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## SYLVIA (5) Struggle for Acceptance

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Source: Whiteley, J. M. (1975). The struggle for self-acceptance.  
The bracketed italicized dialogue indicates the voiced over comments.*

### **Carl Rogers:**

*This is my fifth interview with Sylvia. The fourth interview had been held on the previous day. Prior to that there had been the three interviews a year earlier. The interview will be shown as it was recorded, but with comments both from Sylvia and from myself at points where we felt we wished to clarify what was going on, uh, or to make some comment about what was going on.*

### **Carl Rogers Demonstrates Client-Centered Therapy Transcription from the Video of the Film "Struggle for Acceptance" (1975)**

**Carl:** Well, where would you like to start this morning?

**Sylvia1:** Well, uh, I want to tell you about something that I've been thinking about and that's it's a, a sharing more than (C: M-hm.) telling you a problem. (C: M-hm.)

*C Commentary 2: [So often clients and counselors get the feeling that, uh, the relationship is one which must be filled only with problems. Uh, Sylvia gives a little indication of that, this is just a sharing, it's not a problem.]*

S1 (continued): And that is I've just recently noticed in myself that I've been learning. (*She laughs a little.*) (C: M-hm.) And that's a big deal. Uh, I hear people say all the time, "Oh, I've learned so much, I learned this and I learned that and that was such a learning experience." And I, all these years that I've been grown up, I haven't felt any learning, and I feel, "Well, what did you learn and how did you know that you learned it?" And it was a mystery to me. (C: M-hm.) And just the last few weeks, or actually I've been realizing in the last year mainly is that I've learned some things (C: M-hm.) and I know I've learned them and I, I know that, okay, that I'm at this point and with a certain situation or idea and that six months ago or three months ago it was different. (C: Uh-huh.) And so I'm feeling my learning and that's really exciting.

*C Commentary 3: [A relationship should be one in which good feelings have just as much place as bad feelings, and here she's bringing out some very positive feelings about herself, which is a healthy and valid part of a counseling relationship. It's always exciting to me to, uh, hear a client telling of positive steps which, uh, he or she has been taking, and here Sylvia sounds confident as she's doing something that she has decided to do in her own way, not necessarily following all the books, but doing what she feels and experiences is right.]*

C1: And it's the awareness of it that's new. (S: Uh-huh. Yeah.) That you're beginning to realize, "Hey, I am different in this respect, (S: Uh-huh.) I've learned something."

S2: I've changed. (C: Uh-huh.) And I can see the difference and feel the difference. (C: Uh-huh.) Yeah.

C2: What are some of those differences?

S3: Well, (*small laugh*) um, I, I've made a decision to be more strict with my children (C: M-hm, m-hm.) and to, uh, to listen to them but decide that I'm their mother and I know many things they don't, and that I will make many more decisions than (C: M-hm.) I've made in the past. And uh-

C3: M-hm, m-hm. Sounds as though you feel a bit stronger that way.

S4: Yes. And and I've been trying it. (C: Uh, m-hm.) Trying being the more strict person and it's working beautifully. (C: Uh-huh.) Uh, they at first they, you know, have their little resistance or whatever it is but then we go on with the program, which is my program more, (C: M-hm.) and I feel a lot better about that as being uh uh helping children to adjust to the world.

C4: I mean, sounds, sounds like you feel more like a grown-up mother.

S5: M-hm. Capable. (C: M-hm.) Of making appropriate decisions. (C: M-hm.) For them. And another area is sex. And, uh, and I, I've done a lot of things in the past year, in the past mainly year that I haven't done before. That is, I've had intercourse with a few different men (C: M-hm.) and put myself in situations where before I was absolutely unwilling to do because of my fears and, and I've learned some things about myself. Like I know a lot more right now today about what kind of sexual relationship, what kind of intimate relationships that I want to have with men and that feels good. (C: M-hm, m-hm.) Beca ... and, um, and it only came through, uh, risking I mean there was no, it only became through trying things out, there was no amount (C: Uh-huh, uh-huh.) There was no amount of, of therapy or reading or thinking or talking (C: M-hm.) that helped me to learn those things, (C: M-hm.) but it was feeling strong enough within myself that I can take chances.

C5: So risking has been the road to learning (S: Yeah.) in the sexual area.

S6: Uh-huh. (C: M-hm.) And it is with my children (C: M-hm.) and it is with relating to people in many ways, not just sexually. (*She smiles.*) (C: M-hm.) Other ways too. (C: M-hm.)

C Commentary 4: [*Sylvia is showing a lot of risking behavior. She's risking a good deal to talk about things like this on film. But what's more important is that she has come to the point in her own life where, where she realizes that her own experience is the best guide for her, not books, not therapy, not anything outside of herself. It is her own experience from which she can learn, and here she is learning in a very sensitive and, uh, personal area and is willing to share that with us.*]

S6 (continued): Reaching out to people and approaching strangers and, uh ...

C6: Taking all kinds of risks that you hadn't before.

S7: Some. More, (C: M-hm.) which, I mean I, I don't know about all kinds. (C: Yeah.) Quite a few, and it's been exciting (C: M-hm.) and hard.

C7: And I guess that leads to a, uh, to a deeper kind of learning, or at any rate, a learning that you feel more sure of. I guess, I get a sense of assurance in what you're talking about. An assurance in you.

C Commentary 5: [*One thing that has been true with Sylvia in every interview we've had is that she thinks carefully about what she says, she thinks carefully about what I say, and when what I say is not correct, doesn't match her experience, she's quite willing to correct me. She is very precise in both describing her own feelings and also in making sure that my response to them is also accurate.*]

S8: Well, yes. Yes and no. (C: Uh-huh.) And I ... I ... feel more im... like I, I was saying before, I feel more immature and more and I'm more aware of my immaturity. (C: M-hm.) They're both, uh, a part of each other. (C: M-hm.) And uh, does that make, does that, I guess I'm thinking that it just sounds crazy.

C8: No, I don't

S9: To say that I feel more mature because I know I'm how, I know more about how immature I am.

C9: Uh-huh. No, that makes a lot of sense to me.

S Commentary 1: [*I was surprised at what I said made sense to him. I think that I thought that it made sense to me, but that doesn't necessarily mean it would make sense to other people. I mean, it made in my own system of what was said. It felt good that he could understand me and he knew I that, that it made sense to him too.*]

C Commentary 6: [*It's important to Sylvia to make sure that she's accurately understood. Can anyone understand how she can be more mature by being aware of her immaturity?*]

*Well, to me, that's quite understandable, but it's clear that she wants to make certain that my understanding extends to that degree.]*

S10: It does.

C10: Uh-huh. Because you're, you're uh more aware of all aspects of yourself (S: M-hm.) and it sounds a more acceptant of them too. "Yes, I'm mature in certain ways (S: M-hm.) and here's some ways I know I'm immature."

S11: And I didn't know that before, (C: Uh-huh.) or I, I knew I felt uncomfortable that I didn't understand it. (C: M-hm, m-hm.) But that's related to something I've been thinking about, I think, about being here with you and, uh, and telling myself two things. (C: M-hm.) One is, "Oh, you're just a, I'm just a dependent personality," you know, Carl Rogers or blah-blah-blah-blah, don't, I don't run my own life. (C: M-hm.) I go for help a lot. (C: M-hm.) And then I tell myself I've always been so strong and so together and having everything so worked out in my head that I don't allow myself to, to be helpless in a situation where it might be (C: M-hm.) good for me. (C: M-hm.) Like right now here with you, I would like to be more helpless, which to me means open, I think. (C: M-hm, m-hm.) To what to us and, uh, and I see myself being, uh, together and not being helpless. (C: M-hm.)

S Commentary 2: *[I think at that point I was feeling concern that I was just gonna go to another session of being all in control of things and and rattling on and on. I probably made a conscious decision that that I have to do something to, to break that and, uh, which was talk about it, talk about my fear. My fear was or concern that I wouldn't learn anything.]*

C11: Sounds as though you, you voice that as a conflict, but it sounds as though really you're more on the, on the side of the second aspect that, uh, uh, to be open and, and in that sense helpless and vulnerable, I guess might be a possible term too, um, is something you, you really believe that's what you are, rather than that you're a totally dependent person and really helpless and have to, have to run for help. I sort of get the feeling you like this aspect of you that is able to be with me in a way that is, uh, more open, more vulnerable perhaps.

S12: Well, I like it and I also scold myself for being dependent, (C: M-hm.) so there's

C12: There are the two sides, uh-huh.

S13: there's something missing in the middle to connect, (C: M-hm.) and I it seems like you might have been talking about that and I still didn't hear it.

C13: *(Nods.)* M-hm. (S: Mm.) So really to get it more accurately, you scold yourself for for being dependent, for, for wanting (S: M-hm.) to be here, for example, with me, (S: M-hm.) and yet at the same time you, you feel. uh, well, that's good, I, I really like that, but where's the, where's the integration of those two, uh, points of view. (S: M-hm.) *(Sylvia nods.)*

S Commentary 3: [*That seemed to me like a very excellent, um, not paraphrase, but when he, you know, tells me back (C: M-hm.) what he thinks I meant, it, um, solidified what I expressed in the previous comment about that there was something missing. It made more sense to me.*]

S14: That's right. (*small laugh*) (*pause of 7 seconds*) May I hold your hands again?

C14: Sure. M-hm. (*They lean closer and clasp hands and remain holding hands.*)

S15: To feel that old feeling.

C15: Okay.

S Commentary 4: [*When we did that filming in A\_\_\_\_\_, we held each others' hands the whole time, and I imagine that it occurred me that it might be good to do that again. I feel good. At that time, I, I wanted to get away from being in my head so completely the whole time, experiencing.*]

C Commentary 7: [*I felt very comfortable during this holding of hands. Uh, I'm reminded of a friend of mine who said that he did eye therapy and, uh, in a sense that's what this was. Our eyes were very much in contact, and, uh, I think as much was going on at a non-verbal way as in a verbal way. It was a close relationship, and we both experienced it that way.*]

S16: (*Clears throat.*) (*pause of 11 seconds*) I would like to be less, uh, less strong right now. I would like to give myself the gift of not having to be sensible (C: M-hm.) and reasonable and (C: M-hm, m-hm.) Also the protection, (C: M-hm.) protect, (C: M-hm.) protect myself.

C16: M-hm, m-hm, m-hm. Really would be giving yourself a gift if you could just kind of let go (S: M-hm.) and not, uh, not be so (S: M-hm.) competent (S: M-hm.) and able. (S: Mm.) (*She nods.*) (*pause of 5 seconds*)

C Commentary 8: [*It seems clear that the reason she wants to hold my hands is that she wants to experience something that is very frightening to her, namely to drop her competent, reasonable, strong self and let herself be some of the weakness and vulnerability that she is.*]

S17: And I think it helps to touch (C: M-hm.) (Carl nods.) you, to, to, to let go of the shoulds, of my (*small laugh*)

C17: M-hm, m-hm. And you feel some contact and maybe you can say, "Well, maybe I don't have to be so strong, so (S: M-hm, mm.) Maybe I can just let go more."

S18: (*pause of 5 seconds*) Yes. (*small laugh*) (*She sighs.*) (*pause of 22 seconds*) I want to get away from all, um, my rationalizing right now this minute, and I don't know how to do that (C: M-hm.) except to shut up. (Carl nods.) (C: M-hm, m-hm.) And,

(pause of 5 seconds) so it's not like I have so much a desire to sit and not talk and look in your eyes as I have a desire to not be the way I am all the time. (C: M-hm.) And I don't know yet (C: M-hm, m-hm.) what else to do. (C: M-hm.)

C Commentary 9: *[In the interviews that we held a year ago, the silences were very long and Sylvia found a, a great deal of security and, uh, seemed to profit a great deal from holding my hands during the interview, and here she, uh, returns to the pattern of a year ago. It's another indication of the fact that these interviews with her perhaps rest more solidly on just the fact of the relationship than they do even on the content of what, uh, she's saying and talking about.]*

C18: Have to be kind of silent, to let go of that rational and rationalizing part of you.

S19: M-hm. (pause of 25 seconds) It feels easier to focus on, uh, in this position that I'm in now with you I feel more focused, (C: M-hm.) (He nods.) yeah.

C19: Are there any things that sort of come bubbling up?

S20: Yeah, I know it's something I want to talk about. (She smiles.)

C20: Okay. M-hm. (pause of 10 seconds) (She smiles.) But it's not easy, huh.

S21: No, it's not easy and I'm enjoying the richness of feeling (C: M-hm.) your hands this way and letting go of some more of, of the camera business (C: M-hm.) and the ... (C: M-hm, m-hm.) And, uh, and the fear about bringing up something that (laughs) (clears throat) and knowing that in about fifteen minutes it'll all seem, um, (sighs, smiling) I don't know not quite as serious. (C: M-hm.)

S Commentary 5: *[It just had to take its own time for me to get to where I could feel like I could say the words that I needed to say. It was almost like waiting and just like, uh, you know, what else is new while I'm waiting? For something that took a natural process that it had to take.]*

C Commentary 10: *[If anyone has a doubt about the value of silences, it should be removed by this interchange. Sylvia's saying, "I'm doing more work when I'm silent than I am when I'm talking."]*

S Commentary 6: *[His specific comments or the content of his comments is not necessarily helpful as opposed to not helpful, but what it does do that is valuable is that it gives me something to bounce against. It's a stimulation to better focus myself.]*

S21 (continued): There's something I've been wanting to talk over with you.

C21: Okay.

S22: Good. I'm real attracted to black people. (C: M-hm.) And, uh, that's about the craziest part of me, um, I'm ashamed (C: Mm.) Um, I'm embarrassed, not right now this

minute, but when I'm out walking around. (Carl is nodding.) (C: When it happens, m-hm.) And living my life.

C22: You feel what an awful thing it is that I'm attracted to black people. (S: M-hm.)

C Commentary 11: *[I think that from the time that she first wanted to hold my hands, I felt that she probably was going to make use of that closer relationship to get to something that she hadn't been able to express before, and now she's taking really a great risk in talking about something very private, very personal.]*

S23: Not, and not all the black people I see (C: M-hm.) but a lot. (C: M-hm.) And, uh, like the black people that I talked it over with, it seems, it doesn't seem like any problem at all, they understand perfectly. (C: M-hm.) And, but my family, I think it's a real painful situation for them when I have as many black friends as I do. (C: M-hm, m-hm.) And-

C23: That sounds like not only your family looks down on it or something but that you scold yourself for it too.

S24: Uh-huh, right. I, I think there's something wrong with me.

C24: Yeah, that's it.

S25: Um. But it doesn't-

C25: "What kind of a crazy person am I that I feel attracted (S: Well, sick...) to so many blacks?"

S26: Sick, sick I think of it as

C26: Sick, that's

S27: and ne... neurotic, um. (C: Hm.) Strange. (C: Mm.) (She closes her eyes and clears her throat.) (pause of 7 seconds)

C27: You really feel that there's something sick in you that causes you to have so many black friends.

S28: (Opening her eyes) Well, I keep looking for a reasonable explanation (C: M-hm.) and there is none. (She laughs a little)

C28: So there isn't any reason except that you feel that way.

S29: M-hm. And I ...

C29: And that isn't good enough.

S30: Well, I, I, I've been struggling so long to accept that in myself and I'm still fighting. It's like I'm fighting to accept that in myself and, and letting go rather than thinking it's a terrible thing (C: M-hm.) and and that I can't let other people know. (C: Hm, m-hm, m-hm.) And, uh,

C30: You feel "I should not feel that way. I shouldn't be that way. Sick."

C Commentary 12: *[I think by that response I was trying to exaggerate her feelings in order to assist her in, uh, becoming more accepting of them, but as I, uh, listen to it I think I might have responded more powerfully by responding to her struggle to accept herself as a person who is attracted to blacks.]*

S31: Like when I, wh ... , I imagine when I meet a black person that I am attracted to, that that person will know (He nods.) (C: M-hm, mm-hm.) and I always wonder if they can tell.

C31: Mm, see if it shows. (S: Uh-huh.) M-hm, m-hm.

S32: And that they'll think I'm strange. (C: M-hm.) M-hm. And it has something to do with all the black/white sex stuff that goes on, like, um, black women and white men which is very foreign to me, I have very little thinking or, um, concern about that. But the black men/white women thing, (C: M-hm.) um. and I'm attracted to a lot of black men. (C: M-hm.) Yeah.

C32: It has something to do with the sexual attraction.

S33: I know, yeah, it does, I know it does. (C: M-hm.) But it's not just that, it's also (C: M-hm.) children and and women and lifestyle (C: M-hm.) and as I see it through my tunnel vision, which I do. (C: Uh-huh.) (clears her throat)

C33: So I guess you're saying, um, yeah, there's a sexual element in it but I'm also attracted to their way of living.

S34: M-hm. That I see. (C: Yeah.) And I, but I think what I see isn't what is.

C34: (He nods.) That's partly your fantasy or something. (Sylvia nods.) (pause of 8 seconds)

S35: Maybe putting that, that, this on this film will help me that (She smiles.) stand on the ground and be who I am. (C: M-hm, m-hm.) And not be so ashamed, so embarrassed and so, (C: M-hm.) um, uncomfortable.

C35: In a way you're saying it out loud and really in a wa ..., in a sense, publicly, may help you to feel "I don't need to be so ashamed of that." (S: M-hm.)

C Commentary 13: *[I've filmed a number of interviews, but I never had a client knowingly make use of the filming to try to gain more acceptance of self and clearly that's what Sylvia*

*is doing in this interchange. By putting herself clearly on record, she feels perhaps then she will feel less ashamed, less sick, more, uh, truly acceptant of the person that she is and the experiences that she has.]*

S36: And I tell myself I should be joyful, I mean, (C: M-hm.) (She laughs a little.) why, why negative? (C: M-hm.) And I, I guess, you know, the culture or I don't know, I (sighs) (pause of 6 seconds)

C36: But you feel disapproved of probably, certainly by your family and maybe by the culture in this respect.

S37: My friends don't understand. (C: M-hm.) My white friends.

C37: M-hm, m-hm. (He nods.) (pause of 10 seconds) Makes you feel different. (S: Hm, hm.) Set apart or something like that. (pause of 6 seconds)

S38: Well, sometimes I feel different but I know a lot of other people, I believe a lot of other people feel the same way. (C: M-hm.) and I know a lot of other white women are attracted to black men. So I believe that's common.

C38: So that somehow you know you're not alone in this.

C Commentary 14: [*Here's another example of the fact that expressing all the negative attitudes she has toward her own attraction to blacks leads her to realize this really is not so bad after all; there are positive sides of it. Other people, other women feel the same way.*]

S39: But it seems like the strength of my feelings and, uh, the on-goingness and my de ..., my desire to identify with the black culture and, (C: M-hm, m-hm) um, is, is what seems out of proportion to me. That I feel out of proportion about it. (They both nod.)

C39: M-hm. So Okay, other women feel the same way but not to the degree that you do, you think. (S: M-hm.) That's kind of out of (S: M-hm.) Out of scale.

S40: Or in general to the degree too, not just man/woman, but (C: M-hm.) people. (pause of 15 seconds) Maybe I, (small laugh) it'll come a time accepting that part of myself.

C40: Maybe someday you won't be ashamed of yourself for that.

S41: M-hm. Maybe someday I can be proud of myself. (C: M-hm.) And for what I believe and feel. (C: M-hm.) And I'm gradually learning to do that.

C41: Uh-huh, m-hm. So, perhaps what you are and what you feel will be something you can take real satisfaction in instead of feeling (S: M-hm.) how shameful.

S42: M-hm. And to me it's it's a sign of my growth is being able to do what I'm doing with you now, you'll make a film. (C: M-hm.) (She laughs.) (C: M-hm, m-hm, m-hm, m-hm, m-hm.) It's a real brazen thing to do. (C: Yeah.) M-hm.

C42: Feel this is a risk. (S: M-hm.) And that's a sign of learning and of growth.

S43: M-hm. Well, also it somehow it's a little different from a risk in the sense of some of my friends say, "A film? Wh... What do you want to do that for?" I mean, there's suspiciousness about it and ...

C43: M-hm, m-hm. (He nods.) So that's seen as another strange part of you.

S44: Well, not so much, I mean, that's not a

C44: Not so.

S45: It doesn't bother me. (clears throat) (pause of 11 seconds) Sometimes I, well, right now (She laughs and he nods.) sometimes, I have the sense of talking away what we were talking about and I'm wondering, if I went away, if I withdraw from the subject, uh, what's your perspective? It seems like we were talking about my attraction to black people and now we're not. And I'm, I don't know, like did we finish talking about it or did I withdraw?

S Commentary 7: *[My sense is that I was feeling confused about what was going on.]*

C Commentary 15: *[I think this is a sample of Sylvia's sharp awareness of her own experiencing. I don't believe that in content we had left the subject of her attraction to blacks. But she realizes in herself that somehow she has withdrawn from that. She's, as she says, talked away from it. Obviously, that's because it has been a, a frightening subject to her. Perhaps also because she feels she's gone as far as she can go with it at the present time.]*

S45 (continued): Um

C45: It's more of your analyzing it, isn't it, trying to think (She nods.) about what's happening. "Did I run away from it? Or was I finished with it?" (S: M-hm.) Or continue think about it

S46: analyze it (small laugh)

C46: Instead of asking, "Do I feel as though I'm finished with it? (S: M-hm.) Do I feel as though I'm escaping from it?"

S47: I like that. I like your your questions, or comments. (C: M-hm.) Do I feel finished? (pause of 10 seconds) No, I don't, I don't feel, I don't know (He nods.) about escaping (C: M-hm.) and feeling finished, it's

C47: The feeling is one of uncertainty.

S48: M-hm. (She nods.) (pause of 35 seconds) Well I I feel like I want to go back and listen to what we just talked about, (C: M-hm.) that I didn't hear it very well. (C: M-hm, m-hm, m-hm, m-hm, m-hm.) And ...

C Commentary 16: *[This is one of the commonest experiences when a person delves into areas that are sensitive, where they've exposed themselves in, in ways that make them very vulnerable. Sylvia, like many other clients, hardly knows what she has said because it has come so close to her inner feelings, because it's such a delicate experience. Incidentally, this is one point where a wrong response on the part of the counselor can be very frightening and very threatening because her inner self is really very exposed at this point. This inability to remember is the, uh, defense of the self against being changed too rapidly. It probably would be very good for her to hear this later and to begin to accept more fully what she's just been expressing.]*

C48: "What did I say? What did I feel?" You'd like to have a rerun of it and it

S49: M-hm. Like I just went jabber-jabber-jabber-jabber. (C: M-hm.) And all that. (C: M-hm.) And so-

C49: Sounds like you scold yourself for that, as though, "Oh, I just talk talk-talk." (She nods.) (S: M-hm.) It didn't sound like just talk-talk-talk to me.

S50: It didn't?

C50: No.

C Commentary 17: *[Throughout these interviews, my own feelings have been largely empathic and caring ones. Here's the first time that I express some other feeling of my own. I simply couldn't permit her to scold herself for what she's been doing, and so I said, "It doesn't sound like, uh, just talk-talk-talk to me," which was a very real feeling on my part at that moment.]*

S Commentary 8: *[At that time I had the feeling that Carl was really asking me something that he wanted to know. Like genuinely interested and concerned about that.]*

S51: (pause of 6 seconds) Well, I would like to hear it again, (He nods.) and it has, it, and slowed down somehow, (C: M-hm.) and I now (small laugh) I could think like taking your hand and looking at you and slowing down. (C: M-hm, m-hm.) And then when I'm slowing--and that's what I want to do ... (C: M-hm.) But while I'm doing it, I'm scolding myself. "What are you doing this for?"

C51: M-hm. (pause of 5 seconds) Let me give you a very brief rerun of part of it. You were saying, "I'm ashamed of myself for being attracted to black men. Uh, I know many other women have some of the same feeling, but it seems to me I have that feeling disproportionately strong and uh my family is critical of that, the culture is

critical. Um, I'd like to be able to accept those feelings in myself. Maybe I'm making a little bit of progress along that line, but still it does seem a need to be a strange part of me that I don't understand." (She nods.) (pause of 10 seconds)

S52: That's right.

C52: "And part of that attraction is sexual but I'm also attracted to their children, to the way they live, to a lot of things about them." (S: M-hm.)

C Commentary 18: *[Sometimes when I show what an accurate listener I am, I feel proud of myself and I do in this moment.]*

S53: And what I, what you said that strikes me the most is it's the part of me I don't understand, (C: M-hm.) it's a part of me I don't understand.

C53: It just is, but you can't quite uh can't quite get at the reasons for it. You have to have the reasons.

S54: (Laughs a little) (pause of 5 seconds) And I don't know why I have to have the reasons, (C: m-hm.) I don't have to explain to anybody. (C: M-hm.) So it seems like I don't have to have a reason. (She smiles.)

C54: M-hm. (pause of 20 seconds) So maybe the intellectual understanding isn't as important as you thought it was.

S55: I think the acceptance is what's most important, (C: M-hm, m-hm.) my acceptance. (C: M-hm.)

C Commentary 19: *[As she has shown throughout the, uh, interview, as she says, she analyzes and analyzes. She has to see the reasons for all of her behavior, and now she's taking a little bit lighter look at that, and realizing, "I don't have to have a reason for every bit of my behavior, I don't have to understand all of it. I can simply accept it. Perhaps I can simply accept it." I admire Sylvia's courage in being willing to voice the very, uh, intimate feelings she has on film. I believe that both the expression of those feelings will be constructive for her and that the willingness to share them with a wider audience will also have a positive effect in her life.]*

C55: "If I could accept it, I wouldn't have to understand in the sense of knowing the reasons."

S56: (Nods.) Or explain to anybody. (He nods.) (C: M-hm, m-hm, m-hm.) M-hm.

C56: Sounds like that's what you're doing in imagination a lot, trying to explain it to somebody.

S57: M-hm. (pause of 25 seconds) It seems like I'll probably never understand it. (Both nod.) So I can make life a lot easier for myself by not trying. (They both nod.)

C57: M-hm. (pause of 5 seconds) It may be one of those things that if you can accept it, you wouldn't need to have all the explanations. (pause of 9 seconds)

S58: Wonder what (She closes her eyes for a moment, sighs and clears her throat.) what keeps me, um, feeling like I need to justify myself. (C: M-hm.) Like that's a more basic

C58: M-hm. It's a broader statement of it.

S59: than about a particular view, accepting myself about this and about that.

C59: M-hm. You would in general feel "I have to justify myself with proper reasons."

S60: M-hm. (pause of 20 seconds) (smiles) Well, do you do that? Do you

C60: I suspect we all do, some. (S: Yeah.) M-hm.

S61: So there's nobody that just (Both laugh.) floats along on their (Both laugh.) intuition. That's not it either. So what I need is more balance really. (C: M-hm.) Not that I'm wrong to justify it, but that I can be more, justify it less and feel more, (Both nod.) (C: M-hm, m-hm.) and feel comfortable. (C: M-hm.)

S Commentary 9: *[This experience that I had with Carl is, uh, real special to me and, uh, one of the things about it that feels real close to me is the emotional safety I felt with him. That there was somehow a, a boundary or a fence or a something that, uh, separated the space that I was in with Carl from the rest of the world and inside that space I was very safe and I would not be hurt. I didn't have to have any fear that I would be hurt no matter what I said or did, and the focus of my thinking was how very safe that felt. Another thing I felt from him that I think has affected me some over this time is that I felt, uh, like support from him to be myself, to listen to myself and to respond to myself and to care about, to put myself first. I think about how my life might have been changed by my experiences with Carl. I think Carl's caring for me in the way that he did, his, uh, modeling, helping me to learn to care for myself, where like maybe my most important resource would be myself. (C: Yeah.) So it seems to me that in his style of relating there's a lot of support to do that, a lot of encouragement and influence to listen to myself.]*

## END OF SESSION