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## Oral History Interview with Dr. Judith Provost: Professor of Psychology & Graduate Counseling

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**Oral History Interview with Dr. Judith Provost  
Professor of Psychology & Graduate Counseling**

Interview Conducted by Wenxian Zhang  
Rollins College Archives  
(11/08/07)

WZ: Morning.

JP: Good morning, Wenxian.

WP: My name is Wenxian Zhang, Head of Archives and Special Collections. Today is Thursday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2007. With me is Dr. Judy Provost. She is going to participate in the Rollins Oral History project. Judy, tell me about your family background.

JP: My family background, okay. Um, I was the oldest of two and I grew up in a blue-collar community, a blue-collar family. My mother had an 8<sup>th</sup> grade education and my father had a high school education. And at a very early age I was interested in psychiatry, but the message I got in my community was, well you're a girl, you don't need college, you're just going to get married anyway. You have two choices or three: you could be a nurse, you could be an airline stewardess, or you could be a teacher. And of course none of those really appealed to me. Um, so I did, um, make my way to college, though that wasn't supported in my community, on full scholarship and went from there. And the community was a small industrial town in Connecticut. Not the pretty part of Connecticut, the factory part of Connecticut. So, is that kind of what you're looking for in terms of ...?

WZ: Yeah, yeah. I lived in Connecticut for several years. I still miss the change of the seasons.

JP: Yeah, uh huh.

WZ: So, where in Connecticut? Bristol?

JP: It's in the central valley, the industrial valley, near Waterbury and New Britain.

WZ: Okay.

JP: Yeah, it was known during World War II for making ball bearings. So there were ball bearing factories and clock factories and um, as I described it was a very blue-collar community. I felt very claustrophobic there as a child because I had a very curious mind and I just felt like I wouldn't be there long. As soon as I could get out of town, I was going to get out of town. So it's not the part of Connecticut probably you would miss.

WZ: So you were the first graduate of college in your family?

JP: Yes, I was.

WZ: At the University of Connecticut?

JP: The University of Connecticut, right. And, um, because I was interested in psychiatry and because there was no, um, role model or support, I decided I would go into nursing, so that I could end up being a psychiatric nurse, because I thought that was as close as I was going to get. So, I got a bachelor's in nursing with a plan of focusing on psychiatric nursing. And you know, I graduated first in my elementary class, just a small parochial school. I graduated first in my high school class and I graduated first in my university class. I loved being a student.

WZ: That's wonderful. I understand you wanted to become a nurse, but why a psychiatric nurse?

JP: Well, you know, from the time I was about twelve, I was fascinated with dreams and read Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, and I was very curious about how the mind works and then I came from a pretty dysfunctional family and I think I had a personal interest in trying to understand why people were the way they were. So, that was something that pulled me along.

WZ: So, after you graduated from UConn so did you practice or continue...?

JP: Well, okay, I got married right after graduation. My husband had one more year at University of Connecticut, so I worked that year in an intensive care unit near the university. And then we both were very anxious to be pioneers and go elsewhere and so we both applied for master's degrees at University of California Berkeley. We thought we wanted to see the rest of the United States and, at the last minute, we decided we couldn't afford to both go to school at the same time, so we decided he would go first and get his graduate degree and I worked during that time at the hospital in Berkeley. Of course, we were there during the whole free speech movement and all the radicalization during the mid-60s to the late-60s and I got very active in the foreign student group discussing the negatives of the Vietnam War and learning other citizens' of other countries perspectives on what we were doing in Southeast Asia. So, it was a very stimulating time to be in that environment, the Berkeley environment. So, he finished his degree, and then we moved back east to Washington D.C. for a while. And then we both missed California, and we moved back to California, and that's when I got a grant from NIMH, National Institute of Mental Health, to get a master's degree in mental health nursing, which is closer to what I do now, because it's going out into the communities and doing preventive work with individuals. So, part of what I was doing in that graduate degree was working in outreach programs with the Japanese community, the Chinese community, the Skid Row area of downtown Los Angeles trying to work in a grassroots way to help those communities develop programs, with the mental health center being a backup, for their own well-being. So, that was also another exciting time to be there. And then unfortunately we left California because my husband had a job offer in Florida. I was not wanting to leave because I had a lot of exciting things going on in California. Once we got here I got involved in some advocacy work with the schools because my kids were in school and I was appalled with some of the things in the early 70s in Florida schools. So, I got involved with that. And then I eventually found a job that I liked and once I got established I didn't miss California as much.

And then after a break of eight years from my master's degree I went back to get my doctorate at University of Florida. So, that's kind of a little bit of that journey to Florida.

WZ: Okay, so basically you made sacrifice to support your husband to finish his professional education and then you had your turn.

JP: Yeah, I didn't think of it as sacrifice. I think in good relationships it's a teamwork kind of thing and you take turns and you try to decide at a given moment in time who needs what and I don't think it's a healthy thing in a relationship to think in terms of sacrifice. I think we've supported each other consistently in the forty-four years we've been married.

WZ: That's wonderful. So, when you moved to Florida, so you first worked at Valencia Community College?

JP: That's right. At the open campus, which was the closest I could find to the mental health model that I had embraced in California because when I first came here, I thought, well I'll work at a mental health center. But, Florida didn't understand mental health centers, it was all medicalized within hospitals, and I found at the open campus they had gotten some federal funds to outreach to women who were called displaced homemakers. They had been in abusive relationships or their husbands had suddenly died and they had no education. This involves going out and working with some of the women farm workers and I did some programs for women in jail. And so when I realized what that program entailed, that I'd have a lot of flexibility in designing outreach programs and so on, I decided that was pretty exciting and I worked there for two years until Wanda Russell, who at that time was directing, I think she might have been acting Dean of Students, recruited me to come to Rollins. So those were two good years. I developed a whole assertiveness training model to work with women in groups. Later we started doing more services for men as well. Developed a career counseling program for mature adults, and I got Valencia trained in the MBTI, the Myers-Briggs type indicator which was just coming from being a research instrument to being a practitioners' instrument, so we were the first probably in Florida other than the University of Florida where the typology lab was using the MBTI.

WZ: Okay, so this is the middle of the 1970s.

JP: Right, yes. You're doing good tracking that.

WZ: So I understand you come to Rollins in 1976?

JP: That's right.

WZ: Okay. So what's your first impression of the school?

JP: Um, well of course it's absolutely beautiful, but what I got excited about when I interviewed, I interviewed then with the Director of Financial Aid, it was Bill Loving, with the Dean of Student Affairs who was Ron Pease, and with the College Chaplain. With everyone this was the opportunity to do work as a team and the opportunity to have a lot of creative

leeway in terms of initiatives, because what I found out was the person I would be replacing, had pretty much stayed in her office. If somebody was really in bad shape that student would be referred to the office, a more of a medical model. And the model that I had been trained in was much more of a well-being, preventive outreach program and that seemed like what the people I interviewed with were interested in. So, I was excited. And I was also impressed that the then president, Critchfield, wanted to meet me, even though at that point, the first year was a part-time position and I thought well, this is a place that cares about all levels of its operation if the president of the college is interested in interviewing a part-time person. So, I've actually known four different presidents.

WZ: Um, so okay, you said you've known four different presidents: Critchfield, Seymour, Rita, and then Lewis. Ok, then give me the impression of ...

JP: (Laughs) Oh dear. This is like when you watch these TV shows where the person who's been a presidential adviser is asked you, yeah Allen Greenspan was the most recent person they asked that. Well, um, I didn't get to know Jack Critchfield well, I knew his wife Nancy a little bit better, but he seemed to be Mr. Rollins at the time in terms of conveying a kind of style of the college at that time. And of course the college has changed a lot since then, I think it's moved away from a little bit of the clubby, Greek kind of image to a much more rigorous place. Thad, um, Thad was a very special president in that he put a huge amount of energy into community building. And my favorite memory of Thad, and my family's favorite memory of Thad, is his designing these family weekends at the Circle F dude ranch. I don't know if you've heard anything about that. It's about an hour away from here, there are primitive cabins, we would do campfires and tell stories and horseback ride and square dance and it was all family-focused because the faculty was smaller then, the college could afford to pay for all the families to go over there. And my kids were in elementary school and they remember, to this day, these wonderful memories of Thad telling stories or students playing their guitar and the interactions on all levels with students, faculty, and whatever. We did that for, I guess, four or five years, and those were special memories. It's been a very good environment for me to raise my children, in terms of exposing them to wonderful people and a stimulating culture. Back to presidents, okay, so Rita, um, when Rita came I was immediately struck by the contrast between her and Thad, in that Thad was very interested in community building internally, Rita was interested in image building, fundraising, an external focus. And at first I was worried about that because since I was student-focused, I was wondering how that was going to affect the emphasis on quality for our students. But over time, I became very impressed with her ability to fundraise, certainly, and reach out to other parts of the community, or nationally. So, I think the leadership pendulum swings in that we go from a community focus, an internal community focus to an external community focus, and now with Lewis, we're sort of moving back into the internal because it seems that Lewis' interests are more with the student body and hanging out on campus and being a model for how faculty can interact with students and so on. So, it's kind of interesting and certainly I've read a lot about organizational culture and organizational climate as part of my field, to see how when you change your CEO how it begins to impact the culture and things do move back and forth, just like we see in our country politically, how the presidential pendulum swings there.

WZ: Okay so besides presidents what other people that you remember very well when you first started Rollins? Faculty or other administrators?

JP: Well, certainly I worked very closely with Wanda Russell for the first two years. We shared some office space and developed some career counseling programs because I had done a lot of career counseling when I was at Valencia, um, and she was a really good colleague and a hard worker. Bill Loving who was Financial Aid director at the time had a real love for student services and mentoring students, but just a serendipitous aside, he taught me a lot about photography because he collected photography, and whenever he would acquire an important piece of photography he'd take me into his office like it was buried treasure and show me this particular photograph and teach me about why it was valuable. I really appreciated that about him. And Ron Pease was a traditional Student Affairs Dean at the time and he was only there for a short time, but he certainly set the tone for student services. And then some of the early faculty I met that have continued to be really valuable colleagues, people like Hoyt Edge and Barbara Carson and a little bit later Carol Lauer are people that have stayed really important to me. And in the um, I guess it was in the early 80s, they developed what they call the community of learners which the equivalent now is kind of the RCC program. At that time Barbara Carson was the first master learner, she may have shared something about that. And it was a new role for faculty members to be in a group that was student-centered where the teacher isn't teacher-centered, I volunteered to be the group process consultant to her and then I ended up doing that for the next three or four years for whomever was the master learner for the community of learners. It was really a fun way for me to be involved in the educational process and also to share my knowledge and I developed some close friendships out of those consultations. In fact, today is Thursday morning; we've continued, Barbara and Carol Lauer, who was also a master learner, to have breakfast as part of our consultation on Thursday mornings. I guess it was about twenty-five years ago and we're still meeting for breakfast (laughs). So, I met with them this morning.

WZ: That's very nice. So what's your impression of the student body at that time, I assume that it was smaller at the time?

JP: Right, well it wasn't very diverse. It was primarily white upperclass. I did some research in the early years in terms of personality profiles and interests and extracurricular activities and so on, and it was a very sports-oriented, social, very focused on Greek activities or other kinds of social activities. And then there was a small cohort that was very academically driven, and there was a large percentage of the student body that was interested in academics but just as much or more interested in sports and the social. But, wonderful people, and I know in the early days when I was directing the counseling center, my colleagues in the field that worked in mental health agencies and so on would look at me and go, oh that's a piece of cake, these are young people who have it all together and are well-off, blah blah blah, we're in this beautiful environment. But I found that when you look at human beings they're still struggling with the same issues, whether it's depression or struggling with a parent's divorce and feeling caught in the middle, or whatever else. So I found that the work was just as challenging, even though on the surface our students looked very put together like they have it made. They had the same struggles, I think, that any young people would have anywhere.

WZ: So when you first started as a part-time counselor, then a couple years later you become director of the program?

JP: The next year, yeah. I had gone from a full-time position at Valencia to this half-time position and at first I was ambivalent about taking it because I wanted to work full-time. But, in the first year I realized that if you really do the kind of outreach that my model of mental health calls for, all of a sudden you get very, very busy. And within six months it became clear there was a real need for more than one part-time person, because I was going into the sororities and talking about eating disorders, and I was talking about relationships and communication and assertiveness, and all of those things, and the response was incredible. So I went to the dean and said, look this is the volume [of counseling] and I think we really need this to be a full-time job. And there was no question in their minds. And it was also a time when the attrition rate was fairly high and I argued that if you provide enough support services and help students who are confused and struggle with the things that are going on, kind of eliminate the static, that they might function better. So, that was what happened. And then within a few years of that I showed them data because I kept pretty good records and convinced them they needed a second counselor.

WZ: So when you first started the position, just a part-time position, I don't know when Rollins began to offer the counseling service.

JP: My impression was that the person I replaced might have been there part-time in the health center, which was the old DuBois Center, I think that was the first person; my impression was she would have been there about eleven years. That's my guess that would put her somewhere in the 60s. Probably my guess is that the Dean at that time, Ron Pease, was there during some of the student unrest that wasn't a big deal at Rollins, but it was elsewhere, and in that time was the time they decided they should have a therapist counselor. Probably to kind of help with that. Yeah.

WZ: So, with your leadership the center grew from a part-time position to two-person operations?

JP: Yeah, and later we were two and a half counselors. I think there might be three counselors now. Of course the student body is much larger now than it was then.

WZ: So you were also the director of the counseling center, right?

JP: Yes. You know when I was hired I was in the old DuBois Center which was a health center. It had kind of a hospital smell with some hospital beds with a physician, a full-time post then. And it was definitely a medical model. First of all it wasn't right on campus and you didn't go there unless you were desperate for some counseling. And within a year I had convinced them that my office should be on campus. So over the period of the years I worked there the office moved from place to place. I was in Carnegie with Student Services for a while. I was upstairs for a while next to Financial Aid. I was downstairs with Wanda in a combined career and personal counseling office, and then I was in a residence hall. So, I

moved around, but mainly the importance of being central, sending a message that you don't have to be desperate in order to benefit from talking to a counselor.

WZ: So that time the counseling center was part of the health center?

JP: Yeah, initially. Yep. And then later on when we moved into Elizabeth Hall and we were having problems with having a holistic health center program and they had done a search to try and find a physician. They couldn't find a physician they could afford that subscribed to the kind of model that we thought was appropriate on this campus. So I ended up agreeing, since I had a medical background as a nurse, to coordinating a combined health and counseling center and hiring some physicians part-time and a nurse practitioner who would take care of the day-to-day operations and try to integrate the services. Because obviously if somebody is having sleep problems there could be a medical piece of that and there's also a psychological piece. If somebody's got an eating disorder there's a medical piece and a psychological piece, so there were a lot of ways we could work together. And that worked well for a few years. Then it got to be too much of a burden for me to manage both, and we negotiated so that there was another person directing the medical piece. And eventually after I left they moved the mental health services to another location in another residence hall, I think because both mental health and medical health needed more space. So it's kind of interesting to see how that's worked.

WZ: So when did you start to teach courses at Rollins?

JP: Oh, yeah. I think it was in the mid to late 80s.

WZ: Uh huh, so what made you decide to migrate into a teaching career?

JP: Oh, well actually to answer that question another way, before I started teaching in the graduate program, which was somewhere in the mid to late 80s, I had designed some career credit courses for undergraduates because again, in collaboration with Wanda Russell, we realized we needed to target the freshman and sophomores in the liberal arts college and get them thinking about who they were, what their values were, and so on. So, I designed that course and it was offered for several years and then I designed, um, I think it was a half-course for the R.A.s, the resident aides, in helping skills and communication that the R.A.s were required to take for a period of years. So those were my first ventures into teaching and at that point I was a very self-conscious teacher and not very comfortable with being in that role because it was a very different role, from being a counselor/therapist. I've changed my mind about that since then. And then the graduate program needed an adjunct person, and they asked me if I was interested in teaching a course. And I thought, well yeah, you know there were several courses I would be particularly interested in teaching. So I started teaching one course a term and after a few years I realized the day of the week I got up feeling the most excited was the day that I was going to teach in the evening. So I thought hmm maybe after nineteen years doing this, directing a counseling center, I'm ready to share with others who are learning some of the things I experienced. But, I think I'm the kind of person who felt like I couldn't teach from a textbook. I needed a lot of life experience in order to feel authentic when



I would work with students. So, I wasn't ready to teach full-time before I had a certain amount of experience behind me.

WZ: So you basically just uncovered that you had this passion for teaching and learning. Tell me about some of your different teaching approaches.

JP: Yeah, yeah. Well, I am very student centered and facilitative, so that's where I discovered that counseling and teaching are not too different, the way I do it, which is sort of to midwife the individual to discover their own abilities and strengths empower them to feel like they're active learners and that they have the ability to master things. So most of the teaching I do is very group-centered or student-centered with a lot of experiential and discussion and not a lot of lecture, I'm not really comfortable standing up and doing long lectures, it feels pretty wooden to me. And if I since that the energy is flagging in the group then I'll stop and maybe get them in small groups and talk about a concept or idea, or something of that sort to kind of keep the energy level going. And so, I guess two courses that stick out on my mind that I really get a lot of joy out of teaching are, first of all, the practicum class, which is a very small class because of the CACREP standard, it's not supposed to be larger than six. Students that are getting out in the field for the first time after two years of coursework, they are very anxious about their skills and being able to deal with clients' problems. And yet, they really know a lot, but they don't realize how much they know, so the challenge is helping them key into what they have learned and develop their skills. And it's done through both a student-centered group, where I get them learning from each other as opposed to my doing a lot of teaching, and then doing one-on-one individual weekly supervisions. These are really facilitative meetings where, again, we're trying to foster their development. So, that's very exciting. And then the other course, that's been the hardest course I've ever had to teach, is a multicultural counseling course. And Katherine Norsworthy paved the way by creating a wonderful design, it's very interactive. It is an immersion, it's very intense. Students have to do more reading than in any other classes, and it's very painful reading, especially for young white students. So, the challenge there is, again, in a group-centered way, trying to help them live with the discomfort of reading about oppression and very painful things that they weren't aware of before, and helping them not shut down because sometimes when material gets too intense, I think especially young students, have like a circuit breaker and it goes off and then they're not learning anymore, they're shut down. So, designing experiential activities, bringing in guests, all the different kinds of things, they do journaling, and I read the journals and try to support their discomfort or support their insights on a weekly basis. It's very active and very, very time-consuming. I'm teaching that this term. It's the only course I'm teaching as I'm phasing out. And I'm grateful that I only have that one course because the prep each week and the reading of their papers is very time-consuming. But, it's incredibly rewarding.

WZ: Ok, so besides those two courses you just mentioned, what other courses have you taught or developed or have enjoyed or was challenging?

JP: Well, you know one of my particular interests is in group counseling, so traditionally I've taught both the first group counseling class that they take the first semester in graduate school, and then the advanced group class where they're taking more of an active role and running group. And I'm very proud of what I've done with the advanced class because when I first

started teaching it there was a model that was a so-so model that involved working with of some vignettes. But, what I realized was that a lot of our younger students lacked assertiveness skills across the board and that not only this was a personal issue for them, but then when they got out into mental health agencies and they had to advocate for their clients or speak up, that they didn't have the assertiveness skills to do that. So I went back, it was kind of like a full circle, to the material I had designed back at Valencia for assertiveness groups and said let's do an assertiveness group for the students within the advanced group class. And I had the model all lined up and each student get a chance to run the group for a week. So not only are they learning how to run a group, but they're actually learning assertiveness skills at the same time, so it's like doing two things at the same time. And that worked out incredibly well and I can see a difference in students who before would have kind of, younger students, would have taken a more passive role, in terms of their learning or their field work, now having a little bit more skill to go out and speak up for themselves and so on. So that's been very exciting. So the two group classes, theories of counseling where it's an intensive survey of everything from early Freudian theory and Jungian theory all the way through the theories du jour, some of the things like solution-focus therapy. And the way I taught it, I would present the theory, but then I would try to do a demonstration myself or bring in some video material and get them practicing with that. And any of the skills classes, the basic counseling skills class since that is my area of interest, that particular area. And I've taught career counseling and that was fun to do, but I didn't teach it as much because it was at the same time as the advanced group class and I'd prefer to teach the advanced group class. And then of course the clinical course, the practicum or internship. So those are the main courses that I've focused on.

WZ: That's a lot of courses.

JP: Well, some people have taught a wider array of courses, but I've found some things that I really love, that I really want to focus on.

WZ: So out of those courses do you remember some of the students that...give me some examples.

JP: Yeah, uh huh. And in fact at the retirement party the department gave for me, there were a lot of the graduates that were there from way back and it really blew me away because, you know, I know what my feelings are, but I don't, you don't always have the feedback. So, one of the people that helped put the party on was Francesca Lampugnani who was born in Italy and then married a Floridian and she was in one of the first internship groups I did back in the 90s, and is just this wonderfully vital person and we just connected, and then I enjoyed her husband as well, and we had them over to the house a few times and kind of mentored them. So, she is a very special person. Another graduate who had been a very successful realtor in town and then had the guts to get rid of her real estate company in mid-life, sell it, go back to school, became a very successful therapist, a couples relationship therapist and also a sex therapist in town and we got to be good friends and I enjoyed her and her husband too. Now they've moved to Colorado, we went up and visited them in Colorado this past year. But, there are just a lot of very special people that have come out of the program and now sometimes I invite some of them back when I teach multicultural. For instance, we did gender issues a few weeks ago so I invited back some of the men who graduated from the program who have

wonderful stories to tell and are great role models for the beginning students. Or when we're looking at race and ethnicity, I'll invite some of our graduates, in fact our own Nadine Clark who's now over in the counseling center, is always a big help when I'm doing race and ethnicity.

WZ: Did you work with Barbara on a study of the best professors?

JP: Oh yeah, that was research project we did. That was a lot of fun, the CASE program. The interesting thing about that article that we wrote for the *Journal of Psychological Type* which is a refereed journal, was that the editor when he was reminiscing on twenty five years of the *Journal of Psychological Type* in an article said that there was only one occasion in his twenty five years as editor that there was a manuscript that he didn't have to touch at all or revise, and it was our manuscript. And I was just blown away when he said that in his article, I was like wow. That was really fun because the way that came about was Barbara had gotten the CASE Award and I was very curious about what that entailed and then she showed me the collection of teaching statements that Peter Beidler from Lehigh had put together in a little bound book. And I started reading these descriptions and it was clear to me that it was influenced by people's personality type, MBTI type; that had to be a piece of it. So, I proposed to Barbara that we contact all the CASE winners from that year and from a few years back, that she would be the initial contact person since people knew who she was and people wouldn't go, "Who's Judy Provost?" And also Peter Beidler, we could use some of the transcript from his book, and see if there was a relationship between the preferred styles of teaching and personality, and I had a bunch of hypotheses questions around that. And that was a wonderfully satisfying research project. We had, I think, twenty-four participants, the results turned out to show, in a qualitative research way, how we teach from our strengths, but then as we mature we learn how to teach also to compensate for our blind spots. So, I really enjoyed that project.

WZ: So what made you become so interested, become an expert on Myers-Briggs?

JP: Yeah well, and I say to people I am not a test person, per se, I just don't advocate a lot of testing of people; I really get more from an interview process. But, when I was at Valencia and the open campus, we were trying to help later-life adults try to figure out what they could do career-wise. The instruments on the market at that time were pretty bad. For instance, at that time the major career inventory, the questionnaire, had a blue form for men and a pink form for women. So, when I found the MBTI, I thought it's not specifically a career instrument but it helps people identify the way they process information, make decisions, and there was already some research data suggesting, work environments, that would be more compatible and what work strengths might go with different preferences. And then that year in Gainesville was the first MBTI conference Myers funded the typology lab with the person who later ended up on my doctoral committee. They brought together all the researchers who were using it. And I went to that with some preliminary information from my work at Valencia and I got so excited, I thought this is something I really want to use more. And then when I came to Rollins in the 70s we were concerned about attrition, Thad was really concerned by how high the attrition rate was. I proposed to him that we administer the indicator to all entering freshmen and that I'd track them for a four-year period to see if there were certain personality profiles that thrived here and others that had more difficulty and what some of those difficulties were and do

qualitative research. And I found it incredibly helpful and then of course it was really helpful in one-on-one counseling in understanding the way to connect. It's sort of like a cross-cultural thing. If you understand somebody's preferences, the way they're wired in terms of their own culture, then I can connect with them more quickly by knowing a little bit about how their minds work. And so it was very effective in that way and of course it was very helpful in my family because my husband and I are very different and in raising our children. Of course it's very helpful in couples counseling and family work and so on. It kept kind of growing and growing and I found myself doing more research and ended up writing books on it and doing presentations at national conferences, and I helped develop the MBTI national training program to qualify people, it was a four-day workshop that was equivalent to a course on tests and measurements and there was a lot of home study. And people had to take this unless they already had a graduate degree in counseling, take this workshop in order to be eligible to purchase the instrument to use, because it began to be widely used in the corporate world in team building and career development. And not everybody had a master's degree or doctorate in counseling, so they needed to have additional training. So I did that for about twenty-two years and did some training in Canada and some training in England and mainly in the United States, and that was very exciting too.

WZ: You mentioned a term that I'm not familiar with, attrition or attrition rates. Can you tell me...?

JP: Drop out, the drop out rate. Yes. So um, I think in the late 70s the dropout rate was something like 40%.

WZ: Wow.

JP: So, you know, in other words, people started as a freshman and if you added an extra year, some people take five years, that about 40% of that initial class were not there any longer. And that was an unacceptable level.

WZ: Also you mentioned about your study at the University of Florida that you started after you began working at Rollins? How did you manage that?

JP: (Laughs) I really don't know. I think I sleepwalked through certain years. One good thing, at that time the director position in the counseling center was a nine-month contract, so I was able to do my residency at the University in the summer and take an extra load of courses, and then did a certain amount of commuting to Gainesville one night a week or two nights a week, and then they were experimenting with sending some of their professors down to UCF to use some classroom space there. In exchange what I needed to do was teach a course at UCF or work with their master's level students in their counseling center over there, so that was a tradeoff. So I did all of that for a while. And my kids at that time were pre-adolescent, early adolescent, and they didn't need as much immediate attention, but we were all doing homework together. And my whole family supported my doing this and my husband pitched in more than he would have, but to tell you the truth, I don't know how I did it. It's a blur. But, I find that that helps when I talk to some of our more mature students or some of our students that are struggling with being parents and work, and I tell them some of my stories

because I'm saying, don't feel like you have to do it all at once or that there's a certain sequence of how you get your graduate work, each person has to figure out something that's going to work for them.

WZ: So your dissertation was also on Myers-Briggs?

JP: Yeah, and I was looking at a personality type in attrition, and again because that was such a concern at the time and I was also looking at the extracurricular piece of that and how that, for instance, some students might stay or leave this college depending on how engaged they were in the social community. So I was really interested to look at that aspect as well.

WZ: So you're teaching mostly undergraduate level or the graduate counseling program?

JP: Yeah, I haven't taught undergraduates since the 80s, early 80s when I was doing some of the R.A. courses and the career courses, and since then when I adjuncted it was with the graduate counseling program. Now full-time that's all I teach. It would be fun to teach some other things, but there are only four of us full-time faculty, well I'm not full-time anymore, but there were four of us for the courses and it's a 60 credit structure program with no electives, so the load, the need is such that there really isn't time to teach anything other than the grad students.

WZ: So besides teaching, you're still working as a counselor?

JP: I have had a part-time practice for a long time, but I'm really phasing that out now because I find it's a huge responsibility to carry private clients when I'm doing more traveling. I can't leave clients in the lurch and have to have someone cover for me and so on. So, I'm finding that I'm not doing very much of that. What I'm still doing here at the college, and what I'll probably do with my private practice, is run a few groups because I like doing group counseling. The group I'm running right now, I'm doing one for the graduate students (for free) is a dream workshop. It's a six week workshop where people, members of the group, work with dreams and learn various methods of learning their own dreams, and I'm thinking of trying to do that where I live in New Smyrna as well, but not until I have more time because I'm still pretty much involved here.

WZ: That sounds really fascinating. Most of the people using the counseling service, they're undergraduate here?

JP: Ok the counseling center that I directed was exclusively for the day Arts & Sciences School. But, in the graduate program we have a little practice clinic in our building, in Cornell Social Studies, that has two counseling rooms with two-way mirrors and videotape and all the practicum students have to see clients there, and those clients are Holt students that are not serviced by the regular counseling center, or they can be Crummer students. So that little counseling center, if you can call it a counseling center, we call it the Cornell Clinic, is available for those students. So, what that means is when I have practicum students each of them will be working with at least one client who is a student be videotaping their sessions. They have a signed release from the client that the videotape will be viewed by me and I sit

down with the graduate student and we review their counseling tape and I coach them on how to be effective with that. So, in a way I'm still doing counseling, but it's vicarious counseling.

WZ: I have a book here, *The Freshman Year*.

JP: Oh my goodness, that's an oldie.

WZ: Yeah, but look at how many times the book has been circulated.

JP: Oh my goodness. But you know it's very out of date now because I wrote it in the early 80s. As soon as I finished my dissertation I had free time on my hands, and I was like "Now what am I going to write?" So I wrote that because there was a lot of basic information that I thought was useful, but now I went back and reviewed it recently because my younger daughter, who also has a doctorate, was working in a learning skills center in a college up in Massachusetts, and I thought I had some old copies left and I'd give them to her, but before I did I wanted to read them and when I read some of the stuff, some of the stuff is embarrassingly out of date now in terms of male-female relationships and a lot of other things. Just the flavor is off. So I'm surprised anybody's taking it out anymore.

WZ: Still the most recent one is 2004.

JP: Yeah, it's an oldie.

WZ: This book is also very popular [*Using the MBTI Instrument in Colleges and Universities*].

JP: Yeah, now that, we revised that and then it turned into another book. But it was more than a revision because we deleted about half the chapters in there and we added a bunch more chapters and of course we went back and added a lot more data and all. But, it's been a pretty successful book. The things you don't have here that I didn't think to bring, but believe it or not the most successful of my publications right now is a little monograph called *Procrastination*. I wrote it off the top of my head because when I directed the counseling center, faculty were always sending me students that were what I call pathologically procrastinating, where they left so much stuff to the end they could never dig themselves out and then they'd get physical sick. So I did a lot of work with them in helping them understand what was behind the procrastination, the psychological factors, and began to realize that there was a personality factor there too. So I wrote this book about how each personality procrastinates, but the dynamics of procrastination are different, and the solution of correcting it is different depending on personality. It's only about a thirty-page thing and it sold, I don't know, hundreds and hundreds of copies. I just got my royalty last week and it's not very much because it's just a little publication, but it's still amazing to see the volume of sales from that. And then the other monograph I did was just sort of a spin-off of this earlier one, but is much more focused on academic strategies, it's called "Student Success" and it's used, now that you know what your personality preferences are how do you put that to work for you in an academic environment in terms of how you study, how you take tests, how you choose professors, etc. And that continues to sell well to community colleges and to colleges every fall because you know, that's the time when they use those materials.

WZ: Also you did a study on eating disorders; tell me a little bit more about this research.

JP: Yeah, well when I was directing the counseling center, a very large percentage of the women who came in as clients were struggling with eating disorders, whether it was anorexia or bulimia or a combination of those, or compulsive eating which led to being overweight. And I had done some groups for those women and individual work and did a lot of consultation with a psychiatrist in town who put this book together, I contributed a chapter, and he, when insurance structures were different, he developed a big unit in a hospital in Seminole County for eating disorders and I did a lot of work with him. So when he was putting together this book, he asked me because of my experience working with college students if I would do this chapter, and we also did several presentations at eating disorder conferences at that time. And it's one of the more challenging problems to deal with and it still continues to be a problem on college campuses.

WZ: I understand you also did another research, maybe related to this, with women and self-respect.

JP: Um, well I'm not sure which one you're referring to. Um, I'm not sure which one that is. Maybe it was just looking at the self-esteem issues in relation to personality type.

WZ: Ok, but just give me your impression of the student body over your thirty years of your counseling career.

JP: Oh, well, I talked a little about what it was like when I came. I think now it's a much more diverse student body ethnically, in terms of class because we're offering more financial aid, which I think is good, although I think there's still an undercurrent of class-ism that is a continuing struggle. And the student body now is more interested in volunteer work and service learning, I think, and a lot of that is because faculty has put a lot of effort into it, but I think it's also this generation. And I think there are more academically motivated students now than previously. But they still carry all the baggage that developmentally people in this age group have, about developing their identity, feeling comfortable with their sexuality, with women the pressures of having a certain body type, an image with men some of the pressures about what it means to be a male, as well as dealing with family issues and relationship issues, so it's a very interesting age to do counseling with. I do miss that. I felt very ambivalent when I went over to teaching full-time and leaving the counseling center because I loved doing therapy with this age group, because they're not so grooved into coping strategies yet that you can't help them find better, healthier ways of coping. And there's so much energy and vitality. So, you know, I can't really generalize beyond that about the student body. I think it's a complex student body with lots and lots of real struggles.

WZ: Yeah, well what about in terms of their psychological health? That they become more aware of the service or they're demanding more? What's your assessment?

JP: Well I think the trend nationally, which I saw beginning to go that way in the 90s, is for there to be more people with serious, diagnosable problems being treated in counseling centers

because, well there's probably a lot of reasons. One is there's more awareness in the public that these things can be treated. I think our society has gotten more turbulent and more complex so that young people have even more to deal with. And I think, um, public services or community services, mental health services and agencies and so on, have fallen by the way side. You know, there's been a progressive trend since the 70s to budget cut, budget cut, budget cut, so there's less availability, so we see churches picking up a lot of mental health counseling too and the counseling centers at the colleges doing it. So, I talk to Mark Freeman, as director of the counseling center, frequently and you know, there's just an increase in intensity with the problems that counseling centers are seeing. So, are our students less mentally healthy than they were thirty years ago? It's kind of hard to know for sure, I think there's more complexity for them to deal with and that can create a lot of stresses.

WZ: You were also involved in developing a program about alcohol and drug abuse, tell us more about that.

JP: Well, again, it's a model of outreach and prevention once it became very clear to me very early on that alcohol abuse primarily, and then secondary drug abuse, but alcohol abuse was a serious problem. A lot of the acquaintance rapes that happened, a lot of the self-esteem issues around women, a lot of the STDs that we were seeing at the health center, and other issues as well as academic failures, were related to binge drinking. So, I experimented with different models of peer work where the peers got trained and then they would go out with me and do programs in the residence halls. And then different alternatives to discipline, because you can punish somebody for an open container or punish somebody for breaking a window when they're under the influence, but that doesn't educate them about another way of living their life or doesn't challenge them to stand back from their life and evaluate, well is this the way I want to be living my life? So, I helped design some educational models so that when a student got in trouble with a residence hall or the dean of students that instead of just having it be a disciplinary thing there was an educational component. But it was very important to separate that from counseling because you don't want counseling to be seen as a disciplinary action because that blows the whole thing in terms of trust and confidentiality. So it had to be a separate piece that wasn't directly under counseling. So there was that piece. And then there was another program a little bit later, I guess it was late 80s. Once AIDS came on the scene, I got very concerned about the unprotected sex that students were having, especially when you tie it to the alcohol and lack of judgment. And I formed a group called Students For Safer Sex and trained them in how to go with me and talk about using condoms and making decisions about their sexuality. This outreach includes a film that about a woman who was a heterosexual woman who acquired HIV through a one night stand, to try to get the message out because what I was finding in the late 80s into the 90s was that college students thought they're immortal and they think, no this couldn't happen to me, this is just something that would happen to some gay man somewhere, and that they really had their ears closed to that. And so that was a big thing and in the counseling and health center I had this big ficus benjamins, which is a rubber tree, with condoms taped on it, so it was a double rubber tree and just so students could come in and have that physically be there to remind them of that. And I remember at that time being called to consult with Stetson University, because, being very controlled by the Baptist Church at that point, they were not allowed to talk about these issues and they wondered how did you manage to do this, and we would strategize how the



counseling center and the health center might begin to do some programming around these things without upsetting the Baptist Church. So, those were two things I felt very strongly about, getting out the message about the alcohol, substance abuse, and safer sex because those were big things going on at that time.

WZ: Um, I understand you received, you were named the Counselor of the Year by the Florida...

JP: Yeah, the Mental Health Counseling Association, yeah.

WZ: So you must be very proud of that.

JP: Yeah I was. I felt really good about it. I was quite surprised when they did that. That was at a time when I had created a consortium of directors of counseling centers from all the colleges in the area because there was no formal organization. And I felt all of us were trying to figure out how to deal with alcohol, how do deal with this, how to deal with that, and we needed to compare notes. The Counseling Center staff would meet on our campus or we would go to their campuses. And it was an informal group, there were no officers or anything, but it was a very important part of my professional development and the development of other people at the time, and I think that was one of the reasons why I was recognized with that award at the time.

WZ: So you were also very active in the professional community. What about the community of service?

JP: Oh on campus? Yeah, well you know, when I was directing the counseling center it felt like a 24/7 community service in terms of showing up for things and doing that. Once I got to be on the faculty full-time the first standing committee I joined was student life because I had all these years of experience with that. And I was on that for a while. And then I was interested in the professional standards committee because I participated in those discussions about once people are tenured how do they go through a soul searching about, well how am I with what I'm doing now, and kind of thinking that through again, it shouldn't be a "done deal" once you're tenured. So those were interesting discussions and out of that came that proposal which is now in the bylaws for the penultimate evaluation before you go for sabbatical. And I don't know how seriously people are taking it, but I think conceptually it's a good thing. So I've been on those standing committees. Within the department there's a lot because in a way we function like a school within a school. We have to do our own recruiting, orientation, placement, follow-up, we are accountable to the state in terms of licensing and requirements and so on, so it's a never-ending kind of thing with all of that. And then we have our little clinic which I directed most of the time, um you know, supervise the graduate students and made sure that records were being kept confidential and that things flowed well and that we weren't taking on clients that we couldn't really handle, you know, people that were too acute needed to be referred elsewhere. So, there's a lot to do. I always think of Rollins as a big black hole, as much as you have interest and energy to do, there's more that can be done, and there's always, always more. And I think a challenge for all of us that work

here is being clear about our own boundaries and not overextending to the point that we burn out. I'm sure you can identify with that too.

WZ: Yes, uh I understand Alicia [Homrich] is also one of your students?

JP: She was my student, now she's chair.

WZ: Yes, so tell me about your mentoring role.

JP: Well at the time that Alicia was my student I wasn't full-time in the faculty, so I just was lucky enough to have her when I was adjuncting, so I only had her as a student in one or two courses. I remember her sitting in the back of the room being like the smartest student in the class. And I just remember kind of, uh, conveying to her my respect and appreciation for her abilities and encouraging her. And of course when she first came back with her doctorate she came back in a visiting position and I was chair and then we had to do a national search and that was very awkward because, as you probably know, when you've got somebody in place and they're also competing for a position in a national search it's very difficult to handle that. And I always think it's best to keep talking out loud about the discomfort and work with it that way. And she handled herself very well and it turned out that in that national search she was the best candidate, and I was again very proud of her, and kind of informally kind of been there to support her and help her think through different steps along the way. And one of my messages to her is just like what I said about boundaries, is kind of getting clear about what's a realistic amount to do, but not to overwork because in the end everybody loses; you lose personally, but then your students lose too because if you're not balanced, of course I wrote a whole book on balance too, then it's hard to really be effective I think. So, that's one of my shticks.

WZ: Yeah, I think this is fascinating. I'm still struggling with how to achieve that balance.

JP: Yeah, and it's never an end point. I think balance is always precarious, we achieve it for short periods of time and then something happens to throw it off balance and we have to recalibrate, so to speak. But, I'm kind of having that as a goal, to keep as balanced as possible. And balance is different things for different people, I know that I have a higher need to incorporate play and friends and family than some other people I know who maybe have a higher need for accomplishing certain things at work, certain tasks. So I don't think there's one formula that fits all, but I think it's important to reflect on what is the right mix for any of us individually in order to feel we're maximizing who we are.

WZ: So besides Rollins and the professional community, were you also involved with any civic organizations? I remember reading somewhere you were with some Seminole women's group?

JP: Well, um, Florida Hospital, I guess it was in the 80s too, formed the Center for Women's Medicine at a time when women were being kind of overlooked in terms of medical studies or medical interventions that were still geared toward males because most of the research is on males. And the woman who ran the women's center who is a nurse with a master's degree

recruited me from my involvement with the women's center at Valencia. And I served on their board for a long time. And that was very satisfying work. And then I was also on the board for the Center for Applications of Psychological Type in Gainesville which was the initial starting point for the MBTI and helped develop their training programs and help them with fundraising. But I found out I do not like fundraising; it's not my thing. And now that I have a little more time to be in my own community of New Smyrna Beach, I'm getting really interested in that community. I just helped work on the mayoral campaign for a woman who was trying to unseat an incumbent who's been there since '95. And that was a new experience for me, you know standing on the street corner with the signs and going door to door and talking to people about it and she won! So that was very exciting! And I think in my community, what I'm very concerned about is there's an educated part of my community that has a strong voice and votes in election, but there's a blue-collar African-American part of the community that doesn't seem to participate as much, and my guess is they don't feel, they probably perceive that it doesn't matter. And so I can't go in there and tell them you matter, but I am constantly thinking now about how do we bring that part of the community on board, and I'm probably going to get involved with League of Women Voters over there and maybe some other groups. I've befriended the city commissioner who serves that part of the community and have started some dialogues with her, but I don't know where that's gonna go, but those are things that I'm thinking about.

WZ: Now looking back, how do you view your Rollins career?

JP: Well, it's been the very best it could be. You know I can't think of working anywhere where I would have been more happy because, number one, I'm a team player and I love the collegial interactions, whether it's my department because we work together really well, or it's knowing people like you going on the China trip, or it's the faculty you know over the years from the different projects, on top of being given a certain amount of autonomy to create what I thought needed to happen or what was intriguing to me. So, what a combination! And course, the thing I worry about in terms of retirement is keeping up that level of intellectual stimulation, but I'm developing a list of ways to keep that up. And as I said earlier, I think it's been a wonderful place for my family, my children to grow up. Both of them, one is an M.D. another's a Ph.D., have wonderful memories of the college students, the faculty, the theatre performances, the discussions. It's been a great ride.

WZ: Ok, so what you're most proud of...?

JP: Hmm, what am I most proud of? I don't know if there's any one thing. I think, I think it's um I guess it's the process, I'm sort of a holistic person, and the process of being with people in the ways that I've talked about and having it flow in an authentic way and to feel like I've had impact on others' lives just like they've had impact on my life. I think it is the whole tapestry more than it is any one thing for me. Yeah, I've never been a person that focuses on "I achieved this," like I wouldn't immediately say I'm most proud of this book or of this award. I think it's how it all comes together and being able to have it, make it come together. Does that make sense?

WZ: Yes, yes. Thank you. Uh, yeah you mentioned about the effort to stay intellectually stimulated, so any research project you still carry on?

JP: Nope (laughs). I'm just like over it in terms of doing research. I'm not interested in doing any professional writing at this point. I'm interested in running groups if I can and I don't know if that leads to any research or not. I'm interested in creative writing; I think I might do some of that. I want to become a bridge player again, that's a very challenging thing. I played in high school, I started a bridge club in high school and then I knew I was getting addicted to it and I knew I couldn't play bridge and do all the other things I wanted to do. And there may be some other community projects. I'm interested in getting involved with PFLAG, Parents of Lesbians and Gays, and they have a chapter in Volusia and since I've worked a lot with undergrads that were struggling with sexual orientation and I think Florida right now is a really not-welcoming climate. I'm thinking I might want to do some work with families and with schools on a volunteer basis. So, I think once I figure out the rhythm of it there will be a lot of things of that sort I can do, but not over commit because I want to make sure I have time for my own personal things too.

WZ: Yeah, I read that you also like to play volleyball, tennis...

JP: Tennis, that's the personal things, yeah. I'm addicted to tennis. I love tennis. And I'm a very good player, and that's my main thing I like to do. And I also like to bike. We have kayaks and last weekend we went kayaking for a few hours, my husband's retired so we can throw the kayaks in the truck and go to some river or the inter-coastal and say oh that looks like a good place and put in there. So, I love being outdoors and being physical. So, when you're working full-time it's hard to fit that in.

WZ: Any travel plans?

JP: Well let's see. Well you know, I loved that China trip, that's gonna stand out in my mind forever, but we're planning to spend a week in Honduras in spring during Spring Break snorkeling with the whale sharks. They're the biggest fish in the world; they're the size of a school bus. And I've (laughs) always wanted to check these fish out and it's also a very interesting area in terms of the culture and so on. So I'm reading up on Honduras right now. And then, you know, there'll be other things too. I'd like to go on the Amazon River. As long as I'm healthy and physically active I want to do as much adventure travel as possible. And then I'll leave the kind of sedate, older cities of Europe for when I'm in my 70s (laughs).

WZ: That is very exciting. So anything I have not asked you, you want to add to this session?

JP: Let me think. I don't know. I'm sure there'll be something I'll think about once we're not talking, but I think for me, you know just looking back over the years as I said is the quality of this place for me and the variety of work that I've been able to do. I've never for a minute been bored and I found my colleagues to be so incredibly stimulating. So, I think it's a good place to be, I think I've been very fortunate to land here. Yeah.

WZ: Great Judy, thank you for your contribution to Rollins College for thirty plus years.

JP: You're welcome Wenxian.

WZ: And for your contribution to the oral history project which will benefit the future students at Rollins.

JP: Well you are welcome. I enjoyed talking with you Wenxian.

WZ: Ok, bye.

**1:17:08**