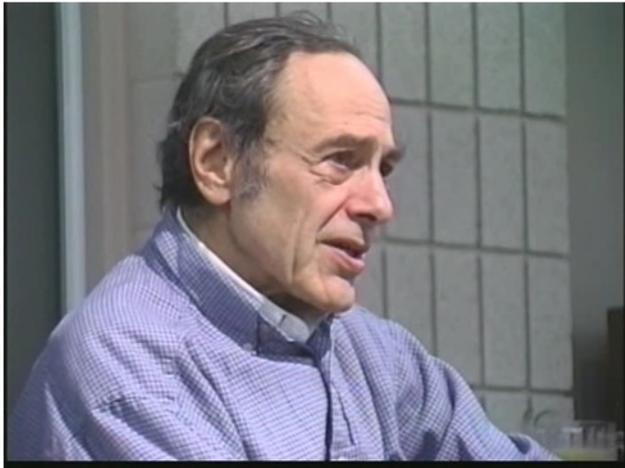




British Focusing Association NEWSLETTER

Issue 8: March 2017



HAPPY 90th BIRTHDAY to Gene Gendlin

<i>CONTENTS</i>	<i>Page No.</i>
Editorials	2
Congratulations Gene Gendlin on Your 90th Birthday	3
'The Shift'—a poem <i>by Helen Evans</i>	5
Listening—a Precious Gift <i>by Karen Liebenguth</i>	6
We Need to Listen Fully	8
Becoming a Better Focusing Partner through Community <i>by Marilyn Harding</i>	9
Focusing and Touch—an Experiential Review <i>by Gordon Adam</i>	10
To Touch or Not to Touch—Focusing, Healing and Touch <i>by Pamela Carr</i>	14
Focusing and the Enneagram <i>by Chris Wilson</i>	17
Focusing and Photography <i>by Manjudeva</i>	19
Introducing Focusing to Women who have Experienced Prison or Immigration Detention <i>by Suzi Mackenzie & Alex Brew</i>	22
Practitioner Profile—Rob Matthews	24
Letters to the Editors	26
Workshops, Events, Groups Listing	26

From the Editors

Gordon Adam

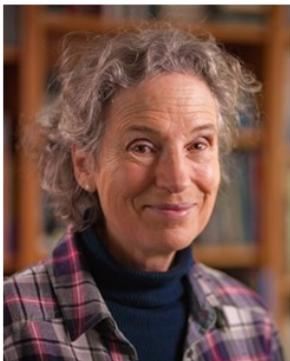


The four months since we sent out the last (November 2016) newsletter have passed very quickly, and I'm pleased to say that the production of this second 'new look' newsletter has gone much more smoothly than the previous one – mainly because Pamela and I now have the experience of hindsight in a whole range of editing and production issues and have 'paced' production more realistically. We described the last issue as a 'bumper issue', but in fact this current issue is two pages longer than that, making this the longest newsletter produced so far! Subscription continues to increase at a steady rate of about 10% per quarter, or about 50% over the last year, and now stands at around 400 subscribers, many of whom (around 25%) are in the US and overseas.

In this issue I am pleased to have an opportunity to present a review of my own experiences of bringing physical contact into Focusing sessions – this is something that has evolved in its own way in my Focusing practice over a number of years and is very much 'work in progress'.

Finally, we are keen for the newsletter to be more interactive, and to stimulate discussion – if you are moved or inspired by any of the content it would be great to hear about it! Send us an email – and we hope to gradually extend the 'Letters to the Editors' section to reflect any dialogue that is stimulated by the newsletter content. www.focusing.org.uk/Gordon-Adam gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk

Pamela Carr



In this issue Gordon and I felt it was important to acknowledge Eugene Gendlin's 90th birthday and it was a joy for me to write the celebratory piece. I'm sending big thankyou's to everyone who has contributed to helping another issue of the BFA Newsletter come to fruition. Thanks to all who wrote sending positive feedback after the last issue, some of which is reflected in 'Letters to the Editors.' Dear authors, I'm appreciating your willingness to share something about your experience of Focusing, which then enriches all our lives. What a challenging, interesting and enjoyable journey it's been for me, going deeply into my own experience of Focusing as I wrote a couple of pieces.

www.focusing.org.uk/Pamela-Carr www.focusingforall.com focusingforall@aol.com

We are considering the possibility of making the newsletter also available as a laser-printed, full-colour, A4 booklet which would be separately subscribed to and sent by post. The cost would depend on numbers printed and postage cost to country of destination, but would be in the range £5-10 per issue. Let us know if you are interested in this option.

Credits

Design & Layout: Gordon Adam

Photographs: Alex Brew, Helen Evans, Manjudeva

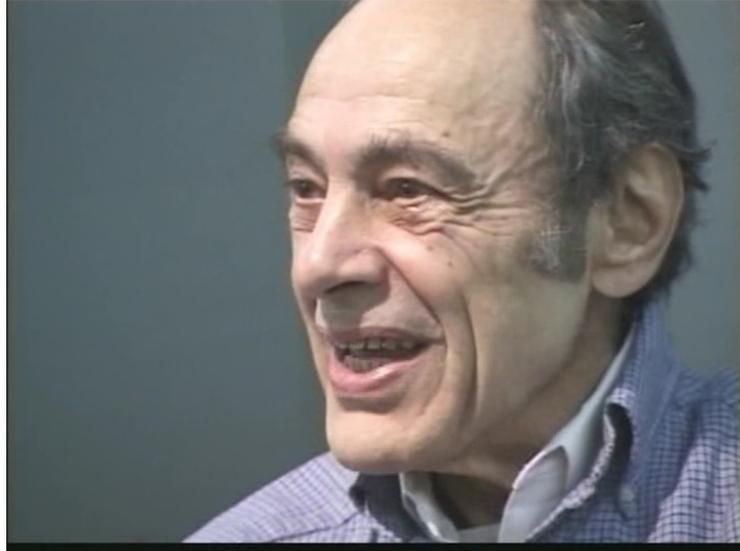
Proof Reading: Carolann Samuels, Pamela Carr

Webmaster: Rob Matthews

Mailchimp: Gordon Adam

Congratulations Gene Gendlin on Your 90th Birthday

By Pamela Carr



An opportunity

Reflecting on Gene Gendlin's 90th Birthday on 25 December 2016, seems to bring a golden opportunity to celebrate his gift to us of Focusing and to express deep gratitude for his life's work, which makes it possible for us to have the benefits of the powerful process of Focusing in our lives too.

About Gene Gendlin

He's a warm, brilliant man who lights up a room with the quality of his listening. (IFI website)

Gene was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1926, but the danger to Jewish families meant that, as a child in 1939, he emigrated with his family to the United States. He became an American citizen and went on to study philosophy at the University of Chicago. Whilst there he also collaborated closely with Carl Rogers, the founder of client-centred therapy. From 1963 to 1995 he taught philosophy at the university and many people were drawn to his first offerings of Focusing during that time. Since his book, *Focusing*, was published in 1978 it has sold over 500,000 copies in at least seventeen languages. In 1986 Gene founded the Focusing Institute, now the International Focusing Institute. He is internationally recognized as a major American philosopher and psychologist and best known for his work with *Focusing* and with *Thinking at the Edge*.

Gene now lives in New York State. His second wife, Mary Hendricks Gendlin, who died in March 2015, worked closely with him to develop Focusing over the years and was the first Director of The Focusing Institute.

Gendlin's writings on Focusing and psychotherapy include:

- *Focusing* (1978)
- *Let Your Body Interpret Your Dreams* (1986)
- *Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy* (1996)

His philosophical works include:

- *Experience and the Creation of Meaning: a Philosophical and Psychological Approach to the Subjective* (1962)
- *Thinking Beyond Patterns: Body, Language, and Situations* (1991)
- *A Process Model* (1997)
- *The Responsive Order: A New Empiricism* (1997)
- *Introduction to Thinking at the Edge* (2004) (in *The Folio*, Vol 19 No 1, 2004).

You can find many of Gene's writings online: www.focusing.org www.focusing.org/gendlin/

Gendlin has received several awards, including these two during his 90th year:

- 2016: "Lifetime Achievement," from the World Association for Person Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counseling
- 2016: "Lifetime Achievement," from the US Association for Body Psychotherapy

Some of my own favourite Gendlin quotes:

What is split off, not felt, remains the same. When it is felt, it changes. Most people don't know this. They think that by not permitting the feeling of their negative ways, they make themselves good. On the contrary, that keeps these negatives static, the same from year to year. A few moments of feeling it in your body allows it to change. If there is in you something bad or sick or unsound, let it inwardly be, and breathe. That's the only way it can evolve and change into the form it needs. Gendlin (1978)

Simply developing more mindful awareness didn't help me to bring the changes in my life that I longed for. It was only through Focusing that I felt safe enough to feel and then to acknowledge and turn towards what I sensed in my body. I came to understand this process that has the power to help things evolve and change. I call Focusing a healing process.

We need not only to feel a Felt Sense, we need to also think. If we only feel a Felt Sense, we only get angry and reactive, and also, if there are only concepts, they are usually old and not about the situation now. A situation is something we understand from our body and do something about it from there. What is a situation? Not just a thought. Yes, get a Felt Sense and then think about it. Focusing Resources (2014)

I love how Gene reminds me to zigzag between the felt sense in my body and whatever thoughts are here. Focusing helps me to take time to sense inside, then to reflect and then check again. This helps something new to come, not just when I am spending time with an issue but also during my day and especially whenever I'm working creatively.

References:

Focusing Resources (2014), *Conversations with Gene Gendlin and Ann Weiser Cornell* online course, November 2014 – Session 4. www.focusingresources.com

Gendlin, Eugene T, (1978) *Focusing*

International Focusing Institute website www.focusing.org

Pamela Carr

www.focusing.org.uk/Pamela-Carr www.focusingforall.com focusingforall@aol.com

The shift

Where Devon's buried deserts
are cut through by cliffs

parched riverbeds collapse
on to the changing shore

and their silts – fossilised
millions of years before –

dissolve, leaving worn stones
in dry, dull, pastel drifts.

I scan the shingle,
graded by the sea,

for rare round cobbles that
fit my palm. Instinctive

choosing – trusting eye and hand.
Relaxed. Attentive.

Then, what I seek shifts
into focus. *It* finds me.

Helen Evans



Photo by Helen Evans

Listening – A Precious Gift

By Karen Liebenguth

Genuine Listening

Eugene Gendlin said this when he spoke to hundreds of psychotherapists at an international congress:

I want to start with the most important thing I have to say: The essence of working with another person is to be present as a living being. And that is lucky, because if we had to be smart, or good, or mature, or wise, then we would probably be in trouble. But, what matters is not that. What matters is to be a human being with another human being, to recognize the other person as another being in there... (Gendlin 1990)

This indeed is at the heart of what makes Focusing partnerships so powerful and so different from Focusing on our own. It's because there is another human being keeping us company. And the most important thing that a Listener can do for the Focuser is to be present - and it's the hardest thing to remember and for many of us the hardest thing to do, despite the fact that it sounds so simple. It's not simple at all because our culture is a doing culture and we constantly think that we need to be helpful, that we need to suggest, give advice, make something happen, that we need to be an expert. It's not quite like that in Focusing.



When was the last time you felt genuinely listened to by your Focusing partner, a friend, spouse, partner, colleague or line-manager...?

When was the last time *you* genuinely listened to your Focusing partner or someone else, your partner, friend, colleague...?

Genuine listening happens when we are fully present for the other person. When we are not distracted and can offer our full attention to

what someone is saying. Taking in what they say without advising, analysing, interpreting or judging and without needing to solve anything for them. The simple act of listening.

Genuine listening happens when we can pay attention to every word the other person is saying. We are aware of how they look and their body language. We are not thinking about the next thing we want to say. This allows us to enter a deeper connection with someone, to empathise with them. It can feel deeply satisfying. As Gendlin says, when we truly listen to someone what matters is that we allow ourselves to be human with another human being.

A precious gift

Listening is highly undervalued, and yet, we all yearn for more moments when someone deeply listens to us. When we feel listened to, in and outside Focusing, we feel respected and considered. We feel valued, heard and understood. It is like receiving *a precious gift* from someone.

How to train our listening ear both in and outside Focusing.

When we fully listen to someone we often feel present, interested, curious, open and relieved that we don't have to say or solve anything. It brings a sense of freedom, connection and companionship. It is also an act of kindness and generosity to give some listening time to someone.

How to train our listening ear both in and outside Focusing.

When we fully listen to someone we often feel present, interested, curious, open and relieved that we don't have to say or solve anything. It brings a sense of freedom, connection and companionship. It is also an act of kindness and generosity to give some listening time to someone.

If you are someone who likes to talk more than to listen, you may want to train your listening muscle a little. You can practice anywhere, not just when you listen to your Focusing partner. You can practice at home with your partner, your children, with your parents, at work with your colleagues, in your social life with your friends or with a stranger at the bus stop or on the train.



Some tips that I have found useful:

When you genuinely want to listen to someone:

- Make an intention to listen fully, i.e. let go of your own agenda and what you want to say.
- Relax into yourself: feel your feet on the floor, take a few deeper breaths.
- Pay full attention to the other person, your Focusing partner, friend or partner – really look at them (this doesn't mean staring at them, just be aware of them without judgement.)
- Now listen – listen intently to what they want to say. When they stop talking, just wait, stay present and keep them company in the silence for it is in the silence that something new can come forward, be heard, be known...
- Notice what it feels like to listen in this way; notice what it feels like for the other person.
- And most importantly, enjoy the experience.

Reference:

Gendlin E.T. (1990). *The Primacy of Human Presence. The small steps of the therapy process: How they come and how to help them come.* (p205-224). In G Lifter, J Rombauts & R Van Balen (Eds.) *Client-centered and experiential psychotherapy in the nineties.* Leuven: Leuven University Press. http://www.focusing.org/gendlin/docs/gol_2110.html

Karen Liebenguth is a BFA Focusing practitioner, a qualified coach and an accredited mindfulness teacher. She works with individuals and organisations to foster personal development. Karen specialises in working with clients outdoors in London's parks and green space because she believes that's where insight, change and creativity can happen most naturally. If you would like to talk more with Karen about her approach, feel free to contact her:

karen@greenspacecoaching.com
www.greenspacecoaching.com



We Need to Listen Fully...

I don't take your words
Merely as words.
Far from it.

I listen
To what makes you talk—
Whatever that is—
And me listen.

Shinkichi Takahashi

We need to listen fully. This is the basis for all compassionate action.

We need to listen not only to the voice of the person who is hurting, but
to her bare feet, the baby wrapped in her shawl, and the stars in the
cold night.

Such full listening helps us hear who is calling and what we can do in
response.

When we listen for the truth of the moment, we know better what to do
and what not to do, when to act and when not to act. We hear that
WE are all here together, and WE are all that we've got.

Mirabai Bush

It is as though he listened
And such listening as his
Enfolds us in a silence
In which at last
We begin to hear
What we are meant to be.

Lao Tzu

Becoming a Better Focusing Companion through Community

by Marilyn Harding

At the end of a recent Focusing session as companion, I was amazed to see the change in the Focuser's face. Where, at the outset, there had been heavy sighs and 'confessions' of mishandling relationships and a deep tiredness had lined her face. Now, her visage was transformed. My friend wasn't smiling exactly, yet there was an inner peace that erased the lines and smoothed away years. I commented about it and upon seeing her reflection, my friend laughed and said, "I can see it."

External circumstances hadn't changed in those twenty short minutes but the internal shift was beautiful to behold in the eyes and expression of one who had been so self-punishing moments before.

I was reminded of what Gendlin said about truth:

What is true is already so. Owning up to it doesn't make it worse. Not being open about it doesn't make it go away. And because it is true it is what is there to be interacted with. Anything untrue isn't there to be lived. People can stand what is true, for they are already enduring it.
Gendlin (1978) *Focusing*

What was showing in the Focuser's face in the beginning was the weight of enduring a truth, and what lifted that weight was to allow the interaction. When we endure rather than open to truth we burden ourselves in ways that deplete us emotionally and physically. It's a privilege to be a companion to another's process—on this occasion, to reflect my friend's process and help her to hold the space that allowed what was a burden to be opened to 'interested curiosity' rather than self-blame. It's a trust that I rely on myself as a Focuser. I can express what I feel in the safety of a caring and attentive other, who, through training and knowledge, will help me create space for truth rather than endure it and help me discern what is true and not true.

As a member of the community growing here in Greece through participation in '*Focusing as a Life Skill*', designed and facilitated by Patricia Foster and Eirini Davleri, I have found the qualities of an effective companion being nurtured through the shared commitment to the community's wellbeing. As one training group blends with the other, there is opportunity to experience various personalities and sensibilities with alternate companions. I find Focuvision (Focusing supervision), which is the regular checking in with either Foster or Davleri, helpful in deepening my sensitivity and developing my skills as a companion as well as integrating my own process. Our dedicated Facebook Page promises to become a lively forum to reinforce our community support and cohesion. I look forward to the expansion of the '*Focusing as a Life Skill*' community as its reach grows and our numbers increase. In all my years witnessing many modalities, I find this experience extraordinary.



Marilyn Harding, a marketing executive, entrepreneur, and writer in the fields of art, holistic lifestyle, innovation and travel, has used her bountiful life and career as a spiritual laboratory to distil the complexity of life into the simplicity of inspired living and everyday happiness. Author of "*Exhilarated Life: Discovering Inner Happiness*" about living the life you are meant to live and "*Yesterday At Justin's*" an illustrated children's book dealing with divorce from a child's point of view, Harding is a frequent contributor to *The Huffington Post* in the U.S. and Greece. Marilyn and her mate, Athan, live on Aegina Island, Greece.

www.MarilynHarding.com www.ExhilaratedLife.com
mh@marilynharding.com

Focusing and Touch: An Experiential Review

By Gordon Adam



Early experiences

Introducing physical contact into Focusing sessions is something that initially arose occasionally and spontaneously for me over a number of years. Here are two examples of such occasions:

My first experience of combining physical contact with Focusing came about 6 years ago when I was companioning one of my regular Focusing partners. My partner got stuck in uncomfortable feelings in her head and just 'keeping it company' wasn't leading anywhere. I had an impulse arise to put my hands on her head and offered this possibility as a suggestion – after a moment of reflection she said "Yes – go for it". I stood behind her and placed my hands lightly on her head and things started to shift immediately – the stuck sensation in her head began to shift and she could feel a flow of energy moving down through her body and into her feet. After a couple of minutes she asked me to change my hand position and to place my hands on her shoulders and the inner movement continued. A few minutes later she said "That's it – it's cleared – you can take your hands off now" and we continued the session in the usual way.

Another opportunity for hands-on Focusing came a few years ago when I companioned a young friend who had recently undergone a 'mental breakdown' and was on quite powerful psychiatric medication. For the first half of the session we seemed to be stuck in a sort of 'no-man's land', and his experience was of unremitting numbness and greyness. I had a sense arise to place my hands on him – I offered this and he accepted. Initially I put my hands on his shoulders and then had a sense of placing my hands level with his heart – one on the chest and one on his back. Quite quickly after this he began to experience feelings of warmth and aliveness in his chest and then sadness came and he started to cry, which was followed by a sort of opening up and unfolding of inner experience. I kept my hands on his body for the second half of the session, and removed them very slowly and gradually a couple of minutes before the session ended. On talking about the session afterwards we agreed that the shift that happened would not have done so if I hadn't placed my hands on his body.

Focusing and Touch Practitioner Project

During 2013-14, one of my Focusing partners, Grace Loveday, did the Focusing Practitioner training programme with Fiona Parr. Grace is an experienced nurse and massage therapist and did her project on 'Focusing and Touch'. This gave each of us a regular opportunity to explore touch in Focusing both as companion and Focuser, and we experimented with a variety of different types of physical contact, both active (massage) and passive (hands placed on body), during our Focusing sessions.

In her project write-up (Loveday, 2014), Grace writes:

Simply by touching the body in an attentive, loving way, the tissues respond. Tension is released, the breath deepens, blood pressure lowers, the immune system is supported, the fascia unwinds, and the chemical and hormonal balance can alter to create a greater sense of well-being and a feeling of calm.

From a session where I was Focuser:

G had the imagery of sinking, being in a tunnel, going deeper – below the ordinary level of consciousness.

When we discussed it later, he said that it felt like his body was unravelling at a deep level; his mind wasn't so engaged.

And from a session where Grace was Focuser:

There was something about the way his touch and connection to me physically gave me permission to rest deeply.

Her experiences of combining Focusing with touch led Grace to conclude:

The general sense, for both myself and the Focuser, is that the session seems longer, slower, quieter and deeper. The Focuser seems to go in to a much more relaxed, deeper state where there is less talking, less story and more following the felt sense in the body, which may be related to where my touch is but not always. For me there's much more of a sense of being totally present and literally in touch with the Focuser's process."

Focusing and Touch Guidelines

My experiences with touch & Focusing have led me to conclude that introducing touch into Focusing needs to be done with care, consideration and sensitivity. With this in mind, here are some suggested guidelines to ensure a positive experience with introducing touch.

Firstly, and importantly, since physical contact isn't a usual part of most people's Focusing experience, the possibility of incorporating touch into the session needs to be flagged up and discussed in advance of the session. Requesting or offering touch during a session without prior consideration by both parties could be disruptive to the unfolding Focusing process.

The incorporation of touch in a session should ideally arise from a bodily felt sense of rightness from the Focuser, or from a suggestion from the companion arising from his/her felt sense (vs. intellect). IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT BOTH THE FOCUSER AND THE COMPANION ARE FULLY COMFORTABLE WITH ANY TOUCH THAT HAPPENS. Also, the level of comfort may change during the touching and should be acknowledged and respected through taking appropriate action.

It is essential that both the Focuser and the companion are fully comfortable with any touch that happens.

Touch can be introduced during the session or initiated from the outset of the session, and the location or nature (e.g. pressure) of the touch can change through the session, as requested by the Focuser, or suggested by the companion.

Touch can be applied anywhere that feels ok for both Focuser and companion.

Some examples:

Holding the Focuser's hand or feet; placing hands on shoulders, head, or head and neck; placing hands on heart, chest, belly, lower back; placing a hand on the Focuser's arm or leg or knee.

It's important to realise that touch or physical contact isn't ok or appropriate for everyone, in or out of a Focusing session, and, as already stated, it is essential that both Focuser and companion individually sense into the ok-ness of touch at any particular time. The Focuser can take time to sense whether the felt sense ITSELF would like touch – an offer of touch from the companion may feel difficult to refuse and HOW it is offered is extremely important. However, we are clear as Focusers that *any* suggestion offered by the companion can be felt into and received or rejected – this equally applies to the offer of touch.

I have a number of face-to-face Focusing partnerships where touch is now part of the normal 'currency' of our interaction, but it is never introduced routinely, and arises in some sessions and not others, according to the felt sense needs of the Focuser at the time.

Although generally fostering a sense of safety, support and containment, touch, depending on the history of the individual, can also feel invasive, intrusive and unsafe, and it is important not to make any

generalising assumptions about the beneficial nature of touch.

All of my initial experimentation with touch happened within the context of established Focusing relationships where a high level of trust already existed. Where I have introduced Focusing touch in a workshop scenario, I have taken time to build a 'safe container' and give clear guidelines and conditions under which touch can be introduced, and ensure that everyone is clear that touch is AN OPTION, the appropriateness of which that must always be freshly sensed into by both Focuser and companion.

I would recommend that touch be avoided if either Focuser or companion is aware of having any sexual feelings for the other person. However it is quite possible that sexual energy may be activated during physical contact – in this case I recommend treating this like anything else that arises into experience during Focusing – with an attitude of friendliness and curiosity and non-attachment. If this is not possible then the touch should be gently discontinued.

How Touch Supports Focusing

I have led a number of 'Focusing & Touch' workshops at various Focusing events over the last year which has deepened my understanding of the value of touch alongside Focusing.

Here is some feedback from experienced Focusers of bringing touch into their Focusing session:

*It provided something that felt like it was needed.
It gave permission for the felt sense to reveal more.
Immediately there was a reaction – tears came and I felt hot all over. The direct hand to hand contact was very supportive.
It provided a holding for what was wanting to unfold there.
I liked the touch aspect – it opened up a particular cohesiveness and connection – this was a big revelation.
It was healing.*

My own experience of what physical contact can bring to the Focusing process is reviewed as follows:

- **It supports presence and 'grounding' for both Focuser and companion.**
- **As Focuser, it deepens my connection with my own experience and with my companion, as companion it deepens my connection with the Focuser.**
- **It enables more connection with embodied experience, often in an easeful way, and a quieting of mental process.** This often leads to a less 'wordy' type of Focusing – it's as if a lot of the communicating, validating and supporting that happens with vocalising and reflecting experience gets bypassed and happens directly through the physical connection, making words redundant.
- **It supports stillness and silence within the Focusing session – it's as if the extra sense of being held through positive touch supports a sense of it being "enough just to be".** This support may be of particular benefit for a Focuser who starts off in an anxious, unsettled or ungrounded state.
- **It enables a more open connection with my unconscious, and often pre-verbal, self. My sense is that it brings facility to connecting with early childhood, even in-utero experience.**
- **Prolonged physical contact in a Focusing way can enable a profound human – human connection that may rarely be experienced outside of an intimate (sexual) relationship.**

Conclusion

I believe that there is a great potential in bringing physical contact into Focusing, and have witnessed it many times bring extra depth, stillness, support and ease to the Focuser's experience. I now routinely introduce touch as an option in my Focusing groups, workshops and retreats.

Reference

Loveday, G. (2014) *Focusing and Touch – an Exploration*. Practitioner Training Project Report.

Gordon Adam lives in Bristol, and for the last 8 years he has been helping build a local community of Focusers, through running introductory workshops, introducing friends and acquaintances to Focusing, facilitating an open monthly Focusing group, and producing a regular local Focusing newsletter. He also runs 5-day Focusing retreats on Dartmoor and in the Southwest, combining Focusing with elements of Buddhist and other practices. Gordon also works as a homeopath and is co-editor of this newsletter. gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk



Grace Loveday has a background in integrative cancer care, facilitating spiritual retreats and massage therapy. Her main interests in Focusing lie in Wholebody Focusing and the use of touch and the links between Focusing and spirituality. She is currently on an extended sabbatical travelling and volunteering around the world and uses solo-Focusing to help manage and process the highs and lows that such a trip entails! kgraceloveday@gmail.com

To Touch or Not to Touch — Focusing, Healing and Touch

By Pamela Carr

Introduction

I've been researching and reflecting for almost a year and it feels as though this theme of Focusing, Healing and Touch is still expanding as even more questions arise. After reading an early draft of Gordon Adam's article on *Focusing and Touch* there was even more impetus to keep exploring, writing, sharing and stimulating discussion with others.

Some of the questions I've been asking myself are: What is Focusing? What is Healing? What is touch? What makes a Focusing session unique? What supports a safe space for a Focusing session? Is it appropriate to add touch into a Focusing session? As this article has evolved it's helped me to clarify my concerns about adding touch into Focusing Sessions.

Presence

Gene's words about the primacy of human presence remind me that *simply by being fully present as a living being with another person is the most important gift we give each other in Focusing*. And I remember



Ann Weiser Cornell saying that without Self-in-Presence it isn't Focusing! In Wholebody Focusing, Addie van der Kooy emphasises the need to establish grounded, whole body, present moment awareness to get out of story and into the body. I value how presence supports my own Focusing sessions and my day to day life too. There are awareness skills which can support presence and as Focusers we each learn our own effective and appropriate ways to come into presence. One way that I learnt from Ann is to use my own hands on my own body, to acknowledge and be with something in me that has shown it wants some touch company. This helps

bring the separation needed for me to Focus, me as presence being with something that's here now. Is it appropriate for the listener to offer touch in order to help herself and/or her Focusing partner to establish and maintain Self-in-presence?

By being in presence, my listener helps me create a safe space for my Focusing process to happen. If she is merged with a 'part', she is likely to speak and act from that and not from Presence. Can I trust my listener's 'parts', which are likely to have their own opinions and agenda? I am concerned that an impulse in the listener to offer touch to the Focuser may be coming from a 'part' that wants to touch, wants to help, heal or fix. Ann gives very clear guidelines to the listener: *Don't try to DO anything - practice not being helpful. Remember, you are not responsible for the Focuser's session* (Cornell 2011).

If the Focuser asks for touch from the listener, it seems important that the listener would acknowledge the request, and then pause to check inside for the rightness of such a move or of an alternative option. The listener might respond by suggesting the Focuser spend some time refreshing Self-in-Presence or inviting the Focuser to place her own hand on her own body. I'm also remembering a Focuser who often brings along a toy bear to Focusing partnership sessions.

I recall Ann saying that *in a Focusing session the Focuser is in charge*. At the beginning of the session the Focuser can say what they would like from their listener, what kind of company. It may even be that

the Focuser wants silence and for the listener to simply be in presence, witnessing and not say anything. If a listener finds this difficult to do, this can be a prompt for refreshing of self-in-presence and an acknowledging of a part that is finding it difficult to do.

Safety and Trust

A Focusing session is about creating a safe space and setting boundaries for equal sharing between partners using Focusing skills and approaches. Might adding touch create unnecessary layers of complexity when we already know that Focusing works without touch? Could it also unbalance the relationship by creating the dynamic of one giving touch and the other one receiving which could evolve into a co-dependent relationship between the Focusing partners? One Focuser told me she realises that her relationship with her regular listener would have been impacted if he had offered touch during her tearful meltdowns. Hippocrates said: 'First, do no harm',

We all have some vulnerable parts and some Focusers may be more fragile than others. Does the addition of touch compromise safety and bring a risk of triggering memories of past abuse or trauma, of creating an overwhelm reaction or causing re-traumatisation? *If we know that Focusing works, can we trust it and trust the natural unfolding of the Focusers process?* I'm recalling the words: 'Don't try to push the river, it flows by itself'. And as Focuser I want to feel the listener's respect for whatever is coming in my process, whatever reasons its how 'it' is right now and however and whenever 'it' wants to change.

In Domain Focusing, Robert Lee emphasises self-empathy and the need for supporting our Focusing process in going 'slowly, safely and surely.' Does the offering of the listener's touch to the Focuser, suggest even subtly, that the Focuser needs some extra help to be present, to make something happen, speed up the process, bring change or make it better? How clear is the Listener about her intention when she offers touch? Is the Focuser more likely to say yes rather than no, because of peer pressure? How easy is it for the Focuser to know how she feels and express what she needs? Even now I sometimes find this hard to do.

Some experiences of touch in Focusing Sessions

As the Focuser in a session in which we both agreed to trial adding touch, I sensed a part asking for some touch. It wanted the listener to support it with an arm around my shoulders and she obliged. It felt good and supportive. But afterwards I realised I had sunk into and been seduced by the warmth and comfort and didn't stay fully in presence. The session had become something other than Focusing. In another session it felt right to express what I needed, from presence, when I sensed the Focuser was merged with a part as he suddenly placed his head in my lap. Could agreement between partners to include touch in their session easily lead to acting out from parts instead of processing from presence? *There are other therapies and techniques available to those people who wish to work with touch and role-play scenarios. And there are lots of ways to benefit from more touch in our lives outside Focusing sessions such as friendly hugs, self-massage, Qigong or sessions with a body-based therapist e.g. massage, shiatsu, hands on healing.*

A disruptive experience during another experimental session, where my listener offered touch, makes me wonder if adding touch could lead to other Focusers also experiencing confusion and distraction from their Focusing process. Is all touch in some way intimate? Could the use of touch during a session easily lead to misunderstanding; or unintentionally activate sexual feelings?

Ethical issues

I'm aware that *even Body Psychotherapists have debated the ethics of using touch with their therapy clients.* I found an interesting piece by Courtney Young who recommends practitioners access training, awareness, self awareness and supervision to examine carefully their reasons for touch, rather than doing it on impulse. He says *"The use of touch is relationally and ethically complex and requires skilful assessment and application."* (Young 2006). I also understand that even for hands-on therapists, the ethics of touch

can be tricky. I read how there can be difficult, confusing and troubling dilemmas confronting touch therapy practitioners, which may seldom be discussed. Are the ethical issues around touch important even if we are sharing Focusing sessions in a non-clinical setting? And as Focusing Practitioners, teachers and mentors is it important for us to value, respect and preserve the essence of a Focusing partnership, without allowing Focusing to be misrepresented or even brought into disrepute with the possibility of complaints or even litigation?

Empowered Focusers

Something comes about how much *I value the development through Focusing of my own capacity for self-care and self-efficacy and the evolving of my own empowerment as a Focuser*. And this is what I want for others. By adding touch into Focusing sessions, might we be diminishing their efficacy as well as disempowering Focusers, especially new people, by putting something in the way of them having all the benefits of becoming confident and competent Focusers?

Continuing on

Some professional body-based therapists are already successfully using their Focusing skills to enhance their practice with clients and I am discovering the benefits of adding these into the hands-on-healing I've been registered to practice for over 25 years. I'm choosing not to use touch in my Focusing sessions and would value wider discussions, including considerations about the ethics of Focusing and touch. For me *a Focusing session is a unique, almost sacred space which calls on both Focuser and listener to be very clear about their aims and intentions, before and during their session, and to practice listening from presence*.

This article is part of a larger body of work which is ongoing. As well as reflecting on my own experience I am searching texts and archives and talking to other Focusers and Practitioners. This continues and I hope my contribution will inspire you to investigate and join the discussion too. I would love to hear from you.

References

Young, Courtney (2006) *To touch or not to touch, that is the question: Doing Effective Body Psychotherapy*
Focusing Resources (2011) *Level One Focusing Skills Course*

Pamela Carr is an enthusiastic Focusing practitioner and teacher, a mindfulness teacher, healer and lover of life. She enjoys exploring new challenges and places, being creative, travelling and sharing all of these with others so they can enjoy them together.

www.focusing.org.uk/Pamela-Carr

www.focusingforall.com

focusingforall@aol.com



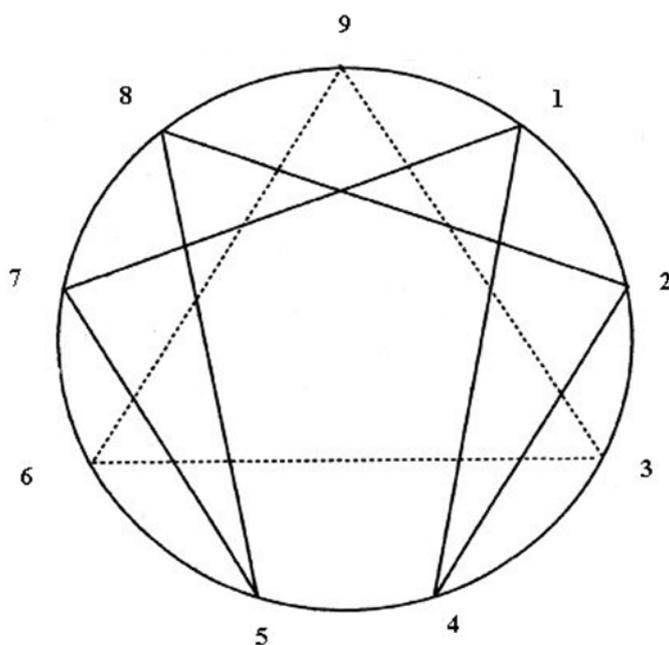
Focusing and the Enneagram

By Chris Wilson

I came to Focusing relatively late in life. Prior to that, I had been steeped in the Gurdjieff tradition, which is a very different thing – based on a complicated cosmology, it is more of a “teaching” than an “uncovering”. Gurdjieff himself always insisted that psycho-spiritual transformation was a “three-centred” journey, in which sensation, feeling and thought had equal importance. Really, what he had in mind was all based on *embodied self-awareness*. But in my experience as a young man, his followers tended towards a kind of rigid intellectualism, scornful of “ordinary life” and not really “embodied” in any sense that I could recognize.

For many years in mid-life I lost contact with the Gurdjieff “system” and developed along different lines. In 1997 I started re-training as a psychotherapist, and soon became interested in Focusing as a body-based, meditative technique. The astonishing thing for me was that I now found I could understand much of what Gurdjieff had been trying to say, for the first time.

One of the most intriguing symbols in the Gurdjieff tradition is the Enneagram:



This has been made into a system of psychological types, which is what most people are referring to when they say “The Enneagram”, however the original symbol was much more than that – a way of representing a transformational process *in three different ways at the same time*: (1) as a triadic *wholeness*, (2) as a *sequence* of discrete events, and (3) as a *process* which has an internal, iterative structure.

Well, I thought, isn’t that what Focusing is about? Preserving the *wholeness* of experience, while understanding something about its psychogenesis? Preserving the implicit complexity, while becoming aware of the explicit meaning? Moving between felt sense and symbolisation, while following the “life-forward” direction?

So, about 12 years ago, I embarked on a journey of discovery, which led to a piece of writing – this never got quite finished. It was buried for 10 years, and then rediscovered by a friend of mine who edits an e-magazine for an institution called The DuVersity. “Why don’t you finish it?” he asked – so I did a comprehensive rewrite, with the benefit of many more years of experience, and he duly published it in his

magazine. If you're interested in how Focusing can be represented on an ancient Sufi symbol, and you're prepared for a long and rather dense read, you can access the article – 'Gendlin and the Enneagram' – at: <http://www.duversity.org/PDF/DUVERSITY%20NEWSLETTER%20No37.pdf>

In the article, I show how the Focusing process “maps” onto the Enneagram with an almost uncanny “rightness of fit”. Here is how the Focusing process corresponds with the Enneagram symbol:

Enneagram of the Focusing Process:

0/9 The Situation (“That Whole Thing”)

- 1 Preparing to Focus
- 2 Inviting what comes

3 The Felt Sense

- 4 Identifying the Situation
- 5 Finding a Symbol

6 The Image or Symbol

- 7 Placing the Symbol in Context
- 8 Reaching for Meaning

The article also suggests that there may be a further stage beyond the process of resonating felt sense and symbol, and that is to *think about* the implications of the Focusing session, maybe pondering about how it fits into (or changes) the narrative of your life and seeing what implications this may have for the way you live it. The symbol is suggesting that something like this may be needed in order to complete the process.

Chris Wilson has been a Focuser for about 16 years, now living in Bristol, UK. He was a member of J.G.Bennett's research team in the 60's, studying the work of the G.I.Gurdjieff, who first brought the Sufi symbol known as the Enneagram to the attention of Western students.

Chris was intrigued by the fact that the Enneagram was described by Bennett as 'a complete representation of any process of transformation', so he set out to test this assertion. He researched whether a Focusing session could be fully represented by the Enneagram symbol, and found - to his astonishment - that it fit extremely well, and seemed to indicate that there is a further stage in the Focusing process that isn't normally seen as part of it, but could possibly make all the difference. chriswilson@phoncoop.coop



Focusing and Photography: Letting the World Speak to You

By Manjudeva

*Let yourself be silently drawn by the strange pull of what you really love.
It will not lead you astray. Rumi*

I'll start by being candid and saying that for me, photography is a kind of obsession. Or that the obsession came first and then I started to make sense of why I was doing it! For me it is a contemplation of beauty, of the majesty of life as it is. It is about finding life and aliveness amidst chaos and it is the sharing of this sensibility with others. It's about finding symbols out there that speak to me and to others. And in all honesty, seeing and finding this beauty helps to keep me sane.



1. Caught leaf

Over time though, I have seen how photography interacts with Focusing, not in a formal way, like doing Focusing as a preparation to take pictures (though that might be a good thing) but more as an interaction on a bodily/feeling level.

For me, when I am with my camera, everything else disappears; including my life troubles and worries and I enter a space of curiosity, wonder, appreciation and searching. One search that goes on is that some part of me or story in me is looking to find itself mirrored in the world, looking to find a symbol that speaks to it. Like a dream image. The world is full of such symbols if you look.



2. Leaf and metal



3. Cables

Another search is for symmetry and beauty in the mundane. These surprise offerings bring me delight and a kind of relief that I find hard to put into words. I marvel at how pattern and symmetry bring joy in my body. Indeed visual artists have been fascinated by this for centuries, this mystery and magic of composition and form.

A related theme that runs very deep for me and for many photographers is abandoned places, indeed there is a whole genre dedicated to it. These places call me, and I often find myself jumping over a fence to get to them. I love the whole atmosphere of these places; the sense of a life lived and then left behind, of past worlds that no longer have relevance. They are filled with senses and textures and stories. And within them you always find nature re-asserting itself. I often think of how in a thousand years these and many places will be forests once more and it starts with these tiny sparks of life.



4. Hidden life



5. Warehouse

They hold a personal story of healing from my past ... one of finding beauty amidst chaos and destruction and they express something more universal - the collective human story of how all things pass and fade... people, mountains, empires, planets and stars. This poem by Anna Akhmatova seems to say more about it...

Everything is Plundered

*Everything is plundered, betrayed, sold,
Death's great black wing scrapes the air,
Misery gnaws to the bone.
Why then do we not despair?*

*By day, from the surrounding woods,
Cherries blow summer into town;
At night the deep transparent skies
Glitter with new galaxies.*

*And the miraculous comes so close
To the ruined, dirty houses—
Something not known to anyone at all,
But wild in our breast for centuries.*

Anna Akhmatova

Of course in a very literal sense you are Focusing when taking pictures - or I might describe it as allowing the world to speak to you and for some of it to come into focus. The choice of what to rest attention and to focus on (as in the photographic meaning) is a kind of sensing in itself. What wants to be seen here? What wants to show itself?

And a similar process continues...

When I get home and look more fully at what I have taken (I prefer to leave it a few days like I had to with film) a whole other process happens. First I delete the ones that are technically not right in some way - for me. Then I sit with each one and enquire... does this image, or might this image, have a quality of aliveness in some way? If it does I keep it, if not then it gets deleted. There are some that I am not sure about yet and they get to stay also. With the ones that really seem alive, I might edit them a little, to enhance some aspect or to crop so they look just right.

All this is very much 'work in progress' and even more so is what happens next: how they get shared. Some go on my website and social media, some might get printed and I am considering exhibiting locally. For me this is part of the process, I don't just want a hard drive full of images that no-one looks at; these images want to be seen.

You don't need loads of expensive equipment to do any of this. It is true that certain cameras can bring creative possibilities that are simply impossible in others... but any camera can do the above. Some of my best pictures are taken with a mobile phone. Any camera can capture something you love and let the world speak to you...



***Manjudeva** spent 12 years practicing and teaching awareness and meditation skills to groups and individuals in a Buddhist context. He trained with Ann Weiser Cornell in "Inner Relationship Focusing" in the USA and with Peter Afford in the UK and has been a certified Focusing practitioner and teacher with the British Focusing Association (BFA) and the International Focusing Institute (IFA) since 2005. He is a BFA mentor and IFA Coordinator, offering training for Focusing practitioners and teachers. Manju is also qualified in Somatic Experiencing (SE), a short-term, body-based approach to healing and easing the effects of trauma. His interest in photography began at art school in the 1980's and was re-kindled in 2011 by the birth of his son.*

*There are more of Manju's photographs here: www.transiencephotography.co.uk
www.livingfocusing.co.uk manju@livingfocusing.co.uk*

Introducing Focusing to Women who have Experienced Prison or Immigration Detention

By Suzi Mackenzie, from an interview with Alex Brew

As a member of the British Focusing Association's Diversity group I am interested in the variety of ways that our Focusing Community is reaching out to include people from different cultures and backgrounds, including those from disadvantaged groups, and so I decided to interview Alex Brew on a project that she had worked on. I hope that others who have worked on similar projects or using the Community Wellness Model may also share something of their work in the newsletter so that we can share our practice, inspire and learn from each other as well as appreciating the great work that's happening with Focusing.

In 2015 Alex Brew and Kay Hoffmann introduced Focusing to a group of women who had experience of being detained either in prison or in immigration detention centres. The sessions were delivered as part of the Women's Health Project London. Free clinics, workshops and classes were on offer as part of a range of practices such as self-massage, Focusing and herbalism. Individuals attending a one to one session of Focusing experienced a guided Focusing session and some teaching. Then, towards the end of the project, as well as having potentially experienced other practices, the women were part of a Focusing workshop.



Photo by Alex Brew

Alex has an interest in self-help, empowering women and working against an authoritarian environment. She and the other women in the collective are activists of some sort. Their emphasis was on changing the system, people doing things for themselves rather than receiving services: *"The women who have experienced those things [prison and immigration detention] have experienced the most brutal edge of our society and... the project in general was trying to give people the tools to resist that. Most women working on the project had some experience of some sort of oppression themselves either because of sexuality or poverty or having been in prison themselves."*

The group was advertised to the women's centre where the All African Women's Group is based and to networks of other women's groups, most of which were grassroots groups. Many of the group members who came already knew Alex or her colleagues.

"At the time I was working in a women's centre where I was doing some of the housework and reception work for a group of women who were self-organising to get their immigration status sorted out. Another woman in the collective had been in prison herself. So that's where people came to the project from."

There was some funding available for the project, much of which went to travel costs. *"People who are awaiting a decision to be made by the home office aren't allowed to work. The decision can take years, literally years, and during that time people are destitute – women with kids who have sometimes experienced rape and torture, or are trying to raise their families out of hardship, are living in this rich country destitute. This means you could be living off as little as about £35 a week, while the Home Office considers your claim, but to claim that money involves the risk of being removed and deported. So something as simple as covering travel expenses makes a massive difference in terms of whether people can get to you."*

In the workshop women shared their understanding of Focusing, with those who'd experienced one to

one Focusing sessions explaining what it was like. Language was somewhat of an obstacle but the team used what French they knew and women who had more of an understanding of English helped each other by translating. The team found that sometimes language was a barrier in terms of trying to be understood, however:

"For women who didn't have much language there was a lot more... hands... and body stuff, a lot of women they were expressing the agitation in their bodies... there was maybe more time spent with the felt sense and less time spent on the talking around it. There was maybe more careful choice of words because of the language difficulties".

What advice would Alex give to people considering introducing Focusing to a socially marginalised group? Knowing the context people live in and not blaming them for it is crucial – and having empathy and awareness.

"If people want to think about working with particular groups, it's really important to do the reading about what the context is that people are living in and really respecting people – that if they're struggling, there's usually a reason... there's usually some context they're living in that's really unbearable... The fact that people are being kept in solitary confinement – and if you're kept in solitary confinement for two weeks, it actually changes your brain – just knowing stuff like that – the kind of torture people are up against, I think really helps you to have empathy and not treat people like you know best. When you're in those situations you're so disrespected by people, the best thing that can come along is somebody who gets your situation and really respects what you're going through".

In Alex's view grassroots organisations create less of a barrier between the practitioner and the other person. She's keen on empowering people to act for themselves rather than look to professionals: *"What I love about Focusing is that you're really encouraged to do that. One of the instructions, in a way, is you're the Focuser, you're the one who's in charge of your session, you have to tell me if you want things different."*

"The project was an attempt at something and in some ways it worked and in others it didn't – it was more service provision than we had hoped, and it was short-term, which I know felt like a loss to some of the women, but I really appreciated the feedback we got – like some of the enjoyment people had with it, the physical pains easing during the Focusing sessions, and some of the camaraderie in the workshop."

If you have worked on a project delivering Focusing training in the Community Wellness model, or delivered training to people from minority groups or who might otherwise find it hard to access Focusing, we would be glad to have more articles on this topic. Alex is happy to be contacted by anyone interested in her project or considering doing something similar.



Suzi Mackenzie is a Person Centred Counsellor and Focusing Practitioner with a keen interest in mental health. Suzi is available for one to one Focusing training in Sussex and London and is hoping to offer Focusing training for wellbeing in the community in the future.

www.suzimackenzie.com suzimac55@hotmail.com

Alex Brew works as an activist and artist and is a BFA-recognised Focusing Practitioner. She loves doing one-to-one sessions with people, helping them to go deeper with their own Focusing practice and uncovering the life moving in them. Alex is also using Focusing as a way of deepening and engaging with her own art and activism.

Alex is involved with the Women's Health Project London offering one-to-one sessions with women who've experienced prison and detention and she is interested in offering more workshops and one-to-one sessions to activists and artists.

<https://drawingonfocusing.wordpress.com/> alexandbrew@gmail.com



Practitioner Profile – Rob Matthews

You only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves.

Mary Oliver

I was enjoying a walk just earlier today, I was bubbling with curiosity...just what is this life...I thought to myself? An image of a beautiful Persian carpet came to mind, an image alive with a kind of glow and preciousness. I sat down with it for a few moments, feeling and marvelling at its richness and intricacy, and bit by bit, it unfolded into different coloured strands, each carrying a differentiated flavour. Each carrying the feel of this wondrous living...of my living...and right there I felt such heartfelt gratitude for this wonderful gift called Focusing. And as I stayed with that sense of “gratitude for Focusing”, I felt the vast familiar unknown, that vague and fuzzy edge, waiting to be experienced, to be discovered, to be known. And it is this knowing that I treasure so much, that Focusing has given me a way to know, to know myself beyond the self-deceptive thoughts and the clever ideas, a knowing that is dependable and leads me to an inner authenticity and congruence that brings unsurpassable joy to my living.



Fragment of a carpet from Turkestan with the subtle light of green and yellow and red

I first came across Focusing in the early 90s whilst doing a counselling training. Although initially interested and even inspired by what I read, I put Focusing to one side while I investigated other approaches to healing, inner transformation and personal growth.

Later on, having found a deep curiosity and love for inner work – an inner work that includes a body, for that type of reflexive felt activity which leads to increasing well-being, to flourishing and deep authentic living – I found myself working with others in this way. It took a friend to point out that the core of what I was doing was a “kind of Focusing”. Recognising this led me to train as a Focusing practitioner.

In working with clients my hope is that each will discover their “soft animal of your body”, and more importantly, just what it loves, and that they discover meaningful connection to their core-self, leading to greater authenticity and well-being. I hope my clients might come into relationship with a body that

knows just what it needs to move forward and flourish, a body that will guide them to discover meaning and joy in everyday living.

As such, Focusing is at the very core of all my individual sessions and workshops. I view Focusing not as simply a tool to solve personal problems and move beyond difficulties but as an essential resource that when applied to the whole of our living leads to increasing human flourishing. And this in turn seems to bring a shift to our centre of gravity, dropping into the “body” itself, from where we can experience “life is living us”. Furthermore, we might say that living itself becomes more of a sensing for that which the soft animal of our body loves...and in that, “loving” well-being may be discovered.

In some of the workshops and courses offered I weave Focusing in with mindfulness, self-inquiry and other methods drawn from eastern and western philosophy, psychology and spirituality to generate insight into the fixed assumptions and ideas around identity – who I am, and what the world “is”. This loosening of identifications, conceptual structures and fixations naturally opens up an inner space that draws the participant closer to the spiritual, a discovery of a living reality, and our place within it.

Discovering and letting the soft animal body love what it loves, finding that inner “something”, Gendlin’s “it”, the living being we are that wants to live life...is a game changer, and I take great pleasure in witnessing others discover that for themselves.

I never to cease to marvel how the simple Focusing act can bring about that “living forward” in the most unlikely and stuck places and how what we might think of as negative holds the key to its own life...

***Rob Matthews** is based in the mountains of the Sierra Nevada, Granada, Spain and visits the UK to offer seminars and workshops. He offers individual sessions, Focusing Skills and other workshops & trainings in person and via Skype/Zoom. He offers a series of workshops that he has named Whole Body Living that includes aspects from other methods drawn from eastern and western philosophy, psychology and spirituality.*

www.RobCMatthews.com

www.WholeBodyLiving.co.uk

robcmatthews@gmail.com



Letters to the Editors

Our own enthusiasm and creativity as editors is supported and inspired by connecting with you, our authors, contributors and readers. We welcome your pictures, letters, comments, questions, ideas, and requests...in addition to your articles. If something in this newsletter resonates with you in some way, we would love to hear from you. After the November 2016 Newsletter we had a post-box full of compliments. Thanks again to all who wrote. Here are just a few:

I just wanted to say that the Newsletter looks great and I'm really looking forward to reading more of it. I love the fact you're emphasising creative aspects and involving more of the international Focusing community. Thanks so much Gordon and Pamela for carrying on this really valuable resource for us!
All the best, Suzi Mackenzie

Thank you so much for making and sending this beautiful newsletter. It is really a treasure of information. Something to keep in my treasure box and read and read again to get inspired and reminded of the beautiful conference we have had in Cambridge. With much appreciation,
Aaffien de Vries

Yes, thank you all for the newsletter, it looks fantastic. It really shows how much work, care and love went into it.
Karen Liebenguth

Really impressed! Interesting and very professional. I think you have all done an amazing job on it – just as professional as and far more fascinating than anything you could find on a magazine aisle! Go Focusers! Well done!
Caroline Redmond

Wow! I really like the new layout, and all of that content. Such variety. I can't wait to read it all - and take my time to savour all those special contributions. Thank you Newsletter Team and contributors. What a fantastic job. Congratulatory wishes,
Carolann Samuels

Forthcoming Workshops & Events

March 2017

Children Focusing Day Malvern, Worcestershire. Sunday 12th March. 10am–4pm. £10 booking fee. A UK gathering of people interested in, or already using Children Focusing.

www.childrenfocusinguk.org sueakehurst@gmail.com

Finding Your Body's Wisdom (Introductory workshop) with Manjudeva
Bristol. 18/19th March. www.livingfocusing.co.uk manju@livingfocusing.co.uk

Self-in-Presence (BFA Focusing skills certificate Level 2) with Paula Newman and Elizabeth Smith
London (NW). 20/21st March. www.paulanewmancounsellingservices.co.uk

April 2017

Focusing-Oriented Therapy Level 2 (BFA Skills Certificate) with John Threadgold.
Manchester. 1/2nd April. http://pccsworkshops.co.uk/?page_id=837

'Focusing: Listening & Learning from the Body' with Greg Madison.
Introductory workshop for helping professionals. Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire. 1/2nd April.
www.gregmadison.net hughknopf@rocketmail.com

Navigating a Life (Free online seminar) with Manjudeva
Online. 4th April. www.livingfocusing.co.uk manju@livingfocusing.co.uk

'The Gifts of the Body in Focusing' 2-day residential workshop with Kay Hoffmann
Near Mancetter, Warwickshire. April 7–9th kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk

Listening to Your Body's Wisdom (Introductory workshop) with Manjudeva
Shrewsbury. 22/23rd April. www.livingfocusing.co.uk manju@livingfocusing.co.uk

Navigating a Life (6 week online course) with Manjudeva
Online course starts 26th April. www.livingfocusing.co.uk manju@livingfocusing.co.uk

'Focusing with the Whole Body' weekend workshop with Kay Hoffmann
Stroud. April 29/30th. kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk

Focusing & Dreams with Peter Afford
London. 29/30th April. www.focusing.co.uk peter@focusing.co.uk

May & June 2017

Focusing & Companion (BFA Focusing skills certificate Level 3) with Paula Newman and Elizabeth Smith
London (NW). 22/23 May. www.paulanewmancounsellingservices.co.uk

The Interconnected Body: Focusing & Interconnectedness with Manjudeva
Bristol. 10/11th June. www.livingfocusing.co.uk manju@livingfocusing.co.uk

The Inner Critic (BFA Focusing skills certificate Level 4) with Paula Newman and Elizabeth Smith
London (NW). 12/13 June. www.paulanewmancounsellingservices.co.uk

Practitioner training workshop Low-cost weekend camp with Kay Hoffmann
Near Darlington. June 9–11th kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk

July & August 2017

Thinking with the Felt Sense with Peter Afford
London. 1/2nd July. www.focusing.co.uk peter@focusing.co.uk

Trauma & Action Blocks (BFA Focusing skills certificate Level 5) with Paula Newman and Elizabeth Smith.
London (NW) 10/11th July. www.paulanewmancounsellingservices.co.uk

Focusing Summer Camp 'The Healing Power of Touch with a Focusing Awareness' with Alex Maunder
Brittany, France. 17th –23rd July. www.wholebodyfocusing.org alex.maunder4@gmail.com

BFA Summer Focusing Camp 4-day family-friendly holiday-weekend camp
Near Cheltenham. 24th–28th August. gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk

Local Focusing Groups

Bristol Insight Focusing Group. Meets monthly in Bristol on the second Sunday of the month from 10am–1pm. Contact: Gordon gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk

Stroud Focusing Circle. Meets monthly in Stroud on the first Tuesday of the month from 7.30–9.45pm. Contact: Manjudeva manjudeva@gmail.com

Resources & Further Information

British Focusing Association (BFA) www.focusing.org.uk

For further information about all matters relating to Focusing in the UK, including list of practitioners, articles, events, training, resources, etc. To see past issues of the newsletter click on 'Resources' on the home page, or www.focusing.org.uk/resources and scroll down till you see 'Newsletters' and click on the button.

To sign up to receive this newsletter regularly go to the home page of the BFA website. Enter your email address in the subscribe window on the right below the pictures .

International Focusing Conference 2016 www.focusingconference2016.uk

As well as listing all of the workshops and presentations at the conference, the conference website also includes, amongst other things, a range of articles by workshop presenters, summaries of Focusing activity in different countries throughout the world, and a gallery with photos & videos from the conference.

The International Focusing Institute www.focusing.org

The International Focusing Institute (formerly The Focusing Institute) is the 'world HQ' of Focusing and is a source of all sorts of information about Focusing. The website gives access to the Gendlin Online Library as well as lots of articles on a wide range of subjects by other Focusing teachers. The website also carries nearly 100 (30-50min) audio interviews conducted by Serge Prengel with a wide variety of Focusing teachers that have been recorded since 2008—these can be streamed or downloaded from the website.

Newsletter Involvement & Contributions

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome and invited. This includes articles, poems (yours or someone else's), book reviews, photographs or pieces of art (photos of), news, event details, etc. Articles should generally be in the range of 500—1200 words.

Inclusion of articles will be at the discretion of the editors, and some contributions may be held over for inclusion in a future issue.

Please feel free to contact us if you would like to discuss an idea you have for an article.

Help in producing the newsletter is also welcome and we invite anyone who would like to be involved to get in touch—this could be editing, design & layout, proof-reading, distribution, etc.

Feedback & Ideas

Your feedback is invited! We would really like to know what you think of the newsletter and if you have any suggestions or ideas for its development. Please send an email with feedback to Pamela or Gordon. We hope to add extra features in forthcoming issues.

Forthcoming Issues of the Newsletter

We are planning to publish the newsletter 3 or 4 times a year and would appreciate receiving your submissions as soon as possible for the next issue in July 2017. The deadline for receiving contributions for this issue is **20th May 2017**.