

BRITISH FOCUSING TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

ABOUT BFTA

The British Focusing Teachers Association (BFTA) is an association of people in Britain who are teaching Focusing or using Focusing in a professional context. It is a forum for Focusing Practitioners and Teachers with a high level of peer support amongst its members. Our main arenas for providing this forum are the annual national gathering and regional groups where members can meet face to face and an on-line discussion group.

We want to bring together as many as possible of the people who use Focusing professionally in this country. We support diversity, networking and good practice in the teaching and use of Focusing throughout the UK. We want BFTA to be a forum for exploring and developing many ways of teaching and using Focusing.

AIMS

BFTA exists to support:

- the teaching of Focusing
- the training of Focusing Practitioners and Focusing Teachers
- the appointment of Focusing Primary Mentors
- the further development of Focusing professionals
- applications of Focusing (in counselling, therapy, business, the arts and elsewhere)
- the development of Focusing groups
- the expansion of Focusing's presence in the world

HISTORY

BFTA was formed in 1994 by a group of experienced Focusing teachers who felt there was a need for support for teachers and teaching in Britain. We quickly came to realise that the most important aspect of our meetings was fostering contact and developing a network of support between our members. BFTA has grown over the last few years as newly-qualified BFTA Practitioners and Teachers have joined us, together with Focusing professionals trained elsewhere.

HOW DOES BFTA OPERATE?

In BFTA we have always aimed to have the workings of our organisation be in harmony with the processes of Focusing itself. We are egalitarian, with all members having equal say in how the association is run and having equal access to information, and consulting with our inner sense of an issue to help us find our

way forward. Through listening to our own felt senses and the felt senses of others, we have been able to come to consensual agreement throughout our history – a remarkable achievement in a group of strong personalities.

Within BFTA there are many years of experience with Focusing and teaching Focusing – a living body of experience. We have come to realise that this can never be reduced to rules and regulations or detailed criteria and standards. Instead, we have guidelines and principles which members interpret from their felt sense. Each person has both the freedom to develop their work in ways that feel right with their inner sense, and responsibility for the content and process of their teaching.

We have a Chairperson (currently this role is shared by two people), who is responsible for keeping the work of the association moving forward. Small groups of people are formed as needed to take responsibility for specific tasks or projects. Any member of the association can be a member of any of these working groups.

MEETINGS

We have an annual gathering of BFTA members for networking, Focusing, and carrying forward our business. In the past few years this has been held over a weekend. During the gathering we have a brief business meeting (AGM) in which we make all our decisions by consensus. Often the consensus is to trust a small working group to make decisions on behalf of BFTA as a whole.

Members are encouraged to meet during the year for personal and professional support, peer supervision and mutual learning.

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Membership is open to Focusers with the BFTA Practitioner or Teacher Certificate, or to those with roughly equivalent accreditation – which includes people accredited by The Focusing Institute as Certified Focusing Professionals or Trainers, recognised as Trainers by the Institute for Biospiritual Research, or holding an MA or Post-Graduate Diploma in Focusing & Experiential Psychotherapy from the University of East Anglia (UEA).

FINANCES & MEMBERSHIP FEES

There is a BFTA bank account and a treasurer. We want membership fees to be modest, but sufficient to enable the association to function and grow. The subscription is currently £24 a year.

CODE OF ETHICAL PRACTICE

We have a simple code which consists of general statements of ethical principle, leaving it to the individual to make 'felt sense interpretations' in their actual situation. The code does not lay down rules of practice. We have Focusing-oriented policies on equal opportunities and health and safety, and a mediation procedure for managing complaints or disputes between a Focusing Practitioner or Teacher and a Focusing client or student. These are not prescriptive, and seek to encourage a Focusing and listening approach to resolving issues as they arise.

COMMUNICATION

BFTA members stay in touch with the group as a whole by means of an online discussion list, which is open only to members. Discussions and decision-making in between meetings happen through the list. Members can ask not to be on the list, but may then not be party to some discussions and decisions.

THE BFTA CERTIFICATES & RECOGNITION

BFTA is currently issuing four levels of recognition:

- 'BFTA Focusing Skills Certificate': an attendance certificate given by BFTA-recognised Focusing Teachers to students who complete 10 days of initial training in Focusing, listening and guiding.
- 'BFTA Focusing Practitioner Certificate': a professional qualification for people to give one-to-one Focusing sessions, or to use Focusing in the context of professional work for which they have relevant training. Practitioners can go on to train to teach Focusing to groups if they wish.
- 'BFTA Focusing Teacher Certificate': a professional qualification for teaching Focusing to groups.
- 'BFTA Primary Mentor': an experienced BFTA-recognised Focusing Teacher may apply to become authorised to train Practitioners and Teachers at the annual gathering. Each Mentor's training programme is unique, since (in accordance with Focusing philosophy), each runs their own training programme in their own way.

BFTA Practitioner and Teacher Certificates are awarded to people who have been trained by BFTA Primary Mentors. They can describe themselves as 'BFTA-recognised'.

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FOCUSING INSTITUTE (TFI)

Whilst BFTA is an autonomous organisation, we keep close links with The Focusing Institute in New York (TFI). BFTA members are encouraged to join The Focusing Institute (www.focusing.org).

BFTA-recognised Focusing Mentors are responsible for training Practitioners and Teachers. The four people who are Mentors at present (Peter Afford, Rob Foxcroft, Barbara McGavin and Fiona Parr) are all also TFI Focusing Co-ordinators, and therefore able to offer training leading to both BFTA and TFI certification. Amongst our members, Simon Kilner, Campbell Purton and Greg Madison are also TFI Co-ordinators.

THE FUTURE

We have built a strong, supportive group of people committed to the development of Focusing in Britain. We benefit from having a network, which is both friendly and professional, where we can learn from and with each other. We are using BFTA as a practical learning project, discovering how to run an organisation that respects feelings, bodies and felt senses. The association is a lively space, always developing in new ways.

Well, would you like to join us?

If the answer is 'yes', please complete the application form. You will receive a copy of the Membership Directory (also published on our website - www.focusing.org.uk), Articles of Association, Code of Ethical Practice, Operational Philosophy, Mediation Procedure, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, and the minutes of the last annual meeting.

September 2008

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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Name:
Address:

Tel:
Email:

BFTA certificates held: (Skills, Practitioner, Teacher) and which BFTA Mentor(s) you trained with:

Other Focusing credentials: (Focusing Institute, Institute of Biospiritual Research, UEA, etc.)

What you offer: e.g. workshops, individual sessions, Focusing-oriented therapy, particular applications, special interests, etc.

I wish to join BFTA and enclose a cheque (**payable to BFTA**) for the current annual membership fee of £24 (**£12 if joining after 30th June**).

I am happy to have my details circulated to BFTA members in the BFTA Members' Directory by email or post. **YES/NO**

Signed:

Date:

Please complete this form and send it with your cheque to: Carol Ervine, 4 Wellgate Street, Newport-on-Tay, Fife, DD6 8HS.