

(Revised 11th March 2020)

PRIOR TO FOCUSING IT IS BEST TO RECALL

In Focusing we distinguish between an emotion and a 'felt sense'. The felt sense is wider and refers to a **whole body sensing** right now in the present. When people fall into an emotion or an altered state and get swallowed up inside Focusing tries to help them **stay back and find the right distance** from which to be in relation to what ever the whole thing is. Mary Hendricks, Ph.D.1998]

Focusing starts with something **SLIGHT** – not simply feelings. It was discovered that we can often disregard a **SLIGHT** subtle bodily quality that often has meaning. One must be willing [to touch a territory that is not clear](#), **staying with something that is not clear is when you are doing focusing – to go beyond your conditioning**. Be willing to go through what Gene called a 'murky zone'.

- **Attending to subtle and that is sometimes vague and unclear and may seem at first to be pointless. It means getting in touch with what is not yet fully known and bringing it into the light of consciousness.**
- **Starting from INSIDE bringing freshly something out that did not exist before.**
- Once the unknown takes centre-stage in our consciousness and becomes known, a person's understanding of themselves deepens and they move further towards healing.
- "Focusing is inherently a process of getting lost and becoming found. ("I once was lost, but now am found—famous line from the song, *Amazing Grace*)." (re: [Domain Focusing/ Macro shifting/3 person Learning Formats](#), R. Lee, Ph.D. , revised 9/1/2018)
- **Letting go of your usual way of thinking, feeling and of talking to yourself.**
- Letting go of the feeling of trying to do something or get somewhere.
- Letting words or images come from, match or fit your body sensations (change does not come from purely mental solutions)
- **Being willing to allow the possibility of change** (even though that may not feel possible at the time you are focusing) to occur.
- Being willing to stay with when you are feeling stuck and let it unfold as the next step.

STEP ONE/PART ONE: CLEARING A SPACE/RELAXATION

Take a moment to relax. Get comfortable --- feel the weight of your body being fully supported by the chair - loosen any clothing that is too tight -Close your eyes and turn inward

- Spend a moment just noticing your breathing
- Massage your face, neck & shoulders.
- Take a minute or two to come in touch within your body
 - Centre of your body around the chest and heart.
- At any time you need more time simply raise your hand

(Revised 11th March 2020)

STEP ONE/PART 2: CLEARING A SPACE/RELAXATION

I'd like you to ask inside ... can I feel ok about how my whole life is going right now? – **WAIT**. See what **comes within** to answer..

Whatever comes, **don't work on it**. Do whatever you need to do **to make a friendly nurturing space** for it all and ask: **except for this, would I feel OK?** WAIT

What's between you and feeling fine? — a particular issue, situation, decision, problem, bereavement, conflict or anything else.

If there is more than one, make a list. You can write down the list if you wish.

If there is a list choose one to focus on.

Using your imagination, after choosing one to focus on, place the list some distance away and far enough away so that you feel relatively comfortable with the sensations and emotions that go with the list. (e.g. You may need to place the list on a train or make it into a paper air plane and let it fly away).

Now take what you have chosen to focus on. Something that seems right for you to follow at the level of difficulty you feel willing to deal with

STEP TWO: GETTING A "FELT SENSE"

- Lets go within and see what is there.
- **Allow yourself to arise what we call a *felt sense/meaning* of "this whole thing"**
- **Allow to form**, as a vague, preverbal sensing within, an unclear body-sense of this whole thing.

STEP THREE: FINDING A HANDLE

- While paying attention to *felt sense/meaning*, and describe "this whole thing" to yourself as vividly as you can.
- Locate the centre of the *felt sense/meaning* and **WAIT**.
- **Now** be aware of an image, word, phrase or sound that arises as you pay attention to the centre of the **felt sense/meaning**.

STEP FOUR: CHECKING AND RESONATING

Does the image, word, phrase or sound match the felt sense?

Sit quietly with it all - going back-and-forth between image, word, phrase or sound, checking to find the symbolization that is "just right" in capturing the meaning of the *felt sense*.

What happened if the image did not match the felt sense?

(Revised 11th March 2020)

STEP FIVE: ASKING OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Ask yourself!

- What is so important about ‘this’?
- What is the worst or most difficult of ‘this’?
- [Note: “One senses it as a whole, to sense what about it is so bad. One awaits the body “to stir” as the answer, rather than deciding anything” (ref: *Experimental Psychotherapy*, Gendlin, 1986)]
- What would it feel like if it was all OK and let the felt sense answer.
- Is there anything in the way of that happening? See what arises. Try and put what arises in into that nurturing space you have created.

STEP SIX: RECEIVING

Welcome what comes and be glad it spoke. What is your *felt sense* now?

Ask what is needed now? WAIT and receive what answer that arises from the felt sense

Be certain to protect it from critical voices that may come to interrupt

Now that you know where it is, can leave it and come back to it later?

Is this a good stopping place?

Do whatever you need to do to finish the exercise but be certain you are not left hanging

Do you want another round of focusing?

(Note: Staying with a felt sense in an **accepting way** will bring something that Gene Gendlin named a “**felt shift**.” A beautiful term for a sense of both relief and hope at the same time!

QUESTIONS TO ASK ITO THE GROUP

1. Recall how you felt when you started focusing - the same or different?
2. Did you find something that matched? What happened to the *felt sense* when you found something that matched?
3. Can you accept that it is only one step to resolve what you have been focusing on and not the last?