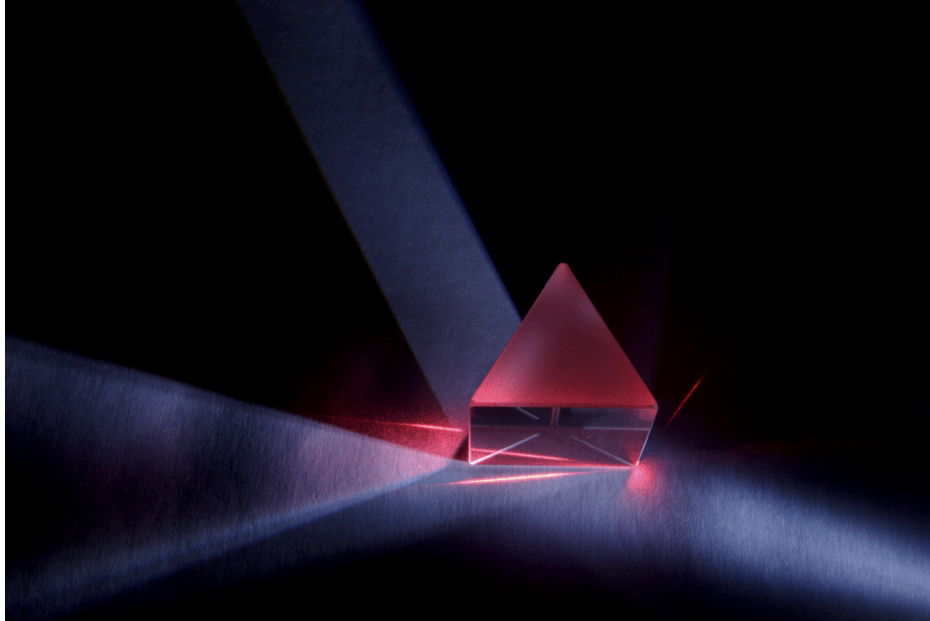


COMPLETE FOCUSING INSTRUCTIONS



A. PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE:

- 1. Relaxation Exercises**
- 2. Getting A Felt Sense**

B. COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSIONS

- 1. “How Am I Today?”**
- 2. Clearing A Space**
- 3. Remembering A Situation**

Disclaimer: “Complete Focusing Instructions” are offered purely as self-help skills. In providing them, Dr. McGuire is not engaged in rendering psychological, financial, legal, or other professional services. If expert assistance or counseling is needed, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

© Kathleen McGuire, Ph.D., 2007
Creative Edge Focusing™
www.cefocusing.com

INTRODUCTION

From Intuitions to “Ahah!s” : A Predictable Method

Focusing is a naturally-occurring, internal, problem solving process. It happens when an individual stops to ponder at the felt “edge” of what is known, the sense that there is “something-that-is-more-than-words.” Research on success in psychotherapy showed that the clients who changed most in therapy were those who were naturally stopping to “ponder upon” this unclear, felt, “intuitive” sensing of where they were stuck or how they could heal.

Research on creativity found the same thing. The most creative people were those who naturally stopped to “ponder” at this intuitive “edge” of what they already knew. They would go back-and-forth between this unclear “intuitive feel” and words or images until they found symbols that were exactly “right” in capturing the “feel” of this intuitive edge of consciousness.

Dr. Eugene Gendlin of the University of Chicago and The Focusing Institute (www.focusing.org) called this intuitive edge of consciousness the “felt sense.” He decided it was important to teach this skill of “pondering at the intuitive edge” to everyday people, to use for personal growth and creative problem solving.

In his self-help book called *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981), Gendlin broke this process of “pondering” down into six steps and called it “focusing.” He described “focusing” upon the “felt sense,” and going back-and-forth between symbols (words and images) and the “felt sense” until the exactly “right” symbols are found to “capture” the “felt sense.” At that moment, the Focuser experiences a “felt shift,” a conscious experience of “Oh, that is exactly right. It’s this!”

The solutions to problems are already present in the body as the “right-brained” information which comes as an “intuition” or a “hunch.” Anyone could now use “focusing” to “sit with” the intuitive edge of consciousness and to create new behaviors and new ideas out of this intuitive “feel.”

Gendlin received the award for “Distinguished Professional Psychologist” from the American Psychological Association in 1970 for his work with Focusing and experiential therapy. His *Focusing* book has been translated into over fifteen languages, and there is an international network of Focusing teachers, and millions of trained Focusers, spread throughout the world (www.focusing.org).

Interest in Malcolm Gladwell’s best seller, *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking* (Little, Brown, 2005) indicates that everyone is ready to recognize “intuitions” and “hunches” as valuable routes to decision making. Gladwell stated that intuitive information was from the subconscious and could not easily be “unpacked” and made consciously known. But Gendlin’s Focusing, which has been thoroughly researched for over thirty years, is a predictable method for

taking “intuitions” and “hunches” and turning them into verbalized, consciously-known “Ahah!” experiences

Dr. McGuire of Creative Edge Focusing™ calls “the felt sense” the “intuitive feel,” since it is like that internal sensing that we refer to as “an intuition,” a “hunch.” She also calls this intuitive edge of consciousness The Creative Edge, because it is in this “intuitive feel,” this “right-brain” information, that creative ideas and innovative solutions to problems can be found.

She calls the “felt shift” a Paradigm Shift, emphasizing that, when symbols are found for “the intuitive feel,” the light bulb goes on, the kaleidoscope turns, the Gestalt changes, and brand new behaviors, emotions, and ideas suddenly “pop up” and become possible, Instant “Ahah!”s.

If you haven’t yet, you can subscribe to the Instant “Ahah!”s newsletter at www.cefocusing.com to receive a weekly reminder to “pause and ponder” at The Creative Edge and to download a free manual with ten Instant “Ahah!” methods you can try, immediately, at home and at work.

Learning Focusing: “Sitting at” the Creative Edge of Consciousness

We all know there are times when we are aware of, and are guided by, a kind of “gut feeling” or “intuition.” An “intuition” is without words, but very concretely present inside, as a “feeling-without-words.” If I asked you where in your body you experience “intuitions” or “hunches,” what would you say? They are not really a “thought” or “image” in your head, but more of an experience that you have in your body. We say “I have a gut feeling about this....” or “Something in my heart tells me I have to do this....” Certainly, we think of “intuitions” as going with our “heart,” not our “head” – as “right-brain” rather than “left-brain” decision making.

Many people experience the “felt sense” or “intuitive hunch” as a gathering of “energy” in the stomach or in the chest/heart area – not the bones or muscles but a gathering of “energy” or subtle “sensing” in that area. Gendlin’s Focusing, which Dr. McGuire calls Intuitive Focusing, is a method for paying attention to this “intuitive feel,” this “gut sensing,” and carefully looking for words or images that are exactly right in describing it. When the right symbols are found, the “felt sense” opens and changes, with new solutions and action steps arising.

In order to teach you how to use Focusing for personal, spiritual, and creative problem solving, the following exercises break the Intuitive Focusing process down into parts and teach the parts in sections. Then, at the end, you will be walked through some complete Focusing Instructions.

If you want to try out complete Focusing right away, skip to **Having A Paradigm Shift: Complete Focusing Instructions**. Or you can use the exercises in the Instant “Ahah!”s Mini Manual available at www.cefocusing.com. But you will be asking yourself to plunge right into 20-30 minutes of inner attention, meditation-like “inward action steps.” If you have little experience in spending quiet, pleasant, meditative time, you will find the Relaxation exercises below an invaluable, pleasant, stress-reducing first step into quiet time “inside.”

Many people also learn Intuitive Focusing most easily in the company of a Focused Listener. You can find all kinds of help, from a Self-Help Package to create your own practice group, to individual Focusing Coaching to Focusing Classes and Workshops at www.cefocusing.com and www.focusing.org, The Focusing Institute.

In order to download these free Complete Focusing Instructions, you probably sent your first email to Creative Edge Focusing's e-discussion/support group. Please continue contributing and reading for constant support, demonstrations, and problem solving, as well as becoming part of a network of people trying to bring Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening throughout the world as a form of "human literacy."

So, if you want to start learning Intuitive Focusing step-by-step, here we go with:

- **Pre-Focusing Practice**
 - A. **Relaxation:** several different basic relaxation exercises to help you have the experience of spending pleasant, restful time going quietly inside.
 - B. **Finding a "Felt Sense:" The Intuitive Feel, The Creative Edge:** several exercises which help you have a "felt sense," or an "intuitive feel" as a concrete experience in your body.
- **Having A Paradigm Shift: Complete Focusing Instructions**, which combines the skills you have learned in the use of Focusing as a problem solving process leading to "felt shifts" or Paradigm Shifts, Instant "Ahah!"s.

PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE

A. RELAXATION SUGGESTIONS

Do one a day for at least a week, taking ten to fifteen minutes per day. Before you begin, you may want to read all of the instructions into the tape recorder so that you can play them back to yourself later. You would need one sixty-minute tape (and a second 90-minute tape for the three Complete Focusing Instructions at the end). Use a gentle, slowly-paced voice, leaving time as suggested between parts of the instruction. The quiet time between instructions is an important time for just breathing...and relaxing.

You can lie on the floor or, for most exercises, sit in a chair. If you fall asleep, it's okay! Means you need more rest! But you may also want to practice sitting up to avoid sleeping.

If you purchase the Self-Help Package at www.cefocusing.com, you will receive audio CDs containing most of these exercises.

1. Noticing—Allow 10-15 minutes

---Lie down and make yourself comfortable....loosen any clothing that is too tight.

---Massage your own neck and face, making small circles with your fingertips over small areas at a time. Find at least five different spots on your neck and five on your face to massage in this way. Feel the tension leaving.

1 minute

---Stretch your whole body three times, reaching your arms out over your head, arching your back, and pointing your toes. After each stretch, collapse into the floor and breath deeply, relaxing....stretch....and relax....stretch....and relax....stretch....and relax...10 seconds

---Now, just lie there and notice your breathing. Don't try to change it, but just notice the breath going in and out....in.....and out.....in.....and out.....in.....and out.....10 seconds

---Now, begin to notice any thoughts or pictures you are having. JUST NOTICE THEM....and keep breathing, in.....and out.....in.....and out.....

1 minute

---Just notice your thoughts going by, like a movie.....don't think or problem solve.....just notice...and keep breathing, in.....and out.....in and out.....

1 minute

--- If you realize that you have started thinking about something and are trying to solve a problem or have started worrying about something, just allow yourself to leave that thought and to come back to noticing your breathing, going in.....and out.....in.....and out.....

1 minute

---If you have started thinking and problem solving, just leave that thought...and come back to noticing your breath, going in.....and out.....in.....and out....

1 minute

---Just noticing your thoughts, like a movie, letting them go, returning to noticing your breath, going in.....and out.....in.....and out.....

3 minutes

---Now, massage any parts of your body that seem tense or uncomfortable.....

1 minute

---Stretch one more time, and get up when you are ready.

2. The Beach—Allow 10-15 minutes

---Lie down or sit down and get comfortable....10 seconds

---Stretch...and relax...stretch.....and relax....stretch....and relax.... three times....10 seconds

---Notice your breathing, without trying to change it.

1 minute

---Now, imagine yourself at the ocean.....10 seconds

---See the wide, sweeping beach of white, crystalline sand.....warm and smooth.....10 seconds

---Take off your shoes and socks, and feel the warm sand between your toes....10 seconds

---Smell the sea on the breeze...breathing in.....and out.....in.....and out.....in.....and out.....10 seconds

---Watch the waves rolling in, and hear their roaring sound.....10 seconds

---Waves blue-green with creamy white caps...lapping at the sand...10 seconds

---Waves rolling in.....and out.....in.....and out.....in.....and out.....10 seconds

---Lie down in the warm sand.....feel its warmth all over your back.....10 seconds

---Stretch and settle in, feeling the sun upon your body...the sand cushioning you...10 seconds

---Listening to the waves rolling in.....and out.....in.....and out.....in.....and out.....10 seconds

---Listen to the gulls crying over head....10 seconds

---Feel the warmth of the sand below you, the warmth of the sun beating down on you...10 seconds

---Remain here as long as you wish.

3 - 5 minutes

---Now stretch, and massage any tension in your face, neck, shoulders, or feet, if you like...

1 minute

--- And get up slowly.

3. The Forest—Allow 10-15 minutes

---Lie down or sit down and get comfortable....Loosen any clothing that is too tight...10 seconds

---Stretch...and relax....stretch.....and relax.....stretch.....and relax....10 seconds

---Notice your breathing without trying to change it...just noticing the breath, going in.....and out.....in.....and out.....in.....and out.....

1 minute

---Now, imagine yourself in a cool, dark, forest.....10 seconds

---Walk along a path by a bubbling spring.....noticing the ferns and wildflowers.....the shy, small forest animals.....10 seconds.

---Come upon a clearing with a soft cushion of silent pine needles.....10 seconds

---Lie down and listen to the wind whistling through the pine trees.....10 seconds

---Hear the spring bubbling beside you.....10 seconds

---Feel the soft cushion of pine needles beneath you... 10 seconds

--- Listen to the breeze blowing the branches.....back and forth.....back and forth.....10 seconds

---The spring bubbling... 10 seconds

--- The breeze blowing the branches.....10 seconds

---Hear the birds calling in the trees...10 seconds

---Birds calling back and forth...10 seconds

---Hear the rustle of small animals around you...curious rabbits....and mice....10 seconds...

---Stay here as long as you like.....

3-5 minutes

---And, when you are ready, stretch, and massage any tension in your face, neck, shoulders, or feet, if you like.....

1 minute

--- And get up slowly.....

4. Counting Meditation—Allow 10-15 minutes

Here is a simple form of meditation, a way of quieting your mind from its continuous racing.....You will learn to discipline yourself to pay attention to counting and breathing, setting aside any thoughts that distract you.

This is not as simple as it sounds! Time and again, you will find that you have forgotten about counting and breathing and allowed your mind to return to its habitual ways of worrying. But the learning is in the trying. If you drift away, simply notice this and return to counting and breathing.

---Lie down or sit down and make yourself comfortable...loosen any clothing that is too tight....

1 minute

---Stretch....and relax....stretch....and relax....stretch....and relax10 seconds

---Begin by simply notice your breathing.....do not try to force it.....just notice the breath going in.....and out.....in.....and out.....in.....and out.....10 seconds

---Now, you are going to count from one to seven along with your breathing. Count each time you exhale. So, inhale, then, as you exhale, count “1” to yourself.....inhale, and, as you exhale, count “2”.....inhale, and, as you exhale, count “3”.....and so on, until you reach “7”.

30 seconds

---When you reach "7," just start over again, with inhale, then count "1" on the exhale.... and continue up to “7.”

30 seconds

---You will find again and again that you have lost track of your counting and drifted off into random thoughts. Don't punish yourself or get upset with yourself. Just notice and return to watching your breathing, and counting.

1 minute

--- Continue repeating as long as you wish, noticing when your thoughts stray and just bringing yourself gently back to counting, from “1” to “7”, over and again....

5-10 minutes

---And, when you are, ready, slowly come back into the room.

5. Tense and Relax—Allow 10 minutes

---Lie down and get comfortable, your whole body supported on the floor or bed....loosen any clothing that is too tight....

1 minute

---Stretch....and relax....stretch....and relax....stretch....and relax...and just notice your breathing, going in....and out....in....and out....in....and out....10 seconds

---Beginning with your feet, and moving slowly up your body toward your head, you will first tense, as if making a fist, and then relax, each section of your body. In between each tension-relaxation cycle, you will rest for a moment, just noticing your breathing. So, to begin, tense your feet, curling your toes tightly...hold...hold...hold...and relax.... Let yourself breathe....in....and out....in....and out....in....and out....10 seconds

---Point your toes and tense your calf muscles as tightly as you can....hold...hold...hold....and relax....and breathe....in....and out....in....and out....in....and out...10 seconds

---Move to your thighs...tense them tightly...hold...hold...hold....and relax.....and breathe....10 seconds

---Now your buttocks and pelvis...tense tightly...hold...hold...hold....and relax....and breathe...10 seconds

---Now your stomach and lower back...tense...hold...hold...hold....and relax...and breathe....10 seconds.

---Let your backbone sink into the floor...10 seconds.

---Now your chest and shoulders...tense and hold....hold...hold....and relax....and breathe....10 seconds

---Now your arms...tense them up, making fists with your hands...hold...hold...hold....and relax....and breathe....10 seconds

---Now your neck and shoulders...tense them up...hold...hold...hold....and relax....and breathe...10 seconds

---Now, lastly, your face. Tense it up, screwing your face into the most horrible grimace...hold....hold....hold....and relax....and breathe....10 seconds

---Now, just lie silently for a while, thinking about something pleasant that you like to do...and just drifting.

3-5 minutes

B. GETTING A FELT SENSE: FINDING THE “INTUITIVE FEEL,” THE CREATIVE EDGE

Here you are learning the difference between thinking up an answer in your head and Intuitive Focusing: waiting for a subtle "feel" of the whole thing, an “intuition,” to form in the center of your body, and then creating words or images that are just right to capture it. You are looking for the “intuitive feel,” the Creative Edge, the right-brain information that is more than you can put into words.

1. The "Intuitive Feel" of Each Person—Allow 10 minutes

I'm going to invite you to imagine two doors. Behind the first will be someone that you feel good about. Behind the second will be someone who upsets you.

You will notice that you have a different experience of each person in the center of your body, around the chest and heart area. This experience, this “intuitive feel” without words, is the Creative Edge.

Although initially this experience comes as an “intuition,” or a “feeling,” without words, by paying attention to this “intuitive feel,” you can create many new words and images, truly innovative ideas (Joan Klagsbrun invented this).

---Close your eyes and get comfortable....loosen any clothing that is too tight.....

1 minute

---Just follow your breathing for a little while, noticing the breath going in....and out.....

1 minute

---Now take a few moments to think about who the two people will be, one that you feel good about, one who upsets you.

1 minute

---And think about the kind of door you'll put each behind, the decorations, color.....30 seconds

---Now, imagine yourself walking up to the first door and opening it...Here is the person that you feel good about....10 seconds

---Let yourself notice the "feel" of that person in your body...10 seconds

---Find some words or an image to describe it.....30 seconds

---Next, bid that person "Goodbye," close the door, and walk away....10 seconds

---Now, imagine yourself walking up to the other door and opening it...Here is the person who upsets you....10 seconds

---Again, notice the "experience" of that person in the center of your body, the "intuitive feel....10 seconds

---Find some words or an image to describe it....30 seconds

---Next, bid that person "Goodbye," close the door, and walk away....10 seconds

---Now, spend a few moments comparing the two "felt senses," the good feelings and the uncomfortable feelings.....30 seconds

---These are the "bodily felt senses," the "intuitive feel" you have, of the two people involved. They are more than you could ever put into words, but you can make many words and images from them.....30 seconds

--- Spend as long as you wish exploring these two experiences, going back and forth between the two "intuitive feels" and looking for words or images to describe the difference.....
3 minutes

---And when you are ready, slowly bring your attention back into the room.

2. From the Bottom Up –Allow 5-10 minutes

Here's another method for finding the "intuitive feel" of the inside of your body, especially the space around the chest/heart area where you will experience the Creative Edge, the intuitive information that is more than words (Eugene Gendlin invented this):

---Close your eyes and get comfortable....loosen any clothing that is too tight...
1 minute

---Follow your breathing for a few moments, just noticing the breath, going in....and out...
1 minute

---Now, turn your attention to your right big toe...Can you feel your toe?....10 seconds

---Now, turn your attention to your knee...and feel your knee from the inside....10 seconds

---Now, pay attention to your body where it touches the chair or floor...Feel everywhere that your body makes contact with the supporting surface.....30 seconds

---Now, the inside of your chest... this is where the felt sense, the "intuitive feel" comes... feel in there.....10 seconds

---Ask yourself, in there, "How am I today?" and wait and see what comes...If you wait for at least a minute, a "felt sense" will arise, a subtle "intuitive feel" of yourself, that is not in words.
1 minute

---Just be with the “intuitive feel” for a moment, feeling it and trying to find a short, feeling or “quality” word (like "scared," "sad," "tense," "silly," "joyful" “red,” “jumpy,” “elastic”) that captures the quality of the “intuitive feel”...Or you might find an image that is just right....

1 minute

---You can use this quality word as a "handle" to hold on to an “intuitive feel” so that you can come back to it later....10 seconds

---When you are ready, come slowly back into the room

3. Clearing A Space– Allow 20 minutes

Clearing A Space is for those times when your body is so clogged up with issues that it's hard to get a felt sense, an “intuitive feel,” for any one of them. Instead, you may feel overwhelmed, depressed, numb.

Clearing A Space involves identifying each issue that you are carrying in a physical way and setting it outside of yourself, if only for a moment, so that your body can breath more freely. Later, you can take one issue back inside and work on it in an Intuitive Focusing way. But Clearing A Space can give your body a break even before the problems can be solved.

Clearing A Space can be especially effective when people must carry a chronic illness, an irresolvable problem, or an ongoing stress every day. It provides a way to get some moments of stress reduction and refurbishment, some moments when the burden can be set down and the body/mind can breath freely (Neil Friedman developed some of the imagery below).

---Lie down or sit in a way that's comfortable for you...if you tend to fall asleep, you might vary your posture to reduce those cues.....loosen any clothing that is too tight....

1 minute

---Spend a few moments just noticing your breathing....noticing your breath going in....and out...

1 minute

---Now, ask yourself, "What's between me and feeling perfectly all right?" and wait and see what issue rises to consciousness: “ Well, there is that whole thing about...’money’or ‘my relationship’ or ‘my son’ or ‘that work issue’.....”

1 minute

---Spend a moment with this issue, noticing how you carry it in your body...10 seconds

---Is there a tension in your neck?....Or butterflies in your stomach?....Or a clenched jaw? ...Or furrows in your forehead?.....See if you can find a physical manifestation of this issue as a tension in your body....10 seconds

---Now, ask your self, “What is the “intuitive feel” of this thing?”...Look in the center of your body, inside the chest/heart area, for that right-brain “intuitive feel” that is more than words...30 seconds

---Don't try to go into the issue or try to solve the problem, just notice the “intuitive feel” of the whole thing.....30 seconds

---Find some words or an image for the feeling or the “quality” of that whole thing....like “scared, “knotted,” “confusing,” “stretching,” “frustrated”30 seconds

---Now, imagine that there is a counter or a table out in front of you and imagine that you are wrapping that “whole thing,” – the issue, the physical tension, and the intuitive feel—all of it, up like a parcel and setting it outside of yourself for a momentyou may experience a “sigh” of relief as you imagine lifting it and setting it outside.....ahhhhhh!!....10 seconds

---See if you can set “that whole thing” outside for a while...You can come back and solve it later...Right now, just see if your body can be free of it for a moment...30 seconds

---Now, ask again, "What else is in the way of feeling perfectly okay?" and see what issue arises next....30 seconds

---Again, just name it...10 seconds

---Notice if there is a physical location for the tension of it....10 seconds

---Get the “intuitive feel” of the “whole thing, before words, in the center of your body...30 seconds

---Find a word or an image that captures the quality of that whole thing....30 seconds

---And imagine wrapping “that whole thing” up and setting it out on the counter for a while....30 seconds....

---Continue in this way until all the issues have been named and set outside...

3-5 minutes

---Now, check to see if there is any background feeling still inside...a basic feeling tone that is always present....30 seconds

---If you find such a thing, again, notice it, find a word or image that captures the quality of it, and try to wrap it up and set it outside for a while....

1 minute

---Now, you might want to take an inventory of all the positive things in your life at this point, in the same way, naming each, getting the feel of it, finding some words or an image, and then wrapping it up and setting it on the table.

3 minutes

---Now, just enjoy the experience of the “cleared space” in your body....

1 minute

---Sometimes, people experience a state of spiritual Oneness at this point...If that happens to you, just savor it....

1 minute

---You might want to create some words or an image for this good feeling state, so that you can come back here whenever you want....

1 minute

---If you were going to continue with Focusing at this point, you would choose one issue, bring it back into the center of your body, and ask "What's this all about?" and proceed in a Focusing way.

4. The “Felt Sense,” The “Intuitive Feel” of a Situation—Allow 10-15 minutes

---Start with a favorite relaxation exercise—the ocean, the forest, counting, tense-and-relax.....

3 minutes

---Spend a few minutes coming to a peaceful place inside, noticing your breathing...

2 minutes

---Now, bring to mind an incident or a situation from the past week which feels unfinished.

1 minute

---Set aside all your ready-made words or images, and try to get a fresh “intuitive feel” for how you felt in that situation, paying attention to the center of your body, around the heart/chest area....

1 minute

---Try to find some words or an image to describe the “intuitive feel” of it, The Creative Edge before words...

1 minute

---Keep checking until the words or image are just right.

1 minute

---Ask yourself, "What's that about for me?" and wait for a felt sense, an “intuitive feel” that is more than words, to form.....

1 minute

---Find some words or an image to capture that “intuitive sense”. You are letting your body's Wisdom tell you about the situation, instead of answering with everything you already know.

1 minute

---When you are ready, come slowly back into the room.

HAVING A PARADIGM SHIFT: COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION INSTRUCTIONS

In Intuitive Focusing, first, you relax and find a felt sense, an “intuitive feel” that is before words and more than words. Then, you go back and forth between open-ended questions (“Why is this hard for me?”, “What’s the meaning for me?”, “How is this related to that other decision?”)and the “intuitive feel,” looking for words or images that exactly capture “the feel of the whole thing,” until you find a sense of resolution, of knowing the meaning. At this moment of “Ahah!,” you are experiencing a “felt shift,” a Paradigm shift. The kaleidoscope turns, and the whole situation is new. New ideas, emotions, and action steps suddenly become possible.

Eugene Gendlin (*Focusing*, 1981) was the first to describe Focusing as a series of steps which could be practiced as a self-help, problem solving method.

Below are three sets of instructions, each taking you through the complete Intuitive Focusing process. If you purchase Creative Edge Focusing™’s Self-help Package from www.cefocusing.com, you will automatically receive an audio CD containing two of the three instructions below.

To make your own audio cassette tapes, I suggest you buy two ninety-minute cassette tapes (forty-five minutes to a side) and read the three sets of long focusing instructions into the tape recorder, two sets on the first side of a tape, the third on the second side.

When you are reading into the tape recorder, make sure to leave at least one minute between instructions (time yourself!), and read with a gentle, welcoming voice.

If you don't have a tape recorder, you can read the instructions to yourself, have a friend read them to you, or, if you have a focusing group, have one person read them to the whole group.

Try these long instructions only as you feel comfortable. Don't be judgmental of yourself if nothing huge seems to be happening. It can take a long time to learn to recognize a felt sense, the "intuitive feel," amidst all of the other things going on inside of your body (thoughts, images, muscular sensations, etc.).

Don't force yourself to stay quietly inside longer than is pleasurable for you. Remember, many people learn the basics of Intuitive Focusing and having "felt shifts" better if they can be in interaction with a Listening partner. Start your own self-help group, using the *Focusing In Community (Focusing en Comunidad)* manual from the Self-Help package, or seek individual Coaching or a class/workshop with a Creative Edge Focusing Consultant (www.cefocusing.com).

If any tears arise during Intuitive Focusing, let them come. Be very gentle and curious with the place the tears come from, asking "What are these tears all about?", "Why does this move me?", "What's the meaning of these tears?"

Each of the three sets of instructions emphasizes a different way of getting a "felt sense" or "intuitive feel."

1. **"How Am I Today?":** You simply ask yourself, "How am I today?" and wait and see what comes as a felt sense.
2. **"Clearing A Space":** You clear a space inside, making a list of all the issues you find, positive and negative, then choose the one thing from the list you would like to focus on.
3. **"Focusing On A Situation"** You think of a specific situation or issue about which you want to learn more, and find the "bodily sense" of how that whole thing feels.

Try each set. You may find that one way works consistently better for you, or you may find that you like to use different instructions to work on different kinds of issues.

1. "How am I today?"—Allow 20-30 minutes

---Lie down and get comfortable...loosen any clothing that is too tight...

1 minute

---Now, stretch your arms up over your head, point your toes, and stretch as long as you can...and relax....10 seconds

---Let your body relax into the floor...10 seconds

---Now, tense your feet, hold for a second...and relax...and breathe, in and out...10 seconds

---Now, tense your calf muscles... hold...and relax...and breathe...in and out...10 seconds

---And, now, your thighs...tense...hold...and relax...and breathe...10 seconds

---And now your pelvis and buttocks...tense...and relax...and breathe...10 seconds

---Now, your stomach and lower back...tense...and relax...and breathe...10 seconds

---Your arms...tense...relax...and breathe...10 seconds

---Now, your face and neck...tense them up...wiggle your face all around...and relax...10 seconds

---Notice your thought process...and gently set it aside...10 seconds

--- Find a peaceful place inside of yourself...10 seconds

---Now, ask yourself, "How am I today?" and just wait and see what comes...30 seconds

---Now, ask yourself, "And what's the feel of that whole thing?," and, again, wait as long as a minute for the "intuitive feel," the more-than-words, of the whole thing to form, probably in the center of your chest/heart area.

1 minute

---Again, find some words or an image that are just right for the feeling.

1 minute

---And ask yourself, "And why does that matter to me?" and see what comes....

1 minute

---Find some words or an image to capture it just right, going back-and-forth between intuition and symbols until there is a sense of fit: "Yes, that's it."

1 minute

---Now, ask yourself, "What would this be like if it were all okay?" and see if you can get some words or an image for that.

1 minute

---Now, ask yourself gently, "What's in the way of that being okay?" and just wait and see what comes as a bodily sense, an "intuitive feel" around your heart center.

1 minute

---And find words or an image to capture that, going back-and-forth until the sense of "fit."

1 minute

---Now, hold those two intuitive senses next to each other: the way it would be if it were okay, and the way it is now, and see if you experience any change or shift in how it is.

1 minute

---See if you can find any small step that would bring you closer to how you'd like it to be.

1 minute

---Now, just spend another minute receiving what has come...

1 minute

--- If you feel like you want some more steps of problem solving on this issue, you can do more rounds of Focusing: ask yourself an open-ended question, wait for a felt sense, the “intuitive feel,” then look for words or images to capture it...

5-10 minutes...

--- When you're ready, end the Focusing for today and slowly come back into the room.

2. Clearing A Space—Allow 20-30 minutes (Bala Jaison created the ladder imagery)

---Lie down and make yourself comfortable...loosen any clothing that is too tight...

1 minute

---Tense your whole body.....hold.....and relax.....and breathe.....in and out....

1 minute

---Feel the floor supporting your body....30 seconds

---Now, take a journey down into yourself...imagine yourself walking down a ladder and going deeper and deeper inside of yourself...10 seconds

---Travel down behind your eyes...and sense into the energy there...and breathe...10 seconds

---Continue down behind your throat....and sense into the energy there...and breathe...10 seconds

---Continue down your backbone until you are behind your chest and heart area, sense into the energy there.....and breathe...10 seconds

---Continue down into your stomach and pelvic area...sense into the energy there....and breathe...10 seconds

---And now, begin to make a list of all of the different things you're carrying inside today. You can ask yourself, “What's in between me and feeling totally okay?” and see what comes.

1 minute

---Just notice each thing, name it, get the feel of the whole thing just for a moment, and then try to wrap it up and set it outside of you, on a table, and see what else is there.

1 minute

---Spend several minutes, taking an inventory inside. You can list positive as well as troublesome things that you find.

2 minutes

---Each time you find an issue, just acknowledge it gently, sense the “intuitive feel” of it, then set it outside on that table in front of you. You don't have to try to solve it now.

2 minutes

---Continue this naming process until you have a cleared space inside.

2 minutes

---Now, from the list, choose the one thing that wants your attention today, or that you most want to explore more deeply. It could be an unresolved issue, or it might even be a positive experience you would like to explore more deeply.

1 minute

---Set aside all of your words, and just get an “intuitive feel” for that whole thing, perhaps in the area of your heart center....

1 minute

---Now, ask yourself, "What's the crux of this whole thing for me?", and wait and see what comes in the center of your body, the “intuitive feel” that is more than words....

1 minute

---Find some words or an image which seem to capture the “feel of the whole thing”....30 seconds

---Check the words against the “intuitive feel,” going back and forth until they are just right.

1 minute

---Now, ask yourself again, “And why does that matter to me?” and see what comes.

1 minute

---Go gently back and forth between words or an image and the “intuitive feel” until you find the symbols that are just right.

1 minute

---Ask yourself, “Is there something needed here?”, and wait and see what comes.

1 minute

---Find some words or an image and check them against the felt sense, the “intuitive feel.”

---You can continue this process for as many steps as you like, asking an open-ended question, looking for words or an image, checking until the words or image capture the “intuitive feel” exactly.

3-5 minutes

---When you are ready to stop, come gently back into the room

3. Focusing On A Specific Situation

---Get comfortable, letting your weight fall into the surface under you, trusting it to support you...

1 minute

---Notice where you have tension in your body...30 seconds

---Imagine that the tension is a stream of water, flowing out of your body through your fingertips and toes...30 seconds

---Imagine the tension flowing like water, down your body and out of your arms and legs...30 seconds

---Let yourself travel inside of your body to a place of peace....30 seconds

---Now, bring to mind an incident or a situation from the week about which you want to know more....

1 minute

---Bring back the detailed memory of being there, in that situation....

1 minute

---Now, set aside all of your thoughts about the situation, and just try to remember what it felt like to be there...not words but the bodily feel of being there.....

1 minute

---Now, carefully try to find words for the felt sense, or an image. Go carefully back and forth between the words and the feel of the whole thing until you find words or an image that are just right.

1 minute

---Now, gently ask yourself, "What's the meaning of this for me?", and see what comes in the center of your body, the place where you experience "intuitions".....

1 minute

---Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that feeling....

1 minute

---And ask yourself, "And why does that matter to me?" and see what comes as an "intuitive feel," somewhere in the center of your body.....

1 minute

---Find words or an image that are just right....

1 minute

---Now, imagine what the situation would look like if it were perfectly okay....

1 minute

---And ask your body, "What's in the way of that?" and see what comes as an "intuitive feel."

1 minute

---Find words or an image to capture that "intuitive feel".....

1 minute

---And ask yourself, "Why is that hard for me?" and see what comes as an "intuitive feel"...

1 minute

---Find words or an image that are just right in capturing that "intuitive feel"....

1 minute

---See if you can imagine some small step you could take to make the situation better....

1 minute

---And check with the "intuitive feel" in your body to see if that would be possible....

1 minute

---Keep imagining a step, and checking with your body, until some step feels "okay."

---And, when you're ready, stop Focusing for today.

Remember, it can be much easier to learn Intuitive Focusing in the company of a Focused Listener. You can learn all about Focusing Listening, and find resources, at the website for Creative Edge Focusing™, www.cefocusing.com. And you will find additional Complete Focusing Instructions, for personal growth, creativity, and spirituality, in the Instant "Ahah!"s Mini-Manual, available along with newsletter subscription.

In order to download these free Complete Focusing Instructions, you sent your first email to Creative Edge Focusing's e-discussion/support group. Please continue contributing and reading for constant support, demonstrations, and problem solving!! Hope to see you there! Kathy McGuire