

# BRIEF THERAPY INSIDE OUT

WITH

Peggy Papp

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.

We can be reached at Division of Psychology and Counseling, Governors State University, University Park, IL 60466. Jon's e-mail address is [jcarlson@genevaonline.com](mailto:jcarlson@genevaonline.com); Diane's e-mail address is [d-kjos @ govst.edu](mailto:d-kjos@govst.edu).

Jon Carlson, Ed.D., Psy.D

Diane Kjos, Ph.D.

PEGGY PAPP

Peggy Papp, CSW, serves as a Supervising Faculty Member of the Ackerman Institute for the

Family and has a private practice in family therapy in New York City. She is the founder and director of Ackerman's Depression and Gender project which focuses on the role gender plays in depression.

Internationally renowned, she is the author of a number of articles and books on family therapy with an emphasis on gender and power. She received the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy's Lifetime Achievement Award and was honored by the American Family Therapy Academy for her work with the Women's Project for Family Therapy.

### HOW TO USE THIS TAPE

This tape is divided into three segments. In the first segment (20 minutes), Jon Carlson and Diane Kjos interview Peggy Papp to gain an overview of her approach. The next segment is the interview with the clients (50 minutes). The couple are volunteers who had not previously met with Papp. Following this, Papp, Carlson and Kjos review and discuss key points in the counseling session (29 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.
- 4.

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 COUPLE1

PP1 [2-1] So you say that you have never been in counseling before.

MN1 Right. Never. This is the first experience for me. Still kind of shaky, but I think I'll get used to it sooner or later.

PP2 So, it makes you a little nervous to come here?

MN2 Somewhat. Somewhat explaining my problems to everyone. I'm just not one for doing all that. I don't know why. I just feel if I can't solve it myself, then maybe there is not a solution.

PP3 Well, I think a lot of people feel that way. So how were you persuaded to come since you feel that way?

WN1 Me. Because I know there's something wrong and we need help. Go get it.

PP4 [2-2] I see. Well, so you must pay a lot of attention to what she says. You must respect her opinion, yeah?

MN3 Yes, I do.

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1PP – Papp, MN – Male Client. WM – Female Client

WN2 Somewhat.

PP5 You do.

MN4 I don't ignore her. I listen to everything she says.

PP6 Is that true?

WN3 No. He does in a way. He listens, but sometimes he'll listen but it's just listening, you know? He'll take it in, but then he don't make no actions behind that.

PP7 I see.

WN4 He'll say I heard you and, and then that's it. But it's like he is trying, you know, and I see it. He does try, but like, that's why I wanted to come to counseling because we need help, you know. We need like a mutual understanding there that we don't have. He has his ways, and I have mine, and we are two different people, but we have to meet somewhere in the middle.

PP8 Well, what do you feel you need a mutual understanding about?

WN5 [2-3] Just like things that he wants out of our relationship and things that I want. We have to like bring them together.

MN5 There are some things that I expect from her I don't receive, and vice versa, things she expects from me I don't receive, and we are trying to meet in the middle, but for some reason we keep going crossing each other's path.

PP9 I see.

WN6 Or we'll just give up.

PP10 So what do you think happens that you just keep going like this rather than getting together?

MN6 Why things happen? I have no idea why we keep passing paths. We pass but we just keep crossing. We try. We may talk, we communicate a lot, so . . .

PP11 You do?

MN7 Yeah, we communicate a lot.

WN7 We do.

PP12 Oh.

MN8 We'll sit down and have a little quiet time and talk to each other. I tell my problems and vice versa. And then we will try to . . .

WN8 Well, we were raised two different ways too. That has a lot to do with it.

PP13 Yeah? What different ways.

WN9 [2-4] Well, I was raised, first of all, I was raised by a minister. So my like my worries in life and my goals and things are more like spiritual and more like loving. Love your neighbor, you know, stuff like that. More emotional feeling type life. Which his is like more down to earth, material like you know, if I don't have money or if I don't have physical things, you know. And I believe, really I do believe that I'm learning, I'm supposed to learn off of him, and he's supposed to learn off of me, but we don't have the way to go about that.

PP14 Well, tell me a little bit about how you were raised.

MN9 [2-5] Well, basically I was raised to take care of yourself. Do what you have to do to survive, you know. If you want something, go out there and get it. Don't wait to talk to somebody else to see maybe they can help me get it. Go out there and get it yourself. That's it. Bottom line. You got to do what you have to do to make it. You know, I was raised in a nice home. My mother and father are great individuals. But they taught me to take care of myself. Bottom line. Take care of yourself. If you want this done, do it.

PP15 So you were taught mainly to take action.

WN10 Real responsibility.

PP16 You take action.

WN11 A lot of responsibility.

MN10 100%

PP17 A lot of responsibility, survive.

WN12 Army. He's been through the Army.

PP18 Oh, Yeah?

MN11 Yeah. I was in the Army for four years. But I was always told don't sit around and wait. If you sit around and wait, you are going to lose out. So that's why I feel like if I want something done, I'll bring it to her. We'll talk about it. If it's not done, then I guess that's when attitudes come into play, and that's when we get made at each other and all this and that. It's not like I be trying to make her do stuff, and it's not like she be try to make me do things.

PP19 So you are really action oriented, and you are more, like you say, spiritual and to talk about things, talk about feelings?

WM13 [2-6] Yeah. I was really raised like I was the baby, so I had like everything thrown at me, you know. So I know like now I have a lot of responsibility to learn, you know. Like I have to get, I know I have to get more responsibility because I don't really have you know all that. I mean I'm responsible, you know. I'm a mother so I'm responsible . .

PP20 You didn't have to be that responsible . . .

WM14 I'm not a go getter. You know that's not one of my good parts of me.

MN12 We talked about that. Like she said. She was the youngest so everything was like done for her. She didn't have to worry about doing anything. Everything was done. In my situation I had to do.

PP21 You had to do everything.

PP22 So how does that work out between you? Are you doing everything for her, and she . . .

MN13 [2-7] You know that actually happens? I'm doing my thing, and she's doing hers. I still do what I need to do like if something needs to be done, I'll go ahead and do it, and that's it. If she needs something to be done, you know, she'll kind of wait and wait and see if I'm going to go ahead and either do it or push her to do it or something of that nature, and that's where the problems comes because it's burning me out. It's burning me out, you know. I'm trying and trying on my side, and then I'm also trying and trying to help her as well. I don't know.

PP23 Well, tell me now, how did your families respond to your getting together? I mean since you are an interracial couple, did either of them have . . .

MN14 Not a problem, not a problem whatsoever.

PP24 I see.

MN15 That was not a problem. That was never an issue. That issue, interracial, never came up.

WN15 [2-8] No. But see I started interracial dating also real young at like 13, 13, 14. My first relationship was kind of you know iffy. They kind of thought it was just a phase and I would go through it. But after they got over that and they find out it wasn't a phase, then you know, I had some boyfriends before him. So when they did meet him, they really liked him for who he was.

PP25 I see.

WN16 They like him a lot.

MN16 We never really had a problem.

PP26 How did you manage to impress them so?

MN17 I have no idea. I was just being myself. To be honest with you I was just being myself.

PP27 They must have been very impressed with you.

MN18 I don't know what I did. My mom still tells me, I don't know what you did.

WN17 They like him a lot.

MN19 That's all that was.

PP28 And your family? How did they accept her?

MN20 100%. They have no problem with Kayla at all. At all. At all, and . . .

PP29 Well, gee. That's a real plus isn't it?

WN19 Yeah, that's good.

PP30 When you don't have to deal with any of that in-law stuff.

WM20 Yeah, that would make it hard too.

PP31 Well, and now how long have you been together?

WN21 Almost three years.

PP32 Do you live together?

WN22 Yeah. We've been living together for like almost two, two years.

PP33 [2-9] And how does it work out your living together and the just practicalities of it? Like who make the living? Who brings in the money? Do you both have jobs?

MN21 Well see, we both have jobs now. But like in the beginning it was all me. It was all me. This needed to be done, it was all me. You know, she was always giving her support, but it was all me. Every time something came up, it was me. It was me, it was me.

PP34 It was you what? Earning a living?

MN22 As far as earning a living, paying the bills, taking care of this, taking care of that. Making sure we had this, making sure we had that, making sure we had everything that we needed. I was all on me. The whole burden was completely on me. And she was there giving her support and all, but I don't know.

PP35 You were taking care of her, huh?

MN23 Basically.

WN23 Yeah. And then I had a baby. I got pregnant a year after we were together.

PP36 I see.

WN24 And I only worked the first three months of my pregnancy. I was off the rest of the time. He took care of me. And then I had the baby, and then I got a job like what, six months after he was born.

MN24 [2-10] Something like that.

PP37 And so who took care of the baby?

WN25 He did.

MN25 There you go.

PP38 You worked and took care of the baby?

WN26 No, I took care of the baby. Oh, you mean after I started working? We switch.

MN26 It just so happened that our jobs they coincide with each other.

WN27 He goes to work and I stay home.

MN27 While I'm at work, she's at home with the baby. While she's at work, I'm at home with the baby. It

just so happened. We're lucky at this time, but I know that will change.

WN28 But at first when I wasn't working, I took care of the baby but he supported us.

PP39 So, it sounds like that's working out well?

WN29 No.

PP40 No. Okay what's no?

WN30 [2-11] No that part is working out well now because I have a job and I'm bringing in money, and he is bringing in money. It's like the funds are more mutual now. It's the arguing and the fighting that we have a problem. We have never fought. Neither one of us really fought fought, but we have arguments. I don't know if that's our way of communicating when we don't communicate, or . . .

MN28 See at this point it's built up. It already is built up. You understand what I am saying? For some reason, like in the beginning, she wasn't working, got a job, lost the job, had the baby. But all that time that she wasn't working and she was just sitting home with the baby, it started building up, it started building up as far as me getting upset about little minor things. You know I'd go home, work, come home, and it was just disarray. For some reason I'm not accustomed to that either. I need everything organized in halfway decent order. That would make me somewhat comfortable. It doesn't have to be perfect. Nobody's perfect, but in a halfway decent order to where you know what this is and you can know where that is, and we had a big problem with that in the beginning as far as organization goes.

PP41 What do you think about him wanting order and for you to . . .

WN31 [2-12] It's fine, but you know what I found out in the past? See this is what we'll do. He'll say like okay, I want this out of you. And then I'll say okay. Well, I want this out of you. So I'll work really, really hard to make sure the house is clean, real, real nice, make sure dinner is ready for whenever he gets home, and then still work and give him like all these things, but then it's things that I want out of him that don't happen. And I don't even see him trying, so that's when I will say . . .

PP42 Like what do you want out of him that you don't get?

WN32 Well, he's like not romantic at all. I like a man that shows that he appreciates me. Like my birthday will come around, and he's not a holiday type person, so he doesn't feel like I should get any presents or I shouldn't get no presents at Christmas or we shouldn't have . . .

PP42 What do you mean you're not a holiday person?

MN29 What it is is as far as birthdays goes and Christmas and stuff, I don't make a big deal out of it. Christmas comes around fine. Okay you want to give somebody one or two gifts okay. Okay, your birthday comes around, happy birthday.

WN33 Yep. And that's it.

PP44 [2-13] And when you were growing up you didn't make a big thing about birthdays, holidays?

WN34 No. (she was answering the man's question)

PP44 So that's not a family tradition for you?

MN30 Right.

WN35 Like Memorial Day or Labor Day, I like to cook because I feel like when those holidays come around, ya know, I kind of, I don't know if I get jealous because everybody else I know is barbecuing and everybody else with their family, and I always, around holidays, all my family got together. That was like a ritual. All the family . . .

PP45 You celebrated together.

WN36 Yeap. And we cooked. My mom always cooked, you know. And the family was all together whatever.

PP46 You didn't celebrate the holidays?

MN31 Yes we did. We had family gatherings. All our family would get together . . .

WN37 He didn't like it.

MN32 I only go just because I didn't have a choice.

WN38 To eat.

MN33 You know, I go to eat, enjoy myself, but . . .

WN39 And go to sleep.

MN34 I really didn't have a choice. I go there. If it's Christmas time, some of the relatives you know throwing a barbecue, having a little Christmas party fine. I'll go over there, laugh and joke for a minute, and then I'll go outside and mind my own business.

WN40 [2-14] And they'll all get him something. All of his family will get him something, but he doesn't feel the need to return the favor. You know he'll show up empty handed, but everybody else has all these nice gifts, and I'm like, why, if we go to my mom's house. My mom you know done gone out the way to get him something nice, and I know she is gonna because she likes him and that's how she is. And I'll tell him, you know, let's go get her something and it's like not no big deal to him.

PP47 So it's just something that you would like to change? Would you like to give more gifts, participate more, celebrate . .

MN35 I mean it's not something that I must do.

WN41 Just like not having my house in perfect condition is not something that I don't think is necessary.

PP48 Well, tell me, so you, she said that you weren't very romantic with her. So what's your idea of being romantic?

MN36 Well, her idea of being romantic is coming home with flowers every night.

WN42 Every once in a while.

MN37 You know doing special stuff like that. Bring her a card every now and then.

WN43 [2-15] Going out to dinner.

MN38 I just don't find the need for that. My thing romantic is hey, you have everything you need. You don't have to worry about anything. What's the problem. You have everything you need. What's the problem. You want me to go out and buy all these roses? You want me to go out and buy all these cards, vases and whatever, but you have everything you need.

PP49 So being romantic is having everything you need.

MN39 No, see you can't break it down like that. It sounds strange.

WN44 It's just like holidays. He feels like why should he get me something for my birthday when you get things something every day.

MN40 Right, she gets stuff all the time, so her birthday comes around . . .

PP50 But tell me when you were courting her, what did you, how were you romantic?

MN41 She didn't get anything. She didn't receive anything. When we were courting, when we first started dating . . .

WN45 Well, that's not why I fell in love with him.

PP51 Excuse me just a minute. How did you court her?

MN42 [2-16] Well, you know, we got together. We might have went out here, might have went out to the part, sat around at the park. Laughed at jokes, at a movie. Went over to a friend's house. Played around the friend's house. Played some cards, you know, dominoes or what have you. Just basically going out and enjoying ourself with all our other friends. As far as getting all dressed up classy going to a restaurant or doing all this or that, we never done that while we were courting.

PP52 Well, how did you show her you liked her, affection, warmth, love?

MN43 She seen it in my eyes I guess. I didn't have to go inside my pocket to give her anything. I didn't have to go outside the car and give her anything. I didn't really have to give her anything. She just seen the look on my face.

PP53 So you are romantic through your eyes?

MN44 I suppose so. But not in her eyes. Apparently not. She doesn't think I'm romantic at all.

PP54 So did he have romantic eyes? Did you feel . . .

WN46 No, that's not really why I fell in love with him.

PP55 Well, in what way was he romantic . . .

MN45 In the beginning.

PP56 . . . that made you fall in love with him. There had to be something, right?

WN47 He really wasn't.

PP57 Really.

WN48 That's not what I'm saying.

PP58 I see, I see. Okay.

WN49 [2-17] I liked him because well we had things in common, and you know, he just, he was a nice guy, you know? It was like I knew that he wasn't going to fake me, like say I'm coming and not come. And I knew that he was gonna, he was just a nice guy, ya know all around.

PP59 He was very dependable.

WN50 Yeah, he's dependable.

PP60 He'd keep his word.

WN51 Yeah. He's just a nice guy. He's not someone who is going to treat you really really wrong, ya know.

PP60 He's going to be responsible to you, dependable, and you can count on him.

WN52 Yeah. And the part where you say going around visiting friends and stuff, that was fine because I didn't know none of his friends at first. So going around that was fine, but now that's like all we do. And the same old people, and I'm tired of seeing the same old people.

PP62 Well, what about your friends? Do you go around visiting your friends?

WN53 [2-18] I don't really have no friends because, I don't know. I just lost a lot of my high school friends. And I only have a couple of good friends that I have, and they've all made families. You know my one good friend got married. My other good friend that I had she got on drugs and she, I can't hang around with that, so she left. We don't hang around no more, and like that's basically it. My other good friends, they haven't gotten married but they got two kids and one on the way so all my friends are like families now. You know, they are all at home.

PP63 What's wrong with visiting families?

WN54 Nothing. It's fine. I just every time we go out I don't want to keep doing the same thing, you know?

PP64 Do you like to visit her friends?

MN46 I have no problem with it whatsoever.

WN55 My friends are his friends.

MN47 I have no problem with that at all.

PP65 And what about families? Do you visit each other family?

MN48 We go to each others family quite a bit. All the time.

WN56 I'm so bored with that.

MN49 It's like she just gets tired of the same old routine which I could understand that.

PP66 You can understand that?

MN50 Yeah, everybody does. Everybody gets tired of the same old stuff.

PP67 What does he understand about that?

MN51 What do I understand about that?

PP68 Yeah. That she gets tired of the same routine.

MN52 [2-19] I mean I get tired of the same old stuff. To be honest, I get tired of going to work every day. Some days I want a day off, you know? I get tired of jumping in the car. Some day I want somebody to drive me to work.

PP69 So, how do you try to get out of this same old routine? Do you every do anything, do you ever surprise her with anything different?

MN53 I mean not really. Maybe every now and then I might do something.

PP70 Like what?

MN54 I don't know. Like I know she is a sweet fanatic. She loves sweets. So the other day she was at work. I came home. I bought her . . .

WN57 Yeah, a little cake.

MN55 A cake.

PP71 Oh. Was that romantic?

MN56 Oh, no. Not to her. It should have been a bucket of flowers, a dozen . . .

WN58 I don't look at it like that. I looked at it like oh my gosh, he actually went out of his way.

MN57 See, every time I do something. . .

PP72 Isn't that what you would call romantic?

WN59 Yeah, exactly. And that's what I want from him.

PP73 So it meant a lot to you.

WN60 Just one time just to go out of your way.

PP74 The fact that he would just go out of his way to do that, that he thought about you.

WN61 Yeah, that's basically it. I just want sometimes for him to think about me and you know do something.

PP75 [2-20] How did you happen to do that? How did you all of a sudden to think about her and buy that for her? It seems very special.

WN62 It was probably on sale.

MN58 No. Me and my, my son and I were in the store and we were getting something to eat, and I seen the cake sitting there. And so I said let's get mommy a cake. And he agreed to it of course, and so that's why I got it.

PP76 So, it was just an idea that came to you?

MN59 It just popped up right then.

PP77 Oh I see.

MN60 I looked up and seen the cake, and I know she likes sweet so why not.

PP78 Yeah. So did she seem to appreciate it?

WN63 Yeah.

PP79 Well I'm not¼

MN61 Well, I guess she did because . . .

WN64 He left right away though.

MN62 What happened was I brought the cake in, set the cake down, picked up from work, came home,

and then I went to sleep because I work midnights. So I went to sleep right after that, so I really didn't see her face reaction. I didn't see how she reacted behind the cake. She told me oh you bought me a cake.

Thank you. And that was it.

WN65 But I really appreciated it.

PP80 [2-21] But didn't that make you feel good that she appreciated it?

MN63 I mean it made me feel good. I didn't feel bad afterwards. OK Yeah, she likes the cake.

PP81 No, I was just wondering since it was a good experience for both of you if it would be an experience that you would want to have more often. It also sounds like you can produce it.

MN64 Yeah, I can.

PP82 You can produce that kind of reaction in her.

MN65 I can.

WN66 Another thing though, see, that's probably why, cause he knows how to get to me. He knows like if you don't do this, then I'm going to be mad. So his way about going about things if he is in any kind of bad mood or anything or he is made at me or anything, then that's what he does. He does the first thing that can get on my nerve. So that would be don't bring her nothing at all. But if he is in a good mood, and I've done something good or whatever, then it's like a treat.

PP83 So what do you have to do good that makes him be in a good mood?

WN67 [2-22] I don't know. He goes through mood swings. He does.

PP84 Now tell me. What does she do that makes you feel good, that puts you in a good mood.

MN66 Well actually when she is around the house and she is just happy, and she is not always, excuse my expression but bitchin all the time. If she is not doing all that, then I'm fine.

PP85 You mean as long as she is not complaining about something.

MN67 Right. About small stuff. Oh I want to go somewhere. Oh I want to do this. I want to do that. Now come on now. You know I gotta to go to work in a couple of hours. How we plan on doing all this stuff before I go to work and me still being able to work after all this. She doesn't look at it like that

PP86 Well, what would you rather have her do? What would make you feel good?

MN68 I mean just stop complaining. You know, stop complaining.

PP87 Is that all? Not do anything beside that?

MN69 Well, I mean she walks around the house happy. She doesn't walk around the house moping all the time, and that's a good thing, because if she did that all the time, then I would be outside the house all the time.

PP88 I see.

MN70 But she doesn't walk around moping that much.

PP89 [2-23] So generally she has a happy disposition and she . . .

MN71 Well, she pretty much, more so now that the baby is around. The baby is ten months now so if she does get in a down mood, she'll look at the baby, get to playing with the baby, and then her spirits will get lifted. Then she will bring the baby in there with me and then my spirits get lifted and vice versa, you know.

PP90 So the baby lifts both of your spirits.

MN72 Yeah, he does. He does a whole lot. But before the baby came around, she would be moping and she would just sit there and just mope. I was like what's wrong? What do you want to do? I want to do something different. Okay, what do you want to do? I don't know.

PP91 But now that the baby is born, and the baby lifts both of your spirits, and she is less that way, what else do you like her to do that makes you feel good, puts you in a good mood? Do you like her to be affectionate with you or to bring you any like cakes or . . .

MN73 For her to just gain responsibility on her own that would make me extremely happy right there. Stop depending on me all the time. She depends on me a whole lot.

PP92 [2-24] In what way do you want her to take more responsibility, to do what?

MN74 To do things for herself so to speak. If she needs something done, don't wait for me to keep pushing. Just go on and do what you have to do. We may go grocery shopping. I end up carrying all the groceries up, fine and dandy. If I'm at work, she goes grocery shopping, she'll wait for me to get off work to

bring the groceries up.

WN68 But now are you going to say that I am trying because now what did I do the last time.

MN75 Yeah, you are trying.

WN69 I carried a ten month old up the stairs and I made five trips up and down three flights of stairs to bring the grocery bags upstairs.

PP93 So you say you are trying.

WN70 Yeah, I can see myself trying, but I don't see him trying.

PP94 So you feel that you are trying what? To be more responsible.

WN71 Yeah. To not depend on him. That's what he does not want me to do.

PP72 Not depend on him so much.

WN72 Yeah.

PP96 [2-25] What are some of the other ways that you are trying not to depend on him so much?

MN76 There's a lot of other things she do for me like tidiness, you know, cause at one point when we first got together, she was take them off, leave them. You know, take clothes off, leave them. If you eat in the living room or something, leave it. Eat in the bedroom, she would leave it. Right now she's starting to get a little more tidy, but I don't look at it like . . .

PP97 She's really . . .

WN73 Trying.

PP98 She sounds like she's trying a lot.

MN77 But I feel like it's not for me. She's not doing all that-

W74 Yes, really I am.

MN78 But it's a part of life. You have to do it yourself. You can't go around leaving this here, leaving that there.

PP99 You don't appreciate the fact that she is doing it just for you?

MN79 I mean I don't like to look at it like she is doing it for me. Because it is not strictly for me. It is

something she has to, if I died today, she'd have to, you can't just leave your stuff there. You can't . . .

WN75 [2-26] No, but I wouldn't pick it up as soon as I finish eating it. I might leave it there until I get ready to go towards the kitchen, not hurry up and bring it . . .

PP100 Well, listen. You are having a very positive influence on her, yeah? I mean you should take credit for that. She's saying I'm doing this for you. Some of it she says she is doing for herself because she wants to do that. Some of it she is doing to please you. So it sounds like you are having a very positive influence on her.

MN80 To be breaking down, she's doing it for me. That's what I don't like. I don't like to hear she's doing it for me. It's a part of life itself. It has nothing to do with me. If I wasn't here at all, you still have to do that.

PP101 Well, what do you think she does do that has to do with you?

MN81 I mean, that's a broad question. I don't understand -

PP102 Well, do you think she does anything that has to do with you, or-

MN82 I mean everything she does should be for herself first. And then for me. You know, she shouldn't just do stuff just to please me. It should be for her. Once she believes in herself, then go ahead and try to make me happy. Once she's done for herself, then come over here and try to make me happy.

P103 [2-27] Well, how can she make you happy.

MN83 I don't know how to answer that.

WN76 I know. He wants me to stop complaining. He wants me to go to school, and he wants me to get a good job, and he wants me to have a lot of money. Everything that's physical.

MN84 But she gives up.

PP104 And you want him to want you for what? Something that's not physical but what?

WN77 Emotional.

PP105 Which would mean what to you? If he were emotional with you. . .

WN78 [2-28] Really I want him to step back and think about what are the important things in life and stop worrying about all this other stuff that's not, you know. You know what I wish I could do to him? I wish that

I could tell him to ask himself what would get him into heaven, and that's it. Leave it at that. Because if he would treat me . . .

PP106 What an interesting question.

WN79 If he would treat me like an angel and like if I treated him like an angel, if we both did that and worried about what God would want from us and not what other people in life want from us, that would be the relationship that I want.

PP107 Well, what would it be like if you were each treating each other as an angel? What would it be like if he treated you like an angel?

WN80 Well, it would be like he would be concerned about how I felt. He would be concerned about like seeing a smile on my face, you know, and never, if I was treating him like an angel, then I would never treat him wrong because that would be a sin. You know I'm trying for a non-sinful life. It's hard because everybody has sin, but that's my goal in life.

PP108 [2-29] Okay. So he would treat you like care about your feelings. If he treated you like an angel he would care about your feelings and how you are feeling.

W81 And if I'm sick – or if I'm ill ¼

PP109 And if you are treating him like an angel though exactly what would it look like. What would you be doing?

WN82 Just enjoying life. I mean life is short and. . .

PP110 Enjoy him?

WN83 Enjoy him, enjoy our life, enjoy our son, you know, and just be happy. That's what I really want, and I know that you have to have, you can't just say I want my life based on this because you have to eat, you know. I understand that, but not be so worried about it. I don't want to be ill at a young age because I am so worried about whether or not I am going to be rich in the future.

PP111 So you would like him to stop worrying. So how does that sound to you, her idea of heaven and the way you would treat each other as angels?

MN85 Well, I can understand us treating each other like angels, okay.

PP112 Yeah? What can you understand she wants when she says she wants you to understand her emotionally? What do you understand by that?

MN86 [2-30] Well, okay what I get from that is like sometimes she may say I feel a little sick. I say okay fine. She say her stomach hurt. All right ain't no need to sit in there crying about your stomach hurt. You just got to deal with it. What can I do about your stomach to make your stomach feel better? She wants me to sit there and cuddle her and hold her.

WN84 No.

PP113 Well, she wants you to be sympathetic.

MN87 Exactly. She thinks I'm heartless because if she gets sick I'm going to be like okay deal with it. Then if I get sick I just deal with it.

PP114 Well, now can you understand that she wants you to be sympathetic? Is that something you can be? Can you be sympathetic?

MN88 Yeah, I can be sympathetic.

PP115 But if you were to be sympathetic, what would you be like? What would you do?

MN89 I mean I be lovin and tell her all you know, I might rub her little tummy or something like that and do all the good stuff.

PP116 Really?

MN90 But then . . .

PP117 You are able to do that?

MN91 Yeah. I can do that.

PP118 Really?

MN92 Yeah, but I just be doing it because I know . . .

WN85 Doing it for me.

MN93 Right.

PP119 Well, that's not a bad thing to do it for her, is it?

MN94 [2-31] It's not a bad thing true enough, but still, I don't see just because you sick you just got to deal with it.

WN86 And that's our whole problem right there. He wants me to do everything he says. But if I say be sympathetic, be romantic, be this, be that, be this, whatever, he don't feel like he should have to do it.

MN95 No, I don't feel like I shouldn't have to do it at all.

PP120 But you do do it sometime it sound like, don't you?

H96 Yeah.

WN87 And that's not it. See, he . . .

PP121 Yeah?

MN97 Yeah, I do it sometimes. Sometimes I may do this and I may do that.

PP122 And why do you do it?

MN98 Why?

PP123 Why.

MN99 Just because it popped in my head to do something like that and so go ahead and do it.

WN88 Because he's in a good mood.

MN100 Maybe that might be why. I don't know.

PP124 And maybe because she likes it? Do you ever do it because she likes it?

MN101 Well, yeah, I know she likes it. That's the way she told you. That's the way sometimes I get back at her. I don't do stuff. Because a lot of times I will not do stuff.

WN89 Isn't that what I said?

MN102 If I'm aggravated or something . . .

PP125 What effect does that have on her?

WN90 A big one because then that makes me like well I don't want to do nothing for you then. That's my first line out my mouth. If you don't want to do nothing for me, then I don't want to do nothing for you.

PP126 [2-32] So you don't get any mileage out of that because then she doesn't do anything for you. It sounds like that doesn't work too well.

WN91 It just brings us down, back down, where if we get up, he'll do something and I will say well fine then. And we will be right back down again.

PP127 Um, you know, since you seem like a very adventurous couple, willing to try different things, there is an exercise I do that I have found helpful in understanding how people experience relationship. How each of you experiences it in a little different way. You've told me something about that. But this is kind of a fun, playful, imaginative exercise, and I was wondering would you be willing to try it?

WN92 If it's not beating each other with a styrofoam bat, then . . .

PP128 No. It's not doing that. You don't have to touch each other.

WN93 A little counselor joke.

PP129 [2-33] No, it's just, it's kind of fun, and imaginative, and some times it's helpful, you know. Because it gives you different images and different ways of communicating, okay? Well, let's try it. Are you willing?

MN103 Absolutely.

PP130 Okay.

PP131 [2-34] I want you to just sit back and get very comfortable in your chairs, and close your eyes. Take a deep breath, let out all the tension in your body. Now think about the problem that you are having. And think about all the feelings that are stirred up inside of you when you can't solve that problem, and it's frustrating when you get into this thing you are telling me that you knock heads and you go in different directions and you can't get it together. Just think about that a minute. The feelings it stirs up. Now if you were to have a dream or a fantasy in which you were having this problem, what symbolic forms would each of you appear in the fantasy or dream. And by symbolic I mean you know what it's like sometimes in dreams when you don't see people in their real forms. They take on different images like I don't know somebody out of a fairy tale or out of a historical novel or even an animal or you know how in dreams people take on different shapes and forms? And so what symbolic forms would you see the other person, and what

symbolic form would you take when you are trying to solve this problem that you can't solve? And think about it for a minute. Don't talk. And then how would you move towards or away from each other. I mean, what would the dance be between you as you are trying to solve this problem between these two symbolic forms? How would they relate to each other? [2-35] And imagine where it would take place. Would it be in a cave, a castle, on the beach, wherever it would take place. And then when you've thought of it, I would like you to just open your eyes but don't talk. Okay? All right. Now I am going to ask you to do something that you may think is a little crazy. You'll have to trust me that it might help you. Stand up. Push your chairs back. Okay. Now we are going to stay within this light, okay? I think you opened your eyes first. So what did you imagine you were, and what was she in relation to you?

MN104 She was a bird.

PP132 She's a bird. What kind of a bird?

MN105 Just a nice pretty little bird flying around.

PP133 [2-36] Pretty little bird? What color?

MN106 I never thought about that. It wasn't in my picture at all. It was just a bird.

PP134 Okay. She's a pretty little bird.

PP135 Okay. And what were you?

MN107 I was a cat.

PP136 You were a cat.

MN108 I was a cat.

PP137 And so what's the movement between the cat and the bird? What's the problem between them?

MN109 What it is, myself, I'm down as the cat and I'm looking up, and I see the bird constantly flying around just in a carefree way just floating around nice and just extremely happy floating around, and I'm down at the bottom being the cat trying to make it so to speak. I'm still happy and I'm still doing what I need to do, but I'm just down to earth.

PP138 Okay. Now I'm going to ask you to do something and maybe I'm crazy, but I'd like you to act this

out. You pretend you're the cat. Down on your knees.

WN94 Mine is going to be good.

PP139 [2-37] Okay. And what's the problem for the cat in having the little bird just fly around.

MN110 Well, it's not the bird that's flying around in the barn. The bird is constantly flying around inside the barn that the cat lives in. I live in the barn. I see she keeps disturbing my barn, knocking stuff over when she gets to flying. See, that's exactly what happens.

WN95 Getting in your way.

MN111 Messing with me. Just keep doing everything so I'm going to start creeping around.

PP140 So what does the cat do?

MN112 At this point . . .

WN96 Eats him. Eats me.

MN113 I try to sneak up on the bird and teach the bird a lesson to stay out of my barn.

PP141 Well, how are you going to teach the bird a lesson?

MN114 I'm going to try to grab the bird. Sneak around the bird. . .

WN97 You can't catch me cause I can fly around and you can't.

MN115 I would go around try to find the bird.

PP142 You are going to grab the bird, and then what would you do with the bird after you grabbed it.

MN116 Just scare the bird. I'm not going to eat the bird. I got plenty of food down here.

PP143 You're not going to eat the bird. You are just going to scare the bird.

MN117 I'm just going to scare the bird. Teach him to stay out of my barn.

PP144 Okay. So let's see. So you grab the bird, and does that scare the bird?

WN98 I'm flying. You can't grab me.

MN118 [2-38] Now when she stops flying that's a fear for a bird not to be able to fly.

PP145 I see. I see. But then of course the cat can't hold onto the bird forever, right? So as soon as you let go the bird flies again?

MN119 Basically, and then I keep tapping her again.

PP146 I see. I see. So that just kind of goes on and on. You grab the bird, she's scared but you can't hold onto her and to your work, so . . .

WN99 I'm a smart bird, and he's a dumb cat. He's on the ground, and I'm flying. He can't catch me, because I'm not going to stop for the cat in the barn. I am going to fly out of the barn, and you are going to be stuck in the barn.

PP147 Okay. But now I'd like you to, what would be the ideal fantasy you would have between a cat and a bird? Show me, if you got the bird. . .

WN100 Me riding on his back ¼

PP148 Now, wait, wait. This is his fantasy.

MN120 I don't see an ideal fantasy for a cat and a bird.

P149 Yeah. Yeah.

MN121 [2-39] I can't picture something like that, a fantasy for a cat and a bird, you know, because they like don't get along. A cat and a bird aren't the best of friends.

P150 Yeah, that's true. So I guess one of the images would have to change, huh?

MN122 It's possible, but it's my image.

PP151 It's your image.

MN123 I'm a cat.

P152 So you are not going to change as a cat. What do you want? Do you want to change her into another cat?

MN124 She can't be a cat with me because she might win. She can't be a cat with me. No. I like her up high where I can keep a nice little eye on her, and I can creep up on her and she can't spot me everywhere I go.

PP153 Oh, I see because if she were another cat she would be on an equal level with you, right?

MN125 Exactly.

PP154 I see.

MN126 Exactly.

PP155 So you feel you have the advantage now? Of being able to reach up and scare the cat?

MN127 Exactly, of me being the cat.

PP156 I see. I see. Okay. All right. Now what is your worse nightmare about this? What if this never changed and just went on forever? What would you do?

MN128 [2-40] The worst nightmare would be if someone closed the barn doors and we were trapped in there together.

PP157 Yeah?

MN129 She would just constantly disarranging the whole barn, mess it all up, then it will be like that until someone releases her again. Right. That's the biggest fear.

PP158 Okay. All right. Well now, let's see, now . . .

WN101 Mine is sort of the same thing . . .

PP159 What was your fantasy?

WN102 Mine was he was I don't know what they are called, those half men half horses.

PP160 He's half man and half horse?

WN104 Pegasus?

PP161 Is that what it is called? Half man and half horse body? What do they call that?

WN104 Pegasus I think.

PP162 Pegasus, -

WN105 But he is one of those, and I am one of those, but I am a unicorn.

PP163 You are a unicorn.

WN106 And I can fly.

PP164 And you can fly? You both saw her as flying.

WN107 [2-41] He was stomping, stomping trying to get a fly off his tail

PP165 So you are a fly? Is that what you are?

WN108 No, I'm a unicorn.

PP166 You are a unicorn Pegasus that can fly. Okay. All right. Now tell him what to do. Let's see. How would you . . .

WN109 Stop. Go back on the ground like you was, and I'm flying again.

PP167 Okay. And what is the problem then with the unicorn and the pegasus?

WN110 He's just standing there. He ain't doing nothing. He's just stomping looking silly.

PP168 What do you want him to do? What does the unicorn, flying unicorn want him to do?

MN130 I can't fly.

WN111 Get smart and run away from the fly.

PP169 You want him to run away?

WN112 From the fly.

MN131 See the fly was bothering me. That's why I was stomping because the fly was bothering me and I was just sitting there.

PP170 I see.

MN132 And she's flying around.

WN113 Just watching him.

PP171 [2-42] I see, she was watching me with the aggravating fly messing with me, and I'm trying to get it off. So you just want me to take off running.

WN114 Yeah.

PP172 The fly is what? All the problems that he has.

WN115 Yeah, and he's just standing there doing nothing about the fly. Stomping.

PP173 He's just stomping on the fly. And then what effect does that have on the flying unicorn? What does the flying unicorn want from him?

WN116 To get away from the fly because . . .

PP174 And do what?

WN117 And go in the pasture.

PP175 Okay. Let's see, if you got away from the fly, stop stomping, you get up. And then the two of you, stay around here. So the two of you go in the pasture. And what do you do in the pasture?

WN118 [2-43] We're fine. Yeah, I'll keep the flies because now you got away from the one and now we don't have that problem no more and now you are over here by me, and I will keep them away.

PP176 Let's see. Oh, I see. So you are going to keep the fly away.

MN134 Since I don't have wings.

PP177 I see. So you are saying that if he only got up, stopped being so preoccupied with that fly. . .

WN119 No. Not doing that. Not just doing nothing at all. He's just standing there stomping, and that ain't doing nothing.

PP178 I see. You would be able to help him.

WN120 Yeah.

PP179 Right, if only he would go with you. I see. I see. Well, let's sit down and talk about this for a minute, okay? So, what was that experience like? Were either of you surprised at the other person's fantasy or at your own?

WN121 [2-44] I kind of knew his because his goes deeper because see he, in our relationship I'm the one that's kind of more like I know that we love each other and I'm the one that's saying like we got to do something about it. We have to fix our problem, or we are not going to make it. I guess he's so, he's just, he's got a lot of pain coming from somewhere. I don't know. I don't know if it's me or past or what, but he is at that point like maybe it is nothing for us, you know. Maybe we should break up and not have nothing to do with each other.

PP180 Oh.

PP181 So is that the point where you are at?

MN135 Basically I told her that already. We spoke about that a while back. You know, you just get fed up

with something so much, and what are you supposed to do? Keep dealing with it and keep being miserable and keep being unhappy? Or break it off so maybe you can try something else. You may be unhappy after you break it off, but who knows? It's just a change you take.

PP182 But you are saying that if you were to work on it or get help something different can happen.

WN122 [2-45] Because everything, and I always told him. What's worse. An alcoholic that doesn't you know say that he's admit to being I mean okay look. An alcoholic that admits he's an alcoholic and goes to AA is better than an alcoholic that says I'm not an alcoholic because he's not admitting to his problems. He's not admitting that he's sick and he needs help.

PP183 Well, so you are telling me that sometimes you get frustrated about whether or not you can change this kind of cycle or interaction between the two of you where you go like this right?

MN136 Well, I feel I probably wouldn't be so upset if that independence came into play. If she was like independent and doing, it all wouldn't be on me.

PP184 Okay.

MN137 With everything on me that just weighs me down so much, and I get so aggravated and just tired and when does it stop.

PP185 Okay. Okay. Well listen. You know what I'd like to do now, because I need to think a minute about your fantasies. They were very rich and very imaginative, so I would like to take a break for just a few minutes, and then I will come back, and I think they are going to turn off the tape while I'm gone, so you can just talk between yourselves for a few minutes.

WN123 All right.

PP186 [2-46] Okay.

BREAK

PP187 [2-47] Well, listen, I was really impressed with your fantasies, and I went out and thought about them for a few minutes, and the thing that struck me was that you both saw her as a bird, and you both saw him on the ground somehow. I mean very connected with the ground. Down to earth. And since you have

both said that you would like to change this pattern of missing each other, we were thinking that in order for you not to feel so responsible and so burdened and so weighted down with everything, that what you would need to do would be to fly every now and then. To learn to . . .

MN138 But then when I flew, it came back and I had to straighten everything when I came back because it will be all disarrayed.

PP188 [2-48] Well, not necessarily. You could learn to fly just a little bit and just kind of soar a little bit, and so it would be just kind of nice, and the thing that I was thinking that you would need to do in order to be more responsible as you say would be to come down to earth more and to be by his side and I was also thinking that you know if you are able to get black and white together as beautifully as you've done, and your families together, that you certainly are capable of getting a cat and a bird together. And you know there are some children's stories in which cats and birds do get together, and cats and birds don't necessarily have to be enemies all the time, but I was thinking that wow. You know, you certainly came from different backgrounds. And different traditions, and here you are. You are able to come together in this way in which this racial issue doesn't even create a problem for you, and that's really big one. You've got your families together. That doesn't create a problem, and it's my feeling anyway, that you certainly are capable of getting the bird and the pegasus or the cat together.

MN139 We both knew we were capable; it's just putting all of the pieces together to make the complete puzzle, so it can be complete.

PP189 Right.

MN140 [2-49] But we both, I know I 'm capable of changing and doing new things.

PP190 You do, you do?

MN141 Yes, I do.

PP191 Well since you know you are capable of it, what would be your first step for you just to begin to do that?

MN142 Just be more caring.

PP192 More caring?

MN143 More caring, right.

PP193 And you are convinced you are capable of doing that.

MN144 Absolutely. I am capable of doing that , yes.

PP194 Well, I believe you, I believe you. You say that with such conviction.

WN124 He's one of those knows he can do just about anything.

PP195 Really?

MN145 Right, ya know, I want to do something...

PP196 You do strike me ...

WN125 He jumped out of planes.

PP197 ...as a person that could do anything he makes up his mind to.

WN126 Anybody that can jump out of a plane can do just about anything.

PP198 So you are going to decide to be more caring, is that right?

MN146 Well we can make a step, I can try a step. Ya know, we take it a little bit at a time, I can try a step.

But then...

PP199 I, I , I am sure you will be able to do that, and you?

WN127 Going back to trying again.

PP200 Are you as convinced as he is?

WN128 Yeah.

PP201 [2-50] That once you make up your mind to do something, you can do it.

WN129 Yeah.

PP202 You can change it.

WN130 OK.

PP203 Well, I am convinced you can do it too.

MN147 We'll wait and see what happens.

PP204 OK, so listen, you know another counselor is going to be assigned to you and she will be able to watch this video tape and see what happened and you will be able to discuss it with her or him, whoever it is. And I just want to say, it was a real pleasure working with you.

MN148 Likewise, likewise.

WN131 Yeah

PP205 It was a lot of fun and very satisfying.

MN149 Thank you a whole bunch for listening.

PP206 Good luck, OK.

WN132 Thanks.

PP207 Now I don't know how to get out of this room.

MN150 Fly away, just fly!

WN133 Run away!

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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##### Web Site

<http://www.ackerman.org/>

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