



# British Focusing Association NEWSLETTER

Issue 10: November 2017



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# From the Editors

## Gordon Adam



I am delighted that our first ever UK Focusing Community Camp was such a great success – see Alejandra Johnson’s account of her own experience being on the camp, and the subsequent pages of camp photos and ‘resonant’ poems & quotes. The organising team (Kay, Camilla and I) are already on track for planning a second camp next year – details will be announced as soon as venue and dates are confirmed.

This issue has a strong international flavour, with contributions from Focusers in the US (Paula Nowick & Linda Bourassa), Canada (Nada Lou), Germany/US (Evelyn Fendler-Lee), Spain (Alejandra Johnson), Scotland (Rob Foxcroft) and England (Manju and me) – this really brings home to me the global nature of the community of Focusers which we are part of and who read and contribute to this newsletter.

My own contribution to this issue (p.11) is, in a way, an invitation to explore a more ‘spiritual’ form of Focusing – one where there is less emphasis and concern about ‘self’ and ‘personal problems’ and more a sense of opening up to the healing power of stillness, silence and ‘the bigger picture’. Paula’s article which follows mine, with her emphasis on *comfort*, I think further extends the possibilities of ‘non-problem-focused Focusing’. [www.focusing.org.uk/Gordon-Adam](http://www.focusing.org.uk/Gordon-Adam) [gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk)

## Pamela Carr



Thanks again to all our contributors who have helped this publication to develop such an interesting, rich and international flavour during 2017. In each of the three Newsletters there has been a piece relating to Eugene Gendlin. Through writing and editing it’s been a real privilege and pleasure for me to help celebrate his 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday, to commemorate his life and legacy and then to share some of Nada Lou’s memories. I’ve learnt a lot and had fun collaborating with four more authors for this issue.

There are plans afoot for a second World Day of Listening on 21<sup>st</sup> October this year, with details at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Worldlistening/>. My hope is that this day of global publicity, activities and events will be well received and inspire many more people to find ways to listen to each other better during 365 days a year. This quote seems to reflect the special kind of listening that those who know Focusing are familiar with:

*The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention..... A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words.* Rachel Naomi Remen

There is a Turkish proverb: ‘*If speaking is silver then listening is gold*’, and it reminds me how precious all of our sharing is...

[www.focusing.org.uk/Pamela-Carr](http://www.focusing.org.uk/Pamela-Carr) [www.focusingforall.com](http://www.focusingforall.com) [focusingforall@aol.com](mailto:focusingforall@aol.com)

### *Credits*

Design & Layout: Gordon Adam

Photographs: Jane Brown, Gordon Adam, Alejandra Johnson Stapells, Linda Bourassa

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# From the Sofa

By Rob Foxcroft and Susan Jordan

## Summer Camp

We are delighted by the great success of the low-cost summer camp for Focusers and warmly acknowledge the careful planning and sensitive facilitation which (along with the good weather) made it so special.

## British Focusing Network

Many years ago, Focusers in Britain set up the British Focusing Network, which had three purposes: to help Focusers contact one another (this was before the internet!), to support peer-Focusing events, and to sustain the newsletter.

After a few years, the Network fell silent because nobody took on its administration. Its money has been lying dormant in a bank account. We want to thank Brendan Hickey for his patient efforts to persuade the bank to release the Network's funds. The money is now in the bank account of the British Focusing Association.

This money will be used for the support of peer-Focusing in Britain, since that is the purpose for which it was given.

## Annual Gathering

The Annual Gathering of the British Focusing Association will take place in November. The gathering is open to BFA Practitioners, Teachers and Mentors, and has made it possible to build a strong network of Focusing professionals in Britain. We look forward to seeing many of our colleagues at the gathering.

We are glad to note all the work done by BFA members to support the development of the wider community of Focusers.

## Rob Foxcroft

*Early on, I was blessed with three teachers who were gentle, musical and kind: Philip Radcliffe, Guy Jonson and Maisie Aldridge. I began to teach. I looked for ways for human beings to learn and grow and relate to one another that would not be essentially authoritarian, but respectful, benevolent and free.*

*In 1988 I went to Chicago to study with Gene Gendlin and became a Focusing Coordinator. I studied the person-centred way of being with Brian Thorne and his colleagues. Now I teach piano-playing, offer spiritual accompaniment, and teach people the principles of meditative listening.*

[rob@robfoxcroft.com](mailto:rob@robfoxcroft.com)



*Susan Jordan is a sofa-person of the BFA together with Rob Foxcroft. She has been a Focusing practitioner and teacher since 2003 and is also a Core Process (Buddhist-based) psychotherapist and supervisor. She runs workshops on Focusing for Psychotherapists and Focusing for Writers and is interested in the crossovers between Focusing and Buddhist meditation.*

*Besides teaching Focusing and being a committed Focuser, she is a writer and poet; her first poetry collection will be published in 2017. She lives in Devon, close to Dartmoor, and loves the moor and the south Devon coast.*

[susanjord@gmail.com](mailto:susanjord@gmail.com)

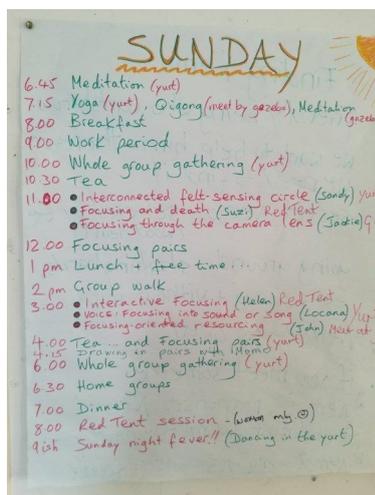
# Living Focusing: Reflections on the first BFA Summer Focusing Camp

By Alejandra Johnson Stapells

Last August, I travelled from my hometown Sevilla, in Spain, to participate in the BFA summer camp. From the moment I received and read the proposal I knew I wanted to go. The opportunity to have one-to-one Focusing sessions over a period of four days was attractive to me but I was also drawn to the outdoor setting and the invitation to co-create something as a group; the latter two aspects stood out as something unique that I wanted to be part of.

## What I liked most about the camp

I loved the open, flexible and horizontal organisational structure, with workshops emerging on a day-to-day basis in response to offerings and requests. I thought it brought a fresh quality to each day (in the Focusing spirit) and was very inclusive of everyone's interests, needs and talents. The size of the camp with 35-40 people was perfect for the sake of both diversity and intimacy and the odd jobs we all signed up to were a great way for connecting with others on a different level and contributed to the community feel and the horizontal structures.



## About the organisation

Gordon, Kay and Camilla, the organisers of the camp, embodied many of the qualities that help bring the Focusing process forwards: non-directiveness, kindness, presence... they transmitted these qualities throughout our time together. I observed an alignment between their vision, the design of the camp and what then took place in a way that really impressed me. Their decisions in relation to the group size, the venue-type and layout of the programme had a positive impact on the way we interacted with each other, our relationships and the activities that took place. I admired their ability to design something which was simple and flexible enough to enable us to navigate the camp as a community, and as individuals, and at the same time to create the conditions for something new to happen each day, bringing the camp forwards beyond my expectations.

Creating a safe environment where each person's uniqueness and innate potential was valued, being perceptive and responding to what can't be predicted in advance, and trusting the process itself, were indispensable components of the camp and its organisation.

## What I learnt on the camp

At a more personal level, I valued having four days to stay connected with a felt sense and having time to explore and come back to something which was very subtle and quiet. I find that pausing is one of the most useful resources in the Focusing process, and it was easy to pause in the context of the camp. Another key learning was to 'live' Focusing within and beyond the structures I am familiar with, such as one-to-one partnerships or a one-off Focusing session. I truly felt I was living





Focusing throughout the camp in a relaxed way – in the sessions, at meal times on the lawn, or sitting around the camp fire. The opportunity to Focus outdoors and generally spend so much time in the beautiful surroundings helped me experience Focusing from a more spacious and loving place and it allowed a shift in my perception of self. In this way, Focusing became more of a living process of relating to myself, to others and to nature.

I've recently had a glimpse into Thomas Berry's concept of Inter-dependence (originally inspired by Thich Nhat Hahn's concept of Interbeing) which somehow describes what I

observed and experienced on the camp. It is this idea that we only exist in relation to 'other': that everything exists because of everything else; that one thing can't exist without the existence of all else; that one thing contains the information of all other things. In summary, what I most appreciated from being at the camp was the *quality* of connection with myself, others and nature.

### Imagining next year's camp

With one full year to prepare for the next camp, it is only logical that it will mature into something more structured. Offers and requests might be made in advance. Perhaps some workshop leaders might value the opportunity to prepare something with more time. I can't imagine they'd want to come across as 'experts'. It might be an idea to offer space for workshop leaders to identify a new field of inquiry for them, a 'work in progress' that could somehow be tested at the camp with other Focusers. As for workshop requests, those which were most popular and fell short of time could be repeated and explored in more depth. Having said all this, a balance will need to be found between pre-programmed, somewhat 'fixed' activities, and space for emergence.

### With gratitude

I wanted to end with this piece by thanking everyone at the camp for making it truly unique and for making me feel part of a wider focusing community. I hope new connections can continue to be made between Focusers in Spain and the UK.

### Interbeing

*"If you are a poet, you will see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper. Without a cloud, there will be no rain; without rain, the trees cannot grow; and without trees, we cannot make paper. The cloud is essential for the paper to exist. If the cloud is not here, the sheet of paper cannot be here either. So we can say that the cloud and the paper inter-are. "Interbeing" is a word that is not in the dictionary yet, but if we combine the prefix "inter" with the verb "to be," we have a new verb, inter-be."*

*Thich Nhat Hanh*



### Alejandra Johnson Stapells

*I am Spanish with British and Canadian family. I first encountered Focusing on a weekend workshop in 2014 and was amazed by what I discovered in a short span of time. I have been Focusing frequently ever since – in a weekly "Changes" group and through Focusing partnerships – and I continue to further my training with Ciriaco Uriarte Ayo, Asociación Escucha Interior, and Instituto Nacional de Focusing.*

*I currently manage a guest house in Sevilla and soon I'll be starting my MA studies in 'Integrative Whole Systems Design for Sustainability'*

[alejandravjs@gmail.com](mailto:alejandravjs@gmail.com)

# Summer Focusing Community Camp



# Some poems & quotes inspired by the Focusing Camp

Compiled by Gordon Adam

"Imagine two lovers. Imagine the energy-field between them. Imagine a community in that energy-field. Imagine a whole culture in that energy-field."

*Joseph Serra*

There is a Field...

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing,  
there is a field. I'll meet you there.

When the soul lies down in that grass,  
the world is too full to talk about.  
Ideas, language, even the phrase *each other*  
doesn't make any sense.

*Rumi*

*Suppose*

From the tangle of the two  
An exchange surprises.  
The bear and the deer  
Become a tree.

We might see  
Whole jungles  
Emerge  
From an embrace.

*Elizabeth Herron*

"Your life and my life flow into each other as wave flows into wave, and unless there is peace and joy and freedom for you, there can be no real peace or joy or freedom for me. To see reality—not as we expect it to be but as it is—is to see that unless we live for each other and in and through each other, we do not really live very satisfactorily; that there can really be life only where there really is, in just this sense, love."

*Frederick Buechner*

"Once the realization is accepted that even between the closest human beings infinite distances continue, a wonderful living side by side can grow, if they succeed in loving the distance between them which makes it possible for each to see the other whole against the sky."

*Rainer Maria Rilke*

# Memorial and Memories of Gene

By Nada Lou

When Mary Hendricks-Gendlin introduced me to Gene in the mid-nineties I had just been chosen as a new TIFI Coordinator and he responded by saying "Another angel has been sent to us." He was referring to the beginning of my videography career, which would barely qualify as sainthood.

It was a great honour for me to be asked to prepare a DVD compilation for Gene's Memorial Service. I was happy to accept. When I started to think what would be the way to go about it, I found myself being overwhelmed by the wealth of choice I knew I had and how to show the best of who Gene was. The 12 minute compilation I made was an attempt to dip into many rich areas of Gene's work. But even more important was finding the clips of Gene the man, the person and friend, to tap into his sense of humour and care for each person he met, and his unwavering steadiness about his message. I took the time to remember what I can draw from my experiences and memories of many years of working with Gene. I had followed him with my cameras to so many different presentations and conferences.

YouTube <https://youtu.be/R5FxmGRXtM>

As I am writing this article, I'm remembering one of my first experiences of filming Gene. It was in Washington DC at a conference and Gene was one of many speakers. I was invited to videotape and produce



his presentation. I was alone that time, with rookie experience of setting my two cameras and the lapel mikes in the best possible place to reach Gene's chair. There were about sixty chairs prepared in a large oval. I successfully taped lapel mike cables to the carpeted floor and was ready! The minute Gene entered the room full of people, he would say - what I learned later he would always say - "No, no, no, I don't want you that far away. I want you all to come closer to me," not in an oval, but in a kind of crowd that he could see and communicate with, face to face, closely. Cameras and cables had to be moved in the shortest possible time. Pulling taped cables off the floor in a hurry is

not the way to go about it - I ended with a huge, permanently glued ball of unusable cables.

It was a special privilege to witness and participate in Gene's building of Thinking at the Edge - TAE philosophical practice. Once a year for six years, I was exposed to his fine thinking processes as he was explaining, refining and fine tuning the steps for TAE. I would come home with more than twenty hours of footage that I needed to choose from to fit onto a two hour DVD. The wealth of learning from Gene in this way was enormous. Going over and over the same bits of footage, making decisions about how to avoid losing anything crucial, how to identify what he said two or three times in the same presentation and how to blend and bind the crux of it into one smooth message.

At one of those workshops he introduced me as his co-presenter in his always respectful and humorous way by saying: "Nada peculiarly spent more time on TAE and the Steps. She has also spent more time with me than I have with me, which is a very interesting thing. I thought about it yesterday. To edit video, to edit something, it means to look at it fifty times and more, so to have Nada teaching the steps is wonderful for me and I can't do anything wrong, whatever I tell you, she'll fix it."

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XnWWCEJlzU8>

And in many ways it was true. I knew Gene better than he knew me but he trusted me completely and gave me complete freedom to produce his wisdom in the way I chose. I spent hours and hours staring at him on the screen and listening to his voice, wisdom, jokes, and profound ... words ... that penetrated deeply into my psyche. My husband said to Gene on one occasion that when listening to his voice at home (as I was editing) he had the feeling Gene was living with us.

Of course Gene's yearly visits to FISS (The Focusing Institute Summer School), where he spent a whole afternoon with us, were special. Five summers he mingled intimately with already bonded groups of sometimes more than a hundred participants. He loved it when people asked him all sorts of questions. He was at his best answering and teaching that way. I edited and produced all five years' recordings into DVDs titled 'A Day With Gene,' 'In touch With Gene,' etc.

With my very limited knowledge of German, I had an interesting experience in producing a set of five TAE DVDs in German. A group of German and Swiss participants flew to the US for this special treat. I felt pretty confident that by then I knew enough of TAE to be able to follow and turn out this production.

My son Goran composed all the music for my productions. The music he provided for me was not directed for a particular DVD. I had my felt sense to make the choice, from many pieces of music he had composed and recorded for me. At some times Goran also helped me with my 'two camera filming'. So he was tuned into Gene's ways, his thinking, personality and sometimes unexpected problems with lapel mikes that would get caught in Gene's jacket zipper. On one of those occasions when Goran was attaching a microphone on Gene's collar, he had his first experience of Gene's philosophy and humour. As Goran was fiddling with the mike, Gene said to him: "Do we have to do what we want to do?" Goran reminded me of that sentence many times through the years with a smile and some bafflement.

I know that, as a teacher and more so as a DVD producer, the results of my collaboration with Gene have reached many people globally. And now that Gene is not physically present with us, it is such a gift to be able to see him and hear him and share his presence.

Some of my clips of Gene can be found on my webpage at:

[http://www.nadalou.com/Nada\\_new/DVD\\_YouTube\\_GENE.html](http://www.nadalou.com/Nada_new/DVD_YouTube_GENE.html)

and at my YouTube channel at:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1BwskRK56OUGmb9WSO9H7Q?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1BwskRK56OUGmb9WSO9H7Q?view_as=subscriber)

There are also some of my clips on The International Focusing Institute's YouTube channel.

DVDs can be purchased from both these websites.

**Nada Lou** is known throughout the Focusing world for her specialty in *Thinking at the Edge and Focusing*. She has taught many courses around the world since the 1990s. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U24H3cHFYs> She is the author of "The Grassroots Introduction Manual to TAE" and is the prolific video maker of 45 DVDs featuring Focusing. Immersing herself in Gendlin's thinking through DVD Productions has made Nada one of the world's experts in TAE. Since co-presenting TAE with Dr. Gendlin, Nada evolved a personal TAE course called *THINK DIFFERENT - FOCUSING FOR THINKING*, and is spreading this practice as program, live lectures, seminars and webinar. [www.nadalou.com](http://www.nadalou.com) [nadalou@nadalou.com](mailto:nadalou@nadalou.com)



## CORONACH

You read the human heart  
The sense of what is there  
That's felt in every part  
And echoes everywhere

You heard the human voice  
And saw the human whole  
You knew we would rejoice  
In movements of the soul

For no-one smiled like you  
Or welcomed the unknowing  
And pointed to the dew  
Where a new green shoot was growing

How can we say goodbyes  
Or think of you as past?  
The tears are in our eyes  
Our love will always last

Here is no final grieving  
We cannot think you go  
Where loss is only leaving –  
Who always said, 'Hello!'

*Rob Foxcroft  
12th August 2017*

*This poem, for Gene Gendlin, was written at the request of Bebe Simon, and read out by Bebe at the memorial event for Gene on 12th August.*

*Coronach: (Scottish or Irish) "a dirge or lamentation for the dead"*

# In Praise of Letting Go of Looking for Problems and Difficulties in Focusing

By Gordon Adam

## Coming to rest - a place to start

At a Wholebody Focusing workshop earlier this year with Kay Hoffmann, in our final Focusing session of the weekend, a suggestion from Kay was to invite our body to show us, or to symbolise, how it wants us to move forward in our lives. After a bit of movement my body came to rest on the ground and wanted me just to stop, completely, to sink into the ground and do... nothing.

The message was clear and unambivalent – my body wanted me to come to rest and to be still and silent – not to do anything or go anywhere but simply to stop and arrive more fully, to deepen into the present moment. My sense was that any ‘moving forward’ that needed to happen would arise from allowing myself to settle in that place of stillness. It was interesting to notice that when I began to move again after being motionless on the floor for most of the session, there was a renewed appreciation of the aliveness in the movement that came.

This experience reminded me of a poem by Wendell Berry:

### A Spiritual Journey

And the world cannot be discovered by a journey of miles,  
no matter how long,  
but only by a spiritual journey,  
a journey of one inch,  
very arduous and humbling and joyful,  
by which we arrive at the ground at our feet,  
and learn to be at home.

*Wendell Berry*

## Discontentment with what is

Eugene Gendlin's book 'Focusing', originally published in 1978, falls into the category of 'self-help' books. My 2007 Bantam edition prefaces the title with "The Classic Self-Help Bestseller..." and on the back page is written:

*"As you learn to develop your natural ability to 'Focus', you'll find yourself more in sync with both mind and body, filled with greater self-assurance, and better equipped to make the positive changes necessary to improve and enhance every aspect of your life."*

The implicit message here is that something is wrong with me and my life and that "positive change is necessary"... and that I should be constantly "improving and enhancing" my life. Why? This feeds the idea that what I have here and now isn't good enough and that I should always want something 'better' – or something that I don't already have. Doesn't this remind you of capitalism, where we are brainwashed into always wanting something more and 'better' to fuel the consumer society and the profit of shareholders? And doesn't this mindset lead to a perpetual sense of 'not-enoughness' or 'not-good-enoughness'? – this translates to me as 'perpetual suffering'!

Gendlin himself reinforces this idea throughout the book by repeatedly focusing on "problems" – this word appears many, many times in the text:

*"This is what Focusing is like...the nature of the problem changes..."* (p.32); *"You try to convince yourself that the problem doesn't exist..."* (p.42); *"Nobody can figure out, intellectually, all the details of a personal problem..."* (p.46).

And in his 'Focusing Manual', giving basic Focusing instructions (p.50): "*From among what came, select one personal problem to Focus on...*" And so it goes on throughout the book – a general invitation to look for problems, "*what feels bad*", "*what's wrong*", etc.

This is perhaps fair enough in the context of the psychotherapeutic roots of Focusing. However, Focusing, and how it is applied, has evolved hugely since Gendlin wrote his book almost 40 years ago, and has developed globally into much more than just a technique for solving problems. Despite this, I would argue that a subtle (or not-so-subtle) conditioning to use Focusing to "solve problems", "resolve difficulties", "untangle", "feel better" persists – and I see this attitude arising as a default position in many people I Focus with.

Recent promotion for the Focusing Institute Summer School opened with:

*"How much are you longing for your life to change? Do you feel worn down, stuck, drained empty, alone, etc."* Well, actually my answer to these questions is "No!" I'm not longing for my life to change and I feel saddened that this message of Focusing as primarily a remedy for feelings of 'not-good-enoughness' is perpetrated at such a high level in the Focusing world!

This message is actually prevalent in a lot of Focusing teaching, and in people with all levels of Focusing experience. I only read Gendlin's book after already having been Focusing regularly for a year or two and I was quite shocked by the emphasis on problems – this was not like my experience of Focusing!

What if, as alluded to in the poem above, there is actually nowhere to get to, nothing to become, nothing to 'aspire' to – that actually everything is fine just as it is? What would happen if we stopped looking for problems to Focus on and paid more attention to "*the ground at our feet*"?

Maybe non-problematic feelings such as joy, gratitude and appreciation could then have space to emerge. Maybe a sense of being a part of something bigger or belonging could come. Sometimes I find a poem comes to mind, or a film, or experience, or anything with which I've felt some resonance – invariably Focusing on 'what comes' in this way enables an appreciation of a deeper resonance, feeling and meaning of *any* experience that I've had.

Sometimes, also, *nothing* is what comes. Might there be value in sitting in silence embracing emptiness whilst my partner 'listens'? From my experience I would answer with a definite yes to that question.

### **Silence and emptiness**

Silence supports presence, and being here now. Silence supports deepening. Silence allows the mind to settle. Being together in silence has an extra quality – a supportive communality that is experienced and needs no words. Silence has a certain fullness and aliveness in it. Listening supports silence.

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*

My qigong teacher, Chunyi Lin, says that the 'form' of qigong, as well as promoting and enabling energy flow in the body (and thereby health and well-being), is also a vehicle for transcending 'self' and coming to a place of stillness and emptiness. He encourages abiding in that emptiness, and refers to it as a place of great resource. Staying in emptiness requires trust, and a willingness to let go of 'doing' anything, or achieving anything, which includes the qigong form itself. This applies to meditation practice also.

Might the same not also be true in Focusing? Could there be value in abiding in emptiness, whilst accompanied and supported by a companion? I would say yes – try it for yourself and see what happens!

## Opening to the 'bigger picture'

I would also like to suggest the possibility that problems, difficulty or stuckness, may be healed or resolved not only by giving attention to the difficulty, or the 'parts', or the 'tangle', but also by attending to 'the bigger picture' of things, which is actually 'all that is', as experienced by the body, and accessed through the felt sense.

This idea of allowing healing to arise by opening to the bigger whole is present in Wholebody Focusing:

"F.M. Alexander observed that *the body had to come alive as a whole* in order for change to happen in a part. He observed that change happened out of a conscious relationship between *an activated whole body self* and the part, and by making room for something new to happen rather than acting out of old habit." *Kevin McEvenue*

And from Gendlin himself:

"If we want the bigger system to work with us, we have to leave it some room."

I'll come full circle and relate another experience I had at a Wholebody Focusing workshop several years ago. It was spring 2014, and my father had died just 2 months before. I was never that close to my dad, but I spent quite a bit of time with him in hospital in the weeks leading up to his death and I was by his bedside when he, literally, took his last breaths. I had been carrying a heavy sad feeling around with me since his death. During the WBF weekend, I never once Focused on my dad, or on that pervasive feeling of grief that I'd been carrying with me, but instead I repeatedly opened to my whole body being supported by the environment around me – the 'bigger picture' – which was supported by the expansive, spacious and often outdoor setting of the workshop. A couple of days after the workshop I realised that the heavy feeling had gone (and it never came back) and that I felt much happier and lighter – healing had happened without any need to Focus on 'difficult feelings'.

Love means to learn to look at yourself  
The way one looks at distant things  
For you are only one thing among many.  
And whoever sees that way heals his heart,  
Without knowing it, from various ills—  
A bird and a tree say to him: Friend.  
*From 'Love' by Czeslaw Milosz*

## Conclusion

My aim in this short article is to challenge the sometimes subtle and not-quite-conscious bias towards looking for, and prioritising Focusing on problems and difficulties. Whilst Focusing can be a wonderful resource for problem solving and unravelling emotional difficulties, there is a vast territory of experiencing that sadly can be left unexplored by the Focuser who is constantly looking for and preoccupied by problems and difficulties to Focus on.

If this article supports you in becoming aware of new possibilities and venturing into some new territory in your Focusing, then the writing of it will have served its purpose.

**Gordon Adam** lives in Bristol. As well as having a passion for Focusing, he has a strong interest in helping build Focusing community. He runs intro workshops, introduces friends and acquaintances to Focusing, facilitates an open monthly Focusing group, and sends out a regular local Focusing newsletter. He recently conceived and co-organised the first BFA Summer Focusing Community Camp. Gordon has been running 5-day Focusing retreats on Dartmoor and in the Southwest for the last 8 years, combining Focusing with elements of Buddhist and other practices. He also works as a homeopath, teacher and supervisor, and is co-editor of this newsletter. [www.focusing.org.uk/Gordon-Adam](http://www.focusing.org.uk/Gordon-Adam) [gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk)



# After the Shift, an Ahhhhh

By Paula Nowick

I don't like to brag, but my serotonin-reuptake system is first rate. I find myself smiling and laughing at the least provocation and have been pretty much happy during my (almost) eighty years of life so far. Friends sometimes ask me how I could remain so positive despite several challenging situations that have haunted me over the years, but I had no really good explanations until Positive Psychology came along with its many theories of happiness. I put a checkmark next to many of them ("already do that"), but have not yet found on its lists the one central attitude that seems to keep my happiness-neural-circuits up and running.

In fact, I was unaware of the name or power of this attitude until it announced itself at the end of one of my Focusing sessions many years ago. "Your happiness stems from Comfort," I heard. "You have learned to delight yourself by creating a world of comfort."

As I have explored this amazing insight, I've concluded that actively seeking comfort, from beautiful people and things and being quick to offer comfort to others is how my happiness begins. But it gains strength by my taking a moment to feel, deeply inside, the wonderful vibration of comfort in every cell.

## Welcome Morning

There is joy  
in all:  
in the hair I brush each morning,  
in the Cannon towel, newly washed,  
that I rub my body with each morning,  
in the chapel of eggs I cook  
each morning,  
in the outcry from the kettle  
that heats my coffee  
each morning,  
in the spoon and the chair  
that cry "hello there, Anne"  
each morning,  
in the godhead of the table  
that I set my silver, plate, cup upon  
each morning.

All this is God,  
right here in my pea-green house  
each morning  
and I mean,  
though often forget,  
to give thanks,  
to faint down by the kitchen table  
in a prayer of rejoicing  
as the holy birds at the kitchen window  
peck into their marriage of seeds.

So while I think of it,  
let me paint a thank-you on my palm  
for this God, this laughter of the morning,  
lest it go unspoken.

The Joy that isn't shared, I've heard,  
dies young.

*by Anne Sexton*

I'd like to share with you how I discovered more about the power of comfort in a Focusing session that centered on my inner experience after a powerful 'shift.' The rest of this article includes several light-hearted 'comforting practices' that often make my happiness-neural-circuits dance and sing. *And that, of course, makes me feel so happy inside!*

## Focusing After a Shift

Years ago my Focusing partner wondered if I might like to close my Focusing session by finding a felt sense and handle for the experience that followed a particularly clarifying 'shift.' She had been reading that it was helpful to protect a newly formed insight as one might guard 'a fragile first blade of grass,'

and she speculated that Focusing on my body's post-shift experience might root this new growth.

I said I'd give it a try and began to re-immense myself in the inner feeling of the shift that involved being released from a persistent resentment I had been unable to (logically) work through. So I started to Focus by checking inside about my inner sensations at this freeing moment. At first (typical for me) was a murky something that seemed like nothing. Then a sort of sudden movement shook the grayness, followed by an image of a balloon popping free from a tightly packed cluster. "Out at last," it seemed to say. I took a deep breath. The suffocating pressure constricting my lungs had melted away. "Relief after pain," it said. I rested in that: Yes. I felt in my body that something painful had gone away.

A bit later, it said, "Comfort..." Now the empty space was filling with something sweet and warm. I floated in its exquisite contentment. Finally I remembered to ask, "What's your name?" "Ahhhhh" is what I heard. It felt inside like angels were singing... *Ahhhhh* - its vibration lullabying the fears in my mind, softly cradling unborn music, yearning to be heard... *Ahhhhh* - its fullness suspending earth-time, making space for one thing at a time to unfold - without pressure - before me and inside me... *Ahhhhh* - its delight filling my heart with joy...

Whoa! A question came: Could it be that the level of happiness I am able to experience depends on the level of comfort I am able to create? Could sighing *ahhhhs* call forth the songs of angels in my heart? I decided that until I heard otherwise in a future Focusing session, I was voting YES. Now I'm wishing I could get your vote too.

### **Adding More *ahhhhs* to My World**

I often refresh my happiness by playfully asking myself, "How could I add an *ahhhh* to my world?" Here are five practices that add to my happiness:

- 1) Several times a day, I ask myself, "How could I -  
add an *ahhhh* of comfort to my commute?  
add an *ahhhh* of comfort to my lunch?  
add an *ahhhh* of comfort to my desk?  
add an *ahhhh* of comfort to my feet?  
add an *ahhhh* of comfort to my bed?  
add an *ahhhh* of comfort to my breathing?  
add an *ahhhh* of comfort to my outfit?  
add an *ahhhh* of comfort to my Focusing?"

I welcome and appreciate the joy that comes alive inside me by adding little *ahhhhs*. I remind myself: "*Feel how happy that makes me inside!*"

- 2) I slip an *ahhhh* of comfort into my speaking voice, intentionally adding easiness and warmth to my tone. You can see how I do that by saying out loud - in your normal voice, "How are you?" Now imagine you are talking to someone you rather dislike and say out aloud, "How are you?" Can you notice the difference in tone, speed, volume? Try again; imagine you are addressing a dear friend you haven't seen for a long time. What do you do with your voice that makes this loving "How are you?" show your delight? And imagine you meet another dear friend who has just suffered a great sadness. Can you hear how this "How are you?" is subtly different from the one before? These last two versions of offering comfort are spoken in your *ahhhh* voice. Perhaps you might like to try out your *ahhhh* voice during your next conversations with a wide variety of people. Watch to see how your *ahhhh* voice affects your listener - and watch, as well, its effect on your own inner happiness. Do you see that you are adding more *ahhhhs* to the world and yourself already? *And feel how happy that makes you inside!*

- 3) And, I sometimes try to add comfort to others with my '*ahhhh* eyes.' *Ahhhhh* eyes? Oh yes! Those are friendly, extended eye contacts that transmit the warmth of a 'How-really-nice-to-meet-you' message. During those very intentional *ahhhh* moments, I look deeply into another's eyes and try to add a

moment of comfort with the unspoken message of "I'm safe and welcoming. I value our brief meeting." Most people smile at me – adding yet another *ahhhhh* to themselves, to me, and to their world. *And I feel how happy that makes me inside!* (However, I encounter some who ignore my offered comfort and a very few who may even snarl in return. I expect to meet a few people whose lives are stuck in such pain that they are not able to soften right now. So I put forth my *ahhhhh* eyes, without any need for reciprocity.)

4) It pleases my heart to imagine that my silent *ahhhhh*s of comfort might add a sliver of happiness anonymously to the universe, a sort of Blessing. I send an *ahhhhh* to the driver who got to a great parking spot seconds ahead of me with the wish that, "I hope you have that kind of luck all day today!" I mentally send *ahhhhh*s to people ahead of me on the supermarket line who look worried and exhausted. I send silent messages of hope for good grades to two teenagers with heavy backpacks. I'm often seemingly preposterous, going beyond reason to slip silent *ahhhhh*s into the world (to the people who filled the potholes on my street the other day; to the people who first laid down the asphalt on my street years and years ago; to the people who cleared the forest so my road could be built.) After all, I've got to keep my serotonin re-uptaking. *And I feel how happy that makes me inside!*

5) Importantly, I practice keeping my heart open to receiving anonymous *ahhhhh*s of comfort that might be sent in my direction by many people, who, like me, are trying to lighten others' hearts and comfort their pain. Although I sometimes live as though I'm in an isolation box, I want to live more often as a happy playmate who not only gives love, but who also receives equal offerings of care. So sometimes when I feel a flush of unexplained delight, I say to myself, "Someone's just sent me an *ahhhhh*... from afar." *And I feel how happy that makes me inside!*



**Paula Nowick** is immensely enjoying her retirement from many years of teaching high school and college English and graduate courses in creativity at the University of Massachusetts. She began Focusing thirty years ago, co-edited *The Folio* for many years, and is now a member of the Board of The International Focusing Institute.

[paulanowick@gmail.com](mailto:paulanowick@gmail.com)

# Experiencing and Felt-Sensing through Photography

By Linda Bourassa

For most of thirty years at Hiram College, focusing was something I taught students to do with their camera lenses. When asked if I might write something on Focusing and Photography, I believed that I had largely compartmentalized the two activities. Upon reflection, I see how they have been intertwined in my creative work and teaching. Students are encouraged to come from an authentic place within when searching for subjects and means of expression. When asked how I compose pictures, I reply “from the gut!”

Creating a picture is often a search for what feels right or correct. Compositional rules taught in art school (the ‘rule of thirds’ and the ‘golden ratio’) are based on proportions and forms in nature that we instinctively respond to as human beings. However, I have found that if one applies rules rigidly, an opportunity is lost to fully engage in the exploration. The capture of live moments in photographs can literally create a positive shift through felt-sensing. Students often report an improvement in their state of well-being and happiness while engaged in taking pictures and working on them in the darkroom and digital lab. Photography classes are popular for this reason.

There is also a spiritual dimension to photography. In looking at the world through a viewfinder, I have experienced whole-body sensing that quiets thoughts and creates a moment of pure, neutral awareness, not unlike meditation. When I travel or take pictures for any length of time, I discover a ‘flow’ effect where serendipitous moments begin to unfold. To quote the photographer, Henri Cartier-Bresson, I search for “the decisive moment” where everything formal and alive comes together in an arresting aesthetic image. It’s exciting and meaningful to take these discoveries to print and exhibition. This process has been a rewarding part of my life.



*Sheri with Annie, Iowa City*

Last summer, I found travel support to attend the International Focusing Conference in Cambridge. A proposal to teach a one credit hour course entitled “The Healing Power of Attention” had been approved and the conference was a way to refresh Focusing skills and knowledge. My academic credentials are in Art, but for forty years I have also been taking courses, workshops, and trainings as a personal growth instructor and energy healer. In the 1980s I learned to Focus with Susan Lutgendorf, a student of Ann Weiser Cornell, in Iowa City. Before that, in the mid-seventies, I had partnered with students of Glyn Seaborn Jones in London in a therapeutic practice called “Reciport,” which was similar to Focusing and Reciprocal Co-Counseling. “The Healing Power of Attention” is based on this work for the

purpose of creating Community Wellness. Every session allows students to learn about the process and work with partners. The conference in Cambridge was extremely helpful in suggesting how to integrate Focusing with other therapeutic approaches. (My home group at the conference was Community Wellness and I also attended sessions on bodywork and how to deal with trauma.)

In one of the conference workshops, art therapy cards were scattered and we were asked to pick a couple to reflect on. At Hiram, I created photographic cards using my own work and free images found online. This approach complemented Focusing without Gendlin's six steps when dealing with students or clients that are overwhelmed. Late in the semester when student stress levels are typically high, they appreciate getting to choose images that reflect their state of mind and/or provide comfort. One student who had been having difficulty all semester using the six steps exclaimed, "I'm starting to feel something!" I realized she had been experiencing a feeling of overwhelm all along. She is a pre-med student and perfectionist; always wanting to get things just right. For her, the steps had become an obstacle. The simple act of talking about a picture from her felt-sense was less intimidating. This session was so successful that I repeated it in the second semester. It seems to be a method that encourages students to share in community while still benefiting from a felt-shift, similar to using the six-step process. I cannot speak to the relative difference of using commercially made art-therapy cards and making one's own, except to say it was another creative challenge that provided discovery and enjoyment.

*Red Head in the Diner*



Since 2008, I've been sharing on Facebook and engaging with friends, artists, and healers to create community through words and pictures. I've preferred the friendly, casual nature of this type of social media to more professional websites. Since I make my living as an educator, sharing has not been for the purpose of marketing my work but rather making personal connections. Feel free to befriend me on Facebook: Linda Bourassa in Hiram, Ohio, USA, or drop me a line with questions or comments at my email address below.



**Linda Bourassa** is an Emeritus Professor of Art at Hiram College with a specialty in Photography, Film, Digital Art, and Contemporary Media. Her personal growth studies began in the 1970s with Primal Therapy, Bioenergetics, and Reciprocal Co-Counseling with Glyn Seaborn Jones in London. She learned Focusing in the 1980s. From 1991-95, she trained to teach the "Understanding Yourself and Others" course with Bill Riedler that resulted in "The Creative Life" course at Hiram from 2001-2014. Recently, she trained as an energy healer with Warren Grossman, a Gestalt psychologist, who published "To Heal with the Earth." Just retired, she plans to continue exploring, Focusing, and sharing her gifts as an artist, educator and healer.

[bourassala@hiram.edu](mailto:bourassala@hiram.edu)

# Personal Growth with Thinking at the Edge (TAE)

By Evelyn Fendler-Lee

*Denken und danken sind verwandte Wörter; wir danken dem Leben, in dem wir es bedenken.  
(To think and to thank are related words; we thank the life as we think about it.)* Thomas Mann

Thinking is not only a way to thank our lives, we also can be thankful for our thinking. On the other side, thinking is often rejected in growth methods: "Get out of your head!" How can we open the paradox that thinking is and is not appreciated? It depends on how we think. Gendlin's work is about a special kind of thinking, a thinking with the implicit. In this article, I will give some exercises to show how to use this kind of thinking – what the praxis of Thinking at the Edge (TAE) tries to teach us – for our growth process.

The exercises stem from my phone course "Giving Language to Stress", the workshop "Personal and Professional Growth with TAE" which I gave in Israel, a self-management seminar I was teaching for some years at the University of Freiburg, and from using TAE steps in Focusing-Sessions.



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## Carrying Forward by Working with Words

There is an uncomfortable feeling or condition and you have (or a client has) already named it with a word. While finding two or three replacements, you tap deeper into the felt intricacy. You might ask: Does the word '....' really fit or is there another word that expresses the uncomfortable feeling in a better way? And further: Can you find one more word that fits better or is relevant to another aspect of the bodily felt sense? Once you have found replacements you can choose those which do fit in some way, even if you don't know why. You can also pick a word that does not quite fit and make it fit.

In both cases you will find deeper meaning by the following exercise: "If the word/phrase '....' could mean just exactly what you wanted it to mean, (slight pause, change in tone, very gently). What would you want it to mean?" By asking into the meaning of the word, again you articulate more of what has just been felt. There is more and more understanding what the uncomfortable feeling is about. Real understanding is a shift and new possibilities will open up.

My first attempt to use this exercise outside of a TAE process was at a lecture on overcoming stress at a 'Health Day' for a bank's IT department. The results were astonishing. One employee, for example, realised that his stress does not come from the work itself, but from the long commute to work. Six months earlier, his former worksite had been closed down and his commute was now more than an hour each way. In being aware where the stress really came from, he could think about a solution.

You can apply the same exercise for finding your inner support by using words like well-being, resource and help. You will get a deeper understanding of what really supports you. It might not at all be what you expect.

### **Getting Help from Your Past by Instancing**

Earlier this year, I was writing a paper about TAE. The deadline was approaching, but I still couldn't find the point of the paper. One day, I stayed with the uncomfortable feeling which was a 'tearing' coming from the left arm and spreading into the rest of the body. I acknowledged the feeling as a sign of my writing problem. Instead of working with it, I held my unfinished paper and waited for a felt sense to form. What came was a tension, a challenging tension. It was coming with an idea of how to write my paper. There was something unusual in my move to turn to my paper from an uncomfortable feeling. I understood that even an uncomfortable feeling has some kind of resource in it. Recently, I applied this pattern to a personal challenge and it again opened something. I found a way to go forward.

When you are able to solve a problematic or challenging situation there is 'something that works.' In some way 'that which works' will also work in another situation. However, if you can name what has worked, if you find the pattern of the instance, you can apply it consciously to another difficult situation. Applying is a crossing. Questions to help you to cross are: As you look with the pattern of the past instance overlaying the present one (like through patterned glasses), what fresh understanding or new possibility arises? Which new feature is visible when you try to imagine that the actual situation has the same pattern as the past one?

Even without an explicit pattern you can cross by applying the felt meaning of the instance as such. What does looking from the past instance let you see in the present challenging situation, that you could not already see. We can use the power of instances to let a next step come for a stuck place in our life. In the same way, we can use the resources found from working with words.



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### **Solving Dilemmas by Crossing**

The other day, a participant of the TAE program at DAF (German Educational Institute for Focusing and Focusing-Therapy) shared what he appreciates most about TAE. For him, TAE is a tool to find peace and sense when it comes to the challenge of: "I would like to.....but I cannot." TAE helps him to see that there is something beyond the two sides and TAE helps him to find a handle for it. Moreover, he experiences that he is bigger than the dilemma, that he can hold both sides.

Such dilemmas or any kind of contractionary feelings can be especially fruitful for growth. We sometimes, maybe even often, avoid staying with those places because they are uncomfortable. Once you have experienced that a big shift might come out of such a frictional place, which can open a way to

work through the dilemma, you will look for them.

Here are some suggestions to work in a TAE way with such places. First, you have to name each side. If you've already named it be sure that you (re)find a felt meaning of each side by its name. Secondly, you 'cross' the two sides in order to find the inherent connection. There are different ways to do so. You could just let both sides interact by imagining them as two people dancing together and wondering what the dance is about. Or you might ask questions like: What is it about the one side such that it is also somehow the other side? What is the very nature of one side, such that it has to be in this relation to the other side? What special quality is emerging while holding one side with respect to the other?

My wish for this article is to spread the understanding that TAE steps can be used for personal growth. My hope is that you are encouraged to use TAE steps in a Focusing session. My offer is to guide you through an exercise.

#### **Resources:**

Gendlin, E. T., Introduction to TAE: <http://www.focusing.org/tae-intro.html>

Gendlin, E. T. & Hendricks, M. (2004). The 14 TAE Steps: <http://www.focusing.org/pdf/TAE-Steps-From-The-Folio-2000-2004-crp.R6.pdf>

Thinking at the Edge: A New Philosophical Practice: The Folio, 19, Number 1, 2000-2004. Purchase at TIFI store: ([Volume 19, Number 1, 2000-2004](#))

Gendlin, E. T. & Hendricks, M. (2004). Thinking at the Edge (TAE) Steps. The Folio, 19 Number 1, 2000-2004, pp11 – 24

Appendix: TAE for Daily Use. The Folio, 19, Number 1, 2000-2004, p147

***Dr. Evelyn Fendler-Lee** is a Coordinator in training and Focusing-Trainer with The International Focusing Institute (TIFI). She is in charge of TAE training at the German Training Institute for Focusing (DAF) and she presents international TAE workshops. Since 2009 she has been self-employed as a coach, trainer and lecturer. She facilitates innovation, professional development and personal growth based on her masters in organizational psychology, her person-centered counsellor training and 13 years of work experience as a group and project manager in the automotive and chemical industries. She began her career as a material scientist working in research institutes.*

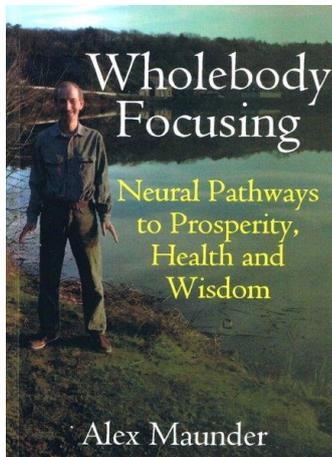
[www.applied-tae.com](http://www.applied-tae.com) [evelyn.fendlerlee@gmail.com](mailto:evelyn.fendlerlee@gmail.com)



# Two new books by BFA members

## 'Wholebody Focusing – Neural Pathways to Prosperity, Health and Wisdom'

*By Alex Maunder*



"Many people are carrying great emotional pain. Suffering is fine if it can lead to a growth in understanding but pointless and cruel if it merely results in repetitive patterns of behaviour. Wholebody Focusing allows you to build new neural pathways in your brain, to escape from the limitations of purely cognitive thinking, and reconnect with the intuitive wisdom of your living body.

From this grounding in safety and the support from something much bigger, the nervous system is soothed and this allows you to step back and see the bigger picture. Then it is possible to connect with the new possibilities that are surrounding you all the time - but you were unable to see them due to the stress and trauma.

For the first time it is possible to see the long-term improvements in brain function, the neuroplasticity, that has resulted from WBF therapy."

Available as a Kindle download from Amazon, and also as a paperback from Lulu.com:

<https://www.lulu.com/shop/search.ep?keyWords=wholebody+Focusing&type=>

Paperback, 298 pages. £8.99 (+ VAT, postage)

## 'Feeling Heard, Hearing Others'

*By Rob Foxcroft*

*Due for publication by PCCS Books early next year*

"My book is about listening: about how the listener prepares to listen; about how to avoid conveying the message, 'Move over! I'll drive!'; and about listening in a group of people.

The heart of the book is a presentation of three principles: the narrative principle, the meditative principle and the integrative principle. I talk about using art, music and literature in the teaching of Focusing-and-listening. I explain simple ways to set up a listening partnership or a listening circle.

I talk about lineage, suggesting that listening and focusing are passed on from one person to another in an unbroken chain.

My book is full of poems and includes a long interview with Bebe Simon, who talks about her life in the Focusing community and her love for Gene Gendlin. It ends with my own tribute to Gene. "

# Practitioner Profile – Manju (Peter Gill)

I was lucky enough to be introduced to Focusing whilst I was on a retreat in 2003. A few months earlier my mum had died, and I was in period of deep grief and struggling with 'trying' to 'do meditation'. A teacher on the retreat simply suggested Focusing may be helpful – saying just one sentence about it: "It's about listening to the body", and that night, after one of those big meaningful dreams, I awoke suddenly with the word Focusing resounding in my psyche like a huge bell. I knew I needed to find out more. I read Ann's book 'The Power of Focusing' whilst on that retreat and was hooked. A missing piece had fallen into place. And I knew at my first workshop with Peter Afford in London, that I wanted to teach it to others... and from there I have not looked back.

I dived into doing as much as I could and was fortunate to attend several longer intensives with Ann Weiser Cornell and Barbara McGavin, as well as the summer school in the USA. The more I practiced and found out, the more I loved it. It was profoundly healing.

I love its simplicity and that it is something that everyone can do, not just something that happens with a therapist or other professional – for me this remains an important aspect of it, and it's there in Eugene's vision of it too – "Making therapy free" he called it.

Not long after starting to teach groups, whilst co-leading a week-long retreat, one of the participants got into trouble with Focusing and starting having PTSD flashbacks. It became clear that I needed and wanted to know more about how to support someone with the symptoms of trauma, so I embarked on the three year training in Somatic Experiencing – Peter Levine's body-based method for healing trauma (based to some extent on Focusing). It was an amazing training and gave me some tools and more importantly confidence in approaching the territory of trauma – both in myself and in others. It is still an area that interests me, and more and more I can see how Focusing can support healing from trauma, and how much unresolved trauma is at the root of most of our tangled issues.

Much more recently however, I have become increasingly drawn to how Focusing can connect us to a sense of the larger world we live in. What I sense in my body is not all about me it seems! – and with all that is happening in the wider world this is not surprising. This in turn is leading to an exploration of how embodied approaches like Focusing interact with the practice of nature connection, and what is called 'indigenous wisdom'. I have always had a sense that a more embodied and connected culture would not need Focusing – as it would be a natural thing – and that our connection with nature can bring much wisdom and well-being, and conversely how our disconnection from nature is literally destroying our very home. What does Focusing have to offer to this? It's early days but I am excited and enlivened by what I am discovering.

My sense is, that the skill, if you can call it that, of deeply listening, to ourselves and others is an essential ingredient to healthy and creative lives and communities. If we can be curious and kind towards ourselves and others, then so much opens from there...

*Manju 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.*  
[www.livingfocusing.co.uk](http://www.livingfocusing.co.uk) [manju@livingfocusing.co.uk](mailto:manju@livingfocusing.co.uk)



# Forthcoming Workshops & Events

## November & December 2017

**Deep Listening** (Introductory 5 week evening course) with Manjudeva  
Gloucestershire (Nailsworth). Starts 1st November. [www.livingfocusing.co.uk](http://www.livingfocusing.co.uk)  
[manju@livingfocusing.co.uk](mailto:manju@livingfocusing.co.uk)

**Exploring the Dynamic Relational Field of WE HERE** (Introduction to Relational Wholebody Focusing)  
With Karen Whalen, Lara Peumans and Christine Sheringham  
Belgium. 2nd-5th November. <http://tinyurl.com/rwbf-belgium-program>

**Focusing Partners** (BFA skills certificate Level 2) with Fiona Parr  
Devon (Liverton). 11/12th November. [fionaparr-focusing.co.uk](http://fionaparr-focusing.co.uk) [fiona@fionaparr-focusing.co.uk](mailto:fiona@fionaparr-focusing.co.uk)

**Deep Listening** (Introductory Day Workshop) with Manjudeva  
Gloucestershire (Stroud). 12th November. [www.livingfocusing.co.uk](http://www.livingfocusing.co.uk) [manju@livingfocusing.co.uk](mailto:manju@livingfocusing.co.uk)

**BFA Annual Gathering & AGM (for BFA members)** at Swarthmoor Hall, Ulverston, Cumbria.  
Cumbria. 17th-19th November. [www.swarthmoorhall.co.uk](http://www.swarthmoorhall.co.uk) Booking: [susanjord@gmail.com](mailto:susanjord@gmail.com)

**Sensing Inwards** (BFA skills certificate Level 1) With Paula Newman & Elizabeth Smith  
London (NW). 20th/21st November. [www.paulanewmancounsellingservices.co.uk](http://www.paulanewmancounsellingservices.co.uk)

**The Path to Wholeness** (BFA skills certificate Level 5) with Manjudeva  
Bristol. 25/26th November. [www.livingfocusing.co.uk](http://www.livingfocusing.co.uk) [manju@livingfocusing.co.uk](mailto:manju@livingfocusing.co.uk)

**Thinking with the Felt Sense** (for experienced Focusers) with Peter Afford  
London (Clapham). 25/26th November. [www.focusing.co.uk](http://www.focusing.co.uk) [peter@focusing.co.uk](mailto:peter@focusing.co.uk)

**Practitioner Training Workshop** (for BFA trainees and new practitioners) with Kay Hoffmann  
Warwickshire (Nuneaton). 1st-4th December. [kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk](mailto:kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk)

**Body Wisdom - an Introduction** with Christine Sheringham  
London (Covent Garden). 3rd & 10th December. To book: [www.citylit.ac.uk](http://www.citylit.ac.uk) Course Code PG692

**Companionship** (BFA skills certificate Level 3) online course (Zoom) with Fiona Parr  
Weds 2-5pm: 6th & 20th Dec, 3rd & 10th Jan. [fionaparr-focusing.co.uk](http://fionaparr-focusing.co.uk) [fiona@fionaparr-focusing.co.uk](mailto:fiona@fionaparr-focusing.co.uk)

**New Year Focusing Retreat** (for experienced Focusers) (5-day residential retreat) with Gordon Adam  
Devon (Dartmoor). 29th December—3rd January.  
[www.balabrook.org.uk/focusing](http://www.balabrook.org.uk/focusing) [gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk)

## January & February 2018

**Focusing & Writing** –'Being curious, having fun and becoming more creative' with Pamela Carr  
Online. Small group or one-to-one sessions beginning in January 2018.  
[www.focusing.org.uk/Pamela-Carr](http://www.focusing.org.uk/Pamela-Carr) [focusingforall@aol.com](mailto:focusingforall@aol.com)

**Focusing Skills for Life** (Day One of Introductory Course) with Carolann Samuels  
Kent (Canterbury). 6th January. [www.carolannsamuels.co.uk](http://www.carolannsamuels.co.uk) [csamuels@carolannsamuels.co.uk](mailto:csamuels@carolannsamuels.co.uk)

**Focusing Skills Course** (BFA Focusing Skills Online Course) with Kay Hoffmann  
Online (Zoom) plus one weekend residential. 10th January—27th June. [kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk](mailto:kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk)

**Teacher Training Workshop** (for anyone interested in sharing Focusing in groups) with Kay Hoffmann  
Warwickshire (Nuneaton). 26th-28th January. [kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk](mailto:kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk)

**The Art of Focusing** (BFA skills certificate Level 1) with Peter Afford  
London (Clapham). 27th/28th January. [www.focusing.co.uk](http://www.focusing.co.uk) [peter@focusing.co.uk](mailto:peter@focusing.co.uk)

**Reminding Suggestions** (BFA skills certificate Level 4) online course (Zoom) with Fiona Parr  
Weds 2-5pm: 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th February. [fionaparr-focusing.co.uk](http://fionaparr-focusing.co.uk) [fiona@fionaparr-focusing.co.uk](mailto:fiona@fionaparr-focusing.co.uk)

**Focusing Skills for Life** (Day Two of Introductory Course) with Carolann Samuels  
Kent (Canterbury). 17th February. [www.carolannsamuels.co.uk](http://www.carolannsamuels.co.uk) [csamuels@carolannsamuels.co.uk](mailto:csamuels@carolannsamuels.co.uk)

## March & April 2018

**The Art of Listening** (BFA skills certificate Level 2) with Peter Afford  
London (Clapham). 24th/25th March. [www.focusing.co.uk](http://www.focusing.co.uk) [peter@focusing.co.uk](mailto:peter@focusing.co.uk)

**Spring Focusing Retreat** (for experienced Focusers) (5-day residential retreat) with Gordon Adam  
Devon (Dartmoor). 10th—15th April. [gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk)

**Applied Focusing** (BFA skills certificate Level 5) online course (Zoom) with Fiona Parr  
Weds 2-5pm: 11th, 18th, 25th April & 2nd May. [fionaparr-focusing.co.uk](http://fionaparr-focusing.co.uk) [fiona@fionaparr-focusing.co.uk](mailto:fiona@fionaparr-focusing.co.uk)

**The Gifts of the Body in Focusing and Listening** (introductory weekend) with Kay Hoffmann  
Warwickshire (Nuneaton). 20th-22nd April. [kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk](mailto:kay.hoffmann@homecall.co.uk)

**Focusing and Dreams** (for experienced Focusers) with Peter Afford  
London (Clapham). 28th/29th April. [www.focusing.co.uk](http://www.focusing.co.uk) [peter@focusing.co.uk](mailto:peter@focusing.co.uk)

## Local Focusing Groups

**Brighton and Sussex Focusing Circle.** No fixed meeting schedule.

Contact: Anna [anna@workpsychologyhub.co.uk](mailto:anna@workpsychologyhub.co.uk)

**Bristol Insight Focusing Group.** Meets monthly in Bristol on the second or third Sunday of the month from 10am–1pm. Contact: Gordon [gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:gordonadam@blueyonder.co.uk)

**London Focusing Circle.** A list of people in the London area who are available for Focusing partnership. £5 joining fee. <http://www.focusing.co.uk/circle.html>

**South Yorkshire Focusing Group.** Contact: Hugh [hughknopf@rocketmail.com](mailto:hughknopf@rocketmail.com)

**Stroud Focusing Circle.** Meets monthly in Stroud on the first Tuesday or Wednesday of the month from 7.30–9.45pm. Contact: Manjudeva [manjudeva@gmail.com](mailto:manjudeva@gmail.com)

# Resources & Further Information

## **British Focusing Association (BFA)** [www.focusing.org.uk](http://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](http://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 .

## **BFA Facebook Forum** [www.facebook.com/groups/206601209671323/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/206601209671323/)

An easy way to quickly connect with other UK Focusers and to see and post events.

## **The International Focusing Institute** [www.focusing.org](http://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, book reviews, photographs, news, event & group details, etc.

Articles should generally be in the range of 500—1200 words. Inclusion of articles will be at the discretion of the editors. 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 currently aim to publish the newsletter 3 times a year and would appreciate receiving your submissions as soon as possible for the next issue in March 2018.

The deadline for receiving contributions for this issue is **20th January 2018**.