Present in the listening session, generalization about past, past at depth, **concept** (inner thinking, emotional reaction, guiding principle)

*Listener:* Hello?

*Speaker:* Hello.

*Listener:* Hi. So I started the recording, and I just want to make sure that that’s okay with you.

*Speaker:* Yes, it’s fine for me to be recorded. Thank you.

*Listener:* Thanks, <name>. So I was really listening to the recording that we finished off just a tiny bit earlier, and I don’t know if you – did you have a chance to refresh your memory with it in any way before we –

*Speaker:* I can remember what I said, yes a little bit.

*Listener:* Okay, okay. So I wanted to talk with you whether there were things that you wanted to bring up based on what you can recall that you didn’t get a chance to talk about in terms of how you care for your clothing.

*Speaker:* Yeah. Actually there was one thing. A lot of what I know I actually learned from my mum, and my mum is she’s retired now. But when she was working, she worked as a teacher to teach people how to sew, and then she went on to get her degree in like tailoring.

*Listener:* Really?

*Speaker:* Yeah. So and my grandmother before her was also a seamstress, a professional seamstress. And so the combination of both of them I've learned lots of things to do with fabrics. And if I'm ever **unsure about something I'll ask my mum**. So for example, **the first time I ever washed a silk shirt it was on my mum’s recommendation to just do it in cold water. And I actually just used a little bit of** like washing up or what you call **dish soap**, a really light one. **Just under the arms and I didn’t agitate it. She told me not to agitate it very much, just rinse it through the fabric** and then rinse it out a couple of times and just **keep it cold and then hang it to dry. And it was a revelation to me because I thought that everything needed dry cleaning.** And you know just **understanding from her** for example, **“Mum, can I wash this crape skirt?” And she’s like no, do not put that crape near water, it will lose its shape and it will be a disaster.**

And so you know 'cause sometimes obviously **I get frustrated when I have items that** **need dry cleaning or say that they do, and I really want to wear them but they could use a bit freshening up**. But **I don't always take them to the dry cleaners 'cause it cost money and it takes time**, so **I'll ask her if I can take a shortcut.** And **on occasion when I haven’t been able to speak to her, I have just gone ahead and dried stuff anyway**, and sometimes it worked **and sometimes I ended up shrinking something, or a little bit like the recommendation with the crape fabric. The crape fabric has lost its shape** you know. **It hangs in a really bizarre way, and it just needed to be thrown out in the end**. Yeah.

*Listener:* So did you wash it even though she said don’t wash it?

*Speaker:* This would be me trying something by myself just thinking oh maybe I can take a risk on this item.

*Listener:* Yeah. Yeah.

*Speaker:* Yeah.

*Listener:* What was it about that situation that prompted you to try something different?

*Speaker:* Well that was a long time ago; I've kind of learned my lesson here.

*[Laughter]*

*Speaker:* But it’s kind of frustration you know. It’s kind of like oh I just want this thing cleaner, it’s got this mark on it or I just want this dealt with now because I need to wear this. I'm going out on the weekend and I need to wear this, and I haven’t got time to go to the dry cleaners and I just want it done. You know so maybe if I'm just really careful, maybe this time if I'm really careful, I can get away with that. If I wash it quickly and it’s just a bit of cold water and I just dunk it in it. But no, you know something like it starts to lose its shape. And some quick fabrics they just kind of like they hang straight. Can you imagine the hem line of a skirt? It’s hanging straight. Then you put it in water and you try and wash it; it just never hangs straight again. And it shrinks sometimes as well, so.

*Listener:* You talked about losing shape a lot.

*Speaker:* Mm-hmm.

*Listener:* And I'm wondering whether – I just want to learn a little bit more about that from the perspective of deciding to wash something yourself versus going to the dry cleaner, taking something to the dry cleaner. And I was wondering if the cloth is the same, so it didn’t matter, what would go through your head in terms of deciding whether to take it to the dry cleaner or to wash it yourself?

*Speaker:* Right. So okay. So the question is about the cost, or?

*Listener:* No. I was just thinking, wondering whether – it costs the same, so if you take cost out of this.

*Speaker:* Mm-hmm.

*Listener:* How would you decide or what would go through your head to determine whether you should take it to the dry cleaner or wash it yourself?

*Speaker:* Oh yeah. So it would be the fabric, knowing that some of the fabric is definitely light. For example, sheeting-type fabric, fabric that might be in a jacket that’s quite tailored, for example. It is gonna be more risky to wash that, or a total no-no to be honest. But I mean it’s the risk factor I guess that would make me take it to the cleaners and knowing that something is very shaped or styled or tailored anyway, that if you are afraid to losing its shape if I don’t treat it properly. So then I would put the onus on the cleaner, because I don’t want to be responsible for ruining it. And I also believe that professional cleaners know what they're doing as well, so it’s not really so much an onus. It’s more like it’s in the proper hands, if you like.

*Listener:* You said it’s a total no-no. What makes it a total no-no?

*Speaker:* Well I know that you can’t wash like a wool jacket, for example. That doesn’t go in water. Definitely doesn’t go in water.

*Listener:* You mean like an overcoat or a suit jacket or both?

*Speaker:* I'm actually thinking of a jacket, a tailored jacket that I have that is a designer jacket and it’s made out of – it’s a very thin, fine wool with a pinstripe through it, and it’s also got a little bit of detail on it that actually looks like seller tape, like sticky tape, but it’s got a design and it’s super cool; I love that jacket. But that oh you cannot put that anywhere near water; there’s no way that you could. It would just be absolutely ruined. I'd even be careful in the rain if it was raining and I had that on and I didn’t have an umbrella.

*Listener:* Right.

*Speaker:* Yeah, yeah.

*Listener:* As far as a no-no, I kind of wanna check this. Is part of the no-no how much you love the jacket? Is that part of the total no-no’ness?

*Speaker:* I think it is. I have to caveat that slightly with the fact that most of the – mmm. I don’t have that many things that I don’t kind of really like that I wear. I get bored of things if I don’t really like them and if they don’t excite me and if they're not doing anything for me in that way. So I think that I like a lot of my stuff anyway *[laughs]*, but yes that has got something to do with it. I could never, ever replace that jacket. It’s from a collection a long time ago, and it’s also a very timeless shape, so I kind of imagine having that one for years. And I also imagine that being something that in maybe ten, 20 years that somebody says, you know when things come around again, and someone says, “Hey, where did you get that?” And I'm like hey, it’s vintage this you know.

*[Laughter]*

*Speaker:* I think that’s gonna fill me with like a big smile, yeah.

*[Laughter]*

*Listener:* That’s neat that you can never replace it.

*Speaker:* Oh I don’t think so.

*Listener:* Yeah. You mentioned also that if it’s shaped and styled or if it’s very shaped and styled, it’s more prone to go to the dry cleaner. How do you figure that out, or on what basis do you? Where does the cutoff point go between two styles versus okay, just in terms of it being shaped?

*Speaker:* It has to do with the fabric as well. So there’s some fabrics I know that definitely cannot go into water without suffering. So wool, for example. There’s rayons and crape. There’s certain fabrics that are treated in a particular way. For example, if I have a silk shirt that’s like a hammered silk, that I would take to the cleaners, 'cause I would be super worried that that hammering effect would dissipate; it would like become reduced or not as pronounced or not as – again, it could lose its shape. It’s like when you bought it, it’s this particular style. The fabric is intended to look hammered, and if that starts to look less hammered than it’s supposed to, then it looks a bit tacky or kind of like it just it’s like fabric's a bit wonky; it doesn't look like how it was intended to look. It’s part of the kind of story of the design that it looks. You know you’ve got hammered silk and it has a bit of divots in the right place. As soon as that starts to look anything less than that, then to me it’s not as exciting to wear. It just looks worn and it’s not as it was intended to be for a design.

*Listener:* Mm-hmm. How did you learn about wool and rayons and crapes?

*Speaker:* That is through my mum. So my mum would often go into a shop and kind of just grab a piece of fabric. She would just grab a shirt or a sleeve from a jacket and she would rub it between her fingers, and she’d go mmm, that’s rayon or that’s crape or that’s gonna bubble or that’s gonna do this or that’s gonna do that. She would instantly know how that fabric would behave over time and how it would wear, and I guess that might have come from her selecting fabrics to make things well and understanding more technical aspects. And so I used to do that with her; I would mimic her a little bit, as I like to touch the sleeve and rub the fabric. And I've got a knack for it now. I'm nowhere near as good as she is; she’s genius at it. But I will touch a piece of fabric and I will say, “Oh that feels like this,” and sometimes I'll do it in shops. I'll do it in front of shop assistants. I'll go oh this is so and so, and they’re like yeah, and I'm like yeah that’s great, I knew. Like I'm practicing, practicing the skill you know.

So yeah, I've definitely got items that are particular fabrics that I know then wear very well. And I know that from experience and I know that from conversations with my mum, and I know that accidents that have happened with things, and crape is a really good example. But so if the fabric is vulnerable to shrinking or bagging or some kind of change when it enters water, then that’s a problem. But also if the item is like a jacket and it’s got these really tailored kind of like collars and it’s like knitting at the waist and you know part of the structure of the fabric, helps kind of hold you in at the waist, then you cannot put that in water when it starts to lose that – it will no longer hold in at the waist like it’s supposed to. It will just bag slightly, so you’ll no longer look kind of like snappy and streamlined and kind of like no longer be that designed kind of, the thing it was designed to put in with the kind of darts around the waistline and shows that fabric specifically, because you knew it was taut enough to handle that and then flare out towards the hip, which will give you a certain look.

But if you wash that, you’ve got the flare-out of the hip looking all baggy. *[Laughs]* You’ve got the waistline looking all lumpy. You know nothing is doing what it’s doing. And so you just get like a sack. I feel like a sack in something like that, so I have to have something with a bit of shape. I mean I have also got items of clothing that are a little bit more they’re more relaxed. So I'm not a suity-type person. It’s maybe a bit misleading me talking about suiting all the time, but it’s more like that style, like it’s a jacket; you know it’s tailored or the fabric is wool.

*Listener:* Have you had something – have you tried to wash a suit jacket and had that happen to it?

*Speaker:* I've washed a jacket that was casual that was a suit jacket, but it was – the fabric was like it was more relaxed, like a crape; I did this a long, long time ago. It was less of a tailored kind of form if you like and *[Inaudible]*, and it just lost its shape completely and was disastrous, and that was the end of that.

*Listener:* It’s funny, I always thought that crape was really forgiving. But from your –

*Speaker:* Not my experience.

*Listener:* Yeah, yeah. Hmm. I will cross that off my list of anything to try.

*[Laughter]*

*Speaker:* Yeah.

*Listener:* I don’t know what your time is like. Do you have a few more minutes, or do you need to run?

*Speaker:* Yeah, absolutely. Yes, absolutely.

*Listener:* Okay, this is great. It’s so interesting hearing you talk about your clothing and how you take care of it. I just have a couple of notes that I picked up from before. So you mentioned your mom. I don’t want to stop that as the person that you learned from, but it also sounds like the art of sewing and appreciation for sewing is running through your family, from your grandmother to your mom to you.

*Speaker:* Yeah. For me it’s the appreciation of the design at the end of it, because I'm not a patient person when it comes to sewing. Sewing is not my thing. That doesn’t run in our blood *[laughs]* for me. But my mum is so patient and she just flies with stuff like that. My grandma was just incredibly talented at stuff like that. But me, you know I would go straight to gluing things rather than stitching things if I could get away with it.

*Listener:* *[Laughs]*

*Speaker:* Just the \_\_\_\_\_. It’s too finicky. I can do some things. Like I can don things when they have holes in them, but I can’t make things from a pattern; I'm not very good at following that pattern.

*Listener:* Yeah.

*Speaker:* But I admire the design.

*Listener:* You mentioned before that – oh that’s interesting that you admire the design, 'cause you’ve talked a lot about the integrity of the garment, staying true to the design you know as much as wanting to preserve it because things cost you know to replace.

*Speaker:* Yeah.

*Listener:* So I just wanted to finish that off and ask you about the kind of fundamentally do you think that it’s about the cost of replacing or the loss of a favorite thing? I don’t want to put words in your mouth, but you mentioned a few things going into it.

*Speaker:* For me, yes it can be a mixture of the two. Like some of the things – when I have money and have spent it on something that is you know really expensive but I loved it and I knew I was gonna give wear to it and I didn’t care because it made me feel good. That I would be gutted if I ruined something that cost a lot, because it would be like well I worked hard for that money and I was yeah, a little bit irresponsible in a fun kind of way spending that on it, but part of the deal in my mind was I would take good care of it you know.

*Listener:* Mm-hmm.

*Speaker:* So in my mind I'm being irresponsible by not taking care *[Break in audio]*. That's less – it’s more irresponsible to not take care than to spend as much as I could on this beautiful item, which is more about appreciating fabulous design you know and also being a selector of those nice things. And the other thing, they’re replaceable, irreplaceable? I don't know so much. The thing I'm thinking about is when I, for example, even down to the t-shirts that I own that I'm very good at preserving. I have a knack of somehow keeping them in good condition. Some of those t-shirts will start to lose their shape, and sometimes that is a little bit frustrating to me because I really carefully selected that particular t-shirt because it’s a really special shape and it’s got special-shaped arms or it like fits around the bust and then tapers out slightly, or the edges of the sleeves are finished more so they’re just cut through the jersey fabric, which means that you know they’re gonna fray unless you take really good care of them. So when things start to wear and they lose those details, like you can’t see anymore that the sleeve was cut on raw fabrics 'cause it’s starting to roll up like cotton sometimes does and you’ve lost that detail.

And maybe the t-shirt is just getting a little bit out of shape anyway so you can’t see that the sleeve’s shape is actually quite special the way it was put in. Or that the color, the blue, was really intense because it’s worn out; it just looks faded. And sometimes things can look good if they look faded and more vintage, but in this case it’s because it’s lost that special thing, that thing that I thought was special when I first saw it. The thing that stood out to me I can no longer see in it anymore. So I do get upset when those things happen, like when I ruin an expensive item that I was *[laughs]* you know kind of realistic though to spend on anyway. And when something kind of loses its luster, it loses its luster because it’s lost the design features, if you like. You can’t see what was special about it anymore; it just looks like an ordinary t-shirt, if that makes sense.

*Listener:* Yeah. What’s the meaning to you or the value to you of having these things that have special-design value, some sort of uniqueness and design? Yeah.

*Speaker:* I would not like to just go to a store and just pick out a t-shirt because I needed a short-sleeve top. I'm not that kind of practical person. I've always been very masked in design and kind of like the way that things look, so it’s like a really – I realize, sometimes I think it can sound shallow, but I love design so much that it’s important to me to select things for the choices that the designers made, the things that make that item distinct. So it could just be – like I said, it could be that they’ve not finished the sleeve off with stitching; they just cut the raw fabric. You know that to me is enough of a feature to make it special sometimes you know. Or it could be a particular way of tailoring something that’s incredibly flattering, then I will love it.

*Listener:* Yeah. Did you learn that from your mum, or where did you learn that?

*Speaker:* Hmm. I think I must have picked up something from my mum, 'cause my mum is super design conscious as well. I mean my design conscious goes through everything I have around me. You know everything, with furniture, pictures, everything. Even my dog’s collar is.

*[Laughter]*

*Speaker:* I over-think everything. And I think my mum she was super focused on fabrics and clothing and shoes. My goodness, she had the best court shoe collection I have ever seen.

*Listener:* Wow.

*Speaker:* You know she is that woman she could walk in heels. When she was walking in heels, she could walk in anything, and I can't do that; that’s not me. I wear sneakers a lot. Design sneakers, don’t get me wrong.

*[Laughter]*

*Speaker:* You know I have to really carefully select them, but I wear t hem because it’s like for goodness sake, every single time I wear heels like I have to have somebody walking with me to hold me upright. So yeah, I think –

*Listener:* *[Crosstalk] [Inaudible]* for sitting.

*Speaker:* Yeah. I mean I think that my mother and I are very different, but I think that it must have rubbed off on me because it was her life 24/7 you know the way that she looked. She was always so well \_\_\_\_\_ by, always very manicured and yeah, smart, very smart.

*Listener:* And you said before that you disregard some clothes. This was on the other – not today but a week ago, that you disregard some clothes. And do you take care of them differently than from the ones that you don’t disregard?

*Speaker:* I can’t remember which ones I disregard now or what context that would –

*Listener:* Gardening or your husband’s clothes. You gave us those examples, but I was wondering if there are other – how do they get to that category? On what basis do you make that decision?

*Speaker:* If it’s my husband’s clothes, disregard. *[Laughs]* That's kind of my – I can see that something’s not – if I know that he loves something, I'll take care with it. If I bought it for him and I know it requires special care, then I will give it special care. But if it’s just a t-shirt that he’s not treating well anyway, I'll just it back in with the other t-shirts. And it’s not necessarily a level of disregard, but I have some clothes that I care less about because I've had them a long time. I really, really love them, but they’ve got to that stage where they're kind of not perfect or not kind of shining examples of what they were anymore. So the care regime – they’ve already lost it you know, so that t-shirt might get washed in with something a little bit darker. Not something that would run necessarily but it’s no longer hand-washed, for example, or pulled out to one side to do a really cold wash with or you know definitely not tumble-dried. You know it might go into the tumble dryer on occasion you know.

*Listener:* Okay.

*Speaker:* Kind of got to that it is a past point, mm-hmm.

*Listener:* *[Crosstalk] [Inaudible]* just before that actually you brought up an interesting point about the categories of care that you have. And previously you said you know that there was cold, warm, and hot, but you’ve just mentioned a bunch of other ways to take care of your clothes. Can you lead me through that a little bit? You were talking about handwashing, about cold, about tumble dry. It just seemed like there was a lot going on there.

*Speaker:* Yeah. So basic wash, like t-shirts that are not like super important they can go into medium warm wash. They can be tumble dried, particularly my husband’s t-shirts where if it’s slightly – he asked me if I shrunk a new one of his the other day and I didn’t admit it, but it did look slightly tighter on him.

*[Laughter]*

*Listener:* You can just tell him he’s gaining weight.

*Speaker:* Yes, that’s what I did. I said, “Well I don’t know. You might have.” I don’t know, it sounds awful, but yeah I was like I don’t know, I *[Inaudible]* but I also think it might have shrunk. *[Laughs]* Yeah, so I think handwashing. So for example, later the other day I've got a shirt that I wore out to see a client, so and that shirt it’s kind of it’s a bright red and it’s more like it’s a casual kind of like fabric. It’s actually slightly crape like in experience, but it’s not the sort that you can’t wash. That one has to be hand-washed, because red will come out of that. It can’t be washed hot, and I can’t put it in the machine that spins, 'cause it spins – the top-load machines here are very different from what I'm used to, the front-loaders. And I think they’re a little bit less merciless; you know they’re quite merciless. They kind of just spin and everything goes out to the side. And you know stitching on the arms might you know weaken or rip, worst-case scenario. So I'm thought about what goes into them. So things like sheets and pillowcases and towels they can get tumble dried, although if it’s a hot sunny day I will hang them out. So I might even partially tumble dry them to make sure towels are slightly fluffy and then finish off the drying outside, because I really hate the idea of wasting electricity on *[laughs]* on you know, especially when the sun – this Californian sun outside, you know that is the power of drying, so I have that free. Yeah, let’s see, what else? Cold washes, yes, it’s used inside out on a cold wash either with other jeans –

*Listener:* Yeah, how come you turn them inside out?

*Speaker:* To preserve the indigo. So some of them I have are really a nice deep, dark blue, and that doesn’t last forever. And when it doesn’t last, sometimes it doesn’t look as great. Plus, after going back to the store that I love to buy jeans from like several times, the girl there kept reminding me remember to wash them inside out, remember to wash them on 30. And I wasn’t always doing that, but particularly as things got older. Now I do, so –

*Listener:* You said wash them inside out and remember to wash them *[Crosstalk] [Inaudible]*?

*Speaker:* 30 degrees or something.

*Listener:* Oh 30 degrees. Oh like a cold?

*Speaker:* Yeah, yeah. So sometimes – I've also learned that I can wash things cold here in this top loader and wash less stuff in the top loader; it’s more likely to get clean. So I've kind of learned to use these top loaders by not overloading them. They do a better job when they’re kind of half full, and actually I've *[Crosstalk] [Inaudible]* the cold.

*Listener:* Why does that do a better job?

*Speaker:* They don’t wash things very – I'm used to things in my front loader. I’m used to things coming out clean. Like there’s no problem with anything I've put in them. In fact I think I talked briefly before about you know you can see like where the spaghetti sauce was on something, and you’re like hold on a second, that’s still sitting on the fabric, it hasn’t even penetrated the thing, the actual fabric of whatever the sauce was is still on the surface. So that is kind of like whoa, this thing is not cleaning. So I've had to play around a little bit with – I've basically come down – I've come back to the idea that less in the machine is better, because if you fill it up, not everything gets covered by water and not everything gets covered by gets the soap suds going through it. So if I do kind of a half, less than what I was using as a full load or when I was doing a full load, then it washes out better. Yeah.

*Listener:* And you said you came back to it. Had you not being doing that all the time?

*Speaker:* Came back to it?

*Listener:* Yeah, you said you came back to the idea that less is better.

*Speaker:* Oh no, it’s kind of like a reductive experimentation I think. You know so that I stopped off and I was like why are these things not getting clean. And I've also moved across the kind of places I've worked. I did laundry in the launderette for a while, did not enjoy that. Did laundry in a machine in \_\_\_\_\_\_ shared building, and now we have our own machine. It's the landlord's machine; it's the machine which was his. So it's not super new. It's not my choice of machine, and it takes learning we think for a few months. So now I feel like I've got a handle on this machine downstairs, which is to not overload it. So it's not that I can, if I don't overload it, get away with washing like underwear and things on a lower wash, and it comes out clean. It actually smells like it has been washed *[laughs]*, because initially with the overloading it was like hold on a second, is this actually been washed? You know it wasn't good, really not good.

*Listener:* *[Laughs]*

*Speaker:* Yeah.

*Listener:* So it sounds like you were experimenting a lot.

*Speaker:* Yeah.

*Listener:* With the washer it sounds like you did.

*Speaker:* Yeah. Honestly, yeah. And you know things like the machine went off balance once because it was slightly overloaded. And you know we probably do washing once, twice a week, but we'll do multiple, multiple loads. So you know sometimes there's a desire to just get stuff done and just put it all in. But of course we've learned now that we can't do that because the wash doesn't really get washed.

*Listener:* How did you decide to do twice a week?

*Speaker:* Not even necessarily twice a week actually; that's kind of like an average maybe. Sometimes I would do it more.

*Listener:* More than once a week or whatever schedule you're on?

*Speaker:* Yeah, time I have available and also the amount of different things I have. Say for example, bedding and towels. So towels and bed linen that has to be done like once a week, so it can just be switched out. And then there are other clothes which I prefer for them not to build up, but sometimes it's the case of waiting to get more than a few items. Sometimes it's not enough to make up a load.

*Listener:* Why do towels and bedding need to be switched out once a week?

*Speaker:* Because they get hot and sweaty and *[laughs]* kind of like – another thing is as well I suffer with allergies, and I have the door and the windows open a lot. Like I love air coming through the house. And I have two dogs as well who I'm actually slightly allergic to too.

*[Laughter]*

*Speaker:* So and there's all this stuff in the air that I kind of need to get rid of, and I find that at the end of a week I'm not maybe sleeping so well, so I launder.

*Listener:* Really?

*Speaker:* Yeah, I launder everything. So I mean I feel like it might be complete neuroses you know *[laughs]* but I also feel that once a week changing out bed linen is good, and I've also read that that's good. And I've also read reports that people say gosh, people don't do it for two weeks. I'm like gee, that was me, okay I better start doing it. So I do; I've learned.

*Listener:* Hmm. I think I better tell my sons that; I keep impressing them on that. *[Laughs]* Okay. I know it's over – it's at least half an hour gone, 40 minutes gone, and I don't want to take up any more of your time. This has been great though.

*Speaker:* Okay. Oh thank you.

*Listener:* Thank you so much.

*Speaker:* You're welcome.

*Listener:* I’m gonna stop the recording now if I can just figure out the code here. Hang on a second. It's the – can you stay on the line just for a second though before I stop it?

*Speaker:* Sure.

*[End of Audio]*