

# Guidelines for BFA Peer Consultative Support

All BFA members agree to have regular sessions of Peer Consultative Support to accompany their professional Focusing activities. These sessions provide an opportunity to pause and sense into how our work is going. The aim is to ensure that we keep our practice alive, notice if something is amiss and find a way forward with any difficulties that arise.

The idea is not for one person to 'supervise' another but for us to support one another in creating a space to sense whether something in our practice is calling for attention. It can either be done in pairs or triads as a peer exchange or you can pay a colleague or mentor for one-way consultative support. Any experienced focuser can listen in this way – it does not require special training. Here are some guidelines on how to do it:

- For a peer exchange, either divide the time equally or arrange two or three separate sessions.
- Some ways you could begin are:
  - Talking about or Focusing on your work or training as a whole
  - Talking about or Focusing on a specific aspect of your work or training
  - Sharing thoughts or stirrings about a new venture or new direction
  - Focusing on your sense of a particular client, student or group
  - Turning towards a vague sense that something doesn't feel right
  - Sharing a piece of writing, e.g. a handout or teaching plan
- If what seems to be needed is regular Focusing and the content is unrelated to your Focusing work, ensure that you *also* take a little time to sense into how your work is going and arrange some further time if you realise that something needs attention.
- Let your listener know what you would like from them. In this context, requests could extend to asking them to share something of their own experience in a certain area or asking for an opinion or recommendation or for their sense of something you've shared.
- The session may also become much more conversational than a typical Focusing exchange. If so, remember to pause and sense from time to time whether your attention is where it needs to be.
- In the listening role:
  - Listen and respond in a Focusing way, saying back what you hear and summarising the main points if a lot has been shared.
  - If you detect an unclear edge in what your partner is saying, invite him or her to pause and sense into it.
  - If you feel moved to offer an observation, opinion or suggestion, ask whether your partner would like to hear it and be willing to keep it to yourself if they are not.
  - If you sense a persistent concern about something, let your partner know that you have something you would like to share with them.
  - Bear in mind that your role as listener isn't to provide solutions to difficulties but to support your colleague in finding her/his own solutions.