

TRANSCRIPT OF THERAPY SESSION

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It is our intention to include a demonstration transcript each issue. The transcript for this issue is provided by Doug Bower who has available several sessions of different therapists and clients. Doug explains this in his introduction. The client and therapist gave permission to publish the transcript anonymously. They offer brief comments on the session. JDB

The research project from which this transcript was taken was part of the requirements for a degree in pastoral counseling. I wanted to know what client-centered therapy looked like and to develop a sense of what it meant to do therapy.

The purpose of the study was to accomplish the following subjective goals for myself: 1) To better understand the person-centered theory of Carl Rogers; 2) To be able to articulate my understanding of the theory; 3) To begin to develop expertise in the utilization of the person-centered approach; and 4) To be able to draw implications from the person-centered theory for the ministry of pastoral counseling.

Those therapists who were asked to participate had associated with Rogers, regarded themselves as being person-centered practitioners, and were recognized by others as advocates of the person-centered approach.

We asked: 1) for a tape of a session which the therapist viewed as typical of his or her work; 2) for the therapist to complete a brief questionnaire; 3) that the client also fill out a brief questionnaire; and 4) that the client complete an abridged form of the Barrett Lennard Relationship Inventory.

Six tapes were received with the accompanying materials. That material was written up and the verbatim therapy transcript in this paper came from that study.

TRANSCRIPT

T = Therapist and C = Client

- T1: I'm always nervous. I seem to get nervous that the tape is something that I've got control of, you know, like its going to be my tape and I think I'm nervous about speaking into it because usually if it is someone else's then I'm less conscious of it or something you know.
- C1: Is this yours or is it . . .
- T2: No its not mine. I mean I'm not going to . . . its going to be theirs. So hopefully I'm not going to be as nervous as I would have had it been (brief laugh). We could put it where we couldn't see it.
- C2: I don't mind
- T3: Yeah, O.K. You don't mind.
- C3: Um, I kinda of wanted to start with a part of the dream that I had last night. Um, it's been grating at me. Every once in a while I have a dream that I feel was significant and that . . . that sticks with me and I . . . and I know that I need to know what it meant. This one part of the dream had a lot of complexities. It really was odd and what it was was this car which belongs to a man that I have been dating. I was like looking for it in the dream. And I couldn't find it. And so I thought well he wasn't around. And then all of a sudden I saw it. It was like in the brush, you know. It was definitely in sight. But it was as if it was parked so that it wouldn't be in sight. And, you know, I can see the tree limb hanging down and I'm real intrigued by it. I . . . It definitely reminds of . . . the fact that this car doesn't have head lights right now.
- T4: You mean like they are gone. There are holes in there?
- C4: No in reality it does but there's something wrong with the headlights.
- T5: Oh, Oh.
- C5: Something with the electrical system keeps them working at night.
- T6: They just don't turn on when you push the button.
- C6: Yeah.
- T7: when you push the button.
- C7: Yeah. Which means that he can't drive at night so what he does is that sometimes he parks his car at the Seven-Eleven and leaves it there and he wouldn't necessarily be there you know. Let's say he came to visit me. He wouldn't necessarily be there. He left my place and went someplace else. The Seven-Eleven is like where he leaves his car and that way it can be watched because they stay open 24 hours.
Well last evening after I left when we were all getting together, I drove by the Seven-Eleven to see if his car was there because I was interested to know if he was in town. He is from Cleveland. And I drove by and the car wasn't there and I remembered having a thought that maybe he was somewhere else. And . . . ah . . . or maybe he didn't even want me to know that he was in town. And I'm pretty sure that's what the dream has to do with. My concern that he doesn't want me to know that he's around. Really I think it goes a little deeper than that. I should say that he doesn't want a relationship like I do.
- T8: Well the thing was hiding . . . the car being hidden behind the tree symbolized him hiding it somewhere.
- C8: Yeah. That bothers me (pause) I have different feelings about it.
- T9: Yeah, that bothers you that he doesn't want . . . you feel he doesn't . . .
- C9: Well yeah, the relationship . . . O.K. I have to clarify that we have only known each other for two weeks, O.K. And its probably premature, but we spent a whole lot of time with each other in the past week and a half and I was basically on cloud nine about the whole

thing. And we were talking about going camping together which just sounded like a great idea. And he seemed to really be enjoying me and I was enjoying him and I was kind of wondering gee when is the honeymoon going to end. But . . . feeling like I was ready to enjoy it as long as it lasted. And then he reported to me that he had talked to his mom and dad and they had inquired as to whether he had spent the night at my place or not and he told them that he had slept on the sofa which indeed he did. But then he was feeling like he couldn't do that anymore. And I felt hurt a little bit at that. And I'm not sure . . . I'm not sure, . . . I'm a little angry, where my anger is directed at. I'm a little confused . . . as to whether it's at his parents or at him. I think both. Um, probably the thing that that strikes me the most is that he would allow his parents to make decisions for him. I feel like . . . if he genuinely inside feels like it's wrong to spend the night, if he feels like he doesn't want to do that because he feels like it's not right, then I can really accept that. I can accept and respect it either way, but that doesn't get me angry. It makes me feel a little disappointed or, you know, "shucks I want you to stay with me. I wish you didn't feel that way." But I feel angrier with him I think because it seems to be the situation where he doesn't deep down feel that way. It's more like he feels like he has to do this for his parents. And I don't know . . . I guess um . . . I was involved in a two year relationship with a man who couldn't make a commitment to me because he was married to his mother. And I'm cautious about getting involved in a situation that's similar . . . I see, there's . . . a difference . . . if he . . . if he really um . . . I think some people can really feel that they want to do something for their parents because their parents request it and on the other hand, "Gee I got to that because it's my parents wishes." See, I don't operate like that. Not that I haven't in the past. But I don't and . . . I don't know

. . . .

T10: I kinda missed that, you don't operate like that . . . you don't do things . . . You don't like to feel it's good to do things you really don't want to do just because they kind of think you should. Is that

C10: Ah-ha.

T11: I just kind of

C11: Um-um.

T12: Missed the point. Yeah, OK.

C12: You know, I guess I feel I need to clarify what I mean. Well, there are things like that my mom wants me to do like write a thank you letter to somebody if they send me something like a card or a gift or whatever I want to write a thank you letter because I feel like I want to write a thank you letter. And my relationship with my mom has improved like. I used to get angry with her "Mom don't tell me to do that. I know to do that" you know. But now I deal with her a little differently. I say either, you know, "I've already sent it." But then she kind of ribs me if I say that to her if I say, "Well, I've already sent it." "Oh Good, you're such . . .

T13: Ah-ha.

C13: A good girl," or something I feel like, Oh gosh. You know, (short laugh).

T14: (short laugh).

C14: That the thing I want to do it because I want to do it not because it's the right thing to do from God Almighty or mother or whomever. And . . . I guess that's that's my experience with Eddie. I want to feel like he's making this decision because he really feels like . . . I mean I don't really care. I don't want to tell him how to behave. I want to feel . . . I want to love somebody who's making this decision on their own. And I don't feel like he's doing that and that's making me angry.

T15: Um-um.

C15: I really, you know, I really feel like deep down he wants to spend more time with me. But I could be wrong. Um . . . he shared with me that he doesn't know where our relationship is going, whether or not we would be able to be married some day. And I had related to him a little earlier that (inaudible) and he kind of implied that he'd like the relationship to go in that direction and to just take it like where we're not concerned about whether or not we have a relationship in the future, but that we just experience each other in the now. And that's OK with me as long as in the now we discuss the future (laughs).

T16: Um-um.

C16: I don't . . . Yeah. And I . . . So I think that's probably my . . . This is an area where I'm not real sure of myself. Um. I question myself. Is it really OK . . . to want to discuss a potential future, you know. I'm not ambivalent on that.

T17: Ah ha.

C17: My experiences with it probably should have taught me by now that often times it doesn't work out real well to discuss the future. Because I . . . it hasn't been real successful. Um . . .

T18: Particularly in that type of thing. About that. About future relationships with a man and woman.

C18: Yeah.

T19: I think particularly it it gets sticky here. Something strange happens. I mean, I don't mean it's not a good thing to do but sometimes guys start to get real nervous when that happens. (slight laugh) I . . .

C19: Mm-mm.

T20: It happens particularly in those things, yeah . . . You are probably still going to be thinking about it anyway, The future, whether you say something about it or not?

C20: Well, you know, like . . . It would be possible to not. I can see possibly having a different perspective on relationships. The perspective where you do enjoy them now, and if something happens more than it will. I tend to think about whether I could or I couldn't live with this person the rest of my life. I tend to think about whether or not . . . you know . . . um . . . Sometimes I'm unsure. I don't have that many suitors (slight laugh) that there are that many times anyway. So I don't have much experience to go on. Um . . . My past relationships are are characterized by basically two long term relationships, one of which happened very quickly and the other one I was involved in a relationship that was on its way to being a long term relationship when I ended that one to get involved with this other man. So . . . (sigh) . . . I'm not sure. I I think I had arrived at the decision that I was not going to bring up the issue of a long term relationship with him, with Eddie. And then what happened, we met for a couple of d-cafes (laughs) I think that's going to be the new American expression. I'll have a cup of d-cafe (laughs). When we met for a cup of coffee, he told me that this conversation with his mom came up and it set off an alarm inside of me. And I got anxious and concerned. And he's telling me that he's not going to be able to spend the night at all. It could have gone in many ways. And I guess what I'm seeing is that I could have said, "Well OK" and continued to maintain the relationship as much as possible and not become concerned . . . I don't know what would have happened. But that's a thing with me. Before he said that, I felt more certain even without speaking.

T21: Certain? What certain?

C21: About how he felt about me.

T22: Oh.

C22: And, you know, and and . . .

T23: OK.

C23: No, it was pretty clear to me that he really enjoyed me.

T24: Yeah.

C24: He wanted to spend time with me as much as we both could.

T25: Right.

C25: At this point I became uncertain.

T26: Doesn't seem like . . . It's kinda like his feelings for his mother are toward her . . . What do you think? Or did you begin to feel . . . That's how it struck me. That was more this was more something about her than about than about you.

C26: Than about me. Yeah, I understood you. I've wondered about that . . . Yeah! You know, probably, yeah, it was more something about her. And I guess the alarm that it set off in me was "Uh oh," because my last relationship like I said, this man was married to his mother and we went out for two years together and boiled down to he could not leave home. And, I just like refused to allow that to happen to me again and um . . . and, you know, this guy . . . Here's a situation where maybe its not me. Because the last one wasn't me. But boy he couldn't leave mom. I mean he couldn't do certain things against mom. And one of the big things between Eddie and I is I'm Catholic and he's not. And despite the fact that he really admires and likes Catholicism and in some ways thinks that Catholicism is his religion, I met him at a Catholic club, a Catholic group, despite that his mom has real reservations about that. And um . . . he feels a strong pull to that and so I wanted to clarify how he was feeling about me. I did take it as . . . as it was partly me. And . . . and see this is the thing. It's so soon in the relationship that perhaps if we had gone out for a long time together, you know, he would have felt differently. But see that's what I'm so afraid I'm allowing to happen, we'll go out for a long time and in fact he won't want to stay with me. .

T27: He won't . . . because of the mother thing again you mean . . . Yeah.

C27: Yeah. Despite how much in love with me he becomes. And so I just feel the need to clarify that a lot. I mean John really loves me to death. And I know that, but I, you know, have pain about that because it doesn't matter how much he loves me. He cannot be with me. He will not be with me. And ah . . . And so ah, you know, here's a situation where maybe I'm allowing myself to transfer off this relationship. I don't know. I am not going to let this past shit interfere. Because, you know, Eddie is not John. And I'm treating it similarly. And preventing that from happening, which, you know, I can understand but . . . Well so . . . mm-mm.

T28: But I was going to say, if the guy didn't feel he could sleep at your house because his mother said that I I don't know what . . . that does sound somewhat . . . ah . . . along that line and I . . . I . . .

C28: Mm-mm.

T29: I don't know how common that is among people. But . . .

C29: Yeah, I guess, you know. I'm not concerned with how common it is or isn't. I'm concerned about how I feel and how he feels. There's some men . . . I mean I don't just ask men to sleep over. I haven't slept with a man in a long time. We didn't have sex. I mean in a way, it was fairly ludicrous because (slight laugh), you know, what's the difference, if he comes over and we have, you know, we have sex, versus he comes and sleeps over and we don't have sex, you know. And so I kind of think its a little ludicrous . . . Um . . . He agrees, but the other the other part of it is . . . and I . . . after I pursued it, he said to me that . . . ; one thing said was he didn't want to lie. He didn't know whether to say this or not, but he guessed he would . . . that he had fantasized us married, you know. But he also said that from the outset that he didn't think it was going to work. The way he met me. And, you know, that of course didn't feel real good, but you know he said he saw problems. Which, you know, I see too. (pause)

But I wasn't so interested in exploring the problems at that point until this thing with his mom came up.

T30: Yeah.

C30: I was really into enjoying him very much.

T31: Yeah.

C31: And so I got this message from him, "I don't think I'm going to be spending as much time with you." I feel like maybe I need to clarify that with him and . . . um . . . One of the things he said was that he didn't want to see me hurt. And I think part of what he was saying, well I'm pretty sure that he was saying, "I want to have a relationship with you. I really enjoy you. I like you a lot." And I know he does. And I (slight laugh).

T32: Yeah.

C32: But I think that he might be looking at this more in terms of not enjoying me for now, but that I'm going to fall in love with him and he's not going to be here for me. (Inaudible) And, yeah, if that's true I don't want that. And then, but then I, you know, raised the whole issue with a girl friend who makes a comment to me that, "Hey, you know, you enjoy the relationship then." And it makes a lot of sense to me (slight laugh). Because otherwise you could miss out on a lot of relationships if you are always looking, you know . . . (sigh) But golly. I really feel like shit. I don't want to waste my time when down the road, boom. I mean, you know. I've been through. I'm aware that the reality of the situation is he could tell me he loves and wants to marry me someday and then leave me and for that matter I could do the same to him, you know. I'm aware of that . . . It doesn't matter (slight laugh).

T33: Mm-mm.

C33: (long pause) A really fortunate part of my experience with him is that he's the first man that I really really really enjoyed since my last relationship. And I really felt like I could tell him that I loved him. (Softly crying) And I, you know, question whether I would ever feel like I wanted to ever say that to somebody again. (Softly crying) That's real nice. And ah . . . I don't feel like I need to contact John anymore. Which I had called to contact him every once in a while. (long pause). (Blows nose). It it was really good to feel, you know, like there was somebody out there that I was in love with. (slight laugh). Ah . . . (slight laugh). (silence with soft crying).

I have really changed as a result of having that experience. I don't know what's going to happen with this in the future. It's part of me that I'm going to have to look at. One of the things that happened was I stopped having that need to have it happen. Even now . . . and I'm not sure because it's not totally over. And if I felt that I wasn't going to see him again or something, I would get back that feeling. I don't like walking around with the feeling of being available . . . and it's not so much a feeling of being available, it's more looking for available partners. I'd rather go on about my business and have somebody (laughs). I don't really know how to be single real well. From the time I was sixteen to twenty, I had a relationship. Then I didn't for a while, but that was almost like my second latency, you know, where I had a real close girl friend and didn't really care about men for awhile. We did things like twelve year-olds do. We looked around and all but never really thought we'd get any of them, you know. But ah . . . then I had a relationship for a while with Tom, until then he left for Chicago which was when I met John and started to date him. My tetley tea man.

T34: Your what?

C34: My tetley tea man. I don't know why he (inaudible)

T35: Ah.

C35: I mean . . .

T36: It sounds like a nickname.

C36: He left me a note one time, you know, signed your tetley tea man. I . . .

T37: Ah, OK.

C37: (soft crying) But ah . . . So I really . . . And I have been saying it's been a year for I don't know how long (laughs). But it probably will be a year forever. No, it's been a year and a few months now. And that has really been over and it was several months before that when it really wasn't working; it's been a year or so since I've seen him. And so I have been single for a year and three months. Which is amazing (slight laugh). I don't really know how to be single and be comfortably. I haven't been single comfortably.

I had a great summer on the beach but I was always interested in, you know, where's the man I'm going to meet. I knew that was unrealistic because I was at the beach and getting ready to move to L.A. but I still had this feeling like maybe I can meet somebody whose looking for a place to go (slight laugh). Maybe I'll meet somebody from L.A. I walked around with that more than I would have liked to. I had some good times. I had some real good times.

I feel like crying . . . It's almost like I equate aloneness with loneliness (pause). But I did have some good times walking up and down the beach. And I think that's one of the reasons I'm feeling teary. I kind of see a picture of me walking along the beach. And on the one hand its really good to be alive. Then on the other it's really rotten because your supposed to walk down the beach with your lover. (laughs) You know? Like they do in the commercials. So. That was really strange because for the first year and three months of my adult life I didn't have a boyfriend. That was really strange cause all kinds of people ask you, "do you have a boyfriend." Your nieces ask you, "Do you have a boyfriend?" (slight laugh) No, I don't. Gee that's strange. But it's better than having John, not having one. If they ask do you have a boyfriend, say yeah, but my boyfriend is married to his mother. (laughs)

T38: (laughs) That's what you say to your nieces (laughs).

C38: (laughs) Really. Well he needs help. He doesn't know how people . . . But anyway it's alone, alone, alone. It's different. Well, I'm comfortable with myself in that I don't feel like I'd just be with somebody to be with somebody. I need to feel that way. At one point I worried about that, you know, that I might not do that. But I have had enough chances now that I tested that that's not true. That's a crisis sometimes, loneliness. You know, which I have come to realize . . . it's better for me than involvement in behavior that I don't like . . . (silence) . . . (sigh)

One thing Eddie mentioned that I think is worth considering that hasn't . . . a lot of my time is spent working because I'm in a doctoral program and I do spend a lot of time working on school and I'm concerned about my future and not even with Eddie, with anybody. How I can incorporate a full time job with a marriage and a family. I really have some serious worries about what I would do to my kids with so much of my time into my work. And I'm concerned about that. And what made me think about that was that he mentioned that a lot. And I spent more time sitting down and talking with him than I have in a long time, with anybody. I take off time here and there, but we spent days together where I do a lot of talking to him and to some extent neglect my work or save it for times when we weren't together and do less than I might have otherwise. I get less sleep than I might have otherwise. So . . . I really wondered . . . I gotta draw some lines somewhere. I don't want have kids who have a mother who's never there for them. (silence)

T39: Uh huh.

C39 Mmm.

T40: The thing was the fact that you wanted to spend time with him and there was no time to do both him and the school work made you made you wonder about the future in that regard

C40: (silence) Because I feel like I have some control over my life and I would like to plan it in the future so that I don't get caught in the trap of of not being there for my children. (silence) Yeah. It really gets down to what's most important to me. Cause on one hand I love to be the scholar and I love to work, and it's really hard to give it up. But I love to go and play and go camping and that too. But it's real hard to compromise those two things.

I think about my childhood and my parents, and I feel cheated out of some of their time. And I know they worked real hard to make money so that they could give me things.

Sometimes I just feel like it's not worth it. I mean I feel like it's not worth it (slight laugh). But (slight laugh) I do. I do. But I feel like those extra couple of days work, they, you know, didn't have to work. They could have taken the day off. It's too much. So now would be the time to start making a change. (silence).

It's a real difference. It's a different kind of pressure you know, I have to make a conscious kind of effort to put away the books and not feel guilty if I took an evening off. I don't feel that any more but . . . I surely would feel guilty if I took a whole day and night off. But really why I don't feel that way is because I don't.

T41: You don't . . .

C41: I don't. I don't take that time off. I get my work done so I don't need to feel guilty.

T42: Yeah.

C42: And I am aware that I am going to get it done. But, you know, in the context of like a family and all, I might have this much amount of work. I'm not concerned because I am going to get it done, but where's that going to leave me in terms of time with them and I mean that's an issue I really haven't touched upon . . . I don't know if I'm ready to deal with it. If I can make some changes before that time comes or if I have to deal with it before then. I don't know. Really where I'm at right now is what I'm going to do with Eddie. What I feel inside. What I feel about Eddie. I feel like I resolved a whole lot about that. Just the whole issue about whether he is doing this for his mom. And I don't like that. And ah . . . (silence) which is real pitiful because I lied to myself about that with John. For a long time . . . Is this going to work out? I don't know. You know, I confused accepting him as a person with accepting the situation with his mom. Out of it was my struggle to be able to accept people. So I really wanted to be able to accept him and long term. However crazy he was. He's a neat guy, I mean, you know. And then it hits me that I really feel . . . I really felt good because I felt like . . . here's this guy he's thirty-three years old, he's got his shit together, you know. He's getting his masters degree. He's taught and what all else and . . . I'm really excited and I do love him. I do love him. But . . . it's like, hey I have a decision here too (slight laugh).

T43: Yeah.

C43: It's not just him deciding about me.

T44: It's the kind of thing where you are involved in it makes it makes it more than whether you accept him in the situation as long as your right . . . then something . . . also.

C44: I'm trying to understand . . . what you said . . . I . . .

T45: I guess . . . what . . . when you said you confused your acceptance of him with your . . . with the acceptance of the situation which involved you.

C45: Yeah.

T46: I never thought about that before myself and suddenly it, you know, you accept the person . . . You know if you are involved with them then if they do something that involves you I mean, then you can still accept them but . . . I don't know. It just struck me I can't . . .

C46: Yeah.

T47: . . . get off of it. It's kind of like, I mean, you can't you can't . . . anything they do can't be OK if its effecting your life in some . . .

C47: Yeah.

T48: You know . . . funny way or something.

C48: And then there's a part of me that wanted to convince him to like me. You know, um . . . It's just . . . To make him realize, you know, that he can't, you know, he likes me too much obviously but mom gets in the way . . . to change his mind like this um . . . I mean, I went through so much junk like that with John that eventually I realized, Gee I've been trying to change this guy, you know. I mean to a drastic degree and and it's finally boiling down to yeah, OK. I respect you. I accept you but we can't be together. And it hurt like hell. Yeah. Yeah. And then, you know, I realized that I kept wanting to say something like that to Eddie and I was real honest with him, you know. I want to say such and such, but I'm not going to and I would either keep it to myself and not say it or say to him, you know, well . . . Mostly I kept it to myself and didn't say anything. There were times when I felt like I could have sucked him into it, you know. (slight laugh) I could have hugged him at just the right moment or something . . .

(The tape ends at this point.)

RESEARCHER'S COMMENTS - DOUGLAS BOWER

What I Learned Concerning the Client

The client had concerns about a man she was dating. These concerns focused upon his relationship with his parents who forbid him from spending the night with the client. This in turn stirred up remembrances of a former relationship with a man who was "married to his mother" and could not/would not commit himself to the client.

The client reported being bothered by the implications of her present relationship and her boy-friend's relationship to his parents. She felt "hurt," "confused," "disappointed," "cautious," and others. She laughed and she cried.

What I Learned from the Therapist Concerning the Client

I have believed that if the therapist empathizes with the client, an observer should be able to learn something about the client from the therapist's responses. I looked at the therapist's responses to see if I could learn something. "That bothers you . . ." "You don't like to feel its good related to your parents to do things you really don't want to do . . ." "You wanted to spend time with him and there was no time . . ."

I found that I did not learn a whole lot from the therapist's responses. So much for theory.

The therapist did not respond for long periods of time. I was not sure during those periods if the therapist really understood what the client was expressing and/or experiencing.

COMMENTS - CLIENT

Response to the content: It is interesting to me that nearly nine years after this session I continue to be challenged by the theme presented in this session. I express frustration, hurt, and anger with partners who make relationship decisions with an external rather than an internal frame of reference. Although I suggest that, "I don't operate like this," in retrospect I did. My goal was not to operate like that. Nevertheless, two years after this session, I became involved in a four year relationship where both I and the other person connected largely because we possessed the suitable external qualities of the same religion, race, age, etc.: (that our parents found most

acceptable- external focus). Since this session, I have continued to evolve my internal focus, and therefore make decisions about my life that are much more consistent with what I really value. At the time of this session, my desire to act on internal principle is evident, but the ability hadn't developed sufficiently to act on it, and I expected to "get it from someone else" . . . being disappointed in them when they didn't deliver it.

Comments regarding the therapist: The therapist really seemed to care about me. I still recall my thoughts and my feelings, my beliefs and values were fully acceptable to the therapist. The therapist often seemed to be right on the edge of my awareness-very "with me." (Responses T-3, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 32, 38, 40, 42, 43, 48). I recall feeling liked by the therapist, and if the memory vestiges serve me correctly, after the session ended and I reflected back, I felt like it was truly OK to be me.

In T-4 through T-8, the therapist was interested in my story. His remarks impressed me as a belief that my story was important to really get straight. He took the details seriously, as did I (This is important for dream work), and I can remember thinking something like "my story is important to him," and "having an accurate understanding of my story is important to him."

In T-18 through T-19, I think the therapist got off base. T-18, it seems, missed and/or interrupted the point that my experiences with men haven't been positive/productive where discussing the future is concerned, and T-19 really diverts away from my focus and may reflect the therapist's stereotypes or own personal issues (see T-29 also), or something, but not my experience. In T-20, he seems to be getting back on track with me.

In hindsight, I can see that in C-20, I was, especially toward the end, attempting to clarify how important it was for me to trust (be certain) that the man I am courting possesses a clear internal frame of reference that I can depend upon. He knows himself, communicates that, and is trustworthy. Although I hardly think I was ready to abandon my desire to discuss the future, I think what I was getting at was that it was less important for me to "talk about" the future than to have security that would come from knowing where this man really stood (and preferably on firm, internally sound footing). Response T-26 appears to focus on interpreting Eddie's behavior more than on my chagrin and confusion over Eddie's seeming changing attitude. The therapist's response does, however, accurately convey the content of Eddie's behavior which disturbs me...his concern about his mother's opinion. Despite the T-26 interpretation, in C-26, I'm again forging out to convince myself of this striving to unleash the bind of the mother complex.

I just want to mention response T-34 because I think that it is funny!

In T-44 through T-48, the therapist is seeking to capture not only the desire that I have to realize my own decision with regard to Eddie, but to understand my struggle with acceptance of a man while also recognizing that he is unsuitable for me because he cannot provide me with what I want in a relationship. The therapist's words: ". . . anything they do can't be OK if it's affecting your life in some funny way."

Final remarks: My final response shows how I hoped to change Eddie to make him possess the requisite internal focus that would obliterate his insecurity and cause him to pursue me with his true desire (of course this would be a double bind for him). During this session I believed perhaps he didn't love me enough.

It has taken me several years to evolve a frame of reference that I am comfortable with for evaluating a partner's suitability. For Eddie, religion may have been it. As for me, I can respect and accept his choice, but I am so glad to begin acting on my desires (seen here nearly nine years ago) to seek a deeply enriching self directed life with a man who will too be self-directed, and to be patient enough and ready and courageous enough to wait to meet someone who desires growth, who is encouraged by my support of his growth, and who can support me in my growth.

Overall, I believe that my therapist acted with moderately high to high levels of empathy, and with very high levels of genuineness and unconditional positive regard.

COMMENTS - THERAPIST

My primary observation after reading the transcript and commentary from the client is that there is more to person-centered therapy than that which can be observed in a written transcript of the verbal communication between client and therapist. I note that I said very little. I would probably say even less today. A number of the few things I said were determined to be unimportant in content by the client during the interview or in her commentary. Yet, the client reports that she felt understood and cared for to a significant degree. I suspect this could have some implications for research and education. How important is the content of the therapist's verbal behavior in and of itself?

For some reason, I found it interesting that in reading the transcript, I remembered word for word some of the things the client or I said and other things that I did not remember at all.

Finally, I would like to mention a suggestion that I heard Carl Rogers make a number of times regarding therapist's behavior: "When in doubt, listen."

COMMENTS - JEROLD D. BOZARTH

The therapist's style is one of relatively low verbal responsiveness. The therapist is not interventive or intrusive. The client seems to respond affirmatively to the therapist's comments as well as to the relationship with the therapist. The client's responses to the therapist nearly all affirm that the therapist has captured the essence of the communication. There does not appear to be any presumptions by the therapist and neither is the therapist worried about making something happen or encouraging the client to explore any particular thing. It is, perhaps, an extreme example of the client doing the work and going in her own direction and pace. A couple of issues raised for me are those of: (1) the importance of the relationship which is not necessarily represented by verbal dialogue by the therapist, and (2) the idea that it is not what the therapist does so much as what the therapist does not do and the client does.

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