

PSY SESSION 3 TRANSCRIPT

Recording starts

E: What kind of things you've got; I see here you've got quite clear categories?

16FS: Well, it was just the way I thought about it. I was putting them into rooms I'd had them in, that's the way I did it, and that's why I wasn't able to place those because I didn't have them.

E: You don't put them in any of those rooms?

16FS: No, any of those rooms, they're just spare ones. I mean that would go in the shed and that would go in a bedroom, so I thought I better leave them as spares.

E: You could leave them as spares like that, or you could even put 'shed' if you wanted to, only if you want to though.

16FS: Yes, I could put those two, but that would have gone in a bedroom, so I didn't know whether to do too many categories for you.

E: It's completely up to you.

17MS: I haven't done it by room, I've done more or less on the function of the things, and some will be in the bedroom and some will be in the kitchen. I suppose we're all looking at it differently.

E: What kinds of things have you got, what are your groups called?

17MS: I would say first of all 'essential': heating, alarm clock, electric lamps, electric fan heater, lights, extractor fans, that's essential, if you know what I mean. Then for 'kitchen cleaning items': clothes and dishes, pressure washer, tumble dryer, washing machine, dishwasher, that sort of thing. Then the 'leisure' ones: mobile phone, camera, stereo system, radio, laptop, internet router, computer, television, DVD players.

Then for 'washing and heating': bath, shower, boiler, central heating sort of thing. Then 'personal cleaning or clothing or whatever': hair curlers, electric razor, hairdryer and that sort of thing. Then 'power for food and drink': blender, coffee machine, kettle, toaster, steamer, cooking hobs, oven, microwave, freezer, fridge, that sort of thing.

E: Did you do something similar?

18MS: Yes, some of that, but I just got confused regarding differentiation.

E: There are so many different ways you can do it.

17MS: We can do it in so many different ways, and some could probably belong to two, couldn't they?

16FS: Yes, that's right, that's why I thought I'd better keep it simple.

18MS: I had to choose between utensils and appliances.

E: Yes, that's a good distinction, so what did you call them?

18MS: Well, I have 'leisure and entertainment': internet, router, DVD player, printer, radio, computer, stereo, laptop, television, digital satellite cable box, and electric drill.

E: So very similar to yours then.

18MS: Very similar to 17's, yes.

17MS: Yes, there's a similarity in that one. You seem to have managed to get fewer groups than me.

18MS: Less groups on its own, because there are things I don't possess.

E: That's fine. You don't know much about those. Lots of people do that as well. What are the other ones you've got there?

18MS: I've got 'cooking appliances and food storage': kettle, toaster, cooking hobs, fridge, blender, microwave, steam cooker, boiler, and vacuum cleaner. I tried to keep all the cooking appliances together in one group actually.

E: Because the function is similar?

18MS: Yes. This one is 'bathroom utensils': shower, electric razor, electric toothbrush, central heating, mobile phone charger, extractor fan, electric fan heater, lights, lamps.

E: You've excluded those ones; you guys didn't exclude anything? No. You'd say that a lot of them you have and some of them you don't?

17MS: Some of them you don't, obviously. I mean if you had much younger people here, there would probably be things like internet router, all that sort of thing. They'd be having stereo systems and so on, but naturally older people don't necessarily have all the things.

18MS: Some of these things which I don't have actually I don't really need.

E: They're not essential?

18MS: They're not essential.

17MS: I think older people will tend to not be relying on so much, because younger people have been brought up on things, whereas we've lived without a lot of the things.

E: So they might consider them essential whereas you don't?

18MS: Yes.

16FS: Yes.

17MS: Yes. I mean I do have digital television, other than Freeview.

18MS: I do all my washing by hand in the sink, I enjoy doing it rather than having a washing machine, just sitting watching the thing go round and round. I prefer it that way. I do all my own dishes as well, I don't need a dishwasher.

E: Because that might be something that someone might consider an essential. If you're thinking about these ones, which ones you'd consider you definitely need and things you don't, so that's quite interesting. Would you consider that essential?

16FS: No, I wouldn't consider a dishwasher essential.

17MS: Not a dishwasher, no, I wouldn't say that was essential.

E: But a washing machine?

16FS: Yes.

17MS: I'm very happy with washing machine, because I can put the things in the machine and then watch my television for the evening and sort it out after.

18MS: I think of a fridge as essential to me, a cooker.

17MS: Well now, we think it's essential and yet in my childhood we didn't have them. Our generation didn't have them, but now we look on it as essential.

18MS: I used to cook trout on a stick over a fire, over trees, and sometimes I'd set fire to the whole place.

E: Talking about things that are essential, is there anything here you just couldn't live without about?

17MS: I have to confess that television, for example, I couldn't live without that, because living on your own in the evening it's company.

FS: I couldn't live without the television.

18MS: Yes.

FS: You could live without an awful lot of this really if you needed to.

E: If you couldn't pay your electricity pay, gas as well, if something went suddenly up, which one of these do you think you could do without?

17MS: Printer because I haven't got one.

18MS: I've got a printer but I could do without it.

FS: I could do without a pressure washer and an electric drill because I don't possess them anyway. I suspect one of the ones you'd get rid of first, even though I like to have it for the towels, is the tumble dryer, because that would be very expensive to run. Normally as long as possible I have it on the line, but obviously sometimes that's just not.

17MS: The tumble dryer I don't find necessary. I've got a washing machine and although when advertised, they said you'd have to go for a dryer, I find that if I dry the clothes after I bring them out, then they come out quite well from the washing machine, pretty near dry, except you've obviously got to dry them. I don't feel the need for a tumble dryer really.

FS: It is an expensive item but I do my washing for my dad at the moment. There's a communal one in the flats where I live and I use that at the moment for that.

17MS: There's a communal one where I live but I never use it.

FS: I do now for that because to get it over to him quickly, because I've got to change him quite a lot.

17MS: I hang my clothes on a horse in front of the radiator.

E: In the house?

17MS: They go on a horse, and then you put them in the linen cupboard after so they dry fully.

E: How do you dry your clothes?

18MS: I hang my trousers usually on a wall outside my front door. Sometimes the wind catches them and blows them down the drive. I'm just hoping that no-one is walking along at the time.

17MS: We've got those clothes line things that swirl around outside but I never use it because I've seen what a lot of people haven't seen, cats and dogs jumping up on towels and that sort of thing, so I don't really make use of it. I don't use the community room dryer either, I feel I can manage without that. They have discs they can put it, they don't pay for that apparently, but I find there's no need for that.

FS: We pay for ours. I think it must work differently with different schemes. We pay for ours, but I don't think it's a facility that will be there much longer, because there used to be two dryers and now there's only one. So as that one broke they didn't replace it, so we're concerned that that will be a problem in the future.

17MS: Years ago before my time, I've been there 19 years but before my time, in the community room, they used to have a washing machine, but for some reason or other, although there was only access for residents, the washing machine got stolen, so they didn't replace it. The dryer didn't. A lot of people in those days didn't have individual washing machines, nowadays more people have got individual washing machines but the first lot of tenants didn't have. I don't really feel the need for..

E: So in your communal flats, everybody has their own washing machine, most people?

17MS: Most people nowadays do. When I first moved in I didn't have, I used to go to the laundrette until I got a washing machine. I think you have to have a washing machine.

18MS: I just won't entertain a washing machine. As I say, I wash my shirt in about two or three minutes.

E: The rinsing is hard?

18MS: Sometimes it can be hard, but the collar is the main thing.

17MS: Well, the collars will get better, I can believe that. I find the collars don't always come out of the washing machine perfectly, so you've got a point there.

18MS: Sometimes I have to use a brush, and sometimes using the iron, the heat to smooth them out. I don't use the iron very often to save costs basically. My washing, I

suppose it can be cost effective, I don't have to pay for the energy consumed by the washing machine, or a dryer, anything else. I dry the shirts and socks on top of a radiator when the radiator is on, so they dry very quickly that way, although I've been told that's the wrong thing to do.

17MS: I don't actually put them on the radiator; I've got the horse which I can put in front.

18: I put mine on top of the radiator.
FS: I've been known to do that.

17MS: You're not supposed to do it.

FS: But if I'm desperate to get something dry to take over to dad I have done it before.

17MS: If you've got to do for two, then you need it more urgently than I do, because I'm on my own. I did my duvet cover, pillow slips and things like that.

FS: If I was by myself, I'd be more likely to hand wash because of the amount of water and electric it uses from the machine, but at the moment because of dad's condition I'm doing his bedding every day anyway. At the moment I can't really consider that as an option for me, but if it was just me there, I would do that, definitely.

17MS: My electric bills are quite low. I pay by direct debit now; I pay £16 or £18 a month, so I can't really say it's high consumption. I don't know about gas yet, that's what's bothering me. I'm with EDF and they've sent me a bill in for the electric, but the central heating for me was from 8th November and they haven't sent a bill in for that, so I have no idea whether that's heavy or low. It should be low because I'm only using the one radiator. Of course the water is heated, you have the water.

E: You just use the one radiator?

17MS: Yes, because I've got my lounge and my bedroom doors open directly on to the hall, and, therefore, I feel it's not necessary. I wouldn't use the bedroom one anyway because I couldn't sleep with heating on in the bedroom.

FS: I don't use the bedroom one.

17MS: It's mainly for the lounge, the radiator benefits the lounge. It is adjacent to the bedroom but it's closer to the lounge. I only put it on, we've got 5 things (*settings*) but I only have mine on 3, so that's helping to economise.

E: Do you leave it on all the time or do you switch it on when you need it; how do you use your heating?

17MS: At this time it's on most of the time. I leave it on because it's set low and because when you come in it's nice and warm. I had a delivery yesterday, I have Wiltshire Farm Foods delivered, the lady came in and said, 'oh it's lovely and warm in this flat.' She didn't realise I was only set on 3. I don't have a radiator in the kitchen, I did originally but they removed those when they modernised the kitchens.

E: Did you use them then?

17MS: No, I never used the radiator in the kitchen, because it's on the east side facing the morning sun, nice and warm in the kitchen.

E: How do you use your heating, do you have it on or off?

FS: It depends how cold it is. If it goes under 15° then I put on to the auto programme, but I very rarely have it on at night, I'll switch it on in the morning. But if I'm going out, if it's over 15° I'll switch it off and if it's gone under 15° I'll leave it as it is. You see I'm not sure which way to do it, I'm not sure which the best way is, and nobody seems able to really quantify that for me. Some people say you're better off to keep it on a low temperature and leave it at that, and other people say if you're not going to be there half the time, you're better off with the automatic.

17MS: When they came and installed it, they switched it to automatic, but then it broke down and I got the engineer in and he said, 'if it goes off, just press this button', but I can't seem to reset it on automatic now, so that's why I'm more or less manual. He explained how to do it on auto, and I grasped it at the beginning, but then when it broke down, just before Christmas, the engineer came in and said, 'press that if it cuts out', and it doesn't seem to have come back on to automatic.

18MS: My situation, my flat was renovated a couple of years ago now, they took away a long heater which was in the living room next to the wall, it was very warm, when it was cold it heated up the flat really well. They took that away, they put two small heaters underneath the front windows, and my flat is always cold, even if I have it on 3 and 4 it's still very cold. I usually have the heating on when I get up in the morning until I go to bed late at night.

17MS: Are you a ground floor flat or first floor?

18MS: First floor.

17MS: I'm first floor but the lady below me has all her heating on full blast and heat rises, so I'm getting the benefit of that as well.

18MS: That's probably happening with mine because there's no-one down below. I don't know if the guy is still alive or dead because he's always in and out of hospital. It seems to me to be stupid to put the radiators underneath the windows because the heat will go through.

FS: They insist on doing that, because I asked them.

17MS: Did DI Jones install the central heating?

18MS: I can't remember.

17MS: Because on the literature I had they said, by the window, but then they didn't do it by the window, they put the new radiators where the old radiators were, which I'm glad of. Our windows are such that there's a window there, there's a bit of a division there, and they couldn't put the radiators by the windows even if they wanted to.

FS: I think what they did from what I saw, because I've got a maisonette and I face north, and also it's a back-to-back house. So you can imagine I've got a lot of glass in my front room, I've got patio doors and glass sides, it's like living in a greenhouse, so fuel wise it's bad. I think what they did, because they asked me where I wanted them and I told them, and then when I came back in they weren't there at all. He said to me, that was the easiest way to do it. So they basically put them which was the easiest way for them to get the gas central heating in and that was the end of the story.

18MS: I shudder to think what my bill will be like next time round.

17: that's what's fascinating me about the gas. It was set to automatic

FS: That's why the company got in touch with me because my electric bills, I used to be electric night storage before, and my electric bills used to be the best part of £500 in winter.

17MS: I don't know how I'm so lucky with my electric, I have my television on in the evening and I'm using the washing machine, although I only use the washing machine once a week of course. I'm lucky that my electric bills don't seem to be high, it's my gas bill I'm curious about.

18MS: My gas and electric has increased about 300% at least over the last couple of years.

FS: Yes, it's getting bad.

17MS: Of course when you pay by direct debit monthly, you don't notice it. Probably if you had it all at once in one big bill, it would be horrifying.

18MS: Even the water bill, which used to be relatively cheap, has gone up as well.

17MS: I'm dreading the water bill because when you turn the taps on now, the hot water doesn't come out straight away so you're using one bit of water before.

FS: that is a problem yeah. I try to keep that for the garden in the summer.

18MS: What I've learnt to do now is when I make a cup of tea just before I'm due to go to bed, I put the hot water from the kettle after I've made the tea into the hot water bottle.

FS: that's right yeah

17MS: You seem to be well organised.

18MS: Well, you've got to be in this materialistic world.

FS: I think we're all going to have to be a lot more organised now with the way this is going.

E: With some of the things here, some of the things we've talked about, like doing your washing and all sorts of things, are there some things you have to do them when you need to do them, or are there things you think could be delayed, for example I don't know if any of you are on Economy 7?

FS: I used to be, so I can answer some of that.

E: Even if you're not, are there things you could, in theory, delay doing, or do they need doing straight away?

17MS: I suppose you could put more in the washing machine. I try and minimise the number of shirts that go in, because things like the collars you need to get them done properly, but perhaps one could instead of putting two shirts in put in four shirts, that sort of thing, experiment a bit with it.

FS: Most of what I do goes around dad really and the times I go and see to dad, so basically I couldn't alter mine at the moment an awful lot.

E: Many of the things you do around the home, do you plan to do it or are they often things you do without thinking?

17MS: I think one has got into a routine, perhaps not consciously thinking of it. Cooking on economy, for example, the microwave which is frowned upon by most people, the expert cooks, I tend to use the microwave more than the cooker, because I find I can get things hot, it takes much longer with a cooker and you're paying. That's one example. But all the experts say you should cook the stuff in the conventional ovens and so on.

18MS: I use the microwave quite a lot. I kind of regret not being able to cook sausages in the microwave, when you do try to cook sausages they make such a high pitched wailing sound, like a whistling sound. I once tried an egg in a microwave.

17MS: A lot of my microwave stuff is in the packets, they're delivered in sealed food items from Wiltshire Farm Foods so I use my microwave mainly for that. It's about 10 – 11 minutes in the microwave, whereas in an oven, you can use it either or, they say 45 minutes. I mean they give the option but I always use the microwave.

E: That's a big difference, 45 minutes in the oven and then 3 minutes in the microwave.

18MS: I find that I've got to organise things in the flat. It depends on how much energy I have, because my energy levels are very low because I think quite a lot, sometimes I think very deeply. I write metaphysical poetry. I need more energy to concentrate on my creative work.

E: How does that relate to what you do in the home, because if you've got less energy, are you not doing the things you would normally do?

18MS: Yes, I get frustrated. At least if I were doing something which I know I could do well rather than sit and vegetating all the time, thinking about the past because it tends to make me depressed at times. I think the main thing is for me to try and realise my dream, our dreams, rather than just totally give up.

17MS: I think years ago when our mother's and grandmother's generation, they had certain days for doing these different things didn't they, they had a routine. I don't think we work like that nowadays.

E: As and when.

17MS: Yes.

FS: When you can fit it in half the time.

Recording ends 28:30 minutes