

BRIEF THERAPY INSIDE OUT

WITH

JUDITH BECK

Welcome to Brief Therapy Inside Out! We have been teaching courses in counseling theory and practice at Governors State University in Illinois for several years. Time and again, we have searched for ways to show students how various practitioners work. What if you know you can only work with this client for a brief time? What are some of the ways you can quickly develop rapport with a client? What does therapeutic hypnotherapy look like? Just what is EMDR anyway? Can you really do “brief” psychodynamic therapy?

We also wanted to share with our students the personhood of some of the leaders in our field. Not all students are motivated to or can afford to attend conferences and workshops where they can meet the leaders in our field. And, as practitioners ourselves, we know how difficult it is to find the time and resources to do this.

This series focuses on thirteen outstanding practitioners who share with us not only the skills and concepts of the brief therapy they have developed, but also tell us about themselves. Therefore, this project has been rewarding to us both personally and professionally. We hope you will share some of this with us as you view this video and follow the study guide.

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HOW TO USE THIS TAPE

This tape is divided into three segments. In the first segment (15 minutes), Jon Carlson and Diane Kjos interview Judith Beck to gain an overview of her approach. The next segment is client session (48 minutes) The client is a volunteer who has not previously met with Judith Beck. Following this, Judith Beck, Carlson and Kjos review and discuss key points in the counseling session (42 minutes).

Each of the three segments have time markers so that you can quickly find your place. These time markers are designed to indicate both the segment of the tape and the minutes into that segment. You will note that, in the first segment, the time marker has one line, in the second there are two lines, and in the third, three lines. Thus the therapy session, which is the second segment, has time markers with two lines. This study guide contains a complete transcript of the therapy session with minute indicators so that you can quickly find a particular exchange.

For class or workshop application: You may wish to assign one or more reading prior to having the class view the video. We recommend the following sequence for a class or workshop:

1. Show the opening interview which covers key points concerning this approach to brief therapy and then discuss with the class things they might look for in the counseling session itself.
2. Depending on time available:
 1. Show the second segment without pause, asking participants to note the time markers of interventions they found particularly significant.
 1. Briefly discuss significant interventions and turning points in the session.
 2. Highlight and discuss common or universal skills such as relationship building or challenging that are demonstrated in this session.
 2. Show the second segment with pauses to highlight and discuss significant

interventions and turning points in the session.

3. Show the third segment and note the segments of the therapy session that the discussants highlighted.

The video series is also useful for personal skill building. For example, you might compare how different therapists build a therapeutic relationship with the client or close a session.

TRANSCRIPT OF THE SESSION WITH A ¹

- JB1 [2-1] Well, Latrese, thank you for coming in tonight. If this were a regular session, regular therapy, what I would do is to have you come in for an evaluation first where I would ask you a lot of questions to find out exactly what your diagnosis was and how the problems developed and what your symptoms are, but if we do that tonight, we won't have any chance to do therapy. So I'm just going to jump right in.
- CL1 Okay.
- JB2 It was very helpful that you filled out this depression inventory, and you have a score of 41 which usually indicates that the depression is in the severe range. How long have you been feeling like this?
- CL2 Um, since December of 1996.
- JB3 What was going on then?
- CL3 [2-2] Um, I lost my brother, and I was just starting to do a lot of erratic things, that I thought were erratic.
- JB4 Such as?
- CL4 I was arrested and convicted and . . .
- JB5 For what?
- CL5 Delivery of a controlled substance.

¹Xx—Judith Beck, CL—Client

JB6 Uh huh.

CL6 And it just changed my life a whole lot.

JB7 You say you got depressed then?

CL7 Yeah.

JB8 And you've been depressed ever since?

CL8 I think so.

JB9 Now, what I like to do at the beginning of sessions is to set an agenda. So that is what I want to do with you tonight.

CL9 Okay.

JB10 And that's to reveal what problems you are having and then to pick one or more, maybe two of them, to go over. So can you tell me a little bit about what is going on in your life now? What are some problems you might want to work on tonight?

CL10 [2-3] Right now I think the biggest problem I am having is, okay, I work part time even though, I have three children, like I said, and I was finally feeling like I was really ready to get out on my own and raise them in my own household, and it has just been a struggle trying to find affordable housing for myself, and I think just coping every day with living with my mother. My father has been gone a year now, over a year now, and just the grief, the ongoing grief is just comes and goes, and it's like you never know.

JB11 Your mom's grief or your grief?

CL11 Both of ours.

JB12 Grief over . . .

CL12 Over my father's and brother's death.

JB13 Okay. And you said coping with your mother.

CL13 Yes.

JB14 Tell me more about that.

CL14 [2-4] Well, uhm, my mom, I mean, she has helped me a lot, and she has done so much for me, but I feel sometimes, like sometimes she could be having a bad day over it, and I could be in a better mood than I was before, and then if I see her grieving or just unsure, then it makes me scared and kind of unsure. And so I have to deal with that day to day. I don't know what each day is going to be like, and I know they are all different, but it is like I don't know.

JB15 So, will you feel scared and unsure when you see your mom's grief?

CL15 Yeah.

JB16 And then another piece of this seems to be kind of what will today bring?

CL16 Yes.

JB17 And when you are feeling really depressed, what do you think today is going to bring?

CL17 I don't know.

JB18 Problems as opposed to happy moments?

CL18 Sometimes. It's like I'm just wishing that it's better or hoping that it gets better at some point.

JB19 And when you say wishing it would get better, what's the it?

CL19 [2-5] Just feeling so burdened by so many things.

JB20 What kinds of things?

CL20 Well, being a parent is tough. Being a mom is tough.

JB21 That's true.

CL21 So, I feel that is sort of a burden and being, feeling, I feel like I do have an obligation to my mother. She is moving into her senior years, senior citizen years, and I come from a large family. And I just feel kind of burdened to meet expectations. What is expected of me, and sometimes it is not easy.

JB22 And these expectations are what kinds of things?

CL22 [2-6] Um, finishing college. Just, I think my mother was a great mother to her, she had eleven children, and I can just see there is a vast difference between us. I always say it's the times, and

I would like to be more like her in the sense of being a mother to my kids, you know, being there.

She was there all the time. She was a homemaker, and so I think it's a big difference. It makes a big difference.

JB23 Oh, sure. So you work part time as a cashier?

CL24 Yes, I work part time, and I'm a full time student.

JB25 And a full time student.

CL25 Yes.

JB26 So, it's understandable that you would feel burdened, but maybe there is something we could do about that to try to lift the burden a little bit. Any other problems that you haven't mentioned already? Any problems with work or other relationships?

CL26 [2-7] Um, no. I would like a better job, but I feel I guess I just have to better my skills and stuff, but with working there now, I like it because I feel that I am in a nice environment of people and co-workers. But I really wish I could do better.

JB27 Yeah. And how about other relationships? Any problems there with friends, family members?

CL27 Well, friends, I don't really feel like I have friends right now, not many, one or two, and one friend has been friends with me for a while, she has been a great friend.

JB28 Do you wish you had more friends? Or are you okay with what you have?

CL28 I think I'm okay with that.

JB29 Okay. Well, let me go through the problems that you mentioned, and maybe we can pick one out to start working on.

Okay. So the first thing is the housing problem. And I'm not sure I have much to offer you on that.

It just may be more of a practical thing. Second thing is coping better with your mother and especially when you get into a spiral where your mother is feeling a lot of grief and then you start to feel unsure and scared. So that's one thing that we can talk about. Then another thing we can

talk about is feeling burdened by your role as a parent. And then the third thing we can talk about is feeling obligated to your mom.

CL29 [2-8] Okay.

JB30 And I guess the fourth thing is meeting family's expectations for finishing college and so forth, and it sounds as if maybe you are comparing yourself to some of your other brothers and sisters.

CL30 Well, I do because I hear it a lot. I hear it a lot by my still being home with my mother. I get the comparisons a lot.

JB31 Right. So which one of those would you like to talk about tonight?

CL31 Um, I think that dealing with the grief with my mom.

JB32 Okay. Now did this kind of situation come up this very week where your mom was having a lot of grief and then you started to feel scared and unsure?

CL32 Yes.

JB33 Can you remember when that was?

CL33 It was Tuesday morning I believe.

JB34 Okay. Tell me a little about what was happening.

CL34 [2-9] Um, I was feeling okay, and I was preparing myself to leave for school, and my mother, she just, she is a real nice and sweet person, but when she is going to have a bad day, it is automatic. You know as soon as you see her. And it's like I don't know I think I left a paper towel or something out, and she just was like I'm tired of picking up and doing. It was just, I don't know where it came from sort of, but it just sort of came out.

JB35 She started yelling at you or criticizing you?

CL35 Criticizing, yeah. A lot.

JB36 Yeah. And you ended up feeling emotionally sad or scared or unsure? What was the emotion?

CL36 All of those.

JB37 All of those.

CL37 Yeah.

JB38 [2-10] Yeah. Now what went through your mind when she said, she started criticizing you for leaving the paper towels out.

CL38 That if I was in my own place I wouldn't have to listen to her criticize me about the paper towels.

JB39 Right. So if I were in my own place, I wouldn't have to listen to this.

CL39 Right you know at least deal with it, see how she's doing, and then go home.

JB40 That's right. And did you have any thoughts that were particularly sad?

CL40 Um, I just thought about how much she missed my father, and I really felt sad about just, it really didn't dawn on me I didn't think in all this year how much she could really be missing him, how lonely she could actually be feeling for him.

JB41 So you had thoughts like she must really miss my father. She must be lonely.

CL41 Yeah.

JB42 And those thoughts were connected with the sadness?

CL42 Yes.

JB43 What thoughts do you think were connected with feeling scared and unsure?

CL43 [2-11] I thought that just seeing her, she seems so different now, she just, she seemed real real short patient now, and what made me scared is just the thought of losing her and just the thought of if I was wondering, okay, when my dad died I lost, I feel like I lost a lot of things, I don't know. It seemed like things just started to go away, and with her I felt, I was just scared that I don't know. I'm just in a, I just feel scared. I feel like that I might lose her, and it scares me a lot.

JB44 And what is your thought? If I lose her, then what? What's the worst . . .

CL44 If I lose her . . .

JB45 What are you afraid will happen?

CL45 I won't have anybody on my side.

JB46 If I lose her, I won't have anybody on my side, and then what are you afraid will happen then?

- CL46 [2-12] I'm afraid that I don't know what I'm going to do. That's what I'm afraid of the most. I don't know. I don't know what would happen to me if I would make it. That's what.
- JB47 So you have the thought I might not make it.
- CL47 Yeah.
- JB48 Yeah. And you have an image or picture in your head of not making it? Do you kind of see yourself in the future not making it in some way?
- CL48 Without her?
- JB49 When you think of the future, and you are scared that she might not be in your future, where do you see yourself? Do you see yourself in the same place you are living now?
- CL49 No.
- JB50 Where do you see yourself?
- CL50 Um, I don't know. I don't really see myself like anywhere that makes me feel good. I don't know.
- JB51 Do you see yourself out on the street, or being alone some place?
- CL51 [2-13] It's not, I don't think I'm out on the street. I see myself like just not doing as well.
- JB52 Feeling unhappy?
- CL52 Yes.
- JB53 Finding it harder to cope?
- CL53 Yes.
- JB54 You don't see yourself in a specific physical place.
- CL54 Um, physically, no. I see myself in Chicago. That's it. And I always said that I don't want to move back there, but I always see myself back in Chicago.
- JB55 And where in Chicago is that?
- CL55 Where I grew up.

JB56 So when you have this thought I might not make it, do you see yourself back in the place where you grew up . . .

CL56 Yes.

JB57 Being unhappy. Not coping very well. Continue to feel very burdened and not very effective?

CL57 Yes.

JB58 [2-14] Yeah. Well, it's understandable then why you would feel so scared if you have that kind of image. Now, when your mom was criticizing you for the paper towel, do you think you had that picture in your mind? Did it kind of flash through your mind of you being back in Chicago, or is that something you just thought of now?

CL58 Um, well, no. I think that I had thought about that when I think back on the times I thought well if I lose her, what is going to happen to me. I always, like I said, I see myself back in Chicago, but the day when she was criticizing me about the paper towel, I don't know. I was so confused. I don't really remember. That's another thing I'm having trouble with a lot of times, just remembering simple things like that. I don't really remember exactly you know how my thoughts played out.

JB59 Well, that's fine, but this is a typical kind of image that you have, back in Chicago where you grew up and not doing as well.

CL59 [2-15] Right.

JB60 Yeah. Now, just as an aside, do you know why you are having more problems with your memory now?

CL60 Um, I just, I think because I don't get enough sleep.

JB61 That's probably part of it, and probably also what's part of it is that you are depressed.

CL61 Yeah.

JB62 Now this is a depression test, and all of these symptoms that you saw here are symptoms of depression. So you are more pessimistic, you are more sad, you feel like a failure, you don't enjoy

things as much, you feel guilty, you have trouble making decisions, you feel more confused, and so forth. Those are all symptoms of the depression, and once we see the depression lifting, we should see all of these symptoms getting somewhat better, too. So that just important for you to know that you have a real illness called depression and no wonder you are having symptoms like this.

CL62 Okay.

JB63 [2-16] But let's get back to the situation where your mom was criticizing you for the paper towel. Now, do you see that the reason that you were feeling sad and scared was because of what was going through your mind at the time. Now if you'd had a different kind of thought, then you might have felt a different kind of emotion. So if you had a thought such as how dare mom talk to me like that, then you might have felt angry.

CL63 Right.

JB64 Or if you had a thought like oh that's just mom blowing off steam. I don't have to pay too much attention to her, then you might have ended up feeling okay, right?

CL64 Right.

JB65 So is that clear to you how what you think in the situation effects then how you feel?

CL65 Yes.

JB66 Okay. Now the other thing you need to know about depression is that everybody who is depressed has thoughts like this. They have depressing kinds of thoughts. Frequently they have scared kinds of thoughts too, and that often times these thoughts are not true or they are not completely true.

CL66 Okay.

JB67 [2-17] But at the moment you have the thoughts, usually you really think that they probably are completely true. You don't even think to say to yourself, wait a minute. Maybe this is just a depressed thought. Maybe this isn't true.

CL67 Okay.

JB68 So one of the things that I would like to do now is to teach you how you can figure out what your thoughts are and then how you can find out to what degree they are true.

CL68 Okay.

JB69 If it turns out your thoughts are true, then you need to solve a problem. There is a problem there to be solved.

CL69 Okay.

JB70 If the thoughts turn out to be not true, then you change your thinking around.

CL70 Okay.

JB71 And I'll teach you how to do that, and when people change their thinking around, usually then they start to feel better.

CL71 Okay.

JB72 So, it seems to me one of the key thoughts is what, oh I might not make it. If I lose mom, I might not make it. So I guess there are two things that we could do. The first question is what is the likelihood that you will lose your mom?

CL72 [2-18] Well, I figure that she seems healthy at this point, at this stage in her life, but it's just that if things go like they usually is, parents usually die first, and I know that is inevitable, but I don't know.

JB73 When you have the thought, she is criticizing you about the paper towels, and you think, of no. What if I lose her? Are you thinking, what if I lose her twenty years from now or thirty years from now, or are you thinking what if I lose her very soon?

CL73 It was more if I lose her very soon.

JB74 Yeah. Now do you have any evidence that you are going to lose her very soon?

CL74 No.

JB75 Do you have any evidence on the other side that you probably won't lose her very soon?

CL75 I don't know what very soon is. I mean it's like saying in the years to come I hope and pray every day that I die before her sometimes.

JB76 [2-19] Well another symptom of being very depressed. Thinking a lot about death. What is the likelihood that she will die say in the next five years?

CL76 Um, probably small. Probably not very likely.

JB77 And at the moment, when she was yelling at you about the paper towels and you thought what if I lose her, were you thinking oh no it's only a very small chance that that would happen?

CL77 I did. I did. Toward the end after she blew me out because she seemed a lot stronger.

JB78 Oh I see. She seemed pretty strong when she was criticizing you. That's good that you were able then to let in the evidence of what was going on in front of your eyes. And when you thought she seems pretty strong, then how did you feel emotionally?

CL78 Um,

JB79 Felt a little bit better?

CL79 [2-20] Somewhat. It was like it took a while. It took an hour or so for me to come to that, for me to get the concept of that, but it finally dawned on me that . . .

JB80 Yeah. Well, that's wonderful. Do you see what you did? You did exactly what I am trying to teach you to do.

CL80 Okay.

JB81 Which is you had a thought, oh no, what if I lose her. And in fact kind of the meaning to you was I may lose her pretty soon. And then you went away from the situation, you thought about it, and you realized that she was actually being very strong and that there was evidence against the fact that you were going to lose her.

CL81 Oh, okay. Yeah.

JB82 And then you felt a little bit better when you did that.

CL82 Yeah.

JB83 So, and this is exactly what I am talking about is taking thoughts that go through your head when you are feeling upset and looking at them more objectively.

CL83 Okay.

JB84 Now I think another, and sometimes the thoughts are in word form like what if I lose my mother, and sometimes they may be in images or pictures. You had a picture of yourself back in Chicago.

CL84 Right.

JB85 Maybe we should talk about the Chicago picture for a minute.

CL85 Okay.

JB86 [2-21] So, you see yourself in Chicago. Is it in the particular house where you grew up?

CL86 Yes, in the area. In that particular building.

JB87 And are you in a particular room in that house?

CL87 Yeah, the room I grew up in.

JB88 Okay. And what are you doing once you see yourself in that room?

CL88 Um, it's just a window I used to look out. I can see downtown Chicago and just looking out that window. I spent so much time looking out that window, thinking about what I was going to do when I grew up and all that stuff, and . . .

JB89 And here you see yourself back in that same room still looking out the window.

CL89 Yeah.

JB90 And what does that mean to you that you are back in the room looking out the window again?

CL90 [2-22] When I used to look out that window, I used to think about all the places that I wanted to see downtown, and all the things that I really wanted to do and what I wanted to be. It was just, when I think about it now, talking about it, it was kind of comforting.

JB91 So it was optimistic when you were younger.

CL91 Yeah.

JB92 Now when you have the image of being back in that same room and you have the thought I might not make it, then are you having the same kind of perspective as you look out the window?

CL92 It's like when I'm looking out the window it's like I don't know. The room is empty. That's all I now. The room is completely empty. The house is completely empty. And it's like the only thing that even brings life to the room is just the view out the window.

JB93 Right.

CL93 And so I don't really . . .

JB94 Do I get the sense that it's as if the room is empty and your life is empty?

CL94 I may feel like that I think.

JB95 Now am I putting words in your mouth?

CL95 No.

JB96 You think that's right?

CL96 [2-23] Yeah. I think that that's one thing that always sticks out, that the house is just empty. It's empty.

JB97 And you feel as if it would be a step back if you went back to that room?

CL97 Yes.

JB98 And why would that be a step back?

CL98 Because where I grew up wasn't the greatest place, and I think that I don't know, just that view gave me comfort, but I don't want to physically be there. I don't want to ever physically be there.

JB99 [2-24] Alright. So when you are having these kind of thoughts that are in word form, that often times is very helpful to respond to them in word form as you did with the thought what if I lose my mother. You thought more about it in words, and you said to yourself, well look how strong she is. She's just been criticizing me. I'm not going to lose her soon, chances are. If you are having a kind of thought that's in a picture form, then sometimes it's more helpful to try to change the picture. Try to change the picture itself instead of only trying to change the words.

CL99 Okay.

JB100 Now, let's take the same picture where you are back in that room and looking out at the view. Is there some way that you could figure out to change that picture in your mind so that actually you are feeling stronger and feeling as if you are moving ahead in life?

CL100 Put some furniture in it.

JB101 Put some furniture in? Yeah, that's one thing.

CL101 Yeah. I think I could change the picture. Um . . .

JB102 What kind of furniture would you put in that room?

CL102 Well, we had a great apartment. I liked it. A nice couch, a bedroom. I mean a nice couch if it can fit.

JB103 Yeah.

CL103 A bed, pictures, family pictures.

JB104 And would you like to image your kids jumping on the bed or something?

CL104 Yeah. That . . .

JB105 Having fun in the room?

CL105 Yeah.

JB106 What do you see them doing? You know, I don't know them, so . . .

CL106 [2-25] Jumping on the bed.

JB107 Jumping on the bed. Okay, I guess I do know them.

CL107 That's what they would probably be doing. Jumping on the bed.

JB108 So, now when you have this picture in your head, and the room is furnished, and it's got pictures on the wall, and there is a couch and a bed, and you see that you've got your three kids, and they are jumping on the bed, how does that make you feel emotionally?

CL108 Better.

JB109 Does it?

CL109 Yeah, it does.

JB110 Now, the fact of the matter is that we don't know whether or not you are every going to end up in that room again. My guess is somebody else probably lives there now. Is that right?

CL110 Yeah, that's true.

JB111 So it's not likely that you can end up in the room. So it's just something that you had a fantasy about.

CL111 Right.

JB112 So, what I'm suggesting is that you take, since it's just a fantasy, it's not true anyway, take that fantasy and improve it.

CL112 Okay.

JB113 In a way that makes you feel better.

CL113 Okay. Okay.

JB114 [2-26] And what do you think having pictures on the wall and nice furniture and kids on the bed, why does that make you feel better? What does it make you realize?

CL114 It just makes me realized that the house is full. I mean I grew up with a full house, furniture, family, and everybody was always there, and I think that just being in the room by myself growing up with eight other brothers and sisters is just scary.

JB115 No wonder you feel scared when you see that kind of image. So now everytime you have that kind of image, see if you can say to yourself, now wait a minute. I'm going to improve on it, and then add things to the image.

CL115 Okay.

JB116 But, maybe we ought to talk now about the thought that you have in words which is I might not make it. Especially if mom's not around. I might not make it.

CL116 Okay.

JB117 [2-27] Now there is no doubt about it say if your mother died at some point in the next few years that you would probably really feel at a loss. You would be very grief stricken at first. You have several losses already, and so this would be another one on top of it. She sounds very important to you. But I wonder if you could see that although you would be extraordinarily pained at first, that you would be able to continue on with life and that that grief might get a little bit less as time went on. Do you think that's possible?

CL117 Yeah.

JB118 Is there something that makes you think that you might go downhill and stay downhill?

CL118 I don't know.

JB119 Do you feel like you need your mom in order to make good decisions or . . .

CL119 I feel like I need to gain independence from her before it happens in order to, I want to be independent before anything happens to her. I don't want it to force me to, I don't want anything to happen to her to force me into having to be responsible and having to be, you know, I just don't want that to happen.

JB120 [2-28] Well, I think it's a good plan. Now, do you know what to do, what to do first in order to get more independent or the things that you've already done to get more independent?

CL120 Um, I'm trying to get more independent, but it's like the hard part to me is having everybody tell me well you should do this first, you should do this first, and that is to me another burden in part. Everybody telling me well you should do this, do this, you should do this this way and it's like trying to figure out on my own. I don't have a clue now.

JB121 Yeah.

CL121 Because it's like I've had so much input from everybody else with the way I should go, it's like everybody is saying take this road, and there are ten people telling me to take ten different roads, and . . .

JB122 Well, maybe there is something I can teach you tonight that might be helpful to you.

CL122 Okay.

JB123 Can you tell me what a couple of those different roads might be?

CL123 [2-29] Okay. Like my one sister, she called me and she said, Latrese you have to get a car first. And my other sister said no, Latrese, you have to get your place first. And my other sister said if I was you, I wouldn't move out of mom's house because then you are never going to have any money for anything, and I'm like, that's not what I want to do. Um, then my other sister she was like well, I think you should move out of state so you can really know what independence is.

JB124 Right. And at this point you are feeling pretty confused?

CL124 Yes.

JB125 Is there any one of these things that you think you could knock off, to say no, I don't think that's right for me right now?

CL125 Um, moving out of state.

JB126 Okay. So we can cross that one off right away. See, now you are only down to three.

CL126 Okay.

JB127 Okay, car first, place first. Car first or place first is really, isn't that really the decision? Because don't move goes along with car first is that right?

CL127 Yeah, I guess it does.

JB128 Or maybe I am missing something.

CL128 Um, no, what I think I should do is move first.

JB129 Move first.

CL129 Yes.

JB130 And you feel confident in that decision or not completely?

CL130 [2-30] I feel confident in the decision until I share with everybody else.

JB131 I'm sorry. Could you say that again?

CL131 I feel confident in the decision of me wanting to move first until I share with my mother and my sisters and everybody, and then it's like that's when all the opinions come in.

JB132 I see. Right. And some people agree with you and some people don't agree with you.

CL132 Right. They agree that I should move, but they think that I should get a car first, and I don't think it is as important even though they do. They think that I need to have a way to get around, but I think that I really need to have somewhere to live.

JB133 To be.

CL133 Yeah, to be.

JB134 Well, it certainly sounds sensible to me. And sometimes when you have to make a decision, it is helpful to look at what are the advantages of say moving first, and what would be the disadvantages of moving first.

CL134 Okay.

JB135 [2-31] And then you can also look at what are the advantages of getting a car first and the disadvantages of getting a car first. And I think if you do that, you are probably right about moving first since you seem to feel it pretty strongly in your gut. But I think if you put it down on paper, it may then help you answer your family members who are saying, no, you should do something different.

CL135 Okay. Okay.

JB136 Does that sound . . .

CL136 Yes.

JB137 Sensible to you?

CL137 It does.

JB138 What would be some of the advantages of moving first?

CL138 I have more time to study.

JB139 Yeah, you know what? We are going to write some of these down so that you can remember them.

CL139 Okay.

JB140 Here you go. So you just put a line down the middle of the page and put advantages on one side and disadvantages on the other side, and we will just start this a little bit. I am going to do some other things with you. Maybe you can finish this either on your own or with one of your sisters or with your mom.

CL140 Okay.

JB141 Okay, and this is advantages and disadvantages of moving first.

CL141 Okay.

JB142 Right?

CL142 Okay.

JB143 [2-32] And you said one advantage would be you would have more time to study.

CL143 I would have a lot more time to study.

JB144 Yeah. And how about another advantage?

CL144 Um, I would be the only adult that has the first and foremost say to my children.

JB145 Absolutely. So I think you better put that down.

CL145 Okay.

JB146 You know, my sense is you are doing this so well that you can probably continue to do this without me.

CL146 Okay.

JB147 Do you think so, or would you rather continue to do it with me?

CL147 I think that just talking about it is getting me to thinking.

JB148 That's good. I'm really impressed, I have to tell you, by the fact that your depression score is 41, yet you seem to be very clear thinking about this. So somehow you are able to overcome the depression to do this.

CL148 [2-33] I think that that is what I really want to do.

JB149 That's the way it sounds to me too.

CL149 I think it's like I'm just to a point where I feel like I have to.

JB150 Yeah. Okay. Well, it sounds very sensible to me. Okay. So one of the things I will have you do for homework. . . you didn't know you were going to get homework tonight did you? Is you are going to continue this list about advantages and disadvantages of moving, and then if you would like you can also do advantages and disadvantages of getting a car first.

CL150 Okay.

JB151 And then I think you will feel stronger in being able to talk back to your sister.

CL151 Okay.

JB152 You sisters who were saying that you have to get a car first, don't move, save up your money, stay with mom longer.

CL152 Yes.

JB153 Now will you have trouble standing up for yourself?

CL153 [2-34] Only to the extent that I feel as though I have been the one that has like my father was sick. I put in a lot of time with my parents because I know that they are getting older, they were getting older and stuff, and my mother. I have always been the one that they need to get the appointments and everything. I made sure that they did that, and whatever they needed done. If I can do it then I try to do it. And so I didn't have a problem putting them first, but now I think that they see, they know that if I move, I'm not going to be there as often like I used to be.

JB154 Right.

CL154 And so . . .

JB155 So maybe they have an interest in having you stay there.

CL155 Exactly.

JB156 So another advantage to moving sooner is that you will be able to put more energy toward you and your kids instead of towards your mom.

CL156 Right.

JB157 Either your mom will pick up the slack or some of your brothers and sisters will take up the slack.

CL157 Exactly. That's true.

JB158 Now, will you have trouble, do you think, telling your sister who wants you to stay with your mom, that you know that you've make the decision that you are going to move out? Is she hard to talk to?

CL158 [2-35] No, she's not hard to talk to. She is the oldest of all of the eleven, and I think that she has had a lot of responsibility put on her, and she has taken it very well. And I think that she understands the advantage of moving. I think that she really does. But see my mother doesn't drive, and so I think that that plays a big part in it too.

JB159 Right.

CL159 So, but I don't think I will have a problem talking to her.

JB160 Okay, that's great. So then another homework assignment is to talk to your sisters who think that you shouldn't move and just tell them in a nice but a firm way that no, this is the decision that you've made, that you've really looked at all the advantages and disadvantages.

CL160 [2-36] Okay.

JB161 Okay. But to get back to a related topic, it sounds as if you have a kind of thought that goes like this. If I lose mom before I become independent, then I might not make it.

CL161 I do feel like that.

JB162 Now I wonder whether kind of another way of looking at it might be if I become independent first, it will be easier on me if I lose mom. If I'm not independent first, it's going to be harder, but perhaps not necessarily impossible.

CL162 That's true.

JB163 Do you agree with that?

CL163 Yes.

JB164 Is that something you think would be helpful to remember?

CL164 Yes.

JB165 Why don't we have you write down something about that.

CL165 [2-37] Okay. Saying if I become independent first. . .

JB166 Yeah. It will be easier.

CL166 Okay, it will be easier.

JB167 If I lose mom. But if I'm not independent first,

CL167 Okay.

JB168 It will be harder but not impossible.

CL168 Okay. But not impossible.

JB169 And how much do you believe that last statement you just wrote down. It will be harder but no impossible.

CL169 [2-38] I believe that if I become independent first, it will be easier, but if I'm not it will be harder but not impossible. I believe it a lot.

JB170 Is there any part of you that doesn't believe it?

CL170 Um, I don't know. I wanted to believe this. I really want to believe this. So, I believe that I do believe it. That, I don't know though sometimes.

JB171 You know, everybody needs help from time to time, and especially in the period when you are going to be grieving. I assume your sisters will be grieving as well. Do you think that you will have your sisters for support?

CL171 Yes.

JB172 And is there anyone among your sisters who might be able to help you in the way that your mom helps you now?

CL172 No.

JB173 What kinds of things does your mom do for you now?

CL173 [2-39] Babysit. Support. Support. I guess the financial advantage is greater.

JB174 There's no question about it. Anything else.

CL174 Um, that's really it.

JB175 Why don't we take just a minute to take a look at these three things and see whether it will be impossible to get these three things from other people or whether it will just be harder.

CL175 Okay.

JB176 Babysitting. What will you do about babysitting if you were to lose your mom?

CL176 I don't know. I would have to find somebody to babysit them.

JB177 You would have to find somebody.

CL177 I would have to.

JB178 Yeah. And you think that would be hard but not impossible.

CL178 It probably would be hard, but not impossible.

JB179 And who knows - you might even trade off some babysitting with one of your sisters. I'll watch your kids for a few hours, you watch mine.

CL179 Yeah.

JB180 [2-40] Okay. Now how about emotional support? If your mom's not there to give it to you. Is it possible you could give it to yourself?

CL180 Coming from myself? I don't know. I used to feel confident that I could. I guess I could.

JB181 It might be something you need to learn how to do again. If you were once more confident in yourself, then you can get there again. Like no one with a depression score that I know of a 41 feels very confident. But it may be that once you are over the depression that you will find your self confidence has come back and that you are really able to support yourself emotionally better. And how about the possibility of emotional support from any of your sisters?

CL181 They will be there.

JB182 They will be there for you?

CL182 Yeah.

JB183 [2-41] Okay. So it's not quite as easy as getting emotional support from your mom, but there is always you, and there's your sisters, and possibly your kids.

CL183 Yes.

JB184 Financial support. Now you are getting help from your mom, and you are living in her place and stuff, so finances are going to be a problem if she's gone. Is that right?

CL184 Yeah.

JB185 Now, does it mean that it's impossible to get your financial resources together or just more difficult?

CL185 It would be more difficult, and I think that what I worry about is my kids. Like now. We were out looking for a place, and they compared everything to grandma's house. And it's like it's not like her house, and it was just a lot.

JB186 It must have been hard.

CL186 It was hard trying to explain to them.

JB187 Before you go out and look at some place new, you say to the kids. We are going to do a little game. Let's see who can find the most good things about the next place we are going to look at.

CL187 [2-42] Okay.

JB188 Right? And let's see who can say the fewest things about comparing it to grandma's place.

CL188 Okay.

JB189 Do you think they would like that? How old are they again?

CL189 My oldest will be 9. They are 9, 7, and 3.

JB190 Well, the 3 year old can't do it, but the other two I bet could do it.

CL190 Yeah, they could.

JB191 And so you kind of make it into a little game for them.

CL191 Okay.

JB192 Do you want to write that one down too?

CL192 Sure. Okay.

JB193 Okay. So let's get back to this thought. If I don't have my independence first before I lose mom, I might not make it. What's another way of looking at that now?

CL193 [2-43] It's almost like a quiz when you ask me. Another way of looking at it? I guess if I have my independence now, I will feel a lot more secure.

JB194 That's right. But not having your independence now, does that necessarily mean that you won't be able to make it?

CL194 It seems like, it seems that way because just because how things are now.

JB195 That's right.

CL195 It really does seem that way. It almost seems like if I don't make it out of here now, it's almost like I want to prove to her that I can make it.

JB196 Well, I think it's a good idea to do that. The only thing I'm trying to do is to try and have you not be quite so anxious about it and have you see that even if the worst happened and you were to lose her soon, it would be hard, but that you would eventually make it.

CL196 [2-44] Okay.

JB197 You seem a little less sure of that then you did a few minutes ago.

CL197 Yeah. I want it though. I really do. And . . .

JB198 Well, maybe another important thing to remember is I want independence so badly that I'm making the steps toward it. And certainly going out and looking at apartments is very good. And when we talked about it first you said you were confused about what to do next. And then we talked about it for another minute, and you were very clear about what to do next.

CL198 Yeah.

JB199 So my sense is that you are really going in the right direction. You have a good head on your shoulders, and you know what to do. The depression is probably holding you back a little bit. And your fears may be holding you back a little bit too. But what I see is that you are plowing ahead, and you are looking at apartments. You are doing things to try to make your life better. What do you think that says about you as a person?

CL199 That I guess I am trying. . .

JB200 I wonder if you are stronger than you think you are?

CL200 [2-45] I don't know. I wonder. I want to be stronger. I want to be stronger and independent and not feel so sad and burdened, but I really do.

JB201 Well, I think you are making some good steps toward it.

CL201 Okay.

JB202 The other thing I was trying to get across tonight is the reason you feel so sad and anxious sometimes is because of thoughts that you have. So if you have thoughts like if I lose mom before I get my independence, I won't make it. Those kind of thoughts are going to undermine you and make you feel really anxious or sad. And you can't necessarily stop the thoughts from coming into your head, but once they come into your head, then you can say to yourself, now wait a minute. How do I know that that's true? Maybe it's not really true.

CL202 Okay.

JB203 Maybe it's not as true as it feels right now.

CL203 Okay.

JB204 [2-46] And let's see. You gave me an example before about mom, oh, even the thought I might lose mom, and then you thought it over later and you say to yourself, now wait a minute. Here she was criticizing me. She's actually very strong.

CL204 Yeah.

JB205 So that's the kind of thing that I'm talking about. When you are feeling really anxious or depressed is to look for thoughts or pictures that are going through your head. And then kind of evaluate them critically and think to yourself, how true are they?

CL205 Okay. How true are the thoughts. Okay.

JB206 Or if it's a picture going through your mind, then you can try to change the picture in the way that we did before.

CL206 Okay, change the picture.

JB207 Okay. So, if you could summarize a little bit about what we talked about tonight, what do you think was important?

CL207 [2-47] Um, standing firm on the decision that I need to move.

JB208 Good.

CL208 Um, what else?

JB209 You can look at your page.

CL209 About just the advantages also of moving. And the thing too about becoming independent first.

JB210 And what a good idea that is.

CL210 Yeah.

JB211 But not to scare yourself so much if that doesn't happen.

CL211 Yeah. Okay. Right.

JB212 Okay, let's see. Anything else we talked about tonight? Oh, and then when you do find that you are having some scary thoughts or depressing kind of thoughts, just to say to yourself how do I know that this is true.

CL212 Right. How true are the thoughts.

JB213 How true are these thoughts really.

CL213 And try to change picture.

JB214 Yeah.

CL214 Okay.

JB215 [2-48] Now, was there anything that I said tonight that you thought I misunderstood?

CL215 No.

JB216 Or anything that bothered you?

CL216 No.

JB217 Okay. And anything that you particularly liked that we talked about?

CL217 Yes. About writing down the advantages and disadvantages on making a decision.

JB218 And that will help you with other decisions as well.

CL218 Yeah. I see that it makes a lot of sense.

JB219 Most of the time people just have these advantages and disadvantages swimming in their heads. But it is much easier if you put them down on paper, and then you can really get a better idea.

CL220 Okay.

JB221 Good. Well, thanks for coming in tonight.

CL221 Oh, you are welcome.

JB222 It was a pleasure talking to you.

CL222 Thank you.

JB223 Sure. We're done.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION



Books

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