

# Proposal for the relationship between the Training Mentor, the Supporting Mentor, and the trainee before and during the BFA Focusing Practitioner Training

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## Supporting Mentor

To facilitate the trainee's self-exploration and process of personal unfolding and growing, the Supporting Mentor offers active/empathetic listening to the trainee's feelings and personal meanings of Focusing. They offer their curiosity and openness to the trainee's questions, understandings, and confusions, thereby encouraging and nourishing the same kind of active inner listening in the Focuser/trainee.

## The role of the Supporting Mentor

The intention is to have a second person accompanying the Trainee's journey - somebody whom they can run their ideas past, who can provide a different kind of listening or input when they need it.

This can be in the form of Focusing sessions, discussions, attending to practical questions, and offering emotional support.

If a Supporting Mentor has specialised experience in a particular field, for example children's Focusing, they can provide additional input in an area of interest.

Each Mentor can be asked to support the trainee's relationship with the other Mentor should issues arise.

Toward the end of the training, the Supporting Mentor will be invited to share a felt sense of the trainee's readiness for certification.

When training is complete, a Supporting Mentor will co-sign the certificate.

## **The Supporting Mentor - some suggestions**

Mentors generally suggest that trainee and Supporting Mentor meet for a minimum of 3 hours. We spent some time with this and our sense is that a minimum of 4 hours would support a more connected relationship. This would enable Supporting Mentors to be more effective in their role. With this in mind, we also feel that it would be helpful if it is highlighted to trainees that they can have more sessions with the Supporting Mentor should they wish.

Session timings can be arranged flexibly to suit both. For example, an initial meeting to envision ways of working together might be helpful.

We added a professional directory specifically for Supporting Mentors [on the professional training page of the BFA website](#) (see further down). Here, Supporting Mentors can choose to offer a 15-minute meeting to support the trainee in finding their right Supporting Mentor.

On qualification, Focusing Practitioners are automatically eligible to become Supporting Mentors.

We suggest that the role of Supporting Mentor is introduced within the Practitioner Training, and that the Training Mentor and Supporting Mentor may discuss how the collaboration should go.

## **Preparing for the Practitioner Training**

### **Communication between Training and Supporting Mentors – some suggestions**

If the Training and Supporting Mentors have not worked together in offering professional training, we suggest a meeting between them for them to agree on their definition of their roles and to discuss what is communicated with the trainee. It would be nice that the three feel like a team.

If the trainee wishes, collaboration between the Trainee, Training Mentor and Supporting Mentor could be supported by an initial meeting with all three.

Any difficulties and stuck places arising in the trainees' learning can be explored with the help of the Supporting Mentor. This could involve 'one to one' and / or three-way sessions with both trainee and the Mentors.

# Support in choosing a Supporting Mentor

To help new Trainees (who may not know Practitioners in the BFA) to find a Supporting Mentor, we added a Supporting Mentors directory to the website in addition to the BFA Primary Mentor directory. (Since 17. August 2022)

Benefits of this list:

- Additional information can be provided by Supporting Mentors
- Ease in approaching BFA Practitioners who have indicated their willingness to act as a Supporting Mentor

If the tickbox "I am available as a Supporting Mentor" has been ticked then these extra fields show:

## Support Mentor profile

- How I see my role as a Supporting Mentor
- I offer a free 15-minute chat to support trainees in finding their Supporting Mentor (tickbox)
- My prices as a Supporting Mentor (text field)
- About my availability, eg "*I will be available again by September of 2022*"

All fields are optional. (if you don't tick or fill in a question, it simply will not show up in your profile)

## How to update your profile on the BFA website

- To make the changes to your profile, please log-in to the website, then click on the "Welcome back <your first name> " link at the top right corner, in the orange coloured area.
- That will take you to the " My account" page and you just scroll down that page and you will find all the options there to edit your membership profile.
- On this page at the "What services I offer?" question tick that you are available as a supporting mentor and fill in the related questions you want to appear in your BFA member profile about being a supporting mentor.
- To apply the changes you made, you have to scroll to the bottom of the edit profile page and click on "Save".

## The additional information entered shows:

- In the member's profiles on:  
<https://www.focusing.org.uk/focusing-professionals-directory>.  
The filter "I am looking for a Supporting Mentor" can be selected.
- On <https://www.focusing.org.uk/professional-training> additional to the Training Mentor directory you will now also find a Supporting Mentor directory.

# Aspects to be communicated to the trainee at beginning of training

## Finding a suitable Supporting Mentor

- A Focusing Practitioner / Teacher / Coordinator from anywhere in the world can be a Supporting Mentor
- Suggesting that the trainee might like to consider whether there is a field / branch of Focusing that interests them, and whether a particular Supporting Mentor can be helpful with that
- BFA Supporting Mentors are listed in the [Professional Training Directory](#)

## Basics about the Supporting Mentor

- A minimum of 4 hours is recommended to be spent with the Supporting Mentor, spread over the period of the training, ideally with some contact close to the beginning and end.
- The initial and final sessions with the Training Mentor can include the Supporting Mentor as requested by the trainee.
- The trainee is responsible for sensing what they might need from the Supporting Mentor and how much time to spend with them.
- The Supporting Mentor can be helpful if there is a stuck place with the Training Mentor.

## Helpful information for the Trainee

- A written outline for the Focusing Practitioner training programme is given to the trainee by the Training Mentor, including required training time, optional sessions, and pricing.
- It is a trainee centred approach, which means that besides the basic training material offered by the Training Mentor the idea is that the student is responsible for communicating what they want and need from both Mentors.
- Offer inspirations for what the trainee can ask for from the Training Mentor & Supporting Mentor. A lot is left to the trainee's initiative in this training format, it's nice for them to be offered some concrete inspiration, for example:

Ways you can learn from and receive support from your Mentors (Training and Supporting) are:

- Focusing time on any topic or about where you are with your learning
- Bring questions / sharing / challenges with your own Focusing practice and with what you are offering to others
- Offer your recordings / transcripts along with your questions
- Bring topics for general discussion
- Bring your questions about Gene's philosophy
- Bring your interests about branches / styles of Focusing (e.g. Wholebody focusing, Inner Relationship Focusing, etc..)
- Receive emotional support
- Discuss any issues arising with one Mentor with the other Mentor

- Issues of confidentiality could be addressed by Training and Supporting Mentor
- Certification:
  - Once the basic training requirements have been met, the readiness for certification is a felt sense decision.
  - The Supporting Mentor is involved in the decision regarding readiness for certification.

*This proposal is posted on the BFA website since August 2022*