

# Creative Edge Focusing™'s Instant "Ahah!"s: An E-Newsletter E-Course on Gendlin's Self-Empathy Focusing and Rogers' Empathic Listening.

By Dr. Kathy McGuire, [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com)

**PART ONE: INSTANT "AHAH!"S 1-3. #1: GENDLIN'S FOCUSING EXPLAINED. #2: ACTIVE LISTENING DEMONSTRATION. #3 PASSIVE LISTENING EXERCISE AND DEMO.**

I am Dr. Kathy McGuire, and I have been offering this E-newsletter E-Course through Constant Contact since 2006. However, now that Constant Contact has changed its template formatting, I have found it easier to put the E-Course, 9 months of 3 e-newsletters a week, with practice videos, into three PDF Files instead, Parts One, Two, and Three, covering all the ten applications of Focusing and Listening in the Instant "Ahah's" download you will find below.

I have left all the links live so that you can walk yourself through the course at your own speed, reading relevant articles, downloading manuals, and watching practice videos. You will also receive instructions and encouragement to start your own Empathy Focusing Practice/Support Group.

For each new "Ahah!", you will repeat practicing two or three new skills over for the four weeks of the month, or at whatever speed you choose to proceed. This is so you can really incorporate these skills into your toolbox. They include learning to relax, learning to find a 'felt sense,' Gendlin's complete six-step Focusing process, and how to take a nurturing non-judgmental attitude to whatever you find inside. They also include practice in passive and active empathic listening for conflict resolution and applications of Listening and Focusing to relationships, education, spirituality, business meetings, community-building, and much more.

I have pretty much just copied the e-newsletters below, so this is not edited like a book but allows you to repeat the practice exercises, with additional explanation and examples, over several times so that you can really learn the skills. Best to download but not print out...so all the links to many additional resources, articles, and YouTube videos remain active.

## **PART ONE: INSTANT “AHAH!”’S 1-3**

So, here we go, starting with several emails which I always send out to new subscribers, then beginning with Pre-Focusing Exercise #1 and Instant “Ahah!” # 1 and progressing through the Complete Focusing Instructions and the ten applications in the Instant “Ahah!” mini-manual which you can download at the links below:

### **WELCOME EMAIL #1:**

Hello, New and Old Subscribers,

The e-course starts over from the beginning every September. Whenever you join, if you stick with it for a year, you will cover everything (except now, instead, you can download it as Parts 1, 2, and 3 and work at your own pace.

I am sending you this introductory email that will orient you to what we are doing right now. It includes a short and a longer video demonstrating Gendlin's Focusing in the company of an Empathic Listener. Oldtimers, this is a refresher for you as well as a new, short video of Gendlin's Focusing (SCROLL DOWN TO IMMEDIATELY SEE VIDEOS):

In the e-course, I will break down [Intuitive Focusing](#) and [Focused Listening](#) , core skills of the Creative Edge Focusing (TM) model, into small steps that we can practice.

Between September of one year and June of the next year (approximately 10 months), the entire Creative Edge Focusing e-course includes a walk through [The Complete Focusing Instructions free download](#), the ten exercises in [The Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual free download \(Ajas Instantaneos in espanol \)](#), the new Interpersonal Focusing Mini-Course and many areas of the Creative Edge Focusing(TM) website.

A course, also, including an e-course, involves a commitment to learning and practice, to doing exercises --- and so, the actual structure of three e-newsletters a week, each with an exercise to practice, and repetition of an area or exercise over a four-week cycle, all fits into an e-course structure.

**NEW THIS YEAR: I HAVE MADE YOUTUBE VIDEOS OF MYSELF DEMONSTRATING ALL OF THE LISTENING AND FOCUSING EXERCISES, AND EMBEDDING THEM IN THE E-**

**NEWSLETTERS, SO YOU WILL HAVE AUDIO AND VISUAL ACCOMPANIMENT WHENEVER YOU CHOOSE!**

**Here is a short demonstration of Gendlin's Focusing with guiding by an Empathic Listener:**



**Short Focusing session with Empathic Listening and Guiding**

**Here is a video which shows where we are heading, an example of Focusing-Oriented Coaching, the power of Empathic, or Focused, Listening, when paired with Intuitive Focusing, to help people unfold life solutions from their own inner experiencing (this lasts 40 minutes. Most will be shorter. Watch as long as is helpful to you at this point):**



## OUR GOAL: INTEGRATING LISTENING/FOCUSING INTO EVERYDAY PRACTICE AND LIVING --- THE HABIT OF FELT SENSING

As with yoga or meditation or exercise or a sport or musical instrument that needs a time commitment for practice, practice, practice throughout each week, we recommend Listening/Focusing as an ongoing "practice," at least three times a week ---The Habit of Felt Sensing, The Way of Relationship, Positive Parenting, Bio-Spirituality, Interpersonal Focusing, all "practiced" continuously.

## WORLD DAY OF LISTENING, OCTOBER 21, WORLDWIDE

Congratulations to all who participated in planning and carrying out World Day of Listening on October 21. Now we can start planning for next year! You can participate as you choose in your location, offering free listening in a public place, teaching a small empathy circle in a library or school, making a YouTube video of yourself doing Empathic, or Focused, Listening with family member or friend, or whatever fits for you. Join our Facebook Group at [World Day of Listening](#) and find files with simple guidelines and a template for a flyer in several languages.

Here is a short animation showing the power of listening to overcome alienation:



**Power of Listening Animation for World Day of Listening**

Now there is also a website at

[World Day of Listening website](#)

FREE downloads of manuals and training CDs now available in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com)

### **STARTING A LISTENING/FOCUSING PRACTICE PARTNERSHIP OR GROUP**

As we proceed through the e-course, you will receive step-by-step instructions for starting your own Listening/Focusing partnership or group. However, if you want a head start, you can click on the links below or get the manual as a free download, in English or Spanish, in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com).

**YOU WILL NOW FIND MANY YOUTUBE VIDEO DEMONSTRATIONS OF LISTENING AND FOCUSING EXERCISES EMBEDDED IN THE E-NEWSLETTERS.**

It is my hope that, before the end of this e-course, you will have found at least one other person to practice Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening with as the beginning of your own local practice group. The manual gives many suggestions about how to find your first one or more people, how to present the idea, how to demonstrate the skills.

**BUT ONLY YOU CAN TAKE THAT FIRST STEP OF FINDING SOMEONE, JUST THAT ONE, FIRST PERSON.** From then on, you and your partner can support each other in enlarging the group, if you want.

### **QUICK LINKS TO E-SUPPORT, CLASSES, BLOG, ARTICLES, ETC.**

[Free Articles in English and en espanol](#)

[Self-Help Package](#), CDs, DVD, manual English and espanol

[Experiential Focusing Therapy manual](#), Free link

[Certified Focusing Trainers Worldwide](#)

[Core Concepts Descriptions](#) (also en espanol)

[Case Studies](#)

[Personality Tests: Embracing "Differing Gifts"](#)

[E-Newsletter Archive](#)

[Ultimate Self Help Blog](#)

[Creative Edge Focusing website](#)

**About Creative Edge Focusing (TM)**

**Mission: bring Core Skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening, and The Creative Edge Pyramid of applications from individual to interpersonal to organizational, to all audiences throughout the world. Place empathy and self-empathy at the core of learning and conflict resolution through the spread of Empathy Circles and Empathy Focusing Circles worldwide.**

**Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director**

**Location: EUGENE, OR**

[Creative Edge Focusing](#)

These materials 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.

**WELCOME EMAIL #2**

**Creative Edge Focusing News and Goods**

**BONUS: Photo Metaphors As a Graphic Way to Teach Intuitive Focusing**

**After over thirty years of teaching about Intuitive Focusing using words and face-to-face demonstration, for fun and also to offer a more multi-media approach for different kinds of learners, I have recently been creating blogs which use a**

sequence of photos to demonstrate the steps of Intuitive Focusing: noticing the need for Focusing, taking time to "sit with" the "intuitive feel" of an idea or problem, and the wonderful "felt shifts," "Ahah!" experiences, paradigm shifts that can result from successful Focusing.

I offer you a compilation of these photo blogs. Hopefully, you will find images that "grab you," turn the light bulb on. Perhaps you will find a photo blog that you think might reach your friends, family, colleagues and forward it to them. Perhaps you will choose to forward this e-newsletter to everyone with whom you want to share Intuitive Focusing.

[Intuitive Focusing: Cat Doing Focusing = "Sitting With" The "Intuitive Feel"](#)

[Intuitive Focusing as Transformation: Lotus Flower Opening--- From Bud To Bloom](#)

[Intuitive Focusing: From Intuition To Creativity, Transformation, Paradigm Shifts --- Photos of Child Opening First Christmas Present](#)

Enjoy and let me know by [email](#) if these photo essays capture something about Intuitive Focusing in a new way!

## **PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**

### **Listening/Focusing E-Course**

Our free e-course, *Instant "Ahah!"s*, three practice opportunities by email per week, is a walk through the Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual and The Complete Focusing Instruction free downloads, and an interweaving of the Creative Edge Focusing (TM) website materials with the work of others within the Focusing community and also in the larger world. No matter when you join, if you stay with us for a year, you will experience every opportunity. Most of you are already participating.

Please forward this e-newsletter to any friends, family, trainees, colleagues who might benefit from either the e-course or CEF News and Goods e-newsletter. They can subscribe at <http://cefocusing.com/subscribe.php> and immediately download our Instant "Ahah!"s Mini-Manual. Just hit "Forward" down near your

"Send" option within your own email program, then choose anyone you want from your email address book! Take this small step to help bring Listening/Focusing into the world!

## QUICK LINKS TO E-SUPPORT, CLASSES, BLOG, ARTICLES, ETC.

[Free Articles in English and en espanol](#)

[Self-Help Package](#), CDs, DVD, manual English and espanol

[Experiential Focusing Therapy manual](#), free link

[Certified Focusing Trainers](#)

[Creative Edge Focusing website](#)

[Focusing-Oriented Therapists](#)

[Core Concepts Descriptions](#) (also en espanol)

[Case Studies](#)

[About Us: Biographies Dr. McGuire, Gendlin, Rogers, CE Associates](#)

[Personality Tests: Embracing "Differing Gifts"](#)

[E-Newsletter Archive](#) New

## WELCOME EMAIL #3

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INSTANT "AHAH!" # 1 Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You

Welcome to our e-course. Here is a chance to try out our basic skill, Gendlin's Focusing, for self-help problem-solving, with a video walk-through.

## Focusing On the Creative Edge

Intuitive Focusing is one-half of the two Core Skills basic to Creative Edge Focusing. Intuitive Focusing can be used any time to find out what is bothering you. Intuitive Focusing involves spending time with the vague, wordless "intuitive sense" that there is something --- something you can't quite put your finger on or put into words --- but something definitely determining your behavior or how you feel or the inkling of an idea or solution ---

Intuitive Focusing can be used not just for personal problem-solving but for sitting with The Creative Edge of anything: a piece of creative art or writing, an exciting professional problem to solve, a good feeling that has a spiritual edge ---

## Description of Gendlin's Six Step Focusing Process

First, I will describe Gendlin's (*Focusing*, Bantam, 1981, 1984) process, then I will walk you through some actual instructions below.

Focusing is a complex inner process and involves closing your eyes and staying with your body-sensing for 15-30 minutes. Today's exercise may be difficult. You are starting by biting off a big piece. The other exercises this week will break the process down into smaller bites, first teaching you just to spend time inside, relaxing, then learning how to find a 'bodily-felt sense' in your body. So, don't give up if this exercise seems difficult. You will learn Focusing in small steps throughout this course, as well as learning how it can be easier if you have an external Empathic, or Focused, Listener..

If you prefer, at this point, you can watch the YouTube video where I describe the six-step process, and then walk you through the actual exercise, instead of reading the instructions below. The whole thing takes 30 minutes, so set aside enough quiet, uninterrupted time:



Kathy describes the six steps of Gendlin's Focusing and walks you through your first attempt

Here are Gendlin's six steps for use of this inner, meditation-like problem-solving process in a self-help way:

- (1) **Clearing a Space:** setting aside the jumble of thoughts, opinions, and analysis we all carry in our minds, and making a clear, quiet space inside where something new can come.
- (2) **Getting a Felt Sense:** asking an open-ended question like "What is the feel of this whole thing (issue, situation, problem)?" and, instead of answering with one's already-known analysis, waiting silently as long as a minute for the subtle, intuitive, "bodily feel" of "the whole thing" to form.
- (3) **Finding a Handle:** carefully looking for some words or an image that begin to capture the "feel of the whole thing," the Felt Sense, The Creative Edge: "It's 'jumpy;'" "It's scared;" "It's like the dew of a Spring morning;" "It's like macaroni and cheese --- comforting," "It's like jet propulsion! Something new that needs to spring forth!"
- (4) **Resonating and Checking:** taking the Handle words or image and holding them against the Felt Sense, asking "Is this right? Is it 'jumpy'?", etc. Finding new words or images if needed until there is a sense of "fit": "Yes, that's it. Jumpy."
- (5) **Asking:** asking open-ended questions (questions that don't have a "Yes" or "No" or otherwise fixed or "closed" answer) like "And what is so hard about that?" or "And why does that have me stuck?" or "What was so beautiful about that moment?" or "And how does this apply to everything else?" and, again, instead of

answering with already-known analysis, waiting silently for the whole-body-sense, the Felt Sense, to arise.

At each Asking, the Focuser also goes back to steps (2), (3) and (4) as necessary, waiting for the Felt Sense to form, finding Handle words, Resonating and Checking until there is a sense of "fit": "Yes, that's it." This often physically-felt experience of tension release and easing in the body, this sense of having found the right words, is called a Felt Shift by Dr. Gendlin. Dr. McGuire calls it a Paradigm Shift It can be a small step of "Yes, that's it" or a larger unfolding, a huge insight, with many pieces of the puzzle suddenly falling into place and a flow of new words and images and possible action steps. Sometimes there is also a flood of tears of acknowledgment and relief or the release of other pent-up emotions. This is an Instant "Ahah!".

(6) **Receiving**: at each new step, each Felt Shift, taking a moment to sit with the new "intuitive feel," simply acknowledging and appreciating your own inner knowing for this new insight. Then, you can start again at step (5), Asking another open-ended question, ("And what is so important about this?"; "And why did that have me stuck?"; "And where does my mother come into all of this?", etc.). And, again, step (2), waiting for the Felt Sense to form, step (3) finding a Handle, step (4) Resonating and Checking until there is a Felt Shift, a sense of "That's it!", another Instant "Ahah!".

### **A First Attempt: Find Out What Is Bothering You**

Set aside at least 30 minutes for this first attempt. Remember, Focusing is a skill usually taught in 10 two-hour classes or two weekend workshops ---so, if it doesn't work for you immediately, don't give up! Find a nearby teacher from the Focusing Institute Listings ([www.focusing.org](http://www.focusing.org) ).

But, some people are natural Focusers and just say, "Oh, yes. I've been doing this all my life. Now, I can just do it better, more predictably, whenever I want. Give it a try:  
(for audio company, find Intuitive Focusing Instructions MP3 files in the totally Free Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) -- leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction)

#### **Step One: Clearing A Space (Relaxation exercise in this case)**

---Okay --- first, just get yourself comfortable --- feel the weight of your body on the chair --- loosen any clothing that is too tight ---  
(one minute)

---Spend a moment just noticing your breathing --- don't try to change it --- just notice the breath going in --- and out ---

(one minute)

---Now, notice where you have tension in your body (pause) ---

(one minute)

---Now, imagine the tension as a stream of water, draining out of your body through your fingertips and feet (Pause) ---

(one minute)

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

(one minute)

### **Step Two: Getting A Felt Sense**

---Now, bring to mind an incident or a situation that was troublesome for you this week (pause as long as necessary) --- Think about it or get a mental image of it ---

(one minute)

---Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about the situation, and just try to bring back the feeling you had in that situation (pause) --- not words, but the "intuitive feel" of yourself in that situation ---

(one minute)

### **Step Three: Finding A Handle**

---Now, carefully try to find words or an image for that feeling ---

(one minute)

### **Step Four: Resonating and Checking**

---Go carefully back and forth between any words and the "intuitive feel of the whole thing" until you find words or an image that are just right for it ---

(one minute)

### **Step Five: Asking**

---Now, gently ask yourself, "What is so hard about this situation for me?", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in your wordless intuition, your whole-body sense ---

(one minute)

---Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that whole feeling --- going back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Now, imagine what the situation would be like if it were perfectly all right

(one minute)

---Now, ask yourself, "What's in the way of that?" and, again, don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for something new to come in the center of your body, more like a wordless intuition or whole-body sense  
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(one minute)

---Again, carefully find words or an image for that, "whatever is in the way" ---go back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Now, see if you can find some small step you might be able to take to move yourself in a positive direction --- again, don't answer from your head, the already known, but wait as much as a minute for the wordless, intuitive "feel," the bodily felt sense of an answer to arise ---

(one minute)

---Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for this possible next step --- go back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Check with your "intuitive feel," "Is this right? Is this really something I could try doing?" --- If your "intuitive feel" says, "Yes (some sense of release, relaxation), I could try that," then you can stop here.

---If your "felt sense" says "No, I can't do that" or "That won't work," then ask yourself again, "What small step in the positive direction would work?", again, waiting quietly, as much as a minute for an intuitive answer to arise, then making words or an image for it --- going back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Keep going back and forth between the "intuitive feel" and possible words and images as long as you are comfortable, or until you experience "Ahah! That's it!".

(one minute or more)

### **Step Six: Receiving**

---Whether a "solution" has arisen or not, appreciate yourself and your body for taking time with this, trusting that pausing to take time is the important thing -- solutions can then arise later.

(one minute)

The crux of change is just spending quiet time paying attention to the "intuitive feel." If no clear next step arises, just remind yourself that at least you have gotten a clearer sense of the problem. Because you have spent quiet, Intuitive Focusing time with the "feel" of "the whole thing," you have started a process of change. Something new may "pop up" later, as you go about your day.

## **Creative Edge Focusing E-Course --- Weekly Support**

The Creative Edge Focusing E-Course walks you through small steps in learning the Core Skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening. Each week you will receive three e-newsletters:

- (1) an "Instant Ahah!" for immediate integration into work and home life
- (2) a Pre-Focusing Relaxation or Getting A Felt Sense" exercise (including "Interpersonal Felt Sensing for conflict resolution)
- (3) a Complete Focusing Exercise you can practice.

We stay with a set of exercises for four weeks, giving ample opportunity for further explanation and practice, so that the exercises become a natural part of your daily living, at home and at work.

No matter when you join this e-course, if you stay with us for a year, you will have a chance to practice all the exercises.

### **PRACTICE: Pause, and Ponder**

When each e-newsletter arrives, **PAUSE** to take 10-20 minutes to practice the exercise, taking time to **PONDER** at the Creative Edge, the source of change.

If you didn't get the free Instant "Ahah!"s Mini-Manual download when you subscribed to this e-newsletter, you can find it in PDF file [here](#) or, [in Spanish](#) --- all ten easy immediate applications for home and work. Keep it handy for weekly practice of one of the ten applications.

You can also immediately download the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) (Pre-Focusing and Focusing Practice), which we will also use each week.

I have now added YouTube Videos of each exercise so that, instead of reading the exercise to yourself, you can close your eyes and follow along with my guiding voice. And you can find all of the videos on [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#).

### **WELCOME EMAIL #4:**

**Hooray! New Store At Creative Edge Focusing, All FREE!!! Four Manuals, Two Audio Trainings free downloads**

**Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director**

**Creative Edge Focusing Store Now Completely FREE!**

The Store on my website for Creative Edge Focusing, [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), has been recreated without a shopping cart. Everything is free! Digital downloads of the various manuals and MP3 files of the CD sets.

Here is a direct link to The Store. Happy shopping at no cost. Download manuals and audio files or just read/listen on your computer. Here is a list of what is there, all free!!!

### **FREE MANUAL DOWNLOADS**

**Focusing in Community: How To Start A Listening/Focusing Support Group (154pp.)**

Simple instructions for learning Focusing and Listening, starting a Listening/Focusing practice group, and building community through Listening/Focusing conflict resolution and group problem solving and decision making.

**Focusing en Comunidad: Como Empezar Un Grupo De Apoyo De Escucha Y Focusing (184 pp.)**

Manual in Spanish.

**The Changes Book: A Handbook for Empathic Listening, Experiential Focusing, and Therapeutic Community (194pg).**

First published in 1978, this book represents the fresh thinking of many of the members of the original Changes Listening/Focusing community started in 1970 in Chicago as a response to the Kent State Massacre. Read the first attempts of Eugene Gendlin, Mary Hendricks-Gendlin, Kristin Glaser, Jim Iberg, Ann Weiser

Cornell and many others as they articulate why an egalitarian therapeutic community based upon Listening and Focusing is essential, how to teach Listening and Focusing, how to run a basic Listening or Focusing training group, and much more. See how the fervor of those times applies to today and how the Changes tradition carries on.

### **The Experiential Dimension in Therapy (180 pp.)**

Dr. McGuire's manual teaches how to do Experiential (EXP) Focusing Therapy. It includes the full transcript of two hour-long therapy sessions, with commentary by Dr. McGuire as therapist explaining why she intervened as she did. She describes her own experience as the therapist and what she was trying to accomplish.

One client was highly intellectualized, the other highly emotional. In both cases, interventions were aimed at helping the client out of static, repetitive thoughts or emotions and into the rich, fresh "experiential ground" out of which new meanings and forward action steps could be articulated.

The manual includes Experiencing (EXP) Scale ratings of each client verbalization. The EXP Scale is a highly-regarded research tool which uses a seven-point scale to measure the degree to which a client/patient is speaking from the fresh, ongoing, "intuitive feel" of present experiencing, The Creative Edge, vs. static intellectualizations.

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## **FREE MP3 DOWNLOADS OF CD SETS**

### **Audio Digital Download: Alchemy (105 minutes)**

Dr. McGuire describes the power of Focusing and Listening to transform your life, turning darkness to gold, in the areas of personal meaning, relationships, parenting, and community. She includes a description of Empathic, or Focused, Listening and a lengthy complete Focusing exercise.

### **Audio Digital Download: Intuitive Focusing Training (100 minutes)**

Dr. McGuire's soothing voice takes you through five different relaxation exercises as you learn to spend quiet time inside; then five different exercises for learning to

find a "felt sense" or "intuitive feel" in your felt experience. Finally, she walks you through two different versions of a Complete Focusing Session.

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## FREE E-COURSE

PDF files for Parts One, Two, and Three

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## FREE PRACTICE

### VIDEOS AT DR. MCGUIRE'S YOUTUBE

You can also walk yourself through the e-course, on your own time schedule, by starting with the earliest of D. McGuire's YouTube videos and working your way up: First E-Course Video or scroll through all the videos at the YouTube channel for Dr. Kathy McGuire YouTube

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## OTHER FREE RESOURCES

Visit the Free Resources area of this website for much more: Articles, Personality Tests, Newsletter Archives, more... Free Resources.

Thank you for your participation in my e-course. Although we interact little in person, it heartens me to know that you are out there, opening the e-newsletters and trying the exercises as you have time and interest.

If you like, please send me an email to [kathy@cefocusing.com](mailto:kathy@cefocusing.com) and tell me how you use the newsletters, what is helpful, what could be different. I would love to hear from you in person and know the effects, good and possibly bad, of the training emails.

## WELCOME EMAIL #5

## Creative Edge Focusing News and Goods: From "Me" to "We": Podcast on Bringing Empathy Into The World By Starting Listening/Focusing "Changes" Communities

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

**BONUS: Podcast on the need for community in today's world with Dr. McGuire and David Battistella**

When Gendlin's Focusing was created, it was grounded in a community of over 60 people who paired Focusing with Carl Rogers' Empathic Listening in the equal exchange of peer counseling turns. The purpose of this original Changes group was to build community by helping people to grow, not only in self-empathy, but also in empathy and tolerance for people who were different from them. Dr. McGuire was a founding member of this original Changes Listening/Focusing Community.

It is one purpose of this e-course to help people start their own Listening/Focusing practice group and to learn the skills for supportive community. It is such creation of empathic understanding and community "We" feeling that is so needed in today's world.

Dr. McGuire and Battistella discuss their perception of a movement from a "We" feeling in the culture of the 1970s to a "Me" culture today, and how a revitalization of the Changes community model can help the much-needed return to a "We" sense of all of us sharing this world.

The 1978 [Changes Book: A Handbook For Empathic Listening, Experiential Focusing, and Therapeutic Community](#) (free link to Google Drive document with active Table of Contents allowing you to scroll to various chapters) was this community's attempt to outline the model they had discovered for having an organization, and a community, which did not stifle individuals into roles, that supported both mutual care and self-actualization. Download this newly-reformatted version of the early manuscript for free at this link (an easier to navigate digital version than the \$5 download at the Creative Edge Focusing website).

Dr. McGuire and David Battistella discuss the special bonding possibilities that come from the equal exchange of Empathic Listening/Focusing turns. Participants see both the uniqueness AND the common humanity of each other, and they become infused with a motivation to help each other. It is this motivation toward helping others which is needed today.

They discuss the particular self-growth that happens when one is grasped, with empathy, by another person, the power of being "seen" in all of your vulnerability and uniqueness by another person.

They compare this with the different benefits of solo Focusing as it has developed since the publication of Gendlin Focusing book (Bantam, 1981). They discuss the lack of a model for interpersonal conflict resolution and group decision making in today's Changes groups, as well as in the culture at large.

Dr. McGuire encourage Focusers to start Changes Communities using her manual [Focusing in Community](#), based upon the original Changes model for building community, and to carry the skills for empathy and conflict resolution into their local communities. Dr. McGuire's manual is available as a \$5 download in English and Spanish, so why not give it a try?

Here are the links to Part One and Part Two of this interesting free Podcast discussion at two different locations:

#### PART 1

<http://www.thefocusingway.com/changes-kathy-mcguire/>

#### PART 2

<http://www.thefocusingway.com/changes-kathy-mcguire-2/>

#### YOUTUBE LINKS:

##### PART 1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HXK35BcBjM>

##### PART 2

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R974\\_wPPwqY&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R974_wPPwqY&feature=youtu.be)

## PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

### Listening/Focusing E-Course

Our free e-course, *Instant "Ahah!"s*, three practice opportunities by email per week, is a walk through the Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual and The Complete Focusing Instruction free downloads, and an interweaving of the Creative Edge Focusing (TM) website materials with the work of others within the Focusing community and also in the larger world. No matter when you join, if you stay with us for a year, you will experience every opportunity. Most of you are already participating.

Please forward this e-newsletter to any friends, family, trainees, colleagues who might benefit from either the e-course or CEF News and Goods e-newsletter. They can subscribe at <http://cefocusing.com/subscribe.php> and immediately download our Instant "Ahah!"s Mini-Manual. Just hit "Forward" down near your "Send" option within your own email program, then choose anyone you want from your email address book! Take this small step to help bring Listening/Focusing into the world!

### E-Newsletter #1, formally beginning the course.

#### PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE #1: RELAXATION --NOTICING

Dr. Kathy McGuire,  
Director

Week One

### WELCOME TO CREATIVE EDGE FOCUSING E-COURSE

For the next nine months, you will receive three emails per week giving hands-on practice in various skills, including

- (1) Relaxation/Stress Reduction Exercises which serve as an introduction to the quiet space inside where Intuitive Focusing can happen;
- (2) Pre-Focusing Exercises which break Intuitive Focusing down into bite-size pieces;

(3) Complete Focusing Instructions which give you a 20-minute opportunity for actual problem resolution through Focusing

Please download [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) as a hard-copy backup for this learning process

I will now also include immediate YouTube videos where I demonstrate each exercise so you can follow my voice instead of reading the exercise alone. However, feel free to slow down the video by "pausing" it if you need more time before instructions, and read the instructions to yourself, if you prefer.

### From Creative Edge Focusing: This week's Relaxation Exercise

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior Focusing space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a reminder to take a moment to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax...

### Print and Practice!!!!

Here is your relaxation exercise for this week, which we will actually practice for four weeks until it becomes natural to you. Print it out, keep it handy, and take those few moments to relax every day, if you can, or as often as possible. Relaxing is one way to "clear a space" inside for a longer-term Focusing Problem Solving session.

You will also find this in the Complete Focusing Instructions download at Creative Edge Focusing, p.3: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #1: Noticing.

You can find free manuals and audio MP3 files to download in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), where everything is now free. However, I am now including a YouTube video link right here in each e-newsletter so you can follow my voice immediately in that way.

### PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE

#### A. RELAXATION SUGGESTIONS (from Complete Focusing Instructions)

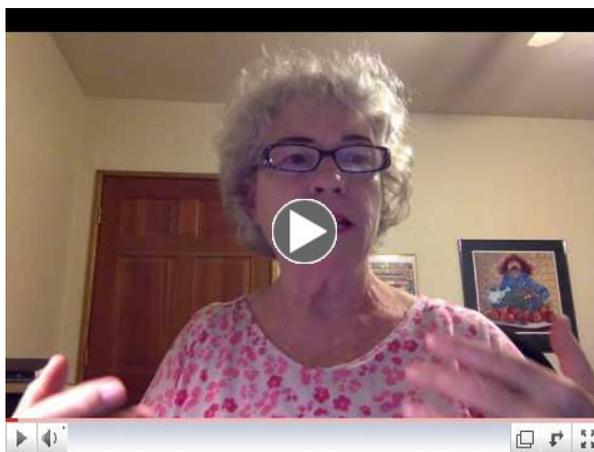
Use a gentle, slowly paced voice, leaving time as suggested between parts of the instruction (time those 1-minute pauses -- they are way longer than you can imagine!). The quiet time between instructions is an important time for just breathing---and relaxing.

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.

**Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses for breathing in--and out--- You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!**

I turn to this simple relaxation exercise when I am having trouble sleeping or am otherwise overwhelmed with stress, anxiety, tension. It is a great first step to a more lengthy Complete Focusing session.

**If you prefer, you can listen to me as I walk through this exercise in the following 13-minute YouTube video. Remember, you will want to close your eyes during the actual exercise. And feel free to "pause" the video if I am going too fast for you:**



**Pre-Focusing Exercise #1: Relaxation,  
Just Noticing Your Breathing**

### **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, lie there and notice your breathing. Don't try to change it, 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.

### About Creative Edge Focusing

Located by Beaver Lake in Rogers, AR, our goal is to support people in the practice of listening/focusing skills, throughout the world, and for personal growth, interpersonal conflict resolution, and creative individual and group problem solving.

## PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE: Getting A Felt Sense #1

The "Intuitive Feel" of Two Different People

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

**From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Getting A Felt Sense Exercise:**

**The "Intuitive Feel" of Two Different People: "Good" vs. "Uncomfortable" Feeling**

**Print and Practice!!!!**

Here is your Getting A Felt Sense exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and try it whenever you have time...I will also send a "reminder" copy by email every week...

And, now, I have included a YouTube video below where you can close your eyes and listen to me giving the instructions, so you can really relax. **YOU CAN TRY IT IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE EMAIL COMES and anytime you want! A MOMENT TO RELAX AND CHECK INSIDE!** The video takes 13 minutes.

You will also find this exercise in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download at Creative Edge Focusing, p.8 : B. Getting A Felt Sense #1: The "Intuitive Feel" of Each Person.

And now The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) is completely free for download: Manuals in English and Spanish and English MP3 files of all the Focusing exercises. And you can always find the practice videos at my YouTube channel for [Dr. Kathy McGuire](#).

**Pre-Focusing Practice**

**B. Getting A Felt Sense #1: The "Intuitive Feel" of Each Person  
(from Complete Focusing Instructions)**

Here you are learning the difference between thinking up an answer in your head and the second Step of Intuitive Focusing: Getting A Felt Sense.

In the first Step, you "Clear A Space" with relaxation or other exercises, setting aside already-known intellectualizations.

In the second Step, Getting A Felt Sense, you wait quietly, for as much as a minute, for a subtle "feel" of the whole thing, an "intuition," to form in the center of your body, and then create 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. Gendlin (*Focusing*, Bantam, 1981, 1984) calls it "the felt sense" of the whole thing.

In this Pre-Focusing Practice exercise, I try to give you guided imagery that will evoke some strong, hard-to-miss bodily "felt senses."

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 \(TM\)](#) and worldwide teachers at [The International Focusing Institute](#)

Here, you can choose to listen to the video instead of reading the written instructions below:



**Finding A Bodily Felt Sense: Noticing the 'feel' of two different people**

Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses for breathing in---and out--- You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!

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.

### 1. The "Intuitive Feel" of Each Person-Allow 10 minutes (Joan Klagsbrun invented this exercise)

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.

---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 feelings30 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.

## Instant "Ahah!" # 1: FOCUSING

Gendlin's Six-Step Process Demonstrated

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

## Creative Edge Focusing E-Course --- Weekly Support

The Creative Edge Focusing E-Course walks you through small steps in learning the Core Skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening. Each week you will receive three e-newsletters:

- (1) an "Instant Ahah!" for immediate integration into work and home life
- (2) a Pre-Focusing Relaxation or Getting A Felt Sense" exercise (including "Interpersonal Felt Sensing for conflict resolution)
- (3) a Complete Focusing Exercise you can practice.

We stay with a set of exercises for four weeks, giving ample opportunity for further explanation and practice, so that the exercises become a natural part of your daily living, at home and at work.

No matter when you join this e-course, if you stay with us for a year, you will have a chance to practice all the exercises.

### Eugene Gendlin Personifies The Self-Empathy We Give To Our Self During Focusing

In this 8-minute YouTube, Eugene Gendlin, the creator of Focusing, personifies the kind, gentle, curious, non-judgmental attitude we turn toward whatever appears inside of us during Focusing. Fathers Pete and Ed Campbell call it a "caring feeling presence." Ann Weiser Cornell calls it simply "Presence." It is the essence of self-empathy, self-caring:



Eugene Gendlin Demonstrates Self-Empathy in Focusing

### EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETE FOCUSING TURN

In the First Week of this four weeks practice of Instant "Ahah!" #1: FOCUSING --- Find Out What Is Bothering You, I introduced Gendlin's Six Step Focusing Process and gave the Complete Focusing Exercise. If you are just joining us, go to the [new e-newsletter archive](#) to read this e-newsletter before

proceeding to read the example of a Focusing Turn below. Everyone else, you'll find the practice video below this example:

I did a Focusing Turn on a felt experience which I call "Experiencing The Sacred":

// Note: Listening/Focusing does not have to be used in relation to spiritual experience -- this is just a special interest of mine, and not central to Gendlin's Focusing process and the use of The Creative Edge Pyramid of skills and applications at home and at work---//

### Step One: Clearing A Space

(closing my eyes, turning inward---slowing down, paying attention to my breathing) --- Breathing in --- and out---- in---and out--- Massaging my face, neck shoulders. Taking a minute or two to come in touch with my body.

### Step Two: Getting A Felt Sense

Now I start looking for the "intuitive feel" to form for the Focusing question: "What is this 'whole thing' about Experiencing The Sacred)-----

----- (Focusing inward at least a minute, waiting for the "felt sense," the "intuitive feel" of "this whole thing" to form, as a vague, preverbal sensing inside my chest area---)

### Step Three: Finding A Handle

Initial words come: "Someone asked me why I have used religious or spiritual terms, like Agape, the Christ-within-the-Other, the Universal Oneness, in pointing to the Sacred experience that I often have during Listening/Focusing turns, especially when the Focuser touches upon a "sheen of tears," a place of profound meaning (see my article "[Being Touched and Being Moved](#)"), and I am the Listener, and, suddenly, **the boundary between us dissolves** and I feel that **"our souls are touching"** or some such thing---hard to find words to describe it---I am pointing

### Step Four: Checking and Resonating

(quiet to check with the "felt sense," the "intuitive feel" of this "whole thing"- -- "Do those words fit? 'Our souls are touching, boundary dissolves?'" (sitting quietly with "the feel of it all," going back-and-forth between words and

**images or gestures which arise, checking and resonating, trying to find the symbolizations that are "just right" in capturing "the feel of it all")---**

---The person and I spoke of Martin Buber's "I-Thou" vs. "I-It" distinction as another way of pointing to this experience---(pause to look for words--- new words) this experience of merging-without-joining, union-with-separation, and, not just the two people, but the sense of "something more" in that moment of "soul-touching (soul is not the right word, just a pointing word)"---the sense that The Sacred (again, pointing words---) enters in---the two people hanging together in this larger---(I'm getting a thrill here, a little teary---almost goose bumps)-----**(big breath---ahhhhhh!)**

**(new steps forward, "felt shifts" coming as I find words that are closer in grasping and articulating the "felt meaning" -- the Ahhh!, sighs, deep breaths that indicate the tension release and "Ahah!" experience of the "felt shift," the Paradigm Shift)**

#### **Step Five: Asking An Open-Ended Question**

**(and I ask myself, "What is so important about this 'two people hanging together in this larger Something?'" and wait quietly for the "feel of it all" to emerge, preverbally in my body, Getting The Felt Sense, before I again begin looking for Handle Words and Resonating and Checking---pause for "felt sensing", as much as a minute, followed by more symbolizations, more resonating and checking between the symbols and the "feel of it all")**

--- and the words "Well, that is the point---it is that experience that I call Experiencing The Sacred---that sense that something else enters into the "energy" (just a pointing word) space between us-----**(breath---sigh---a little teary as in "touched and moved"-----**(big sigh---**)**

#### **Step Six: Receiving**

**(and I sit with and savor this new insight, that it is exactly the two people and Something More in the space between that feels Sacred, touches me so deeply, and some Global Application comes after the Felt Shift --- seeing new connections)**

--- And it can happen in nature, with a sunset, with music, in churches or other sacred spaces, many different roads, not just between people--- **(and I spend some time just letting the richness of the felt shift, the new information, register throughout my body/mind, and thanking my body-sense for this new information). End of Focusing Turn**

## FELT SHIFTING, GIVING BIRTH TO THE NEW

You can see how, instead of answering immediately from my head, what I already know about "experiencing the Sacred" ("Well, of course, it's related to Martin Buber and it's about Something Greater Than Yourself," etc.), Focusing allows me to stop and "sit with" my larger "whole-body-wisdom" that includes everything I have read and everything I have experienced and am experiencing. From this "felt sense" I can articulate new facets of the experience. And I also experience the sense of "sureness," of experiential rather than merely intellectual insight, that lets me know I am on the right track.

Of course, Focusing can be used for all kinds of problem solving without entry into the spiritual realm, without touching on tears and feeling connection with the Other---this Experiencing the Sacred is just a special Interest Area of mine---

## INSTANT "AHAH!" # 1 Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You

### Focusing On the Creative Edge

And here, again, is your practice exercise. Please take time to walk through the Complete Focusing Session below as I did in the example above.

Set aside at least 20-30 minutes. Remember, Focusing is a skill usually taught in 10 two-hour classes or two weekend workshops ---so, if it doesn't work for you immediately, don't give up! Find a nearby teacher from the Focusing Institute Listings ([www.focusing.org](http://www.focusing.org) ).

But, some people are natural Focusers and just say, "Oh, yes. I've been doing this all my life. Now, I can just do it better, more predictably, whenever I want. Give it a try:  
(for audio company, purchase Intuitive Focusing Instructions CD as part of our Self-Help Package at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) -- leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction).

You can also choose to watch/listen to my demonstration video below. If you watched the explanation last week, you can fast-forward to the middle and just use the second half, where I walk you through the Focusing process:



**Kathy explains Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing Process, then walks you through a practice attempt.**

### **Step One: Clearing A Space (Relaxation exercise in this case)**

---Okay --- first, just get yourself comfortable --- feel the weight of your body on the chair --- loosen any clothing that is too tight ---  
(one minute)

---Spend a moment just noticing your breathing --- don't try to change it --- just notice the breath going in --- and out ---  
(one minute)

---Now, notice where you have tension in your body (pause) ---  
(one minute)

---Now, imagine the tension as a stream of water, draining out of your body through your fingertips and feet (Pause) ---  
(one minute)

---Let yourself travel inside of your body to a place of peace ---  
(one minute)

### **Step Two: Getting A Felt Sense**

---Now, bring to mind an incident or a situation that was troublesome for you this week (pause as long as necessary) --- Think about it or get a mental image of it ---  
(one minute)

---Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about the situation, and just try to

bring back the feeling you had in that situation (pause) --- not words, but the "intuitive feel" of yourself in that situation ---  
(one minute)

### **Step Three: Finding A Handle**

---Now, carefully try to find words or an image for that feeling ---  
(one minute)

### **Step Four: Resonating and Checking**

---Go carefully back and forth between any words and the "intuitive feel of the whole thing" until you find words or an image that are just right for it ---  
(one minute)

### **Step Five: Asking**

---Now, gently ask yourself, "What is so hard about this situation for me?", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in your wordless intuition, your whole-body sense ---  
(one minute)

---Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that whole feeling --- going back and forth until the symbols are "just right."  
(one minute)

---Now, imagine what the situation would be like if it were perfectly all right  
(one minute)

---Now, ask yourself, "What's in the way of that?" and, again, don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for something new to come in the center of your body, more like a wordless intuition or whole-body sense ---  
(one minute)

---Again, carefully find words or an image for that, "whatever is in the way" ---go back and forth until the symbols are "just right."  
(one minute)

---Now, see if you can find some small step you might be able to take to move yourself in a positive direction --- again, don't answer from your head, the already known, but wait as much as a minute for the wordless, intuitive "feel," the bodily felt sense of an answer to arise ---  
(one minute)

---Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for this possible next step --- go back and forth until the symbols are "just right."  
(one minute)

---Check with your "intuitive feel," "Is this right? Is this really something I could try doing?" --- If your "intuitive feel" says, "Yes (some sense of release,

relaxation), I could try that," then you can stop here.

---If your "felt sense" says "No, I can't do that" or "That won't work," then ask yourself again, "What small step in the positive direction would work?", again, waiting quietly, as much as a minute for an intuitive answer to arise, then making words or an image for it --- going back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Keep going back and forth between the "intuitive feel" and possible words and images as long as you are comfortable, or until you experience "Ahah! That's it!".

(one minute or more)

### **Step Six: Receiving**

---Whether a "solution" has arisen or not, appreciate yourself and your body for taking time with this, trusting that pausing to take time is the important thing -- solutions can then arise later.

(one minute)

The crux of change is just spending quiet time paying attention to the "intuitive feel." If no clear next step arises, just remind yourself that at least you have gotten a clearer sense of the problem. Because you have spent quiet, Intuitive Focusing time with the "feel" of "the whole thing," you have started a process of change. Something new may "pop up" later, as you go about your day.

### **PRACTICE: Pause, and Ponder**

When each e-newsletter arrives, **PAUSE** to take 10-20 minutes to practice the exercise, taking time to **PONDER** at the Creative Edge, the source of change.

If you didn't get the free Instant "Ahah!"s Mini-Manual download when you subscribed to this e-newsletter, you can find it in PDF file [here](#) or, [in Spanish](#) --- all ten easy immediate applications for home and work. Keep it handy for weekly practice of one of the ten applications.

You can also immediately download the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) (Pre-Focusing and Focusing Practice), which we will also use each week.

I am now incorporating video versions of most of the exercises right here in the e-newsletters, so that you can follow along with my voice when you choose.

Everything in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) is now free for digital download: manuals in English and Spanish, English MP3 downloads of complete audio Focusing Instructions, and more!

## Relaxation #1: Noticing ---

Pause With Me Again!

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

### From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise:

Week Two ---"Ahhhhh....pause with me for ten minutes....and just relax!!! I will send this exercise each week as a reminder to pause...

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior Focusing space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a reminder to take a moment to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax...

### Print and Practice!!!!

Here is your relaxation exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and take those few moments to relax every day, if you can, or as often as possible. Or, you can just open this weekly reminder and walk through the exercise online. Relaxing is one way to "clear a space" inside for a longer-term Focusing Problem Solving session.

You will also find this in the Complete Focusing Instructions download at [Creative Edge Focusing](#), p.3: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #1: Noticing. You get it by joining our e-support group for further support in practicing Listening and Focusing.

You will also find a YouTube video embedded below where you can follow along with my voice as guide.

Audio and manual downloads now all free in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com)

## PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE

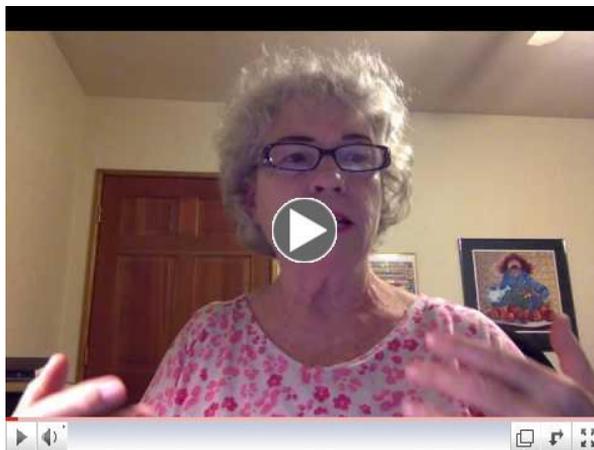
### A. RELAXATION SUGGESTIONS (from Complete Focusing Instructions)

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.

Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses for breathing in--and out--- You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!

And, here, as an option, you can listen along with my voice on the YouTube video below, instead of reading the instructions to yourself:



Dr. McGuire walks you through the Noticing Your Breath exercise...just close your eyes.

## 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, lie there and notice your breathing. Don't try to change it, 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.

## PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE : Getting A Felt Sense #1

The "Intuitive Feel" of Two Different People

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

### From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Getting A Felt Sense Exercise:

The "Intuitive Feel" of Two Different People: "Good" vs. "Uncomfortable" Feeling

### Print and Practice!!!!

Here is your Getting A Felt Sense exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and try it whenever you have time...I will also send a "reminder" copy by email every week...YOU CAN TRY IT IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE EMAIL COMES! A MOMENT TO RELAX AND CHECK INSIDE!

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download at Creative Edge Focusing, p.8 : B. Getting A Felt Sense #1: The "Intuitive Feel" of Each Person.

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### Pre-Focusing Practice

#### B. Getting A Felt Sense #1: The "Intuitive Feel" of Each Person (from Complete Focusing Instructions)

Here you are learning the difference between thinking up an answer in your

head and the second Step of Intuitive Focusing: Getting A Felt Sense.

In the first Step, you "Clear A Space" with relaxation or other exercises, setting aside already-known intellectualizations.

In the second Step, Getting A Felt Sense, you wait quietly, for as much as a minute, for a subtle "feel" of the whole thing, an "intuition," to form in the center of your body, and then create 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. Gendlin (*Focusing*, Bantam, 1981, 1984) calls it "the felt sense" of the whole thing.

In this Pre-Focusing Practice exercise, I try to give you guided imagery that will evoke some strong, hard-to-miss bodily "felt senses."

Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses for breathing in--- and out--- You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!

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.

And now you can choose to close your eyes and follow along with the YouTube video of the exercise instead of reading it to yourself:



**Dr. McGuire walks you through Getting A Bodily-Felt Sense by imagining two different people**

## 1. The "Intuitive Feel" of Each Person-Allow 10 minutes (Joan Klagsbrun invented this exercise)

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.

---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 feelings30 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.

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 \(TM\)](#) 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.

All manuals and MP3 files are now free downloads in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) .

## Instant "Ahah!" # 1: FOCUSING

Gendlin's Six-Step Process Demonstrated

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

## Creative Edge Focusing E-Course --- Weekly Support

The Creative Edge Focusing E-Course walks you through small steps in learning the Core Skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening. Each week you will receive three e-newsletters:

- (1) an "Instant Ahah!" for immediate integration into work and home life
- (2) a Pre-Focusing Relaxation or Getting A Felt Sense" exercise (including "Interpersonal Felt Sensing for conflict resolution)
- (3) a Complete Focusing Exercise you can practice.

We stay with a set of exercises for four weeks, giving ample opportunity for further explanation and practice, so that the exercises become a natural part of your daily living, at home and at work.

No matter when you join this e-course, if you stay with us for a year, you will have a chance to practice all the exercises.

## Eugene Gendlin Personifies The Self-Empathy We Give To Our Self During Focusing

In this 8-minute YouTube, Eugene Gendlin, the creator of Focusing, personifies the kind, gentle, curious, non-judgmental attitude we turn toward whatever appears inside of us during Focusing. Fathers Pete and Ed Campbell call it a "caring feeling presence." Ann Weiser Cornell calls it simply "Presence." It is the essence of self-empathy, self-caring:



Eugene Gendlin Demonstrates Self-Empathy in Focusing

## EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETE FOCUSING TURN

In the First Week of this four weeks practice of Instant "Ahah!" #1: FOCUSING --- Find Out What Is Bothering You, I introduced Gendlin's Six Step Focusing Process and gave the Complete Focusing Exercise. If you are just joining us, go to the [new e-newsletter archive](#) to read this e-newsletter before proceeding to read the example of a Focusing Turn below. Everyone else, you'll find the practice video below this example:

I did a Focusing Turn on a felt experience which I call "Experiencing The Sacred":

// Note: Listening/Focusing does not have to be used in relation to spiritual experience -- this is just a special interest of mine, and not central to Gendlin's Focusing process and the use of The Creative Edge Pyramid of skills and applications at home and at work---//

### Step One: Clearing A Space

(closing my eyes, turning inward---slowing down, paying attention to my breathing) --- Breathing in --- and out---- in---and out--- Massaging my face, neck shoulders. Taking a minute or two to come in touch with my body.

### Step Two: Getting A Felt Sense

Now I start looking for the "intuitive feel" to form for the Focusing question: "What is this 'whole thing' about Experiencing The Sacred)-----

----- (Focusing inward at least a minute, waiting for the "felt sense," the "intuitive feel" of "this whole thing" to form, as a vague, preverbal sensing inside my chest area---)

### Step Three: Finding A Handle

Initial words come: "Someone asked me why I have used religious or spiritual terms, like Agape, the Christ-within-the-Other, the Universal Oneness, in pointing to the Sacred experience that I often have during Listening/Focusing turns, especially when the Focuser touches upon a "sheen of tears," a place of profound meaning (see my article ["Being Touched and Being Moved"](#)), and I am

the Listener, and, suddenly, **the boundary between us dissolves** and I feel that **"our souls are touching"** or some such thing---hard to find words to describe it---I am pointing

#### **Step Four: Checking and Resonating**

(quiet to check with the "felt sense," the "intuitive feel" of this "whole thing"--- "Do those words fit? 'Our souls are touching, boundary dissolves?'" (sitting quietly with "the feel of it all," going back-and-forth between words and images or gestures which arise, checking and resonating, trying to find the symbolizations that are "just right" in capturing "the feel of it all")---

---The person and I spoke of Martin Buber's "I -Thou" vs. "I-It" distinction as another way of pointing to this experience---(pause to look for words--- new words) this experience of merging-without-joining, union-with-separation, and, not just the two people, but the sense of "something more" in that moment of "soul-touching (soul is not the right word, just a pointing word)"---the sense that The Sacred (again, pointing words---) enters in---the two people hanging together in this larger---(I'm getting a thrill here, a little teary---almost goose bumps)-----(**big breath---ahhhhhh!**)

(**new steps forward, "felt shifts" coming as I find words that are closer in grasping and articulating the "felt meaning" -- the Ahhh!, sighs, deep breaths that indicate the tension release and "Ahah!" experience of the "felt shift," the Paradigm Shift**)

#### **Step Five: Asking An Open-Ended Question**

(and I ask myself, "What is so important about this 'two people hanging together in this larger Something?'" and wait quietly for the "feel of it all" to emerge, preverbally in my body, **Getting The Felt Sense, before I again begin looking for Handle Words and Resonating and Checking---pause for "felt sensing", as much as a minute, followed by more symbolizations, more resonating and checking between the symbols and the "feel of it all")**

--- **and the words "Well, that is the point---it is that experience that I call Experiencing The Sacred---that sense that something else enters into the "energy" (just a pointing word) space between us-----(**breath---sigh---a little teary as in "touched and moved"-----(**big sigh---**)****

## Step Six: Receiving

(and I sit with and savor this new insight, that it is exactly the two people and Something More in the space between that feels Sacred, touches me so deeply, and some Global Application comes after the Felt Shift --- seeing new connections)

--- And it can happen in nature, with a sunset, with music, in churches or other sacred spaces, many different roads, not just between people--- (and I spend some time just letting the richness of the felt shift, the new information, register throughout my body/mind, and thanking my body-sense for this new information). End of Focusing Turn

## FELT SHIFTING, GIVING BIRTH TO THE NEW

You can see how, instead of answering immediately from my head, what I already know about "experiencing the Sacred" ("Well, of course, it's related to Martin Buber and it's about Something Greater Than Yourself," etc.), Focusing allows me to stop and "sit with" my larger "whole-body-wisdom" that includes everything I have read and everything I have experienced and am experiencing. From this "felt sense" I can articulate new facets of the experience. And I also experience the sense of "sureness," of experiential rather than merely intellectual insight, that lets me know I am on the right track.

Of course, Focusing can be used for all kinds of problem solving without entry into the spiritual realm, without touching on tears and feeling connection with the Other---this Experiencing the Sacred is just a special Interest Area of mine---

## INSTANT "AHAH!" # 1 Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You

### Focusing On the Creative Edge

And here, again, is your practice exercise. Please take time to walk through the Complete Focusing Session below as I did in the example above.

Set aside at least 20-30 minutes. Remember, Focusing is a skill usually taught in 10 two-hour classes or two weekend workshops ---so, if it doesn't work for you immediately, don't give up! Find a nearby teacher from the Focusing Institute Listings ([www.focusing.org](http://www.focusing.org) ).

But, some people are natural Focusers and just say, "Oh, yes. I've been doing this all my life. Now, I can just do it better, more predictably, whenever I want. Give it a try:

(for audio company find Intuitive Focusing Instructions MP3 files as part of our new totally Free Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) -- leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction).

You can also choose to watch/listen to my demonstration video below. If you watched the explanation last week, you can fast-forward to the middle and just use the second half, where I walk you through the Focusing process:



**Kathy explains Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing Process, then walks you through a practice attempt.**

### **Step One: Clearing A Space (Relaxation exercise in this case)**

---Okay --- first, just get yourself comfortable --- feel the weight of your body on the chair --- loosen any clothing that is too tight --- (one minute)

---Spend a moment just noticing your breathing --- don't try to change it --- just notice the breath going in --- and out ---

(one minute)

---Now, notice where you have tension in your body (pause) ---

(one minute)

---Now, imagine the tension as a stream of water, draining out of your body through your fingertips and feet (Pause) ---

(one minute)

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

(one minute)

### **Step Two: Getting A Felt Sense**

---Now, bring to mind an incident or a situation that was troublesome for you this week (pause as long as necessary) --- Think about it or get a mental image of it ---

(one minute)

---Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about the situation, and just try to bring back the feeling you had in that situation (pause) --- not words, but the "intuitive feel" of yourself in that situation ---

(one minute)

### **Step Three: Finding A Handle**

---Now, carefully try to find words or an image for that feeling ---

(one minute)

### **Step Four: Resonating and Checking**

---Go carefully back and forth between any words and the "intuitive feel of the whole thing" until you find words or an image that are just right for it ---

(one minute)

### **Step Five: Asking**

---Now, gently ask yourself, "What is so hard about this situation for me?", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in your wordless intuition, your whole-body sense ---

(one minute)

---Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that whole feeling --- going back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Now, imagine what the situation would be like if it were perfectly all right  
(one minute)

---Now, ask yourself, "What's in the way of that?" and, again, don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for something new to come in the center of your body, more like a wordless intuition or whole-body sense ---

(one minute)

---Again, carefully find words or an image for that, "whatever is in the way" --- go back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Now, see if you can find some small step you might be able to take to move yourself in a positive direction --- again, don't answer from your head, the already known, but wait as much as a minute for the wordless, intuitive "feel," the bodily felt sense of an answer to arise ---

(one minute)

---Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for this possible next step --- go back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Check with your "intuitive feel," "Is this right? Is this really something I could try doing?" --- If your "intuitive feel" says, "Yes (some sense of release, relaxation), I could try that," then you can stop here.

---If your "felt sense" says "No, I can't do that" or "That won't work," then ask yourself again, "What small step in the positive direction would work?", again, waiting quietly, as much as a minute for an intuitive answer to arise, then making words or an image for it --- going back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Keep going back and forth between the "intuitive feel" and possible words and images as long as you are comfortable, or until you experience "Ahah! That's it!".

(one minute or more)

### **Step Six: Receiving**

---Whether a "solution" has arisen or not, appreciate yourself and your body for taking time with this, trusting that pausing to take time is the important thing - - solutions can then arise later.

(one minute)

The crux of change is just spending quiet time paying attention to the "intuitive feel." If no clear next step arises, just remind yourself that at least you have

gotten a clearer sense of the problem. Because you have spent quiet, Intuitive Focusing time with the "feel" of "the whole thing," you have started a process of change. Something new may "pop up" later, as you go about your day.

## Instant "Ahah!" # 1: FOCUSING

### FOCUSING AND ANXIETY

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week 3

## Creative Edge Focusing E-Course --- Weekly Support

The Creative Edge Focusing E-Course walks you through small steps in learning the Core Skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening. Each week you will receive three e-newsletters:

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We stay with a set of exercises for four weeks, giving ample opportunity for further explanation and practice, so that the exercises become a natural part of your daily living, at home and at work.

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## FOCUSING AND ANXIETY

In the First Week of this four weeks practice of Instant "Ahah!" #1: FOCUSING --- Find Out What Is Bothering You, I introduced Gendlin's Six Step Focusing Process and gave the Complete Focusing Exercise. If you are just joining us, You should have received a resend of this e-newsletter recently.

Please go through the exercise and demonstration video there to get oriented.

Others can go to the [new e-newsletter archive](#) if they want to reread this e-newsletter before proceeding so you will understand the basic steps of Focusing and prepared to do the practice exercise below. But the practice exercise and video are also repeated below.

At times, in my personal/work life, I am caught up in situations generating a lot of anxiety. I often use the Relaxation: Noticing Your Breathing exercise you will also receive this week to help break through the wall of anxiety so that I can fall asleep or, at other times, to "Clear A Space" for a deeper Focusing Turn.

I also sometimes add the basic energy meridian tapping sequence from Emotional Freedom Techniques ([www.emofree.com](http://www.emofree.com)), another free self-help method which often allows the deep sighs and tension release of the relaxation response.

However, best of all, Intuitive Focusing usually allows me to shift immediately from overwhelming anxiety to relieving tears, even sobbing, about the deeper fears and issues underlying the anxiety. As actual research with brain waves and galvanic skin response (GSR) has shown, simply using Focusing to find a "name," to find words and images for what the body is carrying subconsciously, actually brings about relaxation. It is better to know what you are facing, even if the words seem bad to others!

When overwhelmed with anxiety, I find it difficult to do Focusing on my own. So, I have developed a community of Focusing friends on the Internet. Even in the middle of an anxious night, I can go to the computer and do a Focusing Turn, knowing that my "group" is out there in cyberspace, "Listening" to me.

Here is an example of a Focusing Turn on "Debilitating Anxiety" which I did on the Internet last year, getting a lot of "felt shifting" and release of my anxiety (and the ability to sleep for two nights after the Turn) as well as, in a few hours, several comforting, empathic Listening Responses from group members throughout the world. I include only a small part of the Turn, demonstrating the initial shift from "free-floating anxiety" to relieving tears and sobbing as words come as a "Handle" on the felt sense:

Hello, Group,

I am suffering from "debilitating anxiety," frozen neck and shoulders and jaw, sleeplessness or restless sleeping. I am reaching out to your friendly comfort in hopes of "touching" the edge of this anxiety, and allowing it to unfold its message. I find anxiety especially difficult to "disidentify from", when trying to do Focusing alone, so I reach for your compassion --- just knowing you are out there usually helps!

Sp. I am stopping to "sense in," to try to stand at the edge of this anxiety, instead of being paralyzed inside of it --- I imagine I will do some Clearing A Space, naming the various issues I am carrying, seeing which wants attention --- or perhaps not! We'll see what happens in this non-linear Focusing process! But, first, just turning toward my body with some noticing of my breathing as a way to come into my body, and with the general Focusing question, "What is this 'anxiety' all about?" ---

(eyes closed, sigh, breathing---) Words come up almost immediately, with tears (and the words completely surprise me!): "I feel so alone. I am so lonely." (sobbing comes, as I ask myself, "What is this lonely?" and wait for the fuller "felt sense" of "it all" to come ---so I am asking, "What is this sobbing about lonely, and related somehow to anxiety? (still surprised at the words) (more sobbing, don't know "why") ---anxiety is somehow related to "feeling so lonely" -- "What is 'all of this?'" and Focusing on the "feel of it all" ---

Some thinking comes: "Perhaps it is the sense of 'battle' involved in a lot of work and family things on my plate --- the "uphill struggle" so commonly created around herself by an 8 on the Enneagram: The Challenger --- hostility all around --- so, I will stop and do Focusing, sensing into what comes in the 'center of my body' in response to this 'guess' ---

(deep breath, quiet pause for inner 'reflection') ---(shoulders go up and down in spasm of "fear" --- so I decided to "accentuate," to repeat this body motion, see if something comes as a "felt sense," larger "feel" of "all of that fear in my shoulders) --- (lots of sobbing comes as I repeat this "spasm of fear" and the words, again, "I feel so alone; I am so alone" ("What is this 'alone?', I ask myself. These words still surprise me) ---

(long pause for Focusing on the "feel of it all")--- Words: "It seems, or perhaps,

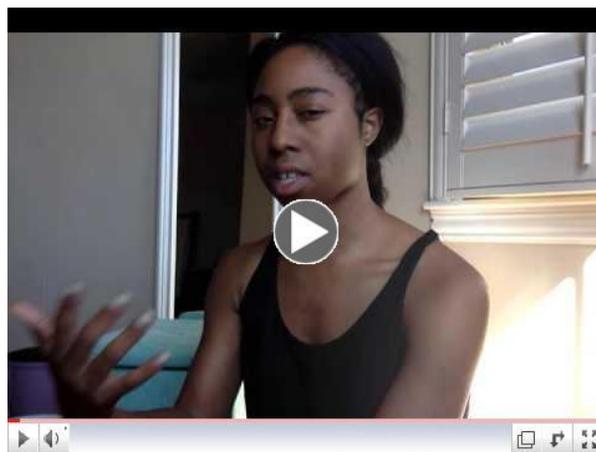
it is that I am seeing negative possibilities in areas where other people don't want to think about them or hear about them, and this leaves me alone with my fears, perhaps" --- knowing this is just a "guess," again, I will stop and "resonate" these words against the "bodily felt sense" that is MORE than any of these words --- "Is it that?", I ask, and wait quietly, reflecting inward, and see what comes -----

(big sigh, breath, and another) --- (moving my head back and forth on my neck rapidly, trying to break through this tension) ---(big breath) --- (shoulders spasming again) ---

"And isn't this what I always do, catastrophize, intuit the worst that can happen --- and sometimes I am right, sometimes wrong (and these new words come) --- but always I am prepared! I am prepared for the worst! Prepared for the battle, the disillusionment, the failure ---- (big sigh)

**This is just the beginning, but you can see how quickly the even distant presence of Listening Others helped me to "relate to" the anxiety, instead of being frozen inside it, and allowed new steps of forward motion, of intuitive problem solving to arise.**

**Here is a complete newcomer to Focusing explaining her discovery of the subtle, bodily-felt sense inside and her excitement in realizing that, just paying attention to it and looking for words and images that are "just right" could lead to new realizations and action steps:**



Newcomer demonstrates the power of  
Focusing on a Felt Sense and the 'Felt  
Shift'

**INSTANT "AHAH!" # 1 Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You**

**Focusing On the Creative Edge**

And here, again, is your practice exercise. Please take time to walk through the Complete Focusing Session below as I did in the example above.

Set aside at least 20-30 minutes. Remember, Focusing is a skill usually taught in 10 two-hour classes or two weekend workshops ---so, if it doesn't work for you immediately, don't give up! Find a nearby teacher from the Focusing Institute Listings ([www.focusing.org](http://www.focusing.org) ) .

But, some people are natural Focusers and just say, "Oh, yes. I've been doing this all my life. Now, I can just do it better, more predictably, whenever I want. Give it a try:

(for audio company, purchase Intuitive Focusing Instructions CD as part of our Self-Help Package at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) -- leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction)

And here is a repeat of my video explaining Gendlin's six-step Focusing process and then walking you through the exercise so you can close your eyes and follow along instead of reading the below exercise to yourself:



**Explanation and practice exercise of  
Gendlin's six-step Focusing process**

### **Step One: Clearing A Space (Relaxation exercise in this case)**

---Okay --- first, just get yourself comfortable --- feel the weight of your body on the chair --- loosen any clothing that is too tight ---

(one minute)

---Spend a moment just noticing your breathing --- don't try to change it --- just notice the breath going in --- and out ---

(one minute)

---Now, notice where you have tension in your body (pause) ---

(one minute)

---Now, imagine the tension as a stream of water, draining out of your body through your fingertips and feet (Pause) ---

(one minute)

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

(one minute)

### **Step Two: Getting A Felt Sense**

---Now, bring to mind an incident or a situation that was troublesome for you this week (pause as long as necessary) --- Think about it or get a mental image of it ---

(one minute)

---Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about the situation, and just try to bring back the feeling you had in that situation (pause) --- not words, but the

"intuitive feel" of yourself in that situation ---  
(one minute)

### **Step Three: Finding A Handle**

---Now, carefully try to find words or an image for that feeling ---  
(one minute)

### **Step Four: Resonating and Checking**

---Go carefully back and forth between any words and the "intuitive feel of the whole thing" until you find words or an image that are just right for it ---  
(one minute)

### **Step Five: Asking**

---Now, gently ask yourself, "What is so hard about this situation for me?", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in your wordless intuition, your whole-body sense ---  
(one minute)

---Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that whole feeling --- going back and forth until the symbols are "just right."  
(one minute)

---Now, imagine what the situation would be like if it were perfectly all right  
(one minute)

---Now, ask yourself, "What's in the way of that?" and, again, don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for something new to come in the center of your body, more like a wordless intuition or whole-body sense ---  
(one minute)

---Again, carefully find words or an image for that, "whatever is in the way" --- go back and forth until the symbols are "just right."  
(one minute)

---Now, see if you can find some small step you might be able to take to move yourself in a positive direction --- again, don't answer from your head, the already known, but wait as much as a minute for the wordless, intuitive "feel," the bodily felt sense of an answer to arise ---  
(one minute)

---Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for this possible next step --- go back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Check with your "intuitive feel," "Is this right? Is this really something I could try doing?" --- If your "intuitive feel" says, "Yes (some sense of release, relaxation), I could try that," then you can stop here.

---If your "felt sense" says "No, I can't do that" or "That won't work," then ask yourself again, "What small step in the positive direction would work?", again, waiting quietly, as much as a minute for an intuitive answer to arise, then making words or an image for it --- going back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Keep going back and forth between the "intuitive feel" and possible words and images as long as you are comfortable, or until you experience "Ahah! That's it!".

(one minute or more)

### **Step Six: Receiving**

---Whether a "solution" has arisen or not, appreciate yourself and your body for taking time with this, trusting that pausing to take time is the important thing - solutions can then arise later.

(one minute)

The crux of change is just spending quiet time paying attention to the "intuitive feel." If no clear next step arises, just remind yourself that at least you have gotten a clearer sense of the problem. Because you have spent quiet, Intuitive Focusing time with the "feel" of "the whole thing," you have started a process of change. Something new may "pop up" later, as you go about your day.

## **PRACTICE: Pause, and Ponder**

When each e-newsletter arrives, **PAUSE** to take 10-20 minutes to practice the exercise, taking time to **PONDER** at the Creative Edge, the source of change.

If you didn't get the free Instant "Ahah!"s Mini-Manual download when you subscribed to this e-newsletter, you can find it in PDF file [here](#) or, [in Spanish](#) --- all ten easy immediate applications for home and work. Keep it handy for weekly practice of one of the ten applications.

You can also immediately download the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) (Pre-Focusing and Focusing Practice), which we will also use each week.

You can now find totally free downloads of four manuals and books, one in Spanish, and MP3 audio files, in English, in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com)

## Relaxation #1: Noticing Your Breathing ---

Meditation Practices To Still The "Monkey Mind"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

## From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise: Week Three

---"Ahhhhh....pause with me for ten minutes....and just relax!!! I will send this exercise each week as a reminder to pause...

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior Focusing space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a reminder to take a moment to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax...

While many people use meditation techniques as an end in themselves, a way of healing mind and body, we are using them as a way of "clearing a space" in the body for the specific problem-solving process of [Intuitive Focusing](#).

**FREE MEDITATION EXPLANATIONS AND PRACTICE ON THE WEB!**

Just "Google" "meditation techniques" and a number of excellent websites offering free explanations and practice exercises will pop up. In general, meditation is a way of escaping from and stilling the endless "go-around" of our thoughts and worries, the endless activity of "the monkey mind." Our Noticing Your Breathing exercise, as a form of "clearing a space" for Focusing, is similar to this breathing process described at the free [Meditation Handbook website](#), which explains seven basic approaches. Here is one similar to the first step of Focusing:

"Another useful method is to lend special awareness to the breathing process felt in the belly. Just behind and below your navel (belly button) lies the hara, which is felt as an ethereal ball of energy. The hara is a natural balancing point of your consciousness which can be thought of as the center of your being. Subjectively and poetically speaking, the hara is where man and universe meet. It is the gateway where we merge and become man-universe and universe-man. No one really knows what the hara actually is, but we can use it to our full advantage. Consciously developing a powerful hara center is the most important secret of meditation.

When your consciousness is centered in the hara instead of the head, your thinking process slows down and you can relax in the expanded world of being. Trying to stop distracting thoughts through will power alone leads to more thoughts and a self-defeating inner struggle. By transferring your center of awareness to the hara, thoughts gradually disappear on their own without inner conflict. That is why you see Buddha statues with a big belly. It is an esoteric message that the hara is the key to meditation.

Sit quietly and focus on your belly as it moves in and out as you breathe. **Over time the hara point will become more noticeable as your meditation grows stronger. Sudden emergencies, such as near collisions on the highway, tend to activate the hara center. We often get a "gut reaction" from sudden danger. You can nourish the feeling of the hara by simply paying passive attention to it.** This relaxed concentration is very close to doing nothing, yet it is still a subtle effort. Drinking herb tea or hot water before meditation sessions relaxes the gut and facilitates awareness of the hara. Overeating and consuming cold drinks tends to make hara awareness more difficult."

The bolding is mine, showing how this meditation practice is seen as strengthening your ability to notice "gut feelings," "intuitions," a great companion to Intuitive Focusing.

If you are really intrigued, you can go to [Free Meditations](#) website and find several different versions of a Buddhist breath meditation and many, many more meditation techniques.

And, last but not least, at [The Meditation Society](#) website, you can find links to 108 different meditations on the web!

But we are using meditation as a first step, a way of opening up enough "free attention" in the body for the deeper process of Intuitive Focusing, which involves a more active back-and-forth between the "intuitive feel" of an issue or idea and symbolizations (words, images, gestures) that arise from it.

### **Print and Practice!!!!**

Here is your relaxation exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and take those few moments to relax every day, if you can, or as often as possible. Or, you can just open this weekly reminder and walk through the exercise online. Relaxing is one way to "clear a space" inside for a longer-term Focusing Problem Solving session.

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download

But here is the YouTube video which will walk you through the exercise below, so you can close your eyes and follow along instead of reading to yourself:



**Relaxation #1: Just Noticing your breathing. 15-minute stress relief!**

## **PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE**

### **A. RELAXATION SUGGESTIONS (from Complete Focusing Instructions)**

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.

**Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses for breathing in---and out--- You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!**

#### **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---stretch---and relax  
10 seconds

Now, lie there and notice your breathing. Don't try to change it, 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.

## PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE: Getting A Felt Sense #1

## The "Intuitive Feel" of Two Different People ---A Miraculous Change in Perception!!!

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

### From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Getting A Felt Sense Exercise:

#### The "Intuitive Feel" of Two Different People: "Good" vs. "Uncomfortable" Feeling

**DO THIS EXERCISE OVER AND OVER --- THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING NEW THAT ARISES, SOMETIMES A MIRACULOUS CHANGE IN PERCEPTION**

Going through this e-course myself at one point (this is past history, now), I did this week's Pre-Focusing: Getting A Felt Shift exercise in my Internet Focusing Group, and here is the miraculous and surprising change in perception that happened from this little bit of [Intuitive Focusing](#):

"My, I love Focusing! I did the "Getting A Felt Sense: Two Different People" email from my own e-course. I've done it many times, and it is always a surprise.

Basically, you choose two people, one you feel good about, one you have trouble with, put each behind an appropriately imagined decorated door, then do a guided imagery of going up to each door, opening, and seeing what happens in your body-sense when you see each person, then finding "handle" words to describe the felt sense. Usually, dramatically different "qualities" arise, showing people the way in which our body's can "read" situations before our minds can make words:

**Behind door one: My husband.** The "felt sense": calm, objective, unruffled, warm. I could "bask in his comforting vibes."

**Behind door two: Someone I have been experiencing as a bully,** and about whose next retaliatory attack I have been experiencing anxiety. Told "No,

you cannot have that," she simply broke into a house and took it. I EXPECTED to experience fear and anger when I opened the door and saw her. Instead, I immediately started crying. I saw her as a frightened child, raging around trying to have power to cover her fear, her desperation. I was completely surprised to find myself feeling compassion for her!

**Last part of the exercise: go back and forth between the two "felt senses" and see what happens.**

Led me to contemplate something other than trying to get her charged with felony "breaking-and-entering" as a way to stop her from thinking she could bully everyone. I thought, maybe I could tell the police we would drop the charges (if we can even make them; that is up in the air) if she would agree to sit down with us, with a police mediator present, and stay in the room for one hour, me trying to reach her Inner Child, her desperation, her fear, and help her stop the damage she is doing to herself and others. Who knows if there is any chance, but it is certainly a shift in my view of her.

### **Print and Practice!!!!**

Here is your Getting A Felt Sense exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and try it whenever you have time...I will also send a "reminder" copy by email every week...**YOU CAN TRY IT IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE EMAIL COMES! A MOMENT TO RELAX AND CHECK INSIDE!**

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download.

Now, free downloads of four manuals and books, plus MP3 audio files, are available in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com).

And many of these exercises are in the Spanish version of the manual, *Focusing En Comunidad*.

And, easiest of all, you will now find a YouTube video below where I walk you through the exercise, so you can close your eyes and just follow along.

### **Pre-Focusing Practice**

## B. Getting A Felt Sense #1: The "Intuitive Feel" of Each Person (from Complete Focusing Instructions)

Here you are learning the difference between thinking up an answer in your head and the second Step of [Intuitive Focusing: Getting A Felt Sense](#).

In the first Step, you "Clear A Space" with relaxation or other exercises, setting aside already-known intellectualizations.

In the second Step, Getting A Felt Sense, you wait quietly, for as much as a minute, for a subtle "feel" of the whole thing, an "intuition," to form in the center of your body, and then create 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. Gendlin (*Focusing*, Bantam, 1981, 1984) calls it "the felt sense" of the whole thing.

In this Pre-Focusing Practice exercise, I try to give you guided imagery that will evoke some strong, hard-to-miss bodily "felt senses."

Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses for breathing in---and out--- You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!

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.

And now, if you like, you can watch/listen to the following YouTube video and just close your eyes...:



Find a 'Felt Sense' by imagining two different people...

### **1. The "Intuitive Feel" of Each Person-Allow 10 minutes (Joan Klagsbrun invented this exercise)**

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. (Suggestion: you may want to avoid choosing a person that is extremely upsetting for you since you might find more overwhelming feelings than you want in this simple exercise. It is okay to choose someone with whom you feel just somewhat uncomfortable...)

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.

---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.

**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 \(TM\)](#) 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.

You can find the free MP3 audio files of exercises in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) or just use the YouTube video above. If you choose to read the written instructions to yourself, use a gentle, slowly paced voice, leaving time as suggested between parts of the instruction (time those 1-minute pauses -- they are way longer than you can imagine!). The quiet time between instructions is an important time for just breathing---and relaxing.

## Instant "Ahah!" # 1: FOCUSING

### FOCUSING AS A "RECIPE" OF INNER ACTIONS

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

## Creative Edge Focusing E-Course --- Weekly Support

The Creative Edge Focusing E-Course walks you through small steps in learning the Core Skills of [Intuitive Focusing](#) and [Focused Listening](#). Each week you will receive three e-newsletters:

- (1) an "Instant Ahah!" for immediate integration into work and home life
- (2) a Pre-Focusing Relaxation or Getting A Felt Sense" exercise (including "Interpersonal Felt Sensing for conflict resolution)
- (3) a Complete Focusing Exercise you can practice.

We stay with a set of exercises for four weeks, giving ample opportunity for further explanation and practice, so that the exercises become a natural part of your daily living, at home and at work.

No matter when you join this e-course, if you stay with us for a year, you will have a chance to practice all the exercises.

## FOCUSING: A "Recipe" of Inner Actions

In the First Week of this four weeks practice of Instant "Ahah!" #1: FOCUSING --- Find Out What Is Bothering You, I introduced Gendlin's Six Step Focusing Process and gave the Complete Focusing Exercise. If you are just joining us, go to the [new e-newsletter archive](#) to read this e-newsletter before proceeding so you will understand the basic steps of Focusing and prepared to do the practice exercise below. Newcomers, you can also "catch up" on our first few weeks of the e-course by looking at the archive for September, but this is not necessary in order to proceed.

Here is a simple short Focusing session, in the company of an empathic listener and Focusing guide, which demonstrates the basic process: finding and holding on to and being with and following a 'bodily felt sense,' allowing answers to unfold from this implicit body knowing:



## Short Focusing session with Listener/Guide

It may help to view the Six Steps of Focusing just like any "recipe" that you try to follow --- in baking a cake, learning to hit a tennis ball, turning on a complicated piece of machinery. Each Step is a specific activity that you do, like "break open the eggs, then separate the whites from the yolks" or "First, pump up the oil, then set the choke, then turn on the ignition."

You have to know how to do each action before you can carry out the recipe and get to the goal. After you have done the recipe a lot of times, you can go very smoothly and even make your own intuitive adjustments.

But we are not used to "inner actions," knowing lots of different activities we can carry on inside. So, in learning Focusing, you are learning a set of actions to take inside of yourself:

(1) Clearing A Space: Using a relaxation technique, a guided fantasy, or a formal Taking an Inventory exercise to go from the intellectualization and tension of the day into a more peaceful contact with your body and its wisdom

(2) Getting A Felt Sense: Now, having set aside everything you already know, you ask an Open-Ended Question, like "How am I today?" or "What am I carrying?" , or, if you have chosen a specific issue to work on, "What is this all about?", AND THEN YOU PAUSE AND WAIT, FOR AS LONG AS A MINUTE, FOR THE VAGUE, PREVERBAL, SUBTLE "BODILY FELT SENSE" OR "INTUITIVE FEEL" OF AN ISSUE OR IDEA TO ARISE.

This "pausing" and paying attention for the preverbal "feel" is a totally new Inner Activity, one that anyone hardly ever does until they learn Intuitive Focusing, and the actual way to access The Creative Edge, the "bodily feel" that is the wellspring of the "new."

(3) Finding A Handle: In this Inner Activity, you look for words or an image or a gesture that begins to capture the "quality" ("jumpy," "black," "a concrete block," "sad," "all knotted up," "joyful,") of the "felt sense."

(4) Resonating And Checking: And, in order to find the exactly right symbolizations to capture this new Creative Edge, you have to GO BACK-AND-FORTH BETWEEN ANY SYMBOLS AND THE "INTUITIVE FEEL" UNTIL YOU FIND THE SYMBOLS THAT ARE "EXACTLY RIGHT," EXPERIENCED AS A PHYSICAL RELEASE OF TENSION, A LARGE OR SMALL "AHAH! THAT IS IT EXACTLY, FROM YOUR BODY.

(4) Asking: Asking open-ended questions of the "intuitive feel" ("And what is so hard about that?" or "And why is this so important to me?" or "And what is the crux of that anger?" and, again, doing the Inner Actions of Steps 2, 3, and 4: Pausing to get a Felt Sense, looking for Handle words or images, and Resonating and Checking until the body says, through tension release, "Yes, that is exactly it." The open-ended question allows a new "felt sense" to form in response, during the pause, and further unfolding happens through resonating and checking.

Inner Actions repeated over and over: Asking, PAUSING, looking for Symbolizations, Checking and Resonating whatever comes until the body says "Yes! That is it."

(5) Receiving: after a "felt shift," a step of unfolding or "Ahah!," stopping just for a moment and letting the new realization "sink in." Pausing to let the new information get "lived into" by your body, taking it in at a cellular level. And appreciating your body, so often ignored and turned away from during the usual day, for sharing its wisdom with you.

And, then, if you like, you can start another cycle of the Inner Actions of Focusing, looking for further unfolding on the issue or idea: Asking, Pausing for Felt Sense, Looking for Handle symbols, Resonating and Checking until the body-sense says, "Yes, that is exactly right."

## **INSTANT "AHAH!" # 1 Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You**

## Focusing On the Creative Edge

And here, again, is your practice exercise. Please take time to walk through the Complete Focusing Session below as I did in the example above.

Set aside at least 20-30 minutes. Remember, Focusing is a skill usually taught in 10 two-hour classes or two weekend workshops ---so, if it doesn't work for you immediately, don't give up! Find a nearby teacher from the Focusing Institute Listings ([www.focusing.org](http://www.focusing.org) ).

But, some people are natural Focusers and just say, "Oh, yes. I've been doing this all my life. Now, I can just do it better, more predictably, whenever I want. Give it a try:  
(for audio company, purchase Intuitive Focusing Instructions CD as part of our Self-Help Package at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) -- leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction)

And, if you prefer, you can listen to me as I walk through the steps in this video, or you can read the instructions to yourself below:



Walk through the six-step Focusing process

### **Step One: Clearing A Space (Relaxation exercise in this case)**

---Okay --- first, just get yourself comfortable --- feel the weight of your body on the chair --- loosen any clothing that is too tight ---  
(one minute)

---Spend a moment just noticing your breathing --- don't try to change it --- just notice the breath going in --- and out ---  
(one minute)

---Now, notice where you have tension in your body (pause) ---  
(one minute)

---Now, imagine the tension as a stream of water, draining out of your body through your fingertips and feet (Pause) ---  
(one minute)

---Let yourself travel inside of your body to a place of peace ---  
(one minute)

### **Step Two: Getting A Felt Sense**

---Now, bring to mind an incident or a situation that was troublesome for you this week (pause as long as necessary) --- Think about it or get a mental image of it ---  
(one minute)

---Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about the situation, and just try to bring back the feeling you had in that situation (pause) --- not words, but the "intuitive feel" of yourself in that situation ---  
(one minute)

### **Step Three: Finding A Handle**

---Now, carefully try to find words or an image for that feeling ---  
(one minute)

### **Step Four: Resonating and Checking**

---Go carefully back and forth between any words and the "intuitive feel of the whole thing" until you find words or an image that are just right for it --  
-  
(one minute)

## Step Five: Asking

---Now, gently ask yourself, "What is so hard about this situation for me?", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in your wordless intuition, your whole-body sense ---

(one minute)

---Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that whole feeling --- going back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Now, imagine what the situation would be like if it were perfectly all right

(one minute)

---Now, ask yourself, "What's in the way of that?" and, again, don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for something new to come in the center of your body, more like a wordless intuition or whole-body sense ---

(one minute)

---Again, carefully find words or an image for that, "whatever is in the way"

---go back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Now, see if you can find some small step you might be able to take to move yourself in a positive direction --- again, don't answer from your head, the already known, but wait as much as a minute for the wordless, intuitive "feel," the bodily felt sense of an answer to arise ---

(one minute)

---Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for this possible next step --- go back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Check with your "intuitive feel," "Is this right? Is this really something I could try doing?" --- If your "intuitive feel" says, "Yes (some sense of release, relaxation), I could try that," then you can stop here.

---If your "felt sense" says "No, I can't do that" or "That won't work," then ask yourself again, "What small step in the positive direction would work?", again, waiting quietly, as much as a minute for an intuitive answer to arise, then making words or an image for it --- going back and forth until the symbols are "just right."

(one minute)

---Keep going back and forth between the "intuitive feel" and possible words and images as long as you are comfortable, or until you experience

"Ahah! That's it!".  
(one minute or more)

### Step Six: Receiving

---Whether a "solution" has arisen or not, appreciate yourself and your body for taking time with this, trusting that pausing to take time is the important thing -- solutions can then arise later.

(one minute)

The crux of change is just spending quiet time paying attention to the "intuitive feel." If no clear next step arises, just remind yourself that at least you have gotten a clearer sense of the problem. Because you have spent quiet, Intuitive Focusing time with the "feel" of "the whole thing," you have started a process of change. Something new may "pop up" later, as you go about your day.

### PRACTICE: Pause, and Ponder

When each e-newsletter arrives, **PAUSE** to take 10-20 minutes to practice the exercise, taking time to **PONDER** at the Creative Edge, the source of change.

If you didn't get the free Instant "Ahah!"s Mini-Manual download when you subscribed to this e-newsletter, you can find it in PDF file [here](#) or, [in Spanish](#) --- all ten easy immediate applications for home and work. Keep it handy for weekly practice of one of the ten applications.

You can also immediately download the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) (Pre-Focusing and Focusing Practice)

You can also download MP3 audio files of the exercises in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) , where everything is now free, including manuals. In the Spanish version of the manual, Focusing En Comunidad, you will find many of the Relaxation and Focusing Exercises in Spanish. You will also receive instructions on setting up a Focusing Partnership or Focusing Group to practice the equal exchange of Listening/Focusing turns.

## Relaxation #1: Noticing Your Breathing ---

### The Difference Between Intuitive Focusing and Meditation

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

### From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise:

Week Four ---"Ahhhhh....pause with me for ten minutes....and just relax!!! I will send this exercise each week as a reminder to pause...

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior Focusing space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a reminder to take a moment to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax...

While many people use meditation techniques as an end in themselves, a way of healing mind and body, we are using them as a way of "clearing a space" in the body for the specific problem-solving process of [Intuitive Focusing](#).

### INTUITIVE FOCUSING IS NOT THE SAME AS MEDITATION

In general, the goal of meditation is to still and clear the constant activity of the mind, to "let go" of controlling thoughts and ego, to rest in a peaceful state of "non-attachment." With repeated practice, this meditative state of meeting life's events with "non-attachment" becomes more and more present during the events of everyday living, leading to stress reduction and action from a place of peaceful

awareness. Meditation is the OPPOSITE of a problem-solving strategy. Its goal is "emptiness" as a healing state in itself. You can find links to many forms of meditation in [Week Three: Noticing The Monkey Mind](#). HOWEVER, the link to the Meditation Handbook is inaccurate. Try this one instead: [https://www.alchemylab.com/meditation\\_handbook.htm](https://www.alchemylab.com/meditation_handbook.htm)

Intuitive Focusing IS a problem-solving method. After using meditations like Noticing Your Breathing to "clear a space," to get to that space of "emptiness," in Intuitive Focusing, we then turn ourselves toward a more ACTIVE way of engaging and interacting with actual real-life concerns. We ask ourselves an open-ended question, like "What is the feel of this whole thing?", and then we wait, as long as a minute, for a "felt sense" of an issue or idea to appear in the center of our body. We allow something to arise in that "empty stage" of the body/mind.

However, different from normal intellectual problem-solving, in Focusing, we are not arguing lists of pros and cons. We are finding a way to engage with the "bodily felt sense," the right-brain "intuitive feel" of an issue or idea, The Creative Edge from which new, non-linear information can unfold. We are engaging in a back-and-forth between this "intuitive feel" and any words, images, or gestures that arise in relation to it. The "body-feel" is the final judge of "rightness." Through a release of tension, the body tells us, "Yes, that is exactly right. That's it."

So, Focusing and meditation are two very different kinds of "Inner Actions," specific activities we can engage in inside of ourselves.

But we are using meditation as a first step, a way of opening up enough "free attention" in the body for the deeper process of Intuitive Focusing, which involves a more active back-and-forth between the "intuitive feel" of an issue or idea and symbolizations (words, images, gestures) that arise from it.

**Print and Practice!!!!**

Here is your relaxation exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and take those few moments to relax every day, if you can, or as often as possible. Or, you can just open this weekly reminder and walk through the exercise online. Relaxing is one way to "clear a space" inside for a longer-term Focusing Problem Solving session.

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download p.3: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #1: Noticing. You can now find free MP3 audio files plus manuals to download in the Free Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com)

## PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE

### A. RELAXATION SUGGESTIONS (from Complete Focusing Instructions)

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.

Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses for breathing in---and out--- You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!

Instead of reading the instructions to yourself below, you can close your eyes and just follow along while I read them in this video, if you prefer:



### Noticing Your Breathing meditation

#### 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, lie there and notice your breathing. Don't try to change it, 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.

## PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE: Getting A Felt Sense #1

The Body Responds To Everything!

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

## From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Getting A Felt Sense Exercise:

### The "Intuitive Feel" of Two Different People: "Good" vs. "Uncomfortable" Feeling

DO THIS EXERCISE OVER AND OVER --- THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING NEW THAT ARISES, SOMETIMES A MIRACULOUS CHANGE IN PERCEPTION. You'll find it at the bottom of this e-newsletter.

In this exercise, you are learning to recognize an "intuitive feel" or "bodily felt sense" by having strong bodily responses brought up by different imagery. When you repeat the exercise, with different people behind each door, different "bodily felt senses" or "intuitive feels" arising in response to each person, you will gain more and more experience with, and confidence in, the body's response as a source of information (and [Intuitive Focusing](#) as the method for symbolizing all this preverbal information into useable knowledge!)

You can also have a similar experience of recognizing your body's response to various events, and the endless information held "preverbally" in this "intuitive feel," by, for instance:

(1) **playing an up-beat and then a slow piece of music, and noticing the difference in the "bodily-feel" of each.** This is, of course, the basis of the success of the symphonic form in music, each section calling up a different "mood" or bodily-response. You can practice using Focusing to look for words and images to describe the "intuitive feel" of the two different pieces of music. You will begin to see that the "felt sense" can be an endless source of new verbalizations, new symbolizations about anything that comes to the body's attention. You could write a poem, create a dance, describe the music to a friend, write your own piece of music, and create many more symbolizations to describe the effect on your body of the two different pieces of music, all from the one "bodily felt-sense."

(2) **Putting your body into a posture or gesture that seems to**

capture how you feel right now. Then, putting your body into a posture or gesture that captures "How I would like to be feeling." Pay attention to the "intuitive feel" of each posture, using Focusing to make words or images for the bodily-feel of each posture, with Checking and Resonating until the symbols feel "just right" in capturing the bodily-feel. Now, go back and forth between the two body postures, paying attention to the bodily-feel of each, and see what happens. New words or images, or a new posture, may emerge!

(3) Reading different pieces of poetry, and noticing the "intuitive feel" that arises in your body to each different poem. Use Focusing, with Checking and Resonating, to find some words or an image for the "intuitive feel" that comes in response to each different poem.

(4) Looking at pieces of art and, again, noticing the "intuitive feel" of each which arises in the center of your body, and using Intuitive Focusing, with Checking and Resonating, to create words or images to describe your "body's response" to each different piece of art.

You see that, whenever we create meaning, or articulate the meaning of something to us, we begin by referring to our "bodily felt sense," our "intuitive feel," and creating descriptive words or images to capture that "bodily feel." Meaning is created from The Creative Edge, the non-linear, right-brain, "intuitive feel" that comes in our body when we turn our attention to "pondering" on something.

I am a very kinesthetic person and an NF (iNtuitive Feeler) on the [Myers-Briggs Type Indicator](#) (you'll find free versions on this test at the link. Please also see my paper, ["The Body As A Source Of Knowledge"](#) for an introduction between Thinking and Feeling as ways-of-being in the world) Getting a "bodily felt sense" comes easily to me. I learned Focusing naturally and easily, simply saying, "Thank goodness Eugene Gendlin (*Focusing*, Bantam, 1981) finally put into words the way I have been living all along." But others, perhaps less kinesthetic, perhaps Thinkers rather than Feelers on the MBTI, have great difficulty in knowing what it means to "check with your body and see what comes."

If none of these Getting A Felt Sense exercises are working for you, if you find yourself saying, "I have no idea what she is talking about! I don't get a 'bodily feel' when I listen to music, read poetry, look at art", then you might want to check into the writings and books about Focusing by Ann Weiser Cornell at [www.focusingresources.com](http://www.focusingresources.com) . Ann describes herself as someone who had no idea what a "bodily felt sense" was, and she developed her methods of teaching Focusing with a lot of awareness of people with a similar problem.

But here is Eugene Gendlin, creator of Focusing, describing Focusing as 'sitting with' the 'murky edge,' the bodily felt sense of the new, the next steps, the not-yet-known:



Eugene Gendlin: Focusing happens at "the murky edge" of the not-yet-known

## Pre-Focusing Practice

### B. Getting A Felt Sense #1: The "Intuitive Feel" of Each Person (from Complete Focusing Instructions)

Here you are learning the difference between thinking up an answer in your head and the second Step of Intuitive Focusing: Getting A Felt Sense.

In the first Step, you "Clear A Space" with relaxation or other exercises, setting aside already-known intellectualizations.

In the second Step, Getting A Felt Sense, you wait quietly, for as much as a minute, for a subtle "feel" of the whole thing, an "intuition," to form in the center of your body, and then create 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. Gendlin (*Focusing*, Bantam, 1981, 1984) calls it "the felt sense" of the whole thing.

In this Pre-Focusing Practice exercise, I try to give you guided imagery that will evoke some strong, hard-to-miss bodily "felt senses."

Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses for breathing in---and out--- You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!

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.

And, if you like, you can listen as I give the instructions in this video, instead of reading them to yourself below. So, you can really close your eyes and go inside...:



Kathy guides "Felt sense of two different people"

**1. The "Intuitive Feel" of Each Person-Allow 10 minutes  
(Joan Klagsbrun invented this exercise)**

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.

---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.

**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 \(TM\)](#) 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.**

**Find free MP3 audio downloads of the exercises, and free manuals, in  
our Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), where everything is now free to  
download.**

## Instant "Ahah!"s #2: Active Listening --

### Short-Circuiting An Angry Confrontation

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

### Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support:

Our e-newsletter, Instant "Ahah!"s, is your weekly reminder to **Print, Pause, and Practice**. Each four weeks, we will practice one Instant "Ahah!", one Relaxation Exercise, and one Getting A Felt Sense Exercise. Our purpose: Helping you incorporate [Focused Listening](#) and [Intuitive Focusing](#) into your everyday life.

Last month, we worked on [Instant "Ahah!" #1, Focusing: Find Out What is Bothering You](#). Although we will continue to reintroduce aspects of Focusing throughout the e-course, if you have joined us, please check out the link for a description of Gendlin's six steps of the Focusing process and a first practice session.

**This month: From Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual, p. 7, #2. Active Listening: *Short-Circuiting An Angry Confrontation*.**

(You had the opportunity to download the mini-manual when you subscribed, but you can also find it here [in English](#) and [in Spanish](#))

When someone comes at you with anger, it is a natural response to feel attacked and to defend yourself, to fight back without a moment's thought.

However, it may help to reframe this anger as "upsetness." The person is feeling attacked or undermined or frustrated in some way, so they are attacking back. We can break this cycle of attack and defense if we can reframe the anger as "upsetness" and, stepping aside from reacting, simply reflect in an active listening way: "Wow! You are really upset!" "Wow! Something is really bothering you." "Wow! Something I'm doing is upsetting you."

And, you can add, "Would you like to tell me more about that?", but, if that doesn't allow the person to calm down, just keep reflecting (maybe we can think of it as "deflecting" as well --- trying to get the anger off of yourself so that you feel less threatened, less need to react with attack yourself).

The person who is angry, who is upset, is knocked off balance. As you know yourself, this kind of angry response doesn't feel good. It is not centered, but a reaction to the helplessness of feeling attacked or frustrated. So, by reflecting the person's words, you can help the person to get grounded again, to get centered.

Read the instructions and the examples and try to keep this immediate response of Active Listening in your back pocket, for emergency confrontations.

## Active Listening: Short-circuit angry confrontations

### Reflect, Don't React

Someone comes at you, seemingly out of the blue, absolutely furious. You are stunned and want to fight back. Instead, you can diffuse the other person's anger by simply responding in an Active Listening way:

"Wow, something is really upsetting you ---"

"You're saying you are absolutely furious that I forgot to show up for lunch"

"You are really upset because you are not getting the service you expected"

"You are really mad that you've had to go through four other departments just to reach me"

"It really bothers you when you have to go through all those mechanical phone responses just to get to a human being"

Yes, this is the behavior which I wish customer service representatives had all been taught so that, when I call them, furious, they would just respond, "I'm sorry that you are so upset. Tell me more about what is bothering you so we can fix it," instead of adopting that rigid, "I'm just following the rules," "We never make mistakes," "There's really not anything I can do for you" attitude that just makes me more and more angry!

Bottom Line: deflect and diffuse anger by simply responding with empathy: "Boy, I can see how this is hard for you," "I'm really hearing how frustrating this has been for you."

### Reflect the Words --- and the Feeling Tone ---

As opposed to Passive Listening, where you simply give your silent attention to the other, at the most saying "Ummmhmmm" or "Ah, hah!" or "Wow!", in Active Listening, you set aside all your typical responses (advice, argument, opinions, problem-solving, judgments) and simply try to say back what the other person is saying, with an emphasis on the feeling tone, if you pick up any:

### Example One: Customer

Customer: "I've just had to wade through 16 phone messages to get to you, and I was cut off and had to start all over. It's taken me ten minutes already."

Customer Service: "Wow! I'm so sorry! You've already been through ten minutes of frustration, and I'm the first person you've gotten to talk to."

Customer: "Why can't there just be a simple way to talk to a human being?! I hate these phone messages!!"

Customer Service: "It is so frustrating to you to have to go through this waiting and confusion everywhere you go."

Customer: "Damn right! Okay, let's get on with it. This is the problem. I changed my mailing address for my bills, and they are still going to the wrong address, and then I end up getting late fees."

Customer Service: "Okay, let me take a look at your account right now and see what we can do."

## Example Two: Spouse

Wife: "How could you have forgotten that we had a dinner engagement at 6PM with the Smiths????!!!!!!!"

Husband: "Wow! You are really angry. I must have slipped up somewhere. You're saying I forgot a dinner engagement with the Smiths?"

Wife: "Yes, you idiot! It was at 6PM, and I've been trying to reach you on your cell phone. How humiliating!!!! Where were you!!!!!"

Husband: "So you've been trying to reach me ever since 6PM, and it's been embarrassing for you, having to make excuses to the Smiths. And you're wondering where I was."

Wife: "How could you not answer your cell phone!!!! That is what they are for, emergencies like this one!!!!"

Husband: "So, to you, this really was an emergency, and no way to get through to me. You're wondering why I didn't answer my cell phone and where was I anyway!!!!!"

Wife: "Yes, that is exactly right! So, where were you?"

Husband: "Okay, I am so sorry. Let's try to figure out how this happened. I got held up at an emergency meeting with my boss, and I couldn't answer my cell phone. He would have gotten even madder at me --- I guess I was so upset by this confrontation with him that I just absolutely forgot about the Smiths --- I should have had the dinner in my Palm Pilot, but I guess I didn't hear that either --- I was

just driving and thinking about what to do with the work situation. What can I do to make this better now? Do you want me to call the Smiths and make another plan?"

Wife: "Oh, that's okay. It's over now. Why don't you tell me what happened at work while I find you something to eat --- "

### Example Three: Child

Child: "I hate school, and I'm never going again. Teachers are all idiots!!!!"

Parent: "Wow, something is really upsetting you today. Sounds like a teacher did something stupid that bothered you"

Child: "No, it didn't bother me!!!! I'm not going to get bothered by fools like that. I don't care what they think!!!! I'm just not going anymore!!!!!"

Parent: "So, it didn't bother you. You're not going to be bothered by fools like that. You don't even care what they think. And, right now, you're saying you are never going again."

Child: (tears of hurt coming) "She said I'll never be a writer --- that I don't even know punctuation (crying)."

Parent: "So your teacher said, 'You'll never be a writer --- you can't even do punctuation,' and that is really hurting you. Writing is very important to you.'

Child: (more tears) "There is more to writing than punctuation --- what I'm saying is way more important --- I'm pouring my heart out."

Parent: "So, for you, writing is not about punctuation but about what you are saying, that you can really pour your heart out. That's what's important."

Child: "Yes (fewer tears) --- that's what matters to me. Next time, will you help me with the punctuation so that she can't make fun of me?"

Believe it or not, this diffusion of anger, usually to hurt, will happen. And what have you got to lose by trying? There really isn't any other miracle way in these situations!

Perhaps the idea of just "reflecting" the other person seems silly to you, like a parrot. However, when you are on the receiving end, just hearing your own words back without judgment or "fixing," you will be amazed at what a rare blessing and relief it is just to be heard.

The Focused Listening Core Skill of PRISMS/S is more than just reflecting. Through Phone Coaching or classes with Creative Edge Consultants or trainers of The Focusing Institute, or through the manual, CD, and DVD of our Self-Help Package, you will learn many nuances:

how to "ask for more" about words with "neon lights" around them,

how to use Focusing Invitations to help the speaker sit quietly and "sense into" the "feel of it all,"

facilitating a Paradigm Shift,

and how, sometimes, you can offer your own Personal Sharings (advice, information, own similar experiences), as long as you go back to Active Listening, reflecting the impact of your words on the other person.

However, always, simple Active Listening, saying back, reflecting the words of the other, remains the core - the one, simple, most powerful thing you can do to increase communication with another person, while, at the same time, helping them to find their own solutions to their problems.

Here is a short example of active listening used to resolve a conflict. First, one person does active listening while the other shares her upsetness, then the roles are reversed:



De-escalate argument: Active Listening

## Self Help Package

To really learn about Reflection, read [Focused Listening](#) at Creative Edge Focusing (TM). To begin practice in a serious way, download the free manuals [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) in The Store. The manual will help you to find at least one other, and, hopefully, a small group with whom you can start a Focusing Community, supporting each other as you practice Listening and Focusing. **YOU WILL FIND FREE DOWNLOADS OF THE MANUAL IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH AND OF THE CDS INCLUDING OUR EXERCISES IN THE STORE.**

## Other Weekly Reminders: Relaxation and Felt Sensing Exercises

Later in the week, you will receive two additional e-reminders: Relaxation and Focusing, taken from the Complete Focusing Instruction download available in The Store.

The Relaxation Exercise for these four weeks is Relaxation #2, p.4: The Beach, a guided imagery practice. The Felt Sense Exercise is #2, p. 9, "From the Bottom Up," starting with a "felt sense" of your toe and moving up to find the "inside" of the center of your body.

## Relaxation #2: Going To The Beach---

### Guided Imagery

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

### From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise:

**Week One ---"Ahhhhh....pause with me for ten minutes....and just relax!!!**

I will send this exercise each week as a reminder to pause...

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior Focusing space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a reminder to take a moment to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax...

### Print and Practice!!!! Visit The Beach

Here is your relaxation exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and take those few moments to relax every day, if you can, or as often as possible. Or, you can just open this weekly reminder and walk through the exercise online. Relaxing is one way to "clear a space" inside for a longer-term Focusing Problem Solving session.

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download at [Creative Edge Focusing](#), p.4: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #2: The Beach.

If you download the free MP3 audio files you can listen on audio CD Intuitive Focusing: Disk one, Track 3, with Dr. McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!! NOW IN THE STORE at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) YOU WILL FIND FREE MP3 DOWNLOAD OF INTUITIVE FOCUSING TRAINING 2-CD SET INCLUDING THE EXERCISES WE ARE PRACTICING.

### PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE: RELAXATION SUGGESTIONS (from Complete Focusing Instructions)

#### "Going To The Beach (Guided Imagery)

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.

Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses and enjoy relaxing in the imagery. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!

Instead of reading the instructions below to yourself, you can close your eyes and follow along as I guide you in the video below:



### Mindfulness: Guided Fantasy The Beach

#### Going To 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 sec

---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 sec

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

---Smell the sea on the breeze, breathing in---and out---in---and  
out---in---and out-- 10 sec

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

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

---Waves rolling in---and out---in---and out---in---and out---10 sec

---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 sec

---Listening to the waves rolling in---and out---in---and out---in--  
-and out---10 sec

---Listen to the gulls crying over head---10 sec

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

---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.

Getting A Felt Sense #2:

"From The Bottom Up"

Dr. Kathy McGuire,  
Director

Week One

## From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Getting A Felt Sense Exercise: "From The Bottom Up"

### 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. If you have just joined us, follow the link to get an overview of the Six Steps of the Focusing process and a first practice session.

In Focusing, you are looking for the "intuitive feel," the [Creative Edge](#), the right-brain information that is more than you can put into words. Eugene Gendlin, creator of the self-help process called *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981, 1984) calls it "the felt sense" of the whole thing.

Gendlin also created this exercise. He came up with it to help people who were having a lot of trouble with the idea of a "felt sense" or "intuitive feel" inside of the body. Perhaps they didn't even know what "inside your body" meant. Perhaps they could only pay attention to their concrete bones and muscles, not the more murky, blurry, "something-more-than words" that is the Creative Edge from which new ideas and solutions can come.

### Print and Practice!!!!

This is your Getting A Felt Sense exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and try it whenever you have time...I will also send a "reminder" copy by email every week...YOU

**CAN TRY IT IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE EMAIL COMES! a MOMENT TO RELAX AND CHECK INSIDE!**

## **Pre-Focusing Practice B. Getting A Felt Sense #2: "From The Bottom Up"**

**(from Complete Focusing Instructions)**

Use a gentle, slowly paced voice, leaving time as suggested between parts of the instruction (time those 1 minute pauses - they are way longer than you can imagine!). The quiet time between instructions is an important time -- it is during this quiet inward attention that the "felt sense" or "intuitive feel" can form and be noticed by you.

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.

Remember, especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!! And it is exactly in the PAUSE that the Creative Edge comes.

And, instead of reading the instructions below to yourself, you can close your eyes and follow my voice as I lead you through the exercise:



**Gendlin's Focusing: Getting A Felt  
Sense Exercise #2: "From the Bottom  
Up"**

**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 sec

---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, where your heart, lungs, diaphragm are --- this is where the felt sense, the "intuitive feel" comes--feel in there, inside--- 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---or perhaps your body wants to move into a certain posture or gesture.

1 minute

---You can use this quality word or image or posture as a "handle" to hold on to an "intuitive feel" so that you can come back to it later for a Complete Focusing Turn ---

10 sec

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

## More Help and Support: Audio Tapes, Teachers

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 and teachers, at the website for [Creative Edge Focusing](#)

You will also find this Getting a Felt Sense exercise in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download at [Creative Edge Focusing](#), p.9 : B. Getting A Felt Sense #2: "From The Bottom Up".

Now you can download free MP3 audio files in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) and you can listen on audio CD Intuitive Focusing: Disk One, Track 9, "From The Bottom Up," with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!!

And many of these exercises are in the Spanish version of the manual, *Focusing En Comunidad*. Download free from our Store [Self-Help Manuals, CDs, DVD](#)

## Instant "Ahah!"s #2: Active Listening --

Empathy for Anger

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

## Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

Our e-newsletter, Instant "Ahah!"s, is your weekly reminder to Print, Pause, and Practice. Each four weeks, we will practice one Instant "Ahah!," (download the Mini-manual if you haven't, in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)), one Relaxation Exercise, and one Getting A Felt Sense Exercise (download [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) manual if you haven't). Our purpose: Helping you incorporate [Focused Listening](#) and [Intuitive Focusing](#) into your everyday life.

This month: From Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual, p. 7, [#2.Active Listening: Short-Circuiting An Angry Confrontation.](#)

### Radical Idea: Greet Anger With Empathy!!!!

As I've gone through the week, I've realized how radical this idea and how worth saying again: "An angry person is a hurting person. Try responding with empathic understanding (Active Listening) instead of attacking back."

I guess I have become an expert on anger, hurt, and empathy because I am a person who can become really, really angry when I feel betrayed or otherwise blindsided by those that I trust. I've come to some understanding about this "personality style" by studying the Enneagram. Of the nine styles, I am an 8: The Challenger, The Boss. "How does an 8 Enneagram cross the river? She jumps in and starts swimming upstream."

8s are great managers and bosses, but they can also scare people with their anger, assertiveness, bluntness. As an 8, I don't really know how to "play games," to be indirect. Give me directness, even anger, anytime! Let me know where you are coming from. Don't hide or seem to go behind my back. You can imagine the vicious cycle for 8 bosses: they get angry because others are being indirect, seeming to hide, going behind their back --- and their anger leads the others to become more indirect, more hidden.

Anyway, from a lifetime of experience, I can tell you that the angry 8 is just a hurting child underneath. While the 8 can look terribly strong and take on any battle, this strong front takes a toll. Like anyone else, the angry 8 responds to empathic understanding (see [Enneagram](#) links).

Read through the examples in [Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual #2: Active Listening](#) again. What if the husband had attacked back when his wife came at him with anger: "Shut up! You can't imagine what my day has been like." Now, two people with their hackles up, attack and attack back (until one of them can respond with empathy: "Okay, I get it. You're saying you had a really bad day and are needing some empathy and understanding."(you can download complete chapters on the [Interpersonal Focusing Protocol](#) ,for resolving serious interpersonal conflicts, here, from the links at top of page, English and Spanish.

## Practice Active Listening In Non-Stressful Situations

Of course, in order to respond with Active Listening in an emergency, you'll want to practice it in less stressful situations until it can become an automatic response. You can do this through our Self-Help Manual and Demonstration DVD. And you can also learn Active (or Empathic or Focused) Listening as part of a Listening/Focusing Level I class. See Resources for teachers below.

Here again is the video where Edwin and I use Active, empathic listening on our conflictual positions about possible gender differences in capacity for empathy:



**Active listening in conflict about gender differences**

And here is another short example of active listening, this time in the comedy show, *Everyone Loves Raymond*:



**Funny example of Active Listening from *Everyone Loves Raymond***

## Self Help Package

To really learn about Reflection, read [Focused Listening](#) at Creative Edge Focusing (TM).

You can now find free downloads of the manual in English or Spanish and MP3 files of the CD sets, Alchemy, describing my philosophy of healing, and Intuitive Focusing Training, which includes my voice leading you through the exercises we practice here. Look in [The Store](#). The manual will help you to find at least one other, and, hopefully, a small group with whom you can start a Focusing Community, supporting each other as you practice Listening and Focusing.

And, for free, you can find all 21 practice videos on my YouTube channel for Dr. Kathy McGuire.

## Classes and Workshops

You can find classes in Listening/Focusing Partnership, by phone, individually, locally, in many languages, for differing costs, in the listing of Certified Focusing Professionals at [The Focusing Institute](#).

## Other Weekly Reminders: Relaxation and Felt Sensing Exercises

Later in the week, you will receive two additional e-reminders: Relaxation and Focusing, taken from the Complete Focusing Instruction download available at the link above.

The Relaxation Exercise for these four weeks is Relaxation #2, p.4: The Beach, a guided imagery practice. The Felt Sense Exercise is #2, p. 9, "From the Bottom Up," starting

with a "felt sense" of your toe and moving up to find the "inside" of the center of your body.

## Print, Pause, and Ponder

When each edition arrives, immediately **PRINT** it out for reference every day, all week long.

Then, every day, **PAUSE** to take 10-20 minutes to practice the Pre-Focusing relaxation exercise and, once or more per week, take time to **PONDER** at the Creative Edge using the Pre-Focusing "Getting A Felt Sense" exercise. Of course, the e-reminders will give you an immediate opportunity to practice.

If you haven't yet, immediately download the [Instant "Ahah!"s Mini-Manual](#), ([Spanish version](#)) all ten easy immediate applications for home and work, from the link at top of this e-newsletter. Keep it handy for weekly practice of one of the ten applications.

You can also immediately download the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) (Pre-Focusing and Focusing Practice), which we will also use each week.

Instead of just reading, you can listen to the Pre-Focusing and Focusing Instructions directly with Dr. McGuire on audio CD for free download at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) in The Store. In the Spanish version of the manual, Focusing En Comunidad, you will find many of the Relaxation and Focusing Exercises in Spanish.

## Relaxation #2: The Beach.

Dr. Kathy McGuire,  
Director

Week Two

### From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise:

Week Two ---"Ahhhhh....pause with me again for ten minutes....and just relax!!! I will send this exercise each week for four weeks as a reminder to pause...

Using Relaxation Exercises to bring your attention gently into the inside of your body is one way to take the first step toward [Intuitive Focusing](#), our self-help skill for solving problems and creating new ideas through unfolding the body's wisdom, [The Creative Edge](#).

### Kathy's Experience of The Sacred At The Beach

Your experiences with Guided Imagery: The Beach may be nothing like mine. But I want to share this special "bonus" I got one week.

"Well, with the Noticing exercise last month, I found myself remembering to stop and just "notice the breath---going in---and out" during the month when I found myself spinning in blind problem-solving mode.

The experience I had this week with the Beach Relaxation exercise had a different quality. I had done the first run-through with the instructions from the e-reminder. Then, during the week, feeling stressed out, I found the strong

imagery of the beach which I had created in the initial run-through returning. I began to see those beautiful green and white waves, rolling in---and out---and to hear the cry of the seagulls overhead.

And then I had this miraculous and different experience than "just noticing". I had a strong "spiritual experience" of the beauty of nature, and how, to me, that is a tie to the experience of The Sacred in everyday life. And I felt comforted (as opposed to just "relaxed") by this idea of a loving Creation in this world supporting me. So, a sense of relaxation into a trusting of some form of "beneficence" in the world.

### **And that was my experience!"**

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior [Intuitive Focusing](#) space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a reminder to take a moment to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax...

### **Print and Practice!!!! Visit The Beach**

Here is your relaxation exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and take those few moments to relax every day, if you can, or as often as possible. Or, you can just open this weekly reminder and walk through the exercise online. Relaxing is one way to "clear a space" inside for a longer-term Focusing Problem Solving session.

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download at, p.4: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #2: The Beach.

And, if you download the free MP3 files in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), you can listen on audio Intuitive Focusing: Disk one, Track 3, with Dr. McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!! Or, any time and for free, you can go to any of the 21 practice videos at my [YouTube channel for Dr. Kathy McGuire](#).

And, here below, is the video of me leading you through this exercise, so you can just close your eyes and relax:



Pre-Focusing Practice. Guided meditation: Going to the Beach

### PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE:

- A. RELAXATION SUGGESTIONS (from Complete Focusing Instructions)
- B. "The Beach (Guided Imagery)

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.

Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses and enjoy relaxing in the imagery. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!

### 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 sec

---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 sec

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

---Smell the sea on the breeze, breathing in---and out---in---  
and out---in---and out-- 10 sec

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

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

---Waves rolling in---and out---in---and out---in---and out---10 sec

---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 sec

---Listening to the waves rolling in---and out---in---and out---in---and out---10 sec

---Listen to the gulls crying over head---10 sec

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

---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.

## Getting A Felt Sense # 2: "From The Bottom Up"

Finding Your Body!!!

Dr. Kathy McGuire,  
Director

Week Two

## From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Getting A Felt Sense Exercise: "From The Bottom Up"

### 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. Eugene Gendlin, creator of the self-help process called *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981, 1984) calls it "the felt sense" of the whole thing.

Here, in his late 80s, Gendlin, creator of Focusing explains the "felt sense," and how to find this murky, unclear, physically-felt "body wisdom," and how it ISN't all those already-known things but can seem at first to be a blank wall of unknowing...:



Gendlin, in his late 80s, explains again what a 'felt sense' is and how to find it...BELOW all that is already known

Gendlin also created this exercise below. He came up with it to help people who were having a lot of trouble with the idea of a "felt sense" or "intuitive feel" inside of the body. Perhaps they didn't even know what "inside your body" meant. Perhaps they could only pay attention to their concrete bones and muscles, not the more murky, blurry, "something-more-than words" that is the Creative Edge from which new ideas and solutions can come.

### **Kathy Shares Her Experience: Hard To Find My Body!**

So, in practicing the exercise below, I did the loosening clothing, the paying attention to my breathing, in and out. Then I tried to feel the inside of my big toe. It was not as easy as I expected. I found I had to wiggle my toe to find the feel of it, and think I should add this to the instructions. So, I found the feel of my toe from the inside.

Then, I moved to my knee. Again, that was not so easy. I almost had to put my hand on my knee to find it. I put my attention inside of my knee, the feel of it from the inside.

Then, I moved to the feel of my body in contact with the supporting surface. Immediately, I felt the pressure of my thighs and bottom against the chair. It took me a while to realize that, oh, my entire back was also leaning against the chair, and to feel along my spine. And even longer to realize my feet were also resting on the floor. Surprising how oblivious we can be of our body-world interaction! Now, I

could feel the whole envelope of my body touching the surfaces.

Then, per instructions, I brought my attention to the center of my body, around my heart, chest, lungs, and just tried to feel inside of there, that whole cavity. Sigh. I'm pausing to do that again, now. I could do that, find that energy space inside, not the bones and muscles, but the cavity, the space inside. It can help to put your hands gently over that heart/chest area.

Then, I asked myself, "How am I today?" and waited, as much as a minute, for a feel of it all to come inside of that cavity. It took quite a while, my mind beginning to doubt, but eventually, I found something and the words that came were flighty, worried, scared.

I stopped there, putting a flag in, knowing I could go back to work with those handle words in a deeper [Intuitive Focusing](#) turn later.

Research has shown that galvanic skin response (GSR, the physiological measure of stress used in lie-detector tests) actually lowers when people find words for unclear feelings and body-senses during Focusing.

E.g., even if the words might seem unsettling, like worried, scared, the body responds with relaxation. Even if the words are difficult, it is better for body-tension to find words, images, or gestures through Focusing, than to carry the unknown as body tension and stress.

**Pre-Focusing Practice B. Getting A Felt Sense #2: "From The Bottom Up"**  
(from Complete Focusing Instructions)

Remember, especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!! And it is exactly in the PAUSE that the Creative Edge comes.

And here is the video version, where you can just close your eyes as I lead you through the exercise, instead of reading it to yourself below:



### Finding a Felt Sense: Starting from the Bottom Up

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):

Allow 5-10 minutes

---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 sec

---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, where your heart, lungs, diaphragm are --- this is where the felt sense, the "intuitive feel" comes--feel in there, inside---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---or perhaps your body wants to move into a certain posture or gesture.

1 minute

---You can use this quality word or image or posture as a "handle" to hold on to an "intuitive feel" so that you can come back to it later for a Complete Focusing Turn ---10 sec

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

**More Help and Support: Audio Tapes, Teachers**

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 and teachers, at the website for [Creative Edge Focusing](#) and for [The International Focusing Institute](#)

You will also find this Getting a Felt Sense exercise in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download, p.9 : B. Getting A Felt Sense #2: "From The Bottom Up".

If you download the free MP3 files in the Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), you can listen on audio Intuitive Focusing: Disk One, Track 9, "From The Bottom Up," with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!! Now, you can download free versions of the CDs and manuals in The Store.

And any time, and for free, you can watch any of the 21 practice videos at my [YouTube channel for Dr. Kathy McGuire](#)

And many of these exercises are in the Spanish version of the manual, *Focusing En Comunidad*. Download in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), where everything is free.

**Instant "Ahah!"s #2: Practice Active Listening --**

**Short-Circuiting An Angry Confrontation**

**Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director**

**Week Three**

## Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

Each four weeks, we practice one Instant "Ahah!", one Relaxation Exercise, and one Getting A Felt Sense Exercise. Our purpose: Helping you incorporate [Focused Listening](#) and [Intuitive Focusing](#) into your everyday life.

This month: From Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual, p. 7, #2. Active Listening: *Short-Circuiting An Angry Confrontation*.

If you have just joined this week, see archives [Active Listening and Anger Week One](#) and [Empathy For Anger Week Two](#) to catch up. After reading these e-newsletters, proceed with suggestions for further practice below.

### Resources for Practicing Active Listening

Several ideas for practicing Active Listening so you will have the skill ready when an angry confrontation comes your way:

1. You can go to [Robert Frick's Do Focusing website](#)'s area on Becoming A Better Listener and go through his step-by-step computerized teaching program. You can try out his computerized Focusing Program while you are there! Neither is perfect, but they are interesting first steps.
2. Download the instructions from [Focused Listening](#) section at our website and free download of [Chapter Three, Listening/Focusing Partnership Exchange](#) (found in links at top of the blog), and find a friend, colleague, or family member to try practicing with. Take turns, one as the Intuitive Focuser, one as the Focused Listener. This is not a big deal! Just find someone you feel comfortable with, someone, perhaps, has "intuitively" been a good listener.

3. You can go to [The Focusing Institute Partnership Program](#) to find a Listening/Focusing Trainer near you and purchase a few beginning sessions. You can also look for a class or workshop near you.

4. You can find Certified Focusing Professionals internationally at [The Focusing Institute teacher search](#) who offer classes locally and online.

5. You can download the manual in English or Spanish, plus MP3 audio CDs for free in the Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) .

6. You can watch all the practice videos from this course for free on my YouTube Channel for [Dr. Kathy McGuire](#) .

Bottom line: please take the plunge and try out Pure Reflection with someone you know, a computer program, a Trainer, just someone!

### **Radical Idea: Greet Anger With Empathy!!!! Please Read The Examples Again**

Here is a short video demonstrating diffusing an angry interaction with active listening. It is one of a series of videos based on Harville Hendricks' book, *Getting The Love You Want*, an excellent resource for intimate relationship:



Couple's Listening Dialogue diffuses anger with active listening

Get out your Mini-Manual and follow along with me or open [Instant "Ahah!" #2, Active Listening](#) on the CEF website ...In each of the demonstrations, somebody is really, really upset, and they are taking it out on somebody else. In fact, they come across as really, really angry.

When someone comes at you with anger, it is a natural response to feel attacked and to defend yourself, to fight back without a moment's thought.

However, it may help to reframe this anger as "upsetness." The person is feeling attacked or undermined or frustrated in some way, so they are attacking back. We can break this cycle of attack and defense if we can reframe the anger as "upsetness" and, stepping aside from reacting, simply reflect in an active listening way: "Wow! You are really upset!" "Wow! Something is really bothering you." "Wow! Something I'm doing is upsetting you." And, you can add, "Would you like to tell me more about that?", but, if that doesn't allow the person to calm down, just keep reflecting (maybe we can think of it as "deflecting" as well...trying to

get the anger off of yourself so that you feel less threatened, less need to react with attack yourself).

The person who is angry, who is upset, is knocked off balance. As you know yourself, this kind of angry response doesn't feel good. It is not centered, but a reaction to the helplessness of feeling attacked or frustrated. So, by reflecting the person's words, you can help the person to get grounded again, to get centered.

Read the instructions and the examples and try to keep this immediate response of Active Listening in your back pocket, for emergency confrontations. And here is the video where Edwin and I demonstrate active listening turns around a conflict:



Kathy and Edwin use Active Listening instead of Arguing about "Gender"

## Other Weekly Reminders: Relaxation and Felt Sensing Exercises

Later in the week, you will receive two additional e-reminders: Relaxation and Focusing, taken from

the [Complete Focusing Instruction download](#) (and the audio CD Intuitive Focusing Instructions).

The Relaxation Exercise for these four weeks is Relaxation #2, p.4: The Beach, a guided imagery practice. The Felt Sense Exercise is #2, p. 9, "From the Bottom Up," starting with a "felt sense" of your toe and moving up to find the "inside" of the center of your body.

## Relaxation #2: The Beach. Week Three---

Guided Imagery, Meditation, and Focusing

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

**From Creative Edge Focusing (TM): Through these weekly e-reminders, I am trying to help you to:**

- (a) begin to have brief, safe times getting to know your Inner Space, if this is new to you;
- (b) teach you [Intuitive Focusing](#) through a series of exercises which are "small steps" in learning Focusing
- (c) help newcomers and longtime Focusers alike integrate the "practice" of pausing for relaxation, felt-sensing, and Focusing into everyday living.

**Kathy's Experience: Difference Between Guided Imagery, Meditation, and Focusing**

Having finally accumulated lots of hot water in my jacuzzi, I decided to stay still there until it became cool. So, I decided to bring back [Relaxation Exercise #1: Noticing](#) -- just noticing the breath going in and out; letting go of any problem solving and just coming back to breathing. (If you have just joined us, follow the link to learn this meditative method)

As I practiced Noticing, I noticed how different this meditation-like technique was from the guided imagery we are practicing this month in [Relaxation #2: The Beach](#).

### Guided Imagery Can Stir "Felt Senses"

Doing The Beach the day before, a lot of "felt senses" came up in response to the imagery. So, that day, the exercise became tinged with the sadness and melancholic nostalgia that "gathered" around the imagery that day. The exercise took on the "color" or "intuitive feel" of my day.

### Meditation Involves Letting Go of Meanings

In comparison, during Noticing, I specifically "let go" of any such associations that come up. I go back again and again to purely breathing. There is a specific kind of "freeing" from all thought which I think of as typical of a more meditation-like approach. I wouldn't say "detached" but "unattaching" moment by moment.

### Intuitive Focusing Finds The Creative Edge under an Image

Intuitive Focusing itself is a third kind of inner activity, being more than either meditation or guided imagery as forms of Relaxation. In Focusing, coming upon a "felt sense" or "intuitive feel," one makes the conscious choice to "sit with," go more deeply into "the feel of that whole thing." In guided imagery, one might go from one image to the next, like a movie. In Intuitive Focusing, one pauses with an image and asks, "What is the feel of this whole thing?" and goes DOWN in a non-linear way, "sitting with" The Creative Edge from which a whole new meaning for the image can arise.

But here we are practicing various different Relaxation techniques as a first step in Clearing a Space inside where Intuitive Focusing might then take place.

## **PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE:**

### **A. RELAXATION SUGGESTIONS (from Complete Focusing Instructions)**

"The Beach (Guided Imagery)

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.

Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses and enjoy relaxing in the imagery. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!

And here is the video version where I walk you through the exercise as you close your eyes and just relax. Remember, practicing is the only way to learn how to find this peaceful place inside as a first step in Gendlin's Focusing:

<https://youtu.be/tQIN07sDvpM>

### 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 sec

---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 sec

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

---Smell the sea on the breeze, breathing in---and out---in--and out---in---and out-- 10 sec

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

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

---Waves rolling in---and out---in---and out---in---and out---10 sec

---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 sec

---Listening to the waves rolling in---and out---in---and out---in---and out---10 sec

---Listen to the gulls crying over head---10 sec

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

---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.

## **Print and Practice!!!! Visit The Beach**

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior Focusing space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a reminder to take a moment

to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax...

Here is your relaxation exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and take those few moments to relax every day, if you can, or as often as possible. Or, you can just open this weekly reminder and walk through the exercise online. Relaxing is one way to "clear a space" inside for a longer-term Focusing Problem Solving session.

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions download](#) at Creative Edge Focusing, p.4: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #2: The Beach.

You can get free downloads of MP3 files walking you through all the exercises in [The Store](#) at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), or visit the YouTube channel for Dr. Kathy McGuire any time.



## Getting A Felt Sense #2: "From The Bottom Up"

Using Touch To "Get In Touch"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

### Pre-Focusing Practice B. Getting A Felt Sense #2: "From The Bottom Up"

(from [Complete Focusing Instructions](#))

Remember, especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!! And it is exactly in the PAUSE that the Creative Edge comes. Intuitive Focusing involves "sitting with," spending time with the Creative Edge: the bodily felt-sense, the "intuitive feel," from which new ideas, solutions, and action steps can come. So, you have to learn how to find a "felt sense" in your body in order to go further with Focusing. These exercises help you find a "felt sense," an "intuitive feel."

If you are just joining us this week, look at [Getting A Felt Sense #1: The "Felt Sense" of Two Different People](#) for another helpful exercise in finding a felt-sense inside.

### Getting A Felt Sense #2: From the Bottom Up

\*\*\*\*I am finding it really helpful in this exercise to use touch from the outside to help me find the "inside feel" of each body-location. So, I wiggle and rub my toe, sensing inside, then my knee, sensing inside, wiggle my body against the supporting surface while sensing inside those points of contact, and, finally, put my hands on top of my chest/heart/lung area to sense inside of there and,

then, while waiting for the larger "intuitive feel" of myself and my day to arise\*\*\*\*\*

This is 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 during Focusing. "Getting a Felt Sense" is an important first step in [Intuitive Focusing](#) (Eugene Gendlin invented this exercise).

Here is the video version of this exercise, so you can just close your eyes and follow along with my words. Remember, only practice will allow you to find the 'felt sense' when you use Focusing for problem solving:



Find a Felt Sense from "The Bottom Up"

**Allow 5-10 minutes**

---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 sec

---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, where your heart, lungs, diaphragm are --- this is where the felt sense, the "intuitive feel" comes--feel in there, inside---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---or perhaps your body wants to move into a certain posture or gesture.

1 minute

---You can use this quality word or image or posture as a "handle" to hold on to an "intuitive feel" so that you can come back to it later for a Complete Focusing Turn ---

10 sec

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

## **More Help and Support: Audio Tapes, Teachers**

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 and teachers, at the

website for [Creative Edge Focusing](#) and at [The International Focusing Institute](#).

You can download MP3 files of the audio exercises as well as free manuals in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) .

You can also watch these demonstration videos for free any time at my YouTube channel for [Dr. Kathy McGuire](#).

And many of these exercises are in the Spanish version of the manual, *Focusing En Comunidad*.

Kathy McGuire, Director

You will also find this Getting a Felt Sense exercise in the [Complete Focusing Instructions download](#) at Creative Edge Focusing p.9 : B. Getting A Felt Sense #2: "From The Bottom Up".

## Instant "Ahah!"s #2: Active Listening

Starting A Listening/Focusing Practice Group

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

## Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

Each four weeks, we practice one Instant "Ahah!," one Relaxation Exercise, and one Getting A Felt Sense Exercise. Our

purpose: Helping you incorporate Listening and Focusing into your everyday life.

**This month: From Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual, p. 7, [Active Listening: Short-Circuit Angry Interactions](#).**

(Newcomers, follow the link to read the exercise. You can also find a review of the three weeks on this topic at the bottom of this e-newsletter). Here is New for Week Four:

### **Starting A Simple Listening/Focusing Practice Group**

So, we have reframed "anger" as "upsetness" and suggested that an "upset" person will respond to empathic, active listening rather than attack-back.

And, last week, I suggested lots of first steps to practice Active Listening so it will be ready-to-hand when a confrontation arises.

Active, reflective Listening is also the best way to help someone who is using [Intuitive Focusing](#) for problem solving.

And understanding about Focusing, and about how the Focuser is trying to pay attention to and find words/images for the "intuitive feel," the "bodily felt sense," also deepens Listening beyond the simple parroting that we imagine when we think of "saying back" the words of another.

This week, I am going to give another nudge toward starting your own Active Listening, or [Focused Listening](#), practice group. Reading the Focused Listening description at the link, you will find definition and examples of the Four Basic Types of Response:

1. **Pure Reflection:** setting aside judgments and advice and just trying to say back the words of the other, with

attention to also reflecting the "feeling tone." Three times more Pure Reflection than anything else!

2. Asking For More: if the person stops speaking, you can "ask for more" about words/images that seemed to carry more implicit meaning
3. Focusing Invitations: once in a while, you can also suggest that the speaker stop talking for a moment, go quietly inside, and "sense into" the "intuitive feel," the "something more" implicit in their words.
4. Personal Sharings: once in a while, in longer turns, you can, with the speaker's permission share an intuition or experience or idea of your own, but always immediately returning to Pure Reflection to let the speaker say how your Sharing fit or didn't fit their experiencing, and letting the Speaker go on with explicating their own experiencing.

Below I am copying pages from the *Focusing In Community* manual which tell you:

- (a) How to find a Partner or a Core Group to start practicing with
- (b) How to structure a ten-week Listening/Focusing Practice Group.

You can also download the entire manual [Chapter Three, The Listening/Focusing Exchange](#), in English or Spanish, from the links at the top of the blog, if you haven't yet, and read many examples of Listening Responses, and of how Focusing by the speaker while talking enriches problem solving.

And now you can find FREE downloads of the complete manual in English or Spanish and the CDs Alchemy and Intuitive Focusing Instructions in [the Store](#) at our website.

## Example of a Beginning Pure Reflection Practice Group

The first several sessions of your Listening/Focusing Practice Group can be just practicing pure reflection, or active, empathic listening. Although not strictly within my model, here is a lovely example of four people, two new to Listening, two more experienced, using Pure Reflection in an Empathy Circle.

You will see, as time goes by, that the Speakers teach the Listeners how to listen to them by asking for clarifications until they feel "completely heard." You can see the new listeners, Nate and Christel, become better and better at pure reflection as the time goes on. It is two hours long, but just watch as much as you find helpful.

You can try this in your initial group meetings, or just with one other person to get you started:



**Practicing Pure Reflective, Empathic  
Listening in an Empathy Circle**

## **Finding a Core Group**

(From [\*Focusing In Community\*](#) manual, Chapter Three)

"If you are not reading the manual as part of a classroom or colleague group, here are some suggestions on how to find an initial person or two with whom to read the book and practice the skills involved:

(a) First, choose the people with whom you feel most able to be yourself, most comfortable, most accepted when you are talking about your feelings. At the beginning, you might want to share the book and practice just with your closest friend; then, after a while, each of you might choose to invite one more person, and so on. Four to six people are an ideal size beginning group.

(b) Some people are best approached by offering them the book to read and telling them what you liked about it, what was important to you. But it's usually best to avoid too much discussion of theory. It's too easy to argue down a theory. Usually, instead of a lot of discussion, we like to say to someone, "Come on. Let's try it for a few minutes. I'll listen to your (using reflection of feelings) for a while, then you can listen to me."

(c) There might also arise a time when you realize that you are naturally using reflection of feelings as a friend is sharing feelings with you. It might then be appropriate at the end to say something like, "You know how we are with each other when one of us is hurting, how we just try to listen and not be judgmental. Well, I'm learning a lot about how to do that even more effectively, and I'd like to share it with you."

(d) Lastly, if there are two of you who have practiced Listening and Focusing together, then you can introduce other people to it by demonstrating with them watching.

Once you have started your small group using Chapter Three, the level of intimacy and mutual concern that arises during Listening/Focusing turns will begin to flow out into other aspects of your lives together. You may find your little core group growing as another couple hears that you can help with interpersonal

problems and asks for help. Or you may decide to share the idea with interested persons in your church or synagogue group, in a professional organization, or in any number of ways."

## Instructions for Small Group Practice (The Listening Exchange)

(From *Focusing In Community* manual, Chapter Three):

Step 1: Round-Robin Practice: Start with a small group of people (four to six).

"Listening/Focusing Turns: Go around in a circle, one person focusing in and saying something from what she is feeling (an important issue in her life or just how she is feeling right then about being there, doing this sharing), the person to the right of her saying back what she says, the Focuser checking these words inside and saying what comes next, the Listener reflecting that. Go back and forth in this way about three times. If the Focuser seems to have run out of things to say in less than three steps, the Listener can try asking her to "say more" about some part of it that seemed important.

AT THIS EARLY STAGE, STICK WITH "PURE REFLECTIONS"  
AND "ASKING FOR MORE"

It's important not to move on to Focusing Invitations and Personal Sharings until everyone is well-practiced at just hearing what the other is saying and at just holding on to a feeling sense and checking words reflected against it.

Feedback: At the end of the turn (about five minutes), first the Focuser, and then the Listener, say a little about how the experience felt, what felt good, what wasn't quite right. Other people in the group can comment or give suggestions from the readings, but avoid getting into too much discussion or argument about what happened. The point is to practice, not to get distracted into intellectual conversation (which is all too easy!).

Continue around the circle until everyone has had a turn at both roles. Your group can repeat Step One as often as you like or until you feel ready to move on to Step Two. Step One takes about one-and-one-half hours with four to six people. I would suggest doing it at least three or four times.

### Step 2 : Dyads

Pair off in twos and spread out to exchange fifteen-minute turns, using just Pure Reflection and Asking For More when the person seems to have run out of things to say. Try out using a Focusing Invitation. Come back together as a group and discuss how it went, where you had trouble, what new things you learned. Consult readings, or memory of things read, for answers to questions. Repeat as often as wanted or needed.

### Step 3: Triads

Alternatively, pair off in threes. This is an ideal learning structure, since the third person can act as an observer. Split up the time equally, allowing 10 minutes between turns for feedback. Each person takes a turn as Listener, Focuser, and observer. The observer also keeps time, giving a five-minute warning before the end of a turn.

At the end of a turn, each person gives short feedback, First the Focuser says how the turn was for him/her - what was helpful, what could have been different. Then the Listener says how it was to be the Listener - good feelings from following the others journey, anxiety about remembering, etc. Then, the observer gives feedback, using Table 3.4., Feedback Sheet For Listening Turns, as a guide.

### Step 4: Focusing Partnerships

When you feel ready or interested, pair off in twos who will get together sometime during the week to exchange one-half hour turns. In these turns, Listeners can try out Focusing Invitations

and Personal Sharings as well as Pure Reflection and Asking For More, but always with the emphasis on helping the Focuser to stay with her "intuitive feel," The Creative Edge, and make words for it. The Focuser needs to be sure to go back to Pure Reflection for several steps after each Personal Sharing or Focusing Invitations.

### Step 5: Focusing Group Meetings

When you come together to do Listening/Focusing turns in a small group (set aside two hours), split up the time so that each person will have an equal amount for a listening turn, with five to ten minutes additional in between each turn, for feedback and comments from others besides the two. Take turns keeping time, ending people's turns on schedule, warning them a minute or two before the end, and moving on to the next turn after limited discussion. Chapter 7.2 gives a format for a group meeting.

Don't get side-tracked into a lot of discussion with no time for doing. Know that a person can stop at the end of her turn, even if she has been working on heavy feelings. During turns, allow no input from others in the group. At the end of each turn, anyone in the group can say what they saw, ask questions, or offer warm support for the work done.

Option: If there are more than four people, or if each person wants a longer turn, you may decide to split into triads and share turns within these, again dividing time equally and making sure that each person who wants to gets a chance both at listening and being listened to. The third person can serve as an observer, giving feedback at the end of the turns. The following page gives a feedback sheet which you can use as a guide when you are observing listening turns (Table 3.4)."

**For Newcomers: Review of Active Listening: Short-Circuit Angry Interactions (Old-timers, nothing new below here!)**

**Radical Idea: Greet Anger With Empathy!!!!**

Follow the link above and read about Active Listening...In each of the demonstrations, somebody is really, really upset, and they are taking it out on somebody else. In fact, they come across as really, really angry.

When someone comes at you with anger, it is a natural response to feel attacked and to defend yourself, to fight back without a moment's thought.

However, it may help to reframe this anger as "upsetness." The person is feeling attacked or undermined or frustrated in some way, so they are attacking back. We can break this cycle of attack and defense if we can reframe the anger as "upsetness" and, stepping aside from reacting, simply reflect in an active listening way: "Wow! You are really upset!" "Wow! Something is really bothering you." "Wow! Something I'm doing is upsetting you." And, you can add, "Would you like to tell me more about that?", but, if that doesn't allow the person to calm down, just keep reflecting (maybe we can think of it as "deflecting" as well...trying to get the anger off of yourself so that you feel less threatened, less need to react with attack yourself).

The person who is angry, who is upset, is knocked off balance. As you know yourself, this kind of angry response doesn't feel good. It is not centered, but a reaction to the helplessness of feeling attacked or frustrated. So, by reflecting the person's words, you can help the person to get grounded again, to get centered.

Read the instructions and the examples and try to keep this immediate response of Active Listening in your back pocket, for emergency confrontations.

**Several ideas for practicing Active Listening so you will have the skill ready when an angry confrontation comes your way:**

1. You can go to [Robert Frick's Do Focusing website](#)'s area on Becoming A Better Listener and go through his step-by-step teaching program. You can try out his Focusing Program while you are there! Neither is perfect, but they are interesting first steps.
2. You can find a friend, colleague, or family member and, armed with the instructions from [Focused Listening](#) section at our website, take turns, one as the Intuitive Focuser, one as the Focused Listener. This is not a big deal! Just find someone you feel comfortable with, someone, perhaps, has "intuitively" been a good listener.
3. You can go to [The Focusing Institute Partnership Program](#) to find a Listening/Focusing Trainer near you and purchase a few beginning sessions. You can also look for a class or workshop near you.
4. You can find Certified Focusing Trainers locally all over the world and also offering online classes at [The Focusing Institute](#)
5. You can go to the completely free Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) and immediately download the manual in English or Spanish and learn to start a practice group.

Bottom line: please take the plunge and try out Pure Reflection with someone you know, a computer program, a Trainer, just someone!

## Other Weekly Reminders: Relaxation and Felt Sensing Exercises

Later in the week, you will receive two additional e-reminders: Relaxation and Focusing, taken from the Complete Focusing

Instruction download available when you join the e-support group (and the audio CD Intuitive Focusing Instructions).

The Relaxation Exercise for these four weeks is Relaxation #2, p.4: The Beach, a guided imagery practice. The Felt Sense Exercise is #2, p. 9, "From the Bottom Up," starting with a "felt sense" of your toe and moving up to find the "inside" of the center of your body.

## Relaxation #2: Going To The Beach ---

Awakening The Body Through Guided Imagery

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

**From Creative Edge Focusing (TM): Through these weekly e-reminders, I am trying to help you to**

- (a) begin to have brief, safe times getting to know your Inner Space, if this is new to you;
- (b) teach you [Intuitive Focusing](#) and [Focused Listening](#) through a series of exercises which are "small steps" in learning
- (c) help newcomers and longtime Focusers alike integrate the "practice" of pausing for relaxation, felt-sensing, Focusing, and Listening into everyday living.

Relaxation is a first step in setting aside daily concerns and "clearing a space" inside the body where Intuitive Focusing can happen. This month we are working with Guided Imagery:

Going To The Beach (below). You can download the [Complete Focusing Instructions manual](#) and catch up on earlier exercises.

### **Kathy's Experience: Awakening The Body/Mind**

Even I, the "creator" of the exercises, struggle to find time to "practice" them. But, I remind myself, I am really taking just a few minutes, a few times a week, to be with myself, to be with my physical body as well as psychological and emotional self in a way which is healthy, relaxing, brings deep breathing and some measure of peace.

I have to admit I sometimes don't open the e-reminder when it comes. But I do find myself grabbing a few moments here and there and remembering I can use the time to Go To The Beach.

One day, for instance, I was reading a book where "seagulls wheeled overhead." I noticed how tense I was and I thought, "I can stop and go to The Beach," lay down on the floor, and did the exercise from memory, experiencing some minutes of Relaxation.

**Also, this week, I did open the e-newsletter when it came, took ten minutes, and had a wonderful "awakening" of my stressed-out body/mind:**

So, this was not a Focusing Turn, but Relaxation through Guided Imagery. I closed my eyes, stretched --- and relaxed--- three times, then imagined myself arriving at my favorite Oregon beach, taking off my sandals to walk in the warm sand as I always do. And, immediately, tears came, about how far away from that sense of relaxation I was at that moment, in this troubled time in my mind.

I did not stop for "Focusing" into the deeper meanings of the tears, but continued with the guided imagery journey. I ran down to the shore and said, "Hello, sky! Hello, birds! Hello, waves!" and more tears came with the realization, again, of how far from this in-touchness with the beauty of nature I was in the moment (and I live, in real life, in a beautiful neighborhood, surrounded by Fall colors, tall firs, and rolling hills, right outside my computer-bounded window!).

I continued with the visualization, listening to the waves, wind, bird calls, going to lie down in the warm sand, to feel the warm sand cradling me below, and the warm sun cradling me from above --- and I felt like the middle of a "love sandwich," being cared for and nurtured. I stayed there a while, enjoying the warmth and the sounds, the support of the sand. And then I came back into the room, refreshed.

### **PRE-FOCUSING PRACTICE RELAXATION SUGGESTIONS (from Complete Focusing Instructions)**

#### **"The Beach" (Guided Imagery)**

You can follow along with my video instructions so you can close your eyes:



### Guided meditation: Going To The Beach. Learn to be comfortable inside

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.

Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses and enjoy relaxing in the imagery. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!

### 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 sec

---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 sec

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

---Smell the sea on the breeze, breathing in---and out---in---and  
out---in---and out--10 sec

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

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

---Waves rolling in---and out---in---and out---in---and out---10  
sec

---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 sec

---Listening to the waves rolling in---and out---in---and out---in--  
-and out---10 sec

---Listen to the gulls crying over head---10 sec

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

---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.

## Getting A Felt Sense #2: "The Bottom UP"

Is the "Felt Sense" the same as bones or muscles?

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

## Pre-Focusing Practice B. Getting A Felt Sense #2: "From The Bottom Up"

(from Complete Focusing Instructions)

Relaxation exercises help us learn to "clear a space," find a peaceful place inside our body where we can practice [Intuitive Focusing](#).

We also need to learn to find a "felt sense," an "intuitive feel" of an issue or idea or situation in our body, specifically in the center of the heart/chest area. Exercises for Getting a Felt Sense allow us to practice finding a "felt sense." You can find all the Relaxation and Getting a Felt Exercises in the [Complete Focusing Instructions download](#).

Remember, especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!! And it is exactly in the PAUSE that the [Creative Edge](#) comes.

The "Felt Sense" is not the same as bones or muscle

In these exercises, you are learning to pay attention to your body "from the inside." But this "inside view," the "felt sense" or "intuitive feel" of an issue or problem, is not the same as the sore muscles knotted in your back, or the pain in your tightened jaw muscles. While tightened muscles or sore bones might be the first "cue" that there is "something-more-than-words" going on in your body, the "intuitive feel" of "that whole tightness or pain" comes more fully as an "energy accumulation" or fuzzy, unclear, "sense of the whole thing."

So, if I have a headache, for instance, first, I might put my attention into the painful area of my head, as we do in this exercise, feeling the toe "from the inside." But, then, I would ask a more general Focusing question, like "What is this tightness in my head all about?" and then wait, for as long as a minute, for the "feel of that whole thing" to form in the center of my body, in an "energy space" in the inside of my heart/lung/chest area.

It is from this broader "intuitive feel of the whole thing" that new words, images, and, eventually, solutions will come as I use the Focusing process to go back and forth between the "intuitive feel" and words or images until I find symbols that "fit," and experience an "Ahah!" of "That's it!" as well as release from the headache.

## DEVELOPING THE HABIT OF "FELT SENSING"

### Getting A "Felt Sense" #2: From The Bottom Up

One more time let's try this method for finding the "intuitive feel" of the inside of your body (Eugene Gendlin invented this). You are developing "the habit of felt-sensing," an all-day long capacity to check with the "bodily-felt sense," the "intuitive feel" of implicit information that is "more than words".

You can close your eyes and follow my instructions on the video or read them to yourself below. Remember, you are learning new skills, and practice makes perfect:



Help finding a 'felt sense' to begin Gendlin's Focusing process

**Allow 5-10 minutes**

---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 sec

---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, where your heart, lungs, diaphragm are --- this is where the felt sense, the "intuitive feel" comes--feel in there, inside--- 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---or perhaps your body wants to move into a certain posture or gesture.

1 minute

---You can use this quality word or image or posture as a "handle" to hold on to an "intuitive feel" so that you can come back to it later for a Complete Focusing Turn ---

10 sec

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

Repeat For Newcomers (Old timers, nothing new below):

From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Getting A Felt Sense Exercise: "From The Bottom Up"

## **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. Eugene Gendlin, creator of

the self-help process called *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981, 1984) calls it "the felt sense" of the whole thing.

Gendlin also created this exercise. He came up with it to help people who were having a lot of trouble with the idea of a "felt sense" or "intuitive feel" inside of the body. Perhaps they didn't even know what "inside your body" meant. Perhaps they could only pay attention to their concrete bones and muscles, not the more murky, blurry, "something-more-than words" that is the Creative Edge from which new ideas and solutions can come.

### Print and Practice!!!!

This is your Getting A Felt Sense exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and try it whenever you have time...I will also send a "reminder" copy by email every week...YOU CAN TRY IT IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE EMAIL COMES! a MOMENT TO RELAX AND CHECK INSIDE!

### More Help and Support: Online classes, Audio Tapes, Teachers

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 and teachers, at the website for **Creative Edge Focusing**

You will also find this Getting a Felt Sense exercise in the [Complete Focusing Instructions download](#),, p.9 : B. Getting A Felt Sense #2: "From The Bottom Up".

And now you can also see all the practice videos, free, on my YouTube channel for [Dr. Kathy McGuire](#). And now there are free downloads of MP3 audio files of the CD sets in our Store, so you can listen to my voice walk you through the Focusing exercises any time.

And many of these exercises are in the Spanish version of the manual, Focusing En Comunidad. Free downloads in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com).

Kathy McGuire, Director

## FREE CHANGES BOOK TEACHES EMPATHY AND SELF-EMPATHY

Newly Reformatted 1978 Changes Book offers earliest teachings of Empathic Listening and Experiential Focusing (self-empathy) skills

This is a time in history when empathic Listening and self-empathy Focusing skills are more needed than ever, to overcome conflict, prejudice, and stereotyping, to build compassionate community, and to encourage compassionate self-awareness as a necessary step in compassion for others. Whether therapists, Focusing Trainers, or everyday people, many of us are being called respond to our world situation in many ways.

Starting in 1970 as a response to the Kent State Massacre, a group of graduate students working with Dr. Eugene Gendlin started a self-help community called Changes which grappled with similar issues.

The 1978 *The Changes Book: A Handbook for Empathic Listening, Experiential Focusing, and Therapeutic Community*, the product of these efforts, has been totally reformatted as a consistent Word document with an active Table of Contents.

A reissue of the 1978 Changes Book goes hand-in-hand with

these times. See below for description and link to newly retyped version on Google Drive and with an active Table of Contents:

The manuscript includes the earliest writings by Gene Gendlin and Mary Hendricks-Gendlin, Ann Weiser Cornell, Jim Iberg, Kathy McGuire, and many more as Experiential Listening and Experiential Focusing were being turned into teachable self-help skills.

Follow along as the participants struggle with how to create this new kind of self-help organization, how to explain and teach Absolute Listening and Experiential Focusing, how to start a Listening group or a Focusing group, and how to integrate these skills into interpersonal relationships and group decision-making. Experience their passion in wanting to help and transform themselves and their world. Consider how you might start your own Listening/Focusing support group, shaped just the way that fits your needs.

Now anyone with the link can open and view the 200-page manuscript, navigate easily by clicking on a chapter heading, and print out all or part of it. The step-by-step instructions are as valid today as they were then.

Those who worked hard to make this happen, Sue Burrell and Marilyn Mayhew, Focusing Trainers-in-Training with Jane Quayle in Sydney, Australia, became fascinated with the manuscript as they started their own Changes group. They wanted everyone to have easy access to this wonderful work and the possibility of starting their own Changes group, and spent hours reformatting it from the hand-typed manuscript. Here are Sue's (who wants it acknowledged that Marilyn did the lion's share of the actual copy-editing!) words:

"We had become keenly aware of the importance of reflective listening as a vitally important companion skill to Focusing, when we recently co-taught Focusing to two different groups. We were very excited to read the Changes book, and intrigued by how much emphasis was given to listening skills, and building community, in the early days of Changes groups, and developing Focusing. We were very aware that Dr. Kathy McGuire, the editor of the Changes book, had long championed both these elements. However, the old format, written on a typewriter, and with handwritten footnotes, was very un-user friendly, for reading and sharing, so we approached Kathy about updating it to a Word document. We were thrilled that Kathy was supportive of our work of bringing the format into the 21st century, and hopefully re-introducing this valuable book to the Focusing community."

Here is the free link to The Changes Book on Google Drive. You do not have to have a Google account to access it: [Change Book Google Drive Link](#)

Thank you for your participation in my e-course. Although we interact little in person, it heartens me to know that you are out there, opening the e-newsletters and trying the exercises as you have time and interest.

If you like, please send me an email to [kathy@cefocusing.com](mailto:kathy@cefocusing.com) and tell me how you use the newsletters, what is helpful, what could be different. I would love to hear from you in person and know the effects, good and possibly bad, of the training emails.

## Instant "Ahah!"s #3: Passive Listening Turns: Stop Argument.

Can This One Step Save The World? --

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

### PASSIVE LISTENING: Avoiding arguments. Week One

Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

For four weeks, we practice one Instant "Ahah!", one Relaxation Exercise, and one Getting A Felt Sense Exercise, with e-reminders and tips each week. Our purpose: Helping you incorporate [Focused Listening](#) and [Intuitive Focusing](#) into your everyday life and work

This month: From Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual, p. 10, #3. Passive Listening: Stopping Arguments With Friends, Partners, Children. (Newcomers, you can start with any issue and, in a year, you will have practiced all the exercises. You can review "Ahah" #1 and #2 in your Mini-Manual)

Please take out your Instant "Ahah!" [Mini-Manual](#) ( [en espanol](#)) and turn to page 10, or [download the exercise](#) from the sidebar at Creative Edge Focusing. Here is how it begins:

#### "Passive Listening: Just Being Quiet, Not Interrupting!"

This is going to be extremely basic. And, maybe, extremely difficult!! All you are going to do is exchange equal, timed, passive listening turns with the other person, instead of

arguing. Passive listening means you don't say a thing, just let the other person speak without interruption. You don't even have to try to use Pure Reflection, as in ["Ahah" #2, Active Listening](#).

But, it can also be the most extremely powerful and successful intervention you can make in your relationships, so, please, give it a try.

Active listening/empathic reflection is the most powerful gift you can give to another. But for now, you are just going to practice Passive Listening - being quiet, listening, not interrupting. You don't need to learn any special skills. Try to imagine what the whole world could be like if everyone knew just this one, simple self-help skill!" Stop for a moment to read the rest of the exercise from your Mini-Manual or [the download](#).

### The Basic Procedure

Here are the subheadings from the exercise which lay out the basic steps of this very simple procedure:

Agree on a signal during a peaceful time

Set a timer and take a seat

Use the timer to keep turns exactly even

Yell at a blank wall, if needed

Just keep going

Caution: Professional help needed?

Online support for conflict resolution

And those are the basics of this very simple procedure, which can be taught to anyone in five minutes.

### Is It Really That Easy?

Probably not. No, it will not be 100% effective. However, to be a "statistically significant" help, it would only have to work 60% of the time. And, after thirty years experience with it, that seems extremely likely.

And, I have not found anything else, short of professional counseling or mediation (and often, even then, I think this more powerful), which has a chance to become such a widespread "cure" for conflict.

### Why does it work?

When people can speak without being interrupted, and without fear of interruption, they automatically become able to speak from their "intuitive feel" of the issue or situation, The Creative Edge, not the already-known logical arguments that cycle around and around without changing. It is from The Creative Edge, this "intuitive knowing" of the whole situation, that new ideas and action steps can arise.

And, when people share from The Creative Edge, and listen to each other, they become vulnerable, authentic, honest. They say what they really want and need. They become "lovable" and move the other person to compassion and a wish to find a solution. So, even "passive listening" creates the capacity for love and understanding.

Here is a short video demonstration of my friend Edwin and I using Passive Listening on our issue about whether there is a

gender difference in empathy. Last month you were given a similar video of us using Active Listening, with Pure Reflection of the words of the other, on the same issue. We both thought that was more satisfying in terms of actually feeling heard and learning something new. But, here, with Passive Listening, you can stop an argument and exchange turns without any training at all, anywhere, anytime, with anyone:



Using Passive Listening Turns on a Hot Issue

Ideally, you and your significant others can study the protocol and set up your own signal for when argument needs to be turned into Listening. But here is an example of how you might use Passive Listening if everyone in the world knew about it as a simple conflict resolution method:

**Example: Two People Arguing In A Store**

Two people are arguing loudly in a store, screaming back and forth at each other. Their child is standing nearby, forgotten in their fury. Let's imagine, in our new world where everyone, and I mean everyone, knows about taking passive listening turns for conflict resolution - just like everyone knows about reading and writing, or standing in line, or how to use an implement for eating.

So, a salesperson or other staff of the store, or simply a bystander, another citizen, can simply say, "Oh, let me help you use Passive Listening Turns." Mind you, this has become a cultural norm, just like driving on the right or left side of the street. Maybe there are even special rooms in public places where people can retreat for Passive Listening Turns. Maybe there are even specially trained mediators around, like there might be police or traffic cops.

So, because it is a norm they have been brought up with since childhood, the arguing people stop in their tracks and say, "Oh. Thanks. We had forgotten ourselves. And take their seats in the "safe place" set aside for such conflict processing (like everywhere there are bathrooms, baby changing tables, benches to rest, bus kiosks, first aid stations). And set the timer kept available.

So, they flip a coin to see who goes first, five minute or ten minute equal turns.

She starts. She is furious, not looking at him, sighing, turning from side to side, would really like to be still engaged in that furious tangle of yelling back and forth. She decides she needs to "yell at the wall" for a while, let some steam off before she can get any deeper into what is going on (but, remember, this kind of conflict processing is a "habit" in the culture, practiced

since childhood, so she knows how to do it, what to expect, what to look for inside, eventually, the "hook" between them)

So, she yells at the wall for about three minutes, using swear words, saying all the worst she thinks about him and his behavior: "You selfish b\_\_\_\_\_. I work so hard and you do nothing. I'm not letting you spend my money on that s\_\_\_\_. I am furious. I am so tired of this and of you", etc.

But, without response, pretty soon this energy runs out, runs down, and she begins to cry: "I'm just so tired. I'm so tired of our never getting ahead. I'm worried that your work is slowing down. I just can't do it anymore, carry all these burdens." Her five minutes (or ten, whatever they negotiated) is up.

His turn begins (he is not so mad anymore, having heard her words, seen her tears, seen her tiredness instead of just her anger): "I can't go without something special. I just need to spend \$10 once and a while on something that is just for fun. I can't stand the drudgery, everything always the same. I wanted these sports cards because, for a few minutes, I could be happy looking at them----I'm scared about my job, about the work slowing down --- I don't like it that you are making more money than me. I don't like it that you treat me like a little boy getting an allowance--- it makes me furious and ashamed."

Not a total solution yet, but a "softening" on each side. It may take more turns. It may take more sessions. It may take professional help at some point. But, in this moment, the "horns locked" energy between them has been broken. Hopefully, they now have some "free emotional space" to care for their child, to not let the rage wash over there as well.

As long as they are not allowed (and have been trained from childhood how not to allow themselves) to get physically violent, or to shout back and forth, the angry assault will lose its fuel, and something new, a more Creative Edge, will arise in each of them, a more compassionate "touching," more sympathy for each other. More willingness to look for solutions.

Please try out the protocol with your significant others this week. When there is not an argument happening, come to mutually understand the rules, find a safe spot, get a timer, and establish a "signal," like "popcorn" that anyone (including your children) to remind you that a bad pattern of "assault" or "argument" is starting, and it is time to try [Passive Listening Turns](#). Then, you can begin to be prepared when an actual argument arises.

In the election cycle in the United States in 2016, I think left and right might have had a chance to bridge the gap and learn from each other if only news media would have strictly enforced non-interruption, passive listening turns in every pundit panel. People there and watching at home would have had the chance to hear something new instead of repeating soundbites.

## "Relaxation" and "Getting A Felt Sense" Exercises for the Month

Later in the week, you will receive two other e-reminders, one for Relaxation Exercise #3. The Forest (p. 5 in [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)) and Getting A Felt Sense: Clearing A Space (p.10),

If you go to the completely free Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), you can download free MP3 audio files of the exercises you can use to follow Dr. McGuire as she speaks these exercises. But now, a video of the instructions is included directly in the e-newsletters so you can just close your eyes and follow along. You can also find all the exercise videos at the [YouTube channel](#) for Dr. Kathy McGuire.

### Relaxation #3: Going To The Forest! ---

Guided Imagery

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week 1

**From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise:** Week One ---"Ahhhhh....pause with me for ten minutes....and just relax!!! I will send this exercise each week as a reminder to pause...

Being able to set aside the jumbled thoughts of the day and create a "clear space" inside is a first step in preparation for [Intuitive Focusing](#).

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior Focusing space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a

reminder to take a moment to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax...

Later in the week you will receive and practice a formal "clearing a space" exercise. But here is another basic relaxation exercise to encourage you to take those few moments to step out of stress and begin paying attention to your bodily-felt sense of your living.

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.

**Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses and enjoy relaxing in the imagery. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!**

Any of the Relaxation Exercises can be used at the beginning of a longer Focusing session, as a way of "clearing a space" inside, so notice which are your favorites you could call upon.

### **Guided Imagery: The Forest-Allow 10-15 minutes**

These next four weeks, we will do our Relaxation Exercise in the guided imagery of The Forest. A change from The Beach, we will sink into the soft pine needles, listen to the bubbling brook and the scurrying animals.

Here is a video where I walk you through, so you can just close your eyes and go on this journey into the forest:



**Guided Relaxation: Going To The Forest. Give your body a break!**

---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

## Print and Practice!!!! Visit The Forest

Here is your relaxation exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and take those few moments to relax every day, if you can, or as often as possible. Or, you can just open this weekly reminder and walk through the exercise online. Relaxing is one way to "clear a space" inside for a longer-term Focusing Problem Solving session.

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions download](#) at Creative Edge Focusing, p.5: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #3: The Forest.

And, you can go to the completely free Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) and download MP3 audio files so you can listen with Dr. McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!! But, you can also find the video free in this e-newsletter. And you can find all the practice videos at the [YouTube channel](#) for Dr. Kathy McGuire.

## Getting A Felt Sense #3: "Clearing A Space Inside"

What to do when numb, overwhelmed, "stuffed" with issues

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

### Pre-Focusing Practice B. Getting A Felt Sense #3: "Clearing A Space"

(from [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)) We will practice this for four weeks.

"Clearing A Space" is the first step in using Gendlin's Focusing. We have been practicing a variety of Relaxation, Meditation, and Guided Imagery exercises as methods for "clearing out" the jumble of emotions, experiences, thoughts which can turn our bodies into a wall of stressful tension or numbed-out concrete. This month we will practice the formal Clearing A Space exercise developed by Gendlin and others.

Remember, especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!! And it is exactly in the PAUSE that the Creative Edge comes.

### CLEARING A SPACE = INSTANT SERENITY

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. It's as if you name an issue and notice the "felt sense" of it in your body, then wrap that "whole thing" up like a parcel and set it out on a table in front of you. Ahhhh! Even imagining doing this brings a sigh of relief from me. You continue with each item that arises inside, including problems but also positive experiences from the week. Each time, you get that "Ahhhh!" of tension release and more "clear space" inside.

After setting everything outside, if you choose to continue with a longer Focusing Turn for problem solving, 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)

## Clearing A Space- Allow 20 minutes

In this video, I will walk you through as you identify each issue and set it outside to give your body a rest:



Instant Serenity: Learning to Clear A Space inside, set down your burdens

---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---not the tension itself, but the "felt sense" of "the whole thing 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 moment --- you may experience a "sigh" of relief as you imagine lifting it and setting it outside-----ahhhhhhh!!---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

Repeat For Newcomers (Old timers, nothing new below):

## 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. Eugene Gendlin, creator of the self-help process called *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981, 1984) calls it "the felt sense" of the whole thing.

### Print and Practice!!!!

This is your Getting A Felt Sense exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and try it whenever you have time...I will also send a "reminder" copy by email every week...YOU CAN TRY IT IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE EMAIL COMES! a MOMENT TO RELAX AND CHECK INSIDE!

### More Help and Support: Audio Tapes, Teachers

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 and teachers, at the website for [Creative Edge Focusing](#)

But, especially for this wonderful exercise for instant serenity, you can use the video above any time.

You will also find this Getting a Felt Sense exercise in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download (link at top of this e-newsletter) p.10 : B. Getting A Felt Sense #3: "Clearing A Space".

And you can download free MP3 audio files of the exercises in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com). And the exercises are free in the e-newsletters and at Dr. Kathy McGuire's [YouTube channel](#).

And many of these exercises are in the Spanish version of the manual, *Focusing En Comunidad*. Download completely free in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com).

## Instant "Ahah!"s #3: Passive Listening Turns: Stop Argument.

Does Passive Listening Work? --

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

## Does Passive Listening Work?

There are two parts to our Creative Edge Focusing model for human literacy: Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening. This month we practice one aspect of Focused Listening: simply passive listening, no interruptions allowed.

If you just joined this e-course, see last week's [Instant "Ahah!" #3: Passive Listening Turns Save the World?](#) for an introduction and example of this exercise.

Do you think that everyone could learn this simple protocol starting as children, in school? Do you think it would work, e.g., that, not allowed to interrupt each other, people would "hear" something different that would soften their opposing positions?

Reminds me of the Gestalt Two-Chair procedure where, even for intrapsychic conflict resolution, one has uninterrupted turns for each side, expecting a "softening."

And, of course, the Quakers have used a no-interruption sharing circle for decision making and conflict resolution for decades.

And, purportedly, at least some Native American tribes used a similar Sacred Circle for conflict resolution and decision making, going around and around the circle for days if needed.

And almost every women's group I have joined uses this Sharing Circle as a meeting format, each person having an uninterrupted turn.

And, of course, all 12-step meetings have this "no-cross talk" structure.

**Why? Because without interruption:**

(a) the speaker can refer to the fresh [Creative Edge](#), the bodily-felt sense and create new, fresh words and images out of this "intuitive feel" of the whole situation

(b) the listener can really "hear" what the other is saying, instead of concentrating on grabbing a turn to have their say.

Remember, you want to review [Instant "Ahah!" #3 Passive Listening Turns](#) with your significant others when there is no argument, and find a timer, a place, and a neutral signal, like "popcorn," that everyone will recognize means "sit down, start the timer, and take turns."

Here again is a video of Kathy and friend Edwin using Passive Listening on their issue about whether there are gender differences in capacity for empathy:



Passive Listening with conflict about gender differences and empathy

Please email questions and comments to [Kathy](#) . Thanks!

## Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

For four weeks, we practice one Instant "Ahah!", one Relaxation Exercise, and one Getting A Felt Sense Exercise,

with e-reminders and tips each week. Our purpose: Helping you incorporate Listening and Focusing into your everyday life.

This month: From [Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual, \(en espanol\)](#) p. 10, #3. **Passive Listening: Stopping Arguments With Friends, Partners, Children.**

(Newcomers, you can start with any issue and, in a year, you will have practiced all the exercises)

### "Relaxation" and "Getting A Felt Sense" Exercises for the Month

Later in the week, you will receive two other e-reminders, one for Relaxation Exercise #3. The Forest (p. 5 in [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)) and Getting A Felt Sense: Clearing A Space (p.10)

In the Store, which is all free, you can find MP3 downloads of the Intuitive Focusing CD so you can follow Dr. McGuire as she speaks these exercises. However, there are now videos of each exercise included in the e-newsletters, so you can follow along for free!

And you can find all 21 videos for practice any time for free at my YouTube Channel for [Dr. Kathy McGuire](#)



## Pre-Focusing Practice: Relaxation #3: The Forest.

Are you falling off "the relaxation wagon?" ---

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

I am teaching Pre-Focusing practices of Relaxation, Meditation, and Guided Imagery as a way of "Clearing A Space Inside" of your body where you can then do a longer Intuitive Focusing Problem Solving session if you choose. But these exercises also stand on their own as a way to give your body/mind a life-giving few moments free from stress.

### Kathy's Experience of Falling Off "The Relaxation Wagon"

Well, you know (I know) that you have "fallen off the Relaxation exercises wagon" when, late Friday afternoon, your web designer says, "Now, may I suggest that you just relax!"

And, so I did. I lay down on the floor, stretched---and relaxed--three times, and took myself into a guided fantasy of being in The Forest.

It was harder than being at the beach---the Forest is more of a childhood memory. But, as I travelled, more and more memories, wishes, dreams came to mind and seemed to enrich just being there.

I took my shoes off, wandered through the dappled sunshine/shade to the side of the babbling brook. There, I

found a beautiful moss-covered rock (nothing is richer than the green of water-side moss), and sat on it, dipping my bare feet into the water. I really looked at the brook rushing over the stones (reminded me of the cover of the *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981, by Gendlin) paperback. I noticed a turtle, and a frog, and then, oh so delighted, almost leaping off the rock to cup my hands around, I found a tadpole in the water.---

This reminded me of many childhood experiences of finding something so glorious and living in nature and transported me back to that playful, always-ready-to-be-delighted-and-surprised childhood state. And that ---was very relaxing.

I saw a squirrel shy and chittering about its new-found acorn; a chipmunk more brave and chittering and scurrying; a fox slyly drifting behind the trees; an owl perched above waiting for night-flight---very relaxing.

And I came back into the room, finally having taken a few moments just to spend time inside and to relax.

### From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise:

Week Two ---"Ahhhhh....pause with me for ten minutes....and just relax!!! I will send this exercise each week as a reminder to pause...

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior Focusing space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a reminder to take a moment

to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax...

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.

Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses and enjoy relaxing in the imagery. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!

Any of the Relaxation Exercises can be used at the beginning of a longer Focusing session, as a way of "clearing a space" inside, so notice which are your favorites you could call upon.

### Guided Imagery: The Forest-Allow 10-15 minutes

These four weeks, we are doing our Relaxation Exercise in the guided imagery of The Forest. A change from The Beach, we will sink into the soft pine needles, listen to the bubbling brook and the scurrying animals.

Instead of reading the instructions to yourself, if you prefer, you can close your eyes and just follow my instructions in the video below:



**Clear a Space through Relaxation:  
Guided Meditation "Going To The  
Forest"**

---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

## **Print and Practice!!!! Visit The Forest**

Here is your relaxation exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and take those few moments to relax every day, if you can, or as often as possible. Or, you can just open this weekly reminder and walk through the exercise online. Relaxing is one way to "clear a space" inside for a longer-term Focusing Problem Solving session.

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions download](#) , p.5: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #3: The Forest.

And, now Free in The Store, you can download MP3 files and you can listen to audio CD Intuitive Focusing: Disk one, Track 4, with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!!



### Getting A Felt Sense #3: "Clearing A Space Inside"

Big Relief Just from lifting issues out, experiencing "Except for all that, I'm fine! I am NOT my problems."

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

### "CLEARING A SPACE" = FREEDOM FROM ILLNESS, OVERWHELM

"Clearing A Space" (CAS) is the first step of the [Intuitive Focusing](#) process. It is a time for going quietly inside and coming in touch with your body. It allows the creation of the inner place for "felt sensing." You make an inventory of all the different issues you are carrying as bodily tensions, while setting each one "outside" of your body. Whew! In this

"cleared space," there is room for something new to come through Intuitive Focusing.

You can also use CAS as a stand-alone relaxation exercise, without going on to a complete Focusing Turn.

A number of different research studies have shown that using the formal "Clearing A Space" exercise (newcomers, find the introduction to this exercise in last week's ["Felt Sensing": Clearing A Space = Instant Serenity](#) or download [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)) has positive effects for women with breast cancer. In general, "Clearing A Space" allows a person with a chronic illness or chronic stressful situation to put that whole burden down for a while and experience "I am not my illness. I am not my problems. Separate from all of that, I can experience ME as totally okay." Often people also experience a deep spiritual connection with the positive energy of the Universe, a Higher Power, connection to other people.

Okay, it's days later, but I opened my Clearing A Space e-reminder and took some minutes to do it, since I do believe in taking time to practice, but, more importantly, to let my body "take a breather" from carrying stress.

So. I am instructed

1. to ask "What is in the way between me and feeling totally OK?",
2. to take the first issue that arises,
3. see if I can find a way I carry it in my body (perhaps a physically-located tension),
4. notice that, and try to get the larger "feel of the whole thing," the felt sense (more likely found in the center of the body, the chest/lung/heart area), and
5. to find a "quality" or "emotion" word to describe it.

6. Then, I get to try to wrap the whole thing up, like a parcel and ---
7. ahhhhh! Set it on a table out in front of me, out of "my body."

## Kathy's Experience

But, for me, first I got "fatigue," which became "so tired I could be nauseous and throw up." So, I tried to set that outside. Ahhhh!

Not completely gone, but some more "clear space" inside.

Next, came "anxious," "rushing," "rushing," "rushing." So, again, after spending a little time with the "feel of that whole thing," I wrapped it up and set it outside --- Ahhhhhh! (that relief happens again as I describe this).

Next came "paralyzed," a familiar tension in my right jaw. This can be a "sink hole" for me, a too-familiar old place that just feels worse if I "fall" into it, so I was careful to stay just at the edge --- some words about "just give up." I cautiously wrapped that up and tried to set it outside. It wouldn't budge. So, like a mother prying a child out of a car seat, I picked it up and said "Come on. You are getting out of here!" I set it on the table, but it was like an infant or toddler who just screamed, like it couldn't stand being alone out there. So, I noticed that. But, still, I felt some relief, having set it outside. Ahhhhhh!

So, given all of that, all those "problems" sitting out there, I began to feel the miracle of "Clearing A Space" --- it is really true that, suddenly, inside it begins to feel more like "Well, except for all of that, I am really okay." I begin to feel all that "okayness" inside, that peacefulness that is ME, not all my problems. Yes. That almost brings tears.

So, that is the magic of Clearing A Space.

Truly, whenever I describe that "lifting out," even if I am just teaching about it, I get a huge "Ahhhhh!" of relief as I make some space inside (Clearing A Space doesn't work for some people, maybe less "kinesthetic" people, maybe more visual or intellectual --- anyway, for those people, CAS may make them lose any "felt sense" they do have. See [Ann Weiser Cornell](#) if you have that problem and get on her e-newsletter as well!)

### Pre-Focusing Practice B. Getting A Felt Sense #3: "Clearing A Space"

(from Complete Focusing Instructions) Week Two of four weeks of practice

Remember, especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!! And it is exactly in the PAUSE that the Creative Edge comes.

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)

### Clearing A Space- Allow 20 minutes

If you prefer, you can close your eyes and follow along with the video instructions below. Believe me, especially in this holiday time, you may find some real inner peace!:



Instant Serenity. Clear A Space, set your burdens outside, and rest in Oneness.

---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---not the tension itself, but the "felt sense"  
of "the whole thing 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 moment  
---you may experience a "sigh" of relief as you imagine lifting  
it and setting it outside-----ahhhhhhh!!---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

Repeat For Newcomers (Old timers, nothing new below):

## 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. Eugene Gendlin, creator of the self-help process called *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981, 1984) calls it "the felt sense" of the whole thing.

### Print and Practice!!!!

This is your Getting A Felt Sense exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and try it whenever you have time...I will also send a "reminder" copy by email every week...YOU CAN TRY IT IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE EMAIL COMES! a MOMENT TO RELAX AND CHECK INSIDE!

## Instant "Ahah!"s #3: Passive Listening Turns: Stop Argument.

The Al Gore Approach To World-Wide Sharing

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

### Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

For four weeks, we practice one Instant "Ahah!", one Relaxation Exercise, and one Getting A Felt Sense Exercise, with e-reminders and tips each week. Our purpose: Helping you incorporate [Focused Listening](#) and [Intuitive Focusing](#) into your everyday life.

This month: From Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual, p. 10, #3. Passive Listening: Stopping Arguments With Friends, Partners, Children.  
**E-Newsletter Archives Available!**

Newcomers, you can start with any issue and, in a year, you will have practiced all the exercises. To "catch up" with this cycle, please read, from the e-newsletter archives [Passive Listening Week 1: Can Listening Turns Save The World](#) and [Week Two: Does Passive Listening Work?](#) Anyone can also access the e-newsletter archives any time from the Free Resources submenu at [Creative Edge Focusing](#).

### Our Own Nobel Peace Project

NEWS FLASH! Since I started this model several years ago, Edwin Rutsch of [www.cultureofempathy.com](http://www.cultureofempathy.com) has started his own campaign to spread Empathy Circles and Empathy Tents throughout the world. On his website, you can find a short handout which will allow you to do an Empathy "Active Listening" Circle with your friends or family or colleagues, no extensive training needed. You could try it at a holiday meal or evening gathering. We have already studied "active listening" here. Now, a simple application you can try today for a more peaceful, harmonious world, starting with the people around

you! Edwin's website also has many examples of "active, empathic listening" circles to show you how.

I could spend this third week on Instant "Ahah!" #3 reminding you again to go through the instructions with your significant others and set up the "structures" necessary (a place to sit, a timer, a mutually-agreed upon "signal" word, like "popcorn") so they will be in place if needed when argument starts. And I will ask you again to email any experiences you are having trying Passive Listening Turns [to me](#).

But, I am going to spend today instead talking about what it would be like to start a "campaign" to get Passive Listening turns, or some other aspect of Listening/Focusing, incorporated into every household, every situation, in the world.

Al Gore, and the millions inspired to work with him, did this around the issue of Global Warming. Al Gore took it upon himself to take action, to respond to what he perceived as a life-or-death, urgent issue for all human beings.

That is how I feel about Listening/Focusing, especially as they can be used for conflict resolution, between individuals, lovers, parents, parent and child, in schools, in cities and communities, in governments, in national and international conflicts. And Passive Listening Turns is the most simple, small-step in that direction that I have come up with.

### Brainstorm With Me To Find "The One Small Step"

Do you think spreading Passive Listening Turns is a good first step, if there were to be a campaign to bring listening/focusing, and the "creation of the new" that can come when people can speak from felt-sensing, to everyone, every situation, worldwide? Do you have a better idea? I'm open!

Can you imagine participating in such a campaign? What "one-small-step" might you be willing to do, or willing to encourage your friends, neighbors, colleagues, elected officials, school systems, doctors and nurses, etc., to do or to spread?

I'd like to imagine a bumper sticker campaign: "Listen, Don't Lecture," "Speaking, Not Arguing," "Popcorn!" Get Out The Listening Timer!", "Passive Listening = Active Solutions," "Stop arguing! Start Listening!"- got better ideas?!!! Certainly, I can use help!

A bookmark-sized handout that obstetricians, pediatricians, counselors, teachers could hand out, outlining the procedure (maybe with a magnet for sticking on the fridge!)

Maybe "Passive Listening Turns" isn't the right name for the process. What would be better? "Timed Turn-Taking"? I can't do this alone, but it would be fun to brainstorm it! I know we would come up with something hugely creative.

So, for this week, besides setting up the structure and trying the Passive Listening Turns procedure if an opportunity arises, I'd welcome any consideration of the Passive Listening Turn "campaign," how we might do our own Nobel Peace Prize effort to get Listening/Focusing Conflict Resolution known. [Email Dr. McGuire](#) with your ideas and reactions. Thank you!

## Passive Listening Turns: The Basic Procedure

Here are the subheadings from the exercise which lay out the basic steps of this very simple procedure:

- Agree on a signal during a peaceful time
- Set a timer and take a seat
- Use the timer to keep turns exactly even
- Yell at a blank wall, if needed
- Just keep going
- Caution: Professional help needed?
- Online support for conflict resolution

And those are the basics of this very simple procedure, which can be taught to anyone in five minutes. Find the entire exercise in your Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual or quickly online here, [Passive Listening Turns](#).

And here is the video demonstration by me and friend Edwin using Passive Listening on our issue about gender differences in empathy. Compared to the Active Listening demonstration you saw earlier, we both felt that, without empathic listening responses, we wandered more and got more defensive -- but, in a pinch, passive listening is better than the negative-energy-intensifying arguing interaction:

Passive Listening: Signal word, Timer,  
Equal Turns, No Interruption

## "Relaxation" and "Getting A Felt Sense" Exercises for the Month

Later in the week, you will receive two other e-reminders, one for Relaxation Exercise #3. The Forest (p. 5 in [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)) and Getting A Felt Sense: Clearing A Space (p.10).

Now, there are free MP3 audio downloads in the Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) you can use to follow Dr. McGuire as she speaks these exercises. But you can also find all the free videos on my YouTube channel for [Dr. Kathy McGuire](#).

About Creative Edge Focusing (TM)

### Relaxation #3: The Forest.

Real Raindrops Lead To Relaxation

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

### Kathy's Experience: Real Raindrops Lead To Relaxation

"I went out on my deck one evening, in the dark. Steady rain pouring, pattering on the leaves. I decided to do The Forest guided imagery, sitting there in my real forest, with my real deer.

Listening to the rain pattering was so peaceful. Whenever I found my thoughts had drifted into worries, angers of the day, I brought my attention back to just listening to the raindrops, imagining the forest.

The image came of me lying in the grass, rain pattering upon me, me dissolving into the landscape, into the rain. How peaceful.

Theoretically, every moment of this peace in the midst of stress is life-giving, the "relaxation response" a reprieve for the body from carrying toxic stress.

### From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise:

Relaxation Exercises can be the first step in "clearing a space" for a longer [Intuitive Focusing](#) session. And Relaxation Exercises can also stand on their own as a way to give your body/mind a few moments of relief from the stresses you carry.

---"Ahhhhh....pause with me for ten minutes....and just relax!!! I will send this exercise each week as a reminder to pause...

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior Focusing space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a reminder to take a moment to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax...

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.

**Especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses and enjoy relaxing in the imagery. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!**

Any of the Relaxation Exercises can be used at the beginning of a longer Focusing session, as a way of "clearing a space" inside, so notice which are your favorites you could call upon.

## **Guided Imagery: The Forest-Allow 10-15 minutes**

These four weeks, we are doing our Relaxation Exercise in the guided imagery of The Forest. A change from The Beach, we will sink into the soft pine needles, listen to the bubbling brook and the scurrying animals.

And, if you prefer to close your eyes and follow along with my voice as I guide you into the forest, here is the video:



**Going To The Forest: Guided Meditation  
for Relaxation**

---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

## **Print and Practice!!!! Visit The Forest**

Here is your relaxation exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and take those few moments to relax every day, if you can, or as often as possible. Or, you can just open this weekly reminder and walk through the exercise online. Relaxing is one way to "clear a space" inside for a longer-term Focusing Problem Solving session.

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions download](#) at Creative Edge Focusing, p.5: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #3: The Forest.

And, if you download the free MP3 audio files in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), you can listen on audio CD Intuitive Focusing: Disk one, Track 4, with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company - - and help you stay on track!! But now you can watch the video here or find it whenever on my YouTube Channel for [Dr. Kathy McGuire](#)

## Getting A Felt Sense #3:

"Clearing A Space" At The Beginning Of a Focusing Turn

BONUS: DR. LAURY RAPPAPORT LEADS CLEARING WITH ART EXERCISE

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

## Creative Edge Focusing E-Course

The purpose: Help you incorporate [Focused Listening](#) and [Intuitive Focusing](#) into your everyday life, at home and at work. Each month we practice one Instant "Ahah!", one Pre-Focusing: Getting A Felt Sense exercise, and one Complete Focusing exercise.

"Clearing A Space" can stand on its own, allowing "Instant Serenity," or can be used as the first step in a longer [Intuitive Focusing](#) Turn.

Laurie Rappaport is a long-time Focusing Teacher/Therapist and creator of [Focusing-Oriented Art Therapy](#) . See her version of "Clearing A Space" exercise below.

**Kathy's Experience With Clearing Before Focusing Turn**  
(reported to Creative Edge e-support group)

"I was having a Focusing Partnership turn, and, knowing I was carrying a jumble of issues, I started by "clearing a space," as I often do at the beginning of a Focusing turn. I was already thinking about five or six things, not knowing which or if any really needed my Focusing attention.

So I started, telling my Listener, that "my plate is full, and I want to sort that out, just naming each thing." So, I sat quietly for a moment, noticing inside, and the first issue came up:

"Anxiety about my sex, food, and focusing blog. Is it too forward? Too exposing?" So I sat with that anxiety for a moment, noticing where it was physically, then said, "Okay, I want to pick up that plate and set it out on the table before me." Big sigh. I experienced it then and experience it again as I describe this. Ahhhhh!

Paying attention quietly again, the next issue came up:

"Anxiety about a work group, can it survive all this chaos or will it be too much." And I sensed into the physical location of that anxiety. Then, again, I said, "Now, I want to lift that full plate and set it outside." Ahhhhh!

And so it went through three more major issues, each "an anxiety."

Then, I said, "Oh, I guess the background feeling running through everything is 'anxiety.' Maybe I need to pay attention to that. And I did so, and spent some Focusing time, receiving Focused Listening from my Listener, as I explored the overall 'anxiety,' hoping it would shift some.

And that is how "clearing a space" led me into a longer, deeper Focusing turn."

## **Newcomers, Print and Practice!!!!**

This is your Getting A Felt Sense exercise for these four weeks. Print it out, keep it handy, and try it whenever you have time...I will also send a "reminder" copy by email every week...YOU CAN TRY IT IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE EMAIL COMES! a MOMENT TO RELAX AND CHECK INSIDE!

Here is a BONUS: Laury Rappaport, creator of Focusing-Oriented Art Therapy, leads you through how Art can be used to Clear A Space for Focusing:



Laury Rappaport, creator of FOArt Therapy: Clearing A Space with Art

### Pre-Focusing Practice B. Getting A Felt Sense #3: "Clearing A Space" (from Complete Focusing Instructions)

Week Three of four weeks of practice

Intuitive Focusing is a back-and-forth between words/images and the larger "intuitive feel," the "bodily-felt sense" of an issue. In Clearing A Space, you are just noticing all the different issues that you are carrying, getting the "felt sense" of each, then setting that "whole thing" outside of yourself. Ahhhh! Big sigh of tension release as you do this. At the end of the "inventory," you'll find yourself saying, "Well, except for all that, I am perfectly okay." You can spend minutes just being in this place of "okay," which reduces stress but also can have a spiritual dimension of "being connected to Something More."

Remember, especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!! And it is exactly in the PAUSE that the Creative Edge comes.

You can read through the exercise below, or follow along with my voice as I walk you through Clearing A Space in this video:



### Clearing A Space in Preparation for Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing

**Allow 20 minutes**

---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---not the tension itself, but the "felt sense" of "the whole thing 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 moment ---you 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

## More Help and Support: Audio Tapes, Teachers

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 and teachers, at the website for [Creative Edge Focusing](#)

You will also find this Getting a Felt Sense exercise in the [Complete Focusing Instructions download](#) at Creative Edge Focusing, p.10 : B. Getting A Felt Sense #3: "Clearing A Space".

If you download the free MP3 audio files at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) in The Store, you can listen on audio CD Intuitive Focusing: Disk One, Track 10, "Clearing A Space," with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you

company -- and help you stay on track!! But now you can also find all the videos for free at my YouTube Channel for [Dr. Kathy McGuire](#).

And many of these exercises are in the Spanish version of the manual, *Focusing En Comunidad*, available, with other free manuals, as free download in The Store.

Kathy McGuire, Director



## Instant "Ahah!"s #3: Passive Listening Turns: Stop Argument.

The "Peace Pipe!" Plan: Step One to Spread Passive Listening

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

### The "Peace Pipe!" Plan: Passive Listening=Active Solutions

I haven't heard from anyone about attempts to use the Passive Listening Turn protocol.

I did get one "delicious" email response to brainstorming request about how to have an Al Gore-like "campaign" to spread the idea of Passive Listening Turns worldwide.

Given that I had suggested "Peace Pipe!" as a possible neutral word that could be used between significant others as a signal to start the Passive Listening Protocol, the emailer suggested we name the campaign The "Peace Pipe!" Listening Plan, and that name makes me smile and sticks with me --- well, isn't that what you want from a campaign slogan?

Let's see: The "Peace Pipe!" Listening Plan: Passive Listening=Active Solutions as a bumper sticker?

### Brainstorm With Me To Find "The One Small Step"

So, I'm going to ask you again to send me any brainstorming ideas. Really, just that one email was so inspiring to me of creative thinking.

Do you think spreading Passive Listening Turns is a good first step, if there were to be a campaign to bring listening/focusing, and the "creation of the new" that can come when people can speak from felt-sensing, to everyone, every situation, worldwide? Do you have a better idea? I'm open!

Can you imagine participating in such a campaign? What "one-small-step" might you be willing to do, or willing to encourage your friends, neighbors, colleagues, elected officials, school systems, doctors and nurses, etc., to do or to spread?

I'd like to imagine a bumper sticker campaign: "Listen, Don't Lecture," "Speaking, Not Arguing," "Peace Pipe!" Use The Listening Timer!", "Passive Listening = Active Solutions" - got better ideas?!!! Certainly, I can use help!

A bookmark-sized handout that obstetricians, pediatricians, counselors, teachers could hand out, outlining the procedure (maybe with a magnet for sticking on the fridge!)

Maybe "Passive Listening Turns" isn't the right name for the process. What would be better? "Timed Turn-Taking"? I can't do this alone, but it would be fun to brainstorm it! I know we would come up with something hugely creative.

So, for this week, besides setting up the structure and trying the Passive Listening Turns procedure if an opportunity arises, I'd welcome any consideration of the Passive Listening Turn "campaign," how we might do our

own Nobel Peace Prize effort to get Listening/Focusing Conflict Resolution known. [Email Dr. McGuire](#) with your ideas and reactions. Thank you!

## The Basic Procedure

Here are the subheadings from the exercise which lay out the basic steps of this very simple procedure:

- Agree on a signal during a peaceful time
- Set a timer and take a seat
- Use the timer to keep turns exactly even
- Yell at a blank wall, if needed
- Just keep going
- Caution: Professional help needed?
- Online support for conflict resolution

And those are the basics of this very simple procedure, which can be taught to anyone in five minutes.

Anyone can download the whole procedure under [Listening Turns: Stop Arguments With Friends, Partners, Children](#), in the sidebar at Creative Edge Focusing (TM) website. Hand it out to everyone you know, or even on street corners!

And here is our short video demonstrating Passive Listening Turns as my friend and I diffuse an argument about gender differences in empathy:



Passive Listening Turns To Diffuse Argument, Increasing Understanding

## Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

For four weeks, we practice one Instant "Ahah!," one Relaxation Exercise, and one Getting A Felt Sense Exercise, with e-reminders and tips each week. Our purpose: Helping you incorporate Listening and Focusing into your everyday life.

**This month: From [Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual](#), p. 10, #3. Passive Listening: Stopping Arguments With Friends, Partners, Children.**

### E-Newsletter Archives Now Available!

Newcomers, you can start with any issue and, in a year, you will have practiced all the exercises. To "catch up" with this cycle, please read, from [the e-newsletter archives](#) , Instant "Ahah!" #3 Passive Listening Weeks, 1, 2, 3.

Anyone can also access the e-newsletter archives from the Free Resources submenu at [Creative Edge Focusing](#).

### "Relaxation" and "Getting A Felt Sense" Exercises for the Month

Later in the week, you will receive two other e-reminders, one for Relaxation Exercise #3. The Forest (p. 5 in [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)) and Getting A Felt Sense: Clearing A Space (p.10).

If you download the free MP3 audio files from The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), you can use the Intuitive Focusing CD to follow Dr. McGuire as she speaks these exercises. However, also for free, you can watch the videos any time at the YouTube Channel for [Dr. Kathy McGuire](#)

**Click here to access Dr. McGuire's blog, [Ultimate Self-Help](#)**, or find it in the right upper corner at [Creative Edge Focusing](#)

## Relaxation #3: The Forest.

### Memories of Summer Camp---

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

### Kathy's Experience: Relaxing in Forest. Memories of Summer Camp

"Finally found a few minutes this afternoon to open "Relaxation #3: The Forest e-newsletter/reminder and to do the exercise.

Of course, I did it sitting at my computer, and I did not get out my audio CD so I could listen instead of reading. But, still, it was a wonderful few minutes of relaxation, of stress reduction.

I stretched ---and relaxed in my chair, then followed my breathing.

Then, it was easy to find myself in The Forest (I almost get tears now, remembering how vivid it was, how peaceful and luxurious and animal-filled, rustlings) ---

So I walked to the brook, noticing the shy animals, put my feet in the stream, listening to it burble, found a place to lie down among the pine needles --- Ahhhhhh! Wriggling my body down into the needles. And suddenly remembering summer camp, day camp where we made "sit upons" out of oil cloth stuffed with pine needles.

And I remembered all the amazing things we used to cook over a campfire. Angel food cake soaked in condensed milk, coated with coconut, and toasted on a stick! Hot dogs stuffed with cheese and bacon, wrapped in bread, and toasted. Dumpling mix with cheese centers that we threw into boiling tomato soup and waited until they popped to the top, the cheese melted. Ah! That was the life. And I have just gotten to spend five minutes in "the feel of it all," totally relaxed and warmed by those carefree days."

Anyone else have a relaxation experience to report? I hope I am not the only one taking a moment to let down the stress, and breath: "Ahhhhhh!"

### From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise:

Relaxation can be used as a first step of [Intuitive Focusing](#) as a way of "clearing a space" inside so that something "new" can come. However, standing alone, Relaxation Exercises give your body a few moments free from the stresses you care and are healing habit in and of themselves.

Week Four ---"Ahhhhh....pause with me for ten minutes....and just relax!!!  
I will send a relaxation exercise each week as a reminder to pause...

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior Focusing space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a reminder to take a moment to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax.

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.

**Epecially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses and enjoy relaxing in the imagery. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!!**

Any of the Relaxation Exercises can be used at the beginning of a longer [Focusing session](#), as a way of "clearing a space" inside, so notice which are your favorites you could call upon.

### **Guided Imagery: The Forest-Allow 10-15 minutes**

These four weeks, we are doing our Relaxation Exercise in the guided imagery of The Forest. A change from The Beach, we will sink into the soft pine needles, listen to the bubbling brook and the scurrying animals.

You can close your eyes and listen to my instructions, or read the below to yourself:



**Take A Break! "Going To The Forest"  
Guided Meditation**

**---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

## Newcomers: Catch up at E-Newsletter Archive

If you are just joining this e-newsletter this week, you can catch up on the first three weeks of this four-week cycle in [the archives](#) as Relaxation #3, Going To The Forest, Weeks 1-3

## Anyone Can Always Access the e-Archive

At the Creative Edge Focusing website, Free Resources section, in the submenu, [right sidebar](#).

Dr. McGuire's blog, [Ultimate Self-Help](#)

Scroll down to find blogs that interest you.

## Print and Practice!!!! Visit The Forest

Here is your relaxation exercise for this month. Print it out, keep it handy, and take those few moments to relax every day, if you can, or as often as possible. Or, you can just open this weekly reminder and walk through the exercise online. Relaxing is one way to "clear a space" inside for a [longer-term Focusing Problem Solving session](#).

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download at Creative Edge Focusing, p.5: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #3: The Forest.

And, if you download the free MP3 audio files in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), you can listen on audio CD Intuitive Focusing: Disk one, Track 4, with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!! However, you can access this video for free in this e-newsletter or on [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#)

## Getting A Felt Sense #3:

"Clearing A Space" for Instant Serenity

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director      Week Four

**Pre-Focusing Practice B. Getting A Felt Sense #3: "Clearing A Space"**  
(from Complete Focusing Instructions). Week Four of four weeks of practice

You are learning to "take an inventory" of all the various issues and items you are carrying inside, carrying in your body. You may start out feeling overwhelmed, confused, even numb. But as you let each item arise inside, spend a moment finding the "intuitive feel," and some "handle" words/images for naming the item, and then, "wrap it up and set it outside of yourself," you will experience big sighs of tension release.

Eventually, you will get to a place where you can honestly say, "Except for all that out there, I am perfectly okay," and spend some minutes relaxing in this "cleared space." You may even have a spiritual experience of union with a Larger Something. Then, if you choose, you can bring one item back inside (it can be an issue or even a good experience from the week) for a longer [Intuitive Focusing Problem Solving Session](#).

Remember, especially at the beginning, time those "1 minute" pauses. You will be amazed at how long a minute is, how seldom we ever pause for a whole minute!!! And it is exactly in the PAUSE that the Creative Edge comes.

Bonus: Here is Leona Dawson introducing "Clearing A Space," with her Aussie accent!:



**Leona Dawson introduces Clearing A Space for Gendlin's Focusing**

**Allow 20 minutes**

**And here is my video version if you would like to follow my voice:**



**Dr. McGuire Walks You Through "Clearing A Space" for Instant Serenity**

**---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---not the tension itself, but the "felt sense" of "the whole thing 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 moment ---you 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

## **Newcomers, Print and Practice!!!!**

This is your Getting A Felt Sense exercise for these four weeks. Print it out, keep it handy, and try it whenever you have time...I will also send a "reminder" copy by email every week...YOU CAN TRY IT IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE EMAIL COMES! a MOMENT TO RELAX AND CHECK INSIDE!

## **E-Newsletter Archives!!!!**

If this is your first e-newsletter, you can catch up with previous e-newsletters in this cycle at the Creative Edge Focusing [Archives](#) (you don't have to; you can just start right in today). You can also find the Archives link in the top right corner at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com).

## More Help and Support: Online e-group, Audio Tapes, Teachers

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 and teachers, at the website for [Creative Edge Focusing](#) and for [The International Focusing Institute](#),

You will also find this Getting a Felt Sense exercise in the [Complete Focusing Instructions download](#) at Creative Edge Focusing, p.10 : B. Getting A Felt Sense #3: "Clearing A Space".

If you download the free MP3 audio files in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com), you can listen on audio CD Intuitive Focusing: Disk One, Track 10, "Clearing A Space," with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!! But now you can get the video for guidance any time for free at the YouTube channel for [Dr. Kathy McGuire](#) .

And many of these exercises are in the Spanish version of the manual, *Focusing En Comunidad*. Find four different manuals as free downloads also in The Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com)

And, having completed Part One, you can now go back to The Free Store at [www.cefocusing.com](http://www.cefocusing.com) and download the PDF for Course: "Instant "Ahah! E-newsletter E-Course Part Two" and also Part Three if you like.