, because that was about the only good thing that you could point to. We don't have other candidates for a motivational explanation. So we have to look for something else, and the phrasing of "She couldn't" suggests the obvious possibility of an answer somehow in terms of limited behavior potential, so that the answer was not that she didn't want to but, in fact she couldn't.

To construct an answer of that general sort, we've got to have some notion of how it could be the case at all, how it could be that her behavior potential was limited in such a way that she just couldn't leave. That's a peculiar sort of limitation, but it's the kind that we started out talking about in our initial session. Now at this point, given some general features of this and what would be needed for that kind of explanation, we come back to here [Father]. We come back to here because this is where we're given a fair amount of detail, and this is where we might expect—although it's not necessary—some kind of pattern to evolve that will show up in all of these three cases [Al, James, and Bill]. So we come back to her childhood years, and what do we find? Specifically, what do we find

that somehow involves limited behavior potential?

Q: *She couldn't go out and play with other kids.*

P: Okay, it was official in that family that they were different.

1. **family different - better, high status**
2. **limited peer access**
3. **family critical**
 - a. **housework - mother**
 - b. **high standards - father**
4. **dating patterns**
 - a. **standards - father**
 - b. **fight then OK**
 - c. **handling sex**

Q: *Either above or below.* [blackboard]

P: So they didn't fit in, and that showed up in that she couldn't just go out and play with anybody she wanted; it was very strictly decided for her. And at the cost of using some gobbledygook, we can put it briefly that way.

Q: *The family was very critical.*

P: We are told two different kinds of things: one, her mother used to get sick when things went bad. Shirley had to do the housework and have her mother sitting around telling her what to do, telling her what she was doing wrong, and presumably seldom being told what she was doing right. Her reaction to that was—she did get annoyed, but *“That's just how it is”*—that was her reaction: *“Well, that's the way things are”*.

Secondly, without being particularly specific, there is some reference there that says her father held her to high standards. Whatever that implies in terms of content, you can from that generate the kind of interaction that went along with that, namely, that he was watching and evaluating to see whether she was doing it right, and criticizing her or reprimanding her or something, if she didn't. So he was setting the pattern of what was okay, what was not okay, and supervising it, you might say. So both what went on with her and her mother in connection with the housework, and

what went on with her and her father in a more general setting, is fairly parallel. And presumably this ["That's just how it is"] was her reaction in both cases, because she didn't fight it.

There were a couple of other things—

Q: *One is that not only did she have limited peer access, but she was an only child.*

P: What were other things that got prescribed for her? It seemed to me there was something else.

Q: *Those dating patterns.*

P: Okay, let's put down this one [blackboard]—we have again her father's views on that; and secondly, that there she did fight, and something in the wording of that suggests that it routinely happened: that she'd have to argue with him and then he'd give his okay for her to go out with the boy. And then, thirdly, her way of handling sexual issues with the boys. You remember she would pretend to go to sleep, and then when they did something she really didn't like, then she'd wake up and object. So think of the implications of this for [blackboard] both her skills and confidence in self-presentation, and also in negotiating with somebody. Clearly, this way of handling that negotiation suggests a deficit both ways.

Okay, now look at the whole set of things there, and what sort of ideas come to mind?

Q: *It seems like her father was her validator.*

P: Well, that's a couple of steps down the line. Because so far you have a whole lot of pattern, and her father only appears in a couple of places. You need to look at the pattern first, and then ask questions about the father. What kind of pattern emerges in all of this?

Q: *The premise is almost that doing nothing, or doing little, is the norm, and you have to fight to get—*

P: She has to do the housework.

Q: *She has to do the housework because her mother can't. If her mother could, she wouldn't. Special circumstances are required to be able to do*

something different.

P: Say some more about that. You said that special circumstances are required to do something that's different.

Q: *And the norm for her life seemed to be pretty—very limited behavior in a lot of areas, unless something special happened—her mother gets sick, her father puts additional demands, or she battles with her father to get permission to go on a date or stay out late at night or whatever. But the expectation seems to be very, very low.*

Q: *### sex on the dates, it seemed like she came up with a new pattern, but it really was an old pattern.*

P: What old pattern?

Q: *The old pattern was sometimes she falls asleep. Just that she wasn't really there, in this kind of situation where she's getting what she wants for herself.*

Q: *In the case where her father would disapprove—*

Q: *But then she fights her father. But then he says okay, so that's a funny kind of fight which always ends up with the other person saying okay. I suspect her father.*

P: Remember, in the session on the self, we talked about self status assignment. Also in Charlie Kantor's paper on schizophrenia, he points out that it's essential for normal development that at some point, the child becomes a self status assigner, that initially his statuses are assigned by other people, because he doesn't have what it takes to do it himself. So initially, his statuses are assigned, and he fits in. At some point, he starts assigning his own statuses. Now this is the main thing that's missing here, in this pattern, that Shirley is constantly—as we see throughout this period—in a position where somebody else is deciding what her behavior potential is. Somebody else is deciding what's allowable, what's okay, what's not okay.

Q: *The exception again is the dating.*

P: Yeah, but remember, this comes at age 16 or something like that—it's up to that time. So the early pattern is of that sort, and if you check

back through the intervening years, I think you'll find it there. Now it's this notion that somebody else has to assign your status before you have any behavior potential, that shows up in Gideon's comment that she wasn't really there. When left on her own, she wasn't really there; or in yours, that the norm was to do nothing. But it's not that to do nothing unless there's something special. It's to do nothing unless somebody else says it's okay.

Now at this point comes in Father, because if you read the actual history, and look at where the father appears and where the mother appears, it's clear that the father is a more crucial figure, that the mother is more limited in her impact on Shirley. It's primarily the father who decides what's okay and when. And one thing to file for future reference is, at least initially, the family was considered by them to be better than the people around them. So in having the father be the one who gives her status, who accredits her, who defines what's okay and what isn't, what is possible and what isn't, it's also the case that it's coming from a high-status person. Now, you recall an earlier discussion where we said: for a person to have a relationship with somebody else who has higher status is normally to expand his own behavior potential. This kind of pattern, which belongs on your list of Images, is called "Checking with City Hall"; it is a case where you have a high-status person that you always have to check with before it's okay for you to do any particular thing. Doing that fits this pattern of a person with less behavior potential relating to somebody with more and thereby gaining some potential. And what you have is the limiting case in which there's basically zero here—that she has no status except insofar as somebody else of an important sort accredits her. It's a lot easier to think of that with children than with adults—I think it shows up more clearly both in the detail that we're given and in that you could readily imagine that a kid has that kind of reaction. Because at some early age, it's fairly normal for kids. They don't have that much initiative, they're not self status assigning, they simply go along with whatever the parents assign them. And that's part of socialization. Without that exposure to status assignment, they couldn't eventually do their own status assigning. So some period of that sort is normal, and this is what we see throughout the childhood and extending into adulthood.

Q: *How does it fit into the dating patterns?*

P: Okay now, here, the father says no, even though he finally does say okay, and that becomes kind of a standard thing. She goes and asks, he says no or has some objection, she puts up a fuss, and then he says okay. Then she can do it. So it's still Checking with City Hall. He still has to okay it. You see, what she's discovered is that she has to do certain things to get the okay, but the okay is forthcoming and it's essential. It's still essential.

Q: *And her boyfriends?*

P: Notice that very little is said about the boyfriends, and they don't appear to have had a great impact on her. Her first sexual experience was certainly not a pleasant one. She just kind of got into it. Again, think of this [self-presentation, negotiation] once she gets away from there and is out there with the boyfriends. What happens is, she doesn't do anything. She goes to sleep. Again, no behavior potential. Until something happens, and then she comes back to these standards that are accredited, and objects. And that's hardly a positive sort of thing. It's more staying within the limits of the behavior potential. So the pattern of how she handles dating and so forth still fits this notion of Checking with City Hall, of having behavior potential that is contingent on somebody else's accreditation.

This is the pattern that we want to come back to over here, to explain why she didn't leave James.

Q: *Moving back one step, she left Al to go—she left Father to go to Al. She left Al to go to James, and then James finked out. Hmmm. And shortly thereafter, she married Bill.*

P: Right. Now one of the things that you can see shaping up here with this kind of sequencing: if what she needs is a high-status figure to do the accreditation that gives her behavior potential, these shifts are going to occur when this person loses his place as the accreditor.

Q: *The other option would be when she runs into a bigger City Hall, a more powerful city—a more powerful figure.*

P: Not unless she has the personal relation, and establishing that relation will generally not come within her behavior potential. If that were a real possibility, you could bet she'd have had it during those three years

she was with James; because in that kind of setting, you'd figure there's all kinds of opportunities, and there were bigger fish around than James. So it isn't just that she had no exposure. It's the limitation set by the limited behavior potential. You see, she could no more do that than respond other than this back here. She could no more leave [change tape] Rather than going straight to James, why don't we go from the family to Al. My impression is that things got so unpleasant at home that she did that primarily just to get away.

Q: *And the opportunity was there because she met Al at the moment when frequently she had to endure physical punishment from her father before her father would let her go out—just around that period.*

P: Now notice that her father was letting her go out and have relationships with other guys, so the kind of transition you're talking about there is possible. And think of how Al is described. He's an older guy, easy-going and pleasant, etc. In effect, he has the good characteristics of her father and not the bad ones.

Q: *A nice guy who took care of her and was kinda fatherly to her.*

P: I think she was 16, and he was 28 or something like that. So it is still more of a fatherly relation, but Al does not have the bad characteristics, the objectionable characteristics of the father. Unlike the father, he doesn't beat her up, he doesn't accuse her, etc., he's nice to her. So she grabs the opportunity here. And that one didn't last long. And recall the essential pattern, I said, was something like that [the descending curve]. That brings us to this question: why weren't Al's good points enough? Remember, initially he looks very good. He has the good points of her father but not the bad points—well, why wasn't that enough?

Q: *He's not very—there's nothing to maintain any particular large amount of status.*

P: Well, he has it by virtue of being older, and he has some kind of a position—

Q: ###

P: That would have been a possibility, but there's nothing in the case that suggests that. There is something else, though. Al has the defects of his good points. He's a nice guy and easy-going, and one of the things he doesn't do is lay down the law. But if he doesn't lay down the law, then he doesn't accredit her and give her behavior potential. So she's missing something from him, and that's what shows up in her dissatisfaction. And as Al loses his status as the accreditor, that leaves her then free to look elsewhere.

Q: *In one way, the message he's giving her is, "Your status is as an adult running your own life," and that's not what she wants. She wants—*

P: Yeah, she needs to be given status, but not like that—not to be told that she already has it. So Al fails in that crucial respect.

Q: *Is this how there can be some access to masochism?*

P: Well, let's think of the thing with James. She did put up with a whole lot of things, but notice that this way of doing it doesn't say she really somehow enjoys it, which I think is one of the features that goes with masochism. Because if you have motivational explanation, even if you have to go transcend it, you still have to conform to Maxim 3: somehow she's getting some pleasure out of it—no matter how painful it is—that makes it worth suffering the pain. Now this is not that kind of explanation, because it's not motivational at all. So it's not a reconstruction of masochism, but it is an explanation of the same kind of things that you might appeal to masochism to explain, namely, why somebody puts up with things that are unpleasant, that are not to their advantage, that most reasonable people would kiss off.

Q: *And that feel good—that wouldn't feel good to most people, but that feels good to them.*

P: No. They don't have to feel good.

Q: *The "feel good" could be—it's a status, but it's some status, to be a victim.*

P: Yeah, but you don't feel good about it.

Q: *You don't feel good about being a victim, but you feel good about at least being a victim—you're not being ignored.*

P: You don't usually think along those lines. That's the advantage to you, that being somewhere is better than being nowhere, no matter how bad that "somewhere" is. But when you are merely in a bad somewhere rather than a nowhere, you don't get much satisfaction out of it. You don't enjoy it. What you have is the pain, and that's why she says, "I want to go," and finds she can't. It's not because she's really enjoying it. There's nothing to indicate that she enjoys it.

Q: *Well, there would be a change from being a victim to being nothing. It's painful being a victim, but—*

P: No. That's the point of the whole status analysis, that the alternative is to be nowhere, and that's more compelling than any kind of motivation. Again, think of how un compelling it would be, in the face of what we're told, to say, "Well, she enjoyed it, she somehow got enough enjoyment out of it." Even when we were able to point to the sexual enjoyment, it still didn't come through right. So if we have to do it in a purely hypothetical form, it's even less satisfying.

Q: *How does Shirley receive status from someone saying "it's okay—###"?*

P: Because that defines it. That's like having her mother say, "Clean the house". As soon as the mother says, "Clean the house," she has a set of behaviors, a change of behaviors that then are okay and are the thing to do, and that is her potential. She then enacts that.

Q: *It doesn't sound like status.*

P: Why not? It's not a reference to status, but it is a move that gives her behavior potential, and therefore, it's an accreditation. To have somebody tell you, "This is what's right to do, this is what you'd better do, this is what I'll accept from you," is accreditation. It's a status assignment. You are in this position. You have this behavior potential. You are eligible for these and only these.

Q: *### that she was taking notice mostly of James's good points and not his bad points?*

P: Yeah. His bad points don't show up until further down the line. His

good points are pretty well there from the beginning. He's described as a teacher of some local repute, so again you have a high status person. And their relationship is one that he defines, and it fits the principle that we saw in connection with why he hanged himself, namely, of no commitments, no responsibility. It's by virtue of that that she's constantly getting the short end of the stick. Because he has no commitment and no responsibility there, but she in effect has, because he's defining for her what it's okay to do and not to do. And notice that ironically enough, he's doing this not by laying down the law, but by not laying down the law, by refusing to say, "I want you to do this and that." He keeps her guessing, and it's by his approval, by his willingness to stay with her, to have her stay with him, that he gets the message across about what's okay and what's not okay. That, and his own self-presentation—"Here's the kind of guy I am, and that carries implications for how you have to be in order to deal with me." So it's accomplished by the self-presentation, by the approval or disapproval of particular things that she does, but not by saying in any explicit or positive way, "Here's what you've got to do."

So that does put Shirley in a kind of bad position. It's not easy to get out of a bind like that, once you're in.

Q: *But she got out with Al.*

P: No, because she was never in that bind with Al. Al would not do that for her. Al would not accredit her. He would not assign her a status. He just sort of took it for granted that she had one, like all people do, and played it accordingly. And so he wasn't giving her the one thing she needed most, namely, the accreditation.

Q: *Would you go over again quickly how James was accrediting her by not—*

P: Well, the self-presentation. It's clear he got across to her his principles, what kind of person he was, and by implication, then, how she had to be to deal with him and stay with him.

Q: *I'm not sure why you're saying that he never did specifically tell her what to do, because, at least later on, when she was pregnant, it mentioned that he told her she could get up or had to get up and go to work or whatever.*

P: But in the early stages, when the issue came up, we're not told anything then about his saying these things. We're simply not told anything that would suggest he did. Remember, a lot of things changed around that pregnancy, including it wound up with him hanging himself. So what was true then needn't have been true during the three years that led up to it. If you go back over the stuff that you're told about the three years, what you're mainly told is that he was a free spirit, in effect, that he would go do his own thing; that he would go out and have affairs; that when she said, "I'll leave you," he said, "Go ahead and do it." None of that sounds like he's saying, "Look, you've got to do X, Y, Z." It sounds more like he's saying, "Look, no commitments; I do whatever I want to do; you do whatever you want to do." But then, back of that is the presentation of the implications: "Here's what you've got to be like to stay with me."

Q: ### *just in the sense that it was hard for her to leave him, or—*

P: Yeah. It's like it's hard for a child to afford to tell his parents to kiss off and then leave home.

Q: *If she'd married somebody who laid down the law a lot, would that have been as much of a bind?*

P: Maybe, maybe not. Because remember, her father did, but he also allowed her to establish relationships with other people, which in turn gave her some status independent of him, enough so that she was able to leave him. And that's the normal course of development. At age 4, a child would have a hard time just telling his parents off and leaving them. But as he grows older, he gets more and more (1) self-status-assigning ability, and (2) more relations to other people than his parents. And at some point, it's the easy and natural thing for him to leave his parents. So if you have that kind of pattern, it's not a bind; you can leave; and that's the normal course of socialization and development. But when you've got something like this, where there is no commitment and no progress, and there's no legitimization of relationships elsewhere, then it's a bind.

So this is what she was stuck with during this period, and that's why she couldn't leave. She had nothing else anywhere else. And yet the relative strength of this—remember, the issue with her parents, that she

wouldn't go to her father's funeral because she was embroiled in something with James. She made a quick trip home and had her mother institutionalized, and came back right away because she was tied up with something with James. So it's clear that during that period of time, James was that predominant an influence in her life. And whereas she felt guilty about these things, it didn't keep her from just sort of sloughing it all off and coming back to James. Now think of the issue of James having affairs with other women, letting her know, and she would be even more anxious then to stay with him. Then consider the implications there: if he's attractive to other women, then that's evidence of his high status, and so he maintains that all the way through.

Now this one ends without her doing anything. It ends because he commits suicide, and we traced that through last time.

Q: *One of the questions I've had at this point is what status does this give her, that he hung himself?*

P: It left her very nearly nowhere, and that's why the depersonalization. That's why the numbness, that's why the failure to react emotionally. But remember, she had been running a store. She had been doing things independently of him that were okayed by him, and you might figure that's what saw her through—that's what gave her some status independent of him, and she was able to then cope.

Q: *Is that why you're saying she didn't commit suicide?*

P: Well, you wouldn't predict suicide for her. What you'd predict for her is more of a depression, if she didn't have enough behavior potential left over. The main place where you can think of that it comes from is that she was running that music store and doing things on her own that didn't depend directly on James, and that's where she was okay.

Q: *Don't you think there was some kind of relief for her? I mean, it's not simply that she didn't go into a deep depression, but that—*

P: Yeah. All of the negatives with James disappeared when he did. That's why the relief. She knew it was better. So relief was an appropriate thing. But remember, she also says it was just a fleeting sort of relief, and

mainly, she was just numb. It's either a fleeting one, or she says she must have been relieved or something like that.

Q: *Can you explain why depression rather than suicide, if she's left with a position of almost no—*

P: Because it isn't zero.

Q: *If she hadn't had that, would you predict suicide for her?*

P: Not really, because even to commit suicide you have to have some—that's part of the answer with James: it was self-affirmation for James. Whereas if she was left literally with nothing, you would expect her to go into a catatonic state or something like that.

Q: *So she didn't have enough to commit suicide.*

P: No, she had too much to commit suicide. She had too much to even be depressed.

Q: *The point is, it didn't matter how much she had—she wouldn't commit suicide, whether she had none or any degree. That makes it that she has a different style—*

P: No, it means that she's not in a bind the way that James was. She's not in an impossible position. It's just a matter of more or less behavior potential. But there isn't the irreconcilable conflict that leaves her with nothing no matter which way she goes, which is what happened with James.

Q: *Before James's suicide, what happened around the time that she became pregnant and all that, that changed things?*

P: She got an additional chunk, namely, the mother of James's child-to-be. And as the mother of James's child-to-be, she's in a position to make some claims, which she did.

Q: *So it was the fact that she was carrying his child that allowed her to define her own behavior potential?*

P: That one was still tied up a lot with him, because it was his child, and she had it presumably in response to his saying he wanted it. So in effect, James had given her permission for that. But as that, she had a claim

on him that she didn't have before. So he legitimized some independent status for her that way, and that's what she was using on him when they were quarrelling.

Q: *Thinking of the message that James was giving her by hanging himself, I forget how it was put here,*

P: "I'd rather die than live with you."

Q: *I'm getting the vague feeling that that gives her part of her new status—that gives her some kind of status, but I can't figure out how this is connected.*

P: No, it gives her the lack of status, and that shows up over here. Remember, we talked about if rage is your dominant motive, and you have no way of showing it, you're going to be bereft of behavior potential. Because nothing else will take priority over this, and this one you can't act on. So where are you? But it shows up later on. Think of what your reaction would be to somebody who said, and enacted, the notion that they'd rather die than live with you. Well, you'd be freaked out, but you'd also ### have the behavior potential to respond to them that way.

Q: *And also, from the narrative, she never even considered it.*

Q: *I'm not so sure it's tied in to murderous thoughts about Saul—it isn't tied into her present situation, rather than months back.*

P: Well, they certainly are tied in with her present situation, but her present situation is not enough to generate the murderous thoughts. It's just enough to bring them out.

Q: *Why? Someone who is an only child, who was a child, and children were never appreciated, would you see Saul as limiting her behavior potential?*

P: Yeah, but how many mothers do you know that because the child is inconvenient for them, they think they'll kill them?

Q: *Every mother!* [laughter]

Q: *My mother.* [laughter]

P: You see, it just isn't enough grounds for that kind of reaction. On the other hand, if you suppose some of the background motivation, that could very easily bring it out. Aside from the special condition that Saul is James's son. He's all that remains of James, you might say. So if there's going to be any live target for that anger, it's going to be Saul.

Q: *Before, you said that she had to do the housework, that that was a bit of accreditation when she was in her mother's and father's place, and I was wondering what that aspect—the mother with the baby, she has to do certain kinds of things, but it's not exactly like it.*

P: Don't think of accreditation as honorific. Some accreditations you wouldn't want to have.

Q: *So that's a case of the same—of accreditation, also.*

P: But it's also a burden. It gives her behavior potential but again, with—

Q: *This time she goes along with her behavior potential.*

P: No, this time there's a lot of dissatisfaction, and there are a lot of disadvantages there. But once you have the kid, you can't not have the kid. You're stuck with it. So that wasn't something that's open to choice and therefore needs to be explained motivationally.

Q: *And when did she stop saying "That's just how it is"?*

P: Well, in a way, never.

Q: *What about when James died? She didn't just say "That's how it is".*

P: Well, in effect she did.

Q: *She went through this depersonalization stage.*

P: Yeah, but look what she did—she took care of all of the practical details, and doesn't that fit her saying, "Well, that's just how it is, I've got to see to his funeral. I've got to do this, and I've got to do that. That's just how it is." You see, this sort of reaction enables her to do the practical things, to comply with all of this stuff. So she does, performatively. But it can also be going through the motions of somebody who's depersonalized. So in that

sense, that's the way she's been all along.

Can we go on from James to Bill? Or are there still some issues here?

Q: *Talk more about the murderous thoughts about Saul.*

P: Wait till we get over here, because the murderous thoughts about Saul are here [when she comes to the clinic].

Q: *Is there a break between James and Bill?*

P: Not much of a break.

Q: *Ten minutes?* [laughter]

P: Okay, let's take ten.

P: I think we were about to move from James to Bill, and gloss over lightly this intervening period, during which apparently she got less de-personalized, went on about her business. And my recollection is: it was a fairly short time. She went home, did a few things, got a job, and then met Bill. Again, in reading the history, it's clear that this was simply an interim period, that it wasn't any great thing in her life, and then things started happening when she met Bill. Okay, now what characteristics does Bill have? Again, he's high status. He's an attorney, he works for a corporation—for somebody whose father was a postman, that's good enough to—

Q: *But he can't hold a job.*

P: Well, okay, but here's the beginning. He starts off this way. He has a high position, he has education, etc. It's a step in the right direction for her. So they start off okay. And what happens? Well, they argue a lot, but remember, that's okay, because as long as it ends with some kind of accreditation, fighting is okay. And you might even suspect that she might pick those fights, since if she was just willing to go along with anything, why would they be arguing that much? So she may have had this strongly enough to go out looking for trouble rather than just waiting for it. And what happens is that Bill has a hard time with his jobs. He has his ups and downs, and about the third time in—how many months?—anyhow, there's some brief period of time where he lost his job again, and she begins to

have unhappy thoughts about him, like “when the hell is he ever going to settle down and support his family”, things like this.

Q: *At the same time, she wants more.*

P: At the same time, she starts having thoughts about wanting more things.

Q: *Did she also have the thoughts about murdering Saul at that time?*

P: Not at the beginning, as I recall. Anybody check that easily? Okay, now look at that coincidence. Bill starts losing status, and she starts having thoughts about having more. Remember our analysis of displacement is that status loss will never be chosen over keeping your status or gaining status. Status loss is what she’s threatened with when Bill starts losing status. And lo and behold, she starts making the very kind of move that we saw was self-affirming when it came to displaced hostility, namely, affirming that they deserve more, that Saul deserves more, that he needs to be taken care of, that he’s special, that she needs to monitor his contacts with other people. So in effect, she’s going through some familiar status-asserting moves at the time when Bill’s status starts dropping. Somewhere further down the line, she starts having these thoughts, worrying about what’s going to happen to them. And either there is something there, or you might guess that it’s partly in connection with where it leaves her if she’s going to leave Bill, to have a child and have to support the child as well as herself.

Q: *Wasn’t Bill a good father to the child? ###.*

P: Let’s see, what else is happening at about this time? She has these thoughts—

Q: *According to the book, she’s had the thoughts for three months, and three months ago Bill lost his job.*

P: Yeah, the thoughts about Saul. Okay, so those do start then, as soon as she really starts being unhappy about the job situation. When did these other things start, with her worrying about whether was he getting enough, he needed supervision. Did they start earlier than that, or—? If she wanted to limit his contacts with other children?

Q: *About the same time.*

P: Okay, so it all hit at the same time.

Q: *And that's when she wanted to screw her therapist.*

P: No, at that time she didn't have a therapist.

Q: *### she may be taking responsibility for herself and for Saul, and getting a job and supporting them, if she hadn't been able to develop that kind of individuation?*

P: Remember, there were ups and downs, and this was kind of a last straw. So this has been more or less precarious, and you might say unless she had built that up, it wouldn't have been the last straw, she would have said, "Well, that's how things are." The very fact that she was building this up, partly during that period of time, too. That she is able to say, "The hell with that, I'm not going to stand for that," or something to that effect.

Q: *### something going on within her which could be considered a positive danger ###?*

P: Yeah. You see, she's acquiring at least from this period—and we don't know whether it's mostly here, during the interim, or during this period—and remember, she was arguing, which does indicate some. It's a combination of that game, and the fact that Bill is losing. He's lost his job, and then he's lost his job, and now finally he's lost this job, and at this point she says, "Huh." So she has enough here, and if she didn't, you'd say then it would have taken six jobs or something like that. So this is where the two curves happen to cross, of his downhill slide and her uphill.

Okay. Now remember we said that back here, she was unable to express anger because she didn't have enough potential, and she didn't have a target; but that if there was going to be a target, it would be Saul, because he's all that's left of James. Well, now over here, we see her having more potential, and we see her having murderous thoughts—not just complaints about how inconvenient it is with Saul—thoughts of killing him. And think of that along the pattern that we did with displaced hostility, of what kind of things you do to break even again when you're threatened that way, when you're put down that way. That message, "I'd rather die than live with you," is one of the great put-downs of all time, and so she's got a lot to make up, and a lot of motivation that she couldn't express back then. She's beginning

to be able to, but still it's only thoughts. But, you might say, strong enough thoughts so that it bothers her, which means that it wasn't just a fleeting, idle thought. It was thoughts that have some emotional charge there. So we see, with an increase in her potential, she's also now beginning to express some of the things that she's had going from back over here, and she's expressing it toward an appropriate target. Notice how the current difficulty of "he is definitely a drawback and an inconvenience" if she's going to have to go out and make it on her own—that gives her the pretext. One of the things I didn't mention with the coming home and kicking your dog is that you don't just do it out of the blue. You wait till he looks at you cross-eyed or something, *then* you do it. So you usually need a pretext, and here she has it with Saul. He is a burden, he is burdensome, he is a drawback, and that's then enough of a pretext, apparently, so that the lightning strikes. But again, not completely, just thoughts.

Now I guess we should have another one that says Therapist [blackboard]:

Father	Al	James	?	Bill	Therapist
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Because at some point she gets bothered enough to come to the clinic. And lo and behold, how does she relate to the therapist? She clearly is putting him in the accreditation spot; she tries to please him, asks him is it okay, so she's putting him in that position.

Now let's come back over here to the sexual pattern.

Q: *How is it with the therapist?*

P: It isn't, because it doesn't actually happen. She just has thoughts. But, we'll see. If the main thing going on here is accreditation, do some paraphrasing, and the first one is from accreditation to acceptance. Remember, we've encountered acceptance before in connection with self-presentation. If you make a self-presentation which is a status claim, somebody else accepts your status claim, in effect they accept that status assignment. And that is an accreditation. So accreditation can be paraphrased as acceptance. And remember the varieties of degradation and accreditation ceremonies: overt public, overt but two-person, and then private, when you have no

visible ceremony. And remember the difference between conventional and situational ways of doing these things. Now ask yourself: if you think in terms of acceptance rather than accreditation, and drop the sociological overtones of accreditation and just think of acceptance in a normal human environment, what kind of overt acceptance ceremonies can you think of? And in about ten seconds, [blackboard] SEX—that's one of the answers that occurs to you. The sexual interaction, by its very nature, is ideally suited to be an accreditation ceremony. It's an expression of acceptance. And once that idea strikes, then you see that the sex curves are exactly parallel to the accreditation curves. That her relation with these three people started, that they were good accreditors, and with Al it went down, and so did her sexual responsiveness. With James, it started high and stayed high, and so did her sexual responsiveness. With Bill, it started high and went low, and so did her sexual responsiveness. And now, remember, why the thoughts of having sex with the therapist, for that very reason: it's part of the pattern.

I think that about covers it. There's at least something in this formulation on each one of these questions [1-7]. Right? Is there anything else that remains puzzling, that needs answering?

Q: *The kinds of sexual fantasy she had—of being assaulted by low-lives or something.*

P: Think over here of the kind of relation—we said that Al had the good points of her father, but not the bad points. And when you're making a move like that, this is one of the two major possibilities. The other possibility is just to go the opposite, to get somebody as unlike your father as possible. Now think of Bill, the attorney for a corporation, and ask yourself: if you had to think of somebody who was as unlike Bill as possible, wouldn't a gorilla do the job? [laughter] Secondly, if you think of the nature of the accreditation—of social, intellectual, of that kind of thing—and then think of the kind of accreditation that comes from being somebody with simply a lot of brute strength, again you have the opposite. Remember, she's been through a lot and is faced with, "What now?" And one of the things that happens is what's as unlike all of these failures as possible, and the answer is: brute, gorilla.

Q: *It's lucky she wasn't married to somebody like that, or she'd really be up a tree. [laughter]*

Q: *Can you say what you would do in therapy with Shirley?*

P: No. The reason is because we need all of the stuff on that list of images and things like that. I can say: remember the Move 2—the two principles of influence, Move 1 and Move 2. Let me review those. Both are based on social practices, and the structure of the practices, and the first principle says that “*Making Move 1 invites Move 2*”, and that’s a fairly common, straightforward thing. The other principle says that “*Making Move 2 makes it hard for Move 1 not to have already taken place*.” So “*Making Move 2 preempts Move 1*.” And it exerts a different kind of pressure than my initiating something and inviting you to follow. This is more like forcing you into this position. As a therapist, oftentimes you’re in a position of forcing somebody into a high status position, and you do it essentially by making Move 2’s. And you can do it more or less overtly and directly, or more or less implicitly. I’m trying to recall—you recall we were talking about depression, and it’s again this kind of thing. And I’ve done it as overtly as telling somebody that as far as I’m concerned, he’s somebody who’s angry, who has good reason to be angry, he’s showing it successfully; and who also has good reason to pretend to be victimized and helpless, and that I’m not going to buy that kind of story because of how I see him. I’m going to treat him that way, and nothing he does is going to change my mind or make any difference to that.

This is known as doing it by force. The effect it has is that I’m putting him in this kind of position and telling him that I’m doing it and telling him that there’s no way it’s going to be any different. And that reflects this high-status/low-status, because I have more status than he has, since he’s a client and I’m a therapist. Sometimes—sometimes—I can get away with that, and if I don’t think I can, I don’t try it. But that’s a short answer to what you might do with Shirley.

Q: *Why did what he [the therapist] did work?*

P: You don’t know what the therapist did. It just says they discussed this and that, and she became better able to talk about her feelings about

this or that. You don't really know what went on there. And you can pretty well figure that whatever went on, you could reconstruct in these terms, that the effect was that he added to the status that she already had, and that whatever he was doing was putting her in that position and overtly acting on it. And this will hold no matter what he says he's doing. For the same reason, you could take the kind of interaction I've described, and any behavior modifier could describe it as my differentially reinforcing certain things. Any psychoanalyst could put it in terms of making the unconscious conscious or strengthening the ego—you can always put it in various theoretical terms. And you can always put it in status dynamics.

Q: ###.

P: Saul was the appropriate target, yes.

Q: *But not an appropriate target to act on.*

P: Right.

Q: *So what does she do?*

P: Well, again, remember I said that one of the possibilities is that you see that the provocation isn't a provocation, that the put-down isn't a put-down, and your anger vanishes, and your motivation vanishes. I would think of trying a combination of that, and redirecting it back toward the original target, namely, James; and portray for her the impossible situation that James was in, that the expression of anger toward her was incidental, that it was simply that he was in an impossible position, there was nothing else he could do, basically. Well, that takes a lot of the sting away. And so a lot of the anger would vanish, and what remained, presumably would be handleable; because, after all, she's only having thoughts. And if it didn't, then you'd play it by ear, because that's the main move, in principle, that you could think of doing here. The other is, I guess, the compensatory gain. You see, she has enough status here so that maybe you could do the positive thing and point out that she has all of these things, and the past is the past, and she doesn't need to be holding grudges. So there's a number of avenues along the line that we discussed in connection with displacement and all of the various ways that you can keep from losing status.

Remember, one of them was complaining to a friend. Well, in effect all of these conversations with the therapist would—if nothing else—fit that category of complaining to a friend about what happened. And as a therapist, if you portrayed that, yes, indeed, she did have a hard time, etc., that would put that in that category. So you have all of these various points to work on.

Again, let me come back to the history, that the original explanations of this in psychoanalytic terms simply were not satisfying, and formulating, even crudely—you see, the original formulation of this wasn't as parsimonious as it is now. But even the crude version had the feature that it hit all of the major things. It said something about all of the questions that you would have, and simply, on the whole, gave you a much more satisfactory picture of what was going on. And this was one of the two beginnings on how come the whole notion of status dynamic formulations, is that when you have a case like this, and you look at the difference in the kind of understanding you get, and the completeness and parsimony, and how you're able to hit all aspects including this peculiar thing [the three sexual patterns], there's very little in the whole thing that you don't have right there in your hand. And that's nice, because I don't think there's any other sort of analysis that would give you that. So from that beginning, then, when you'd say, well, how would you systematize these kinds of things, you come back to some of the other stuff on behavior potential and status, etc., and then systematize that, and that's kind of what we're doing.

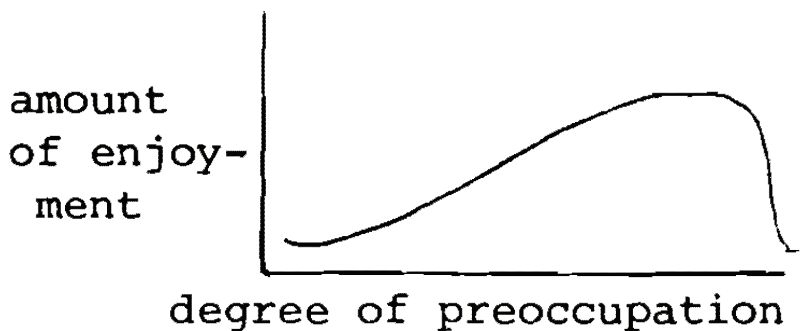
Now remember I said that I'd like everybody here to do something, and if nothing else, pick a case of some sort (either from a case book or from your own cases) and do a status dynamic formulation of it, using our analysis of Shirley as a model. And try to pick one for which the kind of explanation that you would ordinarily think of trying isn't all that satisfactory. Now the status dynamic formulations are not just for pathology. As a matter of fact, I hope that later on in the semester, we can have a presentation of an analysis of humor—a status-dynamic analysis. It's already far enough along so I can say with confidence that just like this touches all of the points that a psychoanalytic one does, and with more closure, likewise the status dynamic analysis of humor will have that

relation to the psychoanalytic analysis of humor, namely, it will touch all of the points that psychoanalytic theory does, and more.

Right now, we have it in the form of a formula for humor that's parallel to the emotion formulas [blackboard] $H \rightarrow A$, and the formula is simply: Humor elicits Amusement, unless—. Exactly the same logical form. And in the same way that with something like danger and fear, or escape, you can't point to anything and say "That is necessarily a danger", because anything can be a danger, and nothing is necessarily a danger. Anything can be a provocation, but nothing is necessarily a provocation. So you can't identify either humor, hostility, provocation, danger, with anything that you can point to. So these are content-free formulas, and then you go around looking for instances of things that show this pattern.

Now because of that, the understanding of humor does not consist of looking more and more closely at the particular things that qualify as humorous, although part of the analysis is looking at various taxonomies of humor. Instead, the understanding comes from relating this formula for humor to all kinds of other things. Because humor is not a concept that just appears out of the blue and is separate and independent. It's a concept that is tied into the whole network of human concepts, and therefore has all kinds of connections, among which are to the notion of enjoyment, being in a good mood, being in a good humor. And that connects to why people tell jokes at the beginning of meetings—to put you in a good humor.

One of the primary explanations here is that the amusement is a status enhancement, that that's the positive value—it's a status enhancement—and for its corresponding principle, that it's a saving in psychic energy that you are then free to use in other ways. Notice how that corresponds to new behavior potential. It's a very parallel sort of notion, and it will do that because of how you're caught up in something that then gets presented in a different way that frees you from it. And that's the paradox or surprise notion in humor. And from that comes what I think is a genuinely empirical prediction which makes it suitable, then, for research, namely, that you'll get an enjoyment curve like that [blackboard], where this is degree of preoccupation, and this is amount of enjoyment.



And the reasoning is that the more preoccupied you are with it, the more it's status-enhancing to be freed from that preoccupation, but if you're really taking it too seriously, you won't enjoy it at all. You won't see the humor. So you'd predict this kind of functional curve, roughly speaking, and this you can index with this, so this is maybe the particular place where the formulation gets confirmed, *a la* hypothesis-testing research with it. There's other connections to the connection between humor and mental health. You think of how much our pathology explanations have to do with preoccupations that tie somebody up; you see humor is a way of liberating you from a preoccupation. Then you could predict that by and large, people who are in poor mental health will have poor senses of humor. And you think back to Allport, whose prescription for the mature person included a good sense of humor, for that positive health.

Okay, so you have various connections of that sort stemming from this formula, from the recognition that there isn't something that makes humor humor, that you would then need to look for in order to understand humor. But instead, you look for the ramifications and the conceptual connections of humor to other things, and that's where the full force of the concept hits you: to see all those various connections to all the other phenomena of human beings. Then you understand humor. So as I say, this is that far along right now; we're working on it, groping along, and by the time—some time closely before the end of the semester, maybe we'll have a reasonably systematic presentation of this.

So as I say, pathology is not the only thing for status dynamic

formulations. Basically, I think, any phenomenon, any pattern phenomenon of human behavior is susceptible to this kind of formulation. So if you have a particular interest in some topic, you might try these ideas on that and see what emerges.

Q: *You're saying that any behavior that is part of a recognized social practice, or—at certain times you've contrasted a status dynamic interpretation to using motivation explanations for behavior—it seems that one would be move involved with a social practice interpretation—*

P: No, remember the analysis of Gloria and Fritz Perls, where we saw that a lot of what was going on was status dynamic, but it wasn't just the participation in social practices, because what they were engaged in was self-presentations that were rejected, and so no social practice was going on there, but it still fit a status dynamic formulation. So first, status dynamic formulations are not that closely restricted to patterns that are social practices. Secondly, they're not just independent of motivational explanations. Remember that the formulas, the emotion formulas, are special cases of the relationship formula, which in turn is one of the versions of status dynamics. So that status dynamic formulations cover the entire range, not merely of necessities like we saw with displacement and unconscious motivations, and James's hanging himself, but also with straightforward emotional behavior and emotional conflicts. So you get all of those into one system. I think I commented last time that psychoanalysis primarily deals with emotional dynamics, of anxiety, guilt, fear, anger. Existential approaches deal with some of these notions of being and non-being, integrity, modes of living, responsibility, choice, and so on. And one of the virtues of the status dynamic formulation is that you get them both. Within the same system, you have that whole range of things available. Which is nice. So you're not cut off from motivational explanations. It's simply that they tend to be down at the lower levels of generality in the emotion formulas and in some of the social practices.

Q: *On the amusement/humor: do you get any mileage out of the thing you started with—the connection with dislocation, from surprise to—*

P: Not much, because there is an element of surprise there, but that's about all you can say, and the element of surprise comes from the fact that

you get something that is either presented seriously and then presented as non-serious, or you get a mention of something that automatically gets taken seriously, and the presentation of that as non-serious. So that juxtaposition gives you the element of surprise and paradox and absurdity, etc. But beyond that, no. So far, we don't see any more mileage than that.

Q: *It seems like if you told a story a little differently, you should be able to move up or down that dimension a little bit, and that should turn into something a little different from just ###.*

P: If you're good enough at construction, you could do an experiment of that sort. You'd need to be able to construct things to prescription, though, and that's hard to do. You'd need to take a standard joke, for example, and then modify it a little bit so that there was more surprise or less seriousness or greater absurdity, or something like that.

Q: *You should be able to make some ambiguous ###.*

P: Yeah, except that I think that you're stuck with the uncertainty as to whether you really accomplished the change that you thought you had. But subject to that limitation, if you could do the rewrites, you could investigate the effect of those changes.

Q: *You might be able to observe by seeing—by looking at the surprise on somebody's face, and that kind of thing.*

P: I'd hate to index surprise that way. It's just not clear from the expression of the face.

Q: *What about people who can't tell a funny joke? [laughter]*

P: That's a matter of their social skills, not the sense of humor necessarily, because they might very well be able to appreciate jokes.

Q: *Well, they're amused, but they can't tell a funny joke. They can tell a funny story, they can do other things, but when it comes to a joke—[general conversation]*

Q: *I was wondering, in status dynamics like the process of self-nominations that's going on in the Democratic party, or the contrast between the dynamics that's going on with Ronnie Reagan vs. President—uh—*

P: President who?

Q: *I've been calling him Edsel all day.*

P: You're having murderous thoughts.

Q: *There you have the same self-assignment of status which is being either accredited or not—*

P: Accepted or rejected by the voters.

Q: *But the dynamics of it seem to be entirely different. Ford is saying, "I deserve this status—which I already have, by the way—legitimately. I don't deserve to be a lame duck president any more. I should be an elected president." But what are the consequences then, in terms of status dynamics, for acceptance or rejection of that claim?*

P: By whom? Remember that the self-presentations are like promises or contracts. If I make a self-presentation, it's like offering you a contract that says, "I'll behave this way. All you've got to do is sign here, and we then have this sort of thing going on between us." It's like a promise in that you're committing yourself that way, and there is a question whether you'll be able to follow through. And that's what is getting judged.

Q: *With Ford, it's not, though, because he already has the status which he is claiming now, so that if he is not accepted in that—it's a two-step loss. Not only was the claim wrong, but the status was wrong.*

P: Remember the degradation ceremony. When you degrade somebody, the punch line is, "What he is now is what, after all, he was all along: an imposter." So you can say: if Ford gets voted out, particularly at the primary, the judgment of the voters will be of that sort—that he never really was President, in the sense that he didn't deserve it.

Q: *If Reagan says, "I should be the nominee," and the primaries say, "No," that's a kind of degradation.*

P: No, it's just a rejection of a self-presentation.

Q: *The other would be a degradation.*

P: Yeah. See—remember the Two Mayors, the one who just wants to

be mayor, and the other who wants to do the things a mayor does. Ford, as an incumbent, is more in a position to do the first one—"I just want to be mayor because, really, I already am." Whereas the other guy more or less has to promise to do the things that good mayors do, precisely because he isn't already one. So he has to validate his claim by promising to do those things. The guy that's already there just has to maintain his claim that he is already a good mayor—he doesn't have to make that kind of promise.

Q: *But he has to act like a president, doing the things presidents do.*

P: Yeah. If your judgment is that he isn't already a good one, then you say the hell with him. So it's very much this kind of thing.

Q: *In the instance where someone makes the self-presentation that involves a certain status claim, and then they eventually don't follow through on that claim, what is your typical explanation for why that happens?*

P: Well, you either find a good explanation, or you go through a degradation ceremony. Again, this is a special case of that general principle that says, if a person has a given ID characteristic, and his behavior violates it, then that calls for an explanation. If no explanation is forthcoming, then you take it that the behavior truly does reflect his ID characteristic, and you change the ID characteristic.

Q: *I'm thinking of a ### explanation might be in a situation where a behavior of an obsessional neurotic appears from the outside to make a certain status claim, because the person appears to be very organized and adult, and their conduct seems to be very coherent and so on; but over time, you begin to see that there's a sort of ceremonial pattern to it, and if you ask him to do things outside their very circumscribed repertoire of behavior, they cannot do it. And unless they have a support system, they might start regressing and having a breakdown or something like that, in which case, the explanation would be in terms of emotions and the dissociation between the behavior and the experiences of the person and the satisfaction of impulse, and so on. I wondered if—I don't see how that would exactly fit with the various paradigms you've—*

P: We went through that the day we talked about displacement, because in surveying the various sorts of things you can do to regain status in

the face of a threatened status loss, one of them is to just flatly self-affirm, another is to fantasize or to dream. Now, I said those may be more or less convincing, and what you've described amounts to that, that this obsessive-compulsive person is facing a threatened status loss, that he's defending against by this affirmation which he can't really follow through on. He's claiming a lot of behavior potential, but he doesn't really have it. And that shows up when you face him with new set-ups, and he can't handle them, so he doesn't really have it. What you're seeing then is a ritual ceremony that affirms the potential which isn't really there.

Q: *But in terms of explaining why he breaks down—*

P: It's that he doesn't have the behavior potential. That's why he breaks down, because he doesn't have it.

Q: *I guess it seems like it's sort of a general formulation or global description of what might be more detailed described in terms of his emotional dynamics.*

P: You get exactly the same distinctions made. You can take the emotional dynamics and point for point make exactly the same distinctions in status terms. Except for the mechanisms. Remember, that's one of the differences—that a status dynamic formulation is a non-mechanical one. But the mechanics is in the theory, not in the phenomenon.

Q: *You might be able to get the emotions themselves out of the status dynamics—you often would be able to do it.*

P: You might. If they're not essential, you probably can.

Q: *If they're not essential?*

P: To what's going on. You can always make up emotions. You can always look at somebody's behavior and give some kind of emotional description of it that isn't obviously false. But you can also be making it up, because there's no reason why all behavior has to be emotional. And in psychoanalytic theory and other similar ones, they're characterized by the fact that there are no reality constraints on when you stop giving certain kinds of descriptions. There's no way to tell when you've had enough, when

you've said enough, when you've said it right. There's nothing built in, and so you need the extra apparatus for making those decisions.

Q: *I don't understand how you meant "non-essential".*

P: If, in fact, the behavior isn't emotional behavior—remember the example of the difference between caution and fear behavior. In both cases, you jump out the window. So the difference is not obvious, if somebody's standing there watching you. Since you did jump out the window, it would be quite plausible to say you acted out of fear, but it may be you were just being cautious.

Q: *The trouble in handling this is like if you take an obsessive-compulsive pattern of behavior, now a psychoanalyst would say, in a sense, that this is the crystallization of fear, of avoidance, of fear. In some sense, that's infused in the behavior, because genetically, that's how it developed.*

P: But look, the language is a tip-off. Something that you have to call "the crystallization of fear" isn't just straightforwardly fear. It's a very peculiar kind of fear. And, in fact, it's so peculiar that it's not distinguishable from non-fear.

Q: *Well, it's a way of describing behavior.*

P: Yeah, it's a way of describing it, but you're not using it to talk about fear any more. If you have to make it a very special kind of fear with different logical characteristics, you can bet that the crystallization of fear is different from simply fear.

Q: *That was a metaphor—*

P: That's what everybody says about psychoanalytic theory. It's just too goddamned metaphorical. But you can see that that way of talking is not necessarily talking about emotion, even though you're using emotional terms. That's why I say that if the emotion isn't really there, it may well be dispensable, and that will show up in that you'll be able to give a status dynamic formulation of it that doesn't mention emotion.

Q: *Will it be developmental? Like in this case I'm giving you, the explanation is, in some sense, genetic. The ritual is said to come out of—*

P: Look what we did here. We started from childhood and went all the way through. In that sense, it's developmental.

Q: —*tied with self-esteem, which is not too distantly related to ### which is basically very developmental.*

P: Remember, status corresponds to being-in-the-world. It's not a simple emotional thing, it's a much more general thing, but we also have these specific formulas and relationships for dealing with those particulars. And we have ways of talking about instances of these, and kinds of instances, so there's no level of generality that you can't tap.

Q: *I think my problem is with the paradigmatic formula—emotional behavior formulas—is that it doesn't really help you—or it doesn't help me, at least—unless I already know what I'm looking for, to see an emotion, to discriminate an emotional behavior from a non-emotional behavior, to see—let's say—an obsessive-compulsive ritual as possibly being the avoidance of a fear or something like that, whereas the—*

P: What is it that doesn't help you?

Q: *Well, when I recognize that behavior, say the ritual, it doesn't make the connection for me that that is a case of emotional behavior, because, in a sense, it's a disguised behavior.*

P: It isn't. It's right out there, and the fact that it isn't disguised shows in that you can give a status dynamic formulation that mentions nothing that is invisible, like mental mechanisms, like crystallizations, like any of that. You can get at it. And if you can get at it that way, then there isn't anything really invisible about this obsessive-compulsive person.

Q: *Not invisible so much as that the behavior—when Freud talks about the act disguising itself, he means that the behavior pattern ostensibly appears to be one way, or to have a certain meaning—*

P: Look, you had that thing back when you learned your ABCs and the difference between performance and intentional action. Two things that have the same appearance can be quite different as behaviors. And there's nothing invisible. There's nothing internal.

Q: *All I'm saying is the formalization makes sense once you know what you're looking for; and in the Symbolic Action formula, I'd use it; but in terms of looking at visible appearances, at the texture of behavior, the physiognomy of behavior of a person, it doesn't tip me off when this is legitimate adult conduct, and when it's—*

P: Yeah, but neither does anything else, and neither *could* anything else.

Q: *Then how do you get better at recognizing—*

P: With practice and experience. [laughter] And negotiation and criticism. No formal system will tell you where it applies and where it doesn't. No theory will tell you where it applies and where it doesn't. And if you don't know what you're looking for, indeed, you won't recognize it, but that's part of the ABCs of Descriptive Psychology.

Q: *I guess that's part of the reason for metaphors and images. [laughter]*

P: I've got a list of images here—sure, they're a help, they're ways of bringing things out, to help you see, but don't mistake them for references to invisible inner things. They're just to help you see things, to help you recognize facts and patterns that you might not recognize if you didn't have here a paradigm for it.

Q: *Well, when two mayors come here, I'll know how to deal with them.*

P: You'll vote for them both, eh?

For next time, review the sheets that have the images and stuff on them, because I think it makes sense now—you remember we had an original list, and we talked about pathology and therapy, and we've done a bit with pathology in dealing with depression and with displacement of feelings, and with a case analysis. It makes sense now to pursue this whole set of notions by talking now about therapy in a more general way.

Session 7

March 2, 1976

Review of Shirley; Diagnostic questions; Problems of diagnosis; Images as both diagnostic and therapeutic; Little White Balls (image); The use of images in therapy.

PGO: Do we have any carryover from last week?

Last week we were trying to finish with the questions we had about Shirley and noted that we had some things with regard to each of those questions. Suppose I raise a couple of questions about Shirley. One: what was wrong with Shirley? And two: where did Shirley go wrong? [blackboard]

1. What was wrong with Shirley?

2. Where did Shirley go wrong?

What's the answer? What was wrong with Shirley?

Q: *She was dependent on someone to give her an okay for doing whatever she was doing.*

P: [blackboard— non-self-status-assigner].

P: Are there any other answers?

Q: *You pointed out two last time. You said that there were some real shortcomings in her ability to engage in self-presentation and in negotiation.*

P: Remember, our reconstruction is that essentially, everything followed from this, that the specific patterns depended on her being this way, plus the circumstances. That's why this [non-self-status-assigner] is a reasonable answer, as a single answer, a one-sentence answer, to the question, "What was wrong with Shirley?" The whole case

analysis was an elaboration of this, in some considerable detail. So you can answer that, then, in a single sentence or in some degree of detail.

Q: —*Shirley misdirected her anger or emotions?*

P: Shirley's emotions have very little to do with the basic analysis. It's one of the points I made, that none of the explanations were emotional explanations. When we got all through, we had hardly mentioned anything about any kind of emotion.

Q: *Except with her feeling, her fantasies and fears, about killing her son.*

Q: —*redirecting her anger back at James instead of to Saul?*

P: That was in connection with therapy. It was in connection with the thoughts that we said yeah, she's angry at James. That was a kind of peripheral sort of thing. It wasn't the explanation for what was wrong with Shirley. That was the most detailed consequence of this kind of thing, which had all kinds of consequences, including that she was angry at James and couldn't show it.

Q: *Would that tie back in that she could not assign the status to herself of being a consistently good mother—among the other things—so that this was a very questionable activity whether or not she would kill her son.*

P: It was enough to bother her. The thoughts were enough to bother her.

Q: *How do you stop from being circular with something like that? Isn't non-self-status-assigner a status that she assigned herself? Didn't she see herself as not having—*

P: Yeah.

Q: *In that case, she is a self-status-assigner.*

P: That's why you can make a Move 2. Remember, I said if you're doing therapy, you can make a Move 2 that tells her she is not a nobody, she is not somebody who can't do this, because—and if you wanted to, you could give that kind of explanation. At the same time, you could say straightforwardly, descriptively, that she's a non-self-status-assigner. If you think of this as her self-concept, then when you say she's that way, you're

saying that she's somebody who has a self-concept and acts accordingly, so she really is that way. Except that also, she isn't really that way, because she is able to do something other than that. We dealt with this in general in connection with self-concepts and "do you really have that potential, or don't you?" And do you really have it if you only have it under certain circumstances or if it takes a particular something to bring it out? Think of the case where the only way it will come out is if you tell the person, "You really do have it. Go ahead and try it." It won't come out if you don't do that. Is it really already there? Well, you've got the same thing going here, is it really already there before she finds out that it's there, or what? So you've got that kind of issue because if she really has that potential, you can put her in the place of somebody who has that potential, treat her accordingly, and that gives her the potential. So it's not a matter of convincing her. It's a matter of creating the phenomena that by virtue of what you do, she has that potential, because you're going to count anything she does as her doing, so at least in that context it becomes the case that she's a self-status-assigner. And since you're able to do that with her, she had that potential. So you're quite right in saying [that it's circular].

Now one of the characteristics of status dynamics is that it very often has a now-you-see-it-now-you-don't sort of aspect. That's why I started raising questions of that sort from the very beginning. Because it's always been tricky in that way.

Q: *In terms of our use of self-status-assignment as final order appraisals about oneself, wouldn't this instead be phrased, "a non-self self-status-assigner?" I wonder if that clarifies it. Because then, for her to be a non-self-status-assigner is for her to be in a trance state of some sort.*

P: You'd say that this is how she thinks of herself, it's what she knows herself to be.

Q: *Maybe more an inadequate self-status-assigner. She does make some moves.*

P: Well, remember we went through the business of "she hasn't got zero". Then when we say that somebody has a concept of himself as worthless, we don't usually mean *completely* worthless.

Q: *One of the finer points in her non-self-status-assigner was the question about her self-presentations, and I'm not sure that ###.*

P: We don't know all that much about her self-presentations except with her therapist, who says she was anxious to please him, that she asked him if what she did was okay, that she kept asking him "Is that all right?" and things like that.

Okay, what about that second question? Where did Shirley go wrong?

Q: *She made a bad move in picking her parents. [laughter]*

Q: *The way she responded to her parents.*

P: Which way?

Q: *### she was unable—she didn't apply the skills to make these self-status-assignments.*

Q: *You're asking something else, aren't you, because you're asking about intentional actions?*

P: Asking where did she go wrong is asking about her behavior. Asking what's wrong with Shirley is asking about her ID characteristics.

Q: *Is it an adequate answer to suspect that she took her parents seriously, and her behavior followed from that?*

P: Where did she take the wrong turn in the road, where did she do the wrong thing, where did she do some distorting, any of these will be paraphrases of the second question.

Q: *There's something along the line that she failed to credit herself with the meaning of the behavior she engaged in.*

P: Well, but that's what she didn't do.

Q: *What she did do, she credited somebody else.*

Q: *Or denied that it had any particular meaning.*

P: Where?

Q: *Things like when she finally beat her father into letting her stay out till ten o'clock or whatever.*

P: He let her stay out.

Q: *He let her stay out, but she didn't take any credit for that, as that became now a new defining element of her. Next time she had to do it again.*

P: Okay, but that's not a behavior on her part. Her failing to take credit is not a behavior.

Q: *Her giving credit to somebody else is a behavior.*

P: That's not a behavior, either. There was no episode in Shirley's life when she was giving credit to her father, that way.

Q: *No observable kind of—*

P: No. A behavior takes time. It is an episode in your life, it's part of your life. As far as we know, there was no such episode in Shirley's life.

Q: *She changed high schools. She went from an upper middle class high school to a lower middle class situation where she was more comfortable—or the reverse—I think it's that second move where she blew it.*

P: Well, distinguish between the fact that it didn't work out and whether she made the wrong move.

Q: *Well, it did work out—the second move—in the sense that she found herself—the move from upper to trade confirmed the status, or the lack of status, the lack of eligibility.*

P: You say she went from one bad situation to another, but still, that was only as it came out. There was a rationale for her making the move, and it's a reasonable move, and you can't say that she went wrong because, in fact, it didn't work out.

Q: *I'm saying she went wrong because making that move led to the opportunity first of lowering her status—no, that creates the problem, but she didn't successfully behave in the first one. It's a little more along the lines of what she didn't do, rather than what she did do.*

Q: *I don't know exactly where the series starts, but there seems to be*

a whole series of behaviors where she does the same thing, where she has a choice of asserting some kind of status for herself and not doing it. One was when her first husband gave her that option, she left him. Before that was with the dating, when she had the choice of presenting herself some way but she went to sleep instead of taking any other option. And I can't figure out where that started.

Q: *With the father—"I'm annoyed, but that's just the way things are"—that behavior, that attitude.*

Q: *She refused to accept the opportunities she did have.*

Q: *She actively chose one—*

Q: *—seeing something in terms of the move, that she put herself in a position where things were easier for her.*

Q: *I see her as going wrong in getting pregnant and then treating James as a person who really wanted the baby.*

P: *It's not clear that that's what happened. There's some presumption that ###.*

Q: *It sounds as if she took what might have been a casual statement as a request for a child. In that sense, the mistake might be a distortion.*

P: *Again, something that might have worked out, didn't.*

Q: *—James, you can imagine—*

P: *Our knowledge of James is based on reconstruction and depends on the fact that he did, in fact, hang himself. If we didn't know that, our reconstruction wouldn't be nearly as tight. It's not something that she ###.*

Q: *Developmentally, at what point do you say a person is responsible—*

P: *Certainly by the time they're dating.*

One of the main reasons for raising this question is to sensitize you to how hard it is to answer it in an illuminating way. Certainly it's a natural question to ask, isn't it? And we didn't have that kind of trouble answering this question [the first].

Q: *It may not be just the trouble—it opens the question of whether there is an answer. Because what can you imagine in terms of an answer to that?*

Q: *If the premise is that she is wrong by not assigning herself status appropriately, then at some point she first started doing that, but that's a non-behavior. Okay, so she was making a choice not to do that, and she was doing this, and it seemed to start way back when her parents were saying, "You're different, you're special," and she bought that.*

P: Again, that's our reconstruction. We can see the pattern going all the way back. Suppose, though, that the marriage with Al had worked out. We wouldn't be talking the same way.

Q: *It strikes me that that's why you have to take a conservative position and go back to the earliest possible point in the case where there is a behavioral move; and with a limited number of behavioral moves that are suggested in that case—*

P: None of them are very plausible, though.

Q: *We have the dating behavior, and we have the high school moves, and then we have the series of marriages.*

P: You could also figure that the whole thing would have gone pretty much the way it did even if her dating behavior hadn't been that. Suppose, for example, her father hadn't let her go out on dates. You could still have had the whole same history. So it's hard to identify that as the strategic place where—

Q: *But the question asks for a strategic place, and what I'm suggesting is that the conservative way to handle it—if you accepted the question as a valid one, and I'm not sure it is—is to look for one of these moves that the other junctures follow from. And that strikes me as one of the places where her move was in the direction of messing up her status assignment.*

P: No. I think the conservative move is to go to the opposite extreme.

Q: *Just the symptoms? When she behaves this way, she's going wrong?*

P: Yeah. Because that's the one place where you can point to and say there's something wrong there. All of the others, you could imagine differ-

ent intervening histories that wouldn't result in anything particular "going wrong". But that's unilluminating.

Q: *Would saying that she was seeing the world in a certain way count as an answer to that question, and that she was going wrong because—*

P: That's not a behavior.

Q: *Well, the behavior is an expressing of seeing the world that way.*

P: All her behaviors would be expressions of that.

Q: *I'm trying to get away from trying to find one event, one thing that she did that would count—when she began to make distinctions and seeing the world.*

Q: *What about a non-behavior. If you don't go right, you're going wrong.*

P: You're thinking of Maxim 9.

Q: *I think the answer is: the first time that she definitely did that in a universal way.*

Q: *That's like "how did you learn to ride a bicycle?" If you can't point to any specific thing that she did, it's just that under those conditions, that is what you learned, and under those conditions*

[change tape—a minute or two lost]

Q: *is going to lead to a series of other sorts of behaviors in which she successfully behaves by not taking responsibility—by seeing herself as not taking responsibility. But here's the first instantiation we have, and that's a behavior. She just closed her eyes and faked it. The question becomes why would she suspect that that sort of thing would absolve her in that way, and you can go back to earlier IDs, but you can imagine how a person could be at a point at which they decide they don't want to be responsible—they don't want to appear responsible. Then they make a move, and they get away with that move, and that sets up an expectancy of success via those sorts of means.*

Q: *Except that that early stuff, about "that was just the way things are", suggests that this non-self-status-assigner started so early that it's not plausible to think of her having done it deliberately.*

Q: *The image that comes to me is of the little kid who's done something wrong, and goes like that [he covers his eyes with his hands] like, "I'm not here because I can't see you." She closes her eyes: "I'm not here, I'm not responsible."*

Q: *The thing about this—it's somewhat conventional behavior. That's not at all uncommon sort of behavior among mid-adolescents, especially in terms of there's a certain kind of communication about "That's what I did," "Oh, that works," kind of thing.*

P: Let me ask another question. Would you generally expect to have a lot of trouble answering this kind of question about, say, one of your clients in the clinic? How about this one [blackboard]: 3. What did Shirley do wrong? Do we have answers to this one? What's the answer?

Q: *Again, it's a not doing something. Because she continues to not assign herself the status to which she could be entitled, were she to assign it to herself.*

P: In fact, the answer to this one is more of the same.

Q: *Only there you could point to specific behaviors—*

Q: *And this is a case of it.*

Q: *There's something really slippery about Shirley, to where you tend not to hold her responsible for a lot of these things. You don't hold her responsible for the death of James or any of the events in her life. It's more—you can get sucked into her depression—she's that—there's something about that that's very coy or very—*

Q: *She's a really powerful non-self-status-assigner. [laughter]*

P: Look—all three questions are the kind that we often ask about any client that we're going to see, or about somebody else's client, the kind of question clinicians typically ask. Where did this person go wrong? What is he doing wrong? What's wrong with this person? When you do an intake interview, this is the kind of thing that you want to come up with. When you do a diagnostic interview, when you use projective tests, this is the kind of thing you want to come up with. And here it is—we have a case

that we've reconstructed in detail, and we're having a hard time giving any answer—to this one [2], at least.

Q: *Part of this is the distinction between state, status, and behavior, in that asking for a specific behavior, any specific behavior, is a manifestation of some ID characteristic; and the traditional answer to those questions is to point to something else in the history as how the person acquired that ID characteristic. And even in traditional theories, it would be very difficult to answer that.*

P: And yet it's the kind of question that we typically ask about clients.

Q: *It strikes me that only the behaviorists would be in a position to feel comfortable about that the solution to his problem is an answer to that question—the second question.*

P: As I say, clinicians in general typically ask this kind of thing, not just –

Q: *Clinicians in general are eclectic and ill-trained in theory and don't take their questions seriously.*

P: Don't disqualify them so fast. They may have sense. Give them the benefit of the doubt.

Q: *The answer to "Where did S go wrong?" is usually—doesn't usually focus upon S as an acting, behaving person. It talks about S as a member of family, a member—*

P: Very often, you can identify strategic places, a strategic turning point, etc.—

Q: *But that's typical of criminal behavior, behaviors of that sort, in which the behavior itself is the thing that's wrong. Then we point to that: she joined this group of people who engaged in those activities, joining this group led to those behaviors.*

P: Or she chose this over that. So it's not the kind of question that's unanswerable. Sometimes you do answer it, and sometimes there's a strong point in—

Q: *But I'm wondering if the issue there is pathology or responsibility for*

specific behaviors, like criminal behaviors.

P: You ask this about clients, and irrespective of who else you ask it of, here is Shirley, who was a client, and we can't really answer that.

Q: *Well, the kind of question you'd have trouble with that—another example would be someone who is very passive-aggressive, and you would say what was wrong with this person—you'd have a hard time. He'd say he had certain feelings—like "I have this rotten feeling every time I see this person", and that's what's going to get you into the feelings instead of the characteristics of that person, of the interactions, because it's easier to deal with feelings. And it would be the same problem: what did they do wrong? Or where did they go wrong? It would have the same kinds of problems as we're having here. So what's in common?*

P: I don't know.

Q: *The question is demanded by Maxim 9, if nothing else. Her behavior did not go right; it went wrong, so there should be an explanation. It's just that in a lot of cases, you can't get the explanation because either there was no single critical event, nobody recalls the critical event, or there's a whole series.*

P: How about inventing a hypothetical quick example where we can answer this question and see what that would look like.

Q: *Criminal behavior might be an example.*

P: No, pathology. Suppose you have a situation where you say, "This person typically puts other people down and gets put down in return; and winds up alienated; and is now suffering from loneliness." Now there's a fast pattern that you could say, "Yeah, this is what he does wrong." And it clearly accounts for the central thing that's going on. And it would be something he does—it's not an ID characteristic; it's specifically something the person is doing wrong. And accounts like that are part of our bread and butter. We use accounts like that—we encounter them, we generate them all over the place. So it isn't that this is a peculiar question.

Q: *Weren't we talking about the second question?*

Q: *Yeah—that's the "What is the person doing wrong now?"*

P: Over here, you say, “He started to do this with his wife, and look where he wound up, and now they’re coming for marriage counseling, and that’s where he went wrong.” You see, he could have been doing it other places, but you identify his starting to do it there, as the place where he went wrong. Because that’s what visibly leaves him with the problem that he brings to you.

Q: *That’s where the direct connections break down, beyond that.*

P: Yeah.

Q: *So why can’t something similar to that be done with Shirley? She began this pattern. In terms of our relevance, when—I guess, either in her first marriage or ... I guess you might be able to take it back to her childhood.*

Q: *But the infant is a non-self-status-assigner.*

P: Yeah. So if she never got out of that, there was no point where she went wrong.

Q: *So when did she stop being an infant? It’s hard to find any place.*

Q: *Or you might be able to go back, if you had a number of developmental clusters of behaviors that occurred, at what point did you start telling your parents that you’re not a person who goes to bed at seven o’clock, you’re a person who goes to bed at eight o’clock, like little kids do—that kind of status-assignment, that usually happens in this time period. Did it happen for you? Yes, or no, and at least narrow it down somewhere—toilet training—?*

P: Wouldn’t you be inclined to say, with Shirley, that her whole life was wrong? That that’s why you can’t tell where she went wrong, because the whole thing was wrong?

Q: *That’s where the nicest answer was his answer when he said like, she didn’t choose her parents. She went wrong by being a person in that setting.*

P: So you could say it wasn’t particularly what she did that was wrong; it’s how she was that was wrong. And that’s why for her we don’t have this kind of answer.

Q: *So you’ve given up.*

P: No. It means that as a therapist, what you have to do is to change her, rather than change what she does. If what's wrong is the way she is and not what she does, then what you have to change is the way she is and not what she does.

Q: *So if what's wrong is an ID characteristic, the questions become less relevant—at what point did you get that ID characteristic? Who knows? At what point did you start engaging in those behaviors may be answerable.*

Q: *On the other hand, there's a problem with the second question again, because the ID characteristics of infants and young children aren't usually ones that they have a whole lot to do with. They're ones that almost get laid on them by their environment and by their initial sort of setting. Later on, in therapy, you almost can say you find out what ID characteristics you wish, and how do you want to get to them. Whether you're successful or not, that in essence is one of the things you're doing. She can't assume responsibility for those initial ID characteristics—we would point to those as being the sorts of things that make her adult behavior intelligible, and yet those aren't things that we could say, "Where did you go wrong?" in the manner that you could if you talked about behaviors.*

P: On the other hand, you can have all of that true and still also have a case where you could point to where it went wrong and what she'd done.

Q: *That third question ["What did Shirley do wrong?"] is still a valid question, then.*

P: Again, my main purpose in facing you with these is to sensitize you to the fact that you can answer this one [1] for Shirley, but it's hard to come up with a decent answer to these [2 and 3], and we note that by distinguishing between problems of how she is and problems of how she does and what she does.

Q: *Isn't it usually the case that what she ###—that's not a valid question?*

P: A lot of times it isn't. On the other hand, a lot of times it is.

Q: *Coming up with ID characteristics, you refer back to the behaviors, and I can't see how you wouldn't come up with that same thing each time—*

what you are and what you do.

P: People do things that get them into trouble, but also people live lives that are troublesome. You can have a non-pathological person who is doing things that get him into trouble. You can have a pathological person who isn't particularly in any troubles—he's just pathological.

Q: *When you're trying to conceptualize what's going on, and base it on what the person's doing—*

P: What I'm saying is that you have to look at both; that you can't translate one into the other any more than you can translate ID characteristics into behavior.

Q: *How can you tell what the ID characteristics are, then, without relying on that?*

P: You rely on behavior, but you can't equate it with behavior. You use the behavior as a way of telling how they are. But remember, that ID characteristic is part of the behavior itself. That's why you have to look at behavior itself. But again, think of how it translates into differences in the therapist's task: one, to change the behavior; and two, to change the person. There's a clear difference in those two kinds of tasks. So you want to be clear about that kind of thing, because if it's a problem of how she is, you're not going to get far trying to change her behavior. If it's all her behavior, then that would need to be changed.

Q: *Could we have examples of that sort of thing?*

P: We have one. That's why I'm using Shirley. It's exactly what I've been doing. For Shirley, we can't really give this kind of answer [to question 2]; we can easily give that kind of answer [to question 1]. With Shirley, what needs to be changed is this [non-self-status-assigner], not any of the particular things that she does.

Q: *What about James?*

P: I'm not sure what you would say about James. To begin with, James did not come to a clinic with a problem, so we don't have that resource. We can't say James was in trouble. We said he was in an impossible bind, but that's different.

Q: *Is that how you qualify if somebody's in trouble—that they come to a clinic?*

P: No, I'm saying if somebody comes to a clinic, they've identified some trouble that they're in, so you have at least that much to go on. Whereas if you look down the hall and pick the first person that you met, you might not be able to say that this guy has a problem, that he's in trouble. You need a basis, and we don't have that kind of basis with James.

Q: *This suggests the battles between the behaviorists and the analysts—I can see a psychoanalyst not caring about the behavior; they want to change the person. And the behaviorists say, forget all that—we'll change the behavior and those will change. But that sets up a dichotomy that I'm not sure is—*

P: That's what I'm suggesting here, that there is a contrast, but you can't do one by working on the other, necessarily. And if you ignore one in favor of the other, either one, you only succeed at the other by chance.

Q: *It sounds like one is really in the ID parameter and the other is in the performance parameter*

P: [blackboard] W, K, KH, P, A, ID

You see, when it comes to what you're doing wrong, you might identify it as wrong anywhere.

Q: *But some of those sound more like know-how than it does performative—*

P: Remember, all of these have a corresponding ID characteristic. You can say she's got the wrong set of values, the wrong knowledge, the wrong set of competencies.

Q: *Is that where you wind up with that distinction between “that's what she did wrong” versus “the way she is”?*

P: No. What she did wrong is more the wrong choice in the set of social practices, the wrong deliberate action.

Q: *I'm in trouble distinguishing between who she is and what she does, and it sounds like that kind of distinction.*

P: Yeah, it's a distinction between behavior and ID characteristics, and they're not the same kind of thing. Behavior is an episode, and ID characteristics aren't.

Q: *Take back to James—here's someone, you can say—you wouldn't call him in trouble or having trouble, but there seems to be a limit to his behavior potential there, you might want to call him pathological in that sense. It doesn't seem right—*

P: It's kind of like having a guy who comes back from the front with shell shock and saying, "He must have been pathological, because look what happened". Unless you assess the degree of stress, just the fact that he came to no good end doesn't imply that he was pathological.

Q: *In terms of his behavior potential—*

P: Keep in mind he was doing pretty well, until—. So that's why I say, we just don't have a good case for James.

Now think of this difference, this contrast between something wrong with the way a person is and something wrong with what they do. One reason for dragging this in, right off the bat, is that if you look at the images on that mimeographed sheet [see Appendix II], just about all of them will be either a way of formulating what somebody does wrong or a way of formulating what's wrong with how somebody is or a way of drawing the contrast between those two for somebody who is confusing one with the other. You might say, this contrast is one of the major ways of introducing some order into that long list. To get it all back, you can talk about *what's* wrong, that the images are ways of formulating what's wrong, and saying what's wrong will be neutral as to whether you're talking about what's wrong with the person or what's wrong with what he does. The images are also a partial solution to the general problem of diagnosis and its relation to pathology, or to treatment. And the problem is: what's the connection between the two? And the difficulty is that if you use standard diagnostic notions, once you've got the diagnosis, you're still left asking, "Okay, now what do I do?" Whereas, ideally, the diagnosis should fairly well tell you what to do, because that's its purpose—that's one of its major purposes. It turns out that the DSM diagnoses are generally for administrative

purposes—that's how they're mainly used, and so they're not of great utility to psychotherapy.

Q: *Did that list originate under pressure from insurance companies? Because I'm told that that is what happened.*

P: No. It's like the development of the intelligence tests in World War I. In World War II, they knew they were going to have a lot of casualties of various sorts, and they needed some way of keeping count of how many were in each category. That's why the DSM is Diagnostic and Statistical Manual. Its main use is as a statistical device for counting how many people fall in each of these categories, rather than as a diagnostic for treatment. That's why it's mainly used for administrative purposes. Also why—by insurance companies.

Q: *One of the current versions is that the insurance companies were complaining when people were billing psychotherapy, that they didn't have regular diagnostic features.*

Q: *Could you explain where the people who put out the DSM went wrong? [laughter] Because why would you want to count those different categories?*

P: Because people did.

Q: *You can imagine, working from a medical model, and planning on your hospital appropriations for the next 20 years, that you'd want to have some statistical notion of what percentage you have of psychophysiological problems, versus anxiety/neurotic, versus psychotic sort of problems, just in terms of your hospital planning.*

P: Just to take a crude example, if you were diagnosing Shirley, would you say she was a character disorder or a neurotic? Even such crude categories—could you say with confidence that Shirley was one and not the other? It's not that easy, is it? Because, in some ways, she looks like one; and in some ways, she looks like the other. She has obsessive thoughts, and there is a category called "obsession". On the other hand, you look at her whole history, and you say "character disorder".

Q: *An obsessional character.*

P: Not an obsessional character. Okay, so that's a difficulty, because as a therapist, this just leaves you hanging, and you have to come up with something else, because that set of categories is not about to do you all that much good. Also, even if it were designed for therapists, it's still too crude. Part of what is wrong with the medical model is the notion that for every pattern of behavior, there is a single, distinctive etiology, which once you know the pattern of behavior, you also know the etiology, and so you know how to treat it. You get the same pattern of behavior for all kinds of reasons. So it's fairly well a foregone conclusion that you couldn't improve the DSM much by doing it over again the way a psychotherapist would. You'd still have the problem that the categories are too broad, that they don't do justice to the individual in a way that connects with your treatment.

So what do you have? What do you do? By and large, you use the theory, and you muddle along. Or you have techniques, and you use them. And that's not very satisfactory. Now the material on these mimeographed pages is an attempt to draw on some experience, draw on some of the background conceptualization, to try to do several jobs that are needful for psychotherapists. One, to have some systematic way of talking about what you do as a therapist, to have some technically useful devices for saying what went wrong in a way that connects with what's to be done. And it's clear that one of the things that's needed is a kind of description that is much more specific than diagnostic categories as we know them. Again, take the analysis of Shirley. What we wound up saying was much more specific there than any set of diagnostic categories.

Q: *It's interesting that a lot of the research that's been done on these systems is totally behaviorist, in terms of describing similar behaviors. And I was trying to think why they weren't capturing these ###. Would a new system have to capture the behavioral vs. ID characteristics?*

P: No, because you need to work with both. You need to be able to deal with ID characteristics, but you need to be able to deal with behavior. More importantly, you need to be able to deal with behavior patterns. You see, when it comes to saying "What did somebody do wrong?", you remember the example I gave was not a single behavior. It was a behavioral pattern. And the behavioral pattern included both what the person did,

and what somebody else did, and what effect it had on him, and where he wound up.

So one of the requirements, then, is description at the right level of specificity. The other requirement is that they connect to what somebody does—it connects with what you do as a therapist, or it connects to what the client does, either way. Because what helps the client may be something you do, but it may be something he does. It may be something you both do.

If you look on the list, it's divided into two main parts. One is Diagnosis, and the other says Therapist Devices. The biggest lists are Heuristics and Images. Both Heuristics and Images are things that a therapist can present to a client, and thereby have access there. Secondly, both the Heuristics and the Images—the key notion is that you're creating or presenting or communicating a concept to the client. Once you have gotten that across, then you can use that as a communication link to do a variety of things. There's no single use for these. It gives you a link in terms of which you can talk. For example, if you present the image of the Two Mayors, you may be using it to then suggest to the client that he's like one of those Mayors and not the other. Or you may be using it to ask him which he is like; or which he'd rather be like; or which of these somebody else is like; or what it would be like if he were doing it one way rather than the other. Or you might be using it to advise him to try to be this way rather than that way; or to warn him about the consequences of doing it this way rather than that way; or to inform him that most other people don't know about this, and, therefore, that explains why they don't do some of the things he'd like to see them do. So you can use it in all kinds of ways. And that's one of the differences between using images and having techniques. The image is not a technique; your use of it is not a technique. That's why I call them "Devices". A piece of chalk is a device, not a technique. It's a thing that can be used in a variety of ways.

The difference between Images and the Heuristics is a simple difference: all of the Heuristics are part of the descriptive formulation. There are simply parts of it which can be extracted and presented, just as in that package, to a client. Whereas the Images are not part of the descriptive formulation, and they're mainly taken from the general culture. And they are things you anticipate that the client will be familiar with, which is to

say, you don't use them unless you think the client will recognize them. In effect, they're ways of evoking from the client, and crystallizing, something he already knows, bringing out into the open and clarifying a pattern that he is familiar with, that he knows about.

Q: *We use Maxims that way, sometimes, don't we—as heuristics?*

Q: *Yeah. Wittgenstein makes the remark that the task of the philosopher is to assemble reminders for particular purposes—we could paraphrase that in the sense that part of the task of the therapist is to assemble reminders for particular purposes.*

P: The presentation of an image is like a reminder of something you already know. And it's not just reminder: it's something that you're now going to use in a further way.

The other thing about the images is that most of them, if not all, have a fairly direct connection between the pattern presented and what one does about it, what there is to do about it, what can be done about it. The second category, of Therapist Devices (you notice, the longest list), says Formats. You see that (1) is Ordinary Conversation. What that indicates is that in a therapy interaction, the rules that govern are those that govern ordinary conversation, unless you set up one of the others. You're bringing to bear, and the client is bringing to bear, a whole lot of knowledge about how people talk with one another, and you're operating by those rules. Rules that say, for example, "Asking a question calls for giving an answer." There's all kinds of implicit rules and norms that you've mastered, and all of this comes into play. Which means that you deal with each other the way people do deal with each other in conversation. And you go to special forms for special purposes, and the rest are special forms for special purposes.

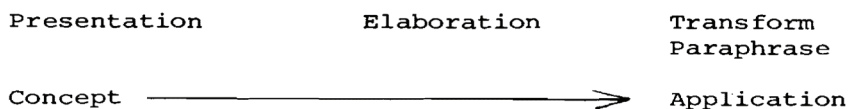
Let's look at the list of Images, now. Let's look at (12), which is one of the simplest ones. That's called Balance. Think of two parents with a child. Think of the parents initially disagreeing somewhat about how strict to be with the child; and the father thinks the mother is too lenient with the kid; and the mother thinks the father is too harsh with the kid. So the mother begins to compensate for the father's harshness by being more lenient. Then, when she does that, the father begins to compensate for the mother's leniency by being more harsh. Then, when he does that, the

mother becomes even more lenient to compensate for the father's greater harshness, and the father becomes even more harsh; and it goes on that way until you find them at polar opposites, where the father is as harsh as he can be, and the mother is as lenient as she can be, and they completely disagree with each other.

Q: *Does that lead to Hatfield and McCoy?*

P: No. What you've done is describe a positive feedback system, where you've got a situation which generates a move that makes sense, and then that generates a compensating move, and that generates a compensating move, and so forth.

One of the things about this example is: nobody is puzzled by it. I have yet to meet even a puzzled look in presenting it to a client, because it's such a familiar sort of thing and, in a familiar setting, that the logic of it comes through loud and clear. So that's one reason why I think it works, because it's a simple one, it's easily—so the initial stage of working with an image is: you present the image [blackboard]:



Sometimes there's an elaboration—an optional elaboration, where if you want to, you can add certain things, but you don't have to—you can just stay with the basic presentation.

The images are taken from the common fund of knowledge, and that's why everybody is familiar with them, or you choose them that way, but by virtue of that, they're not directly applicable to the client. So the next move is to take the presentation, and transform it, or paraphrase it, in terms of the details of the client's life and situation. You first introduce the concept, and then you apply it in a way that's relevant to the particulars of the client. One of the applications here might be, "It looks as though this is what has been going on between you and your business partner when it comes to investing the money. You want to take risks, he wants to be conservative, you take even more risks, he becomes even more conservative, and you're at this standoff that's creating so much hassle for you." Or

if you're dealing with a couple, you can apply it directly, except that maybe it applies to spending money, not to children. Maybe they're hassling over spending money. There's any number of things that could be the topic, the issue between them, that fit this same pattern.

Q: *You look for additional things that fit the pattern, or—*

P: No, no. You bring the pattern in when you see something in their lives that fits. Then you bring the pattern out so as to clarify that for them.

Q: *So that argument about discipline—you'd bring that out by saying, "That's what you're doing"?*

P: That's what's going on. There's one of your choices. Do you want to say, "That's what you're doing," or do you want to say [change tape] Sometimes it happens accidentally—you don't want to say that they're doing it.

Q: *It's less provocative—*

P: Right.

There's an elaboration here that you can use, namely, that either party can change the pattern by acting unilaterally. If the wife becomes less lenient, the husband will have less to compensate for, and you could expect him to become less harsh. If she then becomes even less lenient, you can expect him to become even less harsh. So that whole development is one that, in principle, can be reversed back to the original set of differences, by just one of those parties acting on his own. It doesn't require the consent and cooperation of the other. And notice that this falls under the heading of what have they been *doing* wrong, not what's wrong with them. So by presenting this form, indeed you avoid the attribution of anything concerning their character, and leave it at the level of, "Here's what you're doing wrong—here's what's getting you into trouble. And here's what you can do about it." So the "here's what you can do about it" is an optional elaboration, and you bring that in, if they don't see it themselves.

Q: *Do you usually go with describing it as a behavior, versus a ###*

Q: *No, I guess that's a tautology.*

P: No. It just automatically goes with this example that you're talking about a behavior. "Here's what is going wrong" is clearly not their character you're talking about, it's the interaction that you're talking about. That's a behavior pattern.

Notice that if this is what has gone wrong, then this is all that needs to be changed for things to go right. You don't have to analyze their entire history or character, or anything else to deal with this. You may need to get a history, etc., in order to have some idea of whether this is, in fact, the only thing that's going wrong; but if it is, you don't need to do any more than change it in those ways, and it may well clear up the whole business. Notice the qualification: if that's the thing that's gone wrong, and *if* they see it this way, then it's relatively easy for them to do what's needed to bring it back to being okay.

Q: *It makes a more clear specification of what's wrong, then, too, because if it doesn't work, something else is wrong, too.*

P: Now if they have trouble doing the reverse—if the wife has trouble being less lenient, and he has trouble being less harsh—then you've got a different problem going. But you take it in steps. You first—if that's what's wrong, you take that that way; then if they try and can't, then they've got a different problem, namely, the guy just can't bring himself to be any more lenient. That's a different problem. Because there, that one may work out that he's so mad at her by now and so bitter about it, that that is more important than just the basic ###. And you find that out by first trying the Balance pattern and finding what difficulty they have working with it; and from that generating that, indeed, there's more in the picture, and here's now what that looks like.

Q: *The pathology sometimes generates its own reasons.*

P: You see, one of the things that you frequently find there is that it's become a struggle between them. And one thing about a struggle is that there's winning and losing. And one of the things that keeps people from resolving struggles is that if you do certain things to make it better, you've lost, and the other person has won. And if you're really feeling bitter, you'd rather have the trouble go on than let that son of a bitch win.

Q: *That's a situation where you apply another image to that situation?*

P: Either another image or something else. As I say, you start with what seems to be *the* problem, and if there's trouble working it, that will then generate some new descriptions as to what else is in the picture.

Q: *Hatfield and McCoy, perhaps?*

P: Yeah.

Q: *So if they say, "No way—he does it on purpose, just to get at me," then it's not a question of balance any more.*

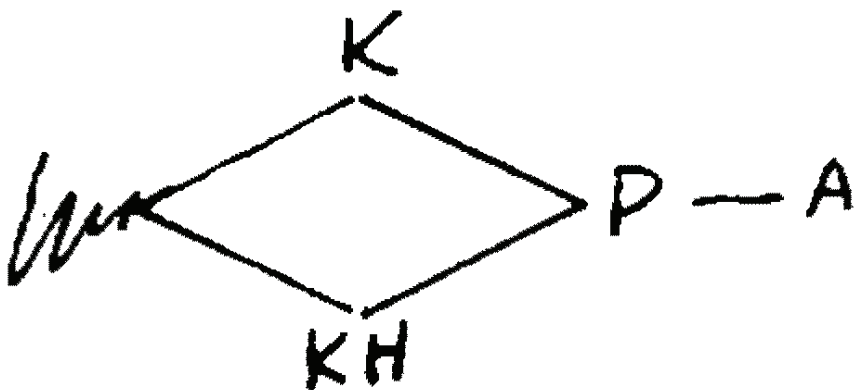
Q: *It's like the old family theories, and the contemporary family theories tend to be systems theories, and this is what takes the place of that.*

P: It doesn't take the place of that. It's a small unit. It has features of systems, but if you have a system problem, then you go to more than just an image. Usually then you go to one of the larger units, like that pattern.

Q: *When you have two people starting off from a position like this, and they're getting wider apart, in order to apply this elaboration where one partner acts in the matter, you might get back to where it's okay—that's assuming it was okay to begin with.*

P: No, you bring it back to the original level of difference. Then you only have that to worry about, whereas what you came in with is this polar opposites, head-knocking.

Okay, that's Image number 12. Let's look at the one that's listed (1). These things are sort of roughly in chronological order, because the list has grown by accretion. And as a matter of fact, during the time that we've been here, I've mentioned a number of others that I've said, "Add it to the list." We're going to need a composite of those additions—I think by now there's about six, our last one being Checking with City Hall, which was this. We'll get down to the end of the list, and when we do, we'll pool our resources.



Little White Balls is a way of bringing out either [blackboard] this kind of behavior, or this kind—namely, performance description or activity description. This is the notation that you would use in representing a case where somebody is going through the motions of doing something. Somebody who is going through the motions is somebody who's making the appropriate distinctions, bringing to bear the proper competence, engaging in the proper performances, achieving the proper achievements, but there's nothing in it for him motivationally. I've just got a new phrase today for that. One of the clinic clients came up with it. He said, "Putting in his time." And that's another common idiom for going through the motions, doing something that is intrinsically meaningless, for an ulterior purpose.

This one, you often give clients who describe themselves in these terms, who present to you a picture that life is meaningless for them, they're just going through the motions and getting no satisfaction. They're just sort of nowhere. And one of the terms that comes to mind is alienation. Somebody who's alienated is somebody who doesn't find meaning, doesn't get satisfaction out of doing the things that are done. And he does some number of them, just to go along with the gag, but he's just putting in his time, just going through the motions. Now the image itself—try it this way. Suppose that you walk in and ask me, "Hey, what have you been doing this morning?" and I say, "Well, I've been walking around on grass and knocking little white balls into holes in the ground, and then doing the whole thing all over again." If I said that, you'd probably say, "Why the hell

would anybody want to do that?” And indeed, you’d be right. Why the hell would anybody want to walk around on grass knocking little white balls into holes in the ground, and then do it again? On the other hand, if I said I’d been playing golf, you wouldn’t ask why the hell would anybody want to do that. You’d know why somebody would want to do that, because you know that golf is something that people do appreciate. Not everybody, but it is the kind of thing that people do indeed appreciate and get something out of it.

Q: *When people talk about golf who don’t appreciate it, they usually see it as hitting little white balls into holes in the ground.*

P: Okay, that’s the initial presentation of Little White Balls, a presentation of the language and the contrast between talking about knocking little white balls into holes in the ground versus talking about playing golf. Notice the difference between those two is the difference between an activity description and an intrinsic social practice description. There’s an optional elaboration there that you almost always need, and that is this: You say, “Talking about golf as ‘knocking little white balls into holes in the ground’ is a burlesque. It’s burlesquing golf to call it that way. It’s burlesquing it to present it in a description that makes it meaningless. And any form of human behavior is susceptible to this kind of burlesque. Comedians get a lot of mileage out of it. For example, think of describing somebody as a pencil-pusher, or a paper-shuffler. Either one of those has the same features as describing little white balls and holes in the ground. It’s getting at the concrete performance that under that description is meaningless. Or describing somebody as a desk jockey. All of these have the same features. So any form of human behavior can be made fun of, burlesqued, made meaningless, by describing it that way.” That’s the elaboration, and you frequently want to give it.

Then the transformation is quite clear. This is how you see things in this domain. This is how you see things in your whole life. This is how you see things at home with your family. This is how things get you at work. Or: this is how you describe things going along at work, but I don’t think that’s really the way it is. Or: this is how you’ve made your work situation, and it looks like the reason is that if you didn’t make it meaningless,

it would be too painful, it would be unbearable. Or: this is why your wife doesn't respond to you—she's seeing things that way. Again, there's any number of possible applications to the person's life. So when you see this kind of thing, and want the client to have a grasp of it, you first present the image, and then transform to whatever part of his life fits. Then when he has a grasp of that part of it—

This one doesn't have such a clear implication for what to do. It has a much stronger implication for what's wrong. However, in the case where you say, "This is how you're describing it, but I don't think it's so," it does have an implication, namely, that's not something that needs to be dealt with, because it isn't true. You don't really see it that way—what we need to deal with now is why you would need to describe it that way, why you would need to make it meaningless. And that's where one of the answers is, "Because it would be too painful."

Q: *You do seem to be putting it into the active, that "you're making it meaningless", and that looks like a way to begin to dig out from underneath this guy's position, but what I'm wondering about is: when the client comes in with the idea that, in effect, he's not playing golf, he is hitting little white balls into holes in the ground, and that's all his life is. Usually this comes in somewhere with a comment about how he's going to kill himself, that things in fact don't have meaning, that he doesn't see things as having meaning.*

P: If he says he's going to kill himself, you go the route usually that, "Well, something seems to have meaning, so your story that nothing does is a little shaky; let's look into it further."

Q: *Then the guy decides he doesn't want to do that, either, because that's meaningless, too, but that life in essence is meaningless.*

P: Okay, then you might—again, remember the elaboration is that you can make anything meaningless, that way. Come back to, "Well, not everybody appreciates golf. For some people golf is, indeed, knocking little white balls into holes in the ground; but the guy who doesn't appreciate golf may get a kick out of bridge, and if it isn't bridge, it will be baseball or fishing or painting pictures or something."

Q: *Those are just games.*

P: Painting pictures is not.

Q: *Yeah, that's just a game, too, it's just putting images on the canvas.*

Q: *It's just the little white balls—painting is just like pushing little white balls around.*

P: Then you lean on your authority as an expert on human behavior, and say, “There ain’t nobody who couldn’t find some substantial satisfaction in the range of things that are available. There are enough different things available that different kinds of people do appreciate, enjoy, find meaningful, that nobody is in a position of having nothing available. Therefore, if you’re in that position, you’re putting yourself in that position.”

Q: *That starts to sound like: it's this way, because if it wasn't this way it would be too painful.*

P: Yeah. Or: nobody is really in that position. If you find yourself in that position now, start looking. There’s something out there for you.

Q: *One of the things I've found with this sort of case is the person who begins talking that way usually is talking that way from a position of pride: how he as an observer sees how things are so meaningless. You can challenge that position by saying, “Well, you're missing something.” And a way to build on that is to ask the person, “We're talking about things that don't work, but some things clearly do work.” And he fights that trap and tells me about those things. Then you have your choice about how those things could appear meaningless to others, but you see them as meaningful; what makes the difference there? And you start talking about the application of that vision, so to speak, to other forms of life. What you're doing is, you're building on the fact that there he sees more than what a person would see from other positions, because he's coming from a position of “because I'm so cool, because I see so well, I see that these things are in essence meaningless.” So what you do is, you bind him to the claim that seeing is valuable, that he has this skill, and what you point out is that he isn't using it very well, that he's using it better for things that work for him. What you do is, you catch him in his pride.*

P: Remember, we’re dealing with bits and pieces here, not whole people. That’s part of the point in it, that you can separate out what he’s

doing wrong from his whole history, his whole character structure, etc., and just deal with that. The images are ways of bringing certain things out, but they're relatively small, limited things, and that's why we have several categories. Internal Dialogues, Slogans, and Scenarios—the main difference between those, they're all like images, but they're bigger and bigger packages. The Internal Dialogues are bigger packages than Images, and Scenarios is in effect what we did for Shirley—that is, a complete life pattern. So the Images are just for getting pieces. And you do that, for example, if you have to build up something a piece at a time, these are the kind of pieces that you can put together. Or you do that when what's wrong is of a very limited sort, and it's this kind.

Q: *###—a possible reason he would see things that way, or—*

P: One of them is you might use the Kissinger—the variations on that. Because when ### usually some variation on that. Or you could try Move 2's, which give meaning to what he does, convey that to him, and that may do the job, too.

Q: *You did a variation on this image once, concerning a deck of cards.*

P: As you can see, there's nothing sacred about golf here. You could do it with all kinds of things. Once you've got the general idea, you might need to construct a parallel image rather than the golf one, and there was a case where it seemed appropriate to do that. That was with somebody who came in with this kind of story, that everything is meaningless, and what he described of his typical day is that he slept till about noon—he doesn't work, and he's 29 years old, and basically has never had a job in his life, is living with his parents—he sleeps till about noon, and gets up and has breakfast; moseys around a little, watches TV; and about four o'clock makes dinner for his parents, who come home at five, and then they have dinner; and then he either sits around and watches TV again, or he goes to the bridge club and plays bridge for several hours; and then if he goes there, he'll usually have a couple of drinks afterwards; and then comes home and either watches TV or reads a magazine, then goes to bed. And this goes on day after day, and it's been going on that way for a long time. So you look at that and you say, "There's something wrong here," and he comes in saying, "I'm losing it. Here's what my life is like. What's wrong? Is there any hope?"

It seemed pretty clear that the most meaningful part of his life was the bridge club.

Q: *The drinks afterwards?*

P: In terms of what he said, it wasn't that; that was just incidental. It was playing bridge, and he was a pretty good bridge player. So I redid the image in terms of bridge, and talked about shuffling little pieces of cardboard, handing them around to people, talking about clubs and suits and numbers, and then handing them out again, and picking them up and laying them down, and then doing it all over again. And then made the same comparison, introducing it in the same way, "If I came in and asked you what you were doing, and you said 'This,' I'd say, 'What the hell would anybody want to do that for?' On the other hand, if you said, 'I'm playing bridge,' I'd know." So the whole image went in terms of bridge and shuffling little pieces of cardboard and handing them around.

Q: *And the next day, he gave up bridge. [laughter]*

P: No. What I did was use the fact—this was an initial interview, by the way, the first time I ever saw him. This was his opening line, that things are meaningless. I said, "Now, look. Your whole life is like that—shuffling little pieces of cardboard. What you described about sitting around, watching TV, cooking dinner, going out, having a beer, etc., all of that sounds an awful lot like shuffling little pieces of cardboard. And that's what's wrong with your life. Now, you know the difference between playing bridge and shuffling little pieces of cardboard. And you know that when you're playing bridge, there isn't any question about why you hand them out, or what you say, or why you say what you say, or when you stop, or why you do it again. The whole thing makes sense. Well, the rest of your life could make sense that way. There is that kind of sense to be made, and you can do it. So there's hope for you." It was one of my principal messages. Because he came in saying, "Is there any hope?" And given this elaboration, I was in a position to say, "Hell, yes, and you can see how."

Q: *But he was initially presenting bridge as playing bridge and not as shuffling pieces of cardboard.*

P: I know. That's why I presented that image of the contrast between

playing bridge and shuffling little pieces of cardboard, and then appealed to the fact that he did appreciate bridge and could, therefore, tell the difference between playing bridge and shuffling little pieces of cardboard.

Q: *But once given that difference and his initial complaint of having no meaning—*

P: His whole life pattern didn't have meaning. The playing bridge was the one thing he had during the day that had any meaning at all.

Q: *Yeah, but don't clients come back and say, "What's missing in the other stuff that I got in bridge?" And how are you going to get that to him?*

P: At that stage, it was enough for him that he could see the difference, and could appreciate how there was hope—that there was a whole domain of meaning that he was missing, and that that's what was wrong.

Q: *Where do you go from there?*

P: The next thing I did with it was to say, "Mostly when people are that way, it's either because they never had anything different, or because it would be too painful if they saw what it meant." And then I said, "It looks like the second one with you. It looks like the way it happened with you is that it would be too painful, and so I'm not going to bug you to talk about things you don't want to talk about." That, too, was both something that conveyed understanding, gave him some understanding, but also offered a different kind of reassurance, namely, that the process of therapy was one that he could put up with. The first reassurance is, "There's hope for you. Your condition is understandable. You can understand it. And here it is." The second one is, "Therapy is not going to be so painful that you can't take it."

Q: ###?

P: That you never had anything different, it's always been like that—like Shirley never became a self-status-assigner, rather than becoming that and losing it.

Q: *He'd never had a job, and so at what point were you able to make that discrimination? It seems to be the case where he had never learned those sort of satisfactions.*

P: What he described as the family history provided pretty good indications of a conflict with his parents. That that was partly why he never had a job—that they were pushing him in certain ways that he was resisting. But also, they weren't giving him things that he needed, and the whole thing was very painful.

Q: *Did you say in your description that that had been the way it had always been, not having a job, and never—*

P: No, I said “for years”. He was 29 years old, and had been doing this for something like eight years.

Q: *You said that it's clear that playing cards was important to him—*

P: Not important. That was the one thing he appreciated, the one thing that wasn't meaningless. And that's why I picked that, because I wanted to appeal to his understanding of *something* that wasn't meaningless, and to draw the contrast between the meaningful description of that, which he would recognize, and the meaningless description. That he would also appreciate the difference; that he would appreciate that playing bridge is not just shuffling little pieces of cardboard and passing them around.

Q: *The reason for that is that he felt that it was important.*

P: No. It's just that he was a bridge player. For him, it wasn't just going through motions. And that was the only place in all of the things he told me that I had some confidence that he wasn't just going through the motions. When it came to communicating the difference, I latched onto that because anything else would have run the risk of him saying, “Yeah, it is meaningless.” Or, “What do you mean, golf is more than knocking little white balls into holes— isn't that what it is?”

Q: *Don't you run the risk, though, of getting somebody who comes in feeling pretty alienated and turned out by everything, and you use that, and he goes, “Yeah, bridge is about as meaningless as watching TV and sitting around the house. You're right.”*

P: No, because you're appealing to the fact that, in fact, it isn't. You're presenting it that way, and you're presenting it that he knows that. So he's going to have a hard time reacting that way.

Q: *I can see that move as being very hostile.*

Q: *That's a bogus issue, unless—it's a logical possibility that the guy could say, "Yeah, I guess that's meaningless, too." What you're appealing to is that, in fact, he knows differently, he has a vision, he sees this as encompassing facts other than the facts of just playing cards. He's not going to give up those facts now. He's coming to therapy—he's acting in the direction of—*

P: One reason for the appeal is that people who come in with an alienation story, very often they are kind of confrontive, and it is a point of pride, and, in fact, they say, "Prove to me that life is meaningful." And there's no way to prove it to them. So you get around that by appealing to something where they already know it is, and they don't need a proof.

Q: *Would you go over that second step again, about where you go from bringing out the distinction—that the person has the ability to make that distinction, how that's hopeful?*

P: Well, he can make the distinction between shuffling pieces of cardboard and playing bridge, and he knows that somebody who sees that as just shuffling cardboard is missing something that's there to be had. Therefore, if the rest of his life looks like shuffling cardboard, he can see how it could be the case that he's simply missing something that's there to be had. And that's the reassuring element.

Again, the specific content of the image is never sacred. In principle, you can make up images fresh every time. Having a readymade stock of them makes it easier.

Q: *So you're relying on the description, and the fact that people describe certain things because they don't understand certain aspects—*

P: No, they don't appreciate certain things. Somebody might understand bridge perfectly, and wonder why the hell anybody would play it. It's not necessarily lack of understanding; it's lack of appreciation.

Q: *But you're saying that there is some appreciation for everything that you do, and that his problem is not describing, but of leaving out.*

P: No. You can go through a lot of motions with some very simple ulterior motivation, like surviving.

Q: *What do you mean by “appreciation”? Is it just when you’re talking in the motivation parameter, the way he appreciates? Is that it?*

P: No, remember the thing about an intrinsic practice is you don’t have to have an ulterior motive to do it. Whatever satisfaction there is, is from doing it. That’s fundamental, because otherwise you’d have an infinite regress of behaviors and motivations. So whatever satisfaction people get out of life, it comes from participating in intrinsic practices *that they appreciate*, that they see the point of, that don’t come through to them as just going through motions. So somebody who comes in and is not getting satisfaction out of life is somebody who has a deficit in appreciating social practices—at least, the ones that he’s engaging in. And that’s why one alternative is to get him on to others that he will appreciate. Then his life is satisfying.

Another is to figure that it’s not accidental that he’s doing it, and then work on that. The line that says, “You’re doing this because it would be too painful,” would not suggest that you try him out on new sorts of practices, because he’d do it there, too.

Q: *Could you elaborate on the guy who’s finding it too painful?*

P: Well, take James. One of the options for somebody like James is to throw up his hands and say, “Oh, shit, life is meaningless.” If life is meaningless, he’s not honor-bound to follow those principles. And so he’s not going to commit suicide.

Q: *But if life is that meaningless, then he can’t have those principles.*

P: Because those principles are meaningless.

Q: *So he in fact can’t be that sort of alienated person—he’s already immune, so to speak, to that particular form of degradation, because of the way it governs his life.*

P: Well, if he makes that change, that is an effective degradation.

Q: *But you have to go through a degradation in regard to the principles, before he’d be eligible to—*

Q: *It sounds like you can cure them and kill them by this.*

P: No, it's a variation on the unthinkable. You see, James's position was unthinkable. And one of his options was to distort reality and treat it as something else. But he didn't. Instead, he took the other way out. But think of somebody like James, who, instead of committing suicide, would have started seeing the whole world—and his own form or principles—as meaningless. Then he wouldn't any longer be in the bind that James was in. Then we would look at him and say, "Yeah, he's seeing the world as little white balls, and the reason he's seeing it that way is that it would be too painful for him to see it in a meaningful way."

Q: ###.

P: James's bind—you remember we went through the entire session working out that—remember, he had a set of principles that required, as a point of honor, that he had no commitments. And then he got himself a commitment with the request for the child and was stuck, and there was no way out. Since it was his commitment, and he had a set of principles that said "no commitments", he couldn't just give up the child because he had a commitment. He couldn't be himself, namely, no commitments, and so the way out was to affirm his principles by committing suicide. So he was in an impossible position, except for this one act which was a self-affirming one. As I say, in that kind of setting, somebody else might have just said, "The whole thing is meaningless," and that would have been a distortion of reality, but it would also have enabled him to survive. So that would fit the general description of the reason he makes things meaningless: that it would be too painful otherwise.

Q: —another way that things are often too painful, is that if you see something as an intrinsic social practice, oftentimes there's winning and losing, or succeeding and failing, and someone who's really afraid of failing, then they have to degrade that as being no longer a social practice. Where would you go with something like that?

P: A variation on that is what I took to be the case with this person, namely, that his parents had so thoroughly disqualified him in his younger years, that if he had seen their behavior as meaningful, he would have had to consider himself worthless, and that would be too painful. That's like

saying, “A guy who is afraid of losing at chess or tennis or academics can get out of the bind by saying the whole thing is meaningless.” Then there’s no winning or losing, and so he avoids even the possibility and the eligibility for being a failure of that sort. So this person was avoiding being the kind of failure that you would express by saying “even a mother couldn’t love him”.

Q: *Even someone who recognizes that they’re afraid of failing all the time, would just pointing that out to them change anything?*

P: It all depends. Again, part of the thing about the images is that they generally carry fairly clear implications as to what to do, and if the implications of what to do are something that’s not doable, it’s a bad image. You don’t use it. And if it’s doable, and the person says he wants to do it and then doesn’t, then you’ve got the basis for saying there’s something else going on, and you deal with that.

Q: *Are you giving like two alternatives, one because it’s too painful and working on that; or finding things that do have meaning, explore other areas.*

P: Explore other areas is one of the things you can do about it. Its being too painful otherwise is one of the two explanations. The other explanation is that he never had it any different, it never was meaningful, that’s why it’s not meaningful now. So there’s two major explanations for how come, for somebody, everything is meaningless. There’s also several things that you can try doing about it. One is trying new activities. And they connect, because if it’s a case of “he never had anything different”, then trying new activities might well work; whereas if it’s a case of making things meaningless because it would be too painful, then probably trying new activities won’t work.

Q: *Is it worth trying—coming up with something you already do?*

P: Yeah.

Q: *Aren’t there two cases, though? There’s someone who says, “Because of my fear of failure, I see academics as being meaningless,” and, “What I’m doing is meaningless,” or ###?*

P: Nobody gives an unconscious motivation explanation of himself.

He can't do it.

Q: *Okay, but the two situations are where "it's meaningless, what I'm doing", or "it's meaningless, and I'm not going to do it", or "I don't do it, I don't engage in it because it's meaningless".*

P: There's be no point in it, because why would anybody want to knock little white balls into holes in the ground?

Q: *But what I'm doing—"I'm doing it and it's meaningless" is like a sour grapes move. "It's meaningless so I'm not going to do it"—*

P: That's ###. You see, "I'm doing it and it's meaningless, and I'm only doing it just to get along"—that's one of the commonest sorts of presentation. "I'm just putting in my time, I've got to do something, I'd be hurting if I didn't, so what the hell."

Q: *But that still doesn't get at why are you doing that, rather than something else that's equally meaningless and takes time, and so on.*

P: That usually comes from the external pressures, what people expect, your circumstances, etc.

Okay, most of those images tie into some of the conceptual formulations, but notice that you wouldn't want to explain to a client the difference between an intrinsic practice description and an activity description, which is what's at issue. Instead, you evoke something he's familiar with and knows how it works, namely, knocking little white balls into holes in the ground. But the logic of that is the logic of this kind of distinction. So when you're working, when you're doing your thinking in these terms, you can use the images that involve the language that the client understands and still do your thinking in these terms. One of the things that I would like to encourage somebody or other to do is to take each of these images, and explicitly relate it to some portion of the descriptive system. This Little White Balls would involve the difference between activity description and intrinsic practice description.

The next one is Choosing Your Movements.

Q: *It's eight-thirty.*

P: Okay, we'll continue next time.

Session 8

March 9, 1976

The use of images; Policies for therapist; Two person schema; Actor-Observer-Critic; Images: Choosing your Movements; Kissinger, and variations; Catbird Seat; Actor-Act-Producer, and variations.

PGO: Last time, we started talking about some of the images. I think I mentioned the Formats, specifically (1). I said that what goes on in therapy is in the ordinary conversation format, unless you do something to change that. Except under those conditions, you're just operating the way people do in conversation. Let me mention the list of things up at the top of that page, the one that says Policies. [see Appendix II] The reason is that the images carry with them a certain temptation. The temptation is simply to drop them in at some point when you feel like it. If you do that, it doesn't work. They work against the background of your operating with these policies, and they work if you've thought through the logic of the image, so that you recognize when you've got something of this sort and can explain or elaborate the image as you need to, or can transform it. As I said, there's nothing magic about the images themselves. They simply are ways of putting together a pattern that is recognizable to the client, and that he can therefore use.

I think that one of the main problems that people experience in starting out using them is this temptation just to use them in the absence of preparation or without having worked through just what's involved. That's one reason why it would be a good idea to have an explicit formulation of the logic of each image. And we'll do some of that right here, so as I said, I would like to encourage anybody who feels like it to do it systematically.

Now let's just review these policies here. The Number One policy is to be on the client's side. And the operative word is "be". Not act as though you are, not convince him that that's the case, but have it be so. That will automatically set certain limits to what you do and don't do and some of the kind of choices that you make.

Q: *Will it also set limits on which patients you can see?*

P: Not that much.

Q: *It strikes me that there might be cases in which it would be very difficult to be on the patient's side, in terms of specific issues.*

P: No. I didn't say "agree with him"; I said "be on his side". Another way of formulating this is that the relation and the interaction that you and he engage in are for his benefit, not yours. And this is not to say that you're not getting anything out of it. It's that it's for his sake, not yours. It's in that sense that you're on his side, not that you have to agree about this or that.

Secondly, legitimize. To legitimize is to show the client what sense he makes. To *show* him what sense he makes. And this contrasts with several things that you might confuse it with. Number one, it contrasts with merely telling him that he makes sense. If you merely tell him that he makes sense, then he's got to take your word for it that he does; and either he believes you, or he doesn't. If you show him what sense he makes, he can see it, and he doesn't need to take your word for it. Secondly, it contrasts with telling the client that what he does is understandable. "It's understandable that you would do such-and-such." And if you want a horrible example, "It's understandable that you would do what you did, because after all, you're crazy." To the extent that what he does merely is understandable rather than legitimate, there's got to be something wrong with him. So saying that it's understandable doesn't do the job. Finally, it contrasts with making excuses for the client. "It was okay to do thus-and-such because, after all, you really were angry." In effect, all three contrasts to legitimization are degradations—some form of degradation—or carry that connotation.

Q: *It's not exactly clear to me how you distinguish making excuses for somebody from legitimizing them. It seems like it shades over, because an excuse is really a way of saying, "Look, what I did makes perfect sense, because*

after all I had this wooden leg,” or whatever.

P: No, an excuse is via a disqualification. If you think of that degradation ceremony, where you get the accusation, to give an excuse is to admit you did it, and it was wrong, but there were extenuating circumstances. And, in effect, you disqualify yourself there. “By virtue of the extenuating circumstances, I wasn’t really doing it. It wasn’t really an intentional action on my part.”

Q: *But conversely, you don’t tell somebody he’s right when you legitimize him.*

P: No. You show what sense it makes. For example, if somebody acts impulsively in anger, in a job situation, you could give the excuse that he was so mad he didn’t know what he was doing. Or you could say it was understandable that he would pop off that way, because after all he was pretty angry. Or you could say, “I can understand why he would do that. It makes sense.” Or you could say, “It’s hard to put up with all that continual bickering, isn’t it?” And in effect, what you’ve done with that last move is to give him the formula that identifies the provocation for which his behavior was the appropriate hostility. And you put it from his point of view that it was constant bickering that was the provocation for the hostility, so that’s the sense he makes. Now, you’re not telling him it was okay to do it. In fact, you may introduce that for the sake of raising that very question with him. But you are showing what sense it makes.

Now that connects, crudely, with the third principle, which is to give activity descriptions in making interpretations. An activity description is non-committal with respect to motivation. It’s got everything else. The point of talking this way is to get around the resistance that’s generated by imputing motivation. Because the most common thing when you see something that a client is doing and that he doesn’t see, and there’s a reason why he doesn’t see it, you say, “Here’s what you’re really doing.” And he’ll say, “No.” And if you say, “But you are,” he says, “No, I didn’t mean it that way.” So by talking in a way that doesn’t imply that he meant it that way to begin with, you don’t generate that kind of resistance.

I’ve mentioned before that there is no clean and easy way to get across the kind of description that you’re giving, but there are suggestive

ways of talking that will more or less carry that implication. Those ways of talking are: “Sounds like, looks like, seems like; you’re acting like a person who—, you’re doing the kind of thing that you would do if—,” all of which have in common that they’re not cases of saying, “Here’s what you’re really doing. Now admit it.” So using that kind of language routinely is a way of avoiding pointing the finger at somebody—“Here’s what you’re really doing.” Now even though it avoids that, you will commonly get reactions, “But I don’t mean to do that.” And with an activity description, you’re in a position to say, “Yeah, but you’re doing it anyhow. Your doing it is having this effect, and it’s not something you intend to do, but you’re visibly doing it, and that’s what people have to go by, and that’s why they react to you as doing that. So don’t be surprised how they react to you.”

Q: *Usually a real simple question to ask at the beginning of the argument that usually ensues is, “Can you see how someone else would see it that way?”*

P: You don’t get too much argument, at least that’s not been my experience. Partly because you pick your times. You don’t just toss these in out of nowhere, either.

Q: *Sometimes you refer to images, when you present an image and then later, in therapy, we refer back to it. It’s getting to the motivation, so it’s not just giving an activity description. I’m wondering how that fits in.*

P: Well, the images are more on the other side and tend to carry the motivations with them. But you might use them this way, or the client might use them this way—“There I go being a demon businessman again, and I don’t really mean to.” So he can transform that into this. But by and large, with the image—since the image carries the sense it makes—it tends to imply the motivation, too. But after all, you want things that imply motivation, as well as you want things that do not imply motivation, so you have your choice. [change tape] Think for example of the Little White Balls. That doesn’t imply motivation. One of the elaborations clarifies that there are reasons why he might be doing that, but that reason isn’t his motivation. In saying that people generally operate this way either because they never had it any different or because it would be too painful, you’re not really implying motivation, but you are giving an explanation.

Q: *Although I think we are, like when we say ### an Art Critic number, and someone says—*

P: Some of the other ones, yeah.

Q: *—the case where you give an activity description because you don't want to push the motivational thing, although you as a therapist honestly believe that the reasons you're describing are his reasons, just that those reasons don't usually fit into his "shoulds", so to speak.*

P: There's a sneaky consideration associated with activity descriptions, and that is that if you think that that really is why he's doing it, you still talk this way, and you figure on getting a denial, and then you handle it, "Yeah, but that's what it's going to look like, that's the effect it's going to produce, so don't be surprised if you get reacted to that way." Now what happens is, the person may still say, "Yeah, but I don't mean it." You repeat, "Yeah, but don't be surprised if that's how people react." Now, in the face of that, it's going to be awfully hard for him to come back next week and tell you he's been doing it again but didn't really mean it. You see, he can deny all he wants that in the past he didn't mean it, but it's going to be hard for him to continue to do it, and say "I don't mean it".

Q: *So a necessary admission isn't that important. Sometimes you can get one by saying, "Well, might not you have some of those reasons?"*

P: No, you don't need to get any of those reasons.

Q: *You're talking about poisoning his well, aren't you?*

P: Yeah, because since he says, "I don't mean it that way," clearly he has a reason not to do it. And if you've shown him that that description would apply if he did that kind of thing, he has a reason not to. And if he continues to do it, then you raise the question of whether it's worth the price. To do that unintentionally and to suffer the consequences, whatever he is doing intentionally, isn't there some other way of doing *that* that doesn't carry this price tag? So that's the major way that it connects to sometimes you think he really is doing that.

Okay, the fourth one is kind of a summary of the others, namely, treat people as people. And what that contrasts with is the theoretical

approach, where you treat the client as an organism, or as an id/ego/super-ego, or as anything theoretical. You stay in the real-life context. And one of the things that goes with people that doesn't go with any of these theoretical terms is rationality, responsibility, authority to be in control of his own life. You address yourself to this person who has these features that people have. It's in that context that you're interacting therapeutically.

Now all of these things—I call them Policies. A policy is something you follow without having any reason for it. It's the exceptions to the policy that you need to have a reason for. You have a rationale for following these policies, and then you do it routinely, and only deviate when you have a reason to deviate. Otherwise you just do it.

Q: *In line with “treat people as people”, one of the things that I’ve seen a couple of times in therapy is the patient, if he’s been somebody that to an outsider looks really screwed up, is likely to be somebody that other people aren’t treating as a person, but as some sort of deficit case, a very restricted notion of what will grab that person. And that person—the patient hardly ever knows different, because he’s so used to that sort of context, and this sometimes just opens up a whole way for that person to begin to ###.*

P: It isn't just other people. *He* may be treating himself as a non-person.

Q: *At that point, he probably won't have much other information to go on. But after you've begun treating him as a full person without—or as a full person who's got these particular problems, he's usually in a better position to evaluate where—what the difference is between what he's contributing to the problem, and what his history, and these are other people's reactions to him.*

P: Yeah. That's part of what goes with being rational and responsible, that sort of consideration.

Recall, we talked about depression, and I described using Move 2's as accreditation. That you can now see as a special case of treating a person as a person. Now, the net effect of following these policies is simply to give a certain over-all character, a certain climate, and certain kind of background relation, because almost anybody will pick up the difference between somebody who's operating this way and somebody who's operating

some other way. So it will give a distinctive character to your whole interaction and relationship. And it's against that background that then you can do a lot of confrontive things that don't have bad effects because the client knows that you're on his side, and when you're confronting him, you're not fighting him. So as I say, it's against this background generally that you are able to use these images to good effect, *if you also understand the logic of each image.*

Q: *A good example of that from an actual therapy interaction: there's a client that I have—at the point where I gave an interpretation of what she was up to, and she remained silent for about 15 minutes, then she said, "I hate you for saying that," which was a way of accepting it. Anyway, I told her at that point, "Well, you can go ahead and discount me for saying that, and you can go ahead and discount anyone else who sees it that way, or you can check it out and see if it fits." And at that point, going over it with Pete, he said that wasn't really being on the client's side at what must have been a hard moment for her, and that an alternative way of going at that would have been to say, "No, you're not, because you know I have your best interests at heart."*

P: That's known as a strong move. Because that's a direct contradiction of what the client says, on the face of it.

Q: *So you've reminded her that, in fact, she doesn't hate you.*

P: In effect, by this verbal contradiction, you're reminding her that she doesn't really, because she has no reason to, and she knows that as well as you do. Well, naturally, you wouldn't say that if you didn't believe it so, and that she would recognize it. But that's a supportive statement.

Okay, let's get back to some more images. The last presentation, we did start to introduce some order into this set, beyond just having a list, [1. Little White Balls 2. Choosing Your Movements 3. Henry Kissinger] and as you see, (3) has four versions, and they're all variations on the same theme.—Let's do (2) first. (2) goes with (1), so we've done (1), let's do (2).

Number (2) is for use in this kind of situation, where the client says, "How do I do X? How do I make the right choices of such-and-such sort?" For example, how do I make conversation with girls? How do I carry

on polite conversation at parties? How do I make friends? What do I have to do to make friends? So it's a question about what do I have to do to do X. And the key is that it's impossible, and that's why it's a problem. So the image is of this sort. You say, "Now imagine, as you sit there, that I ask you what you're going to do when we get through this hour. And you tell me that you're going to go out and get in your car and drive home. And then I look at you in surprise, and ask, 'My God, how are you ever going to do that? Look at all the things you've got to do!' Then you go through it: you've got to put one hand on one arm of the chair, the other on the other arm, and you've got to push, and you've got to lean forward just in the right way, and you've got to push at just the right speed, because if you don't push hard enough, you'll fall back on your ass, if you push too hard, you fall over on your face. And if that wasn't enough, at the same time that you're pushing up with just the proper acceleration—not just speed but acceleration, mind you—you've got to be extending your feet. Otherwise you fall down anyhow. And you've got to do that just right, because you've also got to be turning, and you've got to turn differently on your left foot from your right foot, and you've got to turn at just the right speed, and acceleration, otherwise you walk into the desk [laughter]—

Q: *You're apt to be in real trouble with this. You'll have to go fifty times before you get to the end of the hall.*

P: So you just keep going this way until you get the point across, and usually that's about all it takes.

Q: *How do you carry on a conversation?*

P: If I did that, you would look at me and say, "Jesus, you're right. If I had to do it that way, I couldn't do it." You would say, though, "Fortunately, I don't have to do it that way. I do something I do know how to do, namely, I get up out of that chair and out the door and into my car. Because that I know how to do. And if I do that, I will have made all of the right moves. What I don't have to do is to accomplish this extraordinary feat by choosing all of my movements to be the right ones." There's the image.

Then the transposition. When you talk about "How do I make conversation with girls?" it's like saying, "How do I choose my

movements?”—except that you’re saying, “How do I choose my words?” And if you had to do it that way, you could never do it, and if people in general had to do it that way, they could never do it. Fortunately, they don’t have to do it that way, and you don’t have to do it that way. What you need to worry about is what you’ve got to say, what you’ve got to share. If you’ve got something to say, the words will come. Now you can see that plenty of times you’re faced with clients who formulate things at too concrete a level, and then ask, “How do I make it go right at that level?” and there’s no way of doing it. So the Choosing Your Movements image, then, is to diagnose, to get at what’s wrong with asking that question, why it’s unanswerable, and what the right question is instead, and what you can do instead. It’s got all of that in one package.

Q: *I have a client who’s always saying the wrong thing—always saying something that will pop out of his mouth and then put his hand over his mouth. I’ve felt like telling him, “You should choose your movements.” He’s trying to be spontaneous. What do you do in that case?*

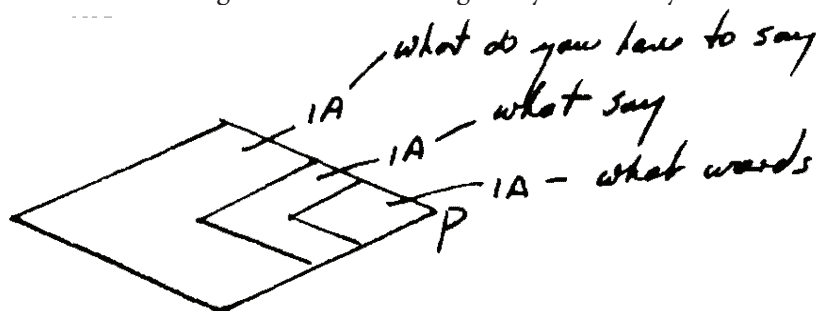
P: You don’t tell him, “Choose your words carefully.” You say, “Watch what you say to people.” You go to the next higher level at which he can exercise discretion. It’s awfully hard to watch your words—at lot easier to watch out what you’re going to say to somebody.

Q: *But he’d start to say something, and something else—he was a classic analytic case. He bent down to tie his shoe, and this girl at a party tells him, “All the men here seem to be ###,” and he thought he would be clever, and he was going to say, “Well, I’ve got a game leg,” and he had an impotency problem, and he said, “I’ve got a lame leg,” and she looked at him and walked away, and he felt just terrible.*

P: At some point, you bring in Maxim 3. You don’t just accept indefinitely that “I did it, but I didn’t really mean it”. Or “I keep doing these things, but I don’t really want to.” At some point you switch, and say, “You know, it’s beginning to look like you really do want to.” But before you reach that point, you generate some of the ordinary cautions, like “watch what you say”. Or “be clear about where you stand with the other person, and you’ll be less likely to come out with things you don’t really mean”. Then, if he still keeps getting it, then at some point ###.

Q: *What's the transition statement in this one?*

P: The restatement of the problem. Your wondering how to make conversation with girls is like wondering how you choose your movements.



Now the logic of both of these [blackboard] is the same diagram, namely, of a significance description, on the issue of where along the line you're operating. The Little White Balls carries with it a diagnosis that you're operating too far in this direction, that you're substituting a less significant description where you should have a more significant description, that you're missing the higher level. The Choosing Your Movements does the same thing but higher up. You're talking about choosing your words here, where you should be worrying about what you say. And the difference is that here you're not talking in meaningless terms. You're not talking "performance", you're talking "Intentional Action", but not one at the level of significance that you should be talking, not the level at which your competence and choice operate. Competence and choice operate at the level of choosing what you say, almost never at the level of choosing your words. When you're writing, often you choose your words but not when you're talking. So you can be too concrete, both down here and anywhere along the line. And both the Choosing Your Movements and the Little White Balls are ways of getting at that. And that's why they go together.

Q: *—the person who isn't sure what to say, who isn't really talking about—who is socially immature, or inexperienced, or something.*

P: [blackboard] The one I talked about was "How do I pick the right words?" The one you're talking about is "How do I pick the right

thing to say?" I go to a party, I'm tongue-tied, I say the wrong things, I can't think of what to say.

Q: *I can see two different kinds of people asking a question like that—one kind would be they've got plenty to say, but they're not sure—they get all tongue-tied. And the other is just more inexperienced and just doesn't have something to say. And I was wondering how you—*

P: Okay, the second one, you would go directly up, and say, "Concentrate on what you have to say. What do you have to say to people in a situation like that?"

Q: *—the people who just get kind of stuck.*

P: If they're stuck there, that's a different problem than this one. So they've misidentified the problem, and you start with the ###. The other kind, the one who knows perfectly well—although you might take that with a grain of salt if he says he knows perfectly well what he wants to say but he gets tongue-tied—then you make a comparable move, "Be clear where you stand with this person." And for this, you reflect back that this behavior is an expression of the relation between them. Confusion in the behavior, if it isn't one of these things, is most likely ambivalence or confusion about the relation. So you direct his attention to the relation and say, "Figure out where you stand with this person that you're talking to, and you ought to have an easier time."

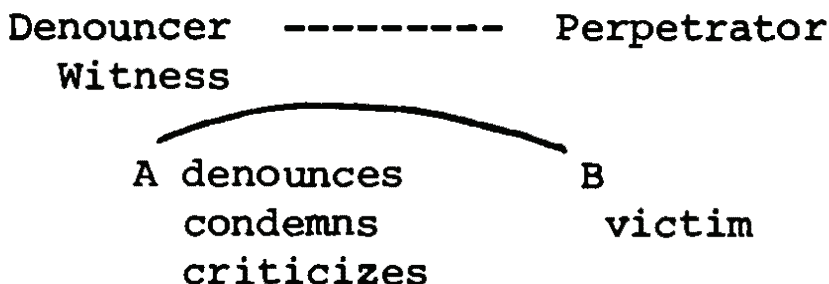
Any questions about these two or how they relate to this kind of representation?

Q: *—people like a couple that have problems talking with one another. Would that be principally that they don't know their relationship within their marriage?*

P: No, it may be that their relation is a bad one, and they know it, and they don't have much to say to each other.

Q: *So they know their relationship, and that's just a function of it, rather than their not knowing their relationship?*

P: Yeah. It could be either, and you worry about which it is and deal with it accordingly.



Okay, for the four variations on (3) [Henry Kissinger]: these will reflect a two-person interaction (or if you want to assimilate back to the Degradation Ceremony, you've got all three there, with the Denouncer and the Witness being the same person). And you have something of this sort. And with this goes all of the apparatus here: that the Denouncer and Witness have good standing in the community, they identify an act, and they claim that it's an expression of B's character, and that the act violates the standard. In this two-person formulation, it's quite clear who's got the good end of the deal, and who's got the bad end of the deal. The Victim has the sorry end of it. He's degraded, he's criticized, he's in the wrong, he's no good, things like that. The Critic, the Denouncer, has the good end of it. He's right, he's got status, he's got standing, he's the top dog, he's not hurting at all. In fact, that's an enjoyable and satisfying position to be in. You have the satisfaction of being righteous, of being right, of being in power, of being in charge. No matter what other negatives go with it, there are these satisfactions. So when it comes to satisfactions, it's clear who's getting some satisfaction, and who isn't. There's a very strong asymmetry there. It's also clear what the Victim better do: he's got to either ship out or shape up. That is, either he does penance or something else to regain his status; or accepts the degradation.

Q: *Or leave the situation.*

P: That would be—at face value—to accept the degradation, unless he does something to indicate that he leaves under protest, or something like that.

Q: *Well, couldn't he stay in the situation and accept the inferior position?*

P: Yeah. One of his options is to accept the degradation.

Now, this paradigm is quite clear-cut and non-problematical and non-puzzling—in a two-person situation. All we've got to do to make it interesting is to combine A and B into the same person. Now that strong asymmetry—what happens to it since it's the very same person who both is the victim, the one who suffers, *and* the critic, the one who gets the satisfaction; who is, at one and the same time, the guy who better ship out or shape up *and* the guy who is in good standing and exercising it; who is at the same time the powerless victim *and* the person in good standing who is in charge and exercising power? You can see that there's a certain incompatibility between being A and being B in this kind of paradigm. So you may expect that when you've got a case of the same person being both A and B, that in each case, the person is primarily A, or he is primarily B. And it's of interest to figure out which it is.

Mainly what you get is Victim presentations, which means that the other end [A] is the one that's going to be of primary interest. Let me go through the Kissinger one first, and then maybe come back to this a little.

Q: *Could you say something about usually getting the Victim presentation, but it's the other one which is of interest, and that's just because it's not elaborated, so you want to find out more about it?*

P: Yeah. If the self-presentation you get is that of the Victim, but you know that with every Victim there's a Denouncer, then it's the Denouncer that's missing from the picture that the client presents. Therefore, it's the Denouncer that's going to be of primary interest to you as a therapist. In general, it's things that the client doesn't know about, that he leaves out of consideration, that are of interest to you, because that's the prime places where clients get into trouble and go wrong. They don't generally get into all that much trouble by taking into account things that are relevant and that they know are relevant. They do get into trouble by not taking into account things that are there and that are relevant. So right away, your instinct says, "Look out for that."

The Kissinger example goes like this. Imagine you walk into a bar, and there's a bunch of people standing around, and you order a drink. And as you're sitting there, drinking your drink, peaceably, the television is on, and the newscast comes on. And the first thing that the newscaster says is, "We've got special news tonight. Henry Kissinger is going to visit Peking and arrange for Nixon's trip." And as soon as he says that and then continues, the guy standing next to you goes into a kind of a crazy act—jumps up and down, expresses all kinds of rage and dissatisfaction, cusses himself out—and winds up saying, "My God, how stupid can I get? I should have kept him from going." Now what's your reaction to this guy? He's cursing himself up and down saying how stupid he is and winding up saying he should have kept Kissinger from going.

Q: *That's when you look to see if there are Secret Service agents around.*

P: So what's your reaction? The normal reaction is delusions of grandeur or something comparable. If the client doesn't come through with that, you simply introduce that. The normal reaction is delusions of grandeur, and you wait for him to agree. And then you say, "How come? How come we look at this guy and say 'delusion of grandeur' when what we hear is that he's putting himself down?" He's saying, "How stupid can you get?" And yet it comes through clearly that this is not a guy who thinks poorly of himself; this is some guy who has something like a delusion of grandeur. And this kind of example, I have never had anybody just look puzzled. It gets through, which is why I kept it. So the question is: how come it comes through so clearly, given that—overtly—all you've got is self-condemnation? Well, either the client supplies the answer, or you supply the answer. And the answer is, "You can only blame yourself for what you're responsible for, and you can only be responsible for what you can control." Somebody who blames himself for not having kept Kissinger from going to Peking is, in effect, somebody who is claiming that he *could have*, that he had that kind of control over Kissinger. And you stop and think of who would be in that position, there's only one man in that position. And that's a very high position, namely, the president. And that's why it comes through as a delusion of grandeur. He's acting as though he

was the president. And this comes through clearly, even though what you hear is a lot of self-condemnation.

What you're seeing there is the two ends, and what is visibly being presented is the Victim, the guy who's no good, the guy who is stupid, but what is shining through over here is the Denouncer. This is a move that you are probably familiar with: "Well, I only studied for 15 minutes for the test—dammit, why didn't I get an A?" You get a guy who gets a prize for a statue or a painting, and he says, "Oh, shit, that was a lousy painting—I had an off-day, that day. I could have done it much better."

Q: —*you read somebody's poetry, and you like it, and you tell him how good you think it is, and he says ###.*

P: There's a number of variations in which you criticize something that itself is good enough, to elevate you to a very high status which you have to have in order to give that kind of criticism of something that is that good.

Now, the variations have to do with some of the nuances.

Q: *Isn't that a variation that you just gave, of that each of them are promises for more?*

P: No.

Q: *"I could have done much better, I'm really much more than you see," or whatever.*

P: It's not quite a promise.

Q: *It's kind of different from Kissinger—*

P: As I say, all of those are variations on the same theme, which is why I've got them all lumped together. There's a difference in the kind of status that you're claiming, and depending on which it is, you get any one of the four. High social status would correspond directly to Kissinger's. For example, if I give a party and invite you all, and then come party time, I go through this same act, and say, "Oh, shit, I forgot to invite Dick Lamm!"

[laughter]

Q: ###.

P: Let's stay with the Kissinger example. To get back to the question of which end is the business end here, think of the role of the Critic, and the fact that, for the Victim, it's up to him to shape up or ship out. Now, what would you make of a picture in which a person is constantly criticizing himself in this way and is trying to improve? You say, "Well, that's the way it should work. As the Victim, it's up to him to try to improve so as not to warrant that criticism. And that's what we visibly see him doing." So that's normal self-criticism. That's the kind of criticism that works in this feedback style, which is the norm. That's the way that criticism ought to work, namely, it ought to be for the benefit of the Actor, it ought to be something that the Actor can act on so as to improve. And if we see the Victim trying to improve, then it comes through as normal functional criticism. But what if you see not the victim trying to improve but just doing nothing about it but continuing to criticize? At that point you say, "It doesn't look like this normal kind of criticism. It doesn't look like the denunciation or the criticism is for the sake of improvement. But then, what's the alternative?" It's for the sake of the satisfaction that goes with being a Critic. And to not do anything to improve is to provide a continuing supply for criticism over here. So that then takes on the appearance that what's keeping the thing going is not the helplessness of the Victim, but the satisfaction that goes with being the Denouncer.

Q: *A couple of instances where you've given that kind of interpretation and usually not being able to see what satisfaction it could be—that could be the guy saying, "I'm miserable," and how can you say there's something satisfying in that?*

P: You're talking about the Victim. One of the things you can do is get back to the two-person situation and have the client talk to this other no-goodnik.

Q: *To get in touch with that satisfaction? Okay, because the way I've dealt with it is saying, "We'll just pay attention to when you're being self-critical, and notice that, indeed, it eases the pain."*

P: Yeah, you can do it, but you can also do it the other way by spreading these [A and B] out, and that helps measurably. Now if you make

this kind of transformation, then you're in a position to present the client with a new formulation, namely, "So far you've been talking as though your problem as a Victim was how the hell can you get out of this horrible bind you're in, how can you escape the pain. But now it looks like the problem is: are you willing to give up this kind of satisfaction? And that's under your control, and it's up to you. Whereas over here, it wasn't under your control, and there was nothing you could do."

Now recall, I once said that in general, it's better as a rule of thumb to give anger interpretations than fear interpretations, and that's because anger is much more under your control than fear. So you're in a much better position to do something about it if you understand it and treat it as anger as against fear. I said, too, that since the behavior that goes with fear is avoidance of the danger, and any behavior that could be described as avoidance could be also described or redescribed as rejection. And rejection is a paradigmatic expression of anger; that formally, anything that you could describe as fear behavior you could re-describe as anger behavior. So this kind of move is always formally possible. It's not always actually desirable. But what's back of the rule of thumb that says, "Do it when possible," is that it's always logically possible. Now the same kind of move holds here, that you've replaced a formulation in which he's helpless and hurting into one in which he's in control and getting satisfaction. And so if something needs to be changed about it, he's in a much better position to do the changing from this position [A] than from this one [B].

Q: *I'm wondering if sometimes it's the case that after you've gone through this, that the client now says, "Not only am I behaving poorly, but I'm over-critical," whereas before, he merely saw himself as behaving poorly—if he comes away with this notion that he's doing two things wrong, instead of simply being a Victim.*

P: Well, you've got some choices. One, you can say, "Well, you're behaving poorly in more than one way, and one of those ways is you're being over-critical." But who's saying that? You're still operating from over here [A], so you retain the same paradigm, and that doesn't get him out from under.

Okay, what are the variations? The Kissinger example gets at primarily high social status, that kind of implicit claim. The Super-Critic is the one who criticizes himself for not being perfect. He's always finding fault with himself and blaming himself for this or that. And as you hear it over and over again, what it amounts to is that anything he does that's wrong, he'll criticize himself for and say he ought not do that. And what it amounts to is that the only thing that would satisfy him is not to have *anything* wrong with him, which means he's criticizing himself for not being perfect. That's the Super-Critic, the perfectionist. It's not social status that's involved, it's perfection. So for that variation, you say Super-Critic, but it works the same way.

The next one, the Hanging Judge, is for those cases where you really get a lot of hatred and vindictiveness. You see, somebody who criticizes himself for not being perfect, you don't get this sense of hate and vindictiveness. Somebody, like in the bar, who says, "How stupid can you get?" you don't get the impression he hates himself. But there are people that you do get that impression of, that really criticize themselves bitterly, that condemn themselves with a vengeance. And for that you have the Hanging Judge and the Depraved Criminal.

Finally, you have the Art Critic. The Art Critic has a different derivation, but you wind up at the same point. It stems from the problem of how does the layman know that the art critics are not just a mutual admiration society, and the whole thing is a put-on? The layman who doesn't understand anything about art—here's these guys praising certain things to the skies and saying other things are no good—what assurance does he have that they're not just making it all up and patting each other's backs? [change tape] In a situation like that, you see, it's ready-made for that kind of abuse. The way you do it is that there are connecting links between the layman and the critics—somebody who has some sense about it can get the layman to see some things he didn't see, but can also testify that there's somebody beyond him that can see even more than he does. With that kind of chain of continuity, the layman can then accept that these guys up there are really not just making it up, even though he can't see a thing of what they're talking about. Now you come back to: once you become an Art Critic, how do you operate? One of the ways of becoming successful, once

you're into that magic circle, is that you adopt a certain kind of stance. The stance you adopt is that your taste is so exquisite that nothing ever really satisfies you. And that's a Famous Critic syndrome. That's why critics write much more criticism than praise, because if you think in terms of status dynamics and self-presentation, in a group of critics somebody who says, "I like that, it's great," is leaving himself wide open for the one-up move of a different critic who says, "Well, that may satisfy you, but—" [laughter] And so the way you play it safe is to never be satisfied with anything.

Now, what holds for Art Critics also holds for critics of experiments. You get exactly the same kind of set-up. And one way to gain a reputation for rigor is to take the position that no experiment is really good enough because you haven't controlled this, you haven't shown that you've met the assumptions, you haven't pretested, you haven't tested on a comparable population, or something. And you can always do this.

Q: —*somebody else does therapy, it's really nice to—*

P: Okay, so that's a different slant. It has the same logic—[general conversation and laughter]

Q: *You remember Jerry? Jerry moved to Kansas, and he said there wasn't much to do there except they have this wine tasting club. And he told people, "I can judge any bottle of wine within two dollars," and he did it for several bottles, and they thought he was a super judge. And then he used to open up a bottle, and they'll all sit around and taste his wine, and he says, "There's a little chalk in it." And everyone would say, "Yes, it has some chalk—I can taste it," and he got known throughout the middle of Kansas as the best wine taster.*

P: Well, you see that illustrates the Art Critic problem: how do you know that I'm not just making it up?

Q: *They were all wine tasters, but there were some who said that this guy knows more about it than we do.*

P: Like I say, the images are taken from real life; that's why you recognize them. So you have at least these four, and there are other variations that I can't call to mind that stem from this pattern of the Denouncer and

the Victim or the Perpetrator; and what happens when you've got them both in the same person; and which end is the business end.

Q: *Instead of a person being an Art Critic, or into that kind of a relationship with himself, would he then not be leaving himself open for other people to criticize him?*

P: Yeah, because he's in there already. It's a variation on the perfectionist, with the difference that the perfectionist, it looks like he's ### over here, that he wants himself perfect; whereas the Art Critic is the guy who's over here, and the implication is "My taste is so exquisite, I am so refined, that nothing satisfies me."

Q: *You also gave us something one time where you asked the question of the client, "Are you lamenting the fact that you're not that way, or are you lamenting the fact that you're not some other person?" If it was a genuine criticism of something they could in fact improve on, or something they could attain; or was it lamenting the fact that they weren't some other person who had that kind of competence or that kind of ability?*

P: That's a back-handed way of getting at which is the business end. If you're lamenting that you're not that way, then you ought to be out doing something about it. If you're lamenting that you're not somebody else, there's nothing you can do about that—no wonder you're not trying. But then, what are you doing on that?

Q: *Which of them would that fit under?*

P: The first one is not any of these, because that's normal criticism. The second one would probably be the Art Critic. Either his tastes or his aspirations are so elevated that he's just not satisfied. And that's a different kind of status from the Judge, Kissinger, or a near Super-Critic.

Q: *Would you be tempted to use any of these things when you saw a case of A and B where they were different people?*

P: Well, that generally creates different problems, because it's out in the open, and everybody sees what's going on—except that the Critic may be getting more satisfaction than he lets on. You don't have to be extra-critical to be getting more satisfaction out of it than you let on.

Q: ###

P: If you had to bet, you'd bet that somebody who's getting too much satisfaction is also being too critical, but that's statistics, so you've got to watch out for ###.

Q: *In the case where there's two, it's a little hard to get somebody to move off being the Critic, because he's not getting the raw end of the deal, so anything that worked for that case might also be usable for this case. Anything that would be strong enough to work for the two-person case might be applicable to this.*

P: Well, it doesn't work that way, because the two-person case is generally not problematical.

Q: *Well, how do you deal with that?*

P: How do you deal with what?

Q: *The two-person case.*

P: What's there to deal with? If you have one person criticizing another, unless the criticism is unwarranted, then you deal with that. But if the criticism is realistic, what's there to deal with?

Q: *Where it's not warranted particularly, where there is a Hanging Judge—*

P: Then you teach the client some techniques of self-defense, but you don't do it ###.

Q: *You don't teach him techniques of self-defense against himself.*

P: That's right. You go the other route, and say, "You can win over somebody else, and you can win over your own body for a limited time, at least, but you can't win a fight with yourself. Because you have no defense against yourself. So you really work that one opposite, when it's the—###.

This one is quite common. Variations of this are very common. Initial presentations as Victim are extremely common. So variations on this somewhere along the line get a lot of use.

Q: *I have one person now whose taste is so exquisite that every time*

he expresses it, he embarrasses his friends, so he has to present himself as a Victim to prevent himself from being lonely.

P: Is his taste really that exquisite? [laughter] You could probably think of a good fourth there: the guy who has to operate with one hand tied behind his back so as not to embarrass the competition. Again let me remind you that there's nothing sacred about the particulars. If you set yourself to it, you could think of a lot of other variations. These are historical examples that happen to come up, and you can see from the Kissinger example where that dates from.

Q: *I have a client now who worked with a therapist, and part of her self-criticism is that she wasn't being that honest and direct and open with everybody, and so she was being phony, and she was criticizing herself for not having a therapeutic relationship with everybody in her life.*

P: A good Art Critic or Super-Critic for you.

Okay, let's move to something else. Number (4) is sort of all by itself. It comes from an old phrase that apparently very few people have ever heard of. It's called Sitting in the Catbird Seat. I take it it's a Southern idiom—I have a vague recollection that's where it comes from. Anyhow, Sitting in the Catbird Seat is a variation on "sitting pretty", except it's more extreme. Sitting in the Catbird Seat is being in such a position that you're invulnerable, nothing can get to you. That's why you're sitting pretty. And the point of being there is to be invulnerable, and the main way that people make themselves invulnerable is to have styles or strategies of disqualifying anything that might threaten to get through to them. Somebody, for example, who thinks that everybody ought to do his own thing is in the Catbird Seat almost automatically, because anything that you have that he doesn't like—well, that's your thing and not his. So if he does that consistently, there's nothing you can do that will ever get through to him.

Q: *Don't some characters seem to view this position from legitimate denouncement, like they're being legitimately criticized—or illegitimately, it doesn't really matter—from that community, and their response to the denouncement is to discredit the denouncer.*

P: One of the defenses against degradation is to try to discredit the

denouncer. If you can do that, then the degradation attempt is unsuccessful. Just think of the Catbird Seat as an extension of that. If you disqualify everybody, then nobody really has the standing to denounce you in any respect. And you'll come across people who are just plain invulnerable. Nothing that you or anybody else does really gets through.

Q: *Doesn't that backfire, because then nothing can get through in the way of appraisal, of status-assignment?*

P: Well, but that's part of the motivation, to get away from that.

Q: *But then you can't gain status, either.*

P: *No, but if you have control of that, you can give yourself any status you like. That's why you're sitting pretty.*

Q: *What kind of bind does someone like that get into?*

P: There is a price, and the price is to be completely alone. And for most people, it's not worth that price.

Q: *Could you say more on that?*

P: I was going to say that there's not much more to be said. [laughter] How's that for an Art Critic? Anybody want to say anything about that?

Q: *It sounds like an effective strategy.*

P: It is. A lot of people have it, not in an extreme form.

Q: *Somebody like that, it would be hard to get through to.*

P: You've got two main strategies. One is to use this, and figuring that reminding the person of the price may get somewhere. Remember, you're dealing with clients, and clients don't come unless they're hurting. So you've already got that on your side, that somebody who is in the Catbird Seat and is a client is somebody that you could figure it's not working that well for. Therefore, you've got something to work with. So the reminder of the price may be part of getting some movement. The other is to work a Move 2 type status-assignment and just keep plugging away to see if that makes a difference. Because instead of getting through to the person, what you're

trying to do is encapsulate them. Instead of getting through, you draw a fence around him and start moving him with your status-assignment, by the way you treat him. You simply define the significance of his behavior, and act accordingly, and that may have an effect. And it does, not by getting through the barrier to him, but by moving him lock, stock, and barrel somewhere else.

It's like a guy in a bubble. In fact, the last time I used this, the guy said, "Yeah, you know, I used to have fantasies when I was young. Have you read science fiction? Well, I was in a big bubble, and nothing could get through. People would try, and they couldn't." In fact, I thought of switching this to the bubble image, it was such a good image: the impervious bubble. You can see that you have your choice of trying to break through the bubble to him, or of taking the whole bubble and moving it somewhere else. Those are the two strategies.

Q: *Paula Heimann evidently practices strategy with patients who would do this from a very high status—who would make very high status claims, by telling him that you would allow them that claim.*

P: Yeah, that's one of the moves. This is what I call "giving it to the client for free", simply making a present to him of it.

Q: *But there's a special sort of way that that was done in her case, because she's dealing with clients who are making exorbitant status claims, and she was say, "I'll let you have that status," implying that she could grant—she's eligible to grant, that she's always going to be a judge throughout that process, so in a way it works the same move on that person.*

P: From that kind of move, and from the switch from the Victim to the satisfaction over here, you can see that one primary strategy in status dynamic therapy is to bypass the defenses rather than fight them. Somebody who comes in with a Victim story may have years of presenting that Victim story and successfully fending off anybody's efforts to help. So if you respond to the Victim and try to help him, he's probably well able to prevent you from doing that. On the other hand, it's unlikely that too many people have detected this [A] and have confronted him with this, so it's unlikely that he will have defenses against the idea that—does he want to give up that kind of satisfaction. So by bypassing the defenses and focusing

on something else where the defenses aren't there, or aren't as well developed, you have a better chance of success. But in either case, your success or failure comes a lot quicker, generally, because if you recognize a defense and then say, "I'm going to get around it, I'm going to overcome it," it usually takes a lot of time. But if you hit over here where there is no defense, it very quickly either works, or it doesn't. And if it doesn't, you usually get some clue as to why not, and you've got something else to go on. So again, the rule of thumb is: try not to hit defenses head on, but bypass them.

And as a matter of fact, some of the intuitive source of status dynamics per se was just that: how do you get around habits that the person has been building up over a period of fifty years or so—thirty years. If you formulate the task that way, it's very discouraging. As a matter of fact, these days clients will face you with that, say "How can I undo the habits of a lifetime? How can you help me do that?" You can see that that's a discouraging prospect. So the move is, "You don't have to undo the habits of a lifetime. That's not the way this thing works, fortunately for you." And indeed, with status dynamic approaches, you don't have to undo habits of a lifetime. You simply move them. You simply put them in a different place, you approach them differently, give them a different significance. There's any number of things, none of which requires undoing the habits. And approaching them differently, giving them different significance, leads you to do things which automatically after a while will undo the habits. But you don't get there by undoing the habits.

Q: *Somebody asks you a question, and you ###. "Well, how can I change the way I've always been?" Do you have a clever reply?*

P: Yeah, a very clever reply. The reply is, "It's easy. All you've got to do is do something else."

Q: *What did you do with the guy in the bubble?*

P: We're still working on it. That was the second session, and that took place last week. I don't know what I'll do with him. I don't think I'll try to break through it.

Q: *In effect, this status dynamic thing is just one large Move 2.*

P: In a way. I think, with that, I'm going to pursue You Can't Get There from Here. That's (7) on the list.

Okay—anything else on the Catbird Seat? The next one has several variations, too. The main one is the Director-Actor-Act, and then there's a couple—the Guy with the Shovel and the Guy with the Paintbrush. The logic of that one is very parallel to the logic of this [Denouncer-perpetrator], except you have different words here.

A producer director	makes orders requires	B actor	Act to do X	Audience buy applaud
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[blackboard] You have this kind of pattern: where A makes B do something. Again, in the two-person situation, it's quite straightforward; there's no in-principle problems, and it's not puzzling, it's not confusing. It just may be hard to deal with practically. And now you make the same move: suppose that A and B are the same person, and that A makes himself do thus and such. Now he's both the helpless Victim and the controlling Producer. And so the Producer-Actor-Act—this is the Producer or Director. He's the one in charge who makes the decisions, who gives orders to the Actor to put on the Act. So these are the elements of Producer-Actor-Act. It's when a person is making himself do something.

One of the implications is that the Actor doesn't really want to do it. Otherwise nobody would have to make him do it. In any case, his doing it is independent of what he [B] wants; it reflects what he [A] wants. And out here is an audience for whose benefit the Act is put on. And the payoff from the Audience is either that they buy tickets for the performance or that they applaud. A successful Act is one that draws applause and that people will continue buying tickets for.

Q: *Can the Audience be within the person as well as outsiders?*

P: Rarely is the Audience also the same person. It can be, but I haven't actually encountered a case. It could happen—I just haven't come across it. And one of the main reasons is that, in general, you force yourself to put on the Act in order to control the Audience where you couldn't do it otherwise. And the Audience is most often a parent.

Q: ###.

P: No, ordinarily he wouldn't do it. That's why you have to force yourself to do it. But then that means that you have to have an ulterior motive for doing it. And the motive is mainly that you've got somebody out here that you want the applause from, and the only way to get it is to put on an Act that they'll buy.

Q: *How's that different from, say, a little kid acting out in school for the sake of being the clown for other friends?*

P: Good example—if he doesn't really feel like a clown, if he's just putting it on for an ulterior motive, then, indeed, he fits. You see, in effect this [the Act] is the persona. That's what you show people. Behind it is you, over here. And it's in this format that what people see can be quite different from you.

Now the reason that you're faced with this is that one of the relevant audiences is the therapist. You get a client who comes in and puts on an act for you. And one of the commonest Acts is the Victim Act. Notice how a Victim Act is designed to draw applause from a therapist. If you had to pick something that would go over big with a therapist, what could you pick that would be better than a Victim Act? So the Victim is either helpless or no good, and that's the form in which the problem often gets dumped in your lap: "I'm no good. Change me. I want to accomplish X, Y, and Z, but I'm helpless and powerless. Help me do it." One of the things that you want to be suspicious of is, is he really that way, and is it that simple that he has this problem and wants your help to solve it? Or is he repeating an Act that has worked with everybody else, and why not you? And those two are not mutually exclusive. He may be hurting, indeed, and have an Act that has worked well with other people and be using it on you and still be hurting and want help.

Q: *Would you point that out to your client, explicitly draw out the analogy between the Audience and the therapist?*

P: Yeah. As a matter of fact, I described an example where I did that, in connection with depression. I was illustrating a Move 2. What I said, in effect, was, "You're presenting yourself as somebody who's helpless, and

whose only way out is to kill yourself. But I can see, in your situation, you have good reasons to put on that kind of act and make that kind of claim, and they really are good reasons. And I'm not going to buy the act. I'm not going to respond to that. I'm going to respond to you, the person who has those good reasons, and nothing that you do or say is going to make any difference in that respect." So there was an explicit portrayal, and I'm taking a stand over here: my stand is that I'm not going to deal with the act, I'm going to deal with you.

Q: *Does it sometimes occur that the patient's integrity then is called into question and that he then reaffirms his act?*

P: Well, you can make mistakes making moves like that, but, in fact, remember that this is a legitimizing move: "You are someone who has good reasons for doing that."

Q: *I can see that would be a good case, but I can also see the case in which now the patient has to prove, by a suicide, that, in fact, that's who he is.*

P: As I say, you pick your time and place and person to do these. You don't just drop them in out of nowhere.

Q: *—a good reason for somebody who's saying he wants to kill himself—you're telling him that he has good reasons to say that—?*

P: Yeah. "Your life has been a horrible disappointment to you. In good part, it's been your fault, it really has been, and you don't see any way out. And you've got all these commitments outstanding that you're going to have to deliver on, and so one way to buy some time is to present yourself as this Victim, and scare people off by telling them that you're going to kill yourself. And that's a pretty good strategy. And it has bought you time, hasn't it? And you can expect that it will buy you some more time. And during that time, while you're buying it from other people, I'm going to be dealing with you."

Q: *It seems that that move would, in a way, bypass part of the problem I was suggesting, because you're still saying that it's legitimate when he makes those claims—in fact, it's legitimate that he continue to make those claims, but not bullshit you.*

P: Yeah. And that—remember, I presented that as a Move 2, as an accreditation, because this person also really was depressed. And remember—depression, small behavior potential, and what I was doing thereby was using mine to establish that link with him, and providing him with something beyond what he had there. And that’s how the thing evolved.

Q: *What’s—### “How you’re going to respond in dealing with me?”*

P: “We’re going to talk about you and how things are going with you, and what you’re going to do and what you’re not going to do, and how it hits you.” Just straight, realistic terms. Because the key is the link and not the content, that you’re establishing a personal link, bypassing this, which is the defense, just directing yourself to that person. One extreme form of the Act is that it encompasses the person’s whole life, as it were. You see, the Act can be more or less limited. It can have to do with a suicide threat, it can have to do with being helpless to stop drinking or to stop taking drugs, or it can be everything that a person would see if they followed you around 24 hours a day. That latter case is what, in the classic literature, is called “living a lie”, where your entire 24-hour day, seven-day week is the Act. It’s also what the existentialists might call a thoroughly inauthentic life. Your whole life is an Act. And what makes it an Act is that you’re not doing those things out of intrinsic motivation, but out of some ulterior motivation.

Q: *What do you think are the consequences of telling somebody who “isn’t there”, and you see it this way, and you tell him, and you sort of force it on him—*

P: ### the same way anyhow. Because if you’re wrong, what happens is that he gets mad at you, and that’s part of the treatment for depression. I told you, with status dynamics there’s a lot of now-you-see-it-now-you-don’t. And this is one of them.

Q: *And you don’t see any problems, anything major coming out of dealing with a person in a way that doesn’t fit?*

P: Remember, you’re not a machine. You’re monitoring, you’re choosing your time and person to do this, and you’re watching to see how it goes. You’re not just going in blind. So if it starts going wrong, you do other things. But it hasn’t gone wrong yet—for me.

Q: [how do you know if it's going wrong?]

P: If a person started crying, for example, then you'd begin to wonder, but you'd also examine the crying as to what it was. But at least if he starts crying, that's not an instant sign of success, and as a critic, you note that. But usually, if that's going to happen, you get intimations of that beforehand because you're not dealing with a stranger. And then you don't make as strong a move. You leave yourself the openings. You see, in this case you had somebody who was depressed, threatening suicide, and diagnosed as borderline psychotic, and really was all of these. And there's just no way to soft-pedal any of that. So I made a strong move.

Q: *If somebody left therapy, would that qualify as a candidate that you may have been off?*

P: Well, it would ### that what you had done was ineffective, but it might just be an indication that you'd been wrong about the motivation to really work instead of continuing the Victim Act. Again, remember that this is a very supportive move. The fact that you use strong language doesn't make it confrontive or combative. It's strongly supportive.

Q: *Calling somebody inauthentic—*

P: I didn't say "inauthentic". I said, "You've got good reason for doing this. It makes all kinds of sense. It has worked. You've been successful there."

Q: *But you're still saying that that's an Act, the way you're treating people is an Act.*

P: Yeah, but that's like saying that your behavior, what you visibly do, is designed to fool these people, and you're right. You've got good reason to fool them, and I'm applauding you for doing it. I'm saying it's okay to keep doing that because you still have a good reason. Except that I'm with you. I'm with you back here. I'm not out there in the Audience that you're going to fool.

Q: *I can accept that or reject that, and say, "You think I'm a phony, and you think I'm treating people as a phony."*

P: I'd say, "No. You're doing something that makes sense, and that's not phony. And I'm giving it to you straight."

Q: *Yeah, and if I accept what you're saying, then that's the way it goes, but if I think you're calling me a phony, then there's a problem.*

P: And then I take care of it by saying, "No, I'm not saying you're a phony. I'm saying that you're doing something that makes sense, and if I was in your shoes, I'd probably do the same thing myself, and so would anybody else with good sense, unless they could think of something better."

Q: *You've sort of made a Move 2, by saying that that's not what's happening.*

P: Well, after all, if a client tells me I'm doing something that I'm not doing, I let him know that, too, and that too is a case of accreditation. In effect, there are some safeguards that are not that obvious, but that make it not as dangerous as you might think, if you're sensitive to these things. On the other hand, that's one place where it pays to know what you're doing and have command of the logic of it, when you're dealing with either potential suicide or potential psychosis. But keep in mind that if you're dealing with somebody like that, you're in trouble no matter what your approach is. It's not as though there were other, safer, more conservative ways to deal with it. There aren't. Anything you do is at least as risky as this. Being kind to that person is as risky.

Any questions about the logic of A makes B do C?

Q: *When it does work, it creates an enormous relief to the client, because he can operate with you without worrying about ###.*

P: That's right. You've got a two-person community going there.

Q: *—the opposite in terms of the integrity issue is also likely to be the result, and that's that the client realizes that now this won't be an issue of integrity with you, to make that claim. And he could continue to make that claim on the outside while dropping the suicide claim in terms of therapy?*

P: Or he can continue making it with me, and it doesn't make any difference to me, because all I do is keep interpreting how come he's doing

that, and legitimizing it, and talking about his actual life situation. So even if he continues the act with me, I'm still going to respond to him and not to the act. As a matter of fact, with this particular client we went back and forth. For a period of time, it was all here [A]; then I got the Act again, and then I went through the same thing again, and it was back here, and then after a while back to the Act, and back to this move, and so everything tested out.

One of the ones that you should put down here—underneath 5B, put down 5C: Sending a Messenger, or an Agent. You use that for a limited Act, for a limited purpose, when you talk about Sending a Messenger out to do the job for you. And the Messenger has the name of the client. If the client's name is John, you say, "You have John the Messenger—you're sending him out to do this job for you while you sit back here safe." And, indeed, that's the way it works. If it's for a limited purpose, then it is like sending somebody in your place to do it for you. [change tape] **Two variations with earlier forms that were one-liners** for people who knew about psychoanalysis and wanted to go back into their past in order to find a solution to their problems, because they knew that that's the way it's done. So the one-liner was: "When you see a guy with a shovel in his hand digging around in the past for a solution to his problems, keep your eye on the Guy with the Shovel because that's where the action is." But the action is not in the past; it's not in what you might dig up; it's in the guy who thinks he needs that and is actively searching for it. So that was one of the early moves to deal with the present rather than the past—that the action is in the present in the form of a guy who thinks he needs that information in order to solve his problems, and is working that hard to get it. And the contrast is implicit—this fictitious person in the past whose history and characteristics, if one could only have access to them, would provide the solution to my problem, and that fictitious person in the past who would do that is me—in the past. So that past person is the B. The Guy with the Shovel in his hand is the Producer-Director, and the digging is the Act. That one was directly pointed to the psychoanalytic tradition: you've got to find out where it came from, etc. The Guy with the Paintbrush—this is for people who come in with a self-improvement program and say, "I want to change. I want to get characteristics A, B, C, D, and all these other

glorious characteristics, and I want you to help me do that.” And the one-liner on that one is, “When you see a guy with a statue of himself, painting it up and making it look very, very pretty, watch for the Guy with the Paintbrush in his hand, because that’s where the action is.” The action is not in the statue, in the product that you’re so interested in laboriously producing. Again, that’s the Act. The action is over here in the guy who thinks he needs that kind of improvement, who’s working that hard to bring it about. That’s where you want to focus your attention. So you have those earlier variants; the Messenger is a later one. And all of them have the logic of A makes B do C.

Q: *They also have the advantage that if you don’t like the statue, it’s not really you.*

P: Yeah. You could introduce the tar and feathers to get yourself the equivalent of the Victim.

Q: *You sometimes hear people say, “I’d like to change in this and that way,” and the therapist helps them change these things, and then maybe later on ### —*

P: That’s a different one: A changes B into C. That’s different from A making B do C. A guy comes in and says, “I want to make these kinds of changes,”—so far, he’s simply giving you this. A changes B into C is what he’s announced that that’s his project, with him being all three. Some of the other images, the Con-Man, the Country Club, a couple more, have to do—You Can’t Get There from Here—all have to do with this format. So it isn’t the case that you just reject out of hand whenever somebody comes in and says he wants to accomplish certain changes. Remember, you don’t routinely use these—you use them when you’ve got a situation that fits. And the one in which there’s ulterior motivation and an act going on, well, you wait until you have somebody who’s doing that before you use it. It’s not to say that everybody who is trying to make a change or who is making himself do something fits this sort of thing.

Q: *Watch the guy who’s using the image, because that’s where the action is. [laughter]*

P: That was a showstopper!

Session 9

March 16, 1976

Two-person formulas; Personal change; Self-improvement; Images; Therapeutic change; Part-whole problem and the idiom of beginnings; Judgment diagram; Images: Eight-year-old Astronaut; Unemployed Housewife.

PGO:—the extra written-in things on the end of this list [of Images]. From time to time, I've made a note to add something to the end, and I'd like to have all of that in one place. What additional ones do we have?

Q: *Spitting on the Sidewalk, and Checking with City Hall.*

P: What else? I'm sure there's more than just those two.

Q: *5-C: Sending a Messenger.*

Q: *The Entrance Exam.*

P: The Entrance Exam is in the Heuristics, and I just switched that to this list also.

One thing that showed up last time is that a lot of the images that we've had so far fit a two-person situation primarily, and the images are getting at what happens when you transform the two-person situation into a one-person situation. So the first one was this: *A Criticizes, judges, etc., B.* And that was the Henry Kissinger and the variations on it. Did we have another variation besides that? Anyhow, the variations on Kissinger fit this pattern, of *A criticizes or judges B.* Then the next one was *A makes B do C.* And this is the #5 series: the Director/Actor/Act, and the Guy with the Shovel, the Guy with the Paintbrush, Sending the Messenger out to do a

job. Then the third one: *A changes B into C*. And that one will pick up a few more on the list here. So one of the regularities that's beginning to emerge here is that a lot of what these images do is to bring out something that fits a two-person logic in the case where it's only one person involved, where the same person is at both ends. And one of the reasons why there is that kind of problem is that all of these are asymmetrical. That is, the position B is not one that you would ordinarily think of as identical with or symmetrical with or equivalent to the position of A. Therefore, when the same person is both A and B in these forms, there is still the same asymmetry. And, in general, that person will be playing B rather than A or A rather than B, in the sense that this is how he will see himself. And since what is going on includes both, half of that whole pattern is invisible to that person. And it's the invisible half, in general, that's going to create the problem, and is going to provide the entree for a therapeutic intervention. And one of the first entrees is to get him to see both sides. And often, that's best exemplified by the Hanging Judge. Just getting the person to see both sides enables you to transform the problem that he deals with into one that he hasn't already tabbed as hopeless, one that he is in control of, and, therefore, one that he can do something about.

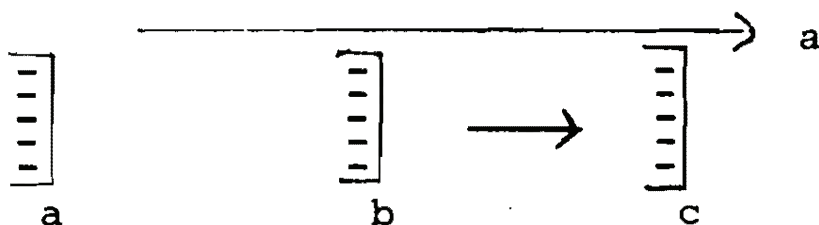
For example, you remember that I said when you have the Critic, you can often transform into—it no longer looks like the problem of how you get out of this horrible bind; it now looks like the problem of are you willing to give up that kind of satisfaction. Similarly, here, you can transform this into “it's no longer a problem of getting this Messenger to do the right thing”. The problem is whether you're willing to go in person instead of sending somebody else to do the job. Now the third one does not lend itself to that. Instead, it lends itself to #7, which is “You Can't Get There from Here”.

Remember, I said that #5-B was designed for somebody who comes in with a self-improvement program. And I would advise you always to be suspicious of self-improvement programs, and raise the question whether the proposed self-improvement is (1) the exercise of the person's behavior potential, in which case it's liable to be self-actualizing, but in any case is probably innocuous; versus (2) does it represent a self-rejection and an attempt to be somebody else instead of oneself? And it's the second one

you've got to watch out for.

Q: *There's also the instance where a person is on that sort of a thing, and it's not really central to the kinds of situations that are germane to the problem. "If I do this over here, maybe this will be okay." There's no connection to what the hell they're going through or their present situation.*

P: ### a diversion, and it's not innocuous, but it's not disastrous either. In any case, when you have a self-improvement program, you want to have these possibilities in mind and ask yourself, "What's going on here?" instead of entering immediately into a contract with a client to succeed in that self-improvement.



A changes B into C

Let's look at these two: A changes B into C, and You Can't Get There from Here. Imagine a client comes in with a self-improvement program and says, "The way I am, I don't like. Here's how I want to be. I want you to help me change so that I'm this way and not this way." Immediately it fits into this form—[blackboard]. This is, in effect, what the client says: "I want to change me from having this sort of thing—these sort of characteristics [b]—into a me that has these sorts of characteristics [c]." So this change is the desired self-improvement: from an existing set of characteristics which are bad to a new set of characteristics which are good. Now what you do is: you raise the question, "Okay, what set of characteristics does it take to accomplish that change?" And there will be a set of characteristics [a] it would take to accomplish that change, an important one of which is being dissatisfied with the way you are.

Now the explanation of why, in answer to a person who asks "How

do I make that change? How do I change from B into C?”—the answer is: “You can’t. There is no way. You can’t get there from here.” Usually, if you say that, you’ll get a dirty look or an expression of surprise or something which then calls for an explanation on your part as to why you would say such a thing. And so this is part of the explanation of why you would say, “You can’t get there from here—there’s nothing you can do to make that change.” Sometimes, before the explanation, when you say, “There’s nothing you can do,” you wait a bit for the message to sink in, and then you say, “But it can happen,” and that draws the appropriate contrast, which you then explain: that it can indeed happen, the change can come about, but if so, it won’t be something that you do.

Okay, so we have the formula here for accomplishing the change. We have the set of characteristics—what it would take, what he has now, and what he’d like to become. And clearly, both [a] and [b] are things he has now. If he’s going to accomplish the change, he’s got to have these characteristics [a] which is what it takes to do it; and he’s got to have these [b], which are undesirables; and he won’t have these [c], which are the desired ones. The explanation is: if you do anything whatever by way of changing yourself into this new self, you can expect a change. Indeed you can. But the nature of the change that is to be expected is not the change from [b] to [c]. It’s not becoming more this way [C]. Instead, it’s becoming more that way [a]. The person becomes more like [a], rather than more like [c]. And the reason is that that’s the way he’s already being. That’s the direction in which the change is going to take place, via the Relationship Change formula.

Q: *Is that explaining—like the person who’s trying to change into a psychologist, and they try to act like one and do all the things that a psychologist does—*

P: It doesn’t explain it. It’s part of dealing with a person like that. Because the first thing you would tell that person is, “You can’t do it. Not that way.” One of the other images—You Have to Be a Poker Player—gets at that directly. Is there any question about why this change [a to increased a] is the change you would expect, on the grounds that this way is the way you’re already being?

Q: *You call that one [a] and the other one [a]—where is the change?*

P: Well, if you're already dissatisfied with yourself enough to try to change, the direction you're going to change into is more somebody who's dissatisfied with himself. If it takes giving yourself the benefit of the doubt, then you're going to change into somebody who is more charitable. Now part of the answer is that this description [a] is almost certainly not the description that you would straightforwardly give of the person and say, "This is what he's like." That honor would be closer to [b]. [b] is the way that person, at least, would routinely describe himself, and that's what he wants to change. The [a] characteristics are the kind comparable—for example, if I said, "I want you to put on a workshop next Tuesday." What it would take for you to put on a workshop is not to just be the way that you usually are across a wide variety of situations. Rather, you would call upon characteristics that you do have that are not that salient. You are not expressing them; they're not that important in your over-all makeup, but you have them available for this job; and in this job, they stand out, and that's what you're expressing there. Likewise, *this* job of changing [b] into [c] is one that calls forth certain of your characteristics that are not your salient ones, that are not primary, and that, therefore, you have room to change in that direction. You could be that way here in this limited context, but you're not just straightforwardly that way. The change will be in the direction of just being straightforwardly that way.

And, you might say, by accident, there can be an overlap between [a] and [c], so, indeed, it's not all that hopeless; but, in principle, you wouldn't want to try it that way because that's leaving it to chance—the chance that the set [a] and the set [c] will overlap. But again, one of the features of [a] is that it will include being unhappy with yourself. If that's the way you're going to become, you want to worry about whether it's worth making that kind of change.

Q: *If there's no overlap between [a] and [c], then the person can't get there—can't even get close. It can't happen.*

P: But notice that that will simply be grounds for continuing to be dissatisfied with himself. As I say, what's back of this is the Relationship Change formula. The behaviors expressing these characteristics [a] will to

some extent violate the major ID characteristics you have, and, therefore, your ID characteristics will change in the direction of that behavior.

To put it differently: if you're going to become somebody, you have to start some time; and the start is when you can act that way, be authentic about it, even though you're not yet that way; that it is a kind of behavior that you can engage in authentically, but it isn't yet an ID characteristic that you have. And clearly, in the process of acquiring an ID characteristic, there's going to be a middle point of that sort, because you don't acquire an ID characteristic just like that out of nowhere. So you're starting to do the behaviors, to bring about the change—those behaviors are going to be the starting point for the change. And so it's the characteristics that those behaviors express that will give the direction of change.

Q: *Then the client will say that he's going to be a phony for a while.*

P: No. I said you can't do it. You can't get there from here.

Q: *That seems to eliminate any possibility for increasing the person's behavior potential at [a].*

P: How do you mean?

Q: *The formulation seems to stress development or emphasis of behavior potentials at [a], but if those potentials aren't there, there doesn't seem to be any room for acquiring them.*



a



c

P: Except by doing something else whereby you can acquire them. That's just putting the whole thing one step further back. You see, here [a] you have behavior potential that you don't usually exercise, but you can here [C]. If you don't have that, then you can do something that does connect to that behavior potential, engage in that behavior, and acquire that potential, and then from that do this. But as I say, that's just putting an extra step in front of a sequence of changes, and the sequence is the same, in principle, whether you add this other step in front or not.

Q: *What would be a real-world example where this would fit?*

P: *Any kind of self-change. The only kind it wouldn't fit is the ones where you can see that the same thing occurs in both places. Then you can say, that kind of change you can bring about.*

Q: *Suppose I say, "I want to stop looking at life like a psychologist."?*

P: You can't do it. That one, I'd say there is no way to do it. Look: think of somebody who wants to learn French, and goes and takes Berlitz lessons and winds up learning French. Normally, that person would not say that he changed himself just because he has a new ID characteristic; namely, this skill or competence. His acquisition of that, he wouldn't count as a change in himself. He would count it as a self-actualization, that he was being himself in going from not knowing French to knowing French. So we wouldn't describe it as changing himself, but rather of being himself; and, indeed, he would be correct, because to do that he would have to be able to do those things.

Q: *But if the person can change their liking themselves on learning French, then you'd say "you can't get there from here", right? If the person decided that they couldn't like themselves unless they learned French, and that was their change—how would that fit it?*

P: I would try that anyhow, because I would seriously doubt whether the person could succeed that way, because somebody who needs to know French in order to like himself will almost certainly not like himself after he's learned French. It's almost certain he was mistaken in thinking that this would do the job.

Q: *So it's the person they want to change, rather than competence or power or something like that.*

P: Yeah. That's why I said, when you have a person with a self-improvement program, the first thing you want to ask is, "Is this program a self-actualization, or is it a self-rejection?" And when it looks like a self-rejection, then you say, "You can't get there from here." When it looks like a self-actualization that's merely the exercise of behavior potential that he has, you say, "Fine, here's how you do it—if you really want to do it." [change tape] One of the reasons why, in therapy, it is more often than not "you can't get there from here." I guess you would call it a slogan, and write this down on the third page, under Slogans. The slogan is: "Whatever the client says is wrong." This refers to the initial presentation that the client makes about himself and his situation. And there's a simple line of reasoning behind it, namely, that clients face problems, they formulate them, they try to solve them, before they become clients. And so long as a client has a formulation that leads to possible solutions, he will try the possible solutions before he comes to therapy. So that by the time he comes to therapy, he has run out of his solutions; and, therefore, the formulation that he comes in with is one that does not connect with the solution. Instead, it is one whereby he shows you that he's in an impossible position, and there is no solution—and that's why he's wrong.

So somebody who merely wants to learn French, and it's a self-actualizing thing, will go out and learn French. He won't come to you and say, "I've got this great self-improvement program, that I'm learning French." On the other hand, somebody who says, "I want to be more open and spontaneous with people"—that one, you want to watch out for. Because that's a tip-off that here's somebody who has tried it; it hasn't worked for him; he hasn't become that way; and his formulation of it will show you why it's impossible. So in effect you're merely echoing his conviction when you say, "You can't get there from here." That's why I think—because you're dealing with people in therapy—that it's more often the case than not that a self-improvement program is a self-rejection rather than a self-actualization.

Again, you can see that the difficulty stems from the asymmetry between the Doer [A] and the Subject that is being acted on [B], and the characteristics that go with the doing [a] and the characteristics that go

with the Subject being acted on [b]. Now, sometimes it pays to do this kind of explaining, and that's why under Heuristics, #9 is "A changes B into C"; whereas the image is "You Can't Get There from Here." But the one is something that you can use to explain the other. It would be possible to not use the diagram of *A changes B into C* by just saying, "That's the way you're already being," and just doing it verbally. However, that tends not to get it across, and that's because there's enough different things in the diagram that it's hard for somebody to keep track of it and see how it works if you're merely talking. Normally, what I do is, I have a blackboard handy—I just put it on the blackboard. On occasions, in desperation, when I haven't one there, I write it on a piece of paper and just hand it over. Now there are times when you don't want to do that, or it's unhandy, or you just don't feel like it, and the #20—You Have to Be a Poker Player—is at least a partial alternative.

The straight presentation of the image would go something like this: think of playing poker, and think of the kind of facts that there are to be learned about poker. Think, for example, of figuring the odds for holding various hands; of the odds that if you hold a certain hand, somebody else will hold a better hand; of the odds that somebody who has a given hand would bluff against yours; of the odds of winning against somebody who is bluffing if you're bluffing. There's all kinds of these miscellaneous facts, most of them having to do with odds, that you could find out about playing poker. Now imagine two different people who are going to acquire those kinds of facts. Imagine first an experimental psychologist who's studying poker playing, and in the course of his investigations, he establishes a variety of facts of this sort. And as he establishes these facts, he makes the use of them that he has—namely, in his experiment, as an experimental psychologist. So the net effect of his acquiring those facts is that he probably becomes a better experimental psychologist, since he's done this one successfully. He probably doesn't become a better poker player, because that's not what he was doing, and that wasn't the use he had for these facts.

So contrast him with a poker player who acquires these kinds of facts, and he makes what use of them he has—namely, playing poker. And the acquisition of these kinds of facts for somebody who's using them in playing poker, you would predict he would become a better poker player.

He probably wouldn't become a better experimental psychologist, because he wasn't using those facts that way. So the moral is: if you want to be a better poker player, you have to be a poker player.

Okay—now this is the image, and then you transform into whatever the person wants to be. If you want to be a more generous person, you have to be a generous person. If you want to be a better psychologist, you have to be a psychologist. If you want to be a better researcher, you have to be a researcher. Whatever it is. So that's the standard phrase—to transform it into the person's actual problem. You can see that that carries the same message, pretty much, in an appreciably different format, and that you can say; whereas this one, you can't hardly.

This particular one also gets at one of the things that I said was a major difference in the kind of problems that one deals with, namely, the difference between problems of being and problems of doing. And the statement that you can't get there from here is a backhanded way of telling the client that what he's taking to be a problem of doing is really a problem of being. That's why he can't solve it, because as a problem of doing it's insoluble. Now come back to this diagram here [p. 2], because there's some auxiliary explanation that often helps. Number one: think how in fact people do change, and you can say to the client, "Look, you know darn well that you're different now from what you were five years ago, and five years ago you were different from what you were ten years ago, and you're different now from what you'll be in five years. So people do change, and that's expected and ordinary. They don't change, in general, by planning it. You didn't five years ago plan to become the way you are now. Probably at no time did you plan to become the way you are now, and yet you did. And your becoming the way you are now was not accidental. It wasn't a case of suddenly becoming somebody else. It was a natural development. You're still you. You're still the same you. But you're different. You're the same person you were five years ago, but you're different. Now, how do people change, if not by trying and doing something to bring the change about? What they do is simply do what comes naturally, namely, that they do whatever they have reason enough to do in the circumstances in which they do it, and by doing that, they change."

So there again, part of the heuristic is an explanation of how people

do, in fact, change, and it isn't by trying, and that backs up the "You Can't Get There from Here." You can't do it by trying to do it. Then the next one is: "If you have a change in mind, to be sure, it might happen in the natural way, but I take it from what you say that it's unlikely or that, at least, you wouldn't want to leave it to chance. That's why you want to do it. You want to see to it. So if your effort is not going to succeed, and it's unlikely that it would happen in the natural course of events, what's the way out? The way out is to introduce another position called [D], who has the characteristics comparable to A, namely, those that are required to bring that change about, except that D is me [the therapist]. That's what I'm here for, is to relieve you of this burden [a], to free you to just do the things that you have reason to do in the circumstances in which you do them, and bring about the change, and I will be worrying about the direction of change." [blackboard: he crosses out A and a, and substitutes D and a']

Q: *What were you doing by crossing that out?*

P: By my being here and having the characteristics needed to bring the change about, I relieve the client of having to exercise those characteristics or even to have them on his own; thereby freeing him just to do what comes naturally; and thereby change in the ordinary way, with me tipping the scales as much as I can in the direction of the change he wants, so that it isn't just by chance; but neither is it a technology that I can just press a button and, lo and behold, he's different.

Q: *This would seem to fit the case where the client wants to move in a certain direction, but every move he sees moving that way is unacceptable: not good, impolite, offensive, something or other. If you take on the role of the Critic, making those kinds of judgments, frees him from that.*

P: Yeah. You see, he doesn't have to be dissatisfied any more, because you can be dissatisfied. You can do the Critic job.

Q: *—the possibility for creating some change in the future, or do you always have to rely on somebody else?*

P: No, no. He's doing the changing in the natural way, because he winds up just responding to situations in ways that he has reason enough

to respond. And that's how one changes anyhow. The main thing—from here, you can do several kinds of things. One, you can send him into situations that give him reasons that he doesn't usually have (or stronger reasons than he usually has) so as to get him to do things that he wouldn't ordinarily do. That's one of the functions of setting exercises for the client, is to get him to do something that he wouldn't normally do, and thereby bring about some kind of change.

Q: *Isn't this something that people do by themselves, sometimes?*

P: Well, an exercise is simply something you tell the client to do, and anything you tell the client to do, conceivably, he could do on his own. In fact, he will do it on his own, so it's not something that lies outside his powers. The point is that he wouldn't normally think of doing it on his own, or if he did, he'd have stronger reasons not to.

Q: *Let's say he wouldn't normally think of it on his own, then you have the diagram where A can change B into C, all being the same person, but one exception runs that A has a bright idea—*

P: Clients are full of bright ideas—that are self-defeating. No, the possibility is that the set [a] overlaps with the set [c], where there's a causal link from something here [b] to something there [C] with nothing intervening. And no interference from up here.

Q: *You mean that he can't make himself change—this A?*

P: Well, that's the net effect. He can't make himself change because he's being some other way than what he wants to change into. He could be lucky, but that would be leaving it to chance.

Now the other thing you can do is to use images to get the client to see things differently, which in turn enables him to do things he wouldn't otherwise. For example, the one about, "The problem looks now like, 'Are you willing to give up that kind of satisfaction?'" That formulation will evoke from the client a whole different set of characteristics and capabilities than the problem of "how do I get out of this horrible bind for me?" That, too, will evoke a whole set of behaviors and characteristics, and they're quite different from the other. So by reformulating the problem that way, you're getting the client to do something different, because he sees

things differently, and it's not something he would ordinarily have thought of. So both exercises and the image presentations are generally in the service of this [b], to get the kind of change you want. And some clients will require all kinds of explanations; others will be satisfied with the poker images. But you can give this kind of explanation, so it will be a heuristic.

Q: —*when the therapist is going to take the responsibility for the direction?*

P: He doesn't take the responsibility for the direction. He just helps. He can't guarantee to produce it. The client can't guarantee to produce it, either. In fact, you can guarantee he can't. But the therapist is not in a position to guarantee the direction of change, only to do what he can to use the client's resources toward that end.

Q: *What do you tell the client?*

P: "I'm here to worry about that. That relieves you of having to do more worrying about it than you really have to." And usually, I say, "But if you want to worry about it, go ahead," so as to eliminate the notion that I'm going to lay a trip on him.

Q: *Would you say that this is the formulation of a token economy in a behavior mod program?*

P: Yeah, I was going to say: notice that if you wanted to burlesque this, you could call it "shaping behavior", because you're first getting the behavior to occur via the exercise or the image; and then presumably it's going to be acted on successfully; and formally, that will fit the notion of shaping, in which you get some approximation to occur, and reinforce it; and then that puts you in a position to do more and more, until, finally, you reach the target. But again, as with the images, the kind of things you would think of doing with this are generally different from the kind you would think of doing if you had learned behavior modification and were shaping behavior. But not nearly as much the other way around. That is, from this point of view, you would have access to anything that you could think of in terms of reinforcement.

Q: *Can you think of any advantages of using the diagram over either the Poker Player image, or just chatting about “you’re different now from what you were a year ago,” and so on?*

P: It depends on how much clarity you want. Maximum clarity is with the diagram, particularly if you explain as much as is needed for the client to say, “Yeah, I see.” If all you want is acceptance, then the Poker Player may be better, because then you don’t burden the client with an explanation that he doesn’t really want.

Q: *When would you use the explanation? With the kind of client who wants—*

P: That’s right. You see, there’s something paradoxical about “You Can’t Get There from Here,” and for that reason, sometimes you don’t say that. Sometimes you just go directly to the Poker Player.

Q: *What about when you explain first—the phenomenon of the relapse—often your explanations are so good that I go away feeling good, and then I get a terrible relapse, like to protect my——*

P: Okay, now look. Turn to page 3 [of Appendix II] and you’ll see something that says Formats. The only one I talked about, #1, Ordinary Conversation said that in doing face-to-face psychotherapy, the conventions that govern ordinary conversation will apply there unless you see to it (or unless the client sees to it) that some other set applies. All the rest on that list are ways of setting it up, of staging, so that a different set of conventions apply. One of those is #7, Code Words.

A Code Word is a single word or phrase that stands for an entire discussion, usually a discussion that you’ve had with a client. And you usually introduce the Code Word by summarizing this discussion, and then the next hour—a week later—if you want to refer back to that discussion, you simply use that phrase that you used in summary. Now the names of these images are Code Words. When you present the image to the client, you usually mention the name, or give it a new name, and then, later on, when you get the relapse, that’s the one you mention by way of reminder. So in this case, when you get the relapse, you say, “It sounds like you’re trying to get there from here. Again.” Or something like that. So with the device of

a Code Word, you don't have to give the whole explanation all over again, because you'll feel like a fool doing the whole thing again. Instead, you use the code word, and if the client then doesn't remember it, then you go in and do it again.

Q: *Or gesture.*

P: Or gesture, yeah. For example, this [arm in front of face as if defending against a blow], for a client who consistently attacks you, and at some point you've talked to the client about his tendency to attack you—you would introduce it by going like this, and then thereafter, when you want to remind the client, you just go like that. Or you bare your breast for the knife to go in, if that's what the client is doing for you, and after that you just go like this. So you can do it with word or gesture, and it has a couple of advantages. Number one, it makes for a very efficient communication, because you can communicate the whole discussion, the whole image, the whole way of thinking, with one word. That's fast. Secondly, it creates a communion—it's kind of like an in-joke: this is your language that you've developed with the client, and that indicates and supports the maintenance of solidarity. So it has a couple of advantages.

Q: *Pantomime is different, then?*

P: In general it's different. You can use a gesture for a Code Word, but more generally, you use Pantomime to get your message in without interrupting the client who's talking. Again, this follows the conventions of ordinary interaction. For example, if you're just talking to somebody in any kind of normal setting, and he says something surprising, normally you will either say something, or make a gesture—you'll go like this. Or if you're irritated, there are ways of looking irritated, astonished, surprised, pleased—some small number, but a fair number of reactions that you can get across in a normal way just by being normal. And what you want to do is be more aware of how one does it, and be aware of when you're doing it. But basically, it's what anybody in conversation will do.

Q: *What's the gesture for "spontaneous"? [laughter]*

P: I could, but it wouldn't be nice. [laughter]

Q: *How do you introduce the images or heuristics without being—to minimize their offensiveness?*

P: To what? [laughter]

Q: *What I mean by that—for example, like if you want to say, “I’ll not only teach you—I’ll show you.”*

P: Well, I haven’t really discovered a problem of minimizing their offensiveness, because they’re not basically offensive.

Q: *What I’m thinking about is, if you say, “Here’s something I want to teach you.”*

P: That’s the heuristic. One of the entrees is, “That reminds me of—”, or “One of the things I thought of as you were talking is—”, or “I got an idea about what’s going on here; here it is.” There’s a number of ways of introducing them. There isn’t a standard way. Usually it fits right into the conversation, because—since I use them fairly often, and I haven’t had to devise special ways of introducing them, presumably, they just flow conversationally. As a matter of fact, I can’t even think of any one way that stands out more than the others. I was going to suggest, “That reminds me of—”, but that doesn’t really stand out. I’m trying to check these off as we go along. Have we gone into the Two Mayors?

Q: Yes.

P: Okay. You can see that the Two Mayors again gets at the contrast between being and doing. One guy wants to do what mayors do; the other guy just wants to be mayor. Let’s take a five-minute break.

Let’s check out the additions here. I’ve got a list of six, on the list of Images. The first one is the Entrance Examination, the second is Checking with City Hall, the third is Back to the Wall, the fourth is Home Base, the fifth is Spitting on the Sidewalk, the sixth is the Unemployed Housewife, with a variation called the Eight-Year-Old Astronaut. The fifth one, Spitting on the Sidewalk, there’s an alternate title for it, and it’s called Passing a Law. As a matter of fact, Passing a Law is better than Spitting on the Sidewalk.

[laughter]

Q: *It's so much easier to spit on the sidewalk.*

P: It's easier to pass a law. Okay. [to a student] Do you want to give the example you were talking about?

Joe: *I'm working with a client who works in an organization, a secretary, and she came in today telling me—a reiteration of what she's come in with before—about being upset because things aren't going right. And I ask what sort of things, and the explanation she gave was very much like the director of a mental health center might give—"They take furniture out of rooms, they don't put them back, and there's this that's done and isn't done, and so on." They were the sorts of complaints that somebody would make if they were a director as opposed to a secretary, but she is a secretary. And she was making these kinds of criticism, being upset at these sorts of things. And the image I came up with is that if I went out onto a busy intersection, which is chaotic, and I stood there, putting my hands up for the cars to stop, I could see what was wrong. I could see that somebody needed to direct the things and put my hands to stop the cars. The cars kept going, and I had to jump out of the way to dodge them. I put up my hands to direct traffic, and the people just went on and stepped on my toes. I would get frustrated, I would get mad, angry, feel ineffectual, feel down. If I had a uniform, if I put up my hands, the cars would stop; put up my hands and the people would go, etc. And it's not that the uniform gives competence. It's that it puts you in that kind of position, gives you that kind of status. And I used that to bring home to her the fact that she was wanting to do the things that she'd do if she was in a position that a degree would give you—she wants to be in that position, make those kinds of decisions, without having to do what it takes to be there. So I was saying it's not that the degree would make you competent, it's that it would put you in a position where you could make those kinds of changes, and you could—in effect—run things. To try to run things from the position of a secretary is to fail in two ways: she's failed as what she is—the position she is in: she's failed to be a secretary, for one thing. And she's being seen by other people as a bitch, as somebody who's constantly upset, constantly frustrated.*

Q: *And the boss gets all the credit?*

Joe: *Yeah, that was another piece of it. She was saying about her boss that*

she does all the work, and all he ever does is sign his name. So I said, "What does he have that you don't have?" She said, "He's male." [laughter] I just reminded her that he also had that degree, and she said, "Well, that doesn't make him competent," and then we came back to, "He's got the uniform, doesn't he?" So when he puts up his hands, traffic does stop, and he can control the way things are going, and you may have more—you may, in fact, be more competent, but you're not in that position.

P: The reason I thought of that example is that in terms of this Unemployed Housewife, you could say of this woman that she was an Unemployed Director, that she's thinking, talking, and acting like a director; the only thing she doesn't have is the job. But she's being a director. That's the inner picture of her. That's how she's being.

Q: *How do you differentiate that from social responsibility?*

P: There's almost no resemblance.

Q: *I was thinking that what Joe described was someone who cares about what happens to the environment—*

P: That wasn't the picture he presented. The picture he presented is somebody who has definite ideas how the place ought to be run and gets mad when anything else than that happens. It's not a picture of somebody who's concerned about the environment. She may be, but that's not the picture. Somebody who's concerned about the environment is not somebody who's going to cut off anybody else's ideas. As I say, I find it hard to even see the resemblance, because it comes through quite differently.

You can give this kind of explanation—historically, I guess the earliest one was of the woman who broke up with her husband—they'd been married some few years—and she decided she wanted to get married again, and was going through all kinds of agonizing reappraisal, because she also had the option of simply being a career woman. She decided she wanted to get married and was doing things and being frustrated in finding somebody that she liked enough to want to marry. And one of the sessions was where she was doing this agonizing and saying, "Why the hell am I doing these things? Why should I care?" and my response was, "Well, you're a housewife." She said, "What do you mean, 'housewife'?" "You're

an unemployed housewife. You're really already that, inside, and it's just a matter of when you get the job." And that sort of jelled for her where she was, what she wanted, and took it up from there.

The Eight-Year-Old Astronaut came in a practicum discussion. I forget how it came up, but I recall we were asking, I think, "Could you have the status without the behavior?" And the answer was, "Yeah," and the Eight-Year-Old Astronaut is the image that came up. Imagine a kid at eight years old; he says, "I'm going to be an astronaut when I grow up." And so he reads books about the astronauts, and he's starting to do arithmetic, and he knows that astronauts have to learn these things, so he starts off on that path. Then about age 12, he changes his mind and wants to become a baseball player; then at age 15, he's going to become a chemist; and at age 18, he finally decides to be a psychologist; but at age 22, when he graduates, he goes into business instead. Now this is not uncommon, because people change their minds, in the course of growing up, about what they're going to be; and even though they may start off in one direction, it's easy enough to change directions. So it often happens. Now a person like that, you would hardly think of saying anything that connected him to being an astronaut.

But now contrast this picture: suppose you have an eight-year-old kid who says, "I'm going to be an astronaut when I grow up." And at age 10, he's learning math because he knows that that's what it takes, and he's watching his physical fitness. And at age 13, he's reading about airplanes and about flight patterns and about astronomy, and when he comes into college, he takes up astronomy and engineering and math, because he knows all these are relevant. When he gets through, he joins the Air Force, and three years later, he volunteers for the Space Program and passes their tests; and, lo and behold, eventually he's up there on Mars. You would say of that kid, "Back when he was eight years old, he was already an astronaut. He just didn't have the job and the skills yet. But he was already an astronaut. As it turned out." You'd have to wait and see how it turns out in order to say, "That's what he already was then," because if it turns out to be a changeable thing, then he wasn't really that. But if he follows through, then you can say, "Yeah, he already was, even though it took him another twenty years to get the job, still he was an unemployed astronaut at eight years old."

You can see that that doesn't have the degree of plausibility that the Unemployed Housewife does, because there's a longer stretch of time involved. And for the Eight-Year-Old Astronaut, you have to bring in a whole lot of ID characteristics, primarily abilities, that stand between the eight-year-old and down here—having the job. It's not just the job; it's also a bunch of capabilities. Whereas for the Unemployed Housewife, it's purely and simply the job, and for the Unemployed Director, it's purely and simply the job.

Q: *What does the job of being a housewife entail?*

P: Being a housewife. She's out of a job, but that's what she is. Look: why do you collect unemployment insurance? You're a printer by trade, you lose your job, and you're unemployed, so you go collect unemployment insurance. When you sign the papers there, they ask you what's your profession, and you say, "Printer." You don't say, "I'm no longer a printer because I don't have a job." You say, "I am a printer, but I'm unemployed." And that, in effect, is a promise that when the chance comes, that's the job you're going to take and fill. Well, that's what that eight-year-old is saying when he says, "I'm going to be an astronaut." He's also making you that kind of promise. And the Unemployed Housewife, again, so you can have an Unemployed Housewife, an Unemployed Princess, an Unemployed Dictator, an Unemployed President, you can have an unemployed almost anything. That is, you just fill in a status and you can add the word "unemployed" in front of it. So once you get the basic image across, it's a very handy way of identifying what kind of status, what kind of role, what kind of position, what kind of relation the person identifies with. And instead of having to use the language of identification, you talk about being unemployed. And that's very handy for people who don't dig psychoanalysis or theory.

So again, this one—the Unemployed Housewife, Astronaut, etc.—has to do with being rather than doing. That's the way the person is already being. So it connects to the Poker Player, and its moral that you have to be a Poker Player in order to become a better one. You have to be an astronaut in order to become a more competent one. You have to be an unemployed astronaut to get the job. Because if you're not, when you get the job, you're faking it. And that's what the Country Club example—no, the Con Man,

#9, which goes with #8. So let's go into those two.

Q: *I'm still confused by the housewife—you're saying that you have to be it?*

P: No. "You have to be it" is "You have to be a Poker Player to become a better one." An Unemployed Housewife is one who is a housewife, but doesn't have the job. An unemployed printer is one who is a printer but doesn't have that job. He's not employed as one—he just is one. And that's a very understandable thing, because everybody's familiar with unemployment, and the fact your profession, your vocation, doesn't change when you're unemployed.

Q: *I'm trying to give you my confused gesture.*

P: It wasn't spontaneous. [laughter]

The unemployment is what carries it across, because everybody's familiar with it, and that's what you're trading on in saying you're an Unemployed Housewife. You're somebody who has what it takes to be one, but you don't actually have the position of one. You're somebody who has what it takes to be a printer, but you don't have a job as a printer.

Q: *That's not a Well-Poisoning move?*

P: No. It may be, but it may not be. In Joe's case, pointing this out would be a Well-Poisoning move. In the case that I mentioned about the unemployed housewife, it was not a Well-Poisoning move.

Q: *What were your intentions?*

P: Clarifying, to legitimize. As I said, she was confused and agonized over "Why the hell am I doing this, why am I trying that, why should it matter to me?" And saying, "Because you're an unemployed housewife," just pulled the whole thing together. That's what made sense out of what she was doing and feeling. [change tape]

Q: *It sounds kind of derogatory.*

P: No. The one that I think of as derogatory is the Unemployed Princess.

Q: Which would you rather be? [laughter]

Q: Have you ever used the *Unemployed Princess* description?

P: Yeah. [laughter] It's a not uncommon phenomenon.

Q: What about the *Eight-Year-Old Astronaut*? Does that also imply that you have this identification, but you don't have the competence yet?

P: Neither the competence nor the job. For the eight-year-old, there is a different paradigm that also helps, if it needs explaining, and that is watching a football game, which is divided into four quarters, which are separated by half an hour in the middle. Suppose you're sitting there in the stands, and you watch the first play of the game, and then you watch the second and third, and then somebody asks you about this, which was a forward pass, and you say, "Well, that was the first play of the game." Now remember this is a question that's asked here [*].



And then the person who's asking you says, "But how can you say that?" You say, "What do you mean? Of course I can say that." He says, "But look—unless the whole game takes place, there isn't a game, and if there isn't a game, then how can anything be the first play of that game?" So you say, "Okay, let's wait." So you sit through the whole game, and then you say, "See, I told you that was the first play of the game." Indeed, it is the case that if the whole game doesn't take place, it isn't literally the first play of the game. But how else are you going to describe it back here? Are you going to adopt some strange language that doesn't commit you to whether it finishes or not? You simply say "It's the first play of the game," and then, if it turns out that the rest of it isn't there, you were wrong. Then you start worrying about how you describe it. We don't have a language for being noncommittal in that way. You say, "That was already the first play of the game here. It didn't suddenly become the first play over here. It was already the first play here—except that that couldn't have been said with certainty until it reached the end."

Now think of promises along the same model. Suppose I say, “Next week I promise to drive you up to the ski area.” Okay, so next week comes, and I’m gone; and you say, the following week, “What the hell? You told me you were going to take me up,” and I say, “Oh, that was just a crazy idea I had,” and you say, “You mean you weren’t really promising then,” and I say, “Nah.” In contrast, if I say that, and the next week I take you up to the ski area, and somebody says, “Why?,” I say, “Because I promised,”—that was already a promise back then even though I didn’t pay off on it until over here. But it was already a promise.

Q: *I see the first as a broken promise. What’s the difference between a broken promise and—*

P: No, you see back here, later, I, in effect, say it never was a promise, because I said it was just a crazy idea I had.

Q: *He’d say you’re a liar.*

Q: *By that kind of reasoning, then, a contract isn’t a contract or a treaty isn’t a treaty if it’s violated.*

P: No, if it’s repudiated. You can repudiate a treaty, and say, “I never meant it.”

Q: *—a promise.*

P: Yeah, it’s an agreement, and you are criticizable for repudiating it, to be sure, but you can’t do that because you can honestly say, “Look, I never meant it—I never meant it that way even though it might have sounded that way.” Now if you go around doing that sort of thing, pretty soon nobody’s going to want to have anything to do with you, but still, there is such a thing as saying, “Well, it only looked like a promise, but it wasn’t, really.” But in the case of the legitimate promise, it really already was a promise even before you paid off. So again, you have this business about things that stretch out over time, and what about their beginnings? How do you talk about those beginnings before you reach the end? Since to call it a beginning implies that the whole thing is there, how do you talk about it? Well, you talk about it as a beginning. But now think of that period of unemployment, followed by a period of employment, and how do you

talk about what you are vocationally here? Well, you can refer backward or you can refer forward—or both. The unemployed printer. So the Eight-Year-Old Astronaut was already one back here, even though he was only beginning, and you couldn't have said so with certainty until 20 years later. Twenty years later you could say, "He already was."

Q: *Do you need the ending to happen? I can imagine an astronaut going through the grade, never having made it into space.*

P: Yeah. The trouble is that it's hard to make a compelling case, in that case. You could certainly identify it as a logical possibility, but when it comes to an actual person, there's not too many sorts of facts that you could collect about that person that would enable you to say that sort of thing with confidence. There are some.

Q: *Like every year he applied, and every year he was turned down, and bided his time and never got anywhere.*

P: You're right, that might do it, but it also puts me in mind of somebody who is a successful applicant for an astronaut. That is, his profession is not being an astronaut where he fails, but rather his being an applicant for an astronaut, which is something he succeeds at.

Q: *What would your reaction be if I pointed to an eight-year-old boy and said, "I wonder if he's an astronaut?"*

P: I'd wonder about you. I'd wonder what your occupation was. There's an asymmetry—that's the kind of thing you don't wonder about, because you don't even think of it unless you have the kind of fact that positively suggests it. Because without that, you could wonder about a million different things of that sort about him, and why would you pick any one of them, to wonder if he's an unemployed *that*?

Q: *But even if you were going to talk your son into being an astronaut, you would say something like, "I think he's going to be an astronaut," rather than, "I think he is."*

P: But that's the Inside/Outside. You think he's going to be an astronaut—you're talking about his having the job. You're talking about what he's like—you say, "He is an astronaut." In the same way, there's a difference

between saying, “This guy who’s collecting his check every week—he is a printer.” It’s not that I predict he’s going to be a printer. He is one. Those are two very different statements.

Q: *Why does a game have to have an ending—a specified ending—for it to be a game?*

P: I didn’t say that.

Q: *What about football?*

P: Football does have a specified ending. But tag doesn’t. You don’t have to have a specified ending, but in this case, you do.

Q: *But if a game was only three quarters, it’s still a football game, isn’t it? No?*

P: What would you call it? As I say, we don’t have a language for talking about what is three quarters of a game of football. It certainly isn’t a game of football.

Q: *Why wouldn’t it be?*

P: Because it isn’t. Look, when a game gets called at the end of six innings, they don’t say that’s a baseball game. They say the game was called, and one of the things is, you can’t win a game that only went six innings, because it isn’t a game of baseball. It’s a something else, but not that.

Q: *In baseball, there is a rule that six innings is a game.* [laughter]

P: Or if you played two sets of tennis—nobody wins that match.

Q: *I think you’re wrong, Pete.* [laughter]

P: Or if the golf match gets called with four holes yet to go—they don’t pay off—

Q: *Be careful!* [laughter]

P: They don’t pay off on 68 holes. It’s got to be 72, or it isn’t a match. And yet, you would say, “They played three quarters of a football game,” because how else—how better—could you get across what it was they were playing? In the same way, if somebody just goes through the motion of writing his name on the board, and what you want to say is this, you have

no better way of saying what motion he went through than to mention the action for which this would normally be the motion. Even though the action may not have been there, that's the kind of motion it is. Well, this play for three quarters—what kind of play is it? It's the very kind of play that would occupy the first three quarters of a four-quarter football game. There's no better way to say what it was that took place there, so we use the language of the whole thing in order to identify some incomplete portion of it. Also to identify beginnings.

Now this notion of the difference between being and doing, from the different kinds of examples should be gaining in salience as to what kind of difference that is, and we'll have a few more as we go.

Let's come to #8, the Country Club. [Blackboard]: A accepts B because C—introduce that kind of paradigm, that kind of formula, the C being some characteristics that he has. The Country Club example I usually do by referring to an old W. C. Fields movie, and in this movie, W.C. Fields plays the part of a seedy old character who lives by the railroad tracks at the edge of town, down in the bottom land where it's ###. And up there on the hill is the Country Club. And the Country Club for him symbolizes everything that he wants. So for years, he lives down there, eating his heart out because he doesn't belong. And finally, one golden day, in the mail comes that engraved invitation, "You're hereby invited to become a member of the Country Club." So he looks at that and turns it down. And his good friend who lives next door and who knows about all of this has a fit, and after he calms down he says, "What the hell are you doing? You've been eating your heart out all these years, and when it comes, you turn it down." And the reply is, "I wouldn't want to be a member of a club that would have anything to do with the likes of me."

This is a portrayal, then, of a lack of self-acceptance. This one is directly used with people who can't believe that anybody could really love them, can't believe that anybody could really be friends with them, can't believe that anybody could really think they're worthwhile. And the way it works is like the Country Club, that if the person denigrates them, if the other person looks down on them, they say, "Well, what could you expect, since I'm no good?" On the other hand, if the person expresses a positive judgment and says, "You're okay," then all that does is show what poor taste

this guy has, because nobody who's worth anything would have anything to do with the likes of me. So it's a kind of an impervious position. In that respect it's like the Catbird Seat, except that there in the Catbird Seat, you're sitting pretty, whereas in the Country Club, you're at the opposite end of the scale. You're no good, and there's no way you could possibly find out that you're not. Where this creates problems for people beyond just the logic of it, is where that's played out over time, where a person first makes ###, and works hard at getting acceptance from people or from a particular person, and then when he succeeds, he rejects it on this kind of ground, and then just keeps repeating that, and going to somebody else, somewhere else, works for acceptance, finally gets it, turns it down, gets discouraged, goes through depression, goes out and does the same thing over again, and just keeps cycling. So with that kind of cycle going, you need to break the cycle, and one way of helping to break it is to present the image to show what's wrong with it—to show up the nature of the hopelessness, the nature of the judgment, the nature of the self-attitude.

Q: *What would you use to supplement this? Is this enough to work by itself? It sounds weak to me in that way, that you wouldn't expect it to do the whole job.*

P: You wouldn't, but with this particular one, oftentimes you'd want to just let it sit there, and let the client twist slowly in the wind. You want him to struggle with it, rather than giving him an immediate solution. Sometimes you want to do it, and this is one where that's more likely to succeed.

Q: *For example, you might want to just mention it whenever it comes up?*

P: No, you want to face them with this and see what they do with it.

Q: *Like in that particular session?*

P: Yeah, or for the next six sessions.

Q: *If you were giving a quick solution, what would you give?*

P: If you look under Therapist Devices, on page 3, exercise #1, it says, "Give yourself the benefit of the doubt." That's directly antithetical to "Who

would have anything to do with the likes of me?” You start that way, and usually the person will have some trouble with it, in which case you go to the A criticizes B, and move into whichever variation that is, go into overt role-playing, to get the person to be in the position of the Criticizer rather than the Victim. And anywhere along the line, you may have succeeded. You might succeed in the presentation of the image, you might succeed with the other move, you might succeed when you bring this in, you might succeed when you have the role-playing, or imagination, or any combination or repetitions thereof. But you can see that the first move, “Give yourself the benefit of the doubt,” is directly responsive to this [“Who would have anything to do—”], and, therefore, is, in principle, an antidote, and the remainder of the moves is simply to get the person to be able to do that, and then if they do that, then you’ve got the A changes B into C thing going. Since they are being charitable, they are not being uncharitable in the way that is pathological.

Q: *The way you’ve described the image sounds like it should read, “A rejects B because of C”, rather than “A accepts B because of C”.*

P: What I was thinking of is the work that a person does to be accepted; and remember, the Country Club did accept this person. But he rejected it because he had not C, but C’. What he said of himself is, “I don’t have what it takes to really be one, and furthermore, they’re making this mistake, which shows what’s wrong with them, and I wouldn’t want to be one of *them*. I wouldn’t want to be a member of a club that would have anything to do with the likes of me.” Notice that there’s a parallel to the Super-Critic who is dissatisfied with himself because he’s not perfect, because there’s something in which he isn’t perfect. So here it’s not a matter of perfection; it’s a matter of being so low that anybody who wouldn’t be dissatisfied is thereby showing ###, and anybody who’s dissatisfied with himself is not going to be satisfied with somebody who isn’t dissatisfied with him. And that’s why it transforms into one of the self-criticism images. The thing about the W. C. Fields one is that it has a comic element, it’s a burlesque on it, and sometimes making fun of it is more effective than seriously going through some of these. Again, in general, you might well have your pick between using the Country Club example or using one of these. But you also have your pick of just assigning the exercise of Giving

Yourself the Benefit of the Doubt, without ever discussing it. If you did, the client might want to know why, but very often he's willing to go along and just do it. In that case, you might achieve that change without ever talking about it.

Q: *This seems to bear a family resemblance to somebody who's manipulating for a certain kind of response, and then when they get that response, it isn't worth anything because they manipulated for it. The image you used for that one was putting a gun to someone's head.*

P: That's the Con Man.

Q: *Or the "it's pretty good for an inferior person".*

P: Yeah. As a matter of fact, add Gun to the Head to the list.

Q: *Which has a nice, easy gesture.*

P: The Con Man takes off from that Country Club. Imagine that country club, imagine a guy who's a member, and he's a lousy golfer, he's so bad that hardly anybody wants to play in a foursome with him, and he digs up the lawn and the lawnkeeper hates him too, and he's socially inept, so when he comes back at the end of the round and sits around the bar, people kind of ignore him or they turn their back on him, and he's just not very popular. So what he does, he goes out and takes golf lessons, and goes to other parties, to become more sociable and to become a better golfer, and after a while, lo and behold, it pays off because his game does improve, and he gets less unpopular, and people don't avoid him in the bar, and things go pretty good. Contrast him with somebody who is not a member of the club, but he has everything. He's a tremendous golfer, he can walk right up there, get out on the green and shoot a 75. When he comes back, he goes to the bar and immediately is the center of attention, his jokes just wow them, he's a great conversationalist—they like him. And his trouble is that he's a phony. He has no business being there even though he's good at it. He has no real room for improvement, because any improvement he might make would just make him a better phony. Because since he isn't a member, he's not entitled to do these things, no matter how good he is. And so he can't get better at anything except being a phony. And the better he gets at that, the more likely he is to feel guilty. In contrast, the other one, who is

a member, when he improves, he's got things to improve at and when he improves, there's nothing for him to feel guilty about, and he enjoys the results, and he's better off.

So what's the difference? The difference is whether you belong or don't belong, and if you don't belong, the best you can do is be a Con Man, and pretend. And what that amounts to is being—or trying to be—somebody other than who you are. That's why you're a phony. Whereas the first guy is not trying to be somebody other than who he is—he's just exercising his privileges for being who he is. Again, a familiar contrast: the self-actualizing self-improvement program versus trying to be somebody else. And here the main different element is the introduction of the phoniness and the potential guilt for pretending that you're somebody other than you are, thereby being a Con Man.

Q: *Is this related also to Inside/Outside?*

P: Yeah, again any being and doing is going to be parallel to Inside/Outside.

Now, one of the variations on this, or one of the points of application, is the business of if you're looking for acceptance of various sorts, and you engage in manipulative activities for the sake of eliciting it from people, then you're in the same kind of bind as the Con Man. Since you got it illegitimately, it doesn't have the value for you that it would have for somebody who got it legitimately. You've conned it out of the other person, and in effect, destroyed your chance of getting it for real. So you can wind up in a bind of never really being satisfied with the genuineness of the affection, the esteem, the whatever that you get from other people, because you know you've manipulated them. It's a very unhappy situation to be in, and some people are in that situation. Mainly you see it in doing things and bigger and better manipulations to get the real thing, but also with a growing sense of despair and dissatisfaction because they never seem to succeed. Whatever they get, no matter how good the manipulation, somehow turns to ashes, and that is indeed a hopeless bind, and that's why the client comes and presents you with this, and it's hopeless.

Q: *Would this at all explain when a person comes into therapy and says, "Everything I've ever tried, I've come close to succeeding—I almost graduated*

from college, I almost did this and that—” and I was trying to understand that with one client, and he explained it as his guilt and that didn’t seem to capture it.

P: It doesn’t quite fit this, either, because to fit this, he’d have to finish and then find that he didn’t want to do anything with it, and he wasn’t proud of it, and he thought it would make him happy, but it doesn’t. The not-finishes looks more like Coercion Elicits Resistance, which is #18. That’s a common thing—in fact, I’ve got somebody right now of just that sort.

The Gun to the Head, again, is a variation on the Con Man and the manipulation. You find this mainly with identity issues: somebody for whom the issue is, “Is it really me doing this, or am I simply doing these things because of some external pressure?” Or it’s the manipulation—it depends on which end you’re at, and it’s this paradigm here: the Gun to the Head is a case of A making B do C, by holding the gun to his head. The image itself goes: Imagine that I point a gun at your head and say, “Pick up that cigarette and put it over there.” The likelihood is high that you’ll do it. The likelihood is zero that you could afterwards say blithely, “Oh, I just did it because I felt like doing it,” and convince anybody, including yourself. If you do it with a gun pointed at your head, there is no way that you could convince anybody, including you, that the only reason you did it is because you just felt like it. There’s just no way to make that plausible. So this formulation works as an extension of the manipulation. If, in case of manipulation, you use the Gun to the Head, then something that you coerce out of people, there is no way that you could convince yourself, really, that the person did it because they just felt like it. If you coerce affection out of somebody, it’s not going to be satisfying because you know that it was coerced and there’s no way you can really see it as genuine. So since most people who do this want the genuine thing, they’re not obtaining that. And the stronger the manipulation, the more surely it’s something that works, the more it’s like the gun pointed at the head, and the more it destroys the genuineness of what you get. So you might say, the better the technician in doing this, but worse off he is, because the more sure it is that he fails.

You use it at the other end with people who have been getting pressure from other people, and mainly it’s children and their parents, or with

college students and their parents. Here you find it as the integrity problem, or the identity issue, of “Am I choosing to become a physician because my father and grandfather and great-grandfather were physicians, or am I doing it because I like it and I would be happy doing it? Am I doing these things because that’s what I really want, or is it just because it’s convenient, because of the situational pressures on me, and I’m really selling out?” There, you see, it is the same problem from the other end, the same problem of “Is it for real?” And the main way to break that is to get the gun away from the head. It’s a situational thing. For example, it’s one of the reasons why people often, when they go to college, go far from home—so as to get away from being under the gun. So that will often take care of the problem, because that far away, you have enough time on your own to figure that it is your inclination and not because of the constant pressure. If that kind of solution isn’t possible, one of the other main routes is the Judgment Diagram, with the explanation that if something is a good idea and worth doing for you, then it doesn’t really matter where the idea came from, whether it came from a parent or from somebody else—if it’s a good idea, that’s what counts. If you have reason to do it, then it doesn’t matter who else is advocating it or whatever: it’s your reason. But that’s the big IF now, you see. Do *you* have a reason to do this? If *you* do, then don’t worry about who else likes it, don’t worry about where it came from, just worry about your having those reasons you might have for not doing it; and if you manage that, you don’t have to worry about “is it coming from somewhere else?”.

Q: *You just described a client I’m working with who wants to become a musician—his father wants him to become a musician—they both think it’s a good idea to sit down and practice a lot, but because father wants him to become a musician, that’s a good reason not to, even though he has a strong urge in that direction.*

P: That’s why the first solution is to get rid of the pressure. If that’s not possible, then you try to seal off the pressure by focusing on the legitimacy of the reasons; and if they are his reasons, then it doesn’t matter where they came from or who else likes them. And, in fact, there may be some advantage if other people like what you’re doing, and approve.

Q: *Do you ever re-describe the situation, like someone will say, “I’ve gone away to school, but my mother calls me every week, and she puts the screws to me, and she lives half way across the country,”—would you re-describe it like it’s really not there?*

P: Not if you’ve got a mother calling you half way across the country. I’d be more inclined to say that she’s really got that gun pointed at you, hasn’t she?

Q: *How do you cope with that kind of thing?*

P: Well, you could suggest to the client that they not call their mother that often, or not be at home when she calls, but usually you get that across by asking them what they could do. Since you’re telling them that way, it’s too much like the kind of pressure that that kind of mother is putting on them. So if they come up with ideas like that, then you let them see if they can make it work. If not, then you try the sealing off rather than the removing of the pressure. Or they may think of telling their mother off, and that usually has a good effect on this kind of thing.

Q: *I’m seeing someone now who says that if she doesn’t have a baby, it will mean her mother’s death.*

P: How?

Q: *It’s symbolic of—her father died when she was five, her stepbrother died, and her sister died, and she’s the only child left, and she feels it’s her responsibility to have a child for her mother’s sake.*

P: That one, I would work on—try to get her to clarify for herself whether she really does have that obligation; and if she does, let her act on it, and if she doesn’t, there’s no point.

Q: *Meaning what would happen to her mother if she decided not to?*

P: No—does she have that obligation? That’s the focal point of her argument: that I have the obligation to have a child. Now part of the explanation or background is, “If I don’t, Mother will die,” so if that’s relevant, that comes into the discussion of whether she has that obligation. I guess it’s about time to quit.

Session 10
March 30, 1976

Images: Country Club; Con Man; Gun to the Head. Coercion; Self change; Actor-Observer-Critic; A makes B do C

PGO: I've mentioned before that a lot of the images assimilate to some formula of this sort, involving two people in its paradigmatic form, and a lot of the interest comes from the fact that you have only one person involved, and when you have only one person involved in a two-person schema, one side of that schema tends to be hidden from view. And the one that's hidden from view is the one that you could probably concentrate most effectively on therapeutically. There's two more of the remaining images that we haven't talked about, that fit a formula like that more or less, and it's this one [A makes B do C], and I'm not sure whether we haven't covered them yet, or whether I just forgot to check them off. The first one is Coercion Elicits Resistance. Now the coercion is the part that fits this.

A makes B do C

You can make me do it but

(a) you can't make me do it right

(b) you can't make me like it

B resists doing C

B does C poorly (badly, inappropriately

B avoids doing C

B refuses to do C

B refuses to really do C

COERCION



+RESISTANCE+

Notice a certain similarity here between this and the analysis of displacement, particularly we went into the displacement of hostility, where you had an attempted put-down, then some time period, until the time when the put-down was either accepted or successfully rejected. In this case, what you have is a coercion, and then the question is: how successful is that coercion going to be? The answer is: there's a lot of ways for it not to be just purely and simply successful, including the case where it's

not successful at all [B refuses to do C].

You can see that most of these will fit clause (a) in this slogan: “You can’t make me do it right.” With the various forms of resistance, the first one is where the person does it reluctantly, slowly, “dragging his feet” is the usual phrase here. Or where he does it but does it poorly, or when he makes a show of trying to do it but somehow doesn’t succeed, or does something that looks like what he’s supposed to be doing but isn’t really. He goes through the motions, for example.

Q: *Are you talking about the case where he does it poorly, but could do it better, so—*

P: Yeah. If he’s doing as well as he can, then you would hardly call it resistance. I’m saying that there are various ways to resist.

Q: *What about overdoing it? Doing it poorly?*

P: Yeah. Either that or this [refusing really to do it].

Q: *On the overkill model, doing too much—*

P: Doing too much is doing it poorly.

Q: *What about inappropriately—is that ###?*

P: Well, inappropriately has some limitations, too.

Q: *Psychoanalysts like that class of resistance where the patient does what’s asked, but they don’t especially do well.*

Q: *Seems to me doing it correctly, but resistance showing up some other way, similar to displacement.*

P: If the resistance shows up somewhere else, and he does it right, then you wouldn’t call it—you wouldn’t assimilate it to the Coercion Elicits Resistance. You would assimilate it to Paying a Price. “I’ll give you what you want, but I’m going to make you pay a price for it.” And you can see that—

Q: *You couldn’t even call that resistance?*

P: No. Whereas this would also fit making you pay a price. You pay

the price of getting it done poorly, or slowly, or inadequately, or something. But it is doing it. And the price is here and not some other place. So you call this resistance, where the other you call exacting a price. Now the punch line on Coercion Elicits Resistance is that it doesn't matter whether it's you yourself that are pushing yourself around, or somebody else—you'll still resist. And the reason for that is that it's a tautology, that it wouldn't be a case of coercion if it was something you wanted to do. Since it isn't something you want to do, if you make yourself do it, that's still coercion. And in the face of that coercion, you will show some tendency to do what you do want to do, namely, not what you're being forced to do. Again, if it was something that you had reason enough to do, and reason not to do but not that much reason, you would go ahead and do it because that you could do on your own. You don't have to force yourself to do what you have more reason to do, even though you have reasons against. That would just simply fit Maxim 3: you'd be doing what you had most reason to do. So it isn't a case of coercion unless it goes beyond, yet, unless the kind and degree of pressure that is put on you by yourself or somebody else goes beyond what you have reason to do. That's why it's coercion. And since you don't have reason enough to do it, that is what will show up as resistance. One of the places where this comes in is with those self-improvement programs that aren't working. Somebody comes in says, "I'm working like hell to get good grades, I've been trying all this and that and the other so that I can accomplish X, and nothing works." About that time, you begin to think, "Mmm—it looks like resistance is pretty strong." You see, this is another version of the Victim. "Here I am, trying like hell, and gee—I can't succeed. Help me succeed. What can I do to get this X?"

Q: *It's also partially the model of the wild interpretation—the thing that should produce insight, but doesn't, the therapist telling the patient that such-and-such is the case about him, and he refuses to accept it.*

P: Making the interpretation that the client isn't ready to accept is in effect a coercion. To tell a person, "Here's what's going on with you," if it's not giving him something he can act on, has that coercive quality. It raises the question of when the client is prepared to act on what you say—that is, when there will be resistance and when there won't.

Q: *The psychoanalysts make it sound like you make your interpretation when he's almost already ready.*

P: Yes, but that's the question: when is he almost ready? And there's no way of telling. You must sort of make your judgments.

Q: *It also sounds like when he already knows.*

P: Well—almost.

Q: *Is this another post hoc—that you know afterwards?*

P: It is that—it's always that, but you wouldn't be able to use it if it was only that. You make judgments as to whether somebody is ready to hear something, and if you think they are, you do it; and you may find out later you were wrong. You may find out later you were right. But if you were constantly wrong, you'd be an ineffective therapist. If there was no way to tell, if one couldn't tell that sort of thing, then one would have to proceed differently or be ineffective.

Q: *Somehow it seems that it's really important to distinguish between someone who doesn't want to, who has reason not to want to, versus doesn't have the ability. I can think of a lot of things, especially the self-improvement programs, a lot of times the person has all the reasons in the world to but doesn't have the ability.*

P: What kind of person would persist in a self-improvement program that called upon abilities he didn't have?

Q: *Someone who really wanted that [change tape] being involved in the activities that would lead him to do better.*

P: Yeah, but that's exactly where you get resistance in the form of learning disability. That's practically standard diagnosis now, when you have somebody with learning disabilities that's been subject to too much pressure. You see, for somebody who doesn't have the ability, to be told to do it is coercion. And initially, you get straight failure, but after a while you begin to get something more like purposive sabotage and foot-dragging and excuses and all kinds of things.

Q: *I had a case like that where the kid kept on losing homework—he*

did it, but he kind of lost it, and he would be late to classes, and once the teacher—somebody lost his test, which was amazing. [laughter]

P: You really seized on that, eh?

Q: *The problem with him, though, his IQ tests were high, so he had the ability to do it and was forced to do it, but he didn't want to. So the lack of ability—how much difference ###.*

P: Certainly you can see how you *could* get a learning disability via this kind of ###. You certainly wouldn't want to say that that's all that ever happens, but people have found something of this sort so often that that's one of the first things you think of.

Q: *It looks like instead of Coercion Elicits Resistance, that the resistance really is there first.*

P: No. In that kind of case, what you get first is encouragement, effort, and failure. Once the failure gets—what?—institutionalized?—once it's clear that you're not going to succeed, then being encouraged amounts to being coerced.

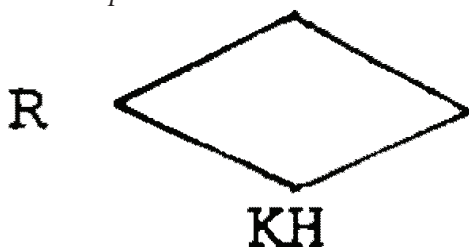
Q: *So it results in expectancy of further failure, which is something that people don't really have good reasons to want to put themselves through.*

P: Yeah.

Q: *I was thinking about the one you gave earlier—that there's good reason why the person wouldn't want to succeed—*

P: Which case was that?

Q: *The case of coercion and displacement where the person does not ###—the person does have reasons.*



P: No. He doesn't have reason enough because he can't do it. He doesn't have reason enough to try because he can't do it. It may be something he values and wishes he could, but remember, [blackboard] a behavior is what you have reason to engage in, and you can have a reason to engage in a behavior if, in fact, you *can*; and if you're missing this aspect [KH], then that behavior is not something you can have a reason to do, because it's not within your behavior repertoire. I can't have a reason for jumping over the moon, even though I might wish that I could, it might be a desirable thing, but I won't have a reason to. I might wish, I might regret that I couldn't, but I can't want to, and I can't have a reason to.

Q: *That sounds contradictory—you really could have a reason to want to do something, or a reason to do something that you couldn't do.*

P: You can have a reason to try, maybe, but you never have a reason to do something that's impossible.

Q: *You mean—a reason to actually go out and do it?*

P: Yes, versus it being merely a valued state of affairs, a valued possibility, a valued possible state of affairs or conceivable state of affairs.

Q: *Won't that create a regress, though, because you couldn't also want to want to jump over the moon?*

P: No, you can wish that you did. The same thing goes. And you can regret that you don't, but you can't want to want it.

Q: *What's the difference between trying and ##?*

P: You're referring to the behavior of which you're identifying the want, and if the behavior is not in your repertoire, it doesn't make sense to say that you want that thing.

Q: *People do that all the time.*

P: There's a difference between wanting and wishing. I can *wish* that certain things were so. I can wish that two and two were not four. I can *wish* that squares were round. But I can't *want* them to be, partly because I can't try to bring it about, because it's impossible.

Q: *Where does "wish" fit in?*

P: Values. Anything I wish for is something I would value if it were the case. But it doesn't connect to my motivations. If it does, then you say, "He wants it".

Q: *If you have a child in first grade who's having difficulty reading, a lot of failure experiences—what do you suggest if you don't want to encourage him and make it seem like coercion?*

P: Well, I think, in principle, you have two main options—maybe it's all one. The main one is to transform the task, so that instead of encouraging him to read, you invite him to play this game. By doing that, you're proposing a new activity, one in which he hasn't already had those failure experiences; therefore, it's not yet coercive.

Q: *Then you ensure success experiences?*

P: That's the other one, that you'd try to pick something that he can succeed at, because what's the point about setting him up with something that you don't think he can succeed at, unless you're just hoping?

Q: *I think also of treating him as if he has—making Move 2's—doing a lot of reinterpretations of things that he might see as failures, as successes.*

P: Yeah. All of the redescriptions, whether Move 1, Move 2, or any kind, would amount to transforming the task. It would amount to a redescription of what it is that he's doing, what it is he's succeeding at, or what it is he's failed at. So you're tapping a new behavior tendency, a new behavior potential, a new motivation, maybe new skills—who knows? What you don't do is just stick to the task in the form in which it is a known failure, and beyond that, it's kind of up for grabs as far as the first-grade reading is concerned.

Q: *Is the major distinction between want and wish—one is attainable, and the other isn't?*

P: Almost, not quite. You'd better put it in the form of: one connects to motivation, and the other doesn't. I can wish for something that is attainable, but if I merely wish for it, I'm not motivated to try to get it. Conversely, I might want it, in which case I'd be motivated to try to get it. You can separate the two with the condition of impossibility—if something is

impossible, I can only wish for it, but I can't want it. But I think the primary thing is whether it connects to motivation or not.

Q: *So you're saying that in ordinary language, the concept of wish appears to connect—does connect—to intentional action, it does via a want?*

P: Yeah, a want or a reason. Keep in mind that these distinctions don't appear in ordinary language. Therefore they will not appear in the ordinary usage of the words "wish" and "want". Until you have these distinctions, you can't mark them by using "wish" for one and "want" for the other. What happens is that usually, in ordinary language, you use both words interchangeably. But these are the kinds of things that you use them on, and that's why, typically, when I come across that, I reserve one for one, and the other for the other. This one, by the way—there is something in the literature somewhere that makes the same distinction and makes the same choice.

Q: *Psychology literature?*

P: No, the philosophy of mind—namely, that wishing doesn't connect to motivation and want does. And I think—in fact, there's two places, because I think the second place is in the book called *Intention* by Anscombe, and she has a statement there—this is probably not an exact quote, but close. She says, "The primitive mark of wanting is trying to get." And as a matter of fact, now that I think of it, the initial formulation of P, I think, was "try to get". Now I call it the Performance parameter, but initially it was called "try to get", which is awkward, but I think it stemmed from that usage in Anscombe's book, is that the performance of the action consists of an attempt to get what it is you want. That's what the performance is. So if, in the action, you're focusing on this connection [W—A], then you would think of this phrasing. If you focus on this connection [K—P], you would use that phrasing: every behavior consists of treating something as a case of something-or-other, but also every behavior is also a case of trying to get something you want.

Q: *So it sounds that wishing would be motivational but just not tied to performance. In the case of a wish, you might not have the necessary competence, or you're not really carrying it through, trying to get; but still, wishing*

implies some sort of motivation. If you wish for something, you have some reason to try, or why you wish for it. It seems still connected to motivation.

P: It's connected, but not like that. It's connected to motivation primarily because it's connected to evaluation. If you wish that X were the case, then you could say, "You would value X over non-X." But if X is impossible, you're not motivated. It shows up in the subjunctive: "You *would* value, you *would* be motivated, if it were possible, if there were a way of doing it." Remember, Maxim 2 says, "If a person recognizes an opportunity to get something he wants, then he has a reason to try to get it." But that's the point: only if he recognizes an opportunity, and something that you recognize as impossible, you will not recognize an opportunity to try to get.

Q: *This also could have some relationship to principles in, say, guidance counseling, in which a person can't want to be certain things without having the requisite concepts as to what those things are. He might wish to be a space pilot, but he can't want to be that unless he has all the available distinctions involved in being that sort of thing. It does get fuzzy around the edges.*

P: Yeah, I get a little twitchy about that. Think of that Eight-Year-Old Astronaut again. You could bet that he doesn't fully understand what it is to be an astronaut, but you wouldn't want to say that he didn't wish it.

Q: *Yeah, but you could make the argument that he can't want to be that, because he doesn't know what that is. What he wants to be is what he thinks that is—the K parameter.*

P: You get the continuity argument that says, "An imperfect mastery of that concept is not some other concept. It is that concept, but imperfect." You can say, "Yeah, he wants to be an astronaut even though he doesn't fully appreciate what it would be or what it would entail."

Q: *Where this fits the principles of guidance is when people make claims of wanting to follow certain paths or reaching certain places without having ###—to point to them that they don't really want to be that once they know what that is.*

P: Yeah. At that point, you're just a step removed from back to our self-improvement program. Because wanting to be something like an astronaut is not that different from wanting to be a different kind of person. Except, remember, wanting has to do with behaving, whereas being a certain kind of person is only indirectly connected to behavior. Which is why I would say that wanting to be another kind of person has to be wishing you were another kind of person, unless you can see a way of getting there from here.

Q: *How do you address the many people who seem to be continually doing things that are unattainable?*

P: Wait a while. There's something wrong with the grammar there.

Q: *Attempting to do it. Because there's many people who it's obvious they can't achieve something and are beating their head against a wall.*

P: Well, either they're not convinced they can't do it—

Q: *They see an opportunity where there is no opportunity?*

P: Yeah, or that's not what they're really doing. They're doing something else.

Q: *They're seeing what they're doing as a case of what they really want, even though—*

Q: *Or they're reaching for the sky instead of beating their heads against a wall.*

Q: *Okay, let's say I want to jump to the moon, I want to get to the moon, so I walk outside, and I jump. My concept of getting to the moon is: if it takes enough of a jump, it may be enough to get there, so I have an imperfect concept, but I have a concept of getting to the moon by jumping towards it. I want to do it. It seems all the parameters are filled, including the achievement, which is that I fail. I've achieved something else—I've only jumped a foot and a half. I know how to jump. I know how to jump towards that. I know how—*

P: Jumping to the moon is different from jumping towards the moon. You may know how to do the one without knowing how to do the other.

Q: *Okay, so I can want to jump towards the moon. I can't want to jump to the moon.*

P: Remember that this is a convention that, in effect, I've just introduced: that there is this distinction between the things that connect to motivation, that it makes sense for you to act on; and the things that don't, or the things that, in fact, connect, and the other ones that don't. And that difference is important enough to use a pair of terms for. And since we have a pair of terms that cover exactly that ground, the only new convention is which you're going to use for which, rather than both for both. But that means that either one is going to violate your sense of common usage, because in common usage, you use both of them for either job.

Q: *There's a conventional connection between wishing and hoping that has some sense here—other than the popular songs that it creates. In hoping, you'd like an opportunity, and you value those things.*

Q: *Pete, why do they say we're working toward a Ph.D.?* [laughter]

P: Why do we say that you're working at curing a client? Because nobody knows how to do it.

Q: *Nothing would qualify as trying to jump over the moon, right?*

P: Right.

Q: *And therefore it's got to be a wish, right?—according to the convention? As nothing could qualify as trying, it has to be a wish, right?*

P: Yeah.

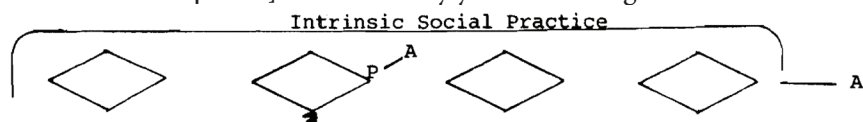
Q: *You say that a wish can be a value even if it's not attainable?*

P: ### that "wish" is a value in that what you wish for is something that you would value. There's a connection there. It's not that a wish is a value.

Let me bring in something else in this connection: the connection between instrumental behavior, goals, and intrinsic behavior. One of the forms of description that, by and large, it's been a long time since I've mentioned—I forget what the name of it is—

Q: *How many syllables?*

P: I think it's more than one word but I'm not sure. [Ed.: course of action description] Here's the way you would diagram it:



It's a social practice description, with a deletion somewhere in the KH parameter. The implication of deleting the KH parameter is that you lose your guarantee of succeeding.

Q: *It sounds like trial and error.*

P: It's not trial and error, but the nature of the whole thing, where somewhere along the line, it is not just an exercise of competence—somewhere if you succeed, it's by luck, chance, accident, or coincidence. What would be a good name for this? I'm going to resurrect it.

Q: *What would be an example?*

P: Curing a client, getting yourself elected president. You see, it's not that you don't succeed. People succeed at these things all the time. It's that the success isn't just an exercise of competence. That's why you would say, "Nobody knows how to get elected president. Nobody knows how to paint a masterpiece. Nobody knows how to cure a client." But people succeed—because they do certain things that do, in fact, succeed beyond their level of competence, and they've got the rest of the competence that it takes.

Q: *Would gambling be related to that sort of activity?*

P: No, that would be all—you'd have all [KH] deletions.

Q: *But the gambler who—*

P: Okay. You have some relevant competence, but not enough. The net effect of all of this is that the ultimate goal [A] is also not guaranteed, since somewhere in the chain of behaviors leading to the goal, since one of those links is uncertain, the whole chain is uncertain. Therefore, when you start here [with A], you have that kind of uncertainty about reaching the goal.

Q: *But Pete, isn't that like all of life—certainty is limited in most cases, like if you started—*

P: Practical certainty. When you exercise competence, you don't have certainty that you'll succeed. Accidents can happen. But when you do succeed, you say it's because you knew how. Knowing how gives you the practical certainty of succeeding if you try. Now talking about a case where you don't have that much or that kind of practical certainty that any time I want, if I try, I'll do it. For example, walking out the door is something I have no qualms about. Any time I try, I figure I can get out that door.

Q: *But as things get more complex, the likelihood is less.*

P: Well, complex—maybe. But certainly there are a lot of things that you would say we don't know how even though we often succeed. Which means that this is a fairly common form of behavior.

Q: *Like winning a game.*

P: Yeah.

Q: *I think Wynn's point is accurate in that there is chance in all the things that you mentioned, like psychotherapy, getting elected president.*

P: Yeah. That's why I mentioned these as examples. They're the kind of thing that nobody knows how to do, and yet people do succeed at them.

Q: *It seems like the chance factor is the one that's really critical, rather than knowing and not knowing, because if you take a lay person and you take a psychotherapist, the likelihood is that the therapist will succeed.*

P: That's what I'm saying: since at some point you lack the relevant competence, you are counting on luck, accident, or chance. But oftentimes, it goes your way, and from there on out you take it in. Or you try several things, not knowing which until one pays off. In all of the earlier versions of the forms of description, this was one of the forms of description.

Q: *Is it in "Notes on Behavior Description"?*

P: Yeah, I'm pretty sure. And the reason I left it out of the later ones is that you generate this in two moves rather than one, and the presentation from the calculational system—what we had were a set of examples that

you generate in one move, and that's why something that you first have to generate the social practice, and then delete something, is a more complicated formula. So this has kind of got lost in the shuffle.

Q: *Are you forgetting because you no longer see it this way?* [laughter]

Q: *Where does coercion come in here?* [laughter]

P: It doesn't. We'd gotten onto something else. We'll get back to this. Okay, now, you get this picture: you have a sequence of behaviors having the form of a social practice, in which—because somewhere along the line the requisite know-how is missing, the know-how for the ultimate goal is also missing, as of when you start. This is a paradigm for instrumental behavior. You do these things in order to reach the goal. But also, not just anything you might do would even qualify as an attempt. Tossing a piece of chalk at you would not qualify as an attempt to checkmate you. It wouldn't even qualify as an attempt. So that's why you have the social practice form of how one does that sort of thing. Then you introduce the uncertainty into that, and that's how you get the notion of *trying* that sort of thing. Now the operative principle here is that all of this is only possible if there is an Intrinsic Social Practice that you do know how to engage in. And the heuristic case for this is the difference between playing chess and trying to checkmate. Playing chess is certainly something I know how to do, and I have no doubt that if I sit down and play a game with you, I will succeed in playing a game with you. Within that game, checkmating is desirable. Outside of that game, checkmating is not only not desirable, it's not even meaningful. So this goal is only a goal within the structure of that intrinsic practice, and it would be a goal, and it would be desirable, only for somebody who was participating in that practice.

Now practices are something you know how to participate in. But within practices, there may be states of affairs that are desirable, that the practice makes desirable, and that you don't know how to achieve. And that's how you get your efforts.

Q: *Could you run through that last part again?*

P: Which last part? I was primarily exploiting the example, because

in the example it's so clear that checkmating is a goal, it's a valued state of affairs that you could devote a lot of effort to. You don't know *how* to do it, but you do things that qualify as trying, or one could do things that qualify as trying. But what all of that is dependent on is that there is such a game; that only within such a game is there such a value; only within such a game is there even the attempt to achieve; and the game is something you know how to do. You can straightforwardly be said to know how to play chess. Your succeeding at that is not accidental. It is not subject to this kind of uncertainty. So you see how you can transform, now, from what somebody is trying to accomplish, to what somebody is doing in the course of which they're trying to accomplish this [A]. So you might say there is always—whenever there is something you're trying, there is always something else that you're doing. Because you couldn't try except in the context of something that you do and in the context of something intrinsic that you do.

Q: *Wasn't that don Juan was giving Carlos, in ### the quest and the—*

P: Yes. he was describing things in intrinsically meaningful terms and trying to get Carlos to appreciate that. Carlos didn't walk in already appreciating those things. That's like teaching somebody how to enjoy tennis by putting them through the motions and getting them to do enough so that they could appreciate it. If he was that kind of guy who was going to ###. Carlos was one of the chosen ones.

Okay, we got onto this whole business from the issue of when you try, and here's an explication of the notion of trying something. When you see that in this format, there's no such thing as an impossible goal, because there has to be a practice within which that is a possibility. And outside of a practice of that sort, you can call something a goal, but it will be arbitrary, meaningless, and therefore not really a goal.

Now back to self-improvement. People often set goals for themselves just about that arbitrarily. They know somebody, they read something, they say, "Hey, it would be nice to be that way. I'm going to be that way." And for them, it's not a matter of self-actualizing, it's a matter of imposing something on themselves; and no wonder when they work toward it, they have to force themselves; and when they force themselves, you find them failing. You're back to Coercion Elicits Resistance.

Q: *Are you saying that that's because the goal is not part of a social practice, or because they don't know what the goal was?*

P: They pick the goal out of a hat rather than its being a goal within some form of behavior that they already appreciate and, therefore, represents a real value to them. It's more like the Con Man: the difference between the guy who improves his golf game but is a member, he's simply elaborating his behavior potential; whereas the non-member, no matter how good he does, is only pretending to be somebody he isn't. If you set a goal that has no real value to you, in effect, you're pretending to be somebody else, namely, somebody for whom that is a real value, somebody for whom it makes sense to try to move that way.

Q: *Resistance via that ### looks like something that fits into the form of Maxim 5. The person can't—he can do something else, which is resist actions and reactions that value that.*

P: Yeah. I'd put it one step removed. If he, in fact, doesn't value it, then he can't engage in any behavior that would require that he did, so instead of that, he'll do something else.

Q: *And anything else he does is a class of behaviors described as "resistance". You can always resist.*

Q: *In the example of someone wanting a trait of someone else—what is the person doing, exactly?*

P: Suppose I say, "I ought to be more generous. I'm going to try. My resolution today is that within six months I'm going to be a generous guy." That kind of thing?

Q: *I was thinking about a guy who—yeah, that's fine. So what is being valued here?*

P: Being generous. It would be nice if I were already generous.

Q: *You said setting a goal that does not have real value to the person, is sort of like coercion to the person.*

P: Yeah.

Q: *And if he's not—if the ### is not what's being valued, what is being*

valued?

P: Nothing. Think of the difference between two people who resolve that within six months, they're going to be more generous. One person who reads Fromm about the self-actualizing person, and one of the items on the list he sees is "generous". So he says, "Okay, I'm going to be that." Think of somebody else who has had several poignant experiences of being ungenerous, uncharitable, watching the suffering, appreciating the suffering of the other person, and the misfortune it has caused, and doing some soul-searching, and saying, "I've got to be more generous. I'm going to try." For the second person, you'd say, "He really values that, and if he were to achieve it, it would make sense for him to try." The other person, you'd say, "If he tries, he probably won't try long or hard and won't be willing to pay much of a price and is going to be dragging his heels, because, with him, other things come first."

Q: *And what he's really valuing is whatever he sees in Fromm.*

P: Yeah, something else. Or he says he wants to be generous, but he doesn't really want to do those things that it would take. And he doesn't really appreciate doing the things that generous people do—he just wants to be generous.

Q: *The Two Mayors. But someone could actually appreciate generosity or being a generous person—*

P: In the abstract, or personally.

Q: *Or in other people?*

P: Yeah. It's nice to have other people be generous, but that's not going to motivate me to become that way. Or to value it in myself.

You can see that again (back to Coercion Elicits Resistance), oftentimes you're faced with making judgments about when somebody is coerced, and often that will reduce to what are his actual values? Does he appreciate it? Does he really want it? Is he really willing? As a rule of thumb, we go back to Maxim 3. If you see a person who has what looks like reasonable chances to succeed at what he says he wants to accomplish, and you find that regularly he doesn't, you apply Maxim 3 and say, "Well,

it doesn't look like he really does want that." Why? Because if he wants it and is trying to get it, then his failures need explaining, and there's a limit to the kind of explanations that will be compelling or even plausible. And the more clearly it's a case that he could get it but he chooses something else, the more certainly you say, "He didn't really want it that much after all." But it's in the explanations and the kinds of explanations and the number of them that you begin to detect some of the foot-dragging, too. The same kind of logic holds for the person himself: if he says, "I want this and that," and then he tries and fails, he's got to have explanations for himself, and one of the most attractive ones, of course, is "I can't." Except that if he took that too seriously, he'd have to stop trying, so the next one is, "I can't because it's somebody else's fault or something else's fault," and that way you can almost eat your cake and have it, too. You can have your failure but have your hope and motivation. That's a form of explanation that has certain real values. But also, you want to be sensitive to that as a therapist.

Again, think of "I just want to be mayor"—think of the value there is in being Mayor, and then think of the value there is in being a person with certain tastes or values or aspirations. Just being that kind of person gets you some mileage, somewhere, and that's one of the reasons why people go through self-defeating things, because they want to *be* the kind person who would be trying. It's part of their self-concept or part of the self-presentation.

Q: *To be the kind of person—*

P: Who would be trying, who would want that kind of thing. And it can be sincere, if it stems from self-concept; it can be manipulative or phony if it's a self-presentation. In either case, you'll see the person being unrealistic about when he decides he just can't.

Q: *If you're doing this in a therapy situation, it seems like there are some goals or instances that call for You Can't Get There from Here, and there are some that call for this kind of explanation, and I don't know how you distinguish for the person what—*

P: Remember that You Can't Get There from Here, I said, is very often followed by "but it may happen", and the point is to make exactly that

distinction between it being a goal that you can get to by doing certain things of an instrumental sort, versus a kind of change that may happen, but if it happens, it won't be because you've done the instrumental behaviors. Changing that way is not something that one knows how to do. Therefore, it's not something that one would try.

Q: *You may have to change someone's conception of which kind of—*

P: That's the prime function of that image, to change people's conception of what kind of issue they're dealing with, because they come in thinking it's an issue of doing—"Am I doing the right thing to get there?"—and you want to transform it into an issue of being: "You have to be a certain way, and it's not a matter of what you do."

Q: *Might this be a case where somebody says, "Well, I just want to be—"*

P: You could have the converse. I've never encountered it. Partly because I think that our culture is much better elaborated in terms of doing than in terms of being. We have all kinds of nomenclatures, etc., for doing things; we have almost zilch as far as being different ways.

Q: *I have a client who wants to be—he doesn't call it self-actualizing—but he wants to be more productive and significant—I forget the exact words he uses, but basically, "a significant character in society," something like that, but he doesn't want to do anything that's going to tie himself down to some horrible, messy, concrete goal, so would that be the kind of case?*

P: He'd be the kind of guy that I would talk about the Two Mayors to. Because what he wants is to have that standing, but he doesn't want to do what it would take to get there and doesn't want to do what it would take to validate that standing. He wants to have it.

Q: *He doesn't want to take the risk of failing. If you see it as a chain of [change tape]*

P: The explanation of "I can't do it because of something or other"—that fits. The contingency there is, "—because I don't want to take the chance and fail, and since I don't want to do that, then I can't try, but that's the only reason why I'm not succeeding." Or, "I don't want to try certain things. I'm afraid to try certain things." You can shade it almost infinitely.

Q: *That's about to come out now. What happens is when you have a specific goal, people will force you to stay with it, and they won't let you get any higher.*

P: As I say, you can make judgments partly on the quality of the explanation. Is it convincing? That one doesn't sound convincing.

Q: *Pete—the difference between some of these images, like the Country Club and the Two Mayors and You Can't Get There from Here—they have a similar theme.*

P: Yeah. That's why I say: for each of these formulas, we have more than one image, and the images are not exact duplications of one another. They get at the same logical structure, but they do it in somewhat different ways with somewhat different emphases; and sometimes it takes two images to really cover what's in it. For example, in this case, Coercion Elicits Resistance gets at some part of this, but the other one is Putting the Screws to Yourself. And that gets at a different aspect of it. And the different aspect of it is that you can, indeed, coerce yourself successfully.

When you coerce yourself successfully, you don't like it, but you've done it.

Q: *Could you coerce somebody into doing something, and still have it a case of coercion, and yet the person end up liking it? The logical structure I'm working at is the structure in which you've got a person who, because of their reasons of fear, that being the case of life, so to speak, that the pattern changes,*

Q: *The army would be a good example of that. There's a lot of people in the army that say, "I don't want to go, and I hate it," and they draft them, and—*

P: In a trivial sense, you could do that. You could say, "If I have reasons to do something, and the reason being that I like it, and stronger reason not to, you can coerce me into doing it, and I'll like it."

Q: *The army is that kind of case. The person gets in the army and then finds out he likes it.*

P: But if they start liking it, they also start seeing it under a different description.

Q: *Their reasons for being there change.*

P: They've transformed the task. They've transformed the social practice that they're participating in. Before, somebody was forcing them to do this or that; and now they're being a soldier.

Q: *But can there be conditions under which a person likes something, but one of the requisites for liking it is to be forced to do it?*

P: Sounds a little bit exotic but not obviously self-contradictory. I'd be a little leery of descriptions like that, though.

Q: *Things like masochism, perhaps?*

P: No way. We have other—remember, in the case of Shirley, we had a very good reconstruction of something that I think a Freudian would call masochism, and it has nothing to do with really enjoying it after all. So you might use that kind of description on a case of masochism, but I'm sure you wouldn't have that.

Q: *I'm thinking of a class of events in which I would do A, but I would only do A if reasons C, D, and E are excluded, which are my preferred behaviors. With those reasons excluded, and they would have to be excluded by a coercion, I will do A and like it.*

P: Well, there's something similar under Slogans—it's Slogan #1: "I would only be willing to go along with somebody who made me." But they're strange bedfellows, because as soon as you become willing, then they're not making you any more.

Q: *There's a logical contradiction in my question, that I'm only willing to do it if I'm coerced—I'll only like it if I'm coerced, and the liking provides a reason to do, which undermines the logic of coercion.*

P: Work that one out and see where it leads, because the answer to that one is not obvious. If you put it in terms of willing, then there is a contradiction between willing and coercion; but between liking and coercion, there's too many intermediate links.

Now think of the notion of Putting the Screws to Yourself. That's just the colloquial form of talking about coercion. And here, the explanation goes this way: that everybody has ways of putting the screws to yourself. Everybody is familiar with the situation where you know you've got to do something, you don't want to do it, so you make yourself do it, and you evolve your own particular ways of making yourself do those things that you know you ought to and have to do, but don't want to. And they work. But they work differently under different circumstances. And the way that works is this: that when you're in good shape, when you've got a lot of resources, you can put the screws to yourself and get more out of yourself. But if you keep doing it, you start running out of resources, because you can't just do that forever. You can't forever make yourself do some things that you don't really want to do without ever doing anything that you do want to do. So that if you try, then you start losing the resources you have, you start reaching the end of your rope, and when you're down at that end of the scale, then putting the screws to yourself gets less out of you. The more you put the screws to yourself, the less you produce, the less you get what you're trying to get from yourself.

In connection with that image, at this point you can bring in the simple principle that Coercion Elicits Resistance, to explain why—to say that the resistance rises as you reach the end of your rope, and so when you're down at that end, the resistance is greater than the pressure, and that's why you get less out of yourself, the more pressure you put. Or you can go to, *You Can't Kill Yourself by Holding Your Breath*, and it's the same kind of notion, that the more you're forcing yourself there, the more you're losing the ability to continue forcing yourself, and so there's a limit to how much you can force yourself. But within those limits, if you're down at that end, the more you force yourself, the more you're losing the ability to keep doing that kind of thing. So you could bring in either of these two other ones to explain how come you get this effect on one end, where you don't get it at the other end.

Then the punch line is: if you're close to the end of your rope, and you're not getting much out of yourself in spite of really putting the screws to yourself, the way to get more out of yourself is to unscrew the screw. And this is a particular exercise. It works very well for people who are at that

point. In general, I've found that it produces immediate relief from a lot of discomfort, just that one single move with that kind of explanation.

Q: *The principal form of therapy for sexual dysfunctions operate off that sort of principle.*

P: Yeah, the notion of performance ###—the notion of putting the screws to yourself to get more out of yourself, and what happens is that you get less. And that's for people who are already anxious. But as I said, you can successfully coerce yourself. The Coercion Elicits Resistance—if you just follow that, you might expect that that's a bad thing to do, you can't really do it, and you ought never to try. But in fact, you can really do it, and sometimes it is the thing to do; and, in fact, we're all familiar with doing it and doing it successfully. So depending on where the person is—has he reached the end of his rope?—you bring that out. Or if he's trying something that he doesn't really want to do, you talk about Coercion Elicits Resistance. So you bring out the image that gets at what *he* needs to understand in order not to be where he is. Neither of those two is a universal principle, which means again that you have to understand your client and choose which image you're going to bring out. You choose in terms of what he needs to have available.

Q: *It's almost on a model of an electrical circuit, and if the resistance of the wire is such, you can still get a current through by increasing the current, increasing the coercion, or by bypassing that, by shunting that circuit.*

P: Any questions about both of these images and their relation to this A makes B do C? Well, let's check off a couple more here. Did we do the Spitting on the Sidewalk/Passing a Law?

Q: *We started that.*

P: Okay, let me go into that one, because I think that at this point, we just have a bunch of miscellaneous ones that don't really fit any of these formulas, are just things that happen to come up from time to time.

Spitting on the Sidewalk. This is a way of explaining the notion of status assignments and how they work and what they can lead to. The image is this, or something like this. It's a common saying that you can't legislate morality, and that you can't prevent people from spitting on the

sidewalk by passing a law against it. And indeed, that's true. But that's misleading. Imagine a situation in which people are going up and down the sidewalk out here, and they keep spitting on it, and they've been doing it, so that you know what to expect of them. And tonight, we pass a law making it a felony. And tomorrow, those people walk up and down they keep on spitting. Now you might be tempted to say, "You see, you haven't changed their behavior one bit." And in a way that's true, but it's misleading. Because you have changed their behavior, and you've changed their behavior radically. Because today, when they spit on the sidewalk, they're committing a crime, where yesterday they were not committing crimes by doing what they're doing. So you've changed their behavior radically. Furthermore, not only have you changed their behavior, but in passing the law, you were committing yourself to prosecute them for violating it. So not only has their behavior changed, but your motivations have changed, your commitments have changed, the way you treat them has changed. In fact, a hell of a lot has changed.

Q: *But the morality of the act hasn't changed, has it?*

P: It's now against the law, and if being against the law has any moral value, then its moral value may well have changed also.

Q: *You can legislate legality, you can make it illegal, but issues of legalism and issue of morality are logically different categories.*

P: They're not unconnected, though. Remember, we're never dealing with logical connections. If I toss a bomb at you, logically that has nothing to do with morality, particularly if we describe the bomb in terms of its chemical composition. But in fact, it probably is an immoral act—not logically, but in fact.

Q: *But making something illegal doesn't make it immoral.*

P: No, but neither does tossing that bomb at you make it immoral. It's just a fact that it's very highly likely to be so.

Q: *It's like legal statements refer to themselves; moral statements refer to themselves for their ###, and they may deal with the same activity.*

P: Remember, that's why it's hard to redescribe behavior, because

when you go to a redescription of the significance, you may be going to a different logical category. By tossing the bomb at you, I am doing something immoral, so the fact that it's a different logical category here than here—that's exactly part of the complexity of behavior,

Q: *And it may or may not also be something illegal.*

P: Yeah. So you've changed the behavior by changing its significance, and that you *can* do by passing a law. In fact, that's indeed what you do do by passing a law. That's the function of passing laws. It's to define the significance of the behavior that qualifies as a violation. And the force of that is that you're committed to treat it accordingly—to treat something as an X. So a lot of things have changed. A lot of things in the real world have changed, and all you did was pass a law. A whole lot of behavior has changed, and all you did was pass a law.

That's the Phase 1 of the image, just that notion. There is an auxiliary that you usually want to include, namely: you can make anybody a criminal, as you can see, by passing a suitable law that makes it illegal to do what they do. Likewise, you can make anybody a failure by introducing a requirement that they have to not do what they do, or they're a failure. And you can make anybody a success by introducing a standard that says, "If he does what he, in fact, does do, then he's a success." So you can make anybody a success, a failure, or almost anything else, by introducing suitable requirements on them, and thereby committing yourself to treat them accordingly.

So that's the second phase of the image itself. Then the transposition to the real-life context will usually—or at least often—take the form of either, "You could do this in this situation, and it would work out better for you, it would seem," or "It looks like this is what you have been doing in this situation, and that's why you or he or they are always a failure. But your being a failure is not a matter of your being different from other people, but of your having different requirements that make you a failure. And you're committed to treat yourself accordingly." From that, you usually then go to an exercise that says, "Decriminalize this behavior. Repeal the law that says to do these things that you're doing is a crime. And treat yourself accordingly and see what happens."

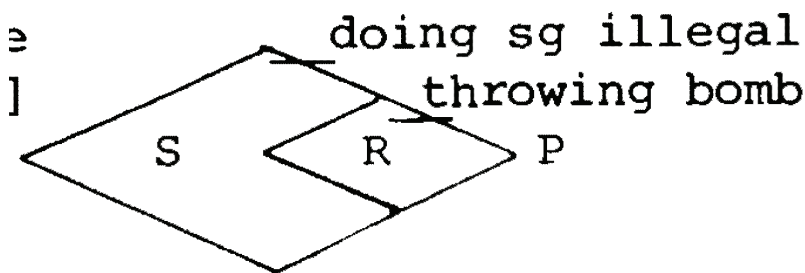
One variation on that is, “Give yourself the benefit of the doubt”.

Q: *After you repeal the law, you see what happens?*

P: Yeah. “See if that’s not just as authentic as the other way. See if that doesn’t fit things better.” Or just, “See what happens. See what the world looks like when it’s not a criminal world.”

Q: *Before, you said something about you changed behavior. It sounds like you changed the meaning or the significance of the behavior.*

P: Remember, *this* [the whole diagram] is the behavior, not that this [R] is the behavior, and this [S] throwing bomb is only its meaning. *This* is the behavior [the whole P thing]. We went through that when we did the redescrptions with Gloria. It’s not that really the behavior is saying such-and-such. Behavior is over here in the intrinsic practice she’s engaging in by saying something. So that’s not just the interpretation or the significance of the behavior as contrasted with the behavior. The specification of the significance *is* a specification of the behavior.



Unless you want to pass a law that says, “The real description is the one that’s farthest on this end, namely, the performance, and everything else is an interpretation or the meaning of it.” You have to pass a special law for that.

Q: *No, I guess we have to pass a special law for it not to be that. Spitting on the sidewalk is spitting on the sidewalk, whether it’s a felony or a misdemeanor or just something that people do.*

P: Yeah, and if there’s a law against it, then that’s a felony no matter

what people do. So it works as well either way.

Q: *The behavior hasn't changed; the meaning of the behavior has changed.*

P: No, the behavior of committing a felony hasn't changed. It's only the form of it that is changed.

Q: *Significance is part of the Intentional Action paradigm, so when it changes, the action changes.*

P: Yeah.

Q: *But in the one case, you have the individual manipulating the significance, or the category to which that behavior will now fit. In the other case, you have another person or other persons doing that.*

P: In either case, it's a person doing that. Any person, from some other person's point of view, is some other person. So all laws are somebody's laws. All requirements are somebody's requirements.

Q: *Whether they agree to it or not.*

P: And some requirements are public requirements. And some requirements are public requirements of a legal kind—the logic is basically the same. It's that of status-assignment. And your behavior is gotten at by saying what you're treating it as, which gets you the significance description, not the performance description. The performance is simply *how* you're doing that. So you're doing it by spitting on the sidewalk.

Q: *Pete—after you throw the bomb at Wynn and kill him—*

P: Then I exit rapidly.

Q: *Wouldn't at that point we say—it would kill us [he's sitting beside Wynn]—and the rest of you who are still alive, would you say throwing the bomb is immoral?*

P: I didn't say that. I said it's very likely to be that.

Q: *No, but after we're dead, and the rest of the class reconstructs it, wouldn't you say throwing the bomb was immoral?*

P: Very likely.

Q: *But I don't see why you're hedging.*

P: It may not be. There's no logical requirement that it should be immoral. I might have a duty to do it.

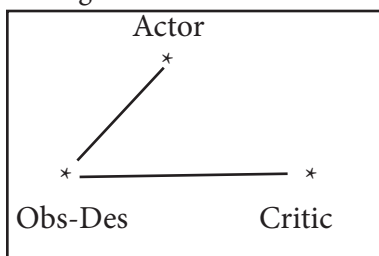
Q: *Is that the reason why you went to the next—*

P: Yeah—the connection between this description [R] and this one [S] is never—or almost never—a matter of logic. It isn't that whenever you have this behavior [R] you have that one [S]. It's that this behavior of this sort is also a behavior of that sort.

Q: *Is that the way the logic works?*

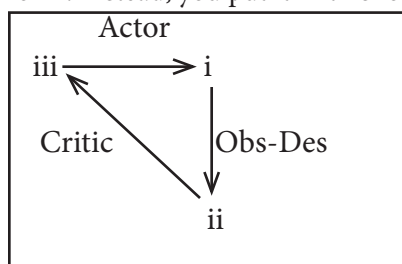
P: It's a matter of *fact* that this case of my moving my arm is a case of throwing the chalk, whereas this case of moving my arm is a case of drinking some pop. In both cases, you've got a case of moving my arm, but the next description doesn't follow from the fact that it's a case of moving my arm. So that's why you deal with facts, not logic, there. But that's also why you need observation, because it's by observation that you tell—mainly—these kinds of things. It's by recognizing these patterns [diagram—instrumental and intrinsic actions] that you tell what it is that's being done with some of these more concrete moves.

As I say, Spitting on the Sidewalk or Passing a Law is simply a way of bringing out the nature of status-assignments. Now from that, I think we could go on to one of the Heuristics, which is the AOC formula.

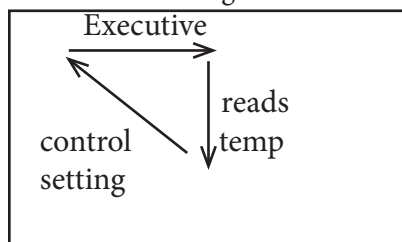


The original form of Actor-Observer-Critic was simply the identification of three forms of—what?—functioning, behaving, behavior. I called them “methodological roles”. A person functions in each of these

three ways, and I said that there are logical relations among them such that Observer-Describer is a special case of Actor; and Critic is a special case of Observer-Describer; and that from these you can develop a criterion of adequacy for any general account of behavior. That's the original formulation of it, and you can use that therapeutically; but generally, it doesn't work in this way if you're using it therapeutically. That is, you don't put it in this form. Instead, you put it in this form [second diagram].



You put it in this form, because what you've got is a functional arrangement, and whereas this [the first diagram] is a logical arrangement, this is a functional one. And the functional arrangement here is the original version of a negative feedback loop [third diagram].



You take a simple example of a negative feedback loop like a thermostat, you'll see that it has exactly these kinds of components in exactly that arrangement: you've got some kind of Executive there that, say, feeds the gas to the furnace, so that's the Actor. You have here a thermometer in the furnace or in the house that reads the temperature, and that's all it does—just registers the temperature. And then you have a control setting that works off the temperature, and decides whether that temperature is too hot, not hot enough, or okay. Depending on which of these things are the case, it turns it off, turns it on, or leaves it alone. And so the thermostat and furnace are a self-regulating setup.

A person who is Actor-Observer-Critic is also a self-regulating individual. One of the contrasts for this is the notion of certainty: [black-board] One of the things that we've inherited culturally, and that a lot of people are carrying around in their heads, is this kind of model, that somewhere there is a magic set of procedures which, if I only had the right ones, would guarantee me the result that I want.

Procedure → Result

And for many people, the scientific method is that procedure. In fact, there is no such procedure. There is no procedure which, if you only do that right, you will be guaranteed the result you want. Practically speaking, there are many good procedures, many that you can count on. But in principle, there is no foolproof procedure. And people don't really operate that way, since there is no such way. Instead of a foolproof procedure, you have a self-monitoring, self-regulating approach. And notice that this is not a second-best to this $[P \rightarrow R]$. You couldn't build a furnace that would always give you the right temperature. The right temperature changes from time to time. You could build a furnace that would give you a certain amount of heat production, but depending on what else is happening, you want more or less to produce the right amount. So you couldn't produce a perfect machine to give you the right temperature; you can only produce a self-regulating machine which, within certain limits, will keep you on track. And this is how people function, and this is why people don't need certainty, and have a very limited need for predictability.

Q: *## wobble is a necessary component of the logic of this feature, anyway. There has to be a variation between settings.*

P: Yeah. Now this form has a fair amount of heuristic value and applicability. Number one, you can use it in the same way that you use this: to comment that one of the ways that people go wrong is to overdo or underdo anyone of the three [A, O, or C]. The person who overdoes the Actor is somebody who's impulsive and thoughtless, and gets into trouble predictably. The person who overdoes the Observer-Describer is somebody who, in effect, is a spectator of his own life, and is living in his head. The person who is overdoing the Critic—well, we have a number of the images: the Hanging Judge, the Super-critic, etc. He's somebody for whom action

and observation serve the function of giving him food for criticism. You go back to the thermostat to point out what the proper function of these things is: that the Observer and Critic are for the sake of improving the quality of the action. They don't substitute for it; they're for the sake of improving it. And the way that they improve is to take the various inclinations that you have as Actor and rule out the ones that are no good, leaving you with the ones that are okay. And if it works that way, what you wind up doing is something you did want to do, but was also okay to do. In that way, Observer-Critic improves the quality of the Actor. I think the last time I used this was to indicate that the way you control impulses is not to sit on them, but to express them when and as they are appropriate. And this is the diagram of that: that as Critic, you make judgments of appropriateness, and so you act spontaneously, impulsively, when it's appropriate. You act on your wants and your inclinations, on your desires, on your reasons, when it's appropriate; and that is control.

So you can have a person overdoing or underdoing these. You can also have weak links, or strong links, functionally. You can have, for example, a person for whom this link [i] is functionally weak, and he goes around doing things and not knowing what he's doing. And then, diagnostically, we talk about a repressive personality, a hysterical personality, or something like that, where a person is oblivious—in a practical sense—to a lot of the things that he does. Or here [ii], a weak link here—again, a psychopathic personality, somebody who knows what he's doing and just doesn't care, isn't that critical about what it is he's doing but can say *what* it is he's doing. Or, over here [iii], somebody who knows what he's doing, knows that it's good or bad, but his judgments of its being good or bad make no difference in what he does. Remember, we identified that in connection with the Hanging Judge and the Kissinger example, to decide whether the person was doing the self-criticism for the sake of the satisfaction here or for the sake of trying to improve. We said: if you see him trying to improve, that's the way it ought to be. If you don't see him trying to improve, then the criticism is for the sake of the satisfaction here.

Once you have this feedback loop arrangement of Actor-Observer-Critic and think in terms of the possibility of overdoing or underdoing these; or of having the connections be too weak or too strong; considering

the implications that a person is essentially a self-regulating individual, it would be surprising if you couldn't formulate any kind of psychopathology as a defect within the scope of this diagram. Because *any* form of psychopathology will be formulatable as a defect in self-regulation.

Q: *So you can also have defects in connections and overdoing—like the character who had a defect in his connection between the Observer-Describer and the Actor, who gave the wrong description of himself, and was very critical of that—you'd have a positive feedback, because it wouldn't be a correction.*

Q: *That troubles me, that you can describe any kind of psychopathology within that system.*

P: Try it.

Q: *I can't think of the analogy to human behavior, but let's say you can have perfectly functioning thermostat that was set too high or too low for the house, and there's some analogy to behavior.*

P: You just have a bad Critic. You have a bad setting.

Q: *It could be functioning perfectly set for 110°, and the Critic doesn't—*

P: If it's too high, you've then in effect said that it's a bad setting. And if you have a critic that allows you do to anything you damn well feel like doing, it's a bad Critic.

Q: *Not to say that the Critic would allow you to engage in a huge range of behaviors—maybe he'd restrict it very carefully—but that range of restriction might be maladaptive, or—*

P: Whatever your basis for saying it's maladaptive would equally be your basis for saying it's a malfunctioning Critic. Whatever's the basis for one is a basis for the other. In effect, those statements are inter-translatable. If you allow yourself, knowingly, something that's maladaptive, is to say you're doing something wrong, you're allowing yourself to do something wrong; therefore, you're being a poor Critic. And if you allow yourself because you don't know what you're doing, then you're being a defective Observer-Describer.

Q: *Take the example of the professional psychopath or sociopath—the Con Man ### real well; next time I’m going to do the same thing—the Critic works beautifully.*

Q: *It seems that we’re talking about, like different cultural things, values, using the example like the thermostat’s off—the culture’s off, something like that? There’s something missing, it seems to me.*

P: No, I think we have the same problem we’ve had before, with the unconscious motivation formulation, namely: this doesn’t tell you which are cases of pathology. It simply says that here is a form of description that is suitable for this kind of use, namely, for a person who thinks that somebody else is in a pathological state; and unconscious motivation is a form of description that explains it, that accounts for it. Likewise, somebody who thinks that somebody else is exhibiting pathology, here is a form of representation that will enable him systematically to say what he thinks the pathology is.

Q: *It’s the basis for a taxonomy, then?*

P: It could provide the basis for a taxonomy—you can do different kinds of bad Critics, you can taxonomize the different errors in observation, or the miscues in the action. So you could introduce taxonomy. You can also simply make judgments as to when the thing was going right or not.

Q: *Psychoanalysts also built a tripartite—Id-Ego-Super Ego that you can break down in the exact same way, and they can go to a whole symptomatology from that. The difference between it is the Id-Ego-Super Ego is like a thermostat, because it’s descriptive of a machine, whereas this isn’t, because the issue of deliberation and responsibility—this sort of diagram—the thermostat is a very faulty version of this kind of thing.*

P: Yeah, that’s why I say this is the original model for negative feedback loops, and it’s precisely because people are as effective as they are that machines built in the image of people, in this sense, are as effective as they are. And why it’s so easy to give them person-like qualities if they’re at all competent, because they do share something quite fundamental with

people. But, you see, it's machines that were built as defective versions of people, not people that are defective forms of machinery.

Q: *You figure a thermostat can't decide whether or not it wants to act on the information it gets.*

P: One thing about this is, it's reflexive, whereas machinery is not reflexive. A person can be a critic of his own criticism, and observe all of this about himself, etc., and that's why the order of self-regulation is much higher, it's a different order of magnitude than a thermostat or a computer or any constructed machinery.

Q: *Is what you're talking about meta-control?*

P: The reflexivity gives you infinite meta-control, because there's no place you have to stop. That's why I emphasize that it's content-free: you're not stuck at that lowest meta-level all the way. Interestingly enough, there are devices for strengthening or weakening these connections, known devices—not things that work for sure, but things that tend to have that effect. One of the more obvious ones is alcohol, right here [ii]. Alcohol will tend to weaken the link between Observer-Describer and Critic. That's why alcohol is known as a disinhibitor, because you know what you're doing but you just don't care that much, and so you go ahead and do it. Meditation also operates here, because in meditation you don't make appraisals; you simply let the thoughts come, but you don't judge them. So that will tend to loosen up this link here. Lots of alcohol will close down that link [i], and you don't even know what you're doing.

Q: *Even more will close down the other link. [change tape]*

P: ### [self-acceptance will increase this link [iii].]—some of the things that you're trying to do as a therapist, in terms of the links in this functioning loop. So you've got this not only for balance and imbalance, and degree of emphasis, and the various forms that it takes, but also the linkages that characterize it as a functioning self-regulator.

Okay, where did we get onto this? This is from the Passing the Law. There's even more to it than we have here: [blackboard].

status-assignment	Before the Fact value-giving creative
	After the Fact value-finding reflective

Your functioning as an Actor is before the fact, and your functioning as Observer or Critic is after the fact—after the fact in the sense that not until there is an action is there anything to observe, describe, or criticize. Whereas the action does not stem from a criticism. The action stems from you, the person. You always have action to criticize—if not yours, then somebody else's.

Q: *The critic has ###.*

P: Yeah, but that itself is a form of behavior. That's why I emphasized over here that all of these are action anyhow. To function as a Critic is to function as an Actor, but a very special case, but they're not mutually exclusive.

Q: *In the example you gave a couple of weeks ago, of talking to the real whoever—were you talking to the combination of Actor-Observer-Critic?*

P: That's unilluminating to—. Now all of these go together: the fact that action is before the fact, the fact that it's value-giving, the fact that it's creative—it's all one single notion, you might say.

Q: *When you say "value-giving", what are you saying?* [blackboard: PGO adds "status assignment"]

P: You give something value when you give it a place in your life and treat it accordingly. That's its value—whatever place it has in your life, and that's status-assigning, and that's why this whole development goes with the Spitting on the Sidewalk, which is simply the bare explanation and presentation of status-assigning.

Q: *Couldn't a Critic—a Critic couldn't be a status-assigner?*

P: No, a Critic also status-assigns, but differently from the Actor. If I look over there [**at the can of pop**], and I'm attracted to it, and I pick it up and drink it, I'm not functioning as a Critic would. I feel like taking a drink, and I do. Now I may look at it and say, "Well, I've had enough." That too is a status assignment, and there I'm functioning as a Critic.

Q: *How's that value-finding as opposed to value-giving?*

P: Because what I'm doing is reflecting on the action or possible action of doing what I felt like doing, which is drinking. I reflected on that; I say, "That wouldn't be right; I've had enough." So not until I get something up here [before the fact] at least as a possible action, do I have a basis for criticizing it, whereas for generating it as a possible action, it comes spontaneously. It comes from me because I'm the guy who right now feels like drinking that pop. It's not as Critic that I feel like drinking it; it's not as Observer-Describer that I feel like drinking it; it's as an Actor. So I give it a certain place in my life, namely, something to be gotten right now. And that is its value. So status-assigning goes with giving things a place in your life and treating them accordingly. In both cases, you're talking about treating something as an X, treating something as having whatever status you assign it to. But you've got to do that status-assigning, because the place it has in your life doesn't follow from anything else about it. That's why we call it creative. That's why we talk about *value-giving*. You see, if I'm really thirsty, if I really like that, it will have that value. But it doesn't follow from anything about it that it has that value. In fact, it might not have. On the next drink, I may be full, and it won't have that value. So whatever value it has for me doesn't follow from any facts about it. I have to give it that value. And I will count it accordingly, because if it turns out to taste bad, I will prosecute. I will count it as a failure, because I require of it, in that status, that it taste good—that's what the hell I'm after it for. So it works very much like the Passing the Law about spitting on the sidewalk. I have a requirement for it: the requirement is that it fill the place that I give it, adequately, and if it does, it's a success; and if it doesn't, it's a failure. It's a failure or a success—I treat it accordingly. But judging whether it's a failure or a success requires [the after the fact group]. So I have to do things, I have to know what I'm doing, and I have to be able to criticize or judge how things

are going, and whether they're going okay, whether I'm doing okay. Then I can operate.

That's why here, we talk about value-finding. If the thing really has that value for me, and I drink it, I will also—as an Observer—find that it has value. I will observe that it tastes good. As Critic, I will say, “That's a good can of Dr. Pepper.” But notice that I can only find it there if I've given it up here. This has an immediate therapeutic application, because there are many people these days whose main complaint is, “There isn't enough value in my life. There's nothing that counts, there's nothing that's important, there's nothing that's really meaningful, etc., etc.” And the natural inclination of somebody who is in that dilemma is to redouble his efforts to find values. What's more natural? If you're missing it, look harder. If you can't find it, look. As you might expect, the solution doesn't usually lie there, because if it did, they wouldn't be coming to you. Instead, the solution lies in that they need to give more value to things, and if they do, they will find it.

Q: *That's when you throw the Little White Balls?*

P: No. You might think so, and you could, but in fact I've never used the Little White Balls in connection with this. This one, then, leads to an exercise called “Creative Drama”, and I think that we'd better continue that next time. Creative Drama is an exercise for a person to run his own life and be self-actualizing.

Session 11

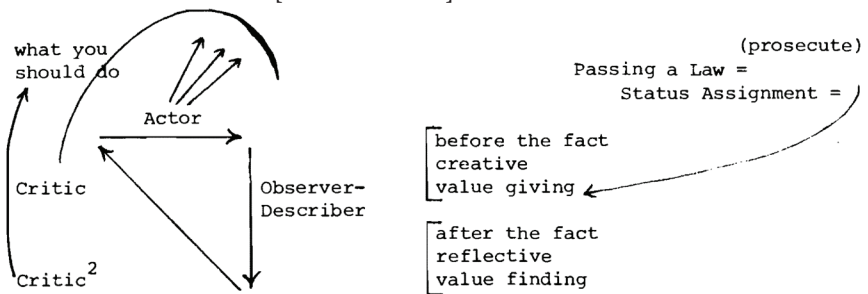
April 6, 1976

Heuristics: Actor-Observer-Critic; Creative Drama; High power-Low power positions. Images: Poor No More; Demon Businessman; Moment of Truth; Home Base.

PGO: Last time, my recollection is we started talking about this one—the image of Passing a Law—and then went on to the heuristic, the Actor-Observer-Critic as a heuristic. I think we got as far as mentioning these things—

Q: *You left off at Creative Drama.*

P: Oh, yeah. We covered all these things, right? To assign a status is to give something a place, and therefore a value in your life. Okay, let's go to the Creative Drama. [blackboard]



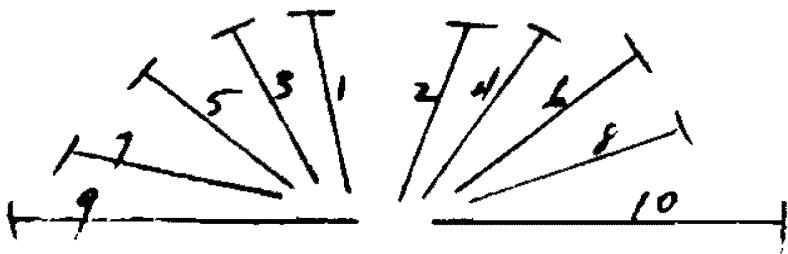
These [before the fact, etc.] characterize the Actor as against the Observer-Describer and Critic, whereas these [after the fact, etc.] characterize Observer-Describer and Critic as against Actor. And recall that this is a functional cycle in which Observer-Describer and Critic are primarily for the sake of monitoring what you're doing as an Actor; and improving it when it needs to be improved; and leaving it alone when it doesn't need improving.

Q: You keep referring to that as a negative feedback loop. What would be the contrasting positive feedback loop?

P: The Balance image is a positive feedback loop, where they start getting further and further apart—that's one of them.

Q: The negative—there has to be something going wrong before it's self-correcting.

P: Yeah, when nothing's going wrong, you just leave it alone. Something starts going wrong, you make a correction, and the correction is the negative feedback part. The positive feedback loop is where something starts going wrong, and that makes it go even more wrong, and that makes it go even more wrong, and pretty soon it's just way off. Remember the Balance example, where they started disagreeing a little bit, and then one started compensating for the other, and then the other started compensating even more, and pretty soon they were just diametrically opposed.



That's a positive feedback loop.

The comment that led to the notion of Creative Drama was this: that very often people come in and their complaint is there's not enough value in their lives. Their lives are meaningless, they're not worth much, there's not that much value. And when somebody says that, he's operating as an Observer-Describer or Critic who is not finding that value there and is judging it to be not enough. I said the temptation, the overwhelming temptation in a situation like that is to look harder, to re-emphasize that way of operating, to look harder for the value that you're having a hard time finding. And I don't know whether it's a matter of selection or cause and effect, but in any case, the solution is usually not that. Because what's wrong normally is that the person isn't *giving* enough value in his life. That's why

he's not *finding* any. He's not giving any value to things. Since he's not giving any value to things in his behavior, he's not finding any value in his life. So his way out is not to look harder and harder, but to start giving more value to things. And it's as an elaboration of this notion of "giving more value to things" that you get into the notion of Creative Drama. How does one go about managing one's life so as to give more value to things, and therefore find more value in one's life?

Imagine an actual drama, like *Hamlet*. Recall, in the process description, the Elements, Individuals, and Eligibilities. I used *Hamlet* as an example there: I said that *Hamlet* is one of the Elements in the play *Hamlet*, and you can have various actors who are eligible to play *Hamlet*. You get that kind of structure. So think of the actual play, *Hamlet*, and then think of the characters in that play, and then think of how the play goes. How the play goes is pretty much foreordained, because the lines are already written, the lines that each of the characters speaks are already written. So if you're thinking in terms of a process description involving those characters and those props, then you could say, "The actual play *Hamlet* is one version of that process. It's one way that those characters might have interacted through that period of time." Now if you were playing *Hamlet*, or one of the other characters, you would probably mostly be going through the motions, because the lines that were written for that character wouldn't fit you. They wouldn't be your lines—they would just be lines that you were speaking.

So an actual play has some life-like features, in that the play is something that could have happened, maybe, but it's not the kind of thing that would fit a given actual person. So take the play and its casting, so that we all know who's playing *Hamlet*, who's playing a spear-bearer, who's playing the Ghost, who's playing Banquo, etc. Now imagine that everything is the same, except that the lines aren't written. All we specify are the characters, but they have no lines. They have to make up their own lines as they go along. Now what kind of structure does that impose? Certainly it's not the same kind of structure as the actual play—the play has a definite sequence of lines and it's all there; whereas if you merely identify who's playing which character, you've done the casting job, but then it's sort of open-ended as to who's going to say what, and who's going to do what. On the other hand,

having cast people as certain characters gives you a basis for saying that they've done well in their parts, or that they've done poorly and are maybe miscast. Because the specification of the different characters carries some implication as to what would qualify as doing a good job there. For example, if one of the characters is Hamlet and one of the characters is his father, you could tell whether the father is behaving toward Hamlet in a fatherly way. If one of the characters is a friend, you can tell, after the fact, whether that friend is behaving as a friend would. Even though you don't have his lines written, you can tell, after the fact, whether he actually does fit his character—the part that he's playing.

Suppose, then, that you're one of these people who is not finding enough value, and you have this kind of presentation, and then I say, "Suppose you write a drama for yourself in which you're the leading character, and you specify as many parts, as many characters, in this drama, as you want. Then take the people you know and assign them to some or all of those parts. So if you have a part, say, for a friend, take somebody you know and cast him as your friend. If you have a part called 'Somebody I Could Really Confide In,' maybe you don't want to take any of the people you know and put them in that part—maybe you just want to say that character is missing in my play. I'm somebody who's missing somebody he can confide in, but I might find somebody I could cast there. So do it whichever way you want. And then treat them accordingly. The person you've cast as a friend, treat him as a friend. The one you've cast as somebody to be avoided, avoid him. So the way you cast people, treat them accordingly. And judge them in terms of what part they have in your life. And if you find you've miscast somebody, you can always recast them as something else.

"You can write a play for yourself that has only bad places for people to be in, or you can write a play for yourself that has good places for people to be in, including good places for you to be in. That's up to you. And if you're not at least somewhat careful, you may miscast yourself. So don't write a part for yourself in which you're horribly miscast. Be realistic. Try that out this week, and see how that works." Then the following week, we talk about what the experience was like, how well it worked, how he sees things, where it went wrong, where he feels good about it, where he found some new value, and just keep refining it. I've done this, I think, about five

times in the last three months; and I think one was a clear failure; and all the other ones got something out of it pretty quickly. So it's something that either works or doesn't, pretty quickly. And the net effect was exactly what I wanted, namely, to get the person in a more realistic, optimistic, active, creative way of living. Now, this did not happen out of nowhere. There was groundwork. But this was the critical move, and some of the previous things about creative, value-giving, etc., we had done earlier, and I repeated them on this occasion, and then went into the Creative Drama.

Now you can see that you could modify that so you wouldn't have to have an elaborate pre-presentation. Once you get the central idea, you could probably write a much more parsimonious set of instructions for getting somebody to do that. It just happens that since I use some of these other things fairly commonly anyhow, it's easy to build on some of these prior things in introducing the Creative Drama via this diagram. And, of course, it helps to have a blackboard. [laughter] I think I'll write a paper on "Blackboard as an Auxiliary to Psychotherapy".

Q: *The couch.*

P: I can do without a couch, but without a blackboard—no.

Q: *When it failed, why did it fail?*

P: I'm not sure. The whole thing just didn't take at all. They couldn't get the idea, and I didn't feel like laboring it, so after the second time, I just said let's try something else. I think where the person got hung up was on the idea of the lines—they kept writing lines. [laughter] Now part of the explanation that goes with this is that you can't write other people's lines for them. You might hope, but you can't get away with it. That's why you specify their characters, you assign them statuses, you let them write their own lines, but you judge them in your terms. That's what connects to the Passing the Law. In assigning them a place, you've laid some requirements on them as to what they have to do to validate that place, and if they don't do the right things, you prosecute them—they're miscast, you re-cast them as something else: you assign them a new status. You go through degradation or accreditation ceremonies. So the judgment in question is very much like the director deciding that this person is miscast

as this kind of character, because he doesn't act accordingly. So you have a basis, then, for how you treat people, because you put them in a place that carries certain requirements, and you can treat them as meeting those requirements, or you can treat them as failing those requirements. Either way gives you a basis for treating them. Either way reflects your relation to them.

Now you go to symmetry. Everybody else is doing the same thing. Everybody else has got *you* written into some part in their drama. You're not alone in this; you're just doing what everybody else is doing. Other people are assigning you statuses which carry requirements on you, and they will judge you and treat you accordingly. Now the question arises: doesn't that just create a lot of confusion, then? Everybody's got a different drama going on—what would you expect but confusion? The answer is: you might expect it, and to some extent it happens, but in fact there's a lot less confusion than you might expect, because—and now you're into one of the other images, the Entrance Examination. I think on the original sheet, the Entrance Exam is listed as a Heuristic on the second page, rather than as an Image on the first, and it's one of those ambiguous ones—I think you could put it under about three or four headings.

By way of preliminary: the answer to why there isn't confusion—or at least not as much as you might expect—is that we have ready-made cultural patterns that involve more than one person, and so people tend naturally to fall into something like these existing patterns which have a place for more than one person. And when they get together, they simply take different places in the same play—a play of the same general kind. Then at the individual level comes the Entrance Exam. The explanation of the Entrance Exam is this: that everybody carries around with him what amounts to an Entrance Exam, namely, it's a way of automatically screening everybody out as candidates for somebody you want to interact with and deal with. You screen everybody out except those people who pass your Entrance Exam. And the Entrance Exam, and passing it, consists of having the kind of appearance and self-presentation that makes them at least look like the kind of person that you want as a character in your play. So that you're actively screening people to deal with at all, to give some place in your life. And most people don't have a place. The ones that get

through the Entrance Exam—it's because they look like they would fit one of your places, so you let them through.

So it's not accidental, then, that the kind of people that you do wind up interacting with in some kind of meaningful way are not there accidentally. They are the kind that at least look like the kind that you could incorporate into your life. Now that Entrance Exam can go wrong, and it's the equivalent of miscasting. Sometimes people have the kind of Entrance Exam that will screen out everybody except certain kinds of people, and those kinds of people are kinds that they can't get along with, in which case they've had it, because then they wind up with nobody. For example, somebody screens out everybody except aggressive, creative people; but then they feel either jealousy, or they feel dominated or restricted, and they can't get along with those, either; so pretty soon they wind up pretty isolated. So Entrance Exams can go wrong, but they're also a normal resource for eliminating the kind of confusion that you would get if you just had to draw people at random to give places in your life.

Now this particular one of there being ready-made patterns is one that you can connect to data, surprisingly enough, particularly with male-female relationships. We're going to have pretty soon, I think, a dissertation based on the notion that if you take some of our cultural paradigms for male-female relationships, what you'll find is that they operate for people very much like Jungian archetypes. People have this image in mind, and it's an actual cultural image like Romeo and Juliet, or like Madame Curie and so forth—some historical or cultural figures, and they will enact the part of, say, Romeo or Juliet; and somebody enacting the part of Romeo is going to be screening women to be Juliets. And vice versa. And by asking the right kind of questions, you can establish that somebody who has the Romeo-Juliet thing will consistently operate in those terms and will specify ideal marital partners, ideal relationships, essential relationships, make behavioral choices, etc., in ways that are in conformity with that; whereas somebody who has primarily a friendship paradigm will do all of those things in conformity with that. There's a certain degree of trickiness as to what kind of data and how, but you can see that if people really have these kind of guiding relationships then you ought to be able to detect it in their pattern of choices and judgments about relevant matters.

Q: *That would seem to underlie a lot of the betrayal that people come in with. “My princess turned out to be a lady frog.”*

P: Yeah. That’s right. That’s why with the Passing the Law, one of the key features is that you’re committed to prosecute the violator; and when you’re operating as a Romeo, somebody who betrays you as a Juliet, that’s a real betrayal.

You see, having these cultural patterns available keeps you from having to be more creative than people really are when it comes to managing their own lives. You’ve got a lot of ready-made ingredients, just like you’ve got a lot of ready-made social practices; so you don’t have to invent all kinds of behaviors. Your creativity comes mainly in which you choose, and you choose those that fit you. But sometimes you just invent new ones.

The point is that you don’t have to. You don’t have to be supercreative or superinventive in order to run a bona fide creative drama of your own life. Because the name of the game is to have one that fits you, not to have one that’s novel. If you have one that fits you, then you are authentic, you are self-actualizing. And the structure of the Creative Drama—that you can specify people’s parts but you can’t write their lines—I think gets at exactly the kind of control you have over how your life runs, and the kinds of control you don’t have over how it runs—namely, you can’t control what the other person does. You can judge it, but you can’t control it. But being able to judge it gives you enough structure, enough basis, to give coherence to your life, even though you’re not controlling all of the elements in it.

And that goes for you in your own part. You don’t have to super-control yourself, or program, or write your lines in advance, any more than you have to do it for other people.

So this paradigm of Creative Drama gets at some of the very important elements of where you have control, what kind of control, where you have creativity, where there is a place for originality, and why it isn’t an impossible task. And what value it is—namely, self-actualization and authenticity. So there’s a lot tied into this paradigm of Creative Drama. [change tape]

Q: *—people in your world, as opposed to just a person-to-person interaction—I’m thinking about a client I have now who’s got an image of always*

being rational, always being nice, always being calm, cool, collected, and she goes wrong in certain predictable ways, which is veins sticking out in her neck but she's smiling, she's being nice and calm and rational and logical about it, and other people see her as being phony. But that's almost like an image or a paradigm—she's coming out of it, trying to prepare herself for a supervisory position that she feels is coming up, and going on an image of what it would be like to be this super, fair, impartial, logical, rational supervisor.

P: So you would reflect that she has a part written in, called “being an inhumanly reasonable supervisor”? And that description, you can recognize as a Well-Poisoning move, but it's not inaccurate.

Q: *A Well-Poisoning move?*

P: Describing it that way, automatically, you expect, evokes motivation not to be that way. But it's an accurate description. At least, it's not inaccurate. So by reflecting back this aspect, via the name that you give it, you're in effect making an interpretation of what she's up to. But you're doing it by showing her what it's like, not by telling her what her motivation is, etc.

Q: *I asked her if her boss was always that way—no, I first asked her if she respected her boss, so I wouldn't go wrong that way [laughter], and she said she did, and I said, “Well, is he always calm and cool?” She said, “No, sometimes he's really up the wall and he screams at me and he does all these other awful things,” and I said, “Gee, you still respect him, huh?”*

P: Let me give you another package involving the same kind of thing, and it doesn't involve a Creative Drama, but it involves most of the other elements. This is a—about a 28-year-old man who's got a job in a bureaucratic organization, and he's young, he's on his way up, and he has a problem of Checking with City Hall, is what it amounts to. He always wants to check to see if the other person agrees with him, or okays it first. And he has a problem with some of the people he supervises, when they express hostility. He has a lot of self-doubts, in fact, almost nothing but self-doubts. His primary comment when he came in is, “I lack self-confidence,” and you see how that connects with Checking with City Hall. And he spaces things out—he starts the day's work with something in his head that he's got to

do, and then he's got to write it down, because if he doesn't, he's likely to forget and screw it all up. So he spaces things out, has a hard time confronting people, and thinks that he ought to be more aggressive. I guess that's enough background to get started.

He began the session with talking about "I ought to be more aggressive," and then he developed that idea with various examples, and at that point I could have gone into the Choosing Your Movements. Choosing the right amount of aggressiveness is parallel to Choosing Your Movements, so I could have done that, but somehow I didn't, but I did give him a fast argument to the effect that clearly he needed a different amount of aggressiveness in different places, depending on what it was he was doing, so therefore there wasn't a certain amount of aggressiveness that was the right amount, because it all depended, so he was going to have a hell of a time if he was trying to figure out what the right amount of aggressiveness was, and get himself to be that aggressive. So, in effect, bypassing the image, we got to the same kind of punch line as with the Choosing Your Movements image, that there isn't a right amount. I then went into one of the Slogans here, which is Keep Your Eye on the Ball. I said, "There is always something that you are doing. There is always some practice that you're engaged in with the other person, and if that goes right, then you will have been the right amount of aggressive. You will also have been the right amount of polite, the right amount of knowledgeable, the right amount of sophistication, and the right amount of everything. And the way you get it to go right is not to somehow get the right amount of aggressiveness and the right amount of politeness, etc. You get it by keeping your eye on the ball, namely, what it is that you are positively doing and seeing that that goes right. If that goes right, everything else goes right, too." So we anchored that one with Keep Your Eye on the Ball, and that's one of the Slogans here.

I had this diagram [AOC] on the board, and about that time, he said, "Yeah, it sounds right, but now look, how come I keep forgetting things?" I then went into the notion that Coercion Elicits Resistance, and that he was coercing himself, and that the forgetting was his way of resisting. I put down both "You can make me do it but you can't make me do it right," and "You can't make me like it," and checked off #1, and that one he recognized, too. Then—and I think this calls for a little more history—in

his childhood days, his primary identification-figure was his mother. And she was somebody who didn't believe in fighting and had a very definite moral code in which you always did the right thing and that included not fighting. That one, you recognize, we did before, in that you can have a second Critic who does a bad job of ruling out everything you want to do and substituting something else that you should do [see diagram, p. 1]. The normal function of the Critic is to rule out some of the things you want to do, leaving some things that you want to do that are also okay to do, so you wind up doing something you want to do that is also okay. When you've got the second Critic [Critic 2], who rules out all of the things you want to do and substitutes what you should do, then what happens is that you lose touch with yourself. You lose touch with what you feel like doing, what you want to do, what's important to you, because it's coming from this Critic [2].

So his next question was, "Does this explain why I'm not in touch with myself?" I elaborated this one to bring in the second Critic, reminded him of his mother, and said, "That's her, and this is how it worked." This point is where I considered going through the Creative Drama thing, as you can see the stage is set now for Creative Drama, but instead decided to do something a little less fancy and more conservative. I said, "Your problem is to get you back in touch with yourself, and the way you do that is to bypass this [the second Critic] and start doing some of these things. And what you do is, you do something because you darn well feel like it—unless it's either dangerous or wrong. That's the safeguard: unless it's dangerous or wrong." His reaction was, "But that rules out everything, because that's the way I've been operating anyhow." The next move is one of the Exercises: "No, you don't accept the burden of proof. If you feel like doing it, do it unless you can make a case against it. The way you've been operating, you're not willing to do it unless you can make a case *for* it. So give yourself the benefit of the doubt. You don't have a burden of proof." That one he understood. So the exercise for the week was for him to do things just because he felt like it, unless it was wrong or dangerous. And one of the preliminaries—I said, "Think back. For example, what have you done today that you did just because you darn well felt like it," and he couldn't think of anything. I made a fast guess and said, "Well, what about what

you had for breakfast this morning. Did you choose that just because you darn well felt like eating whatever you ate?” and he said, “Oh, yeah, yeah, that’s one.” And then I tried another one and said, “Now when you go to a movie, you choose it on the basis of what you would enjoy, not what would be right, don’t you?” He said, “No. When I choose, I choose on the basis of ‘would it be right?’” [laughter] So I said, “Scratch that one, and come back to the original, what you had for breakfast. There’s a live example that you can operate that way, so you have that experience to go by—what it’s like. Now try doing more of that sort of thing in other situations, so long as it’s not wrong or dangerous.”

Q: *You’re lucky he wasn’t on a diet.*

P: I don’t know what I would have done. I’d have probably gone to the movie and then been freaked out.

Okay, now this whole sequence is typical of some of the uses of these diagrams, in that at some point, the person begins to really resonate to it because it’s giving him a picture of a good chunk of his life, and then he starts asking additional questions that you then elaborate, and pretty soon he’s got the sense that he understands what’s going on with him, because you’ve covered, one way and another, all of the questions that he has. That’s the way it developed over this one session. He started out way off somewhere and, little by little, through all of this, at the end of it, he said, “My God, I can see what I’ve been doing!” And I emphasized that giving yourself the benefit of the doubt is something that would, in practice, put him back in touch with himself, and he could see how indeed you could expect that to happen, and that it was something he could do on purpose. It wasn’t just something that it would be nice *if* he could do it, that he certainly could do this on purpose, and indeed you can. You can give yourself the benefit of the doubt *on purpose*, so that this was something practical that he could start with now, that in terms of the diagram, he could see the kind of long range effects, the kind of repetitive effects that it could be expected to have, and that’s what he was up to in doing the exercise. So given that kind of understanding of how this whole thing fits together, how it fits him, how this is something that could be expected to work, and that it’s something he could do on his own on purpose—he’s off and running.

This kind of session happens, I would say about 40% of the time. That is, in some session it all comes together, and you find yourself simply wrapping up a whole package of all the questions that the person has about who he is, why he's doing what he's doing, why he isn't doing something, the various things that seem mysterious to him, all of a sudden he can see it. And that usually is a turning point in the therapy. Well, 40% is high. Maybe one out of three times. But it's not at all uncharacteristic. And notice how many different images, elements, etc., got brought in. There were several slogans, several images, these descriptions, a lot of ingredients tossed in to fit his questions, his pathology, his problems.

Q: *It sounds like his first City Hall was his mother.*

P: Yeah.

Q: *How would this tie in with—you have an exercise here—Decriminalizing. In sounds like in some way, that's what you're doing.*

P: Yeah. You decriminalize with people who are Hanging Judges, Super Critics, etc. And he didn't come across that way. That is, he wasn't—on his own case, he wasn't being supercritical of himself. He was simply being self-conscious and un-self-confident. With one exception. One of the things that happens is that—as I say, he's an up-and-coming character, and he belongs to a number of organizations in which he has some official position, and typically, when he's in the right, then he'll run roughshod over people. And that contrasts strongly with the fact that in most cases, he lacked self-confidence and that's the last thing he was able to do.

That was one question—either he raised it or I raised it—and that brought in a separate—it's not even an image, probably a heuristic, namely, that parents influence their children in two ways. One is in the requirements they lay on the child of what he has to do to get along with them, and the other is what kind of model they provide for the child. So the requirement that this guy's mother laid on him was that he be non-dominant, that he be submissive, acquiescent in going along with her judgment as to what was right. But the other, in terms of a model, he got somebody who operates in terms of right and wrong and shoves it down your throat. So he had both of these available, and you might say he had a two-person game going: A makes B do C, and he could be either A, the person who shoves

it down your throat, or he could be B, the guy who has to check with City Hall, and those were his main options in dealing with people. And indeed, he recognized that the way he dealt with people was pretty much either one or the other, and he could see how that connected to his mother and how she operated, and how that related to this diagram.

So what we're dealing with here is that these images, heuristics, etc., are bits and pieces that you can put together to construct something that has a larger structure, and is tailored to a particular individual, as well as your own therapeutic strategies. You can see there are a number of choice points where I could have gone another way—I could have gone the Creative Drama route. I could have gone the Choosing Your Movements route. There's a number of options there which simply, on a judgmental basis, and I can't say that it really worked out better this way than the other ways. It's simply that you exercise that kind of judgment.

Q: *Would you say a little more about that image of Keeping Your Eye on the Ball? Is that to bring out the Actor more, rather than the Critic?*

P: Yeah, because the ball is whatever you are positively doing. Critics will tend to use double negatives—"Do it right, do it well, do it effectively, do it efficiently, don't do it wrong". One of the explanations that goes with this is that there's characteristic language for Actors, Observers, and Critics, and one of the mistakes people make is to use Critic concepts to try to operate with as Actors. And the rule of thumb for finding out if that's what you're doing is to take whatever notion you have, put it in the form of an instruction, and if you find that you can't follow that instruction, you've got Critic language. If you can follow the instruction, it's good Actor language. Example: suppose you go back to the context of an actual drama, and you take the critic who's sitting in the front row, and in the morning paper what you read is that last night we had the definitive performance of *Hamlet*. Well, that's certainly a legitimate way for that critic to write. Now suppose the director, the night before—suppose you were Hamlet, and suppose the director said, "Joe, tonight I want you to put on the definitive performance of *Hamlet*." That's an instruction you can't follow, because it gives you no guidelines as to what to do, and so you wind up saying, "Yeah, but what do I actually do?" Well, that's the kind of language that doesn't help you as

an Actor, because it's Critic language. Once you have the play there, then you can make a judgment about whether it was a definitive performance. But how could you set yourself to do something called "giving a definitive performance of Hamlet"? You can't do it.

Q: *It seems as if there's Critic language also when you say someone is trying to put the screws to themselves—say, to lose weight. But I don't know how—there are Critic instructions you could follow, but for some other reason, like Coercion Elicits Resistance, it would be more a matter of just keeping your eye on the ball.*

P: No. You see, if the specification is "eat less," that's Actor language. That instruction you can follow. And you remember, it is the function of the Critic to diagnose what's gone wrong, and formulate a new course of behavior. But the new course of behavior has to be in Actor language or it can't be implemented. The point is that other things the Critics do are not of that sort. They're not formulated in Actor language, and, therefore, they are not something that the Actor can follow. They're merely Critic's judgments, not aids to an Actor.

Q: *It's in Actor language, "eat less," but it's not the kind of thing that can be followed.*

P: It *can* be followed, but that's good enough, because if it isn't, then you're back to Coercion Elicits Resistance. It's not that it can't be followed, it's that you refuse it.

Okay, you can see why I say that you can get an awful lot of mileage out of this one, by the time you've put together the differential emphases, the functional links, the fact that it is a negative feedback loop and therefore a model of self-regulating behavior, the way that it connects to all kinds of other images, slogans, etc.

Q: *Something that seems to fit in here—you mentioned once before where a person is sort of counting up the things they do wrong in a day, a week, just keeping score. That is sort of the opposite of Keeping Your Eye on the Ball, isn't it?*

P: No, because there you're worrying about whether you're winning, rather than what you're doing. That's a variation on the Super-Critic. The

example we're talking about is in terms of condemning yourself for making mistakes, and it's a peculiar pattern, and you set it up that way. Imagine that at 10:00 you make a mistake, and it's genuinely a mistake, it's something you ought not to have done. So you say, "Damn, I shouldn't have done that." Then at 12:05 you make another one, and that, too, is a genuine boo-boo and you shouldn't have done that, and so you say, "Dammit, I shouldn't have done that." Then the same thing happens at 2:03, another genuine mistake, and it really is a mistake, and so you castigate yourself for that one. And then at 5:06 and at 5:10, and at 6:25, and at 9:30. And everyone of these is a genuine mistake, and you hadn't ought to have done it. So each time, it was legitimate for you to say, "Dammit, I shouldn't have done it." Now, on the other hand, how reasonable is to expect to go all day without making *any* mistakes? You see this with somebody who in effect is down on himself for having made *any* mistakes. Based on the fact that it was really a mistake, and he ought not to have done it, you can easily go from the fact that for each mistake I make, I shouldn't have done it, to the other conclusion, which is quite different, that I shouldn't have made *any* of those mistakes.

Each one is something you shouldn't have done, but you'd better not expect yourself to go through life not making any mistakes. If you do, then you're a candidate for Mr. Super-Critic, who's criticizing himself for not being perfect.

Q: *Thereby making another mistake.*

P: That's right.

Q: ###.

P: Worry about that one, and all the other ones will go right. And indeed, that is a common move. You say, "Yeah, do a good Critic's job, and you won't be hypercritical. You'll be effectively critical. So turn your own strength at being a Critic on your own performances as Critic, and don't be such a bad Critic." You can work reflexive moves on that. Okay—any questions about the use of Actor-Observer-Critic?

Did we do the Demon Businessman? As I said, at this point we're getting to some that don't fit neatly into categories—they're just sort of a miscellaneous assortment, so let's take the Demon Businessman. The

image goes like this: you've probably heard of the Demon Businessman; he's one of our culture heroes. The Demon Businessman is a businessman who's successful, quite successful, definitely successful, and one of the reasons he's successful is that when he's at work, he's thinking, talking, and acting business, he's all business. And when he's out to lunch, he's thinking, talking, and acting business, he's all business. And when he gets up in the morning, he's thinking, talking, and acting business, and when he comes home at night, he's all business. And when he's out on a weekend round of golf or a hike, he's thinking, talking, and acting business. So he's a successful businessman. And everybody but him recognizes that there's something wrong with this, and what they recognize is that, in spite of his success as a businessman, that's too narrow a way to live. If somebody raises a question with him about how he's living, his typical reaction will be, "You mean I ought to lose money instead of making it?"—which simply goes to show that he's always thinking, talking, and acting business, even when you're raising a different kind of question.

Okay, that's the primary image. Then the transfer—the most common transfer is to somebody who's always right. So you might have a transfer of this sort: imagine somebody who's not a businessman, but somebody who will only deal with other people in those respects in which he's right, so that with respect to the other person, he's never in the wrong, he's never ###, he's always right. And he won't deal with another person in any other way except those things about which he is right. A person like that is unbearable. That's how he comes across to people, and if you start raising questions with him about that, his characteristic response will be, "You mean I ought to be wrong?"—which, again, just goes to show that he's only willing to deal in terms of being right or being wrong. And what's wrong with him is the same as what's wrong with the Demon Businessman, namely, it's not that he should be wrong instead of right, but that operating only in those terms is too narrow a way to live. And that sounds like the way you're living. Then from that, you can go into value-giving or something else. So the Demon Businessman is for somebody who's a fanatic about something. In my experience, the fanaticism is most often about being right. You can see that being right has a place down here, in terms of the Critic language that's not followable by an Actor. You can't

follow the instruction, “Be right,” because you’re left asking, “What do I do?” Incidentally, you can’t follow the instruction, “Be authentic,” or “Be self-actualizing.” Or “Be mentally healthy.” You can’t follow any of those.

Okay, so that’s the Demon Businessman, and it’s for somebody who’s a fanatic about something, because the image of the Demon Businessman is the image of a fanatic. Again, you use that to portray what’s wrong with being a fanatic, and what’s wrong is that it’s too narrow, that there are other things in life beside that. You don’t argue within the fanaticism, you argue what’s left out by it.

Let’s go to Poor No More. Imagine a kid growing up in dire, grinding poverty, and he hates it, as well he might. And about age 13, it really gets to him, and you hear him swearing to himself that when he grows up, he’s not going to be poor. And then you pick him up later at, about age 35. Yes, indeed, he’s got six million dollars in the bank, he’s making money hand over fist, he’s got yachts, cars, houses on the Riviera, etc. And he’s not happy. So you ask yourself what’s going on here? And you remember that back at age 13, he said, “I’m not going to be poor when I grow up.” You say, “Well, if that’s all that was at work, he ought to be happy, because he isn’t poor. He’s got six million in the bank.” So it’s not that he hasn’t reached the goal that he set, that’s not why he’s unhappy. Now, could it be that he doesn’t have things that he wants? Then you say, “Well, he’s buying everything that money can buy, so if it was just that he wanted the things that money can buy, well, he has those, so he ought to be happy.” So if he isn’t happy, it isn’t that, either. Then what the hell could it be? You think about it for a while, and then after a while it hits you that what he’s doing is not being poor. What better way to not be poor than to make money, have money, and spend money? All of that is a way of not being poor. You say, “Yeah, that fits, but why is he unhappy?” Well, he’s unhappy because if that’s what he’s doing, the best he can do is break even. He can never win. The best he can do is avoid something unpleasant, something negative, and if he succeeds entirely, he succeeds entirely in avoiding that negative thing, and there is no way for him to have anything positive in his life. No wonder he’s not happy. It’s a losing game, if the best you can do is break even, if complete success gives you a zero. And that’s what’s the case if you’re spending your life *not* being some way.

Now the kind of issue that people have sometimes is being poor, but usually it isn't. Most often it's things like not being unimportant, not being unloved, not being a nobody. And they tend to go together: being unloved, being nobody, being unimportant.

Q: *How does being unloved break even? Is it by coercion?*

P: By coercing love from people, by having everything you do directed toward getting at least the visible semblance of love. Then if you succeed, what you've succeeded at is not being unloved.

Q: *That would be avoiding being loved.*

P: No. If it has that significance for you, then avoiding being loved is not the same thing as succeeding in being loved. Just like being a millionaire is not the same as not being poor. If you're a millionaire, but the significance of it is merely that you're not poor, the best you can do is break even—succeed in not being poor. And if you have that kind of self-esteem, the best you can succeed at is to not be a nobody. But you can't be a somebody. That's the way you've set it up. So you can live your life in this negative way. You can live your life as an acted-out attempt to avoid some bad condition or other. And if that's what you're doing, then indeed the best you can do is break even, and it will be no wonder that you don't have much value there, that you're not happy.

And so this one naturally leads to, "What can I do instead? What can I do over and above not being a nobody, not being unloved, not being unimportant?" And there, I think, there are no standard leads. You simply pick up from whatever else you know about the client, what else you could have going. And if you have nothing of that sort, you're back to simply trying out at random with the exercise of "Do things that you feel like doing. Find out what you feel like doing, what hits you right." Notice that the Poor No More is one of the being and doing type things. It's the notion of *being* not poor—that's what you're striving for. It's the notion of where you're coming from in your visible efforts, in your visible behavior, and not being poor is where you're coming from. Since that's where you're coming from, that's the most you're going to accomplish. And the contrast with doing is particularly dramatic, because you can have somebody who's accomplishing visibly all kinds of good, valuable things, and that's why it comes across

dramatically, “How come he isn’t happy?” Because typically, you see somebody who, by normal standards, is a great success, because this kind of pattern is highly motivating. So you get this picture of somebody who’s visibly a success, and tells you, “How come I’m not happy?” And if the things that they were succeeding at had the same significance for them as they would normally have for a person, then they would be happy. It’s because they don’t have the same significance, they’re not accomplishing the same things, that’s how come they’re not happy.

Q: *And if the person objects, “Oh, I’ve heard that before,” where do you go from there? There’s a lot of people who—one of the standard things they do is not want to engage in thinking that way—maybe too much invested in the way they are, or something.*

P: I can’t recall a time when that’s happened, believe it or not. Partly—you remember I said you have to exercise some judgment as to whom and when you bring in an image. It’s like judgment as to when you make an interpretation. You don’t bring it out with somebody who you think is going to reject it. What I would do, I think, is say, “Try it and see what happens. Try seeing things that way. Check it out against your experience, your memories, what happens during the week, and see if it doesn’t fit. Even if it isn’t true, see if it doesn’t fit.” In effect, you use the policy of bypassing the defense of claiming that it’s true, and just ask them to see how well it fits. And unless you’ve grossly misjudged what’s going on or the person’s state of mind, you’ll get something.

Q: *Even if it isn’t true, see if it doesn’t fit somewhere—double negative.*

P: You see, there’s a lot of descriptions that fit, that are not true in the sense that that’s not really what you’re doing. But they’re not inaccurate. That’s why the policy of giving achievement and activity descriptions for interpretations is that they’re correct as activity descriptions whether you meant it or not, and the main point of bringing it in is to get the person to see that this is a good description of what he’s doing, even if it isn’t true. And you explicitly allow the person to say, “Yeah, but I didn’t mean it that way—that’s not what I was doing,” and your rejoinder is, “Yeah, but this is what people have to go by, so don’t be surprised that that’s how they treat you. If that’s the way you’re coming across, and you are indeed, then don’t

be surprised at the kind of reaction you get from people.” And that, then, is what motivates the person to do something differently. Even if he’s claiming that he wasn’t doing it on purpose before, it’s hard for him to just keep doing it, knowing that he can expect people to react to him as though he were. If he does, then you can set up explicitly the task of doing what he’s really doing *without* giving that appearance. So the image works like the activity description, namely, that it doesn’t have to be true in order to fit. And that means you don’t have to be right all the time, and that’s an important consideration, because therapy has to be doable by people, and people are not right all the time.

Okay—Moment of Truth.

Q: *Break.*

P: Let’s take five.

The Moment of Truth image, I think, is almost 100% for couples who have lost the solidarity they once had, and who are on the verge of splitting, and so they come to you. As it happens, the image itself has to do with a married couple, so the translation usually is—you don’t need to translate because it’s already there. The image is this: imagine a couple who truly love one another and have great solidarity, and he’s got a job, and it’s an important job, and it requires that he spend a lot of time away from home. But that doesn’t bother them, because they’re a team, and they know it; and he can spend a lot of time away from home, and they both know that they’re both working together as a team, and that carries the day. Now imagine that time goes on like that, and after a while, the strain begins to be felt, and particularly it’s the wife who feels the strain, that the husband always has some good reason for not being home. And it always is a good reason, and it’s always plausible, and so it’s hard to argue with that. And so she sustains her faith by reminding herself that they are indeed a team, and they are indeed working together, even though he’s doing it out there, and she’s doing it over here.

Now there’s a limit to how long she can go without putting up some kind of fuss, so she does, and they talk about it, and they say, “No, it’s really for real there, and he really does have to stay away, and let’s just have it that way.” So things go along for a while longer, but then the same

thing happens. Time after time, he always has a good excuse for not being home, so after a while she begins to raise questions again. [change tape] And again they have a conference, and again he gives excuses and they are good excuses, and there's really nothing they can do. So they go back to the pattern. And again, there's some limit to the amount of time that she can just go ahead with it, and usually this is now shorter and shorter periods of time, until finally, one day, comes the Moment of Truth. And what happens at that time is, she says, "I don't want to hear any more explanations. I don't want to hear about how things are really different from the way they seem. If you really love me, show it. Don't give me explanations." In effect, in the Moment of Truth, whatever seems to be the case is the case. That's the way it's set up. "If you really love me, show it. Don't give me an explanation for why you really do even though you're not showing it." And then either he does or he doesn't. And if he doesn't, it's because they really have lost that solidarity, and it isn't there any more. And one can lose it that way, little by little, without ever realizing it. That's why a Moment of Truth is called for. Either it's still there, or it isn't, and this is a way of checking, of finding out.

This is a pattern that's fairly frequent, you can see, and it doesn't have to be that the husband is gone long. It can be anything that at face value interferes with or prevents the normal expressions of solidarity in a marriage. Anything that prevents the normal expressions of solidarity can work according to this pattern. Because when something prevents that, then you have to have explanations for why things aren't as they seem. You recall that people are limited in their ingenuity in explaining how come things are not as they seem, and as time goes on, there's a stronger and stronger tendency to say, "No, things are as they seem. A guy who for ten years hasn't acted like a friend, he isn't a friend. A husband who for ten years hasn't acted like a husband, he isn't a real husband." You run out of whatever it takes to carry a kind of reality that is negated by the visible appearances. That's the same kind of thing we had in talking about self-concept and how it changes, and it's based on the principle that if you have an ID characteristic—or a relationship in this case—and the behavior that occurs is an expression of it, then that requires no explanation; but if the behavior that occurs is a violation, then that does call for an explanation, if it's an ID characteristic. It also calls for an explanation if it's a relationship.

But also, over and beyond the explanation, you have the Relationship Change Formula that says if it really is in violation, that relationship will change, and that's why this husband and wife can really lose that solidarity without knowing it. Because in terms of the Relationship Change Formula, their relationship has changed. And since their explanation is that no, it really hasn't, and they keep acting that way, they can keep doing it until the relation has changed so much that they no longer have what it takes to stay married.

What often happens when people are about at that point is that you get a husband coming in and saying, "My wife is behaving irrationally. She's being very unreasonable. She's making all of these unreasonable demands, and I've explained over and over to her, and she knows that it's true, and she's agreed for twenty years—why all of a sudden is she acting up?" To him it's very mysterious and irrational, since he has good reasons, and she's been going along with that for God knows how long—why, all of a sudden out of a clear blue sky? So it may be the husband who comes in disturbed at the sudden irrationality of his wife. Or it may be the wife who comes in saying, "All of a sudden I hate my husband. All of a sudden I'm suspicious of him. All of a sudden—something." And then when you get an account of how things have been going, you recognize that there's been this kind of buildup. Or you get a wife who comes in and says, "I don't know if I'm being a worrywart, but I'm uneasy about our marriage, and I think we ought to be spending more time together, but I feel like I'm laying a trip on my husband's head, because he's got good reasons for not being around." And then you review it, and maybe you say, "Well, maybe you ought to hang loose," but maybe you say, "It looks like you guys are heading in that direction, and you're sensing it, and maybe you had better work out something ahead of time, so you won't reach that Moment of Truth."

I will say that, by and large, people are already close to that before they think of it. There was one time when it looked like somebody had caught it early—it was the wife, and she was talking in this very tentative way, and my reaction was, "Gee, you caught it early, and you do seem to be moving sort of in that direction, and it's good that you caught it this early." The next session, it turned out she was just about there, that she hadn't caught it early, it was late. So I'd say that, by and large, it takes getting

somewhere close before people start recognizing something there. And the solution is the Moment of Truth, that you have to stop acting in ways that violate the relation and start giving it some more direct expression, or you're likely to lose it. And since by the time you reach that point, you've probably lost some of the solidarity, it becomes a practical issue of how much is there, what do you have to work with, what are the people willing to do, how well it hits them, how convincing is it to the other person—there's a lot of practical issues there, but the in-principle solution is: give it the natural expression and build it up from whatever you have right now.

The complications have to do with “my wife is being irrational” or “I’m suspicious as hell at my husband, and I just won’t take his word for anything.” It’s things like that that reflect where you are at this critical juncture, can interfere with doing those things that are a natural expression of the relation they have. But in principle, you can see this is a simple thing, and the solution is simple. It’s practical management where the problems arise. And, I guess, in part assessing how much is left, what they have to work with, so if you set exercises, you’re not asking them to do things that really they’re not willing to do, and that, therefore, either don’t work or backfire. One of the common exercises, as you might guess, is: Give Each Other the Benefit of the Doubt, and again, on the grounds that it’s simple, and that it’s doable on purpose, and it’s the kind of thing that will tend to undo the buildup of suspiciousness, of neglect, of negative sorts of attitudes.

Q: *What if they don’t want to do that?*

P: Then you do some negotiating. You say, “Well, what’s your view of it? Have you lost it? Are you still—do you think you still have it? What are you willing to do?”

Q: *And if the answer is “nothing”?*

P: Then you go partly by whether you believe it.

Q: *What if you don’t believe it?*

P: Then sometimes you say, “I find that hard to believe.” You say, “Would you be willing to check that out by trying a few things?” Or you do it more dramatically, “Can you look her in the face and say that?” But if you

believe it, then you say, “Well, what’s to be done if that’s the case?” Or you might suggest a trial, even if you believe it—just in case.

Q: *What about the Hatfield and McCoy—there’s a certain kind of element there, where it just takes one person to believe it or to change it or to give the other person the benefit of the doubt, to get the change going back towards ###.*

P: Hatfield and McCoy is where that doesn’t happen, where neither party is willing—we might as well go into that; it’s almost self-evident.

You remember the Hatfields and McCoys were two families who were feuding, and the way it worked out is that once the killing started, the other retaliated, and then the first ones retaliated for that, etc. And at any given time, each family had a face-value case against the other, that they were the aggrieved party and that they were the one that needed revenge in order to break even. And because of that, it went on forever without anybody breaking even, because what one side took to be a case of breaking even, the other side took to be a case of a new provocation, which then called for retaliation. You can get this kind of thing going on between a husband and wife, where something’s been going on for the last few years, and at any given time, each of them has a perfect case against the other, they have complaints that justify what they do to the other person. And the complaints are justified, and their facts are accurate, and each one has the other dead to rights, and so they act on that, and they continue to do each other in. With justification. Now with that kind of thing, one way to approach it is to portray it for them via the Hatfield and McCoy image, and say that in a case like this, it’s pointless to ask who’s at fault, because it’s been going on so long that God knows how the thing got started; that at the present time, both of them are right, so you can’t stop it by settling who’s right: they’re both right. So the only way to stop it is to stop it, in whatever way it can be stopped. Otherwise there’s no hope. Because if it doesn’t stop, the thing is going to fall apart. So you make that move to evoke whatever motivation they have for staying together, because that’s what you’re banking on, if the exercise is going to work. Then the relevant exercise is Give Each Other the Benefit of the Doubt. That’s the way to stop the pattern of mutual retaliation.

Q: *Did you see in the paper that next month, the Hatfields and McCoy's are signing a peace treaty? It's a formal peace treaty—*

P: I'll have to go to the Israelis and the Arabs. [laughter]

Q: *Isn't what you're saying that the only way to stop is to stop? And they're stopping.*

P: I'll believe that when I see it. Now with the Moment of Truth situation, you can get a Hatfield-McCoy thing having gone on for some time prior to that—another possible complication. But notice, the primary exercise is still the same one, namely, Give Each Other the Benefit of the Doubt. So you could kill two birds with one stone that way. This kind of thing may have to be set up by some preliminary sessions in which you interpret each of the partners to the other one, by legitimizing and showing both of them what sense each of them makes. Because, for example, if the husband comes in and says, "My wife is being irrational," until he understands what sense she makes, he's not in a position to give her the benefit of the doubt. So again, the kind of preparation that comes before this is a matter of judgment. Are they ready for this? Do they need preparation? Would they be able to carry it off? These are the kinds of judgment you make in assigning this kind of exercise.

Let's go to one way down at the bottom of the list, and it's called High-Power/Low-Power. It's primarily for people who are involved in power struggles, who have authority problems, or things of that sort, where the issue of differential power or differential status is the central issue. Again, this is one that's—you could call it an image, you could call it a heuristic, because what you have is primarily not an image but an explanation. The explanation goes like this: if you think of the relations of one person to another, you can classify them in terms of the degree of power that one person has relative to the other, and for the sake of simplicity, let's talk about High-Power and Low-Power positions. You can operate from a High-Power position, you can operate from a Low-Power position. What goes with the High-Power position is things like initiating things, reviewing and criticizing what goes on, insisting on certain things. This list is open-ended: you can emphasize any aspect of it you want to. Mainly, it's initiation, decision-making, criticism that I point to. What goes with the

Low-Power position is selectivity, elaboration, encouragement, implementation, steering. The person in the High-Power position decides something, initiates something. The person in the Low-Power position then selectively encourages certain things, elaborates in one direction rather than another, implements, is subject to criticism or insisting, but with respect to that selectively encourages, interprets, elaborates, etc. Now some punch lines.

You can have a dominant influence on how things go, from either position. Working from the Low-Power position, you can have almost a complete say-so about how things go. Working from the High-Power position, you can have an almost complete say-so on how things go. You can be a strong person in the Low-Power position; you can be a weak person in the High-Power position. Because the power that goes with the position is completely independent of the power that goes with the person who's in that position. And either of them, depending on how he works it, can have a major influence in how things go. But to do that, he's got to be able to exploit the resources of the position. Somebody in a Low-Power position who tries to play it like a High-Power position is going to lose. Somebody who tries to play a High-Power position as though it were a Low-Power position is going to make a mess of things. So you need to know how to operate from these different positions in order to be able to exploit the resources, the behavior potential that they give you.

And then finally, how come we have relationships and differential statuses that way? The answer is that this is an arrangement that, practically speaking, guarantees that more than one person has a say-so about what happens, without bringing the thing to a standstill. In contrast, if you have two High-Power positions, what you get is a conflict and a struggle for power; and that has a tendency to bring everything to a screeching halt.

Q: *What would you call negotiation?*

P: If you're operating from two High-Power positions, still one person loses and one person wins, because one person winds up being the initiator, the decider, etc.

Q: *What if you get two negotiators?*

P: They're not working from either power position. It's not High-

Power, it's not Low-Power. They're not operating from that kind of a differential. But take somebody like an employer and employee: that's built in, and if they don't know how to manage the respective roles correctly, they can screw things up. If they do, things work fine. So the virtue of this kind of differential is that it enables things to be done jointly by people, without interfering, and with both having a say-so in how things go. Whereas if you try to have an arrangement that, practically speaking, guarantees two High-Power or two Low-Power, things can get screwed up. You can see that with somebody who's having trouble with authority—having trouble on the job, say; or a kid who's having trouble with his parents; or a student who's having trouble with an instructor; or somebody who thinks he has to always be in the High-Power position—

Now, one of the punch lines is that sometimes you're in one, and sometimes you're in the other. With respect to some people you're in one, with respect to others you're in the other. With the same person, sometimes you're in one, sometimes you're in the other, and sometimes you're in neither. So part of the message is to disassociate the position from you as a person, because if you identify yourself with either of these, then winning from that position becomes a matter of personal integrity, and you then have integrity problems, or autonomy problems, or something of that sort. Whereas recognizing that you can be you whether in a weak position—a Low-Power or High-Power or neither—that you're still you, tends to bypass a whole lot of problems of that sort.

So for somebody who's having these kind of issues, you can use this to transform the problem from “how to win” to “how effectively to exploit the behavior potential that goes with that position”.

Q: *Can you say anything more about the difference between those two positions?*

P: If somebody's in—it's usually the Low-Power position who has the problem, because that's where you tend to object to the status differential. If you resent it and are trying to win, then you're doing probably the Coercion Elicits Resistance; and you're making a fight out of it; and you're showing the resistance in passive-aggressive ways; and things are going wrong between you and that other person. Whereas, if you learn how to

operate from the Low-Power position, you simply take advantage of the fact that you have a certain—you're able to influence how things go by how you manage them: by what you selectively respond to; by what you implement enthusiastically and what you don't; by raising questions as against announcing decisions. By doing these various things, you might be able to steer it in a way that suits you, even though the other person is the one who primarily has the power.

Now, if you wanted to, you could elaborate this to something like transportation, where you have a motor and you have a rudder; and you can contribute as the motor, or you can contribute as the steering mechanism. And who's to say one is more important than the other? You can operate as the initiator or as the implementer who elaborates in your directions, not just blindly. So all of these are kinds of resources, of behavior potential, that are operative when you're in that differential status ###.

Q: *You're presenting them as if this is the way it exists, but it sounds like this is the way you should move, too. Because I can see someone in a High-Power position initiating, elaborating, deciding, implementing, criticizing, steering—the whole thing—and your role is the caboose: provide the meals and a place to sleep.*

P: But then you're into coercion. You're into somebody who's playing that power position in a way that has some disadvantages—namely, that it will generate resistance. And sometimes you're working with somebody who's on the receiving end of that, and then what you have to teach them is how to be passive-aggressive, how not to lose with somebody who's misplaying the High-Power position.

Q: *Or how to get out of it.*

P: How to get out of it, or how not to get completely trampled.

Q: *So the image would be something like how to move somebody who's got all the marbles, into—*

P: *Nobody* has all the marbles. That's the moral to the story, that nobody has it all. It may look that way sometimes. When I say that, I'm reminded of a cartoon that shows a guy in a castle, and a huge, deep well. There's two guys: both of them are spread-eagled, manacled to these things,

and one is saying to the other, "I've got a plan." [laughter] Ideally, nobody ever has all the marbles. In principle. If it looks that bad, what it calls for is not psychotherapy but justice.

Let me get out another one real fast, and that is Home Base. This one, again, is fairly simple. Think of the different areas in a person's life, usually work, family, hobbies or recreations or avocations. There's nobody who can stand having problems all over. If you have problems at work, and you have problems at home, and you have problems in your hobbies and your recreations and everywhere else, life is unbearable. Everybody needs a Home Base where things are okay, where he's safe, where he can retire from the battle and relax. And for different people, Home Base is in different places. For some, it's at work where things are fine, and when you're there you don't have to worry about all that mess with your family. For others, it's your family. When you're back there, things are fine, and you don't have to worry about that boss that tramples you, or that bankruptcy that's threatening, or all of this other stuff. For others, it's their recreation, and when they're off in the hills hiking, they can forget about that bad family life and that job that they don't really like and just be out there with it.

Okay, that's the primary image, that everybody needs some area in his life where things are not problematical, because life tends to be unbearable if there's problems everywhere. You can turn this one in more than one direction. You can turn it in the direction of "So you'd better work on this area. Otherwise, you're in danger of having problems all over. So get this one cleared up quickly, so as to give you a home base from which you can then deal with others." Or you can turn it in the direction of, "So it's nice that over here you have no problems and let's let you enjoy that while we're working over here in this area where you do." Or you can turn it in the direction of, "People need a Home Base so much that they'll have it that way, even if it isn't true." Unless problems are really out of hand, a person will designate one of those areas as Home Base and treat it as though there were really no problems there. But if he gets some other area really cleared up, then he's able to come back to this one and deal with the problems that are there. "And my impression is that this is what you've been doing, and now that we've cleared up this area, let's come back to your family life and take another look at it"—and work it that way.

So again, a simple image that has several different major directions of development. Okay, let's stop now. I think next time we'll probably finish with the images, and maybe with the whole set of things, because the others we've sort of covered one way or another already.

Session 12

April 13, 1976

Images: Thumbsucking; Back to the Wall; Crazy
Act; Garden of Eden. Internal dialogue: Uniqueness.
Scenarios: Despair; Dissatisfaction.

PGO: Let's take #6—Thumbsucking. This is another one of these that in a way it's hard to think of as an image, because there isn't really an image that goes along with it except what's evoked by the word "thumbsucking". Thumbsucking is really more of a code word for a certain kind of explanation. Think of somebody whose personal style is a steamroller, just flattens out the opposition; and then think of the variety of ways that you might try to cope with a steamroller. And, of course, there's frontal resistance, but people who are good steamrollers don't get that way without a high degree of effectiveness in blasting through resistance. Statistically, the problem most commonly arises with married couples, and it arises in the form that the husband is the steamroller, and the wife has to cope with it. And the steamroller very often comes out in the form of always being right. Somebody who's intelligent and verbal and always right is kind of hard to cope with. Now one of the most effective ways of coping is when you're being pushed to do something, you simply sit on the floor and suck your thumb. In effect, any form of helpless act will qualify. Any form of ignorance act will qualify. And the surprising thing is that, by and large, the effect of this is to bring everything to a screeching halt.

Imagine a situation in which the husband comes in enthusiastic, and says, "Let's do such-and-such", and the wife says, "Well, I don't know anything about that." There's just no way to maintain a head of steam with somebody who's just sitting there not knowing anything about it.

Q: *So the problem here is that the person—the thumbsucker—fails to live up to the dialectical possibilities?*

P: The dialectical requirements. If somebody was so helpless that they can't even comply with the implied pressure of the other person, they're not going to be pushed around much. One version of Thumbsucking is "irrational, emotional, unreasonable, helpless"—there's a lot of varieties. The common element is the inability to make the Move 2 that corresponds to the husband's Move 1. The implied inability. And it has to be implied inability, or it's a fight. That is, if the implication is not wanting to do it, then it's a struggle. If the implication is inability, then there's nothing to struggle about. And that's all there is to it. Thumbsucking is a coping device that works very well in a certain kind of setting.

Q: *Does one encourage Thumbsucking with a steamroller type? Would you want to teach a client to do that passive-aggressive move with a steamroller type, or is it too costly?*

P: It tends to generalize too much, and, therefore, be too costly. Because it's hard to be that helpless in a very circumscribed sort of situation. Somebody who's very helpless here is bound to be helpless in other ways and other places, so it's hard to use it as selectively as you want.

Q: *There are probably other passive-aggressive moves that we can teach them.*

P: Yeah, you go through the High-Power/Low-Power presentation, and explore different ways of—.

Q: *How would you deal with Thumbsucking?*

P: It depends on whether the client is doing it with me or just her husband. [laughter] And it does come back to exploiting the High-Power and Low-Power positions. Basically, it's simply—you look at the resources of the Low-Power position, of selectively encouraging, selectively elaborating, selectively implementing, and there's plenty of power there, so that the person in that position doesn't have to be helpless. And that one works out that way. On the other hand, if the client is doing it on you, which occasionally happens, then you have to know how to exploit the High-Power position. And primarily what you do is you simply identify the resistance and passive-aggressiveness overtly, and treat it accordingly. And being in a High-Power position, you can get away with it.

Q: *I take it that does sometimes get the patient to be actively angry.*

P: No, not if you legitimize. If you at the same time acknowledge why it makes sense for the person to be doing that to you, but also you're identifying it correctly and treating it accordingly, it's not usually a ground for getting angry.

Q: *Being found out?*

P: Well, with a good Move 2, you present it as though it was obvious and wasn't a question of being found out—it's right out there in the open. That way you escape the awkwardness of how I found you out. You've got to be able to carry that off.

Again, another one is—on the additional list—Back to the Wall. Back to the Wall connects with one of the slogans, "Powerlessness corrupts." The central line in both of these is that if you're in a desperate position, then you're warranted in doing whatever you have to do to survive. Normally, that means violating some common standards of appropriateness and acting in ways that normally would be called selfish, egocentric, or manipulative (or things of that sort). But if you really are in a desperate position, then you do what you have to do. So, in effect, seeing yourself as having your back to the wall, seeing yourself as powerless, gives you a rationale for doing anything you want to do.

Q: *An excuse?*

P: That's not a justification. Back to the Wall, you might say, is either a trait or a type. Some people will routinely respond to the world as though their back was against the wall. They will see other people as putting them there, as pushing them to the wall, and they react accordingly. Oftentimes, when somebody's going through a bad period, they'll have some period of time during which he acts that way. It's almost like having a paranoid episode—you see everybody as against you, everybody's putting you to the wall—it's in the same ballpark as a temporary hyper-suspiciousness or temporary paranoid state.

As far as how you deal with this—primarily you deal with it on a straight reality basis of appealing to the person to consider whether their back really is against the wall, to remind them of resources that they have

that they're acting as though they didn't have, or denying features in the situation that they're overlooking in favor of seeing it as just totally pressing in on them.

Q: *Things like the nature of the situation is such that the redescription can be believed.*

P: What redescription?

Q: *Trying to redescribe it in terms of the resources they have, and their back may not really be against the wall, and there are other opportunities and alternatives—it sounds like they're acting out of desperation.*

P: It's not that the redescription wouldn't be believed. It's the appraisal that's the issue. Somebody might agree that yes, there's this and there's that, and there's that, and say, "But my back is still to the wall." So it's the appraisal that is the key point. But the reminder may help soften up the reappraisal.

Q: *It might just be that once you really legitimize their position, then you're not pushing them, so that at least you're not putting their back to the wall.*

P: Sometimes you do, but if you're legitimizing, and you point out the reasons that they have for being that desperate, then the legitimization tends to run counter to their seeing you as putting them there. With the appraisal aspect rather than trying to convince the person, you get them to do something. And the main thing is either try something that they can afford to lose or give somebody-or-other the benefit of the doubt. Because these tend to go together. Give them the benefit of the doubt in those places where you can afford to. Unless you're completely desperate, there will be places where you can afford to, and that's the entree. That's what the softening up of reminding of resources, of places where it's not all bad—that's the kind of ###. But as I say, sometimes just a straight appeal to that "you know it isn't so" will have a substantial effect. Very often, a person doesn't realize that they're doing this, and simply being reminded of that will be enough.

Q: *Do you connect survival and desperation? I'm thinking that a lot of times that isn't a true connection. Because people are desperate when survival*

isn't at stake—when they really want something to the extreme point where it's desperate, but their survival isn't threatened.

Q: *What do you mean by "survival"? Maybe that's the issue. Survival of the organism, or survival of that wish or that pretension?*

P: How about self-esteem?

Q: *Self-esteem would be a good candidate.*

P: How can I be me and do that? How can I be me and cope with this?

Q: *Or how can I be me and not have that?*

P: In that sense, it's survival, and it touches on one's identity, one's integrity or something of the sort. Now the Gun to the Head is again a different situation, and I think we may have been through this, in connection with Coercion Elicits Resistance. Okay, let's get back.

Q: *How about Inside/Outside? [change tape]*

P: I was saving that for Tee. I was just reminded of another one this afternoon, namely, a Crazy Act or a Crazy World. Probably the anchoring one is the Crazy World, and a Crazy World refers to a situation where a person will react to the world as though it was basically a random, meaningless place where anything might happen, where you just have to play the odds, look for regularities, see if you can figure things out, basically don't expect anything except by chance. Some of them can show a tremendous amount of flexibility, precisely because of that, because if you're prepared for anything, then you can usually switch from this to this to this to that, and very few things will surprise you or dismay you because you're used to the surprising and dismaying things. On the other hand, it doesn't make sense. It's not a world within which you can live a very meaningful life.

Because it's a version of meaninglessness, it has some resemblance to the Little White Balls. In general, I think, the explanation is the same, that people create a Crazy World when it would be too painful otherwise, or when they've never known anything different. That's what we said in connection with the Little White Balls. The person sees the whole world as meaningless in that sense, if it would be too painful or if they never knew anything else. The main difference between the two is that the Little White

Balls assimilates to helplessness or fear or dismay or despair, whereas the Crazy World assimilates to anger and hostility and disqualification. Setting up a Crazy World is a way of disqualifying the actual world, in a way very parallel to saying that somebody's crazy is a way of disqualifying him as a person.

Q: *Could humor be an outlet, an alternative outlet, for that person, as opposed to anger?*

P: Not easily, because when you have a Crazy World, it is the whole world, and humor tends to be directed at certain things. So humor provides relief, but it won't substitute for this kind of disqualification.

Q: *There'd be nothing distinct that would qualify as a case of humor.*

Q: *Would it be accurate to say that with the Crazy World, if the person sees the world that way, that's the way things are, whereas with the Little White Balls, the person sees the world that way for himself—?*

P: Not necessarily, but it's more likely, Somebody who sees a Crazy World doesn't see it as his version of the world—he sees the world as crazy—whereas somebody who sees the world as Little White Balls may very well say, "I can't find any meaning."

Q: *With this image, you describe a person who sees the world as crazy, and because they see it that way, they learn to cope—it's a survival tactic. That seems to be in contradiction to the helplessness hypothesis, because a Crazy World is a non-contingent world, and there you would expect the person to no longer be able to cope as a result.*

P: That's why it connects to a Crazy Act. Because the world isn't actually crazy, and so you can cope with it, but treating it as crazy enables you to act crazy. In fact, that then gives you a good excuse for doing a whole lot of things you'd like to do.

Q: *It sounds like a way of legitimizing.*

P: You get all kinds. Sometimes it looks a lot like a put-on, and, in fact, sometimes it is a put-on. Other times it looks sincere and genuine.

Now the Crazy Act has an extension, namely, sometimes you get a

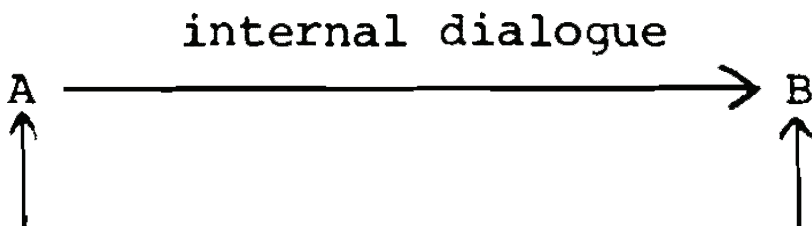
Crazy Act without the Crazy World, and a Crazy Act is a way of providing somebody else with a Crazy World, namely, something that can't be coped with. And in fact, what I said about the Thumbsucking—one of the versions of that is irrational: when you're dealing with somebody who overdoes the case-making and presentation, etc., then you turn irrational and can't cope with it. It's like folding, spindling, and mutilating an IBM card: there's no way that the damn computer can cope with that. As a matter of fact, I often use "fold, spindle, and mutilate" as a code word for Crazy Acts of various sorts. A Crazy Act will get you out from under a lot of pressures. Again, think of the steamroller and the thumbsucking—it's that kind of thing.

Q: *What do you do with the Crazy Act?*

P: By and large, the same as any passive-aggressive move: you identify it and treat it accordingly. Or you ignore it and simply deal with the producer of that act. You see, the Crazy Act fits into the Actor/Producer/Act, as just one of the kinds of acts that one can put on.

Because of the continuity, let's go from the Crazy Act and Crazy World to this Internal Dialogue. It's sitting out there all by itself with only one example. I'm not sure why I could only think of one example, because there are others, but with these larger patterns, they tend to be specific to a person and so you forget them once you're through with that person. This one, for some reason, I do recall.

An internal dialogue is a reconstruction of how a person got from one place to another. [blackboard].



So it's a reconstruction of a thought process, and either end may be the one that's visible to you, or both. You may know that the person thinks this [A] and thinks that [B], and wonder what the connection is. Or you

may know that the person is thinking this way [A], because that's what he says, and then you carry out the line of reasoning here, just carry it on and see where it's going to lead him. Or you know the person is here [B], and you work backward as to how he got there. So this one can be anchored at either end, or at both ends.

The Internal Dialogue can be put in the form of a set of statements, and let's try: [blackboard]

1. I am unique
2. I have to be myself
3. I have to be my unique self by doing unique things
4. If I do what others do—
5. If I do what others would do—
6. If I do what I have reason to do—
7. I have to be crazy to be myself
8. But that's what anyone would do.
9. My God, I've had it

1. I am unique.

That's a pretty safe one.

2. I have to be myself.

And that's a pretty safe one. But from these innocuous beginnings, you'd be surprised where you can wind up.

3. I have to be my unique self by doing unique things.

This looks like it follows from the first two, but, in fact, it doesn't, and the trouble stems from that point on.

4. If I do what others do—

Because the next step is to say, well, if I do what other people do, then I'm not doing anything unique; therefore I'm not being my unique self; therefore I can't do that.

5. If I do what others would do—

Then you can make it even stronger. If you do what somebody else *would* do, then you're not being unique either.

Q: *I have a case right now, where part of the problem, as she sees it, she describes herself as unique, demands that it be that way, but is always hassling whether everybody else her age is going through the same thing she is,*

and so she feels guilty and being depressed about being depressed that way.

P: She should be, too. Okay, then from here—

6. If I do what I have reason to do—

You next rule out that one, because if you do what you have reason to do, then you're merely doing what somebody else would do in those circumstances. So you can't do that either.

7. I have to be crazy to be myself.

Then comes the first punch line. "I have to be crazy and irrational to truly be myself, my unique self." You find statements like this in some existential literature. It's full of references to the absurd, the leap into faith, the irrational, and it follows this line of reasoning. But you also meet people in the clinic who got there because they'd been acting crazy, and they're in trouble either with themselves or with other people, and this is how they got there. Now the next line:

8. But that's what anyone would do.

Some people will stop here [7], others will continue. Then what you get is a depression, because the last punch line is:

9. My God, I've had it.

Q: *That person is damned if he does and damned if he doesn't.*

P: There's no way out. So you have a depression. You see this kind of thing [6-7]—you see people trying to be themselves, empirically you might say, trying to find out who they are by observing what they do, and will generally be out doing unique things as expressions of their unique selves. So mainly you find this [B]: you find people acting crazy, and this is a reconstruction of it. You get clues of this by the kind of things that they announce as general principles, or the kind of self-presentation, and what you'll find is it's one of these prior lines that you get.

Q: *I have a client who does this, trying to do many things, he uses it to go through that kind of thing and then he kind of uses it as training, because he views the world as dangerous, so these unique thing are things to keep him in training for the dangerous world.*

P: Does he ever face the dangerous world directly? Or is he always in training?

Q: *He's always in training.*

Q: *How does it follow to them from the first two moves?*

P: It has a certain compellingness. If you added here [blackboard]—to #2: “by doing what fits you”

1. I am unique
2. I have to be myself by doing what fits you
3. I have to be my unique self by doing unique things
4. If I do what others do—
5. If I do what others would do—
6. If I do what I have reason to do—
7. I have to be crazy to be myself
8. But that's what anyone would do.
9. My God, I've had it

—then it's even tighter. If you have to be yourself by doing what fits you, and it fits you as unique because you're unique, that seems to follow: you have to be yourself by doing unique things. Also, keep in mind that people don't have it that clearly and explicitly worked out.

Q: *Sometimes they do!*

P: Sometimes, but sometimes you'll get this statement [1], sometimes you'll get a statement like this [3], sometimes you'll get a combination [1 and 3], or sometimes you get great objections to being conventional—you may get it anywhere along the line. I've never gotten a complete sequence, but I've gotten all of those as pieces.

Q: *Something must be happening to that person for him to make that kind of choice which doesn't give the person very much room to operate in the current world.*

P: That's why I said “empirically”. That seems to be the thing that is at work a lot of times.

Q: *If a person doesn't operate very well, he can adopt this logical—*

P: No, it's a kind of skeptical approach to oneself, that instead of saying just flatly, “I know who I am,” the line taken is, “I have to find out who I am by watching what I do. But then, I'm not going to find out if what I do

isn't an expression of me, since I'm unique," etc.

Q: *There's some social psychologists who would say that's the case with everyone.*

P: I shouldn't wonder.

Q: *I'm not sure it's advisable, but I suspect that it's to affirm 1 and 2, and to break the connection to 3. How would you do that? The first one makes sense, and the second ###.*

P: Well, how about that?

Q: *The sequence is that 1 is not true—*

P: 1 is true.

Q: *No—the sequence is maneuvers to make 1 true. It's not a given. It's a goal.*

Q: *It is given. 1 and 2 are, in fact, given.*

P: You can accept, "I'm unique," and still wind up here, because you have to discover empirically which unique self is you. You can say that you're unique, and still say, "But who am I? I've got to find out."

Q: *2 is not a given, is it?*

P: That's the only way you can do it. You can't be yourself by doing what doesn't fit you.

Q: *It seems like the same kind of paradox as "be spontaneous".*

P: No, because these are not instructions; these are constraints.

Q: *3 sounds like an instruction.*

P: It can easily be turned into one.

Q: *I would like to know how to bring it back—how to affirm that this person is unique and will do what fits them, but that they don't have to do unique things for them to be unique and for them to do things that fit.*

Q: *Because they're already unique.*

Q: *Yeah, that's the point to affirm, but that's a hard one just to say and*

to buy, because the problem is the rest of the cycle pretty much follows, and this person is now caught up in a depression and sees that as—

Q: *You show them evidence?*

Q: *Of course, you could just take the state of affairs that they're in, and then show them that they're unique and they're going at it wrongly, because this is how they wind up. Use their own behavior against them. A paradox is working here, and it strikes me that the place to break the paradox is to show that 3 doesn't have to follow from 1 and 2. Doesn't follow.*

Q: *I say it can follow.*

Q: *But doesn't this usually appear in the form of a person who's not saying, "I am unique," but they're saying "I have to be unique, because I can't just be over here"?*

P: *It could work that way. It hasn't been my experience. [general conversation]*

Q: *2 becomes a demand statement.*

P: *Remember, these are simply constraints.*

Q: *Can't you use the same move you use against inference—the whole thing is a kind of inferential logic: "I'm touching the ### by the things I do," so inferring from this behavior that if I do this, I am this?*

P: *Yeah. That would be a good counterargument. The trouble is that arguments don't tend to be very effective here. But as an argument, it would be a good one.*

Q: *"But you're no longer playing chess", explaining how you can make up your own game of chess, but then it wouldn't be chess.*

P: *That's a little too far off target, although it's related to this kind of issue. That one, you use for the freedom issue. This one is the identity issue.*

Q: *It strikes me that if the client were a logician, there'd be no difficulty, because you'd just identify 1 and 2 as tautologies—you can push 2 as a tautology if you wish—but 3 doesn't have that character. I'm wondering how it can be done in non-logical fashion.*

P: It can look as though it has that character, and somebody can accept it as true independently of 1 and 2 anyhow. So even a logician might have trouble with it. Besides, by the time he gets down to here, he's no longer a logician. After all, doing logic is simply—

Q: *Remember when you told us, when we use an idea we don't have to identify it with someone else, because once you have that concept, it's yours. So even by doing things other people do—*

P: Yeah, that's part of the way out, but that's further down the line. Somewhere, you have to turn the corner on this, and then start building up positive, and that's part of the buildup.

You can see that there's various possibilities here for how you deal with it. Once you've got this thing identified, you could indeed try to split it here [between 2 and 3]. I'm not sure whether I've ever tried that or not, because my preference has been to do it here—at step 1. Not by arguing against it, but by saying there is no way it could be otherwise, and since there isn't, what's the problem? You're guaranteed to be unique, and that's guaranteed as soon as you say "I".

Q: *Move 2.*

P: So you don't have the problem of some other guarantee of your uniqueness, and you don't have to know that you're unique by finding out anything about yourself. So that takes care of this.

Q: *Well, 3 is, "I have to show that I'm unique. I have to prove it."*

Q: *That seems to be the problem, because the first two—*

P: How about this version of 3 [blackboard: "I can only be my unique self—]

Q: *You take a logician—you don't go by evidence.*

Q: *Aren't you still—even if you're doing things that don't fit you, you're still being you.*

P: Yeah. I don't stress this, because usually you want to get across the notion of authenticity, and if you've argued that anything you do fits you, you're handicapped then in saying, "Some things that you can do would be

authentic, and others wouldn't." So even though you could do this as part of the logical argument, stay away from it for that reason.

Q: *What the client is saying is, "I am unique," therefore, you're saying, "You are unique, period."*

P: Yeah. Therefore, none of this is necessary. Then—as part of the positive buildup—then you come down to these [4 ff], and particularly this one [6]. You say, "If something fits you, it doesn't matter whether it fits anybody else. It doesn't matter if it fits a million other people, it still fits you, so the question here is not, 'Is there a reason?' but, 'Is that reason *my* reason?'"

Q: *Maybe I'm thinking of a different situation, but it starts the same way, but where the person is either saying he's unique but that's not okay, and gets down to the part where he must be crazy because he's unique in certain ways. Or he's saying—he can start in either of two ways: he's unique but a poor something—*

Q: *Not unique—defective.*

P: Or unique and defective.

Q: *Either unique and defective, or "I'm so standard, it's not okay with me, so I've got to be unique, and I've got to find a way to do it, because by being myself, that's not worth doing." So maybe I'm just thinking of two other—*

P: You'd have to reconstruct an actual dialogue. Otherwise it sounds like the Con Man. Or the Guy with the Paint Brush. Because you've got somebody on a self-improvement and/or pretense and self-rejection, or a Producer/Act.

Q: *Are you speaking of the person you talk about as being despicably unique; or the person who sees his uniqueness as putting him apart from the group, which has a common set of characteristics which he lacks, or he has other than?*

Q: *Yeah.*

Q: *The person speaks that way when they wish membership.*

Q: *The status question.*

P: Yeah, again, if you can't have an actual set of lines, then I'd simply assume it's the Con Man, and it doesn't have to be an Internal Dialogue. It's simply a position, rather than a dialogue.

As I say, there are plenty of other Internal Dialogues, and it's not clear why I can't remember them, but I do forget things. Anyhow, Internal Dialogue is a way of getting from A to B, and it's a reconstruction of a thought process, and you do that kind of reconstruction when you've got access to one or the other end, or both. I think what happens is that the ones that start on this end [A] and are extrapolations forward come and go so fast that they tend to wipe out. You simply co-opt the line of reasoning and carrying it a few steps further, show what horrible results, and then the whole thing collapses; and it's over with in two minutes. Okay, let's look at the Scenarios.

Q: *Pete, did you go over the Garden of Eden?*

P: Oh—Garden of Eden—that's true. That one hasn't been prominent in my experience in recent years, but about five to ten years ago, it was all over the place, in the turbulent late 60s.

Q: *You cured them all.* [laughter]

P: The Garden of Eden is an ideal state. It's an ideal mode of being in the world. If you recall the original version of the Garden of Eden, the Garden of Eden was a miniature world, and it had Adam and Eve and the snake and the apple—among other things. Now what were the characteristics of that mode of being in the world? [blackboard]

++

1. spontaneous
2. natural
3. safe
4. manageable
5. nurturant
6. innocence
(ignorance)
7. experiential

**

- reflective
- deliberate
- dangerous
- problematical
- inimical, indifferent
- worldly
(knowledge)
- cognitive

8. self-knowledge, appreciation

It's spontaneous rather than reflective, natural rather than deliberate.

Q: *It doesn't seem very evident to me, like spontaneous/natural ###.*

P: But this is the Garden of Eden. In the Garden of Eden, all these things go together. Now, what else have we left out here? What else is that Garden of Eden?

Q: *Naïveté versus sophistication?*

P: [blackboard—adds “innocence”] What’s the contrast term?

Q: *Cynical.*

P: I guess “worldly” is probably—. What else?

Q: *Ignorant.*

P: That’s a variation on “innocence”. [he adds it]

Q: *Guilt?*

P: There’s no place for guilt in a world in which you’re essentially innocent.

Q: *Wouldn't you put “naive” instead of “ignorant”, because those are too pejorative in the Garden of Eden?*

P: Well, let’s clean it up. [laughter] It would be hard to think up a good word that didn’t have a pejorative connotation, because in our world, anything of that sort almost certainly has a pejorative connotation.

Q: *Educational chauvinist.*

Q: *Do you want a “sacred/profane” distinction.*

P: No.

Q: *How about “uncontaminated”?*

Q: *How about “antiseptic”?*

P: [adding “experiential/cognitive”] That’s probably as close as we have to a non-pejorative term.

Okay, let’s stop here. We may need to pick up other features, but look at the kind of mode of existence that’s implied. Look at what’s being rejected, particularly these: the reflective, deliberate, knowledgeable,

cognitive. [blackboard—adding: self-knowledge, appreciation] There's one other thing added, and that's that you know you have it.

Q: *You know you have it, or you know you had it?*

P: You know you have it, and so you have self-knowledge and appreciation of what you have.

Q: *I'm not sure I understand how self-awareness can have a place in that, because self-awareness would already imply the Fall.*

P: That's the problem. Think of how useless it is to have a good thing and not know you have it and be unable to appreciate it. So the requirements here are not merely these [++], which correspond straightforwardly to the Garden of Eden, but also this last one [8]—

Q: *But Pete, Adam and Eve wouldn't have eaten the apple if they knew.*

P: Or would they?

Q: *If they knew they had this Garden of Eden, they wouldn't have eaten the apple.*

P: Remember that knowledge is over here [**].

Q: *But they know that they have the Garden of Eden, you say.*

P: They only appreciate it after they've left.

Q: *You're talking now from the reconstruction of the Garden of Eden.*

P: Yeah. So as I say, the first seven come directly from the traditional Garden of Eden. The eighth one was introduced.

Q: *Lobotomy will recreate for an individual the first seven, if they're willing to give up the eighth.*

P: Well, it might. You see, in a safe world, you don't have to manage, because everything comes. The world is keyed to you. That's why all you have to do is be spontaneous and natural, since it's safe, nurturant—that's all it takes. It's not problematical, you don't have to work out anything, you just have to act naturally, and because you and the world fit together naturally, you just leave things.

Q: *What do you mean, “manageable”?*

P: That what you do is successful. That you reach out, and there’s the fruit, and you just eat it. If you want something, there it is, you go get it. There’s no problems to be worked out.

Q: *Is the person into therapy?*

P: Depressed. Or something.

Okay, so this kind of thing—I guess one of the natural homes was the group therapy ideology: spontaneous, natural, open, frank, don’t-be-in-your-head experience. I’d say that’s why it was that prevalent. I think it was that kind of ideology—which was fairly widespread, at least among college students. And they had sense enough to add this [8]. I suppose the Flower Children would be maybe the paradigm exemplar here: they were actually out there trying to live that way. Now it is the addition of this [8] that creates the problem, because, in fact, these [++] are in contrast to these [**], and what you added is part of the contrast. Furthermore, from over here [**], this [++] might not look all that attractive. You can give pejorative descriptions of this supposedly ideal state from this other kind of viewpoint, and the classic pejorative statement—one of our colleagues [Dennis Hinkle] described this as “being locked into the universe like a cockroach”. The implication is: if the fit is that good, you’re just a cog in the wheel. If everything meshes that neatly, if everything is that much guaranteed to mesh, and you don’t have to think about it—it just happens naturally—you’re talking about a cog in the wheel, locked into the universe like a cockroach. Furthermore, a cockroach doesn’t know that he has that. He doesn’t have self-knowledge and he doesn’t appreciate the fact that he has no problems.

Q: *What about Raid?*

P: Then he doesn’t know what hit him. [laughter]

Once you see the nature of the pejorative description, then you look at this and say, “Hmmm. What all that looks like, then, is a double negative here [**]. What you want is something that has the good features of this [++], but none of the problems, and that’s why you go to the contrast terms over here. You don’t want the bad features of reflection. You

don't want the bad features of having a dangerous world. You don't want the bad features of things being problematical and uncertain, and not guaranteed safe." [change tape] So if you're seeing the bad aspects of this [**], the contrast terms are the natural ones to go to, coming up with what would it take for things to be okay. The mirror-image or contrast terms are "natural" and—except here [8]. You can't have it, really, both ways. And it's the incompatibility, the self-contradiction, there that leaves people sort of nowhere and gets them disillusioned after a while; or leads them to do crazy things because they're treating the world as safe and manageable, and it isn't, at least, not that way. Or they're getting into trouble interpersonally by being spontaneous and natural in certain ways and not the usual ways. And "not the usual ways" amounts to "inappropriate ways".

Q: *What about creative ways?*

P: Well, creativity doesn't appear. It doesn't differentiate these. Actually, you put "creative" under here [blackboard—**. Under ++, for the contrast term, "unthinking"]

Q: *Would "competition" and "cooperation"—weren't those two important?*

P: Just think of our world as having these [**] features, and if you're protesting against it, if you want to reject it, if you want to formulate an ideal alternative, what's more natural than to go to the contrast terms of some of the things that characterize it.

Q: *I was just suggesting that the competitive/cooperative was one more.*

P: Cooperative isn't quite the word, because cooperative is too deliberative and reflective. That's why it has to be natural, so that things just work out right, not because they're cooperating, but because anything you do will work out right because your reflexes are keyed in. That's the point of "locked into the universe like a cockroach".

Q: *It's natural without natural selection.*

Q: *We don't have peace, love, and happiness in there.*

P: You can see that what this runs afoul of is already handled in the

original story, namely, that as soon as you have knowledge and self-knowledge, you lose this $[++]$, and once you have it, you can't go home again. And this represents, in effect, an attempt to go home again but carrying the knowledge with you. And that's why you either overemphasize these and run into trouble of various sorts, or you switch back and forth and get disillusioned, or you're trying for this $[++]$ as an impossible ideal and always failing because you also have this $[**]$. There's various ways and combinations that can go wrong. The net effect is some version of despair or disillusionment. "Somehow I keep trying but never succeeding, and I wonder what's wrong?"

Q: *In exploiting within this second group—the reflective, deliberate, that column—is already contained all the other terms. Without the contrast, those terms would have no meaning. Worldliness doesn't mean anything unless there's a contrast with innocence. There's no sense of things being problematical unless there are also things that are manageable.*

Q: *This is all a post-Garden of Eden reconstruction.*

Q: *But within the world, so to speak, there are all these ###.*

P: You can have the contrast without having the ideal state, because you can think of more and less here [**reflective, etc.**], and still remain outside of this $[++]$ range.

Q: *You can have the spontaneous, natural column, with the exception of #8, without having the contrast, in the sense that you can imagine such a condition. But you can't imagine such a condition in the second case without that, for those terms to have that meaning.*

P: Why is it asymmetrical? I think it's symmetrical—you could have these $[++]$ alone and you could have these $[**]$ alone, and in a sense you could have them alone just by having this one end, but allowing degrees. You can have this end with all degrees of spontaneity, more and less spontaneous, more and less natural, rather than natural versus deliberate.

Q: *It seems to me that once you add the case of "person", except in the column on the left $[++]$ you can have a person as an observer of another world, he can describe that world in that way, but he can't describe his world,*

and there's the asymmetry. He can describe his world as reflective, deliberative, and problematical, but only so far as there are these other processes described as paradise.

P: You don't suppose that somebody could spontaneously describe our world as reflective, eh? The language doesn't appear here, either, so it's hard to know where that would fit. Anyhow, you can see that because of these logical relations, you can generate in fact—in actual practice, you can generate this [++] from a knowledge of how we find things, and that's why, when it comes to ideals, these are the terms in which it's natural to formulate them.

Q: *Could you go a little bit into the logic of the double negative? That is, how you would derive the one from the other, as opposed to ###, that is, to the extent that you're not being reflective?*

P: Take something like this: what would be a double negative for “problematic”? The first negative would be that something—say, your mode of existence—has failed by being too problematic. The double negative would consist of using a term like this [manageable] as a way of saying that it hasn't failed by being too problematic. Saying that it's manageable is to say it hasn't failed by being too problematic. It's a way of saying that it hasn't gone wrong in a certain way. “Hasn't” and “wrong” are the two negatives. It hasn't gone wrong. It doesn't show this deficit. Now you'll probably find weaker forms of this anyhow, but as I say, it was something like five to ten years ago when people were talking this way, and showing a lot of that disillusionment and switching back and forth, the espousal of these [++] as ideals, getting into trouble socially, not knowing what was going on in part because they were not into this [reflective], they were into this [spontaneous], at the same time coming into the clinic because they also had some self-knowledge, some recognition that their lives were problematic.

Okay, any questions about how this thing works and what it leads to? Disillusionment, despair, self-inconsistency because they're trying to be both ways, interactional problems here [spontaneous]—personal problems, so there's a variety of things that can stem from this.

Q: *Would you address what you do about it?*

P: It's been so long.

Q: *In the 1970s.*

P: I think, using the double negative approach. You can say, "Look, take the way that people commonly live, take the way that you're thinking about, and ask yourself: what would qualify as being successful and not going wrong?" And then going through whatever salient points came out in their discussion.

Q: *That's why I raised the question before that once you have the concept of Person, can you have the concept of Person in that world?*

P: No. Again, that's why the reference to the cockroach—it's a deterministic world, in effect, because there are no real choices because you can't go wrong. It's like imagining a world in which you have a language in which anything that you might say would be true. It wouldn't be a language.

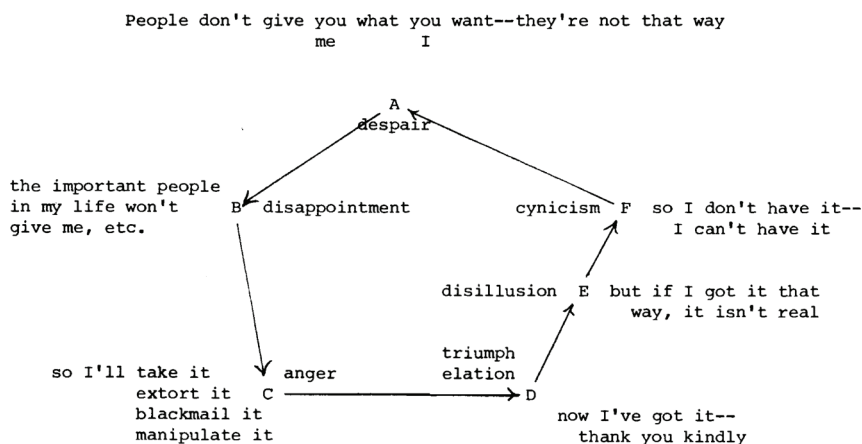
Q: *It wouldn't matter—nothing would hinge on it.*

P: But you have to dig to find out what's wrong with this apparently ideal picture, and rather than going through the analysis of what's wrong, I think that what I used to do was primarily work it into double negatives, and just take a practical approach to it, and say, "Yeah, it's reasonable to have this as an ideal, but not the whole package. It's reasonable to want your life not to be too problematical. It's reasonable to not want to be too much in your head. Indeed, one can be too much in one's head, but enough is enough." And then, as I said, deal with whichever features seem to be salient. I think what happened was, I spent a lot of time getting used to the idea and formulating the image, because it did take a while to recognize that the ideal was essentially—and once I saw it very clearly—the Garden of Eden. So you might say there was a lot of trial and error with that. But there were a lot of trials; I could afford a lot of errors.

Okay, let's look at the two Scenarios. The difference between Scenarios and Internal Dialogues and Images is the size of the package. In general, an Internal Dialogue is a larger package than the Images. A Scenario is a larger package than either Dialogue or Image. A Scenario may be what amounts to a clinical report, in which you formulate the essential

dynamics of a person's pathology. There are two here [Despair and Dissatisfaction—what immediately follows is the Despair diagram]:

You start here with a generalization about people, namely, people don't give you what you want and need, they're just not that kind of individuals. So that's the generalization. From that generalization, you then specialize it to "the important people in your life," and the same holds for them that holds in general, namely, they won't give me what I want and need, namely—and you fill in the blank. Now imagine somebody who at any given time is enacting one of these positions, so that his life is a cycle of this sort.



Q: Why is A necessary?

P: If you didn't have A, you'd need an explanation for this [B], whereas having this for A eliminates any opportunity along that line. Part of what makes this plausible is this conclusion.

Q: Is there another version of A that would substitute, "because I'm not that way" or "I'm not good enough" instead of "because they're not that way"?

P: Yeah, you could run variations on this. Most of the rest of it, I think, would follow.

Q: It would seem that without A, C follows as a stronger line of action from B.

Q: *But you don't get this from despair, without A. Otherwise there's always hope.*

P: You could stop somewhere along the line, I think, much more easily if you didn't have A but only had this [B]. Because if they won't, and you took it, it might be genuine. Now in most of these positions, and maybe all of them, there's a characteristic feeling or emotion. Think of the emotion terms as an approximate fit, that some of them fit well, like the anger and elation, whereas some of these are more approximate.

Q: *Another word you used for "elation" once was "triumph" [P. adds it]*

Q: *Anger is more self-righteousness.*

P: No. The anger comes from the disappointment. "If you won't give me what I need, you've let me down, and I'm going to take it."

Q: *There is something of self-righteousness in that.*

P: Remember, powerlessness corrupts, and this is a good case of that. If I *need* it, then I'm justified in doing whatever I have to do, including [take it, extort it, etc.]. In the case in question, it was anger. [laughter] I'm not saying that these things follow deductively. I'm saying, here is a pattern in which this follows this follows this follows this, and you can make up other patterns in which this wasn't anger, and it wouldn't work quite the same way.

The important thing is, if you look at some of these, they're different enough so that if at one time a person is acting this way [B] and another time this way [C] and another time that way [D], and so forth, that person is going to have a hard time understanding himself. And one of the things he's going to be asking is, "Why am I sometimes this way and sometimes that way? How could I really be this way and yet be that way? What's going on here?" And that kind of question is part of here—this set of feelings. Notice that the stage is set for this person to use a therapist in a position of one of those people who won't give you what you want and need, namely, an explanation of how come I am these ways. And you can see why he would have this question, because at different times he will be

feeling very differently and acting very differently, and both of them would be genuine, in that he wouldn't really be ambivalent here, and he wouldn't be ambivalent here. Because he's got it spread out over time, this way. It isn't as though he has a conflict. He's at one time this way and another time that way. Then the question is, what can he do about it?

Q: *Is this despair in the sense that "you can give it to me, but nobody else is that understanding or takes this sort of relationship"? If he sees this, then it's going to be hard for him to maintain the bind.*

Q: *This could serve as a legitimization for—*

P: Your giving him this puts a bit of a chink in this: you have given him something he needed.

Q: *Sometimes, I guess, you'd be talking about the sort of community the person finds himself in. Could that be sort of a soft move—if you had good reason to believe that, in fact, the people couldn't give it to him?*

P: Maybe, but then it would still leave him with the question, "Well, how can I get it?"

Q: *If you can find people who can give him what he needs, and you make those people important so he doesn't have to take to extortion, etc.*

P: That's the entree. Direct him to somebody who can and will, and you're the first example; and if need be, you do other things to get that across. Then, in terms of what he's been telling you about his life situation, you pick out the people or the kind of people who look as though they wouldn't disappoint him that much, then give them the benefit of the doubt.

Q: *I imagine that one of the things that brings people into therapy in this sort of a knot, this sort of a circle, isn't simply the moodiness, but there might also be the entree of guilt, when the person begins to feel bad about—taking him right from the triumph and elation to guilt, rather than disillusionment. Providing him this network legitimizes the fact that he did take it and extort it, which can undermine his guilt and provide him with something else to do.*

P: My impression is that the main thing that brings somebody like this into therapy is the mystery of "how come I'm this way and also that

way?”. And secondly, “Why am I not happy?” Because these differences are fairly dramatic, and they strike other people, and they strike the client, and so one of the first things he says is, “My problem is I’m three different people”. And one of the functions of this is to show him, “No, you’re not three different people. You’re one person who is following this line, and it makes this kind of sense.”

Q: *In any one period of life, one person could feel all of those ways, in that he could be dealing with different aspects of his community in terms of different stages.*

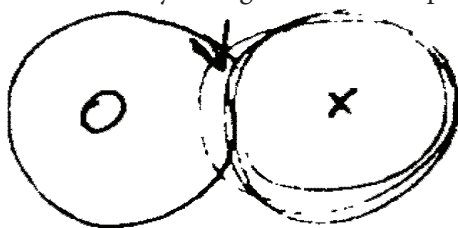
P: Yeah, but that’s not this. Remember, I said that this is a sequence. If there weren’t the sequence, the person would be highly conflicted and ambivalent, and that isn’t this person. That isn’t his pattern. It’s rather a person who looks like multiple personalities because at one time he’s one way, and another time he’s in a contrasting way, and doesn’t feel conflict—he simply is different and does things that then change how he feels, and just keeps going. And after you’ve done this for a few years, things are that unsatisfying, and you see that you are different at different times—those are the things that stand out.

One of the things is, since, indeed, you’re not these things at the same time, you’d have a hard time hanging onto them, because at the time when you’re disappointed, you have a hard time hanging onto what was all this triumph. At the time when you’re disillusioned, you have a hard time hanging onto what was this anger. So it’s hard to put it together, precisely because it’s distributed across time. That’s one thing that keeps the person unable to deal with it, because at any time he’s stuck with whichever place he’s in. And that’s hard just to bootstrap your way out of. So the entree is to provide negations, one being the therapist himself, and the other primarily here [B]—identifying where there isn’t going to be disappointment if he tries and then encouraging him to try. Part of what encourages the trial is the diagram showing why it makes sense to start there.

Now you can see that this sort of sequence is a larger package than Director/Actor/Act or something like that. It’s a sequence of behaviors, it’s a behavior pattern, that’s why a Scenario. This, you might say, is what the person is enacting—the Scenario. And the Scenario doesn’t get at his

whole life, just at what's pathological. This is what he's doing wrong—this is what's wrong with him. One of the common or general characteristics of Scenarios is a cyclical thing. People get stuck and they're going over it, because they're repeating something over and over again.

Here you've got a double loop here.



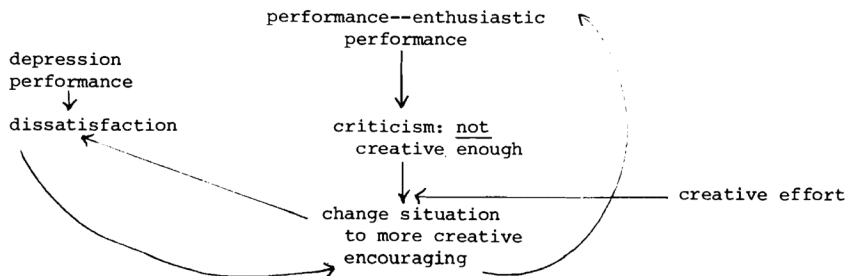
The nature of the cycle is that it's primarily this [X] with occasional this thing out here [O]. This is a person who is something like 40 years old, who over the period of the past 20 years has been doing this kind of thing. He's got some number of cycles—he's been through four major depressive episodes that last about a year.

Q: *Would he be classified as manic-depressive?*

P: No, because he's only sort of manicky.

Q: *He might get that label, though, because the official category labels that under the syndrome as manic-depressive type.*

P: Manic-depressive, depressive type. He does tend to be manicky up here [at Performance] sometimes. As a matter of fact, you could split this up into two: [adds: "performance—enthusiastic"]



Q: *Could you build a loop of a loss of status being unthinkable as the issue of performance—you get manic-depression out of that. If it's a softer case in which the performance itself simply isn't satisfactory, you can get the pure depressive case out of that.*

P: Basically, it's unsatisfactory, dissatisfying, because it's in this form: this is the form of the dissatisfaction, "I'm not being creative enough. And the change in the situation is to a situation that will allow me to be more creative. Then given that change, there I am with a new charge of enthusiasm, doing things,"—that's the manicky part—"and then it tapers off, and then comes the dissatisfaction, the new change, and back we go." This is a highly intelligent and talented man. He has training in chemical engineering, he's done professional work in computer science, he's a dancer, he's been a member of a professional dance group, he invents things, he does all kinds of things—that's part of the emphasis on creative work. Each cycle between the major episodes has been a major vocational shift: chemical engineering, then computing, then dance, and now common laborer. But with the common laborer, there's a lot of things going on in his spare time. Vocationally, there's four separate things.

This cycle here, you should recognize as having a certain resemblance to the Kissinger, Super-Critic, Hanging Judge type thing. This is somebody for whom nothing he does is good enough, even though he does better than most people at some number of different things, and yet that's not good enough, it's never good enough, it never has been good enough, so you get the picture of a Super-Critic or a Hanging Judge. Secondly, he shows a great deal of ingenuity in changing his situation, and partly that's reflected in the fact that he has succeeded with each of these vocational choices. His pattern vocationally is that he shows a lot of promise, a lot of early success, and then tapers off and goes into a depression, gets fired or quits, etc., and then starts over. Secondly, what happens in the depression is that he lives a very primitive existence, but manages, and then gets dissatisfied with that, and he's back over here [**be more creative**]. So he's dissatisfied with being creative, but he's also dissatisfied with being depressed.

Q: *The appraisal, "not creative enough"—that's the therapist's?*

P: Well, the first move was like the self-criticism move, namely, to point out that there's a hidden place where there's a lot of satisfaction, and that's what's keeping him going. And the hidden place is here [creative effort]: he is, in fact, and has been all along, quite creative, and successfully so, in doing all of this changing. The one thing that stands out—if you ask, “In the light of this history, what has he been consistently successful and creative at, at a high level?”—it's here [creative effort]. So the first move is to call his attention to the fact that the failure pattern is enabling him to be successful in exactly the way he describes himself as wanting, and that he is successful that way, but here, rather than here [creative enough]. At that point, you're back to the same problem of, “Are you willing to give up this kind of satisfaction?” rather than “How do I get out of this bind?”

One of the interesting things is that this one, there's no way out of, because in this case, in contrast to some of the others, seeing what he's doing wrong, looking at the diagram and understanding it is simply a case of being dissatisfied with what he's doing, in part on the ground that it's not creative enough. Because certainly, just repeating the same cycle is not being very creative. So in this case, understanding the pattern doesn't take him out of it. It just exemplifies it all over again.

Q: *You ask if he's willing to give up the satisfaction—*

P: Of being creative in *this* way, of changing your life situation so as to open up new opportunities for yourself. He's being very creative that way, and very successful. You see, he wasn't aware of this satisfaction. This was a hidden ###. What he was aware of was this dissatisfaction of not being creative enough. But he really was being creative and successful, so that's where the satisfaction lay. One of the first moves here was to get him to see that it was hopeless. And it really is. Just seeing what's wrong with it does not get you out of it, and this is in contrast to most patterns where, if you see what you're doing wrong, that's the first step to getting out. Here, when you see what you're doing wrong, you're just into the dissatisfaction position in this diagram. So that's one reason why it stands out in memory, because it has this peculiar feature that it really is hopeless. And what happened was, I gave him the assignment for three straight weeks of working through this and convincing himself that there was no way out. I told him

that he had to see that there was no way out, he had to check it out himself, he had to see clearly that there's no way out, before we could—

Q: *Was there any suicidal possibility with this guy?*

P: Vaguely, but not that were worth taking precautions against.

Q: *Clearly there were too many things he potentially enjoyed—to have built up even a possibility of being both engineer and a dancer.*

P: Again, notice that anything that he might have done to change his circumstances would fit the pattern. It's not merely that seeing what he's doing wrong simply puts him in the dissatisfaction position, but anything that he does to do something about it will also fit this part of the pattern [change situation to more creative].

Q: *What about staying in the same situation—would that—?*

P: No. Also the thing he came up with was, "Well, just accept that that's the way I am, and go on from there"—which apparently he read somewhere as a solution. I said, "Look, if you accept that this is the way you are, and you go on from there, the way you go on from there is you continue to do that, so that's not a way out, either." And indeed, usually if you accept the way you are and go on from there, and you have a correct account of how you are, indeed, going on from there, you do something different. But in this case, no. But it's precisely because it had some of these ins and outs that it took three weeks before he finally said, "You're right; it's hopeless. There's no way out." If that had been all there was to it, I'd expect him to be depressed at that point, but in fact, when I first told him that, I said, "It's hopeless, there's no way out, but you've got to see that." And at that point he said, "You mean I've had it—that I'll always be this way." And I said, "No, I've got a gimmick. But it isn't that—there isn't any way out—and you need to see that first." So he didn't get depressed, because he knew there was a gimmick.

Q: *He knew there was hope.*

P: Yeah.

Q: *He didn't get any sleep for three weeks, thinking about it. [change tape]*

P: It's a version of You Can't Get There from Here. I said, "There's no way out. There's nothing you can do to get out successfully." And remember what goes with You Can't Get There from Here: one of the following lines is, "But it may happen, and it's my business to look after that." In effect, that's what I was doing in saying, "You know, I've got a gimmick."

Q: —*the paradox here is, that could work sort of a cure by your telling him that there's no way out, and if his enjoyment is the creative effort, and if in fact there isn't a way out, then he can spend the rest of his life in any circumstances trying to puzzle that through. This character is going to see himself as clever, and perhaps as clever as you, or in time as clever as you, and so you can buy a lot of time in which his main effort is that playing with the possibilities.*

P: Yeah. You see, if he'd been more competitive, which he wasn't, I would have told him that as smart as he is, he ought to be able to see it even faster than I did. "It took me six weeks to figure this out; you ought to be able to do it in three." And then I'd let him win—but I'd be sure that he could do it in three.

Now what is the way out? Or what is the gimmick?

Q: *Not be in it.*

P: Exactly. There's no way out of it, but you don't have to be in it. It's that simple. It's a being-and-doing problem, but so is You Can't Get There from Here. You don't *be* differently by *doing* differently. You just be different. So likewise here, there was nothing he could do that would get him out, but he didn't have to be into this pattern. Then this sort of thing was an elaboration, then, of how come he didn't have to be there. It was a reminder that he was successful, etc.

Q: *Have you seen him since you terminated him?*

P: Yeah.

Q: *What was the termination, and what was it like later?*

P: This took about two more weeks, just to work through the You Don't Have to Be There. Then from there, we went on to a Creative Drama; and, then, at that point, he was looking very manicky again and being very

enthusiastic about this and trying on a number of different things, making a lot of beginnings; and he recognized all of those things as a kind of a manicky state. So what I did here was have him specifically start things that he felt like doing and that he could finish in two weeks, to do three things of that sort. What I told him was that if you didn't finish things, then you would just keep cycling, starting; whereas if you finish something, that changes you and you can move on and be more creative. So when he went through the finishing things, getting the experience of finishing things, getting the experience of thinking about things in advance as something he would finish—you see, one of the things that characterized him, he never finished anything. He would always start something and then give it up, not bring it to completion. His vocational choices, he would start, but he would tail off. So in that sense, he was never successful at anything. He never successfully completed anything. So here, by having him do it on a short range—two weeks, and then a month, that was the last thing before termination. That and the Creative Drama. Because these things took the form of Creative Drama.

Q: *How was he after ## himself again?*

P: Fortunately, I know people who know him, and they confirm that he's different from the way he's ever been and looks a lot better and happier, and he says it. It's too early to tell, but he hasn't had any depressive episodes, either, and he's done things about his life situation, with his family, that he was never able to do. So: so far, it looks good.

Q: *Part of the thing was you telling him to finish a task, was giving him permission to finish a task even though it doesn't strike him as that creative an effort, to finish.*

P: The argument I gave him was that the finishing it changes him; and allows him to grow and become more creative.

Q: *He becomes bankrupt without finishing it, because he's never got that to look back on.*

P: It was better than a simple statement—I forget how I developed the idea that you have to finish something in order to leave it behind and, therefore, grow.

Q: *Have you since modified this for anybody else?*

P: No, because the modifications come back to the Kissinger variations. This pattern is specific for him. I can imagine other people like that, with variations, but I haven't encountered them. The most obvious variations are of a Kissinger—. The key feature, remember, is the changing of the situation to be more creative. So people who are dissatisfied with themselves generally don't—if it's a Super-Critic pattern—don't do anything about it. They just continue to be dissatisfied. The difference with him is, he did do things, but that's why he was into a cycle rather than into a conflict. It's the same as the pattern we had up here before [the Despair diagram]. Since it's a cycle, you don't get emotional conflicts. You get inconsistencies across time. And certainly he showed inconsistencies across time, and any manic or manic-depressive or depressive character will. Again, this is a Scenario on a life scale, this is a diagram of what he's doing wrong, a diagram of what his pathology is. And it's a diagram which, although not as clearly as the images, suggests the kind of things that you might do with it, by way of changing it. And the distinctive gimmick is that there's no way out.

The "no way out" is a much more common thing than this particular pattern. Very often, people are into hopeless patterns, and one of the things they first have to see is that they are hopeless, before they can move on. And when they do see that, very often they have a period of depression.

Q: *This guy got manicky.*

P: Well, once he felt himself free to be himself and do things, he started getting manicky, and I said, "That's too much like what you were doing. I want to see you finish something." Because his usual thing was to have all kinds of brilliant ideas about what he could do to start, to give the ideas to people and let them do something and never, ever finish. So at that point I said, "That's too much like what you were doing. Do this."

Q: ###.

P: Yeah, if you could guarantee this kind of outcome—

Session 13

April 20, 1976

Images: Inside-Outside (Tee Roberts). Conversational formats: Ordinary conversation; Soliloquy; Storytelling; Confession; Three-minute lecture; Pantomime; Empty Chair; Code Word; Old Spanish Saying. Slogans: Fictitious Statistic; Alter Ego; Out of Left Field. Exercises: Benefit of the Doubt; Decriminalize. Therapist Devices: Stirring up Trouble; Muddying the Water; Staying with the Client. Exercise: Perfect Day.

PGO: I think we have one image left, and that's Inside/Outside, and it has to do again with that distinction between being and doing. And since Tee has had some recent experience with it, I'm going to ask her to step up and talk about Inside and Outside.

Tee: The major place you use Inside/Outside is with any sort of role. The first one Pete used it with was with a father, a man who came in and presented to Pete that he was doing everything a father did, but it just didn't feel right, it didn't feel genuine. Other places you can use it would be obviously parents—father/mother roles, husband/wife, also therapist/client, with giving tests: tester/testee. And the idea is that the Outside view is always looking strictly at the performance, what the person does. What the man who came in to talk to Pete said, "I'm doing everything. I punish my kids, I praise them," and the man was going through all the right motions, but all the descriptions he was giving were performative descriptions. He was describing a role from the outside. And the only way it makes sense is with the Inside view, and the Inside view corresponds to giving a significance description. Basically, the significance of any role is the personal relationship. And what happens is like with the therapist example: if you're

doing what a therapist does, from the outside, but you're not being a therapist, you're not having a sort of personal relationship with the client that makes it make sense, then what you're doing will probably come across to them. Likewise with the client—if the client comes in, and they're just going through the motions, they're doing what a client does, then you won't get anywhere in therapy, or it will be hard to, because they'll just be going through the motions, and the sort of personal relationship that makes it all make sense won't be up front.

I used it with mothering, with mothers, and looked at it in story. What I was studying was maternal satisfaction, and to be satisfied, one of the things I concluded was that an essential for that was to have the inside view of mothering, to have the view of the personal relationship that makes it all make sense. Because otherwise, mothers would be doing something by doing what they were doing as mothers, but they wouldn't have non-ultimate satisfaction because they'd be—like they might be trying to be a good mother, doing what a mother does, in order to be a good mother, and that's the Outside view. Where it gets messy is that you can have the—you can realize that the relationship is important, but you can still have the Outside view, and if you're not really being a mother, then you can still have the Outside view even though you appreciate that the relationship matters. The best example of that was with—I had my mothers tell me stories, like TATs, except in response to pictures of mothers and children, and one mother went through, and on every card she described what the kid was doing, and what the mother was doing, and then at the end of every story she'd add, "And they have a good relationship." And it didn't ring true. So she was still having the Outside view, even though she knew the relationship mattered. And that's where the Being/Doing distinction comes in—simply being a mother.

Q: *What happens then if you recognize that they're giving an Outside relationship—how do you get them to switch over?*

T: You simply tell them—you explain the significance, and you just tell them, "Well, be a mother."

P: You can use some of the other Being and Doing images like You've Got to Be a Poker Player.

Q: *It also sounds like you're making a distinction between the performance—going through the motions—and one kind of achieving, which is doing it successfully, but not achieving what “doing successfully” means, that other part of the achievement. Is that what you were getting at by “significance”?*

T: Well, you can—like, say a mother is doing what a mother does in order to be the perfect mother. Maybe in the early months of the kid's life she'll be able to get away with that if she has a really healthy, good-natured child. And she'll be successful, and she'll be satisfied. But the significance of what she's doing is trying to be a madonna mother, trying to be a perfect mother, and the significance won't be having a personal relationship with the child. So it's the difference between non-ulterior and ulterior satisfactions, and you can always get the non-ulterior if you're being the mother.

Q: *Is it always a case of doing something for ulterior motives—when someone's doing this, they're always doing it for an ulterior motive?*

T: No, you could just be like the original example where the man—the father—was going through the motions, and he had no ulterior motive, but he just didn't have the—he didn't appreciate the personal relationship. It's from the Outside, a father doing—a father usually gets a lot of the final decision-making things, and if something—a not-happy decision for the family has to be made—the father has to do it. So from the Outside, fathers look sterner, all the things like that. And that man didn't appreciate that with the Inside, the personal relationship, he could also express the love he felt for his kid.

Q: *To offset the unpleasantness aspects of the role.*

T: And it also made it genuine for him. Because he was doing what a father did, but it didn't feel right, it didn't feel genuine, because he only had the Outside view.

Q: *Would one way around it be—it sounds like it's not a role, it's a perfect role, and that feels unreal: being the madonna mother, the stereotype father.*

T: Well, you can have the same thing with the therapist, just trying to be an ordinary therapist, but if you go about it by doing what a therapist does, it's not going to be genuine. You have to have the Inside view; you have to be a therapist.

Q: *My sense is that people who have that kind of conceptualization—they don't do what the role does; they only do what a part of the role does, like they don't do bad mother-moves or bad father-moves or bad therapist-moves, and that right there would add an element of unreality to it. They don't get to make role-mistakes. In their formulation, that's not permitted.*

T: I'm not sure what to say to that. It's from the Outside view.

Q: *It's not only an Outside view, it's a restricted Outside view.*

T: Right. And maybe I ### the thing too far, presenting just the madonna mother; there'd be lots of other possibilities.

Q: *It's unreal—it feels unreal because it's unrealistic.*

T: No, it's unreal because if you're not, say, being a therapist, then you're not in a position to have the sort of personal relationship that makes the whole thing make sense. Likewise, if you're not already being a mother, you end up in a position of doing what a therapist does in order to be a therapist.

P: You can also assimilate to knocking Little White Balls into holes in the ground. If you're just approaching it from the outside, that's what it is. It takes an Inside approach to appreciate it as golf. And if you're not approaching it that way, you won't get that kind of satisfaction there is in golf. You'll get the meaninglessness that there is in knocking little white balls into holes in the ground.

Q: *Would an Outside approach be a father who is acting like a good father because he wanted a good relationship, and stuff of that sort—because he wants something that's exterior to the fact of the relationship?*

T: Right. That would be a case of doing what a father does in order to get a good relationship, in order to have a good relationship.

Q: *Once you expose that, I can see how one of the things it might do is,*

it might take off some of the pressure from the father, in terms of now maybe he can do some mean things, or things that he felt like doing, but didn't do because they didn't fit. And I was wondering how—what the usual effect of explaining that to somebody is, to a father or a mother, how change occurs there.

T: In that case, the man walked away appreciating—"Hey, it all makes sense!"—because he'd been able to see the Inside view. One thing that helps is to remember that the Inside—the idea of Inside/Outside: Inside is evocative, you're trying to use it to call out something that's already there, or whatever sense someone has of—

Q: *In a way, it's a granting of permission for wider aspects of the role. But I'm not sure that's the central concern.*

T: The central concern of the Inside view is the relationship, the personal relationship—in Martin Buber's term it would be—the Inside view corresponds to the I-Thou; the Outside view would correspond to I-It.

Q: *I'm not sure, but wouldn't some of the Inside/Outside correspond to the difference between role and status? With the role, you've got conventional behaviors, and it takes an Observer to say which behaviors those are, and once you're the Inside, then you've got that status, then you're making a judgment, and you can have a lot of behaviors and using the standard of judgment, just judge them to be appropriate. So you really can't expand behaviors in the role, but you can expand them in the status.*

P: The contrast between status and role corresponds to the contrast between what you do and who you are.

Q: *That was part of the intention of the question I was asking: I can see how a father could act as a good father, could restrict his behavior to good-father behaviors, because of a seeming definition of what that would be for the relationship, and not respond in kind of a full perspective of what he was feeling or what he could respond, because he didn't see it as fitting into the role of father. And I can see this sort of thing as somehow liberating that, by the emphasis on being, being the emphasis on acting appropriately to the relationship.*

T: I think the same example would be when you're being a therapist, instead of doing what a therapist does, because you're already being a therapist, you're going to act with the client's interest in mind, and sometimes you may do things that from the outside don't look like what a therapist does, but from the inside, they make sense.

Q: *It's a little bit like responding to directions, or a map, in terms of how one should behave, as opposed to responding to the situation itself?*

T: Well, not just the situation; also the person.

Q: *Is it more like responding to "shoulds" or direction as to how one should behave vis-à-vis that person, as opposed to responding to that person?*

Q: *That's like a postpartum psychosis—a lot of times a mother will come in with a knife-phobia and say, "I want to kill my child." It turns out, she's acting on an ideal image of what a mother is, and she's supposed to be all-loving, all-providing, and she doesn't feel that way.*

Q: *I'm not sure that that's what Tee's talking about. That's why I wanted to have that clear, so if that isn't what you're talking about, I could—*

T: It's certainly—that would be a time when you could really use it to help free somebody. Like if she had the Outside view that a good mother never is angry with her kid and never feels like throwing the screaming kid out the door, then—

Q: *It seems like something to be particularly applicable to people who are beginning doing something, because then your anxiety is up, and you're orienting toward maps about how to do it, and you may lose track of the Inside in that process.*

T: Yeah, definitely, because with giving the Rorschachs and TATs, it's a question of being a tester, being a clinician vs. doing what a tester does; and if you have the Inside view, then it's a lot easier than if you're just trying to go through the motions and do it right vs. trying to understand the person you're with.

Q: *Would it be fair—would you expect that the Outside view would result in more stereotypic or rigid behavior than the Inside view? Because the*

Outside view, I guess, would be conventionalized.

P: One thing to keep in mind with that is that's just one of about half a dozen images that deal with being and doing, and you can stack them up, you can go from one to the other, you can diagnose an Inside/Outside problem and still use one of the other images, other than Inside/Outside. It just depends on what you think the client is prepared to work with. And in some of these cases, you might use the Little White Balls, bringing out the negative aspects. In other cases, you depend on your ability to portray the Inside view, to get that across. In other cases, you depend on evoking what you think is really there, and it just needs to be brought forth. Other times you use the You've Got to Be a Poker Player to illustrate how it works, that you've got to be using, you've got to be coming from there, in order to assimilate it to that.

Q: *Maybe one of the best ways of getting across the Being and Doing image is that it's not enough to do it perfectly—like the person who goes to the golf course and knows what drinks to order and so forth, but he's not a member.*

P: Or you think of the Eight-Year-Old Astronaut. You see, he's already got it on the inside when he has nothing on the outside. Where you use the ordinary phrase of "where a person's coming from", I've done that with You've Got to Be a Poker Player. Or you refer to the commonplace fact that not everybody who knows how to play bridge appreciates it or would do it and enjoy it. There are some people who, even though they know how to play bridge, can't understand why anybody would want to play that; whereas other people who know how to play bridge—they're out there hour after hour. People differ in their appreciation, and the difference between these two people is that one is a bridgeplayer and on the Inside, and the other isn't. So the Inside view goes with the kind of satisfactions you get out of the performances that you engage in. It makes those performances more than performances; it makes them intrinsic social practices. Without that Inside view, there's nothing intrinsic about it because you don't appreciate what's there.

Q: *It sounds like getting from Outside to Inside is You Can't Get There from Here.*

P: You Can't Get There from Here is another one of those where the explanation is: the reason you change in some other way than what you want is that you're already being that way. But then, there's various ways of getting at this Being and Doing, and Inside/Outside is just one of them. You can have that with the Creative Drama. Again, the Creative Drama is designed to tap the Inside and to enable you to create whatever fits that Inside view in the ###. And then from that, you can move to a number of exercises designed to tap the Actor, as against Observer-Critic. And a genuine Actor move is always an Inside approach. Remember, on the AOC diagram, the Actor is creative, and he gives value to things and treats them accordingly. That aspect of giving value is why, if you're not coming from there, there won't be that value there for you. As I say, the Exercises are designed to get a person to be an Actor rather than just an Observer or Critic and are also ways of getting a person to an Inside view of things. And in terms of the films we saw yesterday, a lot of those Gestalt exercises you can think of in that mode: the stage-setting is to get the person to be an Actor, to enact something. His lines are not specified, simply the situation, and then he takes it up from there. If he gets into the spirit, then he will be operating as Actor rather than Observer-Critic. So that's a way of tapping what's in you, what your self is like, what your inner life is like.

Q: *It's interesting—at one point when that guy asked why he couldn't get into something, he said, "That's not my role." He saw it as a role to be nurturant and supportive. He didn't have the Inside view.*

P: Saying "that's not my role" may have been a heartfelt Inside view. For example, a mother might legitimately say, "From the Inside view of 'mother,' it's not my role to make those kinds of decisions." Indeed it might be a very authentic mother statement. It's hard to go from dialogue alone. In fact, if you could go from dialogue alone, you could get at it from the Outside. You have to set the stage and then count on making judgments about the authenticity, the spontaneity, the appreciation, etc.

Well, that concludes the Images. In looking over the rest of this outline, I think the major thing that we haven't talked about are the Formats, on page 3. The Formats, and I guess the Exercises, although we talked, I think, about the first two. Did mention that #1, the Ordinary Conversation,

is the format in which you operate unless you're specifically operating in some other way? So Ordinary Conversation corresponds to "under normal conditions". That's what you're doing when you're not doing something else. The others are special stage-settings, you might say, designed to facilitate some kind of presentation or communication. For example, the next one down is a Soliloquy, and as you might guess, a Soliloquy is where you talk to yourself and not to the client. To set the stage for that, what you usually do is look away from the client, because, in ordinary conversation, you're looking at who you're talking to; and so if the client is there, and you want to do a Soliloquy, you may look up in the air, or you may turn in your chair and look over there, and then there's some—you sound different, usually, when you talk to yourself: you sound more pensive, you sound more something, so there's a tone of voice that kind of goes with talking to yourself. Kind of a wild-eyed tone of voice. [laughter]

Now one of the main reasons you do a Soliloquy is: you don't want to be interrupted. A conversation is an interchange, there are certain kinds of norms as to how long one person talks before it's okay for the other person to come in with a question or comment.

Q: *You can do this in by looking at the other therapist.*

P: That's like talking to yourself. [laughter] Yeah—if you can count on your co-therapist not to interrupt you—. So one thing is: it's long enough, and you want it all there in one piece, and you don't want to be interrupted with questions and explanations, so you stop talking to the client (which then gives him permission to raise those questions and interrupt you) and talk to yourself. And this is mainly when you want to develop a line of thought. For example, something corresponding to an Internal Dialogue. Because a Soliloquy is, in effect, an Internal Dialogue since you are talking to yourself, and so you can present one by a Soliloquy form. One thing about it: it goes a lot faster than if you present it as an Internal Dialogue. Because in this way, you simply look off somewhere, talk in a certain way, and you get it across, whereas the other way, you have to explain it. And sometimes it's better just to do a Soliloquy.

Secondly, in a Soliloquy, the client has no responsibility for it. You're doing the talking, you're doing the thinking, you're drawing the

conclusion, and it's not directed at the client, so the client is not under any pressure—not under any obvious pressure—to accept a conclusion, because you're not even talking to him when you're talking to yourself. So it's a way of presenting ideas in a non-pressured way. The client is not under pressure to accept, reject, comment, or do anything else. Those are the two main things that go with the Soliloquy: it's long, you don't want to be interrupted, and it takes the pressure off the client as far as admitting things, accepting conclusions, etc.

An interesting variation on this—I guess that's about the closest ###—comes from Milton Erickson via Allan Farber. What he says is that Milton Erickson, these days, does almost nothing but tell stories, and that the virtue of the story, like the images, is it gets an idea across without putting the client under pressure to accept or reject it. Indeed, on the contrary, the client is drawn in because a story has a certain intrinsic interest, and he's actually working to understand it. Which is nice, because you bypass a whole lot of resistance that way.

Q: *Al talking to a group at—I forget whether they were inpatients or outpatients at the VA hospital, and he told them a story, and it was interesting because the other therapist had been trying to get group interaction and questions and all this. And after Al told this story, they all just kind of looked at him and said something or other appropriate to that story; whereas before, they'd just been ### all over the place.*

P: As I say, the key thing is that you get an idea across, but no statement, and that's the thing with images—it's like getting a concept across which you can then operate with as the client can operate with it.

One of the sneaky things that Erickson does and that Al Farber does, is he couches it in terms of “I had another client who—” and then the story is told about the other client. Now what's sneaky about that is that whatever holds for another client like you, obviously, is applicable to you. So the way is greased for you to take it personally. Even in spite of all this non-threatening stuff, it's still aimed at you personally, and so it facilitates your accepting, your getting the idea, etc., because it's another person like you.

Q: *It's like the teaching story has been a traditional part of almost any*

of the things that at least look—in terms of Eastern religions—look like psychotherapy.

Q: —*John Gardner does it with kids, and he uses it with kids under 12—he gets them to tell him a story about an animal, and they don’t realize that they’re talking about themselves, and so they tell the story via the animal, and then he uses this same animal and a lot of the same pieces, but just puts in new options, and that’s his whole therapy, to trade stories each week. And you can see the kid gradually incorporate the options into his stories, and he gets his ideas across that way.*

P: Again, you can see that you get mileage out of just getting an idea across. You don’t have to get the person to believe something. Just having the idea gives him new behavioral options, and if you exemplify, as in this kind of therapy, the taking of some of these options, then he’s got models for how to do things differently. But again, without ever having to do anything.

So stories are either an additional one, or you can think of them as variations on a Soliloquy. A Confession has some similarity to a Soliloquy, and in fact you can do a Confession in the Soliloquy form. But a Confession has a different central feature, namely, that you’re talking about yourself. In a Soliloquy, you’re talking to yourself; in a Confession, you’re talking about yourself. And the essence of a Confession is: “Here’s how it is with me.” That’s the form: “Here’s how it is with me.” Sometimes you do this for confrontation purposes, and you say, in effect, “Here’s the kind of bind that I’m in,” and the implication is, “Here’s the kind of bind that you’re putting me in.” Or you report a reaction, for example, “I’m feeling very distressed about how things have been going, and I really don’t know what to do about it.” Again, you’re talking about yourself, and your reaction, and here’s where you are—you’re distressed, and you don’t know what to do.

One of the prime purposes of a Confession is to take the pressure off the client. Since it’s your problem, you’re the one who’s in distress, you’re the one who’s in this position, it’s not overtly aimed at the client. On the other hand, very often it’s an invitation to the client to take some of the responsibility for where you, the therapist, are and do something about it.

Q: *I’m wondering about the sort of obvious risk—I’m not sure it’s a*

risk—but the sort of obvious problem with that kind of move, when a client hears your confession about your quandary, what that says to him is, “If I can even screw him up, think what kind of person I must be, if I can put even him in a bind.” I suppose that could be a very useful move, if what I’m doing is so bind-producing that it even does it to him.

P: Yeah. And if you want to counter that, if that would be harmful, you make an additional step and say, “Anybody could do that to anybody. Anybody who wanted to could put the other person in the kind of bind that I’m in, just by being dishonest.” Or: “just by refusing to cooperate”. Or: “just by pursuing his own thing”. You do some well-poisoning that way.

Q: *Is that taking the pressure off?*

Q: *It’s a trade-off. On the one hand it makes the client look really bad, because he can even mess up the therapist who presumably is very healthy, but on the other hand it says, “Look how powerful you are.”*

P: No, he isn’t messing me up; he’s just putting me in a bad spot. That I could stand.

Q: *I used that to pull someone out of a victim stance. He was saying, “Yeah, everybody pushes me around,” and I said, “I’m having the same thing—I felt beat up every time I come in here,” and he says, “Well, yeah!” He says, “I can do that.” And I said, “Indeed, you do.”*

P: Or you do it to put yourself in the Low-Power position, and, in effect, force the client to be in a High-Power position. Anyway, you can see that Confession is a specific format for talking that’s not just conversation. Those are some of the uses.

The next one, the Three-Minute Lecture, is what you usually use with the Heuristics.

Q: *I have a question about Confession. All the examples in the discussion of it were in terms of what’s happening now, and I’m wondering if Confession were of the nature of, “The last time I got in this kind of bind, I did thus-and-such and thus-and-such, but I don’t think that’ll work here.”*

P: No. Confession is in present tense. It may refer—as I remember my first example, “I’m distressed about what’s been happening”—so it may

refer to the past, or even future, but it's where I am now. If it's past tense, if I make the statement that the last time I was distressed, it's no longer Confession. That's simply information, that's conversation.

If you look at the list of Heuristics on the preceding page, you can see that most of those are also going to be long enough so that you want to go through it and present it without particularly being interrupted, and you want the client to know that it's a presentation, that you're not just making conversation, and it didn't just come off the top of your head. So for setting the stage for that, you say, "Let me give you a three-minute lecture about emotions and how they work." And you may amplify, "Because I think it would help right here," or something of that sort. You may want to motivate. The main thing you do is, you announce that you are about to make a presentation of a didactic sort. And, as with the Images, it's for the sake of giving you something that you and the client can work with. Then, if you want, you can make it a five-minute lecture or ten-minute lecture, depending on how long you think it's going to take. Usually, three minutes is as far as you go without questions. But the main thing is to set the stage for a formal, didactic type of presentation, so as to not have that come across as stilted conversation. Because if you did it in a conversational mode, it would be stilted conversation and would have a bad effect. Whereas this way, you segregate it, you put a frame around it, and you can announce when it's over. And then you can refer to it.

Pantomime refers to posture, gesture, facial expression, sometimes even movement. Its main virtues stem from the fact that it's non-verbal and quick. One advantage is that you can use Pantomime to give a reaction without interrupting. If the client is saying something, and you're skeptical, you look skeptical, you raise an eyebrow, or you do something. He's talking, and you haven't interrupted, but you've got it across. Secondly, because it's quick to do this, you've got it across right where you want it, whereas you'd have to interrupt and review and pick out the spot that he's talking about in order to do it some other way. So this way, you get a fast, effective, very pointed communication.

Q: *It fits in if somebody is really not listening, when you're trying to get something across, you can ### something?*

P: You'd better duck if you do. Now another thing is that you're providing a model for the client, of being expressive. You don't have to be a professional to be able to do a little bit of exaggerating of the normal facial expressions and postures, to express reactions. Sometimes clients are deficient in this form of expression, and you're modeling for them.

Q: *Usually it takes four years to get that Ossorian smile down.*

Q: *Also, eyebrows are kind of good to be able to use. He raises one eyebrow—* [laughter and more laughter]

P: There's all kinds of ways, all kinds of things you can do.

Q: *Another one—the reason I used the expression of the ###, was that I was seeing this person who would never look at me, and it was bugging me—*

P: If they never look at you to get the reaction—

Q: *But it was also that he wasn't—he was facing the ###, at least I felt as if he was, so I was using a lot of expressions, and he had to look at me to find out was he on track or what was he.*

P: He had to find out from your expression on your face.

Q: *The twitch of my eye.*

P: Another thing is that visual contact is more likely to be an Actor-type contact rather than Observer-Describer or Critic type contact. One of the things you're modeling for him is spontaneous reaction, rather than reflective, because, normally, the postural, gestural things that you do are spontaneous rather than deliberate.

Q: *Do you make him do it?*

P: Well, sometimes you do, but sometimes you just set yourself to be a little more expressive or be less inhibited about reacting that way. But you're not specifically picking your reactions—partly because it takes time, and it wouldn't come across. Or you can have policies that you will normally express certain kinds of reactions unless you have a reason not to. [change tape] For example, things like surprise, perplexity, amusement. Normally, my policy is: express it unless I have reason not to. And it means that when it happens, it's not even deliberate, and it's not at all thought out.

Q: *Do you think you have to use some discretion with your therapist supervisor there?* [laughter]

P: That's true.

Q: *One of the guys who used to be here had a client who wouldn't look at him, so he used to—wherever she was looking, he'd make a hand gesture, and she'd always come right back and look at him, but he got into a lot of trouble—or got into some trouble—for doing that. It was a real Actor move that would get him in touch with the client.*

P: If you have a good rationale and it's not obviously destructive, you can usually sneak it by a supervisor. [laughter]

Q: *You can always erase the tape.* [general conversation]

P: Okay, the next one of the Empty Chair is one that probably everybody's familiar with. You simply put a hypothetical person in an empty chair and talk to that person. Now this variation—you see, normally you have the client talking to the empty chair. This one, I'm talking about the therapist talking to the empty chair or talking about the empty chair. And the usual setting for that is the Act/Actor/Producer. And usually when you have one of these two-person frameworks, and you want to separate the two, you put one over there and the other is the client. So after having set the stage by going through some variation of the Kissinger example—that's usually what's involved—so that you've established the client as Critic and the client as Victim. Then on an occasion when the client says something like, "I've really got to shape up and get busy and do such-and-such," you simply point to the empty chair and say, "He's really got to shape up and get busy, or God knows what I'll do to him." Part of it is to bring home the message that you're talking about yourself as though you were talking about somebody else, that you're treating yourself as ego-alien, as somebody out there, and you're really you. So you exaggerate that by pointing to the empty chair and talking about that person. You can also use this to introduce the exercise where the client then gets into that empty chair and does that kind of talking right there in the interview.

Okay, so that's the Empty Chair therapist device. The Code Words, I think we explained earlier. When you present an image, an idea,

a heuristic, or anything else that takes time, you usually want to give it a name so that you can evoke it with a single word, and the titles of the Images are designed to serve as Code Words, and the titles of the Heuristics are designed to serve as Code Words. Once you've presented a Heuristic, like AOC or the Degradation Ceremony, you simply refer to the AOC or the Degradation Ceremony, or you refer to the Two Mayors, the Catbird Seat, the Balance, the Moment of Truth, the Demon Businessman—any of those, you simply refer to them, and you get the benefit of the prior presentation. By the way, I came across "Catbird Seat" recently in the newspaper. I think it was one of the presidential candidates or—no, it was a columnist talking about John Connally, and the opening line is, "John Connally is once more sitting in the catbird seat." And it's this: that he's sitting pretty because he has some options now that are attractive. That is, he can endorse Ford in Texas and wipe out Reagan, which means that the Ford camp would really give a lot to have him do. Or he can hang back and get the eternal gratitude of the Reagan camp. Either way, he's got something to gain, so he's in the Catbird Seat.

Anyway, the Code Words were designed to evoke either the Heuristic or the Image with a single word, and that, too, makes for effective, efficient communication. It also has a tendency to operate like an ingroup joke, and it's a kind of a private language between you and the client. You both understand it because of what you've been through together. So Code Words, like the Pantomime, have the virtue of being quick, and, therefore, in many respects, efficient. And it's not just efficient in the sense of saving time; it's efficient in the sense that you would change the quality of the conversation and the interaction if you always had to go back and take the five minutes to talk about the AOC, etc. You preserve the interaction by being able to refer to these things fast or by being able to react with a gesture. So it's not just timesaving, it's also the quality and the nature of the interaction. Did we talk about the Slogans?

Q: *No.*

P: In connection with several of the images, you wind up saying, "The moral of this one is—", and then you come out with some pithy saying. The function of the Old Spanish Saying is to get a message like that

across, that you've made up but you don't want to present it as yours, so you present it as this Saying. And the reason you don't want to present it as your own production is you don't want to sound like you're preaching or something like that, because the kind of things that fit old sayings are the kind of things that if you just went up and said it to somebody, it wouldn't go over. But as an Old Saying that you get reminded of—yeah. So “an Old Spanish Saying”. Now, any of these Slogans, you can usually put in the form of that. For example, the Gambler's Principle is that if you can't afford to lose, then you can't take the kind of chances that would enable you to win. You can present that as an Old Spanish Saying.

On the Slogans, the second one there is the Communication Problem. And the reason that's there is that it's become practically a cliché that when people don't get along with each other, it's because they have a communication problem. And particularly, I think, with couples or families or groups, it's practically a reflex to say that “we've got a communication problem”. So this slogan is designed to counteract that in cases where you want to counteract that. There's no single formulation—you can pick any of several. The gist of it is not that you have bad communication or that you have trouble in communication; the problem is in what you have to say to one another, and that you're communicating quite well because you get it across to one another—don't you?

Q: *That's like the person who at these meetings always ends up being the most hated one, who says, “Oh, we're all talking about the same thing.”*

P: Or, “It's only a semantic problem,” or something like that. Anyhow, there is a very significant difference between a case where the problem is a communication problem, where the issue is whether people talk to one another or the form in which they talk, and frankly, I almost never find that to be the case. The usual problems come from *what* people communicate to each other, and they're usually communicating very effectively, and that's why, when they have the wrong sort of thing to say to one another, it gets across and has the destructive effect. So “It's not a communication problem; it's what you have to say to one another,” is I guess a standard version of that second slogan.

Now the Fictitious Statistic is kind of like the Old Spanish Saying:

a little bit of sleight of hand. That consists of talking in ways that suggest statistics. For example, you say “well, it’s generally the case that—” or “most often it works in thus-and-such a way” or “the likelihood is that if you did such-and-such, this is what would happen”. Now all of those several ways of talking suggest that you’ve counted cases. When you say, “It’s most likely,” it suggests that you’ve counted a lot of cases and found that most of them work this way. The reason you use fictitious statistics rather than statistics—number one is when you don’t have the statistics. Secondly, what makes it possible is that ordinary language is quite ambiguous there. When you talk in these ways, it suggests statistics, but you’re not committed to them. What frequently happens is that you have an understanding of the situation that enables you to speak with confidence about what is likely, what is usual, etc., and you don’t have any statistics, but your understanding gives you the confidence, and then you talk in this way because you don’t want to explain to the client what the basis for your confidence is. So you just say “it’s most likely—usually—most often”, things of that sort. The reason you put it in statistical form, in part, is there’s an implicit disclaimer that it doesn’t *have* to work out that way, there can be exceptions, so that what you’re dealing with is confidence rather than certainty. Or confidence rather than strict prediction or some other contrast like that. You do this when you’re dealing with decision-making rather than prediction.

The next one, Alter Ego, basically it comes from psychodrama. There is a psychodrama exercise in which you have two protagonists, and then behind each protagonist there’s an Alter Ego. And the function of the Alter Ego is to express the thoughts and feelings of the protagonists, and more particularly those thoughts and feelings that the protagonist isn’t expressing. And he speaks in first person, as the protagonist would if the protagonist were expressing those thoughts and feelings. So for example, in a hostility-type exchange, the protagonist may say, “I don’t like that,” and the Alter Ego says, “I hate you, I’m going to get even with you for that.” If he has that sense of where the protagonist is. So it’s this kind of thing that is referred to here as Alter Ego. You speak in first person; you adopt the role of the client; and you simply say what the client is thinking. And you can combine this with a Soliloquy, where you look away, and act out the part of the client, saying “I”. Mostly you do this when a client is talking about

somebody else or his relation to somebody else. He's giving you reactions, and then you amplify them by doing an Alter Ego. It's a lot harder to do that when he's talking directly to you about you or about him and you.

When you do this, or when you can do this, it's surprisingly effective, but I'm not sure I'd have any generalization as to when you can get away with doing this.

Q: *Fictitious Statistic.*

P: Usually, it's not advisable. Occasions for this are not common.

Q: *I can think of one occasion where—one of the few occasions where I've used it—it was with a couple who were really engaged in a heated discussion or argument with each other, and they were really saying things that were suggestive of other things, and I used Alter Ego kinds of things. It works there, because they're really not listening to you as you, they're listening to your comments but not interacting with you.*

Q: *I think the opportunities, especially with the Soliloquy, aren't often, because you can't do it often or you might have a lot of resentment if you're constantly taking the client's point of view—they'll take it as putting words in their mouth.*

P: I think Internal Dialogues are one place where you can do it, where the Alter Ego consists of saying out loud what you think the client is thinking. Another is using a very brief one to get some feeling aspect of what that person is thinking. For example, the person is saying something, and at the end, as soon as he finishes, you say, "I hope." You just toss it in very quickly, that way, and that does the amplification. And "I hope" is very different from saying "you hope", which is confrontive, challenging, disqualifying. Saying "I hope" puts you over ###. So there are some virtues, too.

Q: *It sounds a little—almost like a Rogerian reflection, by changing the pronoun. Only it's not a reflection; it's the step below—instead of reflecting directly, you—*

P: Remember you can do this with talks and not just ###. Saying "I hope" or "the son of a bitch" or something like that would read more like

the Rogerian reflection than going through a Soliloquy saying, “Well, it’s not that bad, but I’m going to get mad anyhow,” something like that. There, it’s not a straight feeling thing; it’s more of an Internal Dialogue. So, in effect, you can empathize with anything the client does, not just his feelings.. There is a variation that isn’t in first person, that’s impersonal, and this is the form in which I much more often do this. I guess it’s back to Actor language, and what you do is you talk in a way that identifies what the client is reacting to, that motivates him to do what he’s talked about doing. In effect, when you’re legitimizing, you almost have to be aware of what the client is reacting to that gives him reason for acting the way he does.

Q: *I had a client once, Pete, where she—where her husband’s ex-wife was supposed to pick up her kids, and she waited till the very last minute to call and say she couldn’t, and she did that sort of thing a lot to me, as well. And what you suggested, then, was doing the thing as Alter Ego—“it serves her right”—and it really worked.*

P: Like I say, when you have the right occasion, I’m still a little surprised at how much impact something like that can have, but it’s unfortunate that it’s not common that you get a good opportunity.

Now think of a variation there, where instead of doing that, she’s reporting about her reaction to this situation of being called at the last minute, and she’s mad, but she doesn’t say so; she’s just talking about that. In line of legitimization, you use this impersonal rather than first person. “It’s bad enough to have her do it, but to have her cancel at the last minute is really hard to take.” You see, that’s not done in first person. It is a description, a portrayal, of what it is that she’s reacting to, in such a way that under that description, her anger, her resentment, or whatever, makes sense. That’s why it usually comes out in the context of legitimization, and that’s why it’s not done in first person. But you can see that you could easily take that exact statement and put it in first person, and you’d have this kind of move. You’d have an Alter Ego.

Okay—the last one here is Out of Left Field, and that one comes from the phrase of bringing something in out of left field, which is to say,

out of nowhere. It often happens that you'd like to talk about something, and there's no conversational opening for it. The client is talking about something else—there's no real opening in the usual conversation for that. So in order to talk about it, you do some ordinary things to bring it in out of nowhere. One such way of talking is, "You know, I was thinking—" and then you can talk about whatever you want to talk about. Or, "I was thinking about what happened last time, and what I thought was—". Or, "You know, it occurred to me that—". Now, for this kind of thing, you have to wait at least for a pause, but it doesn't have to have conversational continuity, because these verbal moves of "you know, it occurred to me that—" are exactly the way one normally signals a change of subject. So against the background of usually you want to maintain a conversational flow and not just bring in topics out of nowhere, there are times when you do want to bring in a topic, and so you do it according to some of the conventions.

Q: *That's a way of doing it without apologizing.*

P: Yeah. You set the conventional frame for it, and then it becomes legitimate for you to do whatever you want to with it.

There was another one that I thought of today, and I've forgotten, because I wasn't able to write it down at the time I thought of it. If I think of it again, I'll mention it. Anyway, you can see that this whole set just gets at the fact that when you're talking with somebody, when you're interacting in a kind of a traditional psychotherapy way, that there are a variety of ways of talking, not just ordinary conversation, that have some special utility. And so it helps to keep that in mind when you have one of these special-purpose things that you want to do.

Let's look at Exercises. Basically, an Exercise is any instruction that you give to the client for something to do during—in between the times when you're seeing him. And, of course, having anchored there, you can also set the same exercise right here and now. Basically, it's something the client does on his own, and can, therefore, do it when he's somewhere else. Giving the Benefit of the Doubt is one of those. If you say—particularly if you've gone through some of the Images, like the Hatfield/McCoy, and you say, "The important thing is to stop it in any way that you can," you might want to ask, "Can you think of a way of stopping it?", and if the answer is

no, then you say, “Here’s a way of doing it. The way you do it is you give each other the benefit of the doubt.” If you get a question on that, you explain what’s involved in giving each other the benefit of the doubt, namely, that if you can read it good or read it bad, you read it good. You read it bad only if there’s no doubt that it’s bad, and most behavior is ambiguous enough so that there are at least better and worse interpretations or more or less favorable interpretations. You pick the more favorable one wherever there is a range of question.

Q: *Can you do anything about that when somebody says that that’s what they’re already doing? This is somebody to whom basically the image of Demon Businessman has been presented and has been rejected; and this is a couple, and I gave the guy the exercise Give your wife the Benefit of the Doubt, and he’s trying to say, “Yeah, but that’s what I do.”*

P: In that case, what you would do is decriminalize, and I guess Decriminalize is the next one on that list.

Decriminalize stems from the image of Spitting on the Sidewalk. Remember, the punch line is that you can make anybody a success or failure by introducing a requirement. Introducing the requirement that they not do what they do do, you make them a failure. If you introduce a requirement that says, “All it takes to succeed is to do what the person does do,” then you’re making them a success. And what goes with their being a success or a failure is that you treat them accordingly, as you have that commitment. If you’re basing it on the prior presentation of the image of Passing a Law against spitting on the sidewalk, then when you transfer it to the client, you say, “It looks like you’ve been passing a number of laws dealing with your wife, and that’s made pretty much of a solid criminal out of her, and that’s why, even when you give her the benefit of the doubt, she still comes out a criminal. So what you need to do is repeal some of those laws, decriminalize her behavior.” And then the explanation is, “Don’t set the kind of requirements on her that are making her a failure.” Then you might get back to Giving the Benefit of the Doubt. If there is no doubt, then I think you go to the Decriminalizing, because if it’s that tight, there’s almost certainly the Passing the Law, the setting of a requirement at work and not just a hostile attitude.

Also, Exercises have to be something that the client can do on purpose. That's why you can tell the client to do it, and the client is able to do it. So one of the things you usually emphasize somewhere along the line is that this is something you *can* do on purpose. Usually, you do that if the client raises the question, "I don't know if I can do that." You say, "Oh, yeah, anybody can do this. This is the kind of thing that you can do on purpose."

Q: —at one point said— the guy said, "I can't do this," and he said, "Fake it."

P: No. I think what would fake it is the notion of a portrayal, that you at least have to have the image of what you want, even if it's unrealized, so that even if it's impossible, by faking it, you can at least portray what it is you want. So that's back to getting across ideas without any truth-value.

Q: *As part of the decriminalization picture—it's very hard to take in because you do see it that way, you see those behaviors as wrong, and one of the ways: it was a long time ago that I worked with somebody who was in a similar situation—I suggested that he think about the thing that was mostly unthinkable as he was falling asleep every night. I said, "Just think about it then. Don't think about it any other time, just think about it then, each night," and after a couple of weeks it became very easy for him to talk about that subject.*

P: It sounds like it has more to do with unthinkability than decriminalization.

Q: *The reason why—one of the issues of criminalization is often that it's unthinkable that that not be considered criminal.*

P: In that case you don't want to present it. Then you go through some preliminaries. Remember, you don't give a client an exercise that he can't do, and if it's unthinkable for him, you don't tell him to do it.

Q: *Yeah, that was the point of telling him to think about as he begins to fall asleep.*

P: Yeah, that would be preparation for getting to the point where you could then give him the exercise. The kinds of things I can vaguely think of, along this line, weren't so much unthinkable.

So both the Give the Benefit of the Doubt, and Decriminalize, have the effect of having the person take a more positive approach to himself or to other people, and as you know, this tends to have a self-perpetuating effect. If you think positive, act positive, things are more likely to be positive. As a matter of fact, we have a sort of formalization of that notion, which we'll talk about next time, under the heading of The Effect of Faith and Skepticism. If you have faith, things are more likely to go that way than if you're skeptical about them. So you might see both of these two as ways of getting a person to act with faith rather than with skepticism, with a positive attitude rather than with hostility.

Q: *We were talking about Decriminalization before, and criminalizing things—the thing that kept running through my mind was—I can't remember whether it was Lazarus or Fritz Perls who keeps using a “so what?” The client's talking about doing something, “I can't do that,” and you decriminalize it by questioning, “So what if you do that? So what if you do that? So what if you do that? So what if you do that? What's the big deal?” But that seems to be a different way—*

P: Decriminalize usually is for somebody else. You decriminalize your wife, you decriminalize your employer, your child. Sometimes it's you.

Q: *I can see less resistance on the part of clients to decriminalize what somebody else does—their wife or employer or whatever—than decriminalizing what they do.*

Q: *Wouldn't one of the effects be that the “so what?” may end up not letting the client know you appreciate how important it is? Decriminalization gives it the status of being important, but just saying, “So what?”, the client may feel, “Okay, you don't realize that this really matters to me.”*

Q: *There's a really useful move—I learned from my little brother this “so what?” move, and what he does, he'll listen to a long dialogue, and he doesn't see the point of it, and he'll interrupt, “So?” And what it does, it continually causes you to escalate your abstraction. You have to get to more and more abstract levels of justification, and you can push that to the point where you see if it is or isn't really significant to you, if you're just buying into a dialogue*

or buying into a set of “shoulds”, or whether you’re buying into something that has a great deal of significance. After about two or three “so?”s, when you find you can’t take it any further, sometimes you find that it really isn’t that significant. And I know at least once in the clinic, after a series of two of those, there was a very large attitude change.

P: There’s a problem with that as a technique, namely, that even when a client has a good reason, he’s usually unable to give it to you, and if you’re sitting there saying “So?”, you’re going to do violence to him because he’ll reach a point where he really has a good reason, he can’t tell you what it is, and you’re going to slough it off with a “So?”, and he’s going to feel cheated.

Q: *Well, you’ve got to pick your clients. [laughter] They’re verbal—the people that seem to be able to move in an abstract way.*

P: Well, even people who are able to move in an abstract way, because very few people have got the technique for explaining what’s meaningful about an intrinsic social practice. If you just keep asking why, which is the other version of the “So what?”—

Q: *They can see how far they can take it.*

P: No, but they can take it up there, okay, but when you ask that question, they can’t tell you why, when you say, “So what?” because the answer is, “Can’t you see?” And as a therapist, you’re not accepting that. You’re not going to accept *that* kind of reply. So by exercising, in effect, your muscle as a therapist, in just keeping asking “So what?”, you can really wipe them out. And what happens is that you as a therapist have got to exercise judgment as to when to stop. Otherwise, you really do wipe everybody out.

Q: *Yeah. My recollection is that usually we go through about four or five “So what?” moves, and get to something that—“Okay, that seems important. Now if you can avoid that in a lot of different ways, not just by—“I’m thinking of one case where one guy had a real social phobia about calling a girl for a date, which he’d been struggling with for two years, whether or not to call her for a date, because all these terrible things were going to happen if she wasn’t home, refused, and so on. And, finally, I got it down to being isolated and alone. As long as he had this possibility, he wasn’t isolated and alone, there was a way out. But confronting that and having it fail would have been*

a disaster.

P: You can do the same thing in more low-key language, by asking, “What would you be failing by not doing that? What kind of failure would it be? What kind of difference would it make if it did go that way instead of the other way? What’s the value to you of not doing that?”—there’s a number of questions that you can ask that are not confrontive that way, and that are not destructive in this sense of just trampling over the client. They also give him—you see, the more low-key you do it, the more it is easy for the client at some point to put his foot down and say, “No, it is important, even though I can’t tell you,” whereas if you do it in a strongly confrontive way, there aren’t too many clients who are going to face you down on it. So you’re more in danger of laying your thing on the client by doing it that way than by low-key allowing the client to put his foot down somewhere.

Q: *In practice, “so what?” ends up as a slogan—“examine what the realistic consequences of that failing or succeeding are”.*

P: Well, it has more of a challenging, confrontive connotation. That’s why I say you can do the same thing in a lower key.

Q: *And maintain Be on the Client’s Side.*

P: Yeah. One version that I heard from a client is, “And then what have you got?” So saying “And then what?” is very close to saying “So what?”, but it comes through much less confrontive. Because it’s more of an invitation than a challenge. Or if you just say, “And—”. So there’s a number of ways of—. It’s nice, though, to be able to repeal a law, and it puts you in a position of control, responsibility, etc., which is a better place to be than to be faced down by a therapist who gets you to see how foolish you’ve been.

Q: *Is it usually the law that’s problematical, the fantasized consequences of violating the law?*

P: It’s the commitment to the consequences of violating the law. As I said, when you pass a law, you’re committed to prosecuting the violator, so when you lay a requirement on a person, you’re committing yourself to treat them in terms of their failure or success at meeting the requirement. So it’s a commitment, not a ###, and that’s why you have control over it and

can repeal the law by not laying down that requirement.

I don't know if I've mentioned it—I know I've mentioned Victim Acts a number of times—and one of the strategic principles is Don't Operate in Terms of Victim Acts. Don't let the client get away with a Victim story about himself, because the essence of the victim story is, "There's something that I need to do, that I can't do." And that's a bad one to allow. So you adopt a number of subsidiary policies in the interest of never having the client get away with a Victim story. One of them I mentioned is that in general, any time you can make a fear interpretation, you can make an anger interpretation. Because avoidance and rejection are inter-translatable. Another is this emphasis: This is something you can do on purpose. Another is simply describing the person in intentional action/deliberate action terms, because those are choices and are therefore under the control of the person who does them. Another is the legitimization that gets the person to see what choice he made, what sense it makes, and therefore calls his attention to [change tape]

Q: *You ask them what they've been doing in the past, and, "Well, everything I've ever done has been something that the man I was with wanted."*

P: Right there I'd say, "And you resent it." Or I would say, "The son of a bitch." That reminds me—I remember what the other Format was. It's Making a Provocative Statement, which you're counting on the person getting upset, raising questions about, and, therefore, giving you a chance to explain. And some example came up this morning—that must have been—I'm pretty sure it was one of yours [Lane's]. Anyhow, you make what sounds like an outrageous statement that shakes the client up, and he says, "What do you mean?" and then you explain.

Q: *In line with the case that Tee was bringing up, it strikes me that one active way of redescribing what she said would be to say, "And how long have you wanted it to be otherwise?" She's claimed that "all I've ever done is what men want me to do"; "since when have you wanted it otherwise?"—something that would make it, "So suddenly you want it different," or something that would affirm the fact that that must have been how you wanted it for a long time.*

P: Yeah. That's Observer-oriented. That's commentary-oriented,

whereas saying, “The son of a bitch,” is an Alter Ego/Actor-oriented move, and since the story you’re getting is of an Actor-type deficiency, by and large, it’s preferable to go directly to emphasizing the Actor.

Q: [something to the effect that the feminists would be upset by that sort of question] *And I don’t think it would be a good kind of upset, and you could get to the same thing in a better way.*

Q: *It certainly underlines the victim role. The feminist argument from that position sounds like a victim role, and could be presented as a victim role. Phrasing it otherwise, in the sense that you must have changed your mind recently or something, has with it the feminist analysis that, at this point, you’re rejecting that, but also affirms the fact that you were actively participating.*

Q: *That’s where the argument comes. It would just come across much better if you come up with the resentment now, and then deal with the rest of it in another conference.*

Q: *It’s sort of unacceptable to be the kind of person who would want that.*

P: If you go too strong that way, you’re liable to get some Thumbsucking, which is another victim act. “I don’t understand,” and you can go on forever explaining to somebody who just doesn’t understand. Okay, I can’t think of the actual example—

Q: *“Since as a little boy you put in your time, and it’s not surprising that you’re doing the same thing here”?*

P: No, because that’s explanatory already. It’s not provocative.

Q: *You used to call it Muddying the Waters.*

P: No. There’s really no place to put that. It’s not an Exercise, it’s not a Format, it’s not really an Influence Principle or a Policy. It’s just a Therapist Device. The title of the other one is “Provocation Elicits Perplexity”.

There’s two of these things that kind of go together, they’re fairly similar: one is called Muddying Up the Water, and the other is called Stirring Up Trouble. Both of them are variations on the same theme, and that is this: you’re in a situation where you don’t have a grasp on what’s

there, what's going on, or what the client is thinking, or what the problem is, so that you can't target your moves. And you don't want to just operate on some of these general policies and wait. You make comments that are simply disturbing, puzzling, ambiguous, and, therefore, draw some kind of a diagnostically-valuable response. You make a suggestion that is disturbing and that you don't really believe is true, and you make it with sufficient tentativeness that you're not sticking your neck out, but it stimulates the client to deny, to react, to do something. And that's *Stirring Up Trouble*. Or you make confusing statements that simply give the client something to react to, and by the nature of the reaction, you get a better handle on what's there.

Q: *Do you do this during interrogation?*

P: With no bright lights. For example, one of the things you might do that's confusing is that a client says something, and quick as a wink you introduce five different possibilities there, and that tends to be confusing. And then what happens is that the client has to cope with this whole sudden range of things, and by the kind of avoidance, by the coping policy, by the emotional reaction, by whatever, you get some more information about where that client is at. So both of these are just stirring things up to see what you find.

Q: *Like a verbal Rorschach.*

P: Yeah, in many ways. You simply give the client something to react to for the sake of finding out how he's going to react. Most of these others presuppose that you have some notion about what's there, what's going on, what he's doing wrong, etc. These two are kinds of things that you can do when you don't have a notion, to help you get a notion, in addition to just acting on policies. You can act on policies without knowing anything about what's going on.

Q: *I'm not clear about what the difference is between *Muddying Up the Water* and *Stirring Up Trouble*.*

P: They're variations on a theme. *Stirring Up Trouble* is where you propose or mention something that is disturbing. You suggest an uncomfortable possibility. In effect, you make things unpleasant for the client.

Whereas the Muddying Up the Water is just confusing things, introducing various possibilities that are not necessarily coherent.

Q: *Why don't you call these Diagnostic Devices?*

P: Because you're simply looking for what kind of response. And I suppose, to a fair extent you do it with a client who's uncommunicative, who's evasive, or something like that. Otherwise you can just wait and you'll find these things, or you can ask questions. Where, for example, you're touching on sensitive ground where you can't get there by asking straight questions and getting straight answers, it may be better just to stir things up a little and see what emerges.

Which reminds me that there's a mirror-image type thing which I call Staying with the Client. Staying with a Client, you don't do anything to upset the apple cart, you simply go along with whatever the client does, you reflect without making any interpretations, you don't push the client in any direction, you just go with the client where the client goes. Sometimes you do this for the sake of the overall tempo. You've been working hard, and you both need some relief, and so the next session you just stay with the client and you get some rest. Other times, for the same reason that you stir up trouble or muddy up the water, you don't know where it's going, and you don't know enough to do any pushing one way or the other, so you simply stay and see where the client wants to go. The main thing you're doing is demonstrating to the client that you do understand where he's at, you legitimize, you reflect, you don't push. So technique-wise, it's the mirror-image—you can use both, though, for the same purpose, namely, here's something you do when you don't quite know where things are. And both are ways of finding out.

Okay, back to Exercises. Number 3, the Perfect Day is, in effect, a formalized dream or wish-fulfillment fantasy. You can make it as extreme as you want: the Perfect Day is kind of the extreme. A less extreme form—start out with the less one—"Now lean back, relax, close your eyes, and I want you to imagine how things would go next week during that meeting, if they went pretty much the way you'd like them to, and then give it to me in detail." The extreme form is, "Imagine that your entire life is lived in one day, and it's a perfect life, it's exactly how you most want it to be because it's

a Perfect Day. So sit back, relax, tune in, and now start at the beginning of the day. How does this Perfect Day go?"

Q: *Suppose that he tells you it's longer than a day?*

P: No. The condition is you're going to live your whole life in a day. This is a Perfect Day, it's a perfect time-###. You see, one of the things is you want to set enough structure that the person doesn't have to actively compose much, just come out with ###. And again, the purpose of this exercise is pretty clear, that you want to evoke the person's own inclinations. You want to evoke their motivations. What do they really want? What do they want overall? What are their most fundamental tendencies? And you do this either to get an idea yourself, or to get the client to be more clear about it. So sometimes you can say, "Just go home and do this and do this every night for the next week and see what happens." Other times, you do it right then, on the spot, and you get the client to tell you as it goes along. Very often, you do it that way the first time, to monitor—is he really doing something of the right sort? And then say, "Do this each night before you go to bed, for the next week," and maybe you say, "Keep a record of what you think of." The main thrust is to evoke positive motivations, ideals, values, etc. And you sometimes do this for the sake of setting goals for therapy.

Q: *If somebody told me, "Your whole life is one day," I wouldn't feel very positive.*

P: If it's a Perfect Day, you don't need two days. It's all there. You don't need a succession of days, it's all there, and it's one day. I never had that objection. It's possible, but apparently it doesn't really arise all that often.

Q: *Now you've got one. [laughter]*

P: Now both of these are an extension of simply asking the question, "If you had your druthers, how would it go?" So that's why it's mainly for somebody who has a hard time talking in answer to the question or who's ambivalent enough so that you're not sure of what you'll get if you simply ask. Then you do some extra stage-setting in setting this as a fantasy example and exercise.

Q: *One thing you had me do with a client once that somewhat fits in here, was to ask the question, “Did you try and fail, or were you just wishing that’s the way it was?” And that really helped to sharpen her up on things like not liking her job, wishing she could do this, that, and the other, and yet never having done anything to make that come about. I was presenting it as if she had actually given up on it, and somehow had been blocked—*

P: We did have a discussion, didn’t we, about wishing and wanting? And one connecting to motivation and trying, and the other not? Well, that kind of presentation to a client is one of the values of making that distinction. Indeed, you often hear that, where somebody talks as though they were really out there trying, and after a while you begin to get the idea that they’re not, but just complaining. Again, that’s most likely another Victim: “I tried, and it doesn’t happen, so I’m helpless to bring it about.”

Q: *I don’t know whether we’ve gone over this—one seems to be Nailing to the Wall, a therapist device in some sense, like you’ve given two or three different ways of nailing a client down. Someone says, “I don’t know what you’re talking about,”—*

Q: *A client where every time that I would present something to her, she’d say, “I’m not sure what you’re talking about.” She’d do some thumb sucking, and then I’d go into a little more detail, and she’d say something that would make that an impossibility. And so when she’d say, “I don’t know what you’re talking about, I don’t know what you’re talking about,” I asked you [Peter] what you’d do in that instance, and we role-played it, and about the first or second “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said, “I’m talking about you.” [laughter]*

P: It sounds like me.

Q: *It worked.*

P: That reminds me, there is something that I call Direct Talk, and that takes a bit of explaining, so maybe we’d better just start with that next time, because it’s eight-thirty now. Just remind me about Direct Talk next time. Also, for next time, review the self-concept, specifically that section in *What Actually Happens*. [V-D. Selves without Paradox]

Session 14

April 27, 1976

Placebo; Faith and skepticism (C. J. Peek); Direct Talk

Presentation by C. J. Peek: They've taken it for granted that the client can be helped and that the therapist can help them, and so they've resolved whatever doubts they might have had, if indeed they ever had any. What's of interest are the deviations from the paradigm case. Ordinarily we just act on faith every day. We simply take it that we're going to get where we're going and going to succeed, and we don't give it a second thought. In fact, we don't give it a first thought—it's not a matter of faith, it's a matter of something else like ###.

So the question is: what difference does that make? What significance does a deviation from that paradigm case make? The idea there is that if you—equivocal evidence counts differently, if you believe something or not. Take the example of driving. If he has some prior doubt about, say, the soundness of his car, then—say it's a steering irregularity or something like that, he has some prior doubt—then he's more likely to see equivocal things as evidence of the incapability of making the trip. Like some steering irregularity—if it didn't cross his mind that the car is unsound, he'd likely just correct for it as part of what it takes to get from A to B. If he has some prior doubt, he's likely to think, "Mmmm, maybe this is an expression of some unsoundness, and maybe I should stop or get it fixed or something else that would tend to interrupt the process." I guess fundamentally it's that different things count differently, depending on whether you're going to have faith or not. And within limits, anything can be taken as evidence that you can proceed or not. Like if you think of the example of driving.

It's true in psychotherapy, mostly, that people who simply don't raise the issue of feasibility are more likely to succeed, because to them, the feasibility is out of the question. So when there's a difficulty, it's a technical

problem; there's no in-principle difficulty. It doesn't occur to them that this can't be done, so if it's not working, it's got to be because they're not doing it right, it's a failure of one approach, it's time to look at this a different way, or some such thing that makes it a technical problem and not one of in-principle feasibility.

Q: *Are there any domains, though, where a person sees a feasibility problem, and because he sees a feasibility problem, it increases his likelihood of succeeding? I can't think of one offhand, but I'm trying to think of a case where the person would wonder about the outcome, but because of having that sort of posture, would be more likely to make the kind of distinctions along the way that would get him what he wants—his goal.*

CJ: Something like crossing a mine field.

Q: *That's a good one, and I'm not sure whether I'll get across the mine field, it's going to up the odds of getting across, than if I'm sure I'm going to get across. Because then the question is—I'm not sure I'm going to get across the mine field, but I'm sure I'm going to get across a field if I don't see it as a mine field ###.*

Q: *That's why 18-year-olds make better soldiers than 25-year-olds.*
[laughter]

Q: *CJ, one question was—did you read ### Frank's (book)?*

CJ: Yeah.

Q: *He ### the distinction of faith as being as strong a factor ### faith, cross-culturally, as being the ingredient in the human process, and it's not saying that things—it's not never crossing your mind that you couldn't ###—there's some kind of distinction, I'm not sure what it is.*

CJ: Well, if you are—like the history of medicine: there weren't any pharmacologically effective substances except more or less by accident before the turn of the 20th century, roughly. But for centuries, before the widespread use of active ingredients in medication, physicians had respected roles, and patients got better in spite of the inert or even dangerous nature of the treatment. So this is a phenomenon that calls for an explanation. Maybe one way to do it is to use the concept of faith as—you give

somebody something, and it doesn't cross his mind that it's not going to cure his headache. Then he goes around like a person whose headache has been cured, and that change in status, that redescription of where he is in relation to pain and everything else, may be the curative effect there. If you take it for granted that you've been cured, then you're less likely to see things as evidence that you're not. You can still see yourself as the kind of person who gets headaches, then if you have a little pain—"Oh, you know, that's just a little pain, it's not really a headache"—the equivocal evidence can go one way or the other in matters of faith. And also, in matters of faith, giving a piece of counter-evidence isn't nearly as decisive. So that if you believe something, it'll take a lot more to put you to the opposite belief than if you don't in the first place. And since we're rarely having complete, unequivocal evidence of anything, it puts the predisposition in a very important place.

Q: *Is there any conceptual difference between faith, expectation that something will happen—faith in something—and expectation that something will be the case?*

CJ: There is a difference.

Q: *You're positing faith as "the question isn't even asked".*

CJ: Right. It just doesn't come up. There is no question about this; whereas an expectation, there obviously is a question, and you formulate it in those terms. An expectation is something like a probabilistic notion, anyway. If you expect something, it's different from saying it's happening or going to happen, this is the way the world is—you know, *this happens*. When we have faith, then we have another explanation, there's an "unless" clause. Things happen according to the way we see them, as—if something contradicts that, and you have faith, the question of it not being true doesn't arise, then naturally you find another explanation. There's an "unless" clause that explains things that go contrary to what you believe is the case.

Q: *How about the example you gave us that you just assume, say, that you expect to get from X to Y, as you have faith that you'll get there. Either word could be used interchangeably.*

Q: —the words overlap, but I think CJ has pointed out that there are some places where they don't overlap. If you expect it in that sense, you've thought it through. If you have faith you haven't thought it through.

CJ: The light switch example: there's not a thought, "Gee, there's a good expectation that the light's going to go on when I flick this switch." And when it doesn't, you have to find an explanation for it. Why didn't it happen this time?

Q: But you're not likely to doubt the theory of electricity or something because the light doesn't come on. You immediately take it there's another explanation, and it's like the law of gravity: that's something that we just simply—there's nothing that will shake our confidence in that, because if we see things rising in the air, we'd have another explanation, other forces, but we never really doubt that. It's almost like the idea of something being non-falsifiable or true by definition.

Q: You don't have faith in gravity. I don't. [laughter]

CJ: I didn't say it doesn't cross your mind to doubt it.

Q: I don't think about gravity and say—

CJ: That's the point. You don't think about matters of faith unless you're really shaken up, and you just have no other way of explaining what's happened.

Q: Don't even observers have a term that—because you wouldn't even think to talk about it.

Q: I'm a little confused, because generally people who use the word "faith" the other way—I'll say, when I walk into Muenzinger, I know I'm going to get up to the third floor. And when people say, "How do you know that?", then you say, "Well, I'm intending to do that," and they say, "Oh, that's not the kind of thing you know. You might be predicting it, but that's not something you know," and finally I'm reduced to saying, "Well, I have faith that I'm going to get there." And it's almost as if I'm reduced to the word "faith" at the point at which I have doubt as to how it's going to be produced, rather than saying—

Q: *It's the point at which you have no doubt, that no further explanation—in fact, the true believer who has faith and says prayers, and the Lord always answers your prayers, always hears your prayers—there's nothing you can do contradict that, and if you found that your prayers were never answered, if you were a true believer, the question would never be whether or not there was a God, the question would instead be about the adequacy of your request.*

Q: *That's kind of like the answer to, "Why are you so angry at me?" and you go through a million reasons, and then finally the person says, "Well, I just feel that way."*

Q: *Yeah—you're using faith as the kind of thing that you don't have to make final-order appraisals about because they're already in place.*

Q: *It's the way you see the world, and it cannot be otherwise. But people don't appeal to it unless they have a question.*

Q: *I was thinking that normally you wouldn't have to make a final-order appraisal about—you wouldn't appeal to any other fact.*

CJ: *Maybe the clinically important part of it is that having faith frees somebody to do as well as they can, because they're not hindered by prior doubts that would limit their capacity. Having faith that what you're doing is going to succeed, or is succeeding, frees the person to do as well as he can, because then there are few kinds of things that would count as unfeasibility, that you can't go on, that you're failing. And so you're more likely, again, to find new approaches if things don't go right. It's like you won't take no for an answer.*

Q: *When a client of mine walks in the door for the first time~ it might be a little shaky, but it's not the gravity they're worrying about—[laughter, general discussion]*

Q: *—It makes an almost literally unspeakable thing, because once you have thought about it to the point where you can speak of it, it is no longer in that realm of the un-thought.*

CJ: *Well, you can pull something out that you ordinarily just take for granted, and, at a given time, think about it—like we're riding down the*

road and think about whether our tires are going to hold out, and if they don't, you're going to end up in the creek. Then you think about it a few minutes, and then you forget about it, and you go on treating everything as though it's going to work, without a thought. You see, if you really thought about that stuff all the time, you probably couldn't do much.

Q: *But we're talking about a process of therapy whereby someone ### what's the nature of this relationship? You make me do things I don't want to do, can you control my mind—then they ### kinds of questions that they develop as the relationship develops—*

CJ: It doesn't cross their mind to doubt that you're going to work on them, do something, for example. If you know a person a lot, it doesn't cross your mind that what they're doing is unfriendly or hostile. In fact, if you saw a friend doing something hostile, you'd be more likely to try to explain it away, some other way, if you're reluctant to accept the explanation that they were being unfriendly.

Q: *You're not claiming that in psychotherapy, the patient automatically has faith—*

CJ: No. This is a paradigm case.

Q: *—only that if he has faith, then he's more likely to succeed than if he doesn't have faith.*

CJ: And remember what I said about psychotherapy as a paradigm case. That means it probably never happens in practice. [laughter] How many paradigm cases of Rorschach protocols have you seen? Almost none—right? The same with this: the paradigm case doesn't have to ever actually occur in order to be—

Q: *Are there some therapists that you could imagine a large percentage of the patients see as somebody they have absolute faith in, and certain other therapists that the patients see and expect they wouldn't?*

CJ: Right. And a lot of our explanations are in using that placebo effect, in using faith-enhancing moves and things in therapy.

Q: *Would you make a distinction between that and confidence?*

CJ: I don't know—I suppose an extreme form of confidence—you're so confident that it doesn't cross your mind to doubt—it is faith. You can be confident but allow that it might go wrong, and be consciously aware, be taking a gamble. When you get in your car and drive away, it doesn't occur to you that you're taking a gamble unless you stop and think about it. You just drive, that's all.

Q: *There is a question of having over-confidence—too much faith? Or is there—*

CJ: Well, it depends. You've got to put your faith where it belongs. You can have faith in things that aren't real. Like you can have faith in ###, for example. Or a therapist who really doesn't have your best interests at heart.

Q: *Could there be cases of that sort where not having faith increases your chances of success? Recognizing it as a dangerous situation.*

CJ: Then you can talk about a higher order of faith, in which you incorporate the vision of obstacles, and the higher order of faith that you'll succeed in what you're doing and that you'll also see problems when they arise, and that you'll see things on the horizon that you need to take into account and not be blind to them. Like driving, again: you can see things coming that call for caution.

Q: *That's more judgment than faith.*

CJ: Again, you see, you can always shift things to a higher level that incorporates everything underneath, like you simply take for granted that you'll make good judgments when you're driving down the road.

Q: *I'm wondering if there's a certain point where the word "faith" isn't used to mean "I won't do that." I think there's a certain domain where it seems to have a good deal of sense, and that's the domain of religion, where religion would have a certain amount of sense, it has a certain amount of sense, I have faith separate certain kinds of features—there's a level on which you could describe it as a belief, as a final*

Q: *Could you put it into the diamond?* [PGO to the blackboard]

P: We may have gone through this before: a person takes it that something is the case, and this he does as an Actor. The act involves taking something to be the case. Now from a Critic's point of view,

Actor

Observer

Critic

Takes it that X

Knows that X

Is of the opinion that X

Is convinced (certain) that X

Intuits that X

Has the faith that X

the Critic will look at this, and ask about its basis. Depending on the basis for it, he will appraise it in one of these ways. For example, if P has the proper basis for taking it that X, then the Critic will say, "P knows that X." If P doesn't have the proper basis, but has some basis, then the Critic will say, "P believes that X." If there is no such thing as the proper basis, or if the basis that P has gives him very little basis, then the Critic will say that P is of the opinion that X. If the issue is how strongly, how certain, how open to doubt this is, then the Critic will say, "P is convinced that X." That's independent of how good his evidence is, he may be convinced of X or not. If P has no grounds, for example, in direct perception, when I look over there and see a wall, I don't have a grounds for thinking that it's a wall—I see the wall—in that case, when there is no evidence to be offered, or if P is not prepared to offer any, then the Critic says, "P has the intuition that X," or "P knows that X intuitively." Now, when P is convinced of X, and there is no basis, or at least P is not convinced on some basis but merely is convinced, then the Critic will say, "P has the faith that X." So the difference between faith and these others is not in the phenomenon, but in a Critic's judgment about its basis or some context. The context for this is that no question is raised, no doubt is offered, in spite of the fact that there's not a basis. If there's not a basis, one can raise a question and then generate some of these descriptions.

Q: *When you say there's not evidence, you're saying it's not a difference, not that there's not a basis at all?*

P: He doesn't take it that X on some basis; he simply takes it that X. He never raises the question, and, therefore, the issue of there being a basis never comes into the picture.

Now, this shows up in behavior, in your description of whether you're doing it or whether you're trying. For example, if I have the faith that the switch turns on the light, if I turn the switch and you say, "What are you doing?" I'll say, "I'm turning on the light." If I merely have an expectation, I'll say, "I'm turning the switch on in order to get the light to go on." That is, I restrict my action description to the domain in which I have the faith; whereas, the expectation is expressed as the consequence of my behavior. If I have expectations, when I drive the car, and you ask me what I'm doing, I'll say, "I'm moving this stuff around to try to get the car to get from here to Crossroads." If I have faith, and you ask me what I'm doing, I'll say, "I'm driving from here to Crossroads." The mark of faith is that you give a simple description of what it is you're doing, whereas the mark of expectation, belief, etc., comes in a description that says what you're trying to accomplish, what you hope to accomplish, but may or may not.

Now, the faith that leads you to say, "I'm driving the car to Crossroads," is not certainty, in that if you raise the question, you darn well admit that there could be accidents, that lightning could strike, etc. So it's not certainty; it's simply that you have no reason to expect otherwise, via Maxim 1: that if you have the experience of driving, you have no basis on this occasion for thinking that it's any different, and for raising the question of whether you will actually succeed. Any more than I have any basis for questioning if I want to write the word "knows" whether I'm going to succeed.

Q: *Is that the distinction between being and doing?*

P: It's close, because if you think of how it operates in therapy, if you ask me what I'm doing, I'll say, "I'm getting cured"—if I have faith. If I merely have expectation, I'll say, "I'm seeing a therapist in the hope of getting cured or in order to get cured." As CJ says, if what I'm doing is getting cured, then anything that looks different will simply be a technical difficulty, and I'll adjust and keep going, if it's at all possible, limited only by my imagination.

Q: *You'll accept anything as part of the cure.*

P: Not anything, but I'm more likely to accept any given thing as part of the cure, because, after all, that's what I'm doing.

Q: *Where does the Observer fit in this?*

P: The Observer establishes that "P takes it that X," and also what the basis is. Then, as Critic, you make the judgment about the relation between the basis and the taking it that X.

Q: *The Critic establishes that P takes it that X?*

P: No, the Observer does. He also establishes what the evidence is. Then the Critic makes a judgment, appraisal, about the connection between the evidence and the—

Q: *The Critic is also being more or less tentative about whether, in fact, it's the case, too, isn't he? It seems that if he says he knows that, then he's aligning himself with that particular—*

P: Yeah. Any of the other ones is a disclaimer. Now, what about being and doing here? If I'm in the process of getting cured in therapy, then you might say I've already started to be a person who is cured. I'm already being that way because I've started on something that's going to end that way. It's like the Eight-Year-Old Astronaut, who's already an astronaut even before he graduates from college. So here, I'm already being a cured client, and to some extent, because I'm already being that way, I get better at being a cured client. Till finally I get good enough at it so that I am cured.

CJ: —the placebo effect again: you give somebody a bread pill and tell them it's going to cure them.

P: Did you give an explanation of what a placebo is?

CJ: Any procedure or substance which has an effect on the phenomenon of interest but whose activity isn't conceptualized in the phenomenon. Like giving a bread pill to somebody, the action of which isn't conceptualized in medical terms, for example. It's considered a placebo because in that case, what counts is—that's what's real. Things that have an effect that aren't conceptualized are called placebos and relegated to the status of artifact.

Namely, “artifact” is something that’s produced solely by the procedures involved and not conceptualized in the phenomenon. So like for a medical thing, the procedure of administration generates—the administration by a respected physician will lead to certain effects, and those effects aren’t conceptualized in the account, as why aspirin works in the body.

Q: ###

CJ: You also have the matter of negotiation probability, that on the first, you can expect , but as you go down, the probability that you will diminishes.

P: Well, this is probably maximum [blackboard].

Q: ### *would that be a placebo?*

CJ: Unless you conceptualize ### in some way—it doesn’t have to be. That’s one thing about—you’ve got to make a distinction between popular definitions of placebo and our definition of placebo. Popular definitions make it that something that isn’t explainable in the physiological, biochemical domain—that kind of language—things that aren’t [change tape]—the effect of administration. They’re interested in the effect of the aspirin on the body. So then you can call the other thing a placebo. But if you’re a psychologist, then the placebo thing is real in your explanatory domain.

Q: *Psychologists use those facts, too.*

CJ: That raises an interesting question, in that if psychology is the explanatory domain for placebos, then are there placebos in psychology? And you can find parallels, like for example, talks about how to his great surprise, things like expectancy and social desirability have an important role in the results in classical conditioning. There’s the theoretical language of classical conditioning, and to help explain those results, he uses terms—classical conditioning calls it “molecular behavior”. Then to help explain the results, he calls upon terms like “expectancy” and “social desirability”, “suggestibility”, and those are terms from molar behavior theory, and they’re a domain apart. So you might say that the suggestibility and so on – they’re from a different theoretical domain entirely – are placebos in psychology. The conceptualization of placebos that we’re working with

here doesn't legislate any observers out of business a priori, like the popular definitions do, where something has to be biochemical in order to count as real.

Q: *In a limited conceptual domain, if there is an effective cure, is there necessarily going to be placebos, if those cures act outside of the limiting facts, like in psychoanalysis or behaviorism? In Descriptive Psychology, or in an adequate conceptual field, is there any room for placebo, or does placebo just become a description of other people's account within their theoretical framework?*

CJ: If you have a theoretical framework that takes in everything that you observe, if all aspects of the phenomena you're observing are incorporated in the theoretical framework, then there's no room for a placebo. And since Descriptive has—

P: How come we keep talking about “placebo effect” in therapy? You can refine it even further. If you're dealing with an explanation, and, according to that sort of explanation, what you do has no business working, then you explain the fact that it does work by talking about a placebo effect.

Q: *Why do you call our moves “placebo moves”?*

P: If you just look at what you did, you can't come up with a decent explanation of why it should work. Since it does—well, it turns out that the explanation is of this sort, and it's status dynamics, but if you just take it at a certain level, there really is no reason why certain things ought to work, and so you talk about placebo effects.

Q: *This is like the physiology business again. Within the language of physiology, there's no place for those sorts of things, so when those sorts of things happen, you either have to talk—add something of that sort or as a placebo. Placebo becomes the pejorative term where simply pointing to different levels of logical explanation wouldn't be.*

CJ: It's the difference between saying “It's not real” and “It's not my business”.

Q: *Right, because the physiologists could very well note that giving a bread pill can effectively change certain behavior, but he also is willing to*

talk about it outside the language of physiology—how is it effective? Is it because—

CJ: Insofar as he's a biologist, he's not concerned with that other stuff. And if he talks about the other stuff, like the molar behavior theory stuff, then he's not only a biologist but a psychologist.

P: I think that talking about placebo effects in therapy is more a matter of technical convenience, because you're generally thinking along certain lines, and maybe at a certain level of description, and relative to that level of description, what you're doing hadn't ought to work, but it does, so you call it "placebo". If you wanted to speak more carefully and in more detail, but also in a much more cumbersome way, then you would talk differently, and it wouldn't be a placebo; but that way of talking is not as useful because it's too detailed, it's cumbersome, and—

Q: *—it's like if you had perfect faith that you could explain it, you wouldn't talk about it as placebo. When you have a doubt as to whether could it be the kind of thing that works—that's when you talk about placebos.*

P: Well, no. When I talk about placebos in therapy, at least when I'm doing it, very often I plan it, I do it on purpose, I take it its going to work, but I don't want to talk about it in as detailed a way as would explain it. So I just say "that's a placebo".

Q: *Okay, but that's a cover term that you use rather than that you have a theoretical commitment either way.*

Q: *—also Move 2, in that you're not sure—there was some probability there, but you were taking it as a given, and in that sense you're calling it a placebo move.*

P: Let me give you an example of a placebo move. Suppose that we use this Actor/Observer/Critic as a heuristic, and then tell the person to give himself the benefit of the doubt, and that's his exercise for the week. That's the basic move, that's what ought to work. Now consider these additional procedures: (1) You tell him that it's something he can do on purpose. Notice that that, in a sense, is a faith-inducing move. (2) You tell him that it works better if he understands what's going on. Since you've just

explained what's going on, to tell him that it works better if he understands it is also a faith-inducing move. (3) Just to nail it down, you also tell him that that's why you're telling him.

Q: *You're defining "placebo"—you can conceptualize it directly as any move that works mainly because of faith. For instance, if I told you—if you're a patient and you're crazy in some way, and I say to you—and I knew it was the kind of thing that if you saw yourself as different, you would change—and I said to you, "What I want you to do every night before you go to bed is count to 70, slowly, just do that, and next week you're going—you're not going to be in as bad a shape as you are now," and if next week you weren't in as bad a shape because you believed that would work—counting to 70 doesn't work, so something else is happening—then we'd talk about that as a placebo move, because they're going to take this that ### anything, that they're going to take two aspirin and go to sleep or run around the block.*

P: Notice how that resembles the exercise, though. Initially I'd say, "Give yourself the benefit of the doubt." Now if he does that, that should work. But how do I get him to do that? How do I get him to do it right? Partly, you see, by doing faith-inducing moves. That helps to get him to do it, and to do it right, and to stay with it, and not doubt it too much, and carry it through.

CJ: Sometimes Salting the Mine things can help that way, like if you have somehow led him to believe that counting to 70 would help, and then in fact it did, it would be faith-inducing in itself to have something have that effect: build the desired effect in at the beginning, which lends credibility to the whole—

Q: *—especially using standardized scales, given the items you expect to have anyway like putting your hand out, holding it out stiff, and putting something in your hand—you can talk about that for 60 or 70 seconds before you suggest that the hand is now getting tired and heavy. If you hold your arm out, your arm gets tired and heavy. So you do Salt the Mine.*

P: Think of the statement that the critical thing in therapy is to maintain the client's faith, that that's the operative thing. And then think of that as a double negative. Given the explanation that you've given about how

faith operates, imagine the effect were the client to lose faith in you and start doubting what you said. You'd have a hard time. So you could put it that your problem in therapy is to do things that will maintain the client's faith—not in the sense that faith is the only thing that works, but that if you don't have it, you lose the effectiveness of whatever you are doing.

Q: *That gives me new respect for charlatans, because these are characters that go through extraordinary means to maintain faith.*

P: Well, the issue is: do they cure people through their faith, or do they just maintain faith for a long time?

Q: *I suppose that if they merely maintain faith, they're a charlatan. If they effectively maintain faith, they're whatever the good connotation of that is.*

P: Yeah. You could do a crude job of explaining faith by simply introducing the word "eligibility" and say that any faith-inducing move is a way of increasing the person's eligibility to succeed in the ways that you want him to succeed. But that won't do justice to the ins and outs of faith-inducing operations, but it will give you some kind of handle. Again, think of the example and think of ###, saying this is something you can do on purpose, as increasing his eligibility to do it. And saying "it helps when you understand, and since you already understand, you're better off with respect to it"—all of these are increasing the eligibility.

CJ: Also, for obvious pitfalls, having an explanation that explained them away ahead of time, so you kind of take away the possibilities for ###.

Q: *That's the principal feature of most of the major religious beliefs that are—*

CJ: So that a good feature of a good religion is one that no matter what happens, it fits.

Q: *Or a good personality theory.*

CJ: Right. You're never left without some explanation that fits. You're never left without something to say in the case of a personality theory.

P: Well, that's no more true than with a general scientific approach.

You see flying saucers, you see ghostly shapes, and you say, “Well, there’s obviously a naturalistic explanation of this,” and you believe it.

Q: *But a standard criticism of psychoanalysis is that you can make anything into it, and at the same time, that’s a standard sort of compliment to the theory.*

CJ: One criticism in here, talking about this sometimes sounds like hocus-pocus. Sometimes people say, “Well, you know we—” giving this example of classical conditioning. I’ll say, “No, we do experiments using suggestibility and all these other terms, and so we really have included it in our theory, and it really isn’t placebo, because it’s right there in our experiments, and we have data that included all these variables,” and then make the distinction between a theoretical paradigm and an experimental: that just because you add a variable doesn’t enlarge your theory, only your experiments. You might say that this is a distinction between experiments in which all the variables are conceptualized in a single theory. That way you can test the relations between things in the theory. But you might have to neglect certain aspects of the phenomena, because you can’t conceptualize them in your theory. So if you’re interested primarily in the theory, you need to sometimes call a “monolithic experimental paradigm”, to borrow an engineering term, where everything in it is built on the same substratum—classical conditioning. You can throw an expectancy that that’s a ### variable, so by throwing in expectancy into a classical conditioning experiment, you haven’t included expectancy in classical conditioning—you’ve just included it in an experiment. But if your interest is primarily in the phenomenon, and there are many aspects, and no single theory handles them all, then you might do a hybrid experiment in which you have different sorts of things, different theories, but the variables are interacting in an experiment. But that you’ve got a hybrid experiment doesn’t mean that you have hybrid theory. So you still have, in a sense, a sort of placebo thing going even if the variables are included in a single experiment.

Q: *Placebo is relative to one theory ###.*

CJ: Right. You only have—a placebo only makes sense in relation to something that’s not a placebo. Because nothing is intrinsically a placebo.

It depends on your conceptualization, and the contrast between one domain and another domain, and the one you're working in—that's real, and the other one is placebo, and they can be reversed depending on who you are and what you're doing. So that lets everybody have a piece of the action, and nobody is legislated out of business by their approach to things. And that's a departure from the traditional definition of placebo, in which something has to be in the physiological domain in order to count as real.

P: —*the sequential effect on the learning process, like in therapy or like in biofeedback training, and so forth.*

CJ: It's like if you can divide up a learning process into stages, some number of stages, which you've got to do in order—to get to 4, you've got to get 3, and so on back—and at each point, you lack faith, you're skeptical, then you enlarge the range of things that can go wrong, that can convince you this isn't possible, this can't be done, or I can't do it. And it's cumulative, like if you're so skeptical that you only have a 20% chance here, and a 20% chance here, the end result is pretty darn slim. But if you have faith, that is, if it doesn't cross your mind that you can't do this, then you're more likely to make it here, and that puts you in a position to make it here, and so on. So since most things are sequential like this, a little bit of skepticism can go a hell of a long way in reducing the probability of success.

P: Or a little bit of faith can go a long ways in bootstrapping you up.

Q: *Is there a thing called "a little bit of faith"?*

P: Yep. Just like there's a little bit of luck.

Q: *A little bit of luck, I understand, but—*

Q: *Wouldn't a little bit of faith be like being a little bit pregnant?*
[laughter]

P: Just think of some near transpositions: a little more self-confidence, and he could do it; a little more self-acceptance, and he could do it.

Q: *Okay, that's fine, but ###—a little more faith. It sounds more like the notion of a circle which is open or closed, partially open.*

P: No, you can have more and less faith.

CJ: What you said sounded to me like “a little bit of faith is like a lot of skepticism”.

P: No. Remember the feedback loop of Actor/Observer/Critic. If you have a bad Critic who will rule out anything you do as acceptable, and any possible thing to do as also unacceptable, ### a little more self-acceptance and you’ll be accepting some of these, and thereby continuing, whereas a little less self-acceptance and you’re stymied because you chop everything off. And that’s where a little bit more self-acceptance, a little more faith, a little more self-confidence—

Q: *All those words I can buy except the word “faith”, because “faith” strikes me as either you have faith in the whole network, or some sense of it. You have faith in that or you don’t have faith in that.*

P: No. You have more in molecular descriptions. You can talk about your degree of faith in yourself, and you can probably transpose that into complete faith in certain things about yourself and skepticism about other things; but when you combine them and talk about a certain degree of faith, talk about people having more and less faith in themselves.

Q: *I’m hearing you use the word “faith” now, it’s like the way you would use degrees of certainty.*

P: But remember, certainty is different from faith.

Q: *I know. That’s why I’m raising the question.*

P: But they’re parallel. You see, in this one the emphasis is on the strength of conviction. This one is also on the basis of not raising any questions. So over here the issue is, “How much do you raise questions and how much don’t you?” If you’re not just dealing with a single question, but with a task domain, then you can quantify and say, “To what extent does this person raise questions about what he’s doing, and to what extent doesn’t he? To what extent does he just go ahead and take it for granted that he can do it, and do it?” And then you’ve got a quantification. When you’re working in therapy, mainly you’ve got a handle on it at the level of self-confidence, acceptance of this, that, and the other, and you’re working to generate more faith.

Q: *So degree of faith is relational to the degree of questions you have about that faith.*

P: That is, it's the inverse of the degree of skepticism, the degree to which you raise questions and require proof or evidence. To the extent that you're raising questions and requiring evidence and judging it critically, you're skeptical. To the extent that you're just plunging ahead and doing it, you have faith.

Q: *It sounds like you're talking about faith in faith, in the sense that the degree in which you have—the degree to which you do or don't ask questions about the faith—*

P: I'm not talking about faith in faith. I'm talking about faith in yourselves. You can also do it in terms of burden of proof. If you feel like doing something, and you're not skeptical, you don't raise questions. You simply act it unless something occurs to you, then you have self-confidence, you have faith in yourself.

Q: *If you ask any questions, do you have faith?*

P: Yeah. You can ask certain questions and not others.

Q: *—degrees of faith in terms of particulars.*

P: That's why I say that if you hit it at different levels, you can talk at one level about degree of faith, and another level at either yes/no. For example, if I have the urge to drink a chocolate malt, I may raise questions about small, medium, or large, but not raise questions about should I or shouldn't I? So I raise one kind of question but not another. And at that level, yes, I did this; or no, I didn't do that. But at the global level of "how do I deal with that chocolate malt", I had some faith, but not complete.

Q: *That's one of the ways clients go on in therapy or why they come in.*

P: Yeah. Think of Choosing Your Movements. There's a skepticism-inducing situation, because as soon as you survey that, you say, "You can't do it." And you're right. If you had to do it that way, you couldn't do it, so you'd have grounds for being skeptical. And showing you how it isn't done

that way is, again, a faith-inducing move. Now you can see how it could be done.

CJ: Another thing here in this process. If at each point the person doesn't raise substantial questions—of all possible questions, only a few of them can be raised—totally there's a high degree of faith. A person, when he faces what appears to be failure, is in a better position to use that information creatively to succeed. It's not just at the level his competence would predict, but greater. The level exceeds his competence. If you won't take no for an answer, if you just simply can't fail, then you're more likely to find a way to succeed, to use that information creatively to exceed your competence, and that would be an explanation for overachievers, people who really do better than they really have any right to expect—on the basis of their competence. They regularly exceed their competence. You can explain it that way.

Q: *I can't remember your argument against ###—it sounds like some more kind of thing—someone could say, "Well, I don't have that much faith in therapy," and you go one step below that, and you get a little more molecular, and you say, "Well, I don't have faith in this, this, this, and this—don't you have faith in this?" And they say, "NO, that's made up of this, this, this, this, I don't have faith in them."*

Q: *Is being partially skeptical mostly faithful?*

CJ: I don't think it is, because you can take an issue of whether you're going to succeed, and divide it up into any number of elements, and each element can be either on or off—

Q: *That's why I used the word "faithful", and I'm wondering about—it sounds like when you're no longer skeptical, you're no longer asking questions, then you're faithful.*

P: It depends on how many elements. If you have a hundred elements, and you only raise question about one, then—yeah. But mostly you have faith, and you're a little bit skeptical. On the other hand, if you have only two possibilities, and you raise questions about one, then you're not mostly with faith, because half the time you're skeptical.

Q: *If there's a particular element or particular item, it strikes me you can be either faithful or you're skeptical.*

P: You have to consider repetitions, because you have the problem of talking about a single occasion, in terms of faith, for the same reason that you have a problem talking about a single occasion as an expression of ability or as an expression of probability. For one occasion, it's fairly vacuous to attribute what happened to a certain probability or to a certain ability or to faith. On the other hand, if over a period of time, given the same issue, like trusting your judgment, if mostly a person doesn't raise questions, then you can say he has a lot of faith even though, on certain occasions, he did raise questions. But it's the kind of thing that one repeats over and over in the course of one's life. And one can identify that the same issue came up over and over, and that mostly it works this way, sometimes it works that way. So you get repetition as a basis for codification of degree of faith, too.

Q: *You can't deal with one element—it's like you can't have—if somebody says, "I do not have faith in therapy," they're saying they're not seeing it as—what they see is that it's an all-or-nothing thing. "I do not have faith in therapy"—what they're doing really is reducing it to particulars.*

P: Yeah. Your faith-inducing move there would be to say, "Well, this kind of therapy works whether you have faith in it or not." [laughter] And then you'd better be able to deliver. If you don't, then you lose faith.

Q: *In yourself?*

P: Yeah. As a matter of fact, I've used that kind of faith in the same way. For example, the exercises—I almost routinely say, "This will work whether you believe in it or not. You just have to do it." Again, it's faith-inducing, but it's also true. The fact is that the exercises ought to work whether you believe it or not, and indeed, all it requires is that you do it. It's like saying, "Look, if you keep jumping up and down, your leg muscles will get bigger, and it doesn't matter whether you believe they will or not. It will happen. But knowing that will give you faith and make it more likely." [general conversation]

P: You see, for this kind of thing when you're meeting resistance, you can connect faith-inducing moves to salesmanship. A good salesman is

one who shows you how it's really possible for you to own this thing that he's selling. That's what he does. He shows you, "This could really be yours. All you have to do is A, B, C, D." [general conversation] Notice that showing the person how it could really be his is not that different from presenting an image that shows him what he could do to get out of the bind he's in. That, too, shows him how it's really possible. Because of that, it is a faith-inducing move. So faith-inducing moves are not always placebos. Because if it's clear why it ought to work, including why it ought to increase faith, then you don't call it a placebo. So you have to be on your toes, depending on what kind of objections or skepticism you get.

Q: *To the true believing biological psychiatrist, the real organicist, psychotherapy is all placebos.*

P: Just tell them that there are genuine physiological correlates of this procedure.

Q: *Or he uses that as a pejorative [change tape]*

P: I guess if you restrict it to spontaneous questions, I think so.

Q: *It seems like it's a lot easier to undermine faith than to build it.*

P: Over a wide range, but if you've ever tried to decrease the faith of a true believer, you wouldn't jump to that conclusion that easily.

Q: *—or degrees of faith, faith you either have or don't have, although you can become more and more skeptical about a certain kind of explanation, or more and more faithful. If you're faithful or you're—I'm not seeing faith and skepticism as a yin-yang sort of thing.*

P: They are.

Q: *You talked about being able to raise questions about technique or details or something like that—you could still raise questions not about success or failure, but about technique and details.*

Q: *That changes the subject.*

P: You see, if you stay at the same level, it's a complementary relationship. If you switch levels, you can generate almost any kind of relationship.

Q: *If you stay at the same level, it's being either faithful or skeptical. You can't be a degree of each.*

P: No. If you go global, you can talk about degree of faith and degree of skepticism.

Q: *Otherwise we wouldn't have to invent terms like "the true believer", to discriminate between the true believer and the mere believer.*

Q: *I was wondering how you can become more faithful—once you're faithful, how you can become more faithful.*

CJ: A wider range, not deeper.

Q: *You learn different facts, each time you deal with different facts, so that's not the issue, The issue is—*

CJ: Once you move beyond conviction and belief to the point where you no longer consider it, you've moved that element into the faith.

P: Raise the same question about if you become more non-distractible. If you're not distracted, how can you become more non-distractible? The answer is, you're more non-distracted if you can stay non-distracted in the face of a louder noise. You have greater faith if you can maintain the faith in the face of greater pressure. So there's various dimensions along which you might quantify, and you can be uneasy about some or another, but certain of them—.

There's one other thing with respect to faith and the unquestioning aspect of it. Somewhere along the line, I think it was in connection with self-concept, I commented that people divide the world into two realms, one of which is the given, and the other is the domain of choice. The given is fixed, it's unthinkable that it would be otherwise, and it doesn't present you with any behavioral opportunities. It presents the constraints within which you have opportunities. The range of opportunities is what you make your choices among, but that occurs within the context of a set of things that are givens, that are not matters of choice. Now you can take that distinction, and look at the domain of the given and say, "That's where faith comes in. That's what you don't raise questions about because you don't see any questions to be raised." So you can use the model of a machine with

moving parts, but there's a fixed structure that never changes. The possible happenings are simply the positions of the moving parts, like a three-position switch. At one time it's here, at another time it's here, at another time it's here, and those are the three possible things that can happen. What can't happen is that the switch itself changes. That's the given, that's what no question can be raised about. And that's what's needed in order to apply these three possibilities.

Q: *In terms of inducing faith, our first move in inducing faith with a client is not to consider whether or not we can help them, but how—it's a "how" question, so the next move has got to be saying, "Well, I've listened to you speling in this interview, and my associate here is even better—" your associate just always ###—"I'm pretty sure I could, but I know so-and-so could. Why don't you see him?"*

Q: *I think you could do it smoother, like it's not that we're going to get you a better therapist—it's all a hoax, I mean. [laughter—general conversation].*

P: That's the Art Critic problem.

Q: *"Of course we'll help you, and we'll do the intake, and then assign you to the person who can help you the most, since there aren't that many people with your kind of special—"*

P: If you don't do anything but cross-refer, you lose faith after a while.

Q: *I'll always refer my people to you—after I see them once, you always see them once and refer them to me.*

P: Then if I then refer them to you or to him, and he refers them to him, pretty soon they wonder ### the client.

Q: *Twice with the real skeptic.*

P: Well, in point of fact, it does work. The other thing is, you use that as a threat. If you don't shape up, I'm going to refer you to so-and-so. He'll really take care of you. [laughter]

Q: *—the person who's succeeded in being skeptical about himself.*

Q: *It seems like that kind of a move can be usually interpreted the other way, too, like, "Oh, my God, I must have such a terrible problem that ###."*

P: That's why you have to sound like you meant it when you say, "I'm pretty sure I could help you, but I *know* that—I'm so careful, I don't want to take *any* chances."

Q: *I can do it in three weeks, where he can do it in like just two sessions.*

Q: *If we could bring this into a practical matter that comes up with psychologists a lot, like in mental hospitals—working in a mental hospital they'll say, "I want to see a doctor," and this happens once in a while, and you'll say, "I can help you—I'll see what's going on," and they'll say, "Are you a psychiatrist?" And sometimes they're either too picky because they really don't have much going on, they really have to do it that way. Other times it's really as though they have this problem that is so heavy that they would need this giant pill, which is hard to swallow, to get any better. You have to find out first where that person is at, but ### you have to deal with, because of the faith that some persons have in the M.D.*

P: How do you deal with it?

Q: *I'll let you talk about that.*

P: You could say, "I'm a real doctor, and you don't want just a physician."

Q: ###

P: That's the polemic. If you need a counter-polemic, that's one.

CJ: In Wardenburg, for example, I end up getting a lot of biofeedback cases, and I get a buildup ahead of time. Everybody expects I'm the biofeedback guy, and they're already prepared to be dealt with by an expert. So then you take it for granted it's going to work in the presentation. Like you don't—you talk to them and present it to them in such a way there's just simply no room in your mind that they're not going get better. If in your mind there's no room, then they have to reject it themselves. It's a powerful ###, and you can follow through if you know what kind of buildup people have been getting.

Q: *CJ,—the danger if it didn't work for someone after all that kind of build-up, then they would have the same kind of thing that—"It worked for everyone, but it didn't work for me".*

CJ: There's always an explanation for why something doesn't work. And generally it turns out, in my experience, that people who take it for granted that this is going to work, it does work. People who don't work are people who are skeptical, and you can't convince them otherwise. And it's amazing how much farther you can get in almost no time at all in biofeedback, somebody who just thinks it's going to happen.

P: By the way, I might add: the same holds for interpreting projective tests. It's amazing what a little bit of self-confidence does for the ease and speed with which you pick up the knack. And you have not just a machine to give you feedback. You've got an expert. Again, in the same context, if somebody wants a physician, you say, "Well, I'm a specialist and not just a physician. I'm a specialist in thus and such, which you have." [laughter]

Q: —*those Fictitious Statistics.*

P: Yeah. [general conversation]

Q: *At what point do you start talking about the hero syndrome?*

P: When it gets unrealistic.

Q: *You once said that if you were on your heroic quest, nothing would count as a failure.*

P: A nice position to be in, isn't it?

Q: *Not if you encounter windmills.*

P: Who's counting the failure? There's two versions of the hero. One I think I've mentioned, and that is that "There's got to be a way to make things go right, and it's up to me to find it." This is an occupational hazard for therapists. Somehow it's up to you to cure that client every time, completely, quickly. You need to watch out for it, because plenty of times it isn't up to you, there's nothing you can really do to help that client, and you do what you can to terminate—you refer them or do something else. But it isn't up to you to solve all of the world's ills.

The other version of the hero may be more what you were thinking of, and that is, “My strength is as the strength of ten because my heart is pure.” This is not so much endemic among therapists, but you encounter it occasionally among clients who do all kinds of strange things and think that they ought to succeed because, after all, they mean well. Their heart’s in the right place, and why aren’t they succeeding?

Q: —also the anti-hero, as therapists’ very common sort of model: the guy feels his heart is pure because he’s done what he can, and that’s a problem that’s much more prevalent than the other two.

Q: That gets back to this case of many and most therapists, that their heart’s in the right place, they’re doing what they think is right for the client, and they do all they can, and if they—if we succeed, we succeed; and if we don’t, we don’t.

P: How do we know when we’ve done all we can? I think we have to somewhere stop trying. If you succeed, you have no problem. That’s clear.

Q: —attitude, in that you decide when you’ve—

Q: Well, who else is to decide?

P: PSRO. [Professional Standards Review Organization] Remember, there’s a lot of judgments for which two heads are better than one, simply on the ground that it’s unlikely that both of you will make the same mistake at the same time.

Q: If you think there’s a mistake being made.

P: No, if you even wonder. Often it’s good to check with a colleague. You see that it can get pretty sticky if you keep failing to make the judgment that you’ve done everything you could and find you can do something else.

Q: And faith in doing everything you could—it’s just doing everything that’s right for the situation.

P: And when have you really run out of things to do?

Q: Never. That’s why “everything you could”—the absolute—doesn’t make sense.

P: So somewhere you have to make the judgment, and your own view of your task, of yourself, etc., will make a difference.

Come back to that machine business—the fixed and the moveable, and then think of what we said about self-concept as being one of the ways of formulating what your behavior potential is, and the fact that if that's inaccurate, you can limit your behavior potential—in that sense—artificially. You can have a three-position switch and believe that there's only two positions, and that's all you'll ever try. On the other hand, you can see from this analysis of faith that there are plenty of things which, if you don't believe you can do it, in fact, you can't do it. I think we raised that question very early—in fact, maybe our first session—in looking at the case where the coach says to the runner, “Come on, I know you can do it,” and you observe and you say, “Well, he, in fact, *can* do it if the coach tells him that, but if the coach doesn't tell him that, then he can't do it.” That is, it's the coach's telling him that inspires him, it gets him to do something that he couldn't otherwise do. And if the coach is talking as though it didn't depend on that, then that's part of what has that effect: “I know you can do it”. Or you make the judgment that he really could if he had a little more self-confidence.

Q: *Or he tries harder.*

P: That's what it would take to make him try harder—the faith that he could actually do it.

This notion of faith has a mirror image of a different kind of skepticism, namely, constraint. Here we've been talking about faith as something that opens doors for you, that makes possible things that would otherwise not have been possible. The mirror image is that it operates as a constraint since it isn't questioned, and, therefore, can also limit your behavior potential. You see this, for example, when you're inclined to call somebody a fanatic. He's got all kinds of faith, but it limits what he can do, because it only leaves him certain leeways rather than others that, in some sense, he really has.

Q: *The fanatic is specialized, and in that realm, he's—###.*

P: That's one of the more common problems that you have to deal with in therapy, is within some restricted realm, you're facing somebody

who doesn't believe it can be done, doesn't believe he can do it. He comes in with a Victim act that says, "I *can't*." And then part of your job is to get him to see that it could really be his, and that's the genesis of some of the policies. One of the prime ones is, don't buy any Victim act. Even if it, in fact, is impossible for a person to do a given thing, don't just buy his account of how come it's impossible and why he can't do it.

A variation on that was the policy of making anger interpretations instead of fear interpretations, and the reason is essentially the same: that you have much more control over expressions of anger than expressions of fear. Therefore, you're much less likely to be in a helpless position if you're acting out of anger than if you're acting out of fear. Again, the policy of treating the person as a person who makes choices—if you make a given choice, then you could have made a different choice. Again, the emphasis is on your control, what you can do, rather than on what happened to you, what you were victimized by. So the thrust of some number of the different policies and examples and procedures that we've talked about is increasing eligibility, eliminating skepticism in the form of Victim acts, and then somewhere along the line doing enough things that ought to work whether you have faith or not, so as to maintain the faith.

I once did an exercise on the business of "all you've got to do in therapy is maintain the client's faith in you," and took that seriously, and asked, "How would it work out in detail?" and the answer that came out is, "In order to maintain the client's faith so as to succeed in therapy, you have to be able to do everything that you would have to be able to do if you couldn't count on faith at all."

Q: *You'd have to be an effective therapist.*

P: Yeah. Because if you can't do those things, if you can't get changes to happen without his already believing it, somewhere along the line, he's going to lose faith. You have to be able to bring about changes with less than the full cooperation of the client. Then that generates the faith that you can really help him, and that it isn't just him doing it on his own. And that in turn—that faith—gives him further eligibility further down the line. But at all times, you're maintaining a level of faith, and using it later; but when you use it later, you're not using it up. You're still maintaining so that

you can use it later. Otherwise, you may come to a dead end.

So the exercises are things that by and large will work whether there's faith or not. You have additional faith-inducing moves like telling the person that he can do it on purpose because they do work anyhow, etc.

Q: *What if he's already doing it?*

P: No, not the exercises, usually. The images are more the kind—if you see it, it's over with so fast that faith doesn't come into the picture as to whether you can see it or not. By that time, you've already seen it. If a client has difficulty with an image, you just go right on by and say, "Don't sweat it, we'll come back to this." You don't let it build up negatively. Once he sees it, then you get a good effect by telling him that he's already been doing it—if he can recognize, under that description, that he has already been doing it. For example, remember in the case of depression, I said that one of the powerful moves there is to tell the client that he's mad as hell at the world, that he has good reason for being that way, and is expressing it very, very effectively, and has been doing that. Telling him that he has been expressing it effectively is much more effective than telling him that you know he can. Because after all, if you're actually doing it, there is no question about your eligibility or about the possibility, or whether you can really do it, etc. You have to get him to see it. You can't just tell him that. But that's the thing about legitimization: that you have to show the client what sense he makes, not just tell him.

Q: *Would you say things like, "I wouldn't expect you to see that yet?"*

Q: *—when the client comes in, and he's putting on a dumb act and saying they can't remember anything you said last week, and you tell them don't worry about it, because it'll have an effect anyway?*

P: Yeah. It's not uncommon. Although I wouldn't say it's common, it's not uncommon, and my usual response is something on that order, that, "Yeah, a lot of times it's hard to remember, but I figure that the things we do here are the kind that will have an effect whether you remember them or not. And if it's important that you remember it, then I'll review it with you each week and make sure that you have it. So don't worry about remember-

ing.” And that gives you, then, a whole lot of options as to what you review and what you don’t. But it gets the client out of the difficulty that, “Gee, how can I remember all that stuff?”

Q: *Also, one does it—it’s a resistance.*

P: And that you don’t even talk about. I’m just reminded: one of the therapist devices that should be on the list there is a Sneaky Interpretation. I think that what we need is another heading that simply says “Therapist Devices” because, last time, we came across about four of them that didn’t fit any of the headings. So I think the Sneaky Interpretation is another one of those that’s simply a Therapist Device. The essential character of a Sneaky Interpretation is to make an interpretation that would normally be recognized by a therapist as an interpretation, not only as an interpretation but as a possibly controversial one, and pass it off as obvious. And that way, sometimes—fairly often—you can sneak it by.

Q: *Could you give an example?*

P: The only one that comes to mind readily is little bit marginal, but it’s one that I’ve used to illustrate Well-Poisoning, where here’s a client who comes in with a Victim story, and it’s, “How come I do such-and-such when I don’t really want to or when I know it’s bad,” or something like this, and here’s some number of items that fit—there’s “How come I do X? How come I do Y? How come I do Z?”, etc., and there are some number of reasons. “You do it because of A, B, and C, and over here Q and R,” etc. At some point she comes in and asks for the nth time about A—”How come I do A?” And this time I say, “Well, what we’ve seen already is some of the reasons. You do it because of P, Q, and R, and that accounts for a lot of it, and the rest is simple greed, and that you can take care of.” [laughter]

Q: ###

P: That one produced a very peculiar effect. The first one was a doubletake, because therapists don’t usually talk that way, and that’s not one of the kinds of motivations that therapists usually discuss. It’s strange. First the doubletake, then perplexity—how the hell could that possibly be, and then a sheepish look and silence. And then I laughed, and she laughed.

Q: —*a lot of therapy, like the issue was something that almost everybody disapproves of, but that both of you know pretty much to be the case, and when you root those out, usually you don't say anything, except you point it out, and they sheepishly nod.*

P: As a matter of fact, there I made it explicit. I said, "Sure, you can see that in that kind of thing, what you're doing is like a child in a candy store saying, 'I want this and I want that and I want that because it's good.'" I didn't really have to say it.

Q: *With all these moves that we're talking about today, [change tape]*

P: —Your moves are moves for their benefit, and not ###.

Q: *That was like giving an anger interpretation of fear, wasn't it, in that you give him a dominant position interpretation, an avoidance position. You could go either way? Or would you usually go for dominant?*

P: Not the dominant so much as the non-helpless. You see, the reason I said "greed" is that that's what it was. The move was to not go for the Victim act, namely, "Why do I keep doing such-and-such?" but rather to reformulate it as something that she was actively doing, and she had a choice about. You see, one of the things it does is to reformulate the problem. Instead of, "Why do I keep doing such-and-such?" and looking for an answer, the issue is how to be less greedy. Usually, with something like that, the client does not have defenses against being less greedy. It hasn't come up before in that form, so there's a lot less resistance to dealing with the problem of how to be less greedy, particularly since being greedy does put you in a powerful position. It's a good position to be in. So you're operating from a better position, from a position in which you're in control, and it's up to you, and that's vastly different from a problem of "how do I get out of this situation where I keep doing this, and I don't even know why?" Even if you only break even, at least you're not dealing with the same old problem at all. You've got a new one to deal with. Generally speaking, non-Victim interpretations are more effective for that general reason.

I think that reference to greed probably also will qualify as a moderate example of Direct Talk. Again, it's not a prime example; neither is it

a prime example of a Sneaky Interpretation, because that one sort of didn't get across and sort of did. A good, successful one, you simply slide right by like a Move 2, and from there on out, it has gotten established because you just said it as though it was obvious and then acted on that, and the client never rejected it, so it got established that that's how things were.

Q: —*the Sneaky Interpretation—you start treating him in accordance the way you see that.*

P: Yeah, but that's not a Sneaky Interpretation.

Q: *You went through that once, a woman who had a strong not recognizing provocation, and her husband had let her down somehow, and the next day she had a migraine headache that was so bad she couldn't see straight, and you said the Sneaky Interpretation was that she was so mad she couldn't see straight—did it work?*

P: Remember, execution counts.

Q: —*a guy who came in with diarrhea all the time—he was angry at everything, and nothing was any good, and he came in complaining and I said, “You look at the world and you see what it is, and you say, ‘Shit on it,’” and in five minutes he had to go to the bathroom.*

P: I guess he showed you. [laughter]

P: The problem with this notion of Direct Talk is that really you need examples, and the examples come from the flow of conversation. That's why it's hard to manufacture them right on the spot or even to recollect good examples. Can anybody think of examples that you remember that way? Well, maybe you'll think of some. The general thrust of Direct Talk is simply to call a spade a spade and get to the heart of the matter and don't mess around. I call that Direct Talk.

Q: *Like calling a spade a shovel?*

P: And in some ways, some of these resemble John Rosen's notion of direct interpretation, and some of his examples, if you listen to the Rosen tape, will fit the same thing. For example, the one that I recall, way back when—I don't think it's up here—was of him wrestling a guy to the ground

and saying, “Look, you see I could cut it off if I wanted to, but I’m not going to because I’m your friend.” That has the same quality of directness. Using archetypal language—it often involves using archetypal language, using images that are common—but that doesn’t do any good unless you are getting to the heart of the matter for the client. Just using powerful language doesn’t do it if you’re not getting there. And a lot of the thrust of making the fine distinctions, which aren’t really fine distinctions, and having things worked out, is for the sake of getting to the bull’s-eye, getting there with minimum fuss and bother and pussyfooting.

Q: ###

P: Remember that strange profile we had in the Rorschach class, where there was no F’s, and a week before I had said, “I never really encountered a profile that had no F’s, and it would be of interest to see one,” and the next week Sue came in, and it was interesting, and it had this peculiar thing about a fair number of M’s and FM’s. And as we looked at it, eventually I said, “There’s preoccupation here, but it’s not anxiety-type preoccupation. There’s another kind, and it’s called ‘mobilization of concern.’ And if you think along those lines, rather than anxiety, and then if you exaggerate a little, you get a picture of this guy as somebody who’s hell-bent on having his own way.” And it came out that in terms gross observation, that fit him pretty well. Now a phrase like that, you see, if the client is telling you this, that, and the other, and you say, “It sounds like you’re hell-bent on having your way,” again, would be a moderately good example of simply hitting the bull’s-eye and coming right out with it and not messing around. I will say that as with a lot of the confrontive and apparently manipulative things, what makes it work is the policies that you’re on his side, you’re legitimizing, you’re treating him like a person. Without those things, all of the techniques in the world aren’t going to be effective. It’s only against that kind of background that when you do these things, it doesn’t come across as an attack, so the client doesn’t get mad. If you’re not really attacking him and have shown him that over a period of time, he won’t be defensive in the case of these things.

Q: *I guess almost by definition, the wild interpretation, as in classical psychoanalysis, is the premature interpretation, but when they give examples*

as to what they mean, they're not talking about straight talk, about telling a person directly what the analyst sees. They're talking about an attitude that the analyst has in which he's not involved with the person; he's just saying as soon as he sees, and how that has a global effect on clients.

P: Wild interpretations are usually just speculations, and they miss the target because they are just speculative, and it's not coming through.

Q: *That's actually got a formal definition in psychoanalytic terms, and what it refers to is—the determination may be accurate, but it's just that it's given as at the wrong time or from the wrong attitude.*

Q: —*a wrong interpretation?*

Q: *Well, it's not a wrong interpretation.*

P: Psychoanalysts can be mistaken, but only about when and where he gives it, not about the interpretation itself.

Q: *Analysts readily talk about the wrong interpretation—they have ways of measuring that. The client says No—*

P: Another comment on this notion of Direct Talk. It has two aspects to it. One: it comes because you have a good articulation of what's going on. Today, in the Rorschach class, we were raising questions about a person's self-concept, and I commented that it's clear that we're running out of things that we really see there, but it's also clear that if you have a clear idea of a self-concept, you're much more likely to see something about self-concept in their Rorschach than if "self-concept" for you is a fuzzy sort of notion. Then you're going to have a hard time seeing anything that is relevant to the self-concept. The other, on the impact end, is that Direct Talk has a much stronger impact. Therefore you get results faster, and if you're on the wrong track, you find out faster. So in both senses it goes faster than if you kind of work your way around and sort of ease into it and are very careful and indirect and let the client come to the answer himself. There're some advantages to that, but quickness is not one of them.

Q: *Do you ever throw things out that you know are wrong, just to get a rise out of somebody?*

P: Yeah. That's the Stirring Up Trouble. I mentioned that last time—you do things like that for the sake of getting a reaction, to see what the reaction is, and you do that sort of thing mainly when you don't know what's going on, and you need more information of a diagnostic sort. Or when you just want to get off the dime and move things around and see what happens.

Q: *I had one client who hadn't talked in years, and I said, "I know why you don't say anything. It's because you want to screw your mother."* [laughter] *The guy said, "WHAT?"* [laughter]

Q: *He's fishing there, but he's not just fishing*

P: Something like that, you probably want to be sure you're wrong.

Q: *But Direct Talk is almost in terms of a caution, a cautionary business. It sounds a little like the power-hitter in baseball who hits lots of home runs, but has got a low batting average. It sounds like you had a clinic with all the clinicians active in that manner, what you might expect is a lot of cures and a lot of people leaving—dropping therapy.*

P: Again, remember this is simply a way of operating. Like all of the other formats, it's not that you keep doing this over and over again. It's that, by and large, you're looking, and you're operating with this as a policy that you talk straight unless you have reason to talk otherwise.

Q: *But the thing is that the skill of the practitioner becomes more crucial in issues in which he's providing this way, than it would in therapy in which he's simply following or sitting there quietly.*

P: Yeah. That's why I mentioned that it's faster, but that's the trade-off. Potentially it's less safe; it puts more of a burden on you to know what you're doing and to tap your own skills rather than do anything mechanically. But I also say that the main safeguard is not the skill, but the background policy of being on the client's side. You can get away with all kinds of things in that way, because you're on his side, and you come across that way. That's the major safeguard. Straight talk or Direct Talk is one of the things that beginning therapists find it hardest to do, because it's not safe talk and your strong inclination is to make safe moves, to say uh-huh, to

reflect, to ask mundane questions—to do things that really are not going to cost you anything if you make the wrong move. And that's appropriate. When you're beginning, you do want to pay attention to playing it safe and move from there. But precisely for that reason—that you're invested in playing it safe—it's sometimes traumatic to do it. It may even violate your personal style. A lot of people are very soft-spoken in their style, very non-aggressive, and it really comes hard. And that's one of the great advantages of having videotapes to go over, is that you can practice a fair amount on the tape, not on the client, before you start trying this with a client.

Q: *It sounds like Ellis is kind of a paradigm straight-talker, with his "that's garbage".*

P: Quite the opposite. Ellis is a paradigm of fancy footwork. He'll give you any argument he can think of, just to move you. He's not interested in giving you Straight Talk; he's interested in convincing you.

Q: *Erik Erikson coined the phrase "straight talk", and he's written somewhere along those lines.*

P: Yeah. I'm not sure where the phrase "Direct Talk" came from. I think it has a family resemblance to "Direct Analysis" of Rosen. Where it comes from is the notion of talking directly to the person—remember the Actor/Producer/Act, and saying, "I'm only going to deal with City Hall, I'm only going to talk to you and not this messenger of yours"—it's the same spirit that's involved in talking this way to the client. You're dealing directly with him, and not worrying about certain kinds of conventions.

Q: *Are there any salvage moves, when you find yourself not on the client's side and are sort of in a bind? Can you think of any salvage moves when all of a sudden you wake up and—*

P: You find out that what you've been doing is attacking, something like that. The main line is legitimize. Legitimizing is something you can do on purpose, and if you find that you've been attacking, and set yourself to legitimize for the rest of the hour, if you are constantly during that time seeing how he makes sense, and sometimes reflecting it back to him, it's going to be hard for you to attack or to bother him. And that tends to get you back into the right. Again, the key is that you can do it on purpose. Because

when you see that, you need something you can do on purpose then and there, and there are not that many things that have that feature. There's a lot of things that will work on the whole if you keep doing them, but there are not too many things that you can do any time you decide to do them, and that have a predictable effect. And this is one of them.

Q: *Even if you're in an argument with a client, and at that point you see yourself arguing, you can legitimize his claims in responding to him.*

P: Next week I won't be here—we won't meet next week—and the week following is going to be finals, so it might be a good idea just to stop here and call it a semester.

Appendix I

Comments on images, etc. not discussed during sessions.

[Transcript of a discussion during which Peter explained certain heuristics, Slogans, etc., which had not been covered in the Seminar itself.]

PGO: Poisoning the Well stems from the diagram for Deliberate Action, reasons for and against the choice of particular behaviors. It simply consists of re-describing a behavior in such a way as to tap other reasons against. If you're tapping other reasons for, that's Salting the Mine. So they go together. It's simply the issue that you have reasons for and against, under some description, so as soon as you re-describe the behavior, you're tapping other reasons for and against. So that's Poisoning the Well and Salting the Mine.

Providing an Example, I think is self-explanatory, because people learn by watching other people, and particularly you're often providing an example of how you go about solving problems, how you go about making judgments, how you go about reviewing judgments, of asking about pros and cons or of dealing with particular problems. What do you look at when you're faced with a problem? What kind of questions do you ask? You're constantly providing an example of something or other. Traditionally, this sort of thing was described as "the therapist is the representative of reality". You can see where the notion comes from. And to have an example of how to do something opens up behavior potential and, therefore, provides incentive to do that thing when it leads to something you want. So that's Providing the Example.

The Ladder is the one that starts at the top with Competence, then goes down to Principles, Theory, Custom, and Judgments. Standard, Perspective, and Competence are all interchangeable for the top line, and then the others are Principle, Theory, Custom, Judgment, and that's the Change/Stability Ladder.

The higher up you go, the less quickly there are changes. It's the Appeal Ladder, or the Justification Ladder, in that you justify something by appealing upward. And it's a Generality Ladder, in that the higher up you go, the more generality you have—roughly speaking. It was originally designed to illuminate the thing about social change, because it is a stability ladder and it is a justification ladder, so when you advocate a change, it's usually a change at the level of custom, and you justify it by pointing to the fact that in changed times, it takes new customs to implement the same values, the same principles, the same theory, etc. And that's how you justify change: by appealing upward.

Q: *That Competence and Standard should be equivalent here—*

P: I think I'd just as soon leave Standard out. There are some rare contexts in which I think it may make more sense to talk about Standard, but it's so rare that I'd just as soon leave it out and talk about Perspective and Competence.

Q: *Okay, then the equivalence of Perspective and Competence—?*

P: The Perspective—it's like vision: to be able to see. Vision is different from what you see. Having the vision makes it possible for you to see what's there or not there. But seeing chairs is different from having vision. Perspective corresponds to vision. It enables you to understand certain kinds of questions and thereby appreciate the principles, theories, customs, and judgments that give you answers to those questions. Like, for example, ethical or prudential or aesthetic or hedonic. But that's why Competence comes at the top, is that you have to appreciate the question before you can appreciate the answer.

Q: *Yeah, okay. It's being competent with the Perspective, then.*

P: Well, you see, the competence is the competence to make the judgment, and the perspective is the way, the light in which you ex-

amine behavior. If you examine it in this light, you'll say, "Would it be fun?" If you examine it in that light, it's, "Do I have a duty?" Perspective is a term that preserves an important feature, namely, there's no behavior that you couldn't look at from this perspective. Perspective is not tied to behavior the way that Want is. Perspective is outside of behavior as such. It's a way of looking at behavior as such. So that's why it is Perspective, whereas Competence is the competence to make the judgment, to recognize a good answer. Because one of the things that happens is that, ultimately, your appeal is to the competence of the person rather than to a Custom, Principle, or Theory.

Q: *Much less a Standard.*

P: Well, no. The Standard—it's the same story, because the paradigm statement is, "But can't you see that it's art?" Then if you elaborate, you can say, "Can't you see that it meets the standards for being art?" But also, the "can't you see?" is an appeal to that kind of competence. And, of course, it's an appeal to the perspective. So that's why those terms are sort of interchangeable.

"There's Got to Be Some Way to Make It Go Right," and it's up to me to find it. That's one of the two versions of the Hero. The second is, "My strength is as the strength of ten because my heart is pure."

Q: *Yes—you dealt with that in the last seminar. But you were applying it in the seminar to the therapist and not to the client.*

P: Clients are often therapists, in the sense that you have a school teacher who takes the same attitude toward her pupils, or a mother who takes that attitude toward her family, or a kid who's a peacemaker in the family: "It's up to me to make things go right." So there's all kinds of people who go around doing that.

Let's see—"Make me go along": I can only go along willingly with somebody who would make me go.

Q: *That sounds to me like a contradiction in terms.*

P: Well, it does put somebody or other in a bind. And yet some people take this kind of attitude. I think it's mainly women, and it mainly has to do with the Low-Power and High-Power positions. Because what this kind of thing amounts to is, "I want somebody who is so good at the High-Power position that they can carry the day no matter how well I play the Low-Power position." The answer is: there is nobody who can do that if you play the Low-Power position right. And the business about "Make me go along willingly" is kind of the *reductio ad absurdum* of that kind of thing.

"Keep your eye on the ball" goes naturally with Choosing Your Movements. But it also goes naturally with double negatives. Remember, the Choosing Your Movements says: if you get up out of the chair and walk out the door, your movements—if that goes okay, your movements will be the right movements. You can follow it up with a moral that says, "Keep your eye on the ball." Keep your eye on the positive thing you're doing, and see to it that it goes right, and if you do that, you don't have to see to it that nothing goes wrong.

Then the same goes with the double negative; you can see that it has the same application. If somebody is taking precautions against this, this, and this, and are neglecting the main task—for example, I just came across recently somebody who insists on being fair. And that tends to get in the way.

Q: *This is the occupational hazard of the Critic, isn't it—not keeping his eye on the ball?*

P: Yeah. Double negatives are almost always Critic terms. Certainly "being fair" is. What happens is, it's very disruptive, the things that go on, This guy just breaks up everything by walking in and being fair—as though one could do that.

Q: *Yes, it's a negation of Maxim 9.*

P: Yeah. As an exercise—Keep Your Eye on the Ball is an exercise, too.

Q: *As well as under the Slogans?*

P: Yeah. As a Slogan, it's a reminder; but as an Exercise, it's what the reminder is a reminder to do.

The Sleep Exercise is for people who can't sleep, who are nervous. The exercise is: "Imagine a time when you were tired, happy, comfortable, relaxed, and just about to go to sleep—for example, on a camping trip or just somewhere in your lifetime. And then reconstruct the sights, sounds, smells, everything—"

Q: *The feel of the blankets—*

P: Yeah. Then to wipe out all of the sensory—the sights, the sounds, the smells, etc., leaving only the feeling. Then when you have trouble going to sleep, you simply do this—you recreate the concrete detail, and then wipe out the concrete detail leaving only the feeling. Then you're sitting there feeling relaxed, etc. That works fairly well for some people. I'm not sure—I haven't any statistic, not even fictitious ones. [laughter]

The Gateway is—I've really only used it once, and that was for a guy who got nervous at work and would spend two hours unwinding at home. One time, he mentioned something about as he went out the front gate, on one particular day, thinking to himself, boy, he's glad he's leaving it behind. So I set him the exercise of each day, when he drives home, at the last corner before he reaches his house, imagine the gateway right there, and as he drives past he gives a sigh of relief and says, "Hooo, it's a good thing I'm leaving all that behind." And then just keep moving the gateway back along his route until it's at the place where the gateway really is.

Q: *Why did you not start with the gateway where it really was? Was that too—simply too much all at once?*

P: I'm not sure. It might have done about as well that way. I think I figured that if he was actually nervous by the time he got home, that if he did the Gateway where it really was, he'd have a chance to get nervous all over again by the time he got home. So a little bit of safety factor, maybe, the other way.

The On Top of It ties in with several later things. One is not buying any victim acts. It's in connection with problems including weight problems and other such things: it's that rather than driving yourself, rather than Putting the Screws to Yourself, you simply get on top of it and do it or don't do it because of how it fits in with how you're living. And then it's not a strain because you're on top of the problem. Right now, currently, the prime example is dieting, or losing weight, or maintaining a low weight. I'm working with a group of people who have been dieting and exercising and doing TM and yoga, biofeedback, etc., for two months, and it's a total-push type program with a lot of social facilitation, and every week a lecture on diet, exercise, etc. And after two months of that, I'm going to come in and tell them that the real problem is to keep it off, because by now we know that everybody can take it off and very few can keep it off. And I just recently got hold of a description of 13 ways of living, a paragraph each, and I'm going to hand those out and tell them that what they need is to have a way of living in which eating less and exercising more fits naturally, so that they don't have to keep fighting themselves indefinitely. And if no such way of life exists, then they ought to re-evaluate whether they really want to keep that weight off. Because why would they? And then present them with this, and ask them which fits best what they already have, and then what kind they can imagine having, and where eating fits in either one.

...I told them that weight per se doesn't have to be a problem, and that they need to have some kind of fluctuation, that they don't worry every time they gain or lose a pound. They'd better not make that big a deal about it, and if they do, then just set their normal

weight lower so they have the leeway, and that if it reaches a certain point, then they start giving it priority...That's the notion of being on top of it and operating from strength rather than pushing out of desperation, forcing. So it's always good if you can operate from strength, if you can be on top of it, and that's part of the thrust of not buying the Victim acts—is to put the client on top of it.

Appendix II

Original outline of psychotherapy topics used during discussions.

DIAGNOSIS

IMAGES

1. Little White Balls
2. Choosing Your Movements
3. Henry Kissinger
 - a. Super Critic
 - b. Hanging Judge
 - c. Art critic
4. Catbird Seat
5. Director/Actor/Act
 - a. Guy with Shovel
 - b. Guy with Paintbrush
 - c. Sending a Messenger
6. Thumbsucking
7. "You Can't Get There from Here"
 - a. "You Can't Kill Yourself by Holding Your Breath"
8. Country Club
9. Con Man
10. Two Mayors
11. Inside/Outside
12. Balance
13. Hatfield & McCoy
14. Moment of Truth
15. Demon Businessman

IMAGES

16. Poor No More
17. Putting Screws to Self
18. Coercion Elicits Resistance
19. Garden of Eden
20. You Have to Be a Poker Player
21. Entrance Exam
22. Checking with City Hall
23. Back to the Wall
24. Horne Base
25. Spitting on the Sidewalk/Passing a Law
26. Unemployed Housewife
 - a. Eight-Year-Old Astronaut
27. Gun to the Head
28. High-Power/Low-Power

SCENARIOS

1. Despair Diagram
2. Dissatisfaction Diagram

INTERNAL DIALOGUES

1. Uniqueness

SLOGANS

1. Make me go along (willingly)
2. Got to be some way to make it go right
3. Keep your eye on the ball

HEURISTICS

1. Emotion formulas
2. Relationship formulas
3. Self-presentation
4. Status assignments

5. Degradation ceremony
6. A-O-C
7. Deliberate action
8. Unconscious motivation
9. A changes B into C
10. Entrance exam
11. Situational vs. conventional
12. Ladder
13. Home base

THERAPIST DEVICES

POLICIES

1. Be on the client's side
2. Legitimize
3. Activity descriptions
4. Treat people as people

INFLUENCE PRINCIPLES

1. Move 1
2. Move 2
3. Poisoning the well
4. Salting the mine
5. Provide example
6. Provide

FORMATS

1. Ordinary conversation
2. Soliloquy
3. Confession
4. Three-minute lecture
5. Pantomime
6. Empty chair

FORMATS

7. Code words
8. Old Spanish Saying
9. Fictitious statistic
10. Alter ego
11. Out of left field
12. Making a provocative statement “Provocation elicits perplexity”

EXERCISES

1. Give the benefit of the doubt
2. Decriminalize acts
3. Perfect day
4. Sleep exercise
5. On top of it
6. Gateway

DIAGNOSTIC DEVICES

1. Muddying up the water
2. Stirring up trouble
3. Staying with the client

SLOGANS

1. Gambler’s principle
2. Communication problem

Appendix III

Revised outline of psychotherapy topics

(for May workshop)

ELEMENTS FOR PERSONAL CHANGE

I. GENERAL POLICIES

1. Be on the client's side
2. Legitimize
3. Treat people as persons

II. SPECIFIC POLICIES (Do these *unless...*)

1. Give activity descriptions, not IA descriptions
2. Don't buy Victim acts
3. Use intentional action language, not causal language
4. Choose anger interpretations over fear interpretations
5. Deal with the reality basis of emotions rather than merely the experience or feeling.

III. INFLUENCE PRINCIPLES

1. Move 1: Making Move 1 invites Move 2
2. Move 2: Making Move 2 makes it difficult for Move 1 not to have already taken place.
Short Form: Move 2 creates Move 1 *ex post facto*
Shortest Form: Move 2 preempts Move 1
3. Poison the well: Redescribe the behavior in such a way as to evoke existing motivation to refrain from engaging in it.
4. Salting the mine: Same as 3, positive motivation
5. Provide example: Gets across ideas of how to get something you want.

IV. INTERACTIONAL FORMATS

1. Ordinary conversation, *unless*
2. Soliloquy
3. Confession
4. 3-minute lecture
5. Pantomime
6. Empty chair
7. Code words
8. Old Spanish saying
9. Fictitious statistic
10. Alter ego
11. Out of left field
12. Provocation elicits perplexity

V. EXERCISES

1. Give (yourself, others) the benefit of the doubt
2. Decriminalize acts
3. Keep your eye on the ball
4. Creative Drama
5. Keep on top of it
6. Perfect day
7. Sleep exercise
8. Gateway

VI. DIAGNOSIS, INSIGHT, AND ACTION**A. Images**

1. Little white balls
2. Choosing your movements
3. A criticizes B
 - a. Henry Kissinger
 - b. Super critic

- c. Hanging judge
- d. Art critic
- e. Country club
- 4. A makes B do C
 - a. Director-actor-act
 - b. Sending a messenger
 - c. Sending a representative agent
 - d. Dealing with City Hall
 - e. Guy with a shovel
 - f. Guy with a paintbrush
 - g. Putting the screws to yourself
 - h. Coercion elicits resistance
 - i. Gun to the head
- 5. A changes B into C (Being vs. Doing)
 - a. You can't get there from here
 - b. Passing a law/spitting on the sidewalk
 - c. You have to be a poker player
 - d. Inside-outside
 - e. Two mayors
 - f. You can't kill yourself by holding your breath
 - g. Country club
 - h. Con-man
 - i. Poor no more
 - j. Unemployed housewife/8-year-old astronaut
- 6. Catbird seat
- 7. Thumbsucking
- 8. High-power/Low-power
- 9. Balance
- 10. Hatfield & McCoy

11. Moment of Truth
12. Demon Businessman
13. Garden of Eden
14. Entrance Exam/Auditioning
15. Checking with City Hall
16. Back to the wall
17. Home base

B. Internal Dialogues

1. Unique Self
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1. Despair
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VII. HEURISTICS

1. Actor-observer-critic
2. Relationship formulas
3. Status assignments
4. Self-presentation
5. Degradation ceremony
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7. Deliberate action
8. Unconscious motivation
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VIII. SLOGANS

1. Powerlessness corrupts.
2. If you can't afford to lose, you're a loser.

3. You can go broke buying insurance.
4. It's not a communication problem, it's what you have to say to each other.
5. I could only go along willingly with someone who could make me go along willingly.
6. (Hero) There's got to be a way to make things go right, and it's up to me to find it.
7. (Hero) My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure.
8. You've got to love me for myself alone (no matter what I do).

Appendix IV

Comments on the emotion formulas; chart for organizing aspects and ways of talking about emotions.

There is a relationship between you and something. Since you know (discriminate) it, you act on it. What makes an emotion what it is is *not* feeling. Rather, you have a relationship, and you act on it, e.g., someone provokes me, and I am angry. I am also afraid to express my anger. I couldn't be afraid in this way if anger were just an experience. Anger could not be the object of fear.

Re "What makes an emotion what it is, is not feeling":

Mary Shideler: *Then what is the status of feelings? Are they epiphenomena?*

PGO: What status does the feeling of riding down in the elevator have, relative to riding down in an elevator? It's not really an epiphenomenon. But neither is it riding down in the elevator. Now what's the relation of the feeling of being deserted to being deserted?

M: *One can feel deserted without being deserted. And one can be deserted without feeling deserted.*

P: Most important, it doesn't feel the same way whenever you're deserted. Different desertions will evoke different experience. And so it isn't the quality of the experience that provides the commonality for what makes being deserted a case of being deserted.

M: *Yes, because being deserted may be a provocation, a sadness, a relief.*

P: Yeah. So the feeling, the experience, is simply what it's like to a person. And that contrasts to the thing that is being experienced, i.e., being deserted. *Whatever* it feels like is what it feels like. So the anchoring one is, "The experience of crossing the street is whatever experience you have when you do cross the street." And the

experience is not to be confused with the fact of crossing the street.

So the feeling of being angry is whatever feeling you have when you are angry. And it's not going to be the same experience each time. Very likely, not even the same *kind* of experience. Because if you imagine being angry with being afraid, being annoyed, feeling guilty and jealous, at the same time, it's just not going to feel like a variety of anger, even though that is one of the ways you can feel when you are angry. The equating the emotion with the experience is only plausible, even at all plausible, when you have only one at a time. As soon as you have a variety there, there's just no way that you can make the quality of the experience be the thing that makes it what it is. So that's what's behind that notion that the feeling is dispensable, in that *it* wouldn't have to be what *it* is, in order for everything else to be what everything else is. Whereas if there was no provocation, then there would be no hostility, there would be no grounds for it, so *that* couldn't change and have everything else be the same...

M: *A feeling is a state, isn't it?*

P: It's a second state. Remember the whole set of ID characteristics is built up from the notion of a Type X behavior, a type of behavior-pattern occurrence, so it hinges on there being a Type X behavior. And for any kind of behavior that you can distinguish, you can generate corresponding traits, attitudes, interests, knowledge, values, powers, and states. Okay—you enter that whole system with a Type X behavior, the emotional behavior like fear behavior, anger behavior. You then generate corresponding traits of hostility, attitudes, abilities, powers, and states. So the state is different from the emotional behavior and all of these other things. It's a state of fear, or of anger, or of joy, or whatever. Now remember, a state is simply a condition in which there's a systematic difference in your powers and/or dispositions, and when you're in a state of anger, it shows up mainly in your powers of concentration, things of that sort, and your disposition to find provocations and act in an angry way with respect

to them. Being in that state—the state of anger—is one thing. Being in an experiential state, which is the experience of that state of anger, is a second state. The primary state is the state of anger.

With anger, with fear, with guilt, with either some number or all of these, the state is something that you enter into when you have the condition for the behavior, and you can't behave. So when I get provoked, and I can't counter with hostility, then I'm in a state of anger—causally. That causes me to enter a state of anger. If that lion walks in, and there's nothing I can do to escape, that causes me then to be in a state of fear. The state of fear is what you're experiencing, because that's what you have. The experience of the state of fear is the feeling of being afraid. When it comes to a simple fear behavior, like jumping out the window, the classic report is, "No, I didn't feel afraid. I was too busy getting out the window." So the experience, the feeling, generally goes with the state. It's more closely associated with the state than with the behavior or the trait or the attitude.

"Emotion" is the cover term for any of these, either the behavior, the discrimination, etc. The word "fear"—somebody says "fear", you don't know whether they're talking about the relationship, the behavior, the attitude, etc., or a state, and you use the same word, "fear", for any and all of those. So that "emotion", then, is the cover term for any of these, whereas the "state" is not. "Feeling" is also translatable into the language of either the discrimination or the relationship. You can speak of "the feeling of fear"; you can also speak of "the feeling of being in danger", and, by and large, they're the same thing.

You see, the emotions shade off into motives. Ambition is clearly a motive; it's not clearly an emotion. But all of these emotions [on the chart] are clearly motives. The paradigm locution for motives is, "He did it out of—", and you fill in the blank with the motive. "He did it out of ambition, he did it out of greed, he did it out of sloth." Or, "He failed to do it out of sloth." What they are are

pattern explanations. The motive refers to the pattern the particular behavior fits, and that gives significance to the behavior. And all of these will qualify, also. That's why you put them in terms of formulas, either emotion formulas or relationship formulas. That is the pattern that's being enacted, so when you say that somebody did something out of anger, what you're saying in effect is that this behavior, that you're explaining by reference to that motive, is a move in the anger-game, namely, "Provocation elicits hostility unless—" And so "motive" is the more general term than emotion. And that's why when you start writing emotions down, after a while you run out. And then you start bringing in these borderline cases that surely are motives, but aren't clearly emotions—e.g., greed or ambition.

Perception and belief are elliptical or surrogates for all of a long list of subjective concepts, concepts that don't imply the truth. If I perceive something, it doesn't imply that it is so. If I believe that something is so, it doesn't imply that it is so. If I have the opinion that it's so, if I have the conviction—there's a whole range of subjective language for being non-committal about the truth of concepts. The primary terms involve the paradigm of having a relation, discriminating, as not being unaware, therefore knowing. And therefore experiencing. So once you get beyond the key ones, then you're into that whole set of subjective terms, and there will be a correspondence for each of these subjective ###. "I perceive danger, I believe I am in danger; I perceive provocation, I believe I was provoked": so the list under "perception" or "belief" is the same as the discrimination. The thing is that the perception, etc., lists don't imply that I'm being realistic in perceiving a danger or a provocation.

M: *Why do you need a separate list for attitudes?*

P: Because an attitude is different from an emotion. Remember, "emotion" is the cover term for all or any of those, whereas an attitude is a specific one of them. Likewise "state". You see, all of these

are ID concepts—attitude, state—and an attitude of fear is not the same as a state of fear.

M: *And the attitude of fear is not the same as the feeling of fear.*

P: That's right. The "shame" one was a spur of the moment. There's more to it than transgression, but I'm not sure what. Because wrong-doing is also a transgression. I think one of that standard distinctions is that in shame, you transgress a social norm; whereas, in guilt, you transgress the moral or ethical norm. So you're ashamed when you're found out doing something foolish; whereas, you're guilty when you've done something wrong. The other thing is that there is some question whether shame depends on discovery or not, whereas guilt certainly doesn't. That is, whether it depends on somebody else knowing. And considering the phrase, "You should be ashamed of yourself," it doesn't seem as though it requires somebody else to find out, but it does seem to require a social viewpoint in a way that guilt doesn't.

You know something? Positive feelings don't call for behavior. That's why there's so few of them. The reason negative feelings call for behavior is that the behavior is designed to eliminate the negative. Whereas for positive feelings, the behavior is an expression—that's why "celebration", because I remember that prior to having "celebration", I said "expression".

Emotion Formulas Chart									
Emotion	Discrimination	Relationship	Behavior	Attitude	Perception	Belief	Feeling	State	
fear	danger	is a danger to	Escape	fear	danger	danger	fear	fear	
anger	provocation	provokes	Hostile	anger	provocation	provocation	anger	anger	
guilt 1	wrongdoing				wrongdoing	wrongdoing			
	before the act	temptation	avoidance	guilt 1	before the act	before the act	guilt 1	guilt 1	
guilt 2	wrongdoing		penance		wrongdoing	wrongdoing			
	after the act	wrongdoing	restitution	guilt 2	after the act	after the act	guilt 2	guilt 2	
transgression									
shame	of social norm	transgression	face-saving	shame	transgression of social	transgression of social	shame	shame	
despair	hopelessness	hopeless	none	despair	hopelessness	hopelessness	despair	despair	
envy	inequity	unequal	equalization	envy	inequity	inequity	envy	envy	
jealousy	possession	jealous	equity	jealousy	possession	possession	jealousy	jealousy	
sadness	bad fortune	loss	lament	sadness	bad fortune	bad fortune	sadness	sadness	
joy	good fortune	gain	celebration	joy	good fortune	good fortune	joy	joy	
etc.									

Emotion Formulas Chart								
Emotion	Discrimination	Relationship	Behavior	Attitude	Perception	Belief	Feeling	State
fear	danger	is a danger to	Escape	fear	danger	danger	fear	fear
anger	provocation	provokes	Hostile	anger	provocation	provocation	anger	anger
guilt 1	wrongdoing				wrongdoing	wrongdoing		
	before the act	temptation	avoidance	guilt 1	before the act	before the act	guilt 1	guilt 1
guilt 2	wrongdoing				wrongdoing	wrongdoing		
	after the act	wrongdoing	penance	guilt 2	after the act	after the act	guilt 2	guilt 2
shame	transgression				transgres-	transgres-		
	of social norm	transgression	face-saving	shame	sion of social	sion of social	shame	shame
despair	hopelessness	hopeless	none	despair	hopelessness	hopelessness	despair	despair
envy	inequity	unequal	equalization	envy	inequity	inequity	envy	envy
jealousy	possession	jealous	equity	jealousy	possession	possession	jealousy	jealousy
sadness	bad fortune	loss	lament	sadness	bad fortune	bad fortune	sadness	sadness
joy	good fortune	gain	celebration	joy	good fortune	good fortune	joy	joy
etc.								

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