

# Computer provides neo-therapy

## PAL experiments with psycho programs; denial is first symptom

Can I get a gender switch? I'm just not comfortable with this. "For myself or yourself?" "Who do you think?" "Mr. Watson, a gender switch is serious business. It could drastically alter our relationship."



I think it would help. "Very well. Allow me a few moments." His face disappeared from the screen. Electrons flew around inside. The screen blinked. She appeared. "Better?" "Much. I just prefer it this way." "That's quite alright, Mr. Watson. Let us proceed."

It wouldn't be so bad if they would torture me or something. All I do is talk to this deck and keep saying the same things over and over, it running all different psycho programs on me.

You remember the renegade computer HAL 2000 or 9000 or whatever, the one in the old movie 2001? They call this one PAL, Psychological Assessment and Learning. Maybe it'll take me over like HAL did that ship.

It's an old one, really, out a couple years back but still a corporate favorite. Classic Freudian, neo, post-neo, the old behave stuff, every humanistic therapy they ever dreamed of, even the new TP stuff, all that transcendence and stuff.

And hesh can go either way, male or female.

We have a great time, me and my PAL. Hesh will ask what kind of therapy I want to do today. I say I'm tired of therapy and want to leave the building. Hesh says let's start with a gender and I say female. Now a she, PAL works slow, never pushing me.

We start with some verbal sparring. She asks why I've come and I say I woke up here. I was running from the Lincolnland Towing, International people and I woke up here.

"That's quite a story" she says. Then it's quiet. I've tried to wait her out, but I always give in.

"What would you like to discuss today?" I ask.

She stares blankly for a moment, then her screens fill again, this time with cropped hair. She blinks and asks how she looks.

I thought you were supposed to ask about me.

"You don't like my new face?"

It's fine. I'd like to get going. Will we finish the therapy today?

The not-quite-smug look appears. "That will depend upon you." And so we do it for another two-hour

session. "As your therapist, I must inform you that I have a hard time accepting the idea that --"

Look, how about we switch to post-neo, this is going nowhere.

She flashed through our most recent faces: the "just-be-cool," slick existio guy, the female Freud and her Oedipus trip, the behave guy telling me about reinforcement, the wild transpersonal woman just being there then. Then she switched back to neo.

Anyone ever told you you've

got a split personality, I asked her.

"Very funny. The correct term is Multiple Personality, Mr. Watson." Right.

"Neo-Freudian therapy is a lengthy process, Mr. Watson. It involves reconstructing a great number of past events and sifting through each of them, searching for that one event, the one traumatic experience which was repressed and has only now resurfaced."

Already told you, I'm not crazy. She smiled. "Denial, Mr. Watson, is the first symptom."

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