In HSP 325 *Interviewing for Human Services*, we had four learning outcomes in relation to our final project. These learning outcomes were: #1 Identify the stages of an interview and appropriate communication skills associated with, #2 Demonstrate competence conducting an interview including clarifying expectations, dealing effectively with conflict, establishing rapport, maintaining appropriate behavior, and critically thinking for analysis, solving problems, making decisions, and predicting outcomes, #3 Adapt interviewing skills for diverse populations, and #4 Identify, describe, and assess the standards of confidentiality and ethical practice for interviewing.

When conducting an interview, there are five basic stages you must always move through. These stages are Introduction, Opening, Body, Closing, and Termination. In the Introduction, you use a greeting ritual—meeting client at the door and walking them in, shaking hands; etc.—build rapport, and assess the client’s comfort level with minor chit-chat. Next, in the Opening, the importance of confidentiality and informed consent are established and time constraints are mentioned before the actual interview takes place. During the Body, you learn more about the client and encourage self-help skills through active listening skills such as reflection, observation, summarizing and paraphrasing. You also may use rolling with resistance techniques whenever necessary. The Closing is the time to prepare the client for the end of the interview with a summary and a follow-up. Finally, the Termination is the ultimate finalization. You effectively end and dismiss the client so as not to disgruntle or make unsatisfied the said client. It also keeps you on track for time.

During my own interview, I conducted certain stages flawlessly and (felt) that others fell flat. Originally, I interviewed bible-thumper Brother Jed in Red Square. Unfortunately, I did not press record so the flawless rolling-with-resistance interview I conducted could neither be redone nor used as is. Immediately after, I interviewed one of Brother Jed’s assistants, Sister Pat. Though I managed to do every stage of the interview with her, I felt the content was lacking in comparison to the interview I had just done prior and the timing was well over the 6-minute restriction. Possibly because she was of the older female population, my stereotypical instincts to treat her gently kicked in and I chose not to dig deeper. The next day I interviewed Dylan. For those that were on campus during Brother Jed’s preaching, he was the boy with the “Worship Satan” sign. I spoke with him about the whys and whats of his purpose combating Brother Jed. My interview went very well with him, but it was my closing where I lost it. Possibly because he was part of my peer group, I was more relaxed and less professional during the session.

In the end, I felt very lukewarm about my interviews—I missed points in two and I have no evidence of another. That said, I decided to combine Sister Pat and Dylan into one 6-minute clip. There are times when I feel it’s awkward, but it is the strongest representation of my interviewing skills.