

# BRIEF THERAPY INSIDE OUT

WITH

Scott Miller

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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Jon Carlson, Ed.D., Psy.D. Diane Kjos, Ph.D.

## HOW TO USE THIS TAPE

This tape is divided into three segments. In the first segment (22 minutes), Jon Carlson and Diane Kjos interview Scott Miller to gain an overview of his approach. The next segment is client session (50 minutes). The client is a volunteer who has not previously met with Miller. Following this, Miller, Carlson and Kjos review and discuss key points in the counseling session (33 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:

- A. 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.
- B. Depending on time available:
  1. Show the second segment without pause, asking participants to note the time markers of interventions they found particularly significant.
    - a. Briefly discuss significant interventions and turning points in the session.
    - b. 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.

TRANSCRIPT OF THE SESSION WITH A FISHERMAN1

SM1 [2-1] Hi

CL1 Hello

SM2 My name is Scott.

CL2 I'm Scott.

SM3 Okay. Is it okay if I call you Scott.

CL3 It's fine.

SM4 Let me tell you just a little bit about how I work, and then if you have any questions or anything, let me know. Usually when I meet somebody I'll spend about thirty, thirty-five minutes chatting with them, getting to know them a bit, finding out what they are hoping for from the visit. And then I will take a break and just take some time to myself to kind of think about what they've said and pull together some thoughts. At that time you can also think. You have some reflections about what we've talked about, anything that seemed helpful. Let me know when I come back, and I'll share my thoughts with you.

CL4 Sounds good.

SM5 [2-2]Okay. Good enough. Um, tell me just a little bit about yourself and what you are hoping for from tonight. Any thoughts you'd had about that?

CL5 Well, everybody always tells me I'm a little bit scared to make commitments.

SM6 Okay.

CL6 And they always said how I just say, I don't always want to made a decision right away.

Always kind of hemhaw around about it, and that's probably true. But I don't know if it's just me or if it's just I'm a big chicken to do it.

SM7 Okay. So you would say that these people who make these comments, that their view may be accurate.

CL7 Could be. Yeah.

SM8 Okay.

CL8 And it ain't just one person telling me. You know, there have been several people telling me. If one person said it I'd say well I'll think about it. But when more than that, you know, something has got to be you know.

SM9 Alright. So you've heard this stuff before.

CL9 Right.

SM10 And then you started thinking well, you know. okay.

CL10 Just make up your mind and do it. Either you're not or you are. One of the two.

SM11 Okay.

CL11 And I hear that at work too once in a while.

SM12 Okay.

CL12 [2-3] And it's very true.

SM13 Okay, so it takes you some time to make a decision. Do you eventually make the decision?

CL13 Usually, yeah.

SM14 Okay.

CL14 I'll try to weigh out the situation, which is the best way, and it may not always be right.

SM15 Okay.

CL15 It makes it tough sometimes.

SM16 Okay, so you are the kind of guy who carefully weighs a decision, considers the options.

CL16 Tries to.

SM17 Sometimes that works and sometimes it doesn't, of course.

CL17 Sometimes I wonder if it's just better off to go with a gut feeling and go for it.

SM18 Okay. Do you do that sometimes?

CL18 Once in a while. It never fails. Something is always screwed up.

SM19 Okay, so that's less somehow. When you've done that the results aren't as . . .

CL19 Yeah, they are not as good.

SM20 Okay.

CL20 A lot of times plans get changed. Doggone it. You had this all planned out to go and then don't go. Someone threw a wrench in the pile and now we're set.

SM21 Well, you didn't plan careful enough, right? That's the sort of thought that comes back to you, and maybe then you think I should plan more carefully in the future?

CL21 Yeah.

SM22 Okay.

CL22 [2-4] That, and I'm always trying to look out for everybody else instead of myself. I don't know why, but I'll ask Nancy well, what do you want to do. See it don't make me no difference either way. She tells me to make the decision. I'll make is and, doggone it, that ain't where I wanted to go.

SM23 So Nancy. Who's Nancy?

CL23 That's my girlfriend.

SM24 Okay. An is she one of those voices that say "Come on Scott"?

CL24 Yep. I've known her for five, five and a half years. Something like that. So it's . . .

SM25 Have you been kind of boyfriend/girlfriend . . .

CL25 Darn near the whole time.

SM26 Oh, wow.

CL26 She moved in next door to where I live, and that's how I met her.

SM27 Okay.

CL27 And just ever since then we've been going out or we lived together for four years, so . .

SM28 Okay, so you are together living in the same house now?

CL28 Not right now. We are working on it. So, but things are going real good so far.

SM29 Okay, so things are actually going well with Nancy?

CL29 Right.

SM30 Tell me more about that.

CL30 [2-5]Well, I say we started going out five, at least five years ago, and she had problems with her girlfriend where she lived. They had a fight one night and I moved her out in about two hours, and I pulled all the strings. I had her furniture at my grandma's, at my house, at my father's house, and moved her at my father's house, and it just kind of progressed from there and then we got a place together. We lived together for quite a while, and last summer we had some problems. And she decided she was going to move out. Which . . .

SM31 Now is that the summer before?

CL31 Last fall. About a year ago.

SM32 Okay.

CL32 And we've had some problems. and we've worked on it a bunch because I say I've had problems with my temper, and I've worked on it. And it's had its good and bad. And right now things are a whole lot better than what they were a year ago.

SM33 With Nancy and with your temper?

CL33 Right.

SM34 How did that happen?

CL34 I've had a little bit of counseling that I received here at the college.

SM35 You did?

CL35 [2-6]And that's helped a bunch. That and knowing I just can't do the things I was doing and listening to my mother say hey, you can't do the things you were doing, and getting a little older. It's finally starting to sink in.

SM36 Okay. So with age comes some maturity, I guess. We can all hope.

CL36 Yeah, right. I turned 30 last fall, so that was a little bit different.

SM37 Okay, so the age in combination with the counseling. And did you also say something about your mom? She had been helpful too?

CL37 Yeah, she helps me a little bit and my one uncle. If I ever got problems or whatever, I call him on the phone and go from there. Sometimes you just need somebody to talk to. Not necessarily like I call up Nancy and talk to her but just you know a guy to guy talk. It's, I don't know, sometimes a little easier to say what you are going to say than if I tell Nancy, I'm afraid I'm going to say something . . .

SM38 Might mess things up.

CL38 Right.

SM39 Make it worse.

CL39 Uh huh.

SM40 [2-7] Right. And you don't want that.

CL40 Right. No.

SM41 Not planned that way.

CL41 Exactly.

SM42 So you sort of, again, this seems to me there can be this part of you that is more careful, a planner, you talk to this other person first, and . . .

CL42 Right. Am I going about this the right way? And most of the time he's a great help to me, and my mother helps me a little bit, but

SM43 Okay. And it's more this kind of man to man conversation that helps that you can talk it out. Is there something in particular the way that you guys do it that you find really . . .

CL43 We sit out there in the garage and we are working on a car or just something like that. Nobody else around, and that's a great help to me.

SM44 Okay.

CL44 That's the way I used to be with Grandpa until he passed away, and then after that I had to really find somebody. It took a long time to ...

SM45 How did you eventually find Jerry?

CL45 Well, just, I don't know . . .

SM46 I mean how did you eventually find out that he was the kind of a guy that you could have sort of the same conversation that you had with your grandfather?

CL46 [2-8] I don't know. A lot of- it is probably because he is a lot like Grandpa.

SM47 He's your grandfather's son, right?

CL47 Right. On my mother's side. And it just, I started going over there at different time, and as I said, we'd just sit out there in the garage and just shoot the baloney. Absolutely nothing. And it feels real good just to take the pressure off.

SM48 Right. This wasn't an instant kind of thing.

CL48 No.

SM49 You kind of also with him. You felt it out, you shot the baloney, it took a while, and then this relationship deepened.

CL49 Right.

SM50 Am I getting this right?

CL50 Exactly right.

SM51 Okay.

CL51 Uncle Jerry is more of a father to me than my father probably ever will be.

SM52 Wow.

CL52 And Dad and me, we're probably about this far apart, and Jerry and me are like this.

SM53 Wow.

CL53 If I need something in the middle of the night, all I have to do is call him, and he will be there.

SM54 Wow.

CL54 And that's nice.

SM55 That's incredible to have that kind of relationship in your life.

CL55 Yep. And that's the way he tells me too. If I need something in the middle of the night, all I got to do is call you and you'll be there.

SM56 And you trust him.

CL56 [2-9] Yep. It's nice to have somebody like that around.

SM57 Right. Right.

CL57 It's gotten me over some bad times. Like when Nancy and me were having problems, stuff like that, and that helped. And then when Grandpa passed away and then I lost my sister, there were like five deaths in the family within a year.

SM58 Wow, and just how long . . .

CL58 That was about five years ago now. It was just before I met Nancy. And man it was darn tough.

SM59 It sounds like

CL59 It was, and then I started to talk with him, and that helped. It kept me going.

SM60 It kept you going.

CL60 Yep.

SM61 It also sounds like too like you are a people person. You're not somebody who, obviously you are outgoing, but it takes you, you like to build relationships slowly and over time. Am I getting-

CL61 [2-10] Yep. It takes me a while to get where I trust somebody enough to let them go. Like in my business, too. I've got to trust the guy that's watching the banks for me. If I don't trust him, you know, I'm only as alive as he is watching. If he don't watch me, I could be dead tomorrow. And that happens.

SM62 Do you trust the bank person now?

1CL62 Yeah. I watch a little bit, and then I've got a couple of other people that help me watch. See I don't ever want to get covered up again. once was enough.

SM63 Oh, you've already had this happen to you.

CL63 I've had it happen once, and I don't want it to ever happen again.

SM64 Okay. Alright. So it's both. It's both that, and I imagine maybe the same with Jerry that you take a while to build this relationship, but then there is also a part of you that sort of keeps an eye on yourself as well and making sure that things are okay and that you are still safe.

- CL64 Like a sixth sense almost. You can feel that something ain't quite right. Like when I'm a hole most of the time I can feel the ground move before you can see' it move. You can feel it. How, I don't know, but you feel it.
- SM65 Okay.
- CL65 And it's just something that you feel.
- SM66 [2-11] Right. Right. I was just struck by all these things I mean that you've had going on. I mean you had the difficulties with Nancy that you guys went through. You had the deaths of these close family members. You had this anger that you were sort of working on and struggling with, and you are saying that those things are kind of on a roll.
- CL66 And I'm not the kind of person most of the time to go out and just start talking. I hold a lot of it inside, and it just keeps burning and burning in there and comes to a head sometimes.
- SM67 Okay.
- CL67 But a lot of times I'll just go up to the shop and I'll work on a car or whatever just to get away from everybody for an hour or two.
- SM68 Okay. So when you have that feeling of things kind of burning inside, one way you take care of it is by getting off to yourself. That helps you I guess keep from what?
- CL68 It keeps my temper under control, and . . .
- SM69 Okay. Where did you learn this?
- CL69 [2-12] I don't know. It was something that Nancy or somebody was telling me. She always told me one of her girlfriends read it in a book. One of them should always walk away. Well, that didn't always work because I'd say well I walked away the last three times we've had a discussion. It's your turn to walk away, or she would follow me right out to the garage, you know. I'd do it at work, you know, when things are going bad or whatever. I'll just go to the water cooler and get a drink and just stay away from everybody for a couple of minutes. Come back, and hit it hard again. The boss and me will discuss it, what we need to do, and we'll go from there. That way nobody gets hurt, and it's the safest way to do it.
- SM70 So, there is a combination of things I'm catching here that you not only sometimes take a break and say I've got to get away. But there are also times where you discuss it.
- CL70 Yeah.
- SM71 How do you make the decision between the two? I mean, I'm sort of stumped by that.

CL71 [2-13] Well, just kind of feeling out the situation between how the boss is reacting and how I feel about it and how things are going in general. If it's been one of those days where everything just went wrong, I just walk away and I'll go to the truck. But, you know, things have been going good and all of a sudden we have a problem. Alright, what is the problem here? Let's find out why, and we'll go from there. If it was something I did or just the way things happened, let's put it behind us and let's go.

SM72 Say this last part again.

CL72 We'll put everything behind us, and sure I screwed up or he did, hey, you know. We don't intend to screw up, but if we were working, it happens.

SM73 So there's a big forgiveness part in this too.

CL73 Right.

SM74 And I'm not going to make a mountain out of every molehill.

CL74 Right.

SM75 And you discuss it and sometimes you figure out why and move on.

CL75 Right. And that's what Nancy and me have been trying to do. You know, instead of getting mad at each other, let's find out why. And sometimes we do and sometimes we don't. But it's gotten, like I said, it's gotten a lot better.

SM76 Okay. And I'm really curious about that because you not only do this in your personal life and your work life. But you also do it in your intimate life with Nancy. You've been trying to do that.

CL76 Right.

SM77 [2-14] So sometimes if things are just starting to get a little sort of on the edge, I'm guessing that that is when you sort of approach Nancy or she approaches you. How does that happen?

CL77 Sometimes it's kind of a mutual thing. And you've got to feel it between, well, it ain't going good here. Why ain't it? And we will talk about it. Well, most of the time it's just a lack of communication and somebody threw the clinker in there and set her back a half hour or I didn't get there on time. There is just something, we both had a plan to be here at 6:30. Well, she had to work late or whatever, or we're both tired. Well, you know, we know what the problem is. We are both just exhausted.

SM78 Okay.

CL78 And then we go from there.

SM79 Once you are able to get to sort of the thing . . .

CL79 Right.

SM80 And then mutual understanding, break that communication, I don't know, stoppage or backup, then it moves on and things are cool.

CL80 [2-15] Right. It usually works out real good. Like last weekend we had a problem because we got up and we were supposed to go fishing that morning, and it was raining. And so they didn't want to go fishing. But my mother was planning on going fishing, and Nancy wanted to go shopping. I said well, I'll tell you what.

SM81 Let me get this here, Nancy wanted to go fishing.

CL81 Go shopping.

SM82 Shopping. Okay. Because of the rain, she didn't want to sit out in the rain?

CL82 Yeah. And I was kind of planning on them to go fishing with-me, and I was going to go in and we'd eat dinner or whatever.

SM83 Have a good time.

CL83 Right. Well, they changed the whole plan. Just go. I'm doing what I want to do. You do what you want to do. And it worked out real good. They come back and picked me up at 3:30. We went out and had a real nice dinner.

SM84 So they dropped you off at the spot.

CL84 They dropped me off with the boat in the lake, and I went off and did my thing, went fishing all day, then they come back and hooked up to the trailer when they got back, and when I come in they were ready to go. We went back to town, cleaned up, went out for a nice steak dinner, and everything went just slick as a whistle.

SM85 Now that could have turned out as a problem in the past.

CL85 [2-16] It could have. Yeah.

SM86 What was different? How come you know this time . . .

CL86 We discussed what was going on. And communication, and it seems like when we have problems or even at work, it's just a lack of communication.

SM87 Okay.

CL87 It seems like anyhow. It's just the way I interpret it. And it's helped a lot just being able to talk to people. Because when I was in high school, I couldn't sit down and talk to nobody. I, what we are doing tonight, I was a shy person. I couldn't talk to nobody.

SM88 Really?

CL88 And since I got into the construction business, there ain't nobody I can't talk to.

SM89 So that's even helped, the kind of work you do because . . .

CL89 I can talk to anybody now.

SM90 How does that happen? I mean a lot of people might have just said well screw it. I'm going to get out of the construction business then. But you didn't do that.

CL90 [2-17] No. It started out, I was working the top, and I didn't really know a lot of people I was working with. But just over time I got to know them good, and then the boss had put me in charge of like public relations, telling people we were going to shut their water off, and if somebody come up, inspectors and stuff like that, I always had to deal with them people.

SM91 The people who were mad or the inspectors?

CL91 Right. And after a while you just learn to deal with the people, and you just don't let it bother you. Sometimes it's real tough. Somebody is calling you an SOB or something you know. I'm sorry sir but I didn't, we didn't plan on having the water main break. But it happened, and we will try to get it back as soon as we can, and we will go from there. Sorry for the inconvenience and all. And if you treat people good, most of the time they will treat you real good. You always get a few that don't, but it keeps it interesting. There is no doubt. Because you don't know when you are going to go knock on a door is this guy going to rip me, or he is going to comp me a cup of coffee.

SM92 Right. But you've got to overcome that challenge.

CL92 It's easy now. Nothing to it.

SM93 But would you have said that let's say, let's say you were back in high school and you would have thought, sort of imagined that is the kind of work you would have been doing. I mean what would have happened then?

CL93 [2-18] I would have been a big chicken then. I wouldn't have went to the door. I'd have had a real hard time with it. It would have been real hard.

SM94 Okay.

CL94 There was one day we couldn't get a guy out of bed, and we had to have his cars moved, and I'm pounding on the door pretty loud. The boss he comes in there, boom, boom, boom. I think the whole house is rattling, and this guy come out swearing and everything else. I'll talk to you later.- I'm going back to the job.

SM95 Yeah.

CL95 And after you seen how they handle it, you learn a lot from just seeing how other people handle the situation, and it works real good.

SM96 Okay. I mean this is a theme that has come up a couple of times here. Even in the short time that we've been talking that first-off, it, ya know, your cautious. You take your time. You don't jump in. Usually that means you are up to here in something not nice.

CL96 Right.

SM97 [2-19] And the second thing you do, it seems like, and if there is more let me know, it seems like you are very observant. You watch how other people do stuff and then you apply that in your life. And then this last part is even though, even when you do sort of develop a strong relationship...

CL97 I'm always looking over my shoulder.

SM98 You are watching your backside.

CL98 Kind of. I suppose it is good in a way, but it makes me timid to jump into a relationship and this is the way it's going to be because it's touch you know knowing that everybody has been divorced and this and that. And it makes it tough.

SM99 That's right.

CL99 I'm just trying to look out for both of us. Not just for me. I don't through her to have to go through it or me.

SM100 Right.

CL100 So...

SM101 I mean given all the divorces and stuff you've seen the multiple remarriages, the pain that goes with that. I mean this makes a person cautious.

CL101 Because my mother brought me up since I was a little kid, so I see more her side of it than anybody else's. And I know that if I'd known half the stuff that my father did, I'd have killed him.

SM102 Yeah, because he hurt your mom.

CL102 [2-20] Right. That way. If I was as big as now then, he probably wouldn't be alive today. I'd have killed him for the stuff he's done. And I don't appreciate that kind of stuff.

SM103 In a way then you are sort of protecting Nancy.

CL103 Right.

SM104 You-don't want anything in the world to hurt her.

CL104 Right.

SM105 Does she know that?

CL105 Yeah, but she won't listen to me. She thinks I'm just full of baloney.

SM106 Okay. Alright.

CL106 But she's gradually learning.

SM107 So, it's taken some time . . .

CL107 Oh yeah. A lot of time.

SM108 And you are talking together a little bit more. You are communicating a little bit more. You are applying these things to your, things seem to be on the way in that?

CL108 Yeah.

SM109 Okay.

CL109 [2-21] Yeah, so I don't know. If everything goes like we're planning, probably in January or February we will be married if everything goes decent. Because she told me about it, where she works the highest sales people, they send them to Vegas for I don't know how many day trip on them. And she said why spend the money to go to Vegas to get married if everything goes right, let the company pay for it. If that's the way you want to do it, that's find with me.

SM110 Right.

CL110 Sounds real good to me.

SM111 Okay. So the plan is then to go ahead and go to Vegas during the regularly scheduled...

CL111 In the wintertime, yeah.

SM112 Wow.

CL112 That way I don't miss a bunch of work, and she don't either, and it will work out good for both of us.

SM113 Wow. Wow, that's incredible.

CL113 I hope everything works out good.

SM114 How, I mean, it seems like you are fairly, I mean, maybe I'm wrong about this , but it seems like you sort of have this clear vision about where you want things to go.

CL114 Not always. And I don't know, in the last six months it's gotten better.

SM115 It has.

CL115 But, I don't know. I never usually plan too far ahead.

SM116 Okay.

CL116 I know in the spring and the fall I'm in the field farming, and then the rest of it, I kind of fly by. When it gets done- it gets done.

SM117 Okay. What's gotten better about the situation in the last six months in terms of this part?

CL117 [2-22] Communication-wise it's just gotten a lot better because it seems like we both grewed up a little bit, and we learned, you know, we have to talk to each other to make it work. Because she is 39 years old or 38 and I'm only 30, so there is a little bit of an age difference, you know. And as I said, she's been married twice, so she is a little bit farther along in what it takes to make a relationship work. And I'm still trying to learn this stuff.

SM118 Okay. You're catching up.

CL118 I'm trying to catch up here.

SM119 Alright.

CL119 And some of the stuff I'm learning, and sometimes I'm not. Sometimes I'm a little slow at it, you know. I try to do the best that I can with what I got. Sometimes it works out real good. . .

SM120 And sometimes it doesn't.

CL120 It causes a few waves, but we try to learn from it and say well, okay. This didn't work. Why didn't it, you know. Sometimes, you know, I push too hard or she did or just something like that. Just something minor usually is what causes the biggest problems for us.

SM121 If that what gives you the hope that things will . . .

CL121 Yeah, cause I know we can work things out.

SM122 [2-23] Okay, what is it about you and her that make you think, in addition to these changes, what gives you the hope about that? I mean I can really feel it as I listen to you talk.

CL122 Well, we like a lot of the same things.

SM123 Okay.

CL123 She likes to go fishing. She likes . . .

SM124 Unless it's raining.

CL124 Unless it's raining. You've got it. She don't like to fish them 14, 15 hour days either.

SM125 Okay.

CL125 A lot of people don't. So, and she likes horses. I used to team rope, she likes That part of it.

And she basically likes to be out there in the country where I'm at. And that's ideally where I like to be. I don't like it up where there are a lot of people, and she don't either. So, we've got a lot things that are like the same, and she don't mind my big fish tank or nothing like that.

SM126 You've got a big fish tank?

CL126 135 gallon.

SM127 Wow. Salt water or fresh?

CL127 Fresh. And I like to tinker with that kind of stuff, so you know, it gets kind of expensive, but she likes it too, so that gives us both something to deal with in the wintertime. It's nice.

SM128 What would you say she likes about you?

CL128 [2-24] I have no idea. I don't know.

SM129 If I sort of have her off in a private moment. I'd say, now look at that guy over there. What is it about him?

CL129 She'd probably say sh likes that I help everybody out. She likes that part that I helped everybody, but she don't like because a lot of times I won't get stuff done for her.

SM130 Okay.

CL130 You know, that way. And like I say she's starting to learn that I don't let nothing happen to her.

Try to go out of my way to help out anybody I can. Even if her mother needs something. I'll go over there and help her out all I can. And she likes that.

SM131 Okay. She can say you have a really good spirit.

CL131 Yeah. She calls me up. I'll go over to her house and I'll work. I work more there than I do at my own house most of the time.

SM132 You are also kind of generous, it sounds like, with your time and...

CL132 [2-25] Like I said most of the time I get stuff done for everybody else, and I don't get my own stuff done. But, I don't know, like last winter it got to me. I was wondering am I here just because you want me to help fix up your place, or is it that you want me to be here? And it caused some problems, but when we talked it all out, she wanted me there.

SM133 Tell me more about this moment, because it sounds like kind of important. When was this?

CL133 It was like this early spring, last winter, and . . .

SM134 You had been apart then for about six months or so.

CL134 Right. And it was kind of tough that I thought maybe that was the only reason she wanted me back was to just kind of help her out, to get her house fixed up and this. And I was working there every night after work I would go there and I would try to work on this or that, and it was starting to get to me. Now is this the only reason you want me here? And after I thought about it and talked with her, I realized that wasn't the thing that, she didn't just want me there to help her out for that part. She wanted me there for moral support and being together and that kind of stuff.

SM135 [2-26] She convinced you. That thing convinced you. What was it? That sounds important because otherwise I could understand you hanging back and saying, God, you know, I'm basically a lucky here. I get to, I do all this stuff, and I don't need this. I've got a job.

CL135 Right.

SM136 What was it about that that really sort of helped you feel more like . . .

1CL136 I don't really know what it was. Because I like just to be around her and just sit around and watch a little TV in the evening or something.

SM137 Right, but you weren't willing to just hang out and keep doing stuff for her.

CL137 It was getting to the point, right.

SM138 That you were going to say . . .

CL138 And I didn't want to.

SM139 No.

CL139 Because she means too much to me to lose her for that.

SM140 She does. She does.

CL140 Yeah. So, I guess it's just . . .

SM141 So is it something she said or how you talk? How did that happen? I mean it seems . . .

CL141 [2-27] I don't really know. It just kind of happened you know over a couple of weeks. It just happened. I told her can I just have a break. You know, I don't mind helping you, and she realized that you know maybe she was pushing me a little bit too hard to come there every night and work. I was working every day at my normal job, and then I would come there and work for two or three hours a night. Not doing a lot but just odd jobs, you know. Tinkering, and I'd usually have dinner on the table by the time she got home and all that kind of stuff. So, you know, it was getting on me.

SM142 Yeah. Yeah. But you brought it up to her, and you somehow said can I have a break?

CL142 Right. And I think she realized you know maybe I'm pushing him a little-bit too much here.

SM143 Okay.

CL143 Because we had problems, and she didn't want to push me away too much either.

SM144 That's what it communicated to you.

CL144 Yeah.

SM145 When you said it to her and then she responded, then somehow you knew she didn't want you to go away either.

CL145 Right.

SM146 She was willing to say okay don't to the work. Just come over?

CL146 Yeah. That's how it ended up. And then gradually I got her to come out to my place and help me a little bit, so then it started working out. I'd come out here and help her a little bit and on the weekend or whatever she would come out and help me.

SM147 So more back and forth.

CL147 [2-28] So now instead of just me coming up helping, now she will come out and help me in the garden now or different things. so it helps. She'll help me with my grocery shopping. That has got to be the worst thing there is. Grocery shopping.

SM148 Why don't you like it? I know why I don't.

CL148 I just hate it. I don't, if I could just go in and get what I need it wouldn't be so bad. But when you've got to stand in line for twenty minutes behind somebody that don't have a clue what they are doing. . .

SM149 And their thing piled this high.

CL149 Yeah. You're in an aisle that says fifteen and under, and he's got a cart-full. And you are trying to get half a dozen things. I get one day off, and I got to stand in line here behind somebody like this. It just gets irritating.

SM150 Yeah, tell me about it.

CL150 You can tell me what to cook. I can cook about anything you want me to cook.

SM151 Right.

CL151 But I just hate going to get it.

SM152 Okay Alright. So it seems like at that moment then you've mentioned it. Somehow finally . . .

CL152 We just compromised and went from there.

SM153 Compromise, yeah.

CL153 And it worked out real good.

SM154 [2-29] And then from that given that you seem, I mean you seem to take a lot from your experience and put it to practical use. You've been trying to communicate, notice when there is a concern rather than letting it fester or . . .

CL154 Right. Talk about it before it ever gets bad and catch it when it is here instead of here.

SM155 Right.

CL155 And it's working real good.

SM156 Okay.

CL156 I'm trying not to let things bother me like they used to. I used to be bad about that. I'd just let things burn up in side of me, and-then my guts would be turning and everything else. And I try not to do that anymore.

SM157 And the way that happens is again you talk about it or you take one of these breaks. Go outside, hang out.

CL157 I used to go lift a lot of weights and stuff like that, and now my back hurts. I don't do that no more either.

SM158 That was a way to sort of . . .

CL158 Took a lot of pressure off.

SM159 Okay-

CL159 Instead of saying stuff I didn't want to and hurting somebody, I just go in the basement and I'd pump iron for an hour or something, and then you are wore out. You don't feel like arguing even if I was going to talk about it. And that helps.

SM160 It seems like things are on the road a bit.

CL160 Yeah.

SM161 [2-30] I mean what would tell you or make you feel confident about those things continuing for you? I mean, or are you confident?

CL161 I'm sure things are going to keep going the right way. As I say, we've had rough times in the five years. We had some real rough times, but we've always come through them, and I'm a believer that you've got to learn from your mistakes. If you keep screwing up the same way all the time, there is something wrong. But we try our darndest to learn and say well this is how we screwed up last time. This is our problem. Let's try not to do that anymore, and we will go from there. Sure, we may screw up again, but we are going to do the best we can because there is no relationship that's perfect.

SM162 So the part that gives you confidence is you're observant. You learn from your experience. You think stuff out.

CL162 Try to anyhow.

SM163 Okay. Well, you know nobody's . . .

CL163 [2-31] Nobody's perfect. And now that she's got a job that she likes, it makes it a whole lot easier for me. Because if somebody comes home and is ragging on you as soon as you walk in the door, you don't even want to go home at night.

SM164 Tell me about that. What happened?

CL164 Like when she was 'Living with me, and she a lot of times wouldn't get home until 7:00 or something like that. If I stopped somewhere on the way home, the first thing is well you stopped and had a couple of beers didn't you, and she would just continually rag on me because the one guy she was married to was an alcoholic. And it always rubbed her wrong if I had a couple of beers.

SM165 Before you come home.

CL165 Right. But now she has learned too that I'm not out messing around with nobody, and if I stop, I stop for one or two beers and that's it and I come home. And she has learned that I'm not out to hurt her.

SM166 But why did she stop ragging? I mean how did you help her see that about you so that she didn't have to worry?

CL166 [2-32] Well we discussed it. I told her. I'm not your ex-husband. I don't ever want to be, and I'm not out to hurt you. If I stop, it's just I'm going to have a couple of beers and then I'm going to come home, and I will help cook dinner or whatever and take care of everything else that's got to be done, and you know she realized after a while that you know I get more done at night than what most people do.

SM167 During the day.

CL167 Yeah. Like working two jobs anymore. I work usually from 6:00 in the morning until 9:00 at night. So it's not lacking of working.

SM168 No.

CL168 [2-33] I catch it because I work too much. How come you didn't come see me tonight? I have all this stuff that's got to get done. It causes a problem some time, but, she is realizing that it's not that I don't want to come see her now. And that was part of the problem before. She thought that I was just pushing her off, and I could see her point, you know, that I was working all these hours. She thought that. And that took a little bit to sink in my head, you know, that instead of me actually helping us both, I was actually hurting her. And I guess I had to learn you know about her not being there losing what I wanted. And if I keep doing what I'm doing, there isn't going to be no chance. I've learned from it.

SM169 And that's what it was, sort of recognizing what you had and what you wanted for in the future. That's what helps things sort of sink in. Okay.

CL169 There are things that I do and things that she does that we don't always see eye to eye on.

SM170 Of course. Welcome to the world of relationships.

CL170 Right. So, it's going though. It's helped me, and it helps here.

SM171 Okay. And what else, what, anything else that makes you feel confident about the next three or four months that things will continue or will there be signs that you were continuing. I mean small signs that you were . . .

CL171 Well, she was always saying that I was kind of afraid to commit to her. Well, since I've asked her to marry me, things have really, they have progressed, and we went to the next level, and things are going real good. They are smooth.

SM172 [2-34] And how do you feel about that decision? I mean what happened to all this fear of commitment and indecision and, I mean did you just finally weigh it carefully enough that it made sense to you?

CL172 Well, I think so. All the thinking about it, and I've run all this stuff through my head. You know, laying there every night and not sleeping for a week.

SM173 You really thought about it.

CL173 Oh, yeah.

SM174 Does she know that?

CL174 Yeah.

SM175 She did.

CL175 I don't think she believes it.

SM176 Okay. She wanted what she wanted.

1CL176 Yes. You know, she just thinks that it was just something that I said well we're going to do it.

This is something that I just didn't start tonight thinking about it. This has been going through my mind for a long time. And . . .

Sm177 Does she see that about you, any of it that you carefully weigh things?

CL177 Yeah.

SM178 I mean it's irritating at times, I guess.

CL178 [2-35] Right. She says too I'm too observant. I see too many things that are going on you know, and probably sometimes that's good and sometimes it's not. Because I read more into it than what a person should a lot of time.

SM179 Okay.

CL179 It gets me in trouble.

SM180 Okay.

CL180 But . . .

SM181 How do you deal with that, when it happens?

CL181 Most of the time we just talk about it, you know. Either when I'm at work or at home. It works out. A lot of times I say I see a lot more than a lot of people do. And it's good and bad.

SM182 Well, you're . . .

CL182 I'm always looking over my shoulder at who is doing what and how are they doing it.

SM183 Right.

CL183 So, I tell people look, I'm not telling you how to do your job. I'm just trying to help you out.

SM184 Okay.

CL184 And try to make people smile. Because that's what makes me happy is seeing other people smile.

SM185 Right, of course.

CL185 I try to make them laugh. And a couple of people told me you gotta, there's something that's holding you back, and you always try to feed off everybody else smiling. But that's what makes me happy is to see everybody else smile and have a good time. If they are . .

SM186 That makes you genuinely happy.

CL186 Yeah.

SM187 And to hell with those other people.

CL187 [2-36] Right. If you can't have a good time, then I don't want you around. That's what I like, to see everybody smile. We laugh at work. Stuff like that. And I try to do that with Nancy or anybody I'm around, make them smile. Sometimes I don't succeed, but I have a good time anyhow.

SM188 What makes you confident that you would be able to continue having smiles with Nancy over the next six months on the way to Vegas?

CL188 Um, I think some of it is because she's starting to see a little bit of my humor.

SM189 She is seeing that.

CL189 Right.

SM190 So, it's not all you.

CL190 Right.

SM191 There is also some other stuff. You are observing these changes.

CL191 Right.

SM192 Part of that it because you are communicating more, but it's also because you are seeing a change on her. That effects your confidence level. Deepens your sense of commitment.

CL192 And knowing that my temper isn't near as bad, that helps me.

SM193 You feel confident about that as well?

CL193 [2-37] Yeah, I'm getting a lot better with it. A whole lot better. Because now I'm the heck with it. Talk it out or we will go from there somehow or other. And it works out. I don't know how it happened, but it does.

SM194 Okay. That's good. That's good.

CL194 And sometimes I do have a hard time making a decision. I know that. I'd let somebody else make a decision about where we are going for dinner or what we are going to have, and that kind of stuff, it don't bother me. If you want to go here, hey that's fine. That kind of little stuff . . .

SM195 The little stuff doesn't bother you too much.

CL195 No, not really.

SM196 The major decisions . . .

CL196 We'll work on them together.

SM197 O.K.

CL197 Or try to. You know this is the way, you want to do it now? Alright, well, there ain't no way I can do it. How 'bout instead of doing it at 3:00, can we do it at 2:30. Or we'll compromise or something like that. That works out real good, or usually. Not always, but. . .

SM198 Signs in Nancy that will tell you that you can check your backside a little less.

CL198 Yeah, usually, yeah.

SM199 [2-38] What kinds of signs will you be noticing in the next six months that you can sort of feel comfortable with your decision.

CL199 Well, she always calls me now and wonders did I get home alright?

SM200 What started that happening? You were mostly calling her, you were mostly coming over, mostly cooking her meals. Suddenly she is calling you.

CL200 Yeah, now she is calling me again. And I don't know why it happened.

SM201 I Did you tell her to do it?

CL201 No, no. That's the way it happened. And she'll call me now or leave a message on the machine.

SM202 That's nice.

CL202 Or just say absolutely nothing . . .

SM203 Does it make you smile?

CL203 Sometimes.

SM204 Okay.

CL204 There for a while it was getting crazy. Every day I would get home, and she would talk for ten minutes on the machine and say absolutely nothing. And I'd listen to this thing. And I'd call her up and say well what did you actually want. It was no big deal.

SM205 She just wanted to talk.

CL205 You ain't ever home, so I just talk to the machine. When you get home, you call me.

SM206 [2-39] Seeing her or having her call you, leave you messages, even though sometimes they say nothing in the message, they say a lot to you. Am I right about this?

CL206 Yeah, sometimes, yeah.

SM207 Okay.

CL207 She's just calling to check up on me, make sure I'm still kicking.

SM208 Okay. Anything else you'd see in her over the next six months on the way to Vegas that would make you feel more confident, less having to check less frequently about your back?

CL208 Um, it made me feel more confident. The other night she was telling me that she told her mother the other night that I'd asked her to marry me, and I was really surprised that she told her.

SM209 Why is that?

CL209 Well, her mother and her, they talk, but they don't, I don't think anyhow, they don't talk a lot about that kind of stuff. They might talk about a bunch of baloney, but to get down to, sometimes they might, but I don't see them doing a lot of it. So. . .

SM210 So it obviously was something . . .

CL210 [2-40] Something that meant something to her, and it makes me feel good to know that she's told her mother that, that she's ready. So, I haven't told my mother yet, but, I was holding off until she told me that everything was good with her.

SM211 Okay. Anything that would be happening in Nancy that would make you feel confident enough to tell your mother that you would see in the next week or so?

CL211 I could tell my mother tonight. It wouldn't bother me a bit.

SM212 Really? Has something changed that would make you feel like oh now I can do it?

CL212 Well, just things have been going like they should go or how I think they should go.

SM213 Okay.

CL213 [2-41] We're getting along real good, and it's, when I call and ask her to come out to my place instead of me coming up, it's no problem. I'll be there in 45 minutes or whatever. It's like we are thinking as one instead of I'm doing this tonight and I don't have time to do that. It's more that way now between us than it ever was.

SM124 Wow. And if things continue like that, you would feel very comfortable flying out to Vegas.

CL214 Right.

SM215 Okay. This wouldn't be a big gamble.

CL215 No, no. When was it, two weeks ago. We went to the county fair in Kankakee. I had one of my buddies along. He's a little bit on the crazy side, and he goes up to the band and pays them of f to tell us congratulations over the PA, and this place is packed full of people. There ain't room to walk hardly, and he's gotta go up there and do that.

SM216 What did Nancy think of that?

CL216 She thought I did it. I said no I didn't have a thing to do with this. I didn't know nothing about it until the band said it. I had not a clue.

SM217 So you were as shocked as her. Did she like it? [laughing] Sort of.

CL217 She liked the part of, yeah that, but she was kind of embarrassed because that's where it happened.

SM218 Yeah.

CL218 So, it was funny though.

SM219 Okay.

CL219 [2-42] And I got a big kick out of it on the way home because she harassed me about it on the way home. I told her I didn't have a thing to do with it. I didn't know it was coming or nothing.

SM220 Well, sort of announcing to the world.

CL220 My one uncle caught us when we were walking out, and he caught us. I heard on the announcements that you two - no I didn't hear a thing.

SM221 Well, Scott, I'd like to take a break here for five or six minutes.

CL221 Sounds good.

SM222 And think about what you told me about. As I said earlier, as you think about our chat, as brief as it's been, if anything stands out as sort of like yeah, you want to think about or feel you need to think a little bit more about, I think that's the kind of guy you are anyway, or you feel like I need to do more of that, share it with me when I come back.

CL222 Sounds good.

SM223 Good enough?

CL223 Sounds good to me. I can handle that.

[BREAK]

SM224 [2-43] O.K. Scott welcome back.

CL224 Yep.

SM225 I'm just wondering if you had any thoughts or reactions or anything about what we talked about.

CL225 Kinda sitting here relaxi'n

SM226 O.K.

CL226 Not doing anything crazy.

SM227 O.K. [laugh] good enough.

SM228 Well I just wanted to, I did have some thoughts and if you have any in response to me let me know. I guess my first one is that I just wanted to let you know I found this really enjoyable talking with you.

CL227 Me too.

SM229 Good, good. I can't remember a time when I had one of these visits where I laughed as much and smiled as much.

CL228 That's good.

SM230 [2-44] So I just wanted you to know that, and I, not that there wasn't, not that I didn't notice you've been through a lot at the same time. But hey, no one says you have to frown and cry in your beer. I know that things have been hard for the last few years, death of your family members.

CL229 Yep.

SM231 Struggles with Nancy.

CL230 Yep.

SM232 And such. But over all, it seems like, because I thought back over the 40 minutes we chatted or so, seems like your sense is that things are on the way. Am I right about this?

CL231 Yep. Gotten a lot better.

SM233 [2-45] And that your thinking is that that's because, and my thinking actually is, it's a combination of boldsome, very thoughtful, and caring decision making on your part. I just think you're the kind of guy who takes time to make a decision and when people push that sends up even more red flags because somehow it doesn't fit with who you are and making decisions slowly are carefully. Once you do make a decision it seems like you are very committed. You have an ethic about following through on the promises that you've made. We need more of that in this world. Really.

CL232 No doubt.

SM234 So there's a combination of that about who you are, the careful decision making and then in addition it also seems like the thing that keeps you on track and feeling confident is that you learn from your experience. You observant and you watch. And again red flags go off and your past experience tells you that red flags should go off when you are being pushed to make a decision or to go against what you've learned or before you've learned.

CL233 Yeh.

SM235 It seems like in the relationship with Nancy, what you have learned very much is to talk, talk early, and talk often.

CL234 It makes a big help.

SM236 If that continues then it seems like your feeling confident.

CL235 Uh huh.

SM237 [2-46] So, my only sort of suggestion is to simply pay attention because of your - the observant person you are - is to pay attention to the signs that you can feel confident over the next six months. So every time you notice something, I want you to keep your eyes open for signs that you can and should feel confident. And notice those signs and then talk about them with Nancy. Share them with Nancy so ya know, when she tells her mother, you know you noticed it and then say - "that meant something to me". That's my only thought.

CL236 I'm just thinking here. Sometimes I get a little bit depressed. I don't, were going along all of the sudden and then I get depressed for a couple of days. I have no idea why I do that. But, sometimes I'll just be there and someday I'll completely hit rock bottom. And I just don't feel like doing diddley squat. Most of the time it don't last but a few days. That's it. I have no idea why.

SM238 [2-47] O.K., so help me understand. What have you learned about that as a result of ...

CL237 I try not to get there.

SM239 O.K., O.K.

CL238 I have no idea why, what brings it on.

SM240 O.K.

CL239 I'm happy one day and the next I just, I'm down in the dumps, I have no idea why. It don't happen very often.

SM241 O.K. It Doesn't happen very often, but every once in awhile things sort of bottom out. O.K. O.K.

CL240 Yep.

SM242 Well I mean, again my thought is maybe at this point we don't have enough information to really understand what that is. You may want to notice what's happening when those periods take place.

CL241 Be a little more observant again.

SM243 Ya, does that make sense?

CL242 Yep, what's causing it and go from there to correct what's causing it.

SM244 Right. Does it make sense to you?

CL243 Ya, it helps.

SM245 [2-48] O.K. Any other thought or feeling about anything?

CL244 Ya, it helps, it just helps to talk.

SM246 Ya, talk early, talk often.

CL245 It definitely helps. I know it has helped a lot so far.

SM247 Have you shared these moments of feeling down with Nancy?

CL246 Sometimes. I one of those king of people, it's hard for me to talk. I just pull off in a corner somewheres and I'm just - "Leave me alone".

SM248 If you were able to talk with her would you feel more confident about the relationship?

CL247 Probably.

SM249 Really?

CL278 Probably would help me a lot. I can talk to her about a lot of stuff. There's some stuff it's hard to talk to a woman about. No matter if it's your wife or your mother.

SM250 Ya.

CL249 It's just hard to talk about.

SM251 O.K.

CL250 That's when I call up Uncle Jerry and talk to him and Rod when I got to talk.

1SM252 Perfect, you sort of rally these other resources.

CL251 [2-49] Yep, That's where I had a counselor before. If you ever have to talk to someone in the night, whatever, just call. I ain't gonna gaurntee that I'll be there, but if you need somebody just give me a jingle. That helps just knowing you got somebody there to talk to.

SM253 Right, Right.

CL252 It ain't really nobody I know, it's just someone to talk to.

SM254 That person now is Jerry, or your - Would you like to be able to talk to somebody else?

CL253 Sometimes it's good to talk to somebody else.

SM255 O.K.

CL254 It kinda put a fresh perspective of ya know, four eyes are better than two ya know. Maybe they'll pick-up something that hey, they didn't ever see before, and then it's right there and it bites you. Sometimes it's just having somebody tell you what it was. Your completely over looking it and there it was.

SM256 If there was some way that we can arrange to either meet or to continue our conversations would that be something you'd be interested in?

CL255 Ya, I can handle that.

SM257 O.K.

CL256 [2-50] It helps picks off the chest a little bit.

SM258 Perfect.

CL257 Not even when we talk about anything serious, just to talk, it helps to keep moving.

SM259 O.K.

CL258 Keep looking in the right direction anyhow.

SM260 Let's figure out how to make that happen.

CL259 Sounds good.

SM261 Thanks a lot Scott.

CL260 Uh huh.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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