

Demonstration with Toni

Pam: Hi.

Toni: Hi.

Pam: How are you? Nice to meet you.

Toni: Nice to meet you too, Pam.

Pam: Yeah. Tell me: what brought you in here today? What made you call? I know people don't just pop into therapy. Something motivates them to give a call so what's going on for you?

Toni: That's true. I'm not just popping in. I've been thinking about this for a long time and I feel like I'm in a transition in my life and I'm trying to figure some things out. I've got to make some big decisions. How I'm noticing- What I'm saying to myself lately about this is like "I'm in a crossroads but I'm idling there."

Pam: Okay.

Toni: Every time I think about "Well I should go this way or I should go that way or I should keep going" I feel like I just hit a brick wall.

Pam: Okay.

Toni: And I feel really stuck and I really need help because it's leading to some depression.

Pam: Is it?

Toni: That is worrying me actually.

Pam: Okay. Tell me a little bit more about that worrying. Like you said, the depression is worrying you, right? That's the motivator that got you in here is the feeling stuck and the-

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Toni: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Pam: Okay. What's worrying for you about that? What's your concern?

Toni: That it'll just keep getting worse and I'll just feel bad, endlessly. I won't be able to make a decision. I won't be able to move. I won't be able to make a choice. I'll just idle and there's something uncomfortable about that.

Pam: Yeah okay so the idling is a very uncomfortable thing for you. Okay. All right. What's uncomfortable for you about it?

Toni: The idling?

Pam: Yeah.

Toni: That's a good question, actually.

Pam: Thank you.

Toni: What's uncomfortable about it? Here's what's uncomfortable about it is that my life is still going. It's not like I am literally idling-

Pam: Right.

Toni: So I keep having to make decisions. I keep having to make choices. I keep being presented with options and I have to do something.

Pam: Okay.

Toni: But the feeling like I'm not making the right decision or I'm not going in the right direction or "Why did I say yes?" or "Why did I say no?" Feels like it's all happening to me.

Pam: Okay.

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Toni: Instead of me doing it-

Pam: Doing something about it-

Toni: Does that make sense?

Pam: I think a little but give me- I'm not sure I totally understand. Could you give me an example about that? I really want to make sure I understand your situation.

Toni: I have an incredibly busy work life so I will be given opportunities to make a move in this direction or make a move in that direction. It will come- I will be offered an opportunity and it will come at me and I will say yes or no not depending on what I want but ... I don't know. Let me just see if I can describe this.

It's like ... I know this is sort of a ... a metaphor but life is happening to me instead of me making my life happen.

Pam: Okay.

Toni: That's part of the not feeling good.

Pam: Okay so there's a part of you that feels like life is happening to you and it doesn't feel good, right?

Toni: Mm-hmm (affirmative) and it feels like a wave. It just keeps coming. It just keeps coming. It's a wave.

Pam: When it comes like that what's that like for you? Like drowning?

Toni: Overwhelming.

Pam: Overwhelming?

Toni: Not quite drowning.

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Pam: Okay.

Toni: But very overwhelming.

Pam: Very overwhelming? Okay. Tell me what overwhelming means to you? Is that when you get depressed or is overwhelming- Some people feel anxious when they're overwhelmed. What does it feel like to you when you're overwhelmed?

Toni: I think anxious is a good descriptor.

Pam: Anxious is a good one? Yeah okay.

Toni: Yeah.

Pam: All right. See if this is right okay? Things come to you, you feel like you have to say yes or no. Do you know what- Do you mostly say yes? Do you mostly say no? What's your dilemma there? I'm not quite sure I un-

Toni: I usually say yes.

Pam: Okay. That's what I was wondering. Okay.

Toni: I mostly say yes.

Pam: So you mostly say yes? Okay and that's when it feels like the waves are-

Toni: Right.

Pam: Okay. Things start feeling anxious. Somewhere there's this sense of- see if this is right; this may not be right- of needing to do something different? Like not always say yes or what's that point? I'm not sure I get that point that you're at ... you know?

Toni: Well let's say this. If you can get an image like a crossroads and I'm in the middle of it and "yes" is going this way.

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Pam: What you always done.

Toni: Yeah, but there are other options in life.

Pam: Okay.

Toni: There are potentially other options for me and so the choice seems to always be to just keep going forward-

Pam: Okay.

Toni: Even as I'm talking about this, if I may say so, I'm starting to see that I'm actually not idling.

Pam: Yeah? You're moving forward.

Toni: Yeah.

Pam: Yeah. Just sort of moving forward, moving forward, moving That's a very- I always say that part of you is really pretty strong. Pretty predominant. Other parts are beginning to wonder ... well be aware that there's something else you could do here, right? You're interesting in listening more to that or knowing about that so you can clarity about which direction to go? Would you say that's accurate?

Toni: Yeah I would say that's accurate.

Pam: You sure?

Toni: Yeah.

Pam: Okay.

Toni: This whole metaphor of being in a car and driving forward is a little distressing.

Pam: Is it? What's distressing about it?

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- Toni: It just feels so automatic. How I'm describing it to you feels so automatic, and I don't really want to be living my life on automatic like that, and I think maybe that's where some of the depression is coming from. I am on automatic.
- Pam: Okay. Yeah. What's that- Tell me what that feels like. What's bad about that? You said you don't want to live that way? What's it feel like to you to live on automatic?
- Toni: It feels like there's not a lot of choice that goes into that. It feels like there's not a lot of slowing down and really paying attention to what I want, what I need, what I dream about, all of that.
- Pam: Yeah so it feels sort of, see if this is right, this may not be right, so tell me if it's not right, constrained, constricted ... I don't know. I don't want to say tunnel vision but just... that. So not really more-
- Toni: Spacious.
- Pam: Spacious. Got it. Okay. All right. I think I'm getting a picture of what's been going on for you. Again just tell me if this is right or not. There's a part of you that just keeps saying "Yes, yes, yes, yes" right? You're noticing some other parts of you that feel not so comfortable with that any longer that it really just was automatic but also noticing that when you do that there's some part that feels overwhelmed and you notice some anxiety coming up, right? You've also been noticing some other place in you where there's some depression and some concern about getting stuck there.
- Toni: Mm-hmm (affirmative)
- Pam: And also other parts that have an awareness that there's other choices that you could be making, and I'm sort of adding this. Tell me if this feels right. Maybe even feeling cheated that you're always moving forward and never creating more spaciousness. Is that last part right or not?
- Toni: You know I used to feel cheated.
- Pam: Okay.

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Toni: I've been making more effort. I can just hear that voice in my mind: "Wait a minute. What about this and what about that?"

Pam: Right.

Toni: I have been making some good choices for myself so it's not totally like that.

Pam: Okay.

Toni: There is the driver. The driver in the car is still the stronger.

Pam: Okay so yeah so that wasn't accurate any longer but you really do. You've named these particular parts: the driver, the one that feels overwhelmed by the anxiety, some depression, and even a stuck feeling.

Toni: Definitely.

Pam: What I believe and the way that I work is that we believe that these are all different aspects of our personality. All different parts of us that have competing interests inside of us. For most people those parts just react. Something will be offered to you and the driver will react and you'll be doing it.

Toni: Exactly.

Pam: The way that I work is to help you develop a relationship with all those different aspects of your personality so you can understand them better, know how they operate in your system so that you then can get into a place where you can respond, make choices, be more ... just have more choice about what you do rather than just having these parts react all the time. Okay. Does that sound like something you'd like to do? Sound interesting to you?

Toni: I really like that word "choice" because that's what I feel like I don't have.

Pam: Right, exactly.

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- Toni: It's a little confusing that I can have a relationship but I'm available to know more about that.
- Pam: Okay. Great. We'll go along and if you have any questions let me know. Otherwise the best way to start with this is for you- Those parts that I named, those different competing interests in you- Which one of those are you most curious? Which one would you like to know better or develop a relationship with first?
- Okay so do you want to de-role first? Since you did that little ...
- Toni: I actually don't feel like I got- I started thinking that I was going to be in a role but very quickly that wasn't a role anymore so I don't need to de-role.
- Pam: Okay.
- Toni: I mean I wish I could de-role! I wish I didn't have that dilemma.
- Pam: Right. I hear you.
- Toni: Thank you for the offer.
- Pam: Yeah you're welcome. Let's just start by first: what was that like for you? How was that?
- Toni: I noticed a little a part. We're in front of a camera. This is going to be shown to the masses so I felt a little uncomfortable. I had a part that felt a little uncomfortable, but you're so easy and warm-
- Pam: Thanks.
- Toni: And I love you, and you're my friend, so that softened pretty quickly.
- Pam: Okay.
- Toni: This was good. The inquiry was good because I felt like I got some real insight into the

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story that I've had about where I am in my life right now is not as accurate so that was great.

Pam: Okay. It felt like ... I don't know. I can imagine as you're a client you were beginning to feel engaged. You were beginning to feel a little safety, a little openness. Yeah? No?

Toni: Yeah.

Pam: Okay.

Toni: What I really liked is how ... you did a couple of things. One is you kept saying "I want to get this" and so you were reflecting back to me and also using your hand which is a great thing because it just illustrates that there's a dilemma.

Pam: Right.

Toni: Also saying something like "I'm going to make a suggestion and this might be right and it might not be" which gave me all kinds of permission to say "That's not exactly right. This is more-"

Pam: Right.

Toni: So I really liked that a lot.

Pam: Okay good. For you all I just want you to know that what was happening for me was I- Even though Toni and I know each other I didn't know anything about this dilemma so it really was all new for me. I was trying to get- I was curious about what was happening for Toni and just asking as many questions as I needed to ask and fill in as many blanks as I could so that I could get some clarity about what the different parts of her were.

Sometimes when I was confused and didn't really know I would say "Is this right or is this not right?" Again I'm focused on her. I know that I don't need to be the expert, that she ... if I can ask the right questions, if I can just stay engaged enough, I will get the information that I need to get and if I'm off base she'll correct me. If I drift off a little bit, she'll bring me back. We got all the way to her picking a part that she might

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like to work with or get to know better which we'll talk about in the next module where you go from here.

I thought this was a really nice example of getting started. The other thing you heard in there was my brief little what I call elevator talk about what we do in this model. I don't go into a lot of detail but I do help clients know that it's an internal focus, that they're going to get know their parts. They may not totally get it but I'm starting to introduce it and I'll help bring clarity as we move along in the process.

I just want to say thank you a lot to you. I really appreciate it. I know it's scary. It's scary to open up and be revealing so I really appreciate it. Thank you.

Toni: Thanks. I want to say one other thing that was really helpful.

Pam: Okay.

Toni: Which I know is something that we teach in this model all the time but it's really helpful not to have you analyze or try to make connections for me.

Pam: Yeah right.

Toni: That is something I really appreciate, and not lead me somewhere.

Pam: Right.

Toni: You were talking about that. It's staying curious, staying curious, staying curious about my experience and not wanting to take me somewhere where you think that I should go.

Pam: Right.

Toni: That is really helpful, a really helpful beginning.

Pam: Good.

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Toni: Yeah. Thanks.

Pam: Thanks for naming that. I think that's really important.

Toni: Great. I'll pay your secretary on the way out.

Pam: No. Pay me!