Instructor’s Manual for

OBJECT-RELATIONS CHILD THERAPY

from the series

CHILD THERAPY WITH THE EXPERTS

with

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with hosts Jon Carlson, PsyD, EdD and Don Keat, PhD

by

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Instructor’s Manual for Object Relations Child Therapy
with David Scharff, MD

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Instructor’s Manual for

OBJECT RELATIONS
CHILD THERAPY

with David Scharff, MD

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Tips for Making the Best Use of the DVD

1. USE THE TRANSCRIPTS
Make notes in the video Transcript for future reference; the next time you show the video you will have them available. Highlight or notate key moments in the video to better facilitate discussion during the video and post-viewing.

2. GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
Pause the video at different points to elicit viewers’ observations and reactions to the concepts presented. The Discussion Questions provide ideas about key points that can stimulate rich discussions and learning.

3. LET IT FLOW
Allow the session to play out some so viewers can appreciate the work over time instead of stopping the video too often. It is best to watch the video in its entirety since issues untouched in earlier parts often play out later. Encourage viewers to voice their opinions; no therapy is perfect! What do viewers think works and does not work in the session? We learn as much from our mistakes as our successes and it is crucial for students and therapists to develop the ability to effectively critique this work as well as their own.

4. SUGGEST READINGS TO ENRICH VIDEO MATERIAL
Assign readings from Suggestions for Further Readings and Websites prior to viewing. You can also time the video to coincide with other course or training materials on related topics.

5. ASSIGN A REACTION PAPER
See suggestions in Reaction Paper section.

6. ROLE-PLAY IDEAS
After watching the video, organize participants into pairs. Assign each pair to role-play a session with a child, using an Object Relations approach. Each role-play shall consist of one therapist and one child.
The client can be like the boy in the video or you can develop other scenarios, and if time permits you can even have pairs switch roles. After the role-plays, have the groups come together to discuss their experiences. First have the clients share their experiences, then have the therapists talk about their experiences in the session. Finally, open up a general discussion on what participants learned about Object Relations therapy with children.

An alternative is to do this role-play in front of the whole group with one therapist and one client; the entire group can observe, acting as the advising team to the therapist. Before the end of the session, have the therapist take a break, get feedback from the observation team, and bring it back into the session with the client. Other observers might jump in if the therapist gets stuck. Follow up with a discussion that explores what does and does not work in treating children using an Object Relations approach.

7. WATCH THE SERIES

This video is one in a series portraying effective approaches to therapy with children of different ages. Each video in the series presents a master therapist working with real clients, just as you see here. By showing several of the videos in the series, you expose viewers to a variety of approaches, allowing them an opportunity to see what fits best for their own style and orientation.

Key Aspects of the Object Relations Therapy Model: Object Relations is a branch of psychoanalytic theory which holds that a child’s mental structures are formed around an internalized image of the parents as well as the child’s experience of the relationship with the parents. The Object Relations therapist provides a holding environment in which children can safely express the powerful and/or painful feelings they carry inside. Creating a container for troubling, conflictual, or toxic material, the therapist is able to take in whatever the child brings. The therapist holds, processes, or reframes it and feeds it back to the child in such a way that the child can take it back in without feeling overwhelmed.

Child Therapy Models: Other videos in the series use different therapeutic models. You can reflect upon the differences among these
models by exploring the following questions:

- How does the model explain the therapeutic process?
- What assumptions does the model imply about the purpose of therapy with children and teens?
- How is theory translated into practice in real-life situations?
- How does the model approach work with family members besides the child, including parents, siblings and others?
- What is the role of the therapist?
- What outcomes are associated with successful therapy?
- What kinds of research support the approach?

8. PERSPECTIVE ON VIDEOS AND THE PERSONALITY OF THE THERAPIST

Psychotherapy portrayed in videos is less off-the-cuff than therapy in practice. Therapists or clients in videos may be nervous, putting their best foot forward, or trying to show mistakes and how to deal with them. Therapists may also move more quickly than is typical in everyday practice to demonstrate a technique. The personal style of a therapist is often as important as their techniques and theories. Thus, while we can certainly pick up ideas from master therapists, participants must make the best use of relevant theory, technique and research that fits their own personal style and the needs of their clients.

*A NOTE ON PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Because this video contains an actual therapy session, please take care to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the clients who have courageously shared their personal life with us.
Group Discussion Questions

Professors, training directors and facilitators may use a few or all of these discussion questions keyed to certain elements of the video or those issues most relevant to the viewers.

INTRODUCTION

1. **Branch of Psychoanalysis:** Do you find yourself having any particular preconceived notions about child psychotherapy coming from a psychoanalytic perspective? How do you react to Scharff’s idea of children forming their mental structure based on how they *take inside* their early and continuing relationships with their parents? Let’s talk openly about this.

2. **Holding:** *Scharff talks in theoretical terms about holding.* How do you translate that into practical experience? What would you actually do in a session with a child to create a holding environment? How might you convey to a child that you can contain the child’s painful or frightening material?

PSYCHOTHERAPY SESSION

3. **Parent Meeting:** What aspects of the initial meeting between Scharff and Jeff’s mother stood out for you? In what ways was this helpful in setting up the work with Jeff? If you had been the therapist, would you have wanted to start with a meeting like this? How might you have conducted it differently?

4. **Questions:** When Scharff asked Jeff questions about his life which ones did you find particularly useful? What questions would you have left out or changed? What would you have wanted to ask Jeff that Scharff did not?

5. **Drawing:** What did you think about how Scharff incorporated drawing into this interview? Coming from an Object Relations perspective, how might you think about Jeff’s drawings? Was this an effective intervention?
6. **Mother and Child:** Having heard from both Jeff and his mother about him and his family, what hypotheses can you form about Jeff’s object relations? How do those hypotheses fit with the specific problems at school and at home that Jeff is facing in his life right now?

7. **Affective Response:** What feelings or emotions did you notice yourself having as you watched this session? What did Jeff and his mother pull for in you, or what got triggered? How would these feeling responses be important in understanding this family and your work with Jeff, if you were the therapist?

8. **Next Steps:** If you were going to see Jeff over time, how would you proceed? Do you think it makes sense to keep seeing him individually? Which other members of his family might you bring in?

**DISCUSSION**

9. **Splitting:** What did you think about Scharff’s comment that the problem with an idealized relationship is the denigrated relationship that is its counterpart? What does this mean to you? How might you work with this issue in therapy?

10. **Oedipus:** What are your reactions to the discussion of the Oedipus Complex and Jeff’s relationships with his mother and father? Does this make sense to you? If yes, how might you use this understanding in your work with Jeff?

11. **The Therapeutic Relationship:** How would you characterise the relationship between Scharff and Jeff in this video? Did Scharff form a working alliance with him? How significant do you think the therapeutic relationship was in this particular course of therapy?

12. **Scharff’s Style:** What was it about Scharff that allowed Jeff to feel comfortable enough to engage in the therapy? How did Scharff join with him?

13. **The Model:** What do you think about using this model with children? Does it make sense to you? Do you see yourself
using it in your work with children? What in particular would you do differently from Scharff’s model?

14. **Personal Reaction:** How would you feel about being Scharff’s client, or about bringing your own child to him for therapy? Do you feel an alliance could be made and that he would be effective? How so?
Reaction Paper for Classes and Training

- **Assignment:** Complete this reaction paper and return it by the date noted by the facilitator.

- **Suggestions for Viewers:** Take notes on these questions while viewing the video and complete the reaction paper afterwards, or use the questions as a way to approach the discussion. Respond to each question below.

- **Length and Style:** 2-4 pages double-spaced. Be brief and concise. Do NOT provide a full synopsis of the video. This is meant to be a brief reaction paper that you write soon after watching the video—we want your ideas and reactions.

**What to Write:** Respond to the following questions in your reaction paper:

1. **Key points:** What important points did you learn about Object Relations therapy and therapy with children? What stands out in how Scharff works?

2. **What I found most helpful:** What was most beneficial to you as a therapist about the model presented? What tools or perspectives did you find helpful and might you use in your own work? What challenged you to think about something in a new way?

3. **What does not make sense:** What principles/techniques/strategies did not make sense to you? Did anything push your buttons or bring about a sense of resistance in you, or just not fit with your own style of working? Explore these questions.

4. **How I would do it differently:** What might you have done differently from what Scharff did in this therapy session? Be specific in what different approaches, strategies and techniques you might have applied.

5. **Other Questions/Reactions:** What questions or reactions did you have as you viewed the therapy in the video? Other comments, thoughts or feelings?
Suggestions for Further Readings, Websites and Videos

ARTICLES


WEB RESOURCES
Tuning the Therapeutic Instrument, David Scharff’s blog
www.tuningthetherapeuticinstrument.com
Psychotherapy.net Interviews with Owen Renik and Otto Kernberg on psychoanalysis
www.psychotherapy.net
The International Psychotherapy Institute
www.theipi.org
Psychoanalytic Psychology
www.apa.org/journals/pap/homepage.html
The Melanie Klein Trust
www.melanie-klein-trust.org.uk

RELATED VIDEOS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PSYCHOTHERAPY.NET

*Adlerian Parent Consultation*
– Jon Carlson, PsyD, EdD

*Adlerian Play Therapy*
– Terry Kottman, PhD

*Adolescent Family Therapy*
– Janet Sasson Edgette, PsyD

*Gestalt Child Therapy*
– Violet Oaklander, PhD

*Reality Therapy with Children*
– Robert E. Wubbolding, EdD

*Time Limited Dynamic Psychotherapy*
– Hanna Levenson, PhD
Complete Transcript of a Demonstration of Object Relations Child Therapy with David Scharff, MD

Note to facilitators: We have indicated on-screen minute markers throughout the transcript. You will find chapter markers on the DVD at five-minute intervals so that you may easily skip to desired points within the session.

PSYCHOTHERAPY SESSION

2–1

David Scharff: Angie, thanks for coming in to talk about Jeff. Tell me about him. He’s 11. When will he be 12?

Angie: April.

Scharff: So he’s coming up on 12.

Angie: Right.

Scharff: And he’s a big fellow.

Angie: Mm-hmm. Yes. Just grown the past two years, just rapidly.

Scharff: That’s his job.

Angie: He actually had to have two hip surgeries. They don’t know if it was related to the growth spurt or a birth defect or… But he had pins.

Scharff: Does he play a lot? Does he play sports?

Angie: He used to play baseball a lot. He’s playing again now. He hasn’t played for a year, any sports. Right.

Scharff: Because of the, because of his hips.

Angie: Right. And he played flag football for awhile. Played soccer.

Scharff: But no sports injuries?
Angie: He just started playing—No.

Scharff: I mean, that wasn’t the reason for the surgeries.

Angie: No, actually the way we found out about the hip was we thought he’d got hurt during a football game because he was kind of limping around afterwards.

Scharff: I see.

Angie: And it went away for awhile and then it started again. And so we took him in, and it was the hip, yeah.

Scharff: Turned out it was the injuries.

2–2

That was how long ago?

Angie: He had that last April, the day after his birthday.

Scharff: And how long was the recovery?

Angie: April to like June, the middle of June. And then he had the second surgery the end of August.

Scharff: So he’s had a rough year.

Angie: Rough year, yes. And he’s also developed asthma the past year, too, so it’s been very difficult for him.

Scharff: Why did you want somebody to see Jeff?

Angie: Jeff’s dealing with a lot right now. My mom lived with us. She had Alzheimer’s and she just passed away in October. He’s, in fact, today we had like a little session of crying together. We sat there. He was, he was very sad today.

Scharff: Was he close to your mom?

Angie: Yes, he was very close to her.

Scharff: Had she, how long had she had the Alzheimer’s?

Angie: She actually was diagnosed, she had seen a doctor in like in ’99, November, and they said senile dementia, and then in February of 2000, they think she might have had like a mini-stroke and some seizures and she just declined from there.
2–3

**Scharff:** But before that she’d been okay?

**Angie:** Like a heart, she had a heart attack a couple of years ago, but yeah, she was all right. She could still do things up until…

**Scharff:** She could do things that… And Jeff could have a relationship with her.

**Angie:** Oh, he had a great relationship with her, yes. Wonderful.

**Scharff:** So losing her was…

**Angie:** It’s very hard for him.

**Scharff:** For him and everybody else.

**Angie:** Yeah. It’s tough.

**Scharff:** Well, what else, what else has happened to him that…

**Angie:** Jeff has just, just now, earlier today, he said that he’s getting along better with his dad. He said, “Me and Dad are getting along now.” They don’t have a good relationship. They have a really…

**Scharff:** And was that the main reason?

**Angie:** That was pretty much the main reason. Right. They just spent a weekend. We’re, my husband takes all three—we have three boys—takes them to a motorcycle race every year that’s in Indianapolis right around now and they just got back from that weekend. So it’ll probably be okay for a little while because they all kind of bonded for a little bit.

**Scharff:** That goes pretty well.

**Angie:** Yeah.

**Scharff:** But ordinarily, day in and day out?

2–4

**Angie:** No, they conflict constantly.

**Scharff:** What do they do?

**Angie:** They fight. They pick… Jeff’s very sensitive and Don can be
very insensitive. He picks at him. Like he teases them—

**Scharff:** Don? Your husband picks on Jeff?

**Angie:** Yeah. He teases them in a way that doesn’t go over well. And…

**Scharff:** Sounds like, sounds like you and your husband have a disagreement about it.

**Angie:** We have a very big disagreement over Jeff.

**Scharff:** Over Jeff.

**Angie:** On how he treats him.

**Scharff:** How about the way he treats the other boys?

**Angie:** He favors them.

**Scharff:** So Jeff is the one that creates sparks with him? With you, too? Or…

**Angie:** No. Jeff’s… I just had this thought the other day that—it just came to me. I don’t know where. After like 10 years that, well, probably since Jeff was 3 it started. And I decided the other day—I’m not sure if it’s true or not—but that Jeff is so much like me that that might be why he gets it instead of me. Because I can stand up for myself.

2–5

**Scharff:** You think he’s taking it, he’s taking it for what your husband would have to say to you.

**Angie:** Yeah. Because he got mad at me one day, the other day. A couple, like this last week, and within five minutes, he was like yelling at Jeff. And I, that was the first the light bulb ever went on. I was like, no! So we had, we’ve had one of those, me as the protector for a long time.

**Scharff:** I see. Now since he was 3, that’s… Now, his brother, his brothers are how much younger?

**Angie:** They’re really close. I had all three of them within three and a half years.

**Scharff:** Okay, so the younger one is…

**Angie:** There’s the, Jeff’s going to be 12, the middle one was 9 in the
fall and the, then this one was 8 in the fall.

**Scharff:** Okay.

**Angie:** So they’re very close.

**Scharff:** And are they closer to each other than they are to Jeff?

**Angie:** Oh, yeah. Well, it depends. They go through stages. Depends on developmentally where they’re. Sometimes Jeff’s really close to Jake, who is the second one. For the most part, Jake and Nate are very close.

**2–6**

And I do notice that with things like, they went on this weekend and Jeff brought a friend along because there’s really nobody that he hangs with. Right.

**Scharff:** Because the kids have, the kids have each other. Okay. So the main thing is that Jeff and his dad really...

**Angie:** Part, part of it, too, is that Jeff’s starting to like act to Jacob the way his dad acts to him. So he’s modeling, I mean, he’s doing the behavior.

**Scharff:** Now what’s, what, just describe for a minute...

**Angie:** He yells at him. You know, like Jake will want to do something and Jeff will say, “Don’t do that,” you know, like he’s the dad.

**Scharff:** And is that what Don does with...He just yells it.

**Angie:** Oh, yeah. Yeah. He doesn’t ever just say, “You shouldn’t do that right now.” He yells it.

**Scharff:** They get in fights, in physical fights?

**Angie:** Not yet.

**Scharff:** You think they, you think they might?

**Angie:** About six months ago, sometime in the summer, they were kidding around one day and Jeff said—my husband’s like 6’1”, 6’, 6’1”—Jeff said to him, “Someday I’ll be bigger than you.” And they were kidding.
And then about a week later, they were fighting and Jeff said, “Someday I’ll be bigger than you,” and Don said, “But I’ll still be your father.”

The look on Jeff’s face was like, “so what?” You know, so that concerns me. He’s only 12, he’s already…

Scharff: Well, he’s thinking about it. Has there been much physical punishment?

Angie: You know, no, not recently. When Jeff was younger, maybe. Spankings and stuff. We had a lot of fights about that, Don and I had fights and arguments about what was appropriate and what wasn’t. So…

Scharff: Anything else about Jeff that you worry about?

Angie: He doesn’t think his dad likes him. He doesn’t. He really doesn’t.

Scharff: Mainly that.

Angie: He thinks he doesn’t love him. He’s told me that. I worry about his self-esteem as far as that goes, and he’s really vulnerable right now because he lost—My mom was a big part of our lives, and so I think he’s really hurting because of that.

And he’s, he’s looking to me for a lot more right now, but because of what’s going on with me and my, losing my mom, it’s been tough. All the way around.

Scharff: Hard for you. You’ve been depressed? You’ve been depressed?


Scharff: Now, I know from just the questions you answered earlier you were real depressed after your, after Nate was born.

Angie: Right, I had postpartum.

Scharff: For how long?

Angie: A year. A good year, maybe a little bit longer.

Scharff: So that was, that was when Jeff was three.
Angie: Yeah. Yeah, I would say actually maybe it started with Jeff and Don about 4, maybe when Nathan was about a year old. When he first started learning to write, was the first time I really picked up… They were really, Don was very attached to Jeff when he was a baby. They were like inseparable.

Scharff: Really?

Angie: Yeah. Jeff used to sleep—Jeff had colic—and he used to sleep across Don’s stomach because he’s really warm. And that’s how he, that’s the only way we could get him to sleep when he would cry at night.

Scharff: Really.

Angie: And yeah, he used to take him everywhere.

2–9

Scharff: So then starting to have trouble with him was a big…big loss for Jeff.

Angie: Yeah. One of our—

Scharff: Now, did Jeff become closer to you while you were depressed or after you got over the depression?

Angie: No, Jeff was always really attached to me.

Scharff: Anyway?


Scharff: Did that seem to change around 3 or 4?

Angie: Uh-uh.

Scharff: That was all, and that’s just stayed.

Angie: It got worse afterwards, when he started kindergarten. He got separation anxiety.

Scharff: What happened?

Angie: He just, he couldn’t sleep at night. He didn’t want to go to school. I had to take him in to see a doctor, he put him on something for the anxiety. I can’t remember the name of the drug now. And that was maybe six months he took that.
Scharff: What year was that? What was his first school year?

Angie: Let’s see. He was, he was in kindergarten. It didn’t happen too much when he was in preschool. He did go to preschool, and that was just a couple blocks away and we knew people that were going there, so he was pretty much okay with that. He had some friends there, but when he started kindergarten, it was very hard.

Scharff: That’s age 5 or…

Angie: Five. Mm-hmm.

Scharff: Yeah. Then he had a lot of trouble.

Angie: Yeah.

2–10

Scharff: And did he, how long did it take to be able to go to school without trouble or has that, has that stayed?

Angie: You know, it’s still, I know it’s still there. He can go away with his dad for these weekends and stuff. But I just really started noticing last year that he would have friends spend the night, but he was never spending the night anywhere. And I was always like, “How come, you know, you always have Joe over? You never go there.”

And then finally, this little boy’s mom said, “You know, we invite Jeff over a lot. He just never calls you and asks you.”

Scharff: So maybe that separation anxiety has stayed right through.

Angie: That’s still there. He called…he spent a night at another friend’s house finally last year one time and he called, and I had to go get him.

Scharff: Let me switch, switch gears. How about the relationship between you and your husband?

Angie: Right now? It’s really rocky right now.

Scharff: And has it…

Angie: No, it’s just, it’s not rocky. I don’t know how to explain it. There’s just a lot of outside stuff. We were going to buy a house, and the deal fell through, so he’s really bummed about that.
So he’s kind of, the way he handles things is to like withdraw from it, so he’s real moody lately.

**Scharff:** The two of you fight a lot?

**Angie:** No. No. Not, not verbally.

**Scharff:** But there’s tension?

**Angie:** Body language. Yeah.

**Scharff:** Is this as bad as things have gotten or there have been other bad periods, too?

**Angie:** Probably when I was depressed. When Nathan was born, it was pretty bad.

**Scharff:** What would happen?

**Angie:** We just didn’t talk. That’s how we fight: we don’t talk.

**Scharff:** Now… Okay. So that’s sort of—

**Angie:** He has done in the past, he got mad at me a couple years ago for something. Well, there was, we have this… It’s a long story. He wants to buy a house, like out in the country. He’s got a dream, okay, and a couple of years ago we had found another house and that didn’t work out either, and he was really, he was really depressed after that one. And he was really not very nice to live with, and we had a fight, which was like one of the first fights we had ever had in front of the kids. And he stormed out saying he was leaving.

And they, you know, it scared the hell out of the kids. So I think…

**Scharff:** Now, I know that Jeff can get asthma. Does he get it in those situations or…

**Angie:** Oh, I’m sure it’s related. Yeah. I’m sure it is. I’m sure that, this fall he was really, really sick a lot with asthma. I’m sure that was related to my mom.

**Scharff:** You and your mom got along all right?
Angie: Mm-hmm. We were really close.

Scharff: Your dad? Your dad?

Angie: My dad’s deceased. He’s been deceased for…

Scharff: How, how was their marriage and just growing up?

Angie: It was nice. It was real, yeah. They were nice. Well, yeah, they were good parents.

Scharff: You had a childhood you liked.

Angie: Yeah.

Scharff: And how about your husband? How about his family?

Angie: No. His, my husband’s parents have been getting divorced for 50 years, so.

Scharff: They fight a lot?

Angie: They fight every, yeah, a lot. It’s…

Scharff: How does he get along with each of them?

Angie: He avoids it. I have to do all the family stuff.

Scharff: Does he have trouble with his father?

Angie: Yes.

Scharff: Always has?

Angie: Yes.

2–13

Scharff: Sort of like him and Jeff?


Scharff: Much worse. So this is an improvement.

Angie: Yeah. He had decided when we were having kids that he was going to be different. That’s what he said. So yeah, he doesn’t… They fight. We don’t spend a lot, we do like the holiday stuff and as the kids get older, they’re in sports more, his parents come to things like that but his family is, there’s all these power struggles going on in his family.
Scharff: Okay. I wish we had more time to talk about this. It’s important and relevant, but we don’t. Is there anything that I haven’t talked to you about that you think I should know about Jeff?

Angie: Um…No, I think Jeff is pretty open. I think that once he relaxes a little bit, you’ll pretty much have a good handle on where he’s at. He doesn’t hide things too much. He tries. You know, he tries very hard to…

Scharff: Is he trying hard in school?

Angie: Yes. Yes. He tries.

Scharff: So he tries in general.

Angie: He tries in general.

2–14

He tries really hard with his dad sometimes and then…

Scharff: So it’s upsetting to him that they just don’t seem to be able to…

Angie: It’s upsetting to him.

Scharff: And to his dad?

Angie: Well, I don’t know. I guess so, but I think he’s just… I said something to him last year about, you know, “You’d better start working on this because pretty soon he’s going to be grown up and gone, so you need to determine what your relationship is going to be.” And he stalls, really…

Scharff: You’re mad at him about this.

Angie: Yeah, I’m really mad at him.

Scharff: Okay.

Angie: For this.

Scharff: Okay. Well, thank you for coming in and for bringing Jeff in.

Angie: Thanks for seeing him.

Scharff: And I’ll see what we can find out that might be helpful. Okay, thanks.

*****
Scharff: Jeff, thank you for coming in to talk today. You said you do a little drawing.
Jeff: Yeah.
Scharff: We can talk about anything that matters to you. I can ask you questions or you can just talk.

2–15
Jeff: You can ask me questions.
Scharff: Sure. Sure. You just told me you were in sixth grade.
Jeff: Yeah.
Scharff: How is it?
Jeff: I’m homeschooled because the teachers were really mean and stuff, so.
Scharff: What was hard about school?
Jeff: I had hip surgery before I went to sixth grade and the, well, what I had to do was leave five minutes early between classes to get to other classes, and some of the time, the teachers wouldn’t let me go and stuff. And then the principal, or the assistant principal, kept on asking me when I was going to be in gym and stuff, so my mom took me out because of that, so.
Scharff: And are you going, you like being homeschooled?
Jeff: It’s better than regular school.
Scharff: Do you expect to keep, keep it up or do you think you’ll go back next year?
Jeff: I don’t know. I might go to a different school next year, so.
Scharff: Was that the only trouble you had at school? How about friends?
Jeff: That was the only trouble.
Scharff: Did you have friends?
Jeff: Yeah.
They were nice people, so.

Scharff: They were nice. So you were getting along well with kids.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Were you having trouble with the work?

Jeff: No.

Scharff: It was just teachers wanting you to do things you couldn’t do.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Were you in a lot of pain with your hips?

Jeff: No. Not really.

Scharff: What trouble did they cause you?

Jeff: Just me trying to get out of classes early without bothering the teachers and stuff. It was like…

Scharff: Did you have trouble walking to the next class?

Jeff: No.

Scharff: Why did you have to leave early?

Jeff: Well, because if I left when everybody else left, I’d be, I’d probably fall because everybody runs out of the rooms to get to the next room, so that they can try to get home earlier. So that, so when I’m coming out of the classrooms, if there’s anybody else in there, I’d probably get knocked down, so.

Scharff: Now how are your hips now?

Jeff: They’re fine.

Scharff: No pain?

Jeff: No.

Scharff: How was that surgery? Was it tough?

Jeff: I had both my hips were done. One was in April of last year and the other one was in August.
And it wasn’t hard. All they had to do was put a screw in, so nothing big.

_Scharff_: Okay. Did your mom say anything to you about why she was asking you to talk with me or…

_Jeff_: No.

_Scharff_: She just said we’re…

_Jeff_: Well, she said that it was for school and for other…

_Scharff_: For her school.

_Jeff_: Yeah. So.

_Scharff_: Okay. Okay. While we’re doing that, anything that you think is kind of a problem in your life would be good for us to talk about. I also want to know about what really goes well in your life. So good things and bad things, and anything in between.

_Jeff_: Okay.

_Scharff_: Okay. So you like homeschooling?

_Jeff_: Yeah.

_Scharff_: But you’re, you’re up for going back to regular school next year if that’s…

_Jeff_: Yeah, but I probably won’t go back to the school I was at.

_Scharff_: Not to that school. You don’t want to go back to that school.

_Jeff_: No.

_Scharff_: Right. Okay. How about your family? What’s that like?

_Jeff_: I have two brothers that are okay and then my dad, which sometimes we don’t get along with, and it’s my mom and me.

_Scharff_: Okay. Well, tell me about each of them.

_Jeff_: My brothers are 9 and 7. No…yeah, 9 and 7. No, nine and 8.

_Scharff_: Nine and 8. Okay.
Jeff: And they, sometimes they—
Scharff: This is Jake, Jake and…
Jeff: Nate.
Scharff: Nate. Okay.
Jeff: And sometimes they annoy me, really.
Scharff: That’s what brothers are for.
Jeff: Yeah.
Scharff: Right.
Jeff: But like…
Scharff: But you think they were just…
Jeff: They’re okay.
Scharff: They’re okay.
Jeff: Yeah.
Scharff: They don’t annoy you more than they’re supposed to?
Jeff: No.
Scharff: Okay. And do you play with both of them? Do you tend to play more with Jake?
Jeff: No, I play with them the same, about.
Scharff: What kind of stuff do you guys play?
Jeff: We play Nintendo and cars and stuff.

2–19
Scharff: Cars? You play cars? What do you…
Jeff: Like, we have remote control cars, and we drive them around, so.
Scharff: Right. Okay. And you get in fights sometimes?
Jeff: Yeah.
Scharff: Do you have any trouble handling them or…
Jeff: Well, before I did, but now I don’t. I just leave them alone. If they
fight with me then I go tell, so.

Scharff: Okay. Okay then you said your dad, that can be a problem.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Why now?

Jeff: Well, me, when I was a little younger, my dad was really nice to me and stuff. Then when I was like 5 or 6, he started yelling on me, yelling at me more than my brothers. And then, like if there was a big problem and the basement was dirty or something, he would yell, single me out saying that I did it or something like that, so.

2–20

He would yell at me like most of the time. Now we’re getting along, so.

Scharff: How long have you been getting along?

Jeff: A couple of weeks.

Scharff: I see.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: So you got, you got a couple of years in there where you have some trouble.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Why do you think he picks on you?

Jeff: Because I’m the oldest and I’m supposed to have all the responsibilities and stuff, so.

Scharff: So you think you don’t do a good enough job?

Jeff: I don’t know.

Scharff: Okay. You don’t know why.

Jeff: No.

Scharff: But you feel he does, he does pick on you.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: And then there’s your mom.
Jeff: She’s nice. She’s the best person in the family to me, because me and her bond more than me and my dad and stuff. And she just takes me a lot of places, so.

Scharff: How do you get along when she’s teaching you and all that?

2–21

Jeff: We get along fine. Just like my first grade teacher, which was really nice. So.

Scharff: You still remember your first grade teacher. Who was…who was she?

Jeff: Ms. Anderson.

Scharff: Ms. Anderson? What was she like?

Jeff: She was really, really nice. She was like my grandma, so then. She was my teacher, so she was really nice.

Scharff: But not all the teachers have always been nice.

Jeff: No.

Scharff: There have been a lot of teachers that haven’t been nice or mostly they’re okay except this last year.

Jeff: Well, for sixth grade, we had like six or, six different teachers, and all of them were kind of, were all at least mean. And then I had my fifth grade and my fourth grade teacher were mean, and that was it.

Scharff: You’ve had a bad run.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: When you say they’re mean, what do they do that feels mean.

Jeff: They yell. A lot. Especially my fifth grade teacher.

Scharff: She yelled more than the sixth grade teachers?

2–22

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: What’d she yell about?
Jeff: I don’t know. She just like, like she’d yell at me a lot because when I get back from being sick—because I’ve got asthma and I get bronchitis a lot—when I get back from school she’d be like, or from home, she’d tell me that how come I don’t have my homework in or anything, when I don’t get it. I was out of school for like a month one d—one month because of my bronchitis and she, they were yelling at me and everything about my work.

And then my grandma got sick and then I had all this homework done and everything and it all wound up in flames because she turned all four burners and she put a bunch of stuff on there like she was cooking, and it went up in flames, so.

Scharff: She was pretty confused.

Jeff: Yeah. She had Alzheimer’s.

Scharff: She had Alzheimer’s. So she burned up your homework.

Jeff: Yeah, and, and I got detention for a week and a half after I told them about that, and they didn’t believe me, so.

2–23

Scharff: So then it didn’t seem funny.

Jeff: No.

Scharff: Were you upset even before they punished you at school?

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: That she burned your homework?

Jeff: Yeah. Well, I didn’t know it was my homework until, until we looked at all of it and then found out it was some of my homework and if I got mad at her, then I didn’t do anything because she was my grandma and she was really sick, so.

Scharff: So even if you were upset, you wouldn’t do anything about it?

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Then I guess she was sick for a couple of years and then she died last, last year?
Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Hard on you?

Jeff: Day after my brother’s birthday.

Scharff: The day after your brother’s birthday. You were really, really close to your grandma. Has it been hard for you that she died?

Jeff: Uh-huh.

Scharff: Do you think about her?

2–24

Jeff: Yeah. But she was sick and stuff, so I remember the good times about it.

Scharff: You do remember? You have a pretty clear memory of the times that you and she got to do stuff?

Jeff: Mm-hmm.

Scharff: Did she and your mom get along really well?

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Is there anybody else in your family that doesn’t get along?

Jeff: In my family or out of my family also that’s part of our family?

Scharff: Well, either. Both. Both are good.

Jeff: Okay. Well, part of our family is on my mom’s side is her sister, which is, I don’t really like because when my grandma died, she only came for one thing and she wasn’t there for the whole thing. She came for the beginning half and then she was there when we brought her to the grave part.

2–25

And then she only came to see my grandma on her birthday and that was it. So once a year.

Scharff: So you’re mad at her for not being nice to your grandma.

Jeff: Yeah.
Scharff: Is your mom mad at her?
Jeff: Yeah, sometimes she is. Sometimes she isn’t.
Scharff: But you’re mad at her most of the time?
Jeff: Yeah. Yeah.
Scharff: How about inside your family? Are there people who have trouble getting along inside your own family? Mom, dad, brothers.
Jeff: No.
Scharff: How do your mom and dad get along?
Jeff: Well, they get along okay except for when my mom tells him to do something, he won’t do it.
Scharff: He doesn’t like being told what to do?
Jeff: Well, like my mom tells him to clean up something, but he won’t do it. But I don’t know why, but I think that it’s because he works long. He works, he gets up at 4:00 in the morning and goes to work until 4:30 or 5:00, so. I don’t know. Maybe he just wants to rest.

And he works on the weekends from like 6:00 at night until 2:00 in the morning at a bar. So I don’t know.

Scharff: What’s he do in his regular job?
Jeff: Like what, working? Or…
Scharff: What’s his job?
Jeff: He works at Panduit. He works on electronics and stuff, so it’s pretty cool.
Scharff: Cool stuff.
Jeff: Yeah.
Scharff: Have you ever been to his work with him?
Jeff: Yeah. I was there when I was 4. It looked like a big computer chip. Before they remodeled, and then they remodeled and now it looks like a regular room.
Scharff: You mean the room looked like a big computer chip before?
Jeff: Yeah. And then they remodeled and now it looks like a regular office place, so.
Scharff: And what does he do? Does he do electronic…
Jeff: He makes different dyes and stuff, and then he also does stuff on metals. He works on metals and stuff, so.

2–27
Scharff: Okay. Okay. You think he’s got a pretty neat job.
Jeff: Yeah.
Scharff: Would you like to do the kind of stuff he does when you grow up or you’ve got other things in mind?
Jeff: If I can’t succeed in anything else, then I want to do that. But what I want to do is play baseball when I get older, because I like baseball.
Scharff: Do you?
Jeff: Yeah. It’s my favorite sport.
Scharff: Are you pretty good at it? Can you hit pretty far?
Jeff: Yeah. I hit a grand slam and a home run in one game, so. It’s my favorite.
Scharff: What positions do you play?
Jeff: I like to play pitcher and first base, so.
Scharff: Those are good positions?
Jeff: Yeah.
Scharff: How’s your pitching?
Jeff: It’s okay. It’s not like I used to have it, but that’s because I was out for, I had hip surgery before I had, before I even had one game. I had one practice and then had hip surgery, so I was out the whole summer.

2–28
Scharff: The whole season.
Jeff: Yeah. So. This summer, I’ve got to work on my arm because it hurts a little bit.

Scharff: Okay. Okay. So you’ve got a lot of stuff going. So baseball, if you don’t do baseball, what would be your next choice?

Jeff: If I don’t do baseball, then…um I’ll work like on computers like my uncle—like my cousin does. He has his own business where he can, he takes your computer part and then puts in more memory and stuff and then puts it back and gives it back to you. Stuff like that. So we gave him our computer’s thing and we’re getting a burner for it, so.

Scharff: Getting a burner.

Jeff: I’m going to see what’s going on, how to do that, so. I’ll start out in Radio Shack.

Scharff: Start in Radio Shack.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Okay. You like it there?

2–29

Jeff: Yeah. My cousin works there. It’s really cool. Big discounts and stuff.

Scharff: Yeah? You have a computer?

Jeff: Yeah, we’ve got a computer at home. And then when we get a new one, the one that we got is going to be all three of ours, me and brothers’, so.

Scharff: What do you like to do on the computer?

Jeff: I type up my reports and then I play games on it. My favorite game is Solitaire.

Scharff: Solitaire. Are you pretty good at it?

Jeff: Yeah. I’ve beaten it five times in a row.

Scharff: Okay. You use the Internet or not yet?

Jeff: Yeah, I go on the Internet for my email and stuff, check it out and see what kind of music’s on there.
Scharff: Good. Okay. Well, I’ve probably got some more questions for you, but how about if we do a little drawing?

2–30
Jeff: Okay.
Scharff: Okay. You want to draw… Are there things you like to draw?
Jeff: Let’s see. What do I want to draw? I’ll just draw a car.
Scharff: Okay. Let’s see you draw.
Scharff: Cop car?
Jeff: Yeah.
Scharff: Okay.
Jeff: I want to be a cop when I grow up.

2–31
Scharff: Oh, yeah?
Jeff: Try that out. My dad was a security guard.
Scharff: He was? When was that?
Jeff: Like when he was 20. Then he quit that because he got an offer at Panduit.
Scharff: I see. So you like the idea of being a cop.
Jeff: Yeah. He met my mom’s sister that lives in California at Panduit and introduced her to one of his friends. So.
Scharff: Now what do you like about what cops do?
Jeff: The car chases.
Scharff: The car chases. All right.
Jeff: And getting to hold a gun.
Scharff: You like that idea.
Jeff: Yeah. I want to be a canine one.
Scharff: A canine cop.
Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: You like dogs?
Jeff: Yeah. I want to get one, but my mom’s allergic to dogs, so.
Scharff: Your mom’s allergic to dogs, so you don’t have a dog.

2–32

Scharff: Got an antenna.
Jeff: Yeah, I need one.
Scharff: Okay.
Jeff: So. Okay, let’s see.

Scharff: You done?
Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Okay. So you’ve got room for the dogs?
Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: And it’s got a door.
Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Okay. Okay.
Jeff: I’m trying to think of what I should draw next.

Scharff: Well, I’ll tell you what: I’ll ask you to draw something.
Jeff: Okay.

Scharff: How about drawing a person?
Jeff: Okay.

Scharff: Okay? Just put that down there.
2–33


Scharff: Okay.

2–34

Jeff: And make sure...wait, hold on.

Scharff: And...

Jeff: And long hair because it’s a picture of my grandma.

Scharff: This is your grandma.

Jeff: Yeah. The one that died.

Scharff: Right. Okay.

Jeff: That’s one of her shirts.

Scharff: Sorry?

Jeff: That’s one of her shirts that she had.

Scharff: She had a shirt like that with the hearts, spades...

Jeff: Hearts, spades, diamonds and clubs, so. It’s the only shirt I can really think of. Keep in mind.

Scharff: Okay. Okay. Well, anything else you can tell me about her in the picture?

Jeff: No. She’s happy.

Scharff: She’s...

Jeff: Happy.

Scharff: Happy.


Scharff: Was she happy most of the time?

Jeff: Yeah. She’s an angel.

Scharff: She’s an angel.
Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: You think of her as up in heaven?

Jeff: Yeah. Because she was a really nice person.

Scharff: Right. I know she was really important to you, so. Her being sick and then dying is really…

2–36

Jeff: She was in the hospital a lot, so.

Scharff: So…

Jeff: She was in the hospital, so I kind of figured that she was dying because of that. Because she had a heart attack.

Scharff: Yeah. Yeah. Were you ready for her to die?

Jeff: No.

Scharff: No.

Jeff: She was in the hospital lots, so.

Scharff: Lots.

Jeff: She had a heart attack in California after we went out. She stayed out there for awhile.

Scharff: Now what’s this? Are these, these the wings?

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Okay. You done?

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Shall we do another one?

Jeff: Okay.

Scharff: Think you can draw a picture of your family doing something together?

2–37

Jeff: Okay.
Scharff: I don’t think you need the clipboard. I’ll just give you the papers. What are you going to have them doing?

Jeff: On a trip.

Scharff: Okay. Your family take a lot of trips?

Jeff: We’re going to California this summer, so I thought we’d, I thought I’d draw that.

Scharff: Great. And you think you’ll drive there?

Jeff: We’re going to. A week’s drive. Should be fun.

Scharff: It’s a week’s drive.

2–38

You like driving? You like being in the car a lot?

Jeff: No. Not really. It gets boring.

Scharff: So what happens when it gets boring while you’re driving?

Jeff: I don’t know. I just sit there. Take a nap.

Scharff: Take a nap?

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: That’s a week’s worth of naps.

Jeff: Yeah. Well, then we get to see Mount Rushmore and stuff, so. My dad will probably drive.

Scharff: Does he do most of the driving?

Jeff: Yeah. We went to Alabama and he drove.

Scharff: When was that?

Jeff: A couple years ago when my friends moved out there.

Scharff: Was that a good trip?

Jeff: Yeah. Ten hours, though.
2–39

Jeff: Luggage.

Scharff: Lot of it.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: You have a van or a station wagon?

Jeff: We have a Suburban.

Scharff: Hmm?

Jeff: A Suburban.

Scharff: Suburban.

Jeff: Grey one. Just got it, too.

Scharff: You just got it.

Jeff: Last summer.

Scharff: You like it?

Jeff: So...

Scharff: That’s it.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Okay. Little hard to see the members of your family.

Jeff: Yeah. Well...

Scharff: Actually, I’ll tell you one thing I notice about it. There are only four of them.

Jeff: Oh, yeah.

Scharff: So who’s, who got left out?

Jeff: Oh, wait. There’s, there’s no window in the back. That’s why. So I’ll put see-through glasses on. There’s the last person.

Scharff: Who was that that got left out? Who’s in the back?

Jeff: Usually it’s my mom and my dad in front and I get one of the passenger seats, and then one of my brothers.
So it could be Jake or Nate. I don’t know.

Scharff: Okay. All right. All right. Well, how about doing a drawing game?
Jeff: Okay.

Scharff: Okay? I’ll draw a squiggle.
Jeff: Okay.

Scharff: And then you make it into whatever you want.
Jeff: Okay.

Scharff: We’ll try and figure out what it is. You can tell me what it is. Or if you want me to, I’ll guess. Okay?

Making life tough for you.
Jeff: Okay.

Done.

Okay. Well, I can see there are people, and there’s some stones or…

Jeff: Sand castles.
Scharff: Sorry?
Jeff: Sand castles.
Scharff: Sand castles.

Jeff: When we were in California we went to the beach, so me and my brothers made sand castles.

Ah ha. So that’s the ocean?
Jeff: Yeah. It’s the only thing I could think of that was blue.
Scharff: Okay. All right. Okay. So that’s, was that a pretty good time?
Jeff: Yeah. Except for going in the water.
Scharff: Oh, what was wrong with going in the water?
Scharff: I see. You didn’t know to keep your eyes shut.
Jeff: No, we did, but it still, like when you opened up your eyes when you got out, it hurt.
Scharff: You still got salt.
Jeff: Yeah.
Scharff: And was it just the three of you in the water, or did your parents go in, too?
Jeff: My parents went but they were by the car videotaping us and stuff, so.
Scharff: So they videotaped you and you guys…
Jeff: Yeah. We were playing.
Scharff: Okay. All right. Want to do another one?
Jeff: Yeah, sure.
Scharff: We’ll move this away. All right, what color do you want me to use?

2–44
Jeff: Um…hmm. Blue again.
Scharff: Same blue? This one.
Jeff: Yeah, I’ve got another idea.
Scharff: Oh, okay.
Jeff: Okay.
Jeff: Something that me and my grandma did when we were in California.

Scharff: Sorry?

Jeff: We went to Lake Tahoe when we were in California, and I’m drawing about that.

Scharff: That’s what you’re drawing about.

Jeff: Yeah. That’s the water. That’s me and my grandma sitting down eating. Ketchup and mustard.

Scharff: Ketchup and mustard. All right. Okay. That’s you and your grandma. So when you took that trip to California, your grandma was with you?

Jeff: Yeah. It was the same exact trip.

Scharff: Yeah?

Jeff: Except my grandma was at my aunt’s house in the other picture.

Scharff: Right. But she went on the trip with you?

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: And was she okay then?

Jeff: Yeah, until we left. Then a couple days, or a couple weeks after we left, she got sick. She was in California. She was going to stay for an extra two months, stay out there with my cousin.

Scharff: She was out there with your cousin, and then she got sick out there?

Jeff: My cousin… My cousin and my aunt and my uncle, and she got sick out there, so.

Scharff: Then she had to come home?

Jeff: Well, she had to stay out in the hospital out there and it was horrible because on the first night she was out in the hallway after she
had a heart attack. So she’s in the hallway the first night, and then she got into a room and then the tray that holds all the food fell down, so she, they finally airlifted her out here and she was in the hospital for like six months, so.

Scharff: Oh, gosh. But she was here so you could see her?

2–47

Jeff: Yeah. We went to visit her. She was…

Scharff: Was it upsetting to see her?

Jeff: She was asleep a lot and there’s a lady that came in like every day to help her try to see if she could get up and walk around and stuff. And then she got Alzheimer’s, and then we had to get her a walker. So then we just forgot about that, because she didn’t want to walk with that. So we just, we got baby things, baby, the baby cages so that you don’t go to a different room when you’re a baby.

Scharff: The fences.

Jeff: Yeah. So that she wouldn’t wander around in the kitchen or something like that to try, because she could have burned herself. So at night, also, we had to put wind chimes on her door handle because she’d get up in the middle of the night and walk around.

Scharff: So you had to know.

Jeff: She went downstairs in the base—downstairs and was walking around and turned on the TV and sat down like she was watching TV. Because she used to get up at like 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning.

2–48

So we had to put wind chimes and the baby cages up, so. She had the mind of a 3 year old, so.

Scharff: You think about your grandma an awful lot, don’t you?

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: And I’m clear that you really miss her, although you think that she was so sick that there wasn’t anything else that could be done for her.
Jeff: No. They don’t have a cure for it. They probably never will.

Scharff: Right. Sounds like she was about your favorite person.

Jeff: If my grandpa was alive, then he’d probably be my favorite person, also.

Scharff: Was he a good guy?

Jeff: I don’t know. I never met him.

Scharff: Oh, you never met him.

Jeff: He died while my mom was in high school, so.

Scharff: I see. She tell you about him?

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: What did she say?

Jeff: He was a nice man. He was a nice man, and he would have liked—loved me.

2–49

He died after, like right after he was getting all this money to put in an ex—an additional room in the old house. So what he did was like, in the front porch, he knocked down a huge wall and then added onto that so he’d have another living room there. And he just ran out of money and a couple weeks after that, he had a heart attack and died, because they couldn’t do anything about it back then.

Scharff: Right. How about your dad’s parents?

Jeff: I don’t like them.

Scharff: What’s wrong with them?

Jeff: They’re just mean people.

Scharff: Really?

Jeff: I had a stomach ache and I felt like I was going to throw up one time. I had to go over there because they had to watch us. So I went over there, and I laid down because I wasn’t feeling good. And they said, “Oh, get up and go play Sony with your brothers or something.
You’re probably just, you’re probably just faking it,” and stuff. And I’m like, “Oh, my god. They don’t believe I’m, feeling sick.”

2–50
And then we were going to send them away to Las Vegas this, like for their anniversary. They don’t want to go until April when it’s hotter than heck, so.

Scharff: You mean you’re giving them a trip? Your parents are giving them a trip?

Jeff: Well, everybody is in our family. And they just, they don’t want to take it and then they wanted to and then they didn’t want to. So then after they found out that everybody was going to be gone over Spring Break, they said that they wanted to go over Spring Break, and it’s going to be hot as heck in Las Vegas. They said, “It’s too cold there now.” Some guy came back and it was like 65 degrees there.

Scharff: Yeah. You think they’re kind of fussy?

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Well, I’ve got another question for you.

Jeff: Okay.

Scharff: You got any dreams?

Jeff: About what?

Scharff: Any dreams.

Jeff: Yeah, I have dreams.

Scharff: Do you remember any?

Jeff: Yeah. I’ve had, I’ve had horrible dreams.

Scharff: Tell me. Tell me.

2–51
Jeff: Well, I don’t know. It might seem… It doesn’t seem horrible to you, but it’s horrible to me.

Scharff: That’s fair enough. You can tell me what’s horrible about it.
Jeff: My dreams, my dreams were A) my mom had to go back to my school for a couple days to tell them, or like to go back to school to tell them, drop off notes saying that I’m never coming back to school because I’m being homeschooled. And my mom accidentally left out of the door—I’ve had this dream like three times, the same exact thing—she leaves out and she goes away and she doesn’t remember that she left me here.

So I’m walking around and everything because she’s told me to sit down. So she went out to talk to one of the teachers and then she walks off, and I didn’t know about it. And then I stand up and she was already gone. So I have to spend the rest of the whole day there. And what they did is they set it up different, is that I went to all these different classes and everything saying that, they’re like, “Oh, we’re glad to have you back, Jeff.”

And I’m like going in the different classes and there’s this one class where we had to sit down and watch a video, and all the teachers are like, “Why did you leave?”

2–52

“Oh, did you think we were too mean and everything? Oh, you’re going to get a lot of homework tonight.”

I’m like, “Oh my god.” I wake up and I’m sweating and everything and it’s horrible. I’ve had the dream three times. That’s scary.

Scharff: That’s scary stuff.

Jeff: Yeah. Going back to that school.

Scharff: That school really is, it’s like hell for you.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: That’s sort of the worst place you can dream of.

Jeff: Yeah. Except for going down there. Except for going…

Scharff: Except for hell.

Jeff: Yeah.

Scharff: Okay. I think being separated from your mom is really
scary for you, and I guess the closest thing to it has been when your grandmother died, losing her. Because she also is so important to you and I know your mom’s real important to you.

2–53

**Jeff:** Yeah.

**Scharff:** So the idea that something could happen so you couldn’t be with your mom really scares the heck out of you. And it’s almost like the teachers are mad at you because you want to be with her instead of being with them.

**Jeff:** Well no, it’s actually… Well, the reason that I’m scared of the dream is because of them actually yelling at me, wanting to know why I got out of the class and everything. Why I want out of the school and not staying with them.

**Scharff:** So when your mom leaves you there, it exposes you to their yelling at you and...

**Jeff:** Yeah.

**Scharff:** Asking you all of these terrible questions: “Why did you do that? Why did you leave us?”

**Jeff:** I almost got kicked off my basketball team from our church for… our CCD, we got this note saying that any boys that, on that day, that wanted to sign up for basketball would go and sign up and then you were on a team. So my parents had asked me, and I said, “Yeah.” So we went to go sign, we went to go sign up, and we had like two games.

2–54

And then I come back from my friend’s house and everything and right when I walk in the door, it’s like, 7:00, 6:00, 7:00 when it’s really dark out. So we’re all…I’m coming in and my parents are like, “Jeff, can you stop for a second?”

I’m like, “Yeah, sure. What’s the matter?”

“The head of the basketball thing called and said that you can’t play basketball anymore.”
And I’m like, “What? Why?”

“Because you’re not released from your doctor yet?”

And I’m like, “Wait a second. Where’d they find that out?”

Mr. Kowalski was talking to the guy and said that I wasn’t released until Feb—January 8, and they’re like, I’m like, “Oh my god. Why the heck did he say that?”

“So then my parents called them back up and then my, and then the priest calls and asks all these questions, and my mom’s like asking about how come, “Is Mr. Kowalski a regular team coach? Is he being paid for it? So he’s a volunteer. He gave out confidential information about my son.”

So then they said all we need was a note saying that I can do one practice and one game a week.

Scharff: So that worked out?

Jeff: Yeah, it did, but we got into all these fights with Mr. Kowalski, the assistant principal at our school…and…

Scharff: Oh, so there’s more trouble at the school?

Jeff: Well, there was until we figured it out.

And they wanted to meet with mom. So he actually ended up, the principal asked if I wanted to come back to school and my parents came back about, “I don’t think so.” So, and then, and then my mom’s
talking to the principal and everything. She can just hear him like breathing really hard and everything trying to think of what he’s going to say next, because the principal and everything was thinking that we were going to sue them for doing that. So my mom wanted him to think that we were going to sue him, so.

**Scharff:** So you got a little revenge on the school?

**Jeff:** Yeah.

**Scharff:** Yeah. Big time.

**Jeff:** It was cool.

**Scharff:** Well, you think you’re going to feel that way about the next school or you hope it will work better?

**Jeff:** Well, I don’t know. We’re going to figure it out, so. We’re going to figure out what’s going to go on. If this school is okay with homeschooling, then I’m going to do it until I go to high school and stuff. And… Or…

**Scharff:** So that’s a couple years.

**Jeff:** Yeah. Or I’m just going to go to a Catholic school for…

2–57

**Scharff:** Jeff, is there anything you want to ask me? We’re going to stop in a minute, so I’m just…

**Jeff:** No.

**Scharff:** Here’s your chance. Okay. I’ll tell you what I do… I’ll just tell you a little bit. Something I think. I know you and your dad have a lot of trouble getting along, and you’d like to get along with him, wouldn’t you?

**Jeff:** Yeah.

**Scharff:** So I think that’s, I don’t know exactly how. I’ll talk with your mom about it sometime, but I think that’s, I hope you and your dad can work some stuff out and maybe your mom can help with that, too. I think that’s important, because I think when you’re going to grow up and presumably you want to be a dad and so on, it helps if you and
your dad have been able to work out some stuff.
Now, I know only part of it is in your hands because you also need…

Jeff: Well, the reason why he’s like that is because of his parents.
Because they were just…

Scharff: They were so tough.
Jeff: They were just like him. So at least I have, one half is really nice and the other half is kind of mean, so I’ll do half and half.

2–58

Scharff: You think so? Or you…
Jeff: Be disciplined but really nice, so.

Scharff: Okay. Sounds, that sounds like a good model. Jeff, thank you for coming in to talk with me and do some drawing. I really appreciate it. I hope you do real well in basketball.

Jeff: Okay.

Scharff: Okay.

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Dr. Scharff’s books include *The Sexual Relationship: An Object Relations Approach to Sex and the Family*, and *Refinding the Object: Reclaiming the Self* (1992). With his wife, Jill Savege Scharff, MD, he co-authored *Object Relations Family, Object Relations Couple Therapy, The Primer of Object Relations Therapy, Object Relations Therapy of Physical and Sexual Trauma, Object Relations Individual Therapy* and *Tuning the Therapeutic Instrument: The Affective Learning of Psychotherapy*. He is the editor with Ellinor Fairbairn Birtles of *From Instinct to Self: The Selected Papers of W.R. D. Fairbairn*, Volumes 1 and 2 and editor of *Object Relations Theory and Therapy: An Introduction*. He is co-editor with Michael Stadter of *Dimensions of Psychotherapy, Dimensions of Experience*; co-editor with Jill Scharff of *The Legacy of Fairbairn and Sutherland*; co-editor with Henri Parens et al. of *The Future of Prejudice*; and most recently of *New Paradigms for Treating Relationships*.

Dr. Scharff has taught nationally and in 25 countries on Object Relations theory—specifically on the work of Ronald Fairbairn—as well as chaos theory as a new paradigm in psychoanalysis and family therapy, family, couple and child therapy, and sexual development and therapy.

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