Identifying Wishes and Outcomes in Interpersonal Narratives Using Lay Coders

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This report describes the basic features of a system for coding wish-response themes in narratives of personally important or problematic encounters. The system leans heavily and gratefully on decades of work by Lester Luborsky and his colleagues in developing the Core Conflictual Relationship Themes coding system (CCRT; Luborsky & Crits-Christoph, 1990). Luborsky developed his coding system to identify transference themes emerging in transcripts of psychotherapy sessions, using therapist coders. The present system evolved when we failed to achieve reliability in applying the CCRT method to the narratives of non-clinical samples using non-therapist (college student) coders.

Our impression is that the present system is more explicit and more streamlined than is the Luborsky system. We do not yet know whether therapists using the CCRT (or the present system) would code the same narratives differently than would laypersons. However, because we have tried to preserve the basic components and contents of the CCRT, a fairly good fit is expected. Thorne (1995b) conceptually compared the wish categories in the present system with the third edition of the CCRT wish categories and concluded that there is a fairly good match in terms of content.

The present system can probably be used to code a wide variety of narratives of emotionally significant encounters as long as the narratives focus on interpersonal encounters. We are currently using the system to code memories of personally important or problematic interpersonal encounters that are elicited via Luborsky's RAP interview (Luborsky & Crits-Christoph, 1990). The yield of our research thus far is reported in Thorne and Klohn (1993), Thorne (1995a, 1995b), and Thorne and Michaelieu (in press).

Specific Differences from the CCRT Coding System

1. The present system was developed to code non-transcribed interviews (although it can also be used for coding transcripts). The coder is instructed in how to select, transcribe, and code relevant portions of the interview directly from the audiotape or videotape. Because the present system includes transcribing time, it takes longer than the Luborsky system. Once the transcribing is done, the coding itself usually takes less than five minutes per episode. We currently average about 16 episodes per interview, which means 80 minutes of coding per interview.

2. Our criteria for what counts as a relationship episode (RE) are more stringent. We focus on specific interactions that happen at one point in time, with a particular other person. Frequently occurring episodes (e.g., I always loved to go to the movies and eat popcorn with my dad) are not coded. Also, the subject must be directly involved with the other person, rather than, e.g., observing the other person from the sidelines.

3. For each episode, we code only one overall wish-response pattern. The Luborsky method codes as many instances (e.g., wishes) as appear within an episode, and then takes the most
frequently occurring content as the overall wish. The latter approach is probably necessary given the more rambling nature of psychotherapy discourse. RAP interviews, in contrast, produce relatively straightforward and demarcated episodes, in which it is probably easier to identify an overall wish-response pattern.

4. Each standard wish category is explicitly interpersonal, phrased in terms of what the subject wants from the other person. Standard wish categories in the Luborsky system include non-interpersonal wishes.

5. The present system codes ambivalent or mixed responses of self and other, in addition to the positive and negative responses coded by Luborsky.

Inter-rater Reliabilities

Table 1 shows inter-rater reliabilities for coding the idiographic content of narratives in a sample of 95 23-year olds from the U.C. Santa Cruz campus and surrounding community, using undergraduate coders. Reliabilities were computed using percentage agreement across 12 interviews totalling n = 197 episodes. Coders showed good agreement about the identity of the other person in the episode (e.g., mother, lover, teacher), what the subject wanted from the other person (the wish content, phrased in the subject's own words), how the other person responded, and how self responded. The primary difficulty was deciding whether or not the episode was codable. Of a total of 197 episodes, 151 were deemed codable by both coders. Twenty-seven percent of the episodes were chosen by one coder and not the other coder, resulting in 77% agreement about the RE. While not excellent, this level of agreement is adequate. Table 2 shows the reliability of the standard wish and response categories. Reliabilities are adequate in this preliminary sample, and were higher for a subsequent sample (Thorne, 1995b).

The Coding Process

We recommend training several coders on several pilot transcripts, and then on several recorded (audiotaped or videotaped) interviews without transcripts. Our training usually takes about 40 hours per coder over a period of four or five weeks. At that point, reliabilities are usually adequate for selecting the unit of analysis (the relationship episode, subsequently defined), for extracting the idiographic content of the key components of each episode, and for applying the standard categories to the idiographic content. To prevent coder drift throughout the period of actual coding, reliabilities should be spotchecked periodically.

For non-transcribed, 60-90 minute interviews, coding takes about 7-8 hours because of the necessity of identifying and transcribing codable episodes, which takes about 6 of these hours. The coding itself takes only 1-2 hours per interview, or about 5 minutes per episode. The coder typically makes two passes through the videotape. On the first pass, the coder takes notes about where each relationship episode begins and ends. On the second pass, the coder transcribes the content of each episode and then codes the episode. Well-practiced coders can identify, transcribe, and code all of the episodes in one careful pass through the tape. This reduces the total coding time per interview from 7-8 hours to about 3 hours.

Logistically, all that is involved is that the coder identify and transcribe the content of each episode on a coding sheet, and then code the content. An example of a coding sheet follows:
One afternoon I decided to go visit my grandparents, a pretty good distance from my house. I'd been there by car often and I knew I could find my way there so I just set off walking. I felt I was old enough to take care of myself. My sister wasn't home and I didn't think it was a big deal. A couple of hours later I got there and knocked on the door and they were really surprised to see me. They called my house and it turned out my sister was really worried, I guess I'd been gone a long time. I didn't think it was very long. I remember being upset at how upset they were that I went for a walk. I felt they were babying me. I felt I was old enough to do that. I tried to walk back, too, but they wouldn't let me.

W = To walk to my grandparents' on my own

RO = surprised, upset

RS = upset that they were upset; I felt babied

Standard Wish Category: 5 (to assert)

RO:  - (negative)

RS:  - (negative)
Idiographic Phase of Coding

The definitions that follow are listed in the order in which they appear on the coding sheet.

Relationship Episode (RE) number. The RE is basically a story about a direct encounter between oneself and someone else, no matter how mundane the encounter may seem. To qualify for coding, the RE must be about a specific event located in time and space, as opposed to a generic or frequent event (e.g., "we always went to movies and ate lots of popcorn"). The event should happen in one time frame instead of be stretched across time; for example "I went back there years later and she wouldn't talk to me" should not be included in an RE that began earlier. Typically, each memory will represent one RE, although some memories include multiple RE's. Indicate the point on the videotape counter at which the RE begins and ends. Number the RE's consecutively.

Other (O). The identity of the primary other person with whom S is interacting in the episode. If there is more than one O in the episode, code for the O with whom the episode is most complete (see below for definition of a complete episode). If the episode is equally complete with each O, code the episode twice, as if it were two episodes about two different O's. If the episode is equally complete using either O, and the episode content is essentially the same using either O, then code the RE only once, identifying O as both people (e.g., babysitter, dad).

*Identify each O by sex, by relationship to S, and by a proper name, if given. Example: female, sister, Sue.

*If O's identity is special, like "first love", use the special identity as the relationship, not the generic identity. (In this case, the generic identity would be "boyfriend"). The rationale for this is that first love has a special status and may bring special meaning to the episode.

Completeness Rating (CR). Extent to which the episode contains the three components of wish, response from other, and response from self, regardless of how difficult the exact content is to code. (The 3 components are described more precisely below). Rate from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Code every episode with a CR greater than 2. No record is necessary for episodes with CR of 1 or 2.

Age. Record S's age at the time of the episode. If age is not given, guess the age and add a question mark to indicate that you are estimating. Example: 13?

Episode Content. By transcribing the episode content, the unit of analysis is demarcated, the specific content of the episode is transcribed for subsequent case studies, and the coding task is made easier. Use verbatim content. Your coding of the episode will be based directly on this transcript, so it needs to be complete. Transcribe each episode on a separate coding sheet.

Wish (W). What S wants or desires from O; directly related to RO and RS. Use the first person (e.g., "want dad to pay attention to me"), using verbatim content.

*If several wishes are apparent, cite all of them

*Be alert to the possibility of multiple, conflicting wishes in an episode. Example: To love (establish intimacy) with another/to avoid pain. (see Thorne, 1995b for a case study of a young woman showing this particular wish combination).
*Always phrase the idiographic wish content in the first person, from the perspective of the subject. For example, not "to explore", or "to let him explore", but "to let me explore".

*The wish should specifically relate to the need to which the other person responded (or failed to respond), as opposed to, e.g., the motivation that gets subject into the general situation.

*If alteration of the actual content is necessary to arrive at a W, put brackets [ ] around the altered or inferential content.

Response of Other (RO): how other responds to the wish. A response may be an attitude, a behavior, or both. Include all verbatim RO's. Use first person for the subject (e.g., "Dad says he's angry with me")

Response of Self (RS): how self responds to response of other. A response may be an attitude, a behavior, or both. Include all verbatim RO's. Use first person for the subject (e.g., "I pouted")

* RS will usually follow RO in temporal sequence. Sometimes it is difficult to tell whether the temporal sequence of RO and RS, an ambiguity that we have been able to live with thus far.

Applying Standard Categories

After you have identified the idiographic content of the primary W, RO, and RS in the episode, apply standard categories to these contents.

Standard wish categories. The wish categories were developed by domain sampling the RAP memories of a non-clinical sample of 23-year olds (N = 95 subjects, 10 memories each). We sorted a random sample of these memories into wish categories, finally converging on 7 reliable categories that turned out to resemble quite highly the final set of wish categories developed by Luborsky (Barber, et al., 1990, Table 3-3).

Our standard wish categories are intended to be mutually exclusive, although in some cases a compound code seems necessary. About 20% of the narratives ended up being coded as compound wishes in an age-23 sample (Thorne & Klohn, 1993). In such cases, we give each wish in the compound a half weight for the purposes of data analysis.

The standard wish categories are applied to the entire gestalt of the relationship episode, taking into account the subject's age at the time of the memory, the other person involved in the episode, and the idiographic content of the W, RO, and RS. Additional examples of each standard wish category can be found in the Appendix.
1. TO HAVE APPROVAL, VALIDATION FROM OTHER, RECOGNITION, ESTEEM

This category should be applied when the subject wants to be noticed, approved of, or believed by the other. This wish is self-focused, which differentiates it from wishes for love, which are mutually or "we" focused. Also, the wish tends to be more wistful than active; that is, the subject does not demand approval or validation (as in wishes to assert). Rather, the subject quite passively hopes for credibility or esteem from the other, without demanding it.

ex: I wanted my parents to have confidence in me

2. TO BE HELPED, TAUGHT, NURTURED BY OTHER

This category should be applied when the subject is in a dependent position and requires hands-on help from the other person, as opposed to approval or validation.

ex: I wanted her to protect me from the mugger
I wanted him to teach me to read

3 TO PLAY WITH, HAVE ADVENTURES WITH, FUN WITH

This category should be applied when the subject is simply pursuing fun or enjoyment or mischief with another person. Physical activity is often involved, although not necessarily: One may simply want to have a "good time".

ex: I wanted him to explore the park with me
I wanted her to have a good time with me

4. TO CONNECT WITH, LOVE AND BE LOVED BY, BE SECURE WITH, CLOSE

This category should be applied when the subject wants an enduring and mutual connection with the other person. Whereas wishes for play are short-term, wishes for love are enduring. The requirement of mutuality helps to differentiate wishes for love from wishes for approval, which are more often "me" centered than "we" centered.

ex: I wanted us to be close friends
I wanted us to be a family again

5. TO ASSERT SELF/ REBEL / CONTROL / DOMINATE

This wish requires an episode in which there is perceived conflict with the other person, and the subject actively attempts to make his/her wishes known to the other person. The subject might argue, or protest, or rebel, or attempt to take control of the situation. The requirement of perceived conflict and of active attempts to prevail differentiates this wish from wishes for approval.

ex: I wanted to win the argument
I wanted to take care of myself instead of be babied

6. TO HELP OTHER, BE CONCERNED ABOUT OTHER'S WELFARE

This wish describes episodes in which the subject is primarily concerned about the other's welfare, and/or makes active attempts to help out the other person. Unlike with wishes to be helped, the subject is usually the more competent, healthy, or able of the dyad.

   ex:   I wanted my mom to be healthy again

   I wanted to make him feel better

7. TO AVOID CONNECTION, PAIN, CONFLICT/ MOVE AWAY FROM, HOLD OFF

This wish entails wanting to distance oneself from the other person in order to avoid contact, continued connection, pain, or conflict. The wish typically occurs in contexts that are aversive for the subject. Unlike with wishes to assert, wishes to avoid entail moving away from conflict, rather than moving toward conflict.

   ex:   I wanted her to stop torturing me

   I didn't want to get involved with him

8. OTHER (specify)

Occasionally none of the seven wish categories seems appropriate to characterize the subject's social motives. In that case, simply specify the idiographic wish content. We seldom need to use this category.

   Response of other (RO).  Rate the affect/outcome of the RO in terms of whether the RO gratifies the wish from the perspective of the subject. Apply one of the following ratings: + (gratifies the wish), - (does not gratify the wish), +/- (partially gratifies the wish).

   Response of self (RS).  Rate the affect/outcome of the RS in terms of whether the RS gratifies the wish from the perspective of the subject. Apply one of the following ratings: + (gratifies the wish), - (does not gratify the wish), +/- (partially gratifies the wish).
**End sheet.**

On the last page of the coding sheets, record the following:

- **Subject's themes:** Subject's statement of self-perceived themes or similarities across memories, in response to the interviewer's query at end of the RAP interview. Stick to verbatim quotes as much as possible.

- **S's comments on task:** Any comments that S makes as she/he is doing the task. These may include comments about task difficulty, questions about the instructions, metaphors used when describing how she/he summons up particular memories, etc.

- **Miscellaneous coder comments:** Your impressions of S's cooperativeness, ease of recall, rapport with interviewer, character, etc.

- **Core pattern:** Coder's identification of the primary W-RO-RS pattern for this subject. Note which RE's tend to show the pattern. The core pattern may not necessarily be the most frequently occurring pattern. A computer can identify the most frequent pattern; we want you to use your own judgment to identify a core pattern, but be sure to tell us on what you based your judgment!
References


Table 1

Interjudge Reliabilities for Idiographic Content

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>% Agreement</th>
<th>Agreed-Upon Frequency</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identity of Other</td>
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<td>147</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wish</td>
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<td>Response of Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response of Self</td>
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<td>135</td>
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**Note:** n = 197 episodes
Table 2
Interjudge Reliabilities for Standard Categories

<table>
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<th>Standard Category</th>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Approval, validation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To be helped</td>
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<td>43</td>
</tr>
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<td>3. Play, adventure</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>4. Connection, love</td>
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<td>5. Self-assertion, control</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
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<td>6. To help other</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>7. To avoid</td>
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<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response of Other</td>
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<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response of Self</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>172</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: n = 183 episodes

^4Each member of a compound wish was counted separately.
APPENDIX

Examples of Idiographic Wish Content Coded into each of the Thorne & Hogan Standard Wish Categories

Note: These contents were extracted from the tally sheets of 10 randomly selected cases in our second, mini-longitudinal study (described in Thorne, 1995b). Subjects averaged 23 years of age and were drawn from the Santa Cruz campus and community.

1. TO HAVE APPROVAL, VALIDATION FROM OTHER, RECOGNITION, ESTEEM

This category should be applied when the subject wants to be noticed, approved of, or believed by the other. This wish is self-focused, which differentiates it from wishes for love, which are mutually or "we" focused. Also, the present wish is more wistful than active; that is, the subject does not demand approval or validation (as in wishes to assert). Rather, the subject quite passively hopes for credibility or esteem from the other, without actively agitating for approval/credibility or forthrightly demanding it.

***

I wanted my parents to believe that the money wasn't mine. (age 16).

Wanted my parents to be honest with me and not to pretend there was an Easter bunny. (age 4).

I wanted my parents not to let me down, to have "Santa" get me that stuffed dog I wanted for Christmas (age 5).

I wanted my older brother to treat me like a person, not a side-kick or a nuisance. (age 11).

I wanted to be recognized as a real person, with needs, but the doctors gave me the impression I was infringing on their time (age 21).

I wanted to get admitted to UCSC and the Dean called and offered me special admission. (age 18).

I wanted to know why he didn't want to know more about me, if he was so interested in me. (age 18).

I wanted to try using drugs so I would be accepted by my boyfriend, and to see what drugs are like. (age 16). (double-coded as need approval /need play).

I wanted my boyfriend to understand why I hadn't told him about my abortion. (age 16).

I wanted the moving man to pay attention to me and not just ignore me like I was a piece of furniture (age 3).

I wanted to understand what I had done wrong but she just spanked me and didn't tell me what I'd said that was wrong (age 6).
I wanted to get recognition for the work I had done; I wanted to graduate from college. (age 24).

I wanted my dad to respect my fear of the dog and not call me a wimp. (age 6).

I wanted my mom to accept my choice of a girlfriend. (age 23).

I wanted to impress the more popular kids by telling them a story about my martial arts skills. (age 10).

I wanted to try out for the school play and get chosen for the role. (age 16).

I wanted my aunts to see that I was smart and could understand what they were doing. (age 4).

I wanted my ex girlfriend to remember my birthday. (age 18)

I wanted my dad to understand me and not judge me by my athletic ability (or lack of it). age 8.

I wanted to get involved with baton twirling; my mom was very supportive of that and I felt like a little Princess. (age 4).

I wanted dad to make me feel special. He built me a little boat, and it was neat because it probably was the neatest boat of all the kids. (age 4).

I wanted attention from grandma. I wanted her to say that she liked my playing the piano. (age 7).

I wanted to let everyone know that I was dogpaddling for the very first time. I wanted them to look at me. (age 2).

I wanted to prove to my dad that I could jump off and swim beyond the reef, because my brother had done it with him. But I was too scared; I handled it by crying. (age 8).

I wanted them to give the basketball to me so I could shoot. (age 23).

I wanted my grandma to understand that I wasn't going to bed with this guy. (age 16).
2. TO BE HELPED, TAUGHT, NURTURED BY OTHER

This category should be applied when the subject is in a dependent position and requires hands-on help from the other person, as opposed to emotional approval or validation as in the prior wish category. As with the prior wish category, the focus is on "me", not you or us.

***

I wanted my teacher to make me feel comfortable the first day of school. (age 7).
I wanted my dad to comfort me over my dog's death, make me feel better (age 8).
I wanted my mom to come and talk to me to keep my mind off my operation (age 22).
I wanted my friend to drive me to the hospital so I wouldn't have to go through it alone (age 21).
I wanted my friends to help me from falling apart (from frequent drug use) (age 19).
I wanted my friend who had also had an abortion to help me get one. (age 16).
I wanted my boyfriend to stick up for me against the verbal attack from my ex boyfriend. (age 16).
I wanted the babysitter to let me back in the house because I was hot and thirsty. (age 4).
I wanted my mom to rescue me from the mean babysitter. (age 4).
I wanted someone to talk to, because I was lonely and depressed and wanted someone to make me feel better. (age 19)
I wanted the policeman to comfort me because I was crying. (age 19).
I wanted my dad to come to school with me and tell us what his job was (age 6).
I wanted my friend to print out a title page for me because I don't have a computer. (age 23).
I wanted my mom to teach me how to whistle. (age 3).
3. **TO PLAY WITH, HAVE ADVENTURES WITH, FUN WITH**

This category should be applied when the subject is simply pursuing fun or enjoyment or mischief with another person. Physical activity is often involved, although not necessarily: One may simply want to have a "good time".

***

I wanted to have fun playing tennis with dad. (age 7).

Me and my friend wanted to find blood on the rock where a friend had gotten hurt, to look death in the face, at least the remnants of it. (age 7).

I wanted to enjoy our new living arrangement, kick off the new year well with my housemates (age 21).

I wanted to have sex with my girlfriend for the first time. I had a great time. (age 17).

I wanted to try using drugs with my friends. (age 16).

I wanted to wake mom up early to watch cartoons, for her to share my enthusiasm (age 3).

I wanted to have fun with my mom. We went out and bought celery and apples and ate them with peanut butter. (age 4).

I wanted to have fun putting coins on train tracks with my dad. (age 5).

I wanted to have fun with dad by getting tucked in really tight and then breaking free. (age 4).
4. TO CONNECT WITH, LOVE AND BE LOVED BY,
This category should be applied when the subject wants an enduring and mutual connection with the other person. Whereas wishes for play are short-term, wishes for love are enduring. The requirement of mutuality helps to differentiate wishes for love from wishes for approval, which are more often "me" centered than "we" centered. ***

I wanted to make the relationship with my girlfriend work, to pursue it. (age 22)
I wanted to get to know my older brother, who was kind of a stranger to me. (age 18)
I wanted to be able to be friends with my ex-girlfriend. (age 19).
I wanted to become friends with this guy. (age 10)
I wanted to reconnect with my old boyfriend because I decided I really loved him after all. (age 16).
I wanted to set up a friendship with the girl I had a crush on. (age 14)
I wanted her to be my girlfriend. (age 17).
I wanted more than he could give me, a real steady relationship. (age 15).
I wanted to become friends with this girl who was singing "I want to hold your hand" in German in the shower. (age 15).
I wanted to see my real daddy again and he came over and picked me up. (age 3).
5. **TO ASSERT SELF/ REBEL / CONTROL / DOMINATE**

This wish requires an episode in which there is perceived conflict with the other person, and the subject actively attempts to make his/her wishes known to the other person. The subject might argue, or protest, or rebel, or attempt to take control of the situation. The requirement of *perceived conflict* and of *active attempts to prevail* differentiates this wish from wishes for approval. This active component may not be apparent in the following wishes, but it was apparent in the surrounding narrative.

***

I told him I wanted to listen to my own music without him being obnoxious, knocking on my door saying he wanted to hear something else. (age 18).

I called the irate customer every name in the book; I felt like I should stand up for myself. (age 23)

I confronted my ex boyfriend who raped me and told him he had to help pay for my abortion. (age 16)

I stood up against peer pressure to use drugs. (age 20).

I told my boyfriend to choose between me or drugs. (age 16).

I took revenge on my girlfriend by getting involved with another girl. (age 18).

I stood up to my father, to let him know I didn't want to visit family that day. (age 15).

I tried to convince father not to spank me. (age 6).

I tried to convince my brother not to bring his girlfriend to dinner because I didn't want to be around her. (age 23).

I wanted to express my anger about his killing rabbits to eat. I told him I had a real problem with that. (age 12).

I wanted to have fun swinging in the tree to show my friend's dad that I could pull it off in spite of his order not to swing, but the tree split in half. (age 10).

I wanted my space in the bed; I didn't want him to cross the line, so I would move my brother's hand and we would fight until he fell asleep. (age 10).

I wanted to pick on my bratty cousin by poking, pinching and kicking him under the table. (age 22).

I wanted to do whatever it took to convince my grandparents to stay because I was finally having a social life here and didn't want them to send me away. (age 17).
6. TO HELP OTHER, BE CONCERNED ABOUT OTHER'S WELFARE
This wish describes episodes in which the subject is primarily concerned about the other's welfare, and/or makes active attempts to help out the other person. Unlike with wishes to be helped, the subject is usually the more competent or healthy of the dyad.

***

I wanted to make him smile. He just looked so miserable. (age 14).

I wanted to help this guy on the street who was having seizures; it looked like he was dying. (age 8).

I wanted the pedestrian to be ok; I gave him CPR. (age 22).

I wanted to help my mother who was lying on her back in the hospital, completely helpless. (age 14).

I wanted to obtain visitation rights to get my daughter away from a bad situation. (age 20).

I wanted to spend my community service time helping those old people. (age 20).

I wanted to teach her to read so she could get a driver's license. (age 22).
7. TO AVOID CONNECTION, PAIN, CONFLICT/ MOVE AWAY FROM

This wish entails wanting to distance oneself from the other person in order to avoid contact, continued connection, pain, or conflict. The wish typically occurs in contexts that are aversive for the subject. Unlike with wishes to assert, wishes to avoid entail moving away from discomfort or conflict, rather than moving toward it.

***

I wanted to avoid getting in trouble with the resident advisor for smoking pot. (age 18)

I wanted the cops to get off our backs for borrowing someone's bike, but they gave me a ticket. (age 20)

I wanted to avoid getting in trouble for going in the forbidden room, but dad caught me red-handed. (age 5).

I wanted to avoid the awkwardness of meeting my real father for the first time, on the day of my graduation. (age 17)

I wanted my ex boyfriend to leave me alone and not force himself on me, but he raped me. (age 16)

I didn't want my ex-boyfriend/rapist to tell my new boyfriend that I had had an abortion; didn't want him to cause conflict between me and my boyfriend. (age 16)

I didn't want my boyfriend to find out about my cheating on him. (age 17)

I wanted to avoid having the pedestrian's death on my conscience (age 22).

I wanted to avoid conflict with a friend over who owned a toy; I learned how to keep my mouth shut. (age 6).

I wanted to avoid getting into trouble for playing doctor. I didn't want my friend's dad to tell my parents. (age 6).

I wanted to avoid the stranger's sexual advances and remarks. (age 12).

I wished I could get out of having to play Truth or Dare with this group of brothers and sisters, which was making me uncomfortable. (age 9).