

Instant “Ahah!” E-Newsletter Free E-course

Part Three: “Ahah!”s 7-10. #7 Clearing A Space: Serenity, #8 Sharing Your Day: Intimacy, #9 Creativity: Focusing on Blocks, #10 Spirituality: Being Touched and Moved

I am going to start out with a Reminder of Instant Ahah! #1, Gendlin’s Six-Step Focusing Process, just to remind everyone of the basic Focusing Process introduced in Part One of this free E-Course. Please go to the Part One and then Part Two PDF files to catch up, if you have not been there before, before beginning this Part Three.

The E-course has been condensed from a nine-month long e-newsletter/e-course into these three Parts as PDF files with live links to practice videos and articles, covering the entire Instant “Ahah!” manual. This includes ten applications of Gendlin’s Focusing and Rogers’ Empathic Listening in the Creative Edge Focusing™ model, applying these self-help skills at home and at work, in intimate relationships as well as creative problem solving in parenting, education, businesses, organizations, and supportive communities for peer self-help. Download the files so you can work your way through at your own speed. However, work from the downloads. If you print them out, you will lose all the live links to much material.

Instant “Ahah!” # 1: FOCUSING

Find Out What Is Bothering You

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

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).

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, download the free MP3 Files Intuitive Focusing Instructions in the totally free Store at 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 ---

(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](#).

You can also go to the Store at www.cefocusing.com and download the free MP3 files and you can listen to the Pre-Focusing and Focusing Instructions directly with Dr. McGuire on audio any time you want. 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. Both the Spanish and English manuals, plus two other manuals, are now free downloads in The Store at www.cefocusing.com

Instant "Ahah!"s #8: Sharing Your Day = Instant Intimacy

The Exercise Is Simple. The Commitment Is The Task

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

INSTANT INTIMACY, FINDING PARTNERS, DEEPENING SENSUALITY

You may have signed up for this e-newsletter thinking it was just about business. But, for healthiest living at home and work, I do not like to compartmentalize. Healthy, intimate relationships at home increase attendance and productivity at

work. So, now a month on Intimacy. Then, next, a month on Focusing and Creativity.

These four weeks, the exercise is to be done between committed partners, friends, family members. It is a basis for keeping intimacy alive in long-term relationships. I will also share what I know about how this intimate sharing can carry over into increased sensuality/sexuality.

But I will also teach what I know about finding a Focusing-Oriented partner.

Here is the basic exercise. It is extremely simple. Perhaps you are already doing this with your significant other. Perhaps all you have to say is "Let's try this," and you and your partner will make it happen. However, perhaps it will seem impossible to get from where you are now to this kind of sharing. Or maybe you don't even have a significant other. We will spend four weeks working on overcoming these obstacles! For today, read with your significant other, if you have one, and start practicing as many days of the week as you can.

If you don't have a significant other, or you can't imagine bringing this idea up with yours, you can begin using [Instant "Aah!" #1, Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You](#) to explore the "felt sense" of this whole issue for you, look at "What is in the way---?," and look for a possible first step:

INSTANT "AHAH!" 8

Sharing Your Day : *Instant Intimacy*

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Time = Love

With your significant other: Every day, and I mean religiously, set aside about 40 minutes to sit down and "share your day." Get a drink or a snack or go in the hot tub -an uninterrupted space away from other family members. It might only take 20 minutes, but it is ideal to have plenty of time available.

At a separate time, you can also do this with your children, each person having an uninterrupted turn.

Just Warm, Silent Attention: No Interruptions, No Criticism

Each person gets to talk without interruption, refreshing in his/her own mind and describing to the other the events of the day, usually in chronological order, often starting with the night before: anxieties, dreams. The speaker gets to share every event of the day which rises to consciousness, no matter how trivial it seems. This can easily take about twenty minutes

The other person simply listens quietly, not saying a word (Well, maybe an occasional "Wow!" or "How interesting!" or "Oh, no!" or "Yikes!").

Then, when the first speaker is done, it is the other person's turn - same deal: No interruptions, no opinions, no judgments.

No Problem Solving

And no problem solving. At least initially, save problem solving for another time, or do it before or after. Too easily, problem solving can eat up the sharing space, and intimacy is lost. Problem solving can also bring up conflicts, not wanted in this sharing space. And fear of problem solving can make people dread sharing time, instead of looking forward to this peaceful, intimate lull in a busy day.

Intimacy = Sharing

That's it!!! You will thoroughly understand what your significant other does all day, the frustrations, the tedium, the other people in his or her world, the small joys, the conflicts, the stresses, the successes, the low points, the high points. And each person will feel that their life is valid and valuable, no matter how trivial or repetitious it may seem to be.

Over time, you will get to know each other intimately, and this intimacy will carry over into other areas of your shared life. Intimacy increases sensuality and sexuality between partners. Intimacy also leads children to turn to their parents when needing help.

Here, you are using passive listening simply to let your partner or child be the center of attention. At the same time, the speaker becomes the "center of attention" to him- or her-self, taking the time to fully receive his or her day.

Instant "Ahah!" s 2 and 3 show how to use both [passive](#) and [active](#) listening for problem solving. If you need some more active problem-solving to open communication in your relationship, here are links to the videos for trying out Passive and Active Listening:



Empathy: Passive Listening, No Interruptions,
Equal Time



Empathy: Active Listening to Increase
Understanding

QUICK LINKS TO CLASSES, BLOG, ARTICLES, ETC.

Self-Help Package, CDs, DVD, manual English and espanol

[Experiential Focusing Therapy manual](#)

[Creative Edge Focusing website](#)

[Certified Focusing Trainers and Therapists Worldwide](#)

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

[Case Studies](#)

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

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

[New E-newsletter Archive](#)

[Ultimate Self Help Blog](#)

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

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.

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

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.

Getting A Felt Sense of Interpersonal Situations

Using A Third Person As A Listening

Facilitator

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

USING A THIRD PERSON AS A LISTENING FACILITATOR

Sometimes two people can sit down and use the Interpersonal Focusing Protocol on their own. But sometimes an issue just seems too hot to handle, too much anger and hurt, too much danger of slight "twists" in Focusing Listening responses which actually add in a bit of wounding sarcasm or put down instead of the kind of empathic compassion which allows another to feel safe in going more deeply with [Intuitive Focusing](#).

In these situations, and also when a conflict happens in a [Creative Edge meeting](#) where there is a Process Monitor, or other group member, who can serve as Third Person Facilitator handy, it is helpful to have a neutral Third Person, who is not involved in the conflict, respond to each Focuser in turn with [Focused Listening](#).

Here is how I describe that approach in the manual, *Focusing In Community (Focusing en Comunidad)*. (You can read the entire [Chapter Five: Interpersonal Focusing, in English and in Spanish](#) available as a free download through my blog. It gives explicit instructions and examples. Also, you can read the [Interpersonal Focusing Case Studies](#) on the website if you haven't yet):

"Using a Third Person As A Listening Facilitator

Although two people can work through a trouble on their own as I have outlined above, it is often wise to ensure that there is a third person present to act as a Listening facilitator. This is especially true if very angry feelings are involved (as in the example of Stella and Karen) or when people are new at learning to set themselves aside so they can listen to another. When feelings are very strong between two people, it may be impossible for the one who is supposed to be Listening at any particular time to set aside all of her own reactions and feelings and simply reflect the other accurately.

To protect against this, the third person can take the role of Focused Listener, reflecting first one person and then the other. The participation of the third person is especially important in Stage Two, Going Deeper, where each person is trying to use Focusing on her own feelings in order to find out something new.

On the one hand, the person who is Focusing is making herself vulnerable in a situation where the other person may be just waiting to find evidence of fault and to lay blame. It's hard for her to explore her own possible contribution to the trouble with the very person who is most invested in proving her wrong. Having the Listening/Focusing interaction with the third person, with no interruption from the other, is much more likely to allow the kind of trust needed for approaching vulnerable feeling.

Also, in terms of the second person, the investment in believing that the other person was wrong or bad, that she did a hurtful thing (which seems to be part and parcel of feeling angry and hurt) gets in the way of being able to reflect accurately and help the person to go deeper. Subtle distortions, based on one's assumptions about the person's motives or hidden intentions or immaturities, creep into the reflections. The speaker picks this up and declares, "I don't feel safe going on with you." The third person can allow the kind of safety and sensitive Listening and Focusing instructions that can bring about a real shift in one or both persons and the possibility of change in the whole trouble they are having.

In choosing a third person, it's important to find someone with whom both people feel comfortable and whom both people feel will be unbiased. It is also important that each speaker get approximately equal time through the processing experience, as a guarantee that each person feels fairly treated.

If a third person is doing the main part of the reflecting of one speaker, before switching to a turn for the second person, the second person should try to do a summary reflection of what the first has said, so that the first person will know that her communication is being taken in some way.

The rhythm of Interpersonal Focusing is worked out between the two or three people involved. They must agree on a time limit - some point at which they intend to be finished or will at least reassess the situation and decide whether to continue or to meet again some other day. Usually, a serious tension takes about 1 ½-2 hours to work through, with each person having several short five or ten minutes turns for clarification and laying out of the issue and each person having a twenty-minute turn for going deeper, with a few more short turns at the end for reactions.

As they go along, the two will make a lot of agreements about how to proceed, like "How about I take ten minutes, then you take ten, then we decide where to go from there." Each person will also be responsible for indicating when she feels a need for a change in speakers - a Listener may need to say, "I can't go on much longer without a turn", or a speaker may say, "I've said enough; I need to hear a response from you". If there is a third person Listening facilitator, she may want to turn to the second person and say, "Can you say back what she just said? It seems important that she hear it from you, or, to a speaker, "Can you say that directly to (the second person) - I think she would like to hear it from you".

It's also nice, and a good idea, to give the third person a five or ten minute listening turn at the end of Interpersonal Focusing so that he or she can work through any tension left from participating in what may have been a hard interaction. It's always a good idea to take care of our helpers!" (P.101-102)

If you haven't yet, please read the entire [Chapter Five: Interpersonal Focusing, in English and in Spanish](#), from my manual, *Focusing in Community (Focusing en Comunidad)* available as a free download through my blog. It gives explicit instructions and examples. Also, please read the [Interpersonal Focusing Case Studies](#) if you haven't yet.

Self-help manuals in English and Spanish and audio instruction kits are now all totally FREE in the new totally free [Store](#) at www.cefocusing.com

Focusing Exercise For Today

If you want a further Focusing Exercise for today, you could

1. turn to the list you have made of up to five unresolved interpersonal situations or find a new incident more recently and
2. "sit with" each in a Focusing way, asking yourself if it would make sense to approach the person directly, instead of only working on your "felt sense" of the situation on your own.
3. If "yes" for any of them, imagine how you might approach that person, suggesting the use of Interpersonal Focusing.
4. Ask yourself whether a third person facilitator might be needed and who that might be.
5. If you like, you could commit yourself to trying to resolve as many of these conflicts as possible over the coming year.

Remember, you can also practice Passive or Active Listening for problem resolution and increased communication with your partner. Here are video demonstrations:



Passive Listening for Empathic Communication and Understanding



Active Listening for Empathy and Conflict Resolution

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

ANOTHER FOUR WEEKS ON INTERPERSONAL FOCUSING

I've decided that, since there is so much to learn about Interpersonal Focusing, I will spend another four-week cycle on this topic. Today, I cover Using A Third Person As A Listening Facilitator. Other weeks, I will review Ken Blanchard and Margaret McBride's book, [*The One Minute Apology: A Powerful Way To Make Things Better*](#), Rosa Zubizarreta's Focusing-Oriented Application of the [Dynamic Facilitation](#) model for group conflict resolution, and Janet Klein and Mary McGuire's Interactive Focusing method.

Complete Focusing Session On Joy, Love, Beauty, Awe!

Using Focusing to Completely Articulate a Positive Experience

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: "Sitting With" and Completely Articulating A Positive Experience

Today, we are going to be reminded that [Intuitive Focusing](#) can be used to experience fully, articulate, and "keep" and "revisit" and "recreate" positive experiences, as well as for problem solving "stuck" situations.

So, I am going to ask you to spend some time with a positive experience related to intimate relationship: perhaps something new if you tried the Instant Intimacy exercise this week; perhaps an older memory of intimacy in your present relationship, perhaps, if you have no significant other now, a memory of a time when intimacy and sharing was present in the past.

You will simply spend Intuitive Focusing time with this memory, fully tasting and making words/images for what was so special about it, asking yourself how you might bring this intimacy into your life now, if it is missing, or savoring it if it is present.

Or, if "intimacy" doesn't feel right, then choose another positive experience to spend Focusing time with: a moment in nature or listening to music, friendship, love, joy, awe.

And, if what you really need is problem solving, perhaps on why you and your partner couldn't do the "sharing your day" exercise or where it got stuck or, if you have no partner, where you are "stuck" in finding one, then go back to Instant Ahah! #1, either in your mini-manual or online as [Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You](#) and adapt those instructions to your need.

Focusing On A Positive Experience (20 minutes)

Here is a link to the video if you prefer to follow along with my voice:



Gendlin's Focusing on a Positive Experience! Find Words and Images That Let You Recapture That Feeling Any Time!

---Get comfortable in a chair or lying on the floor, letting your weight fall into the surface under you, trusting it to support you ---

---Turn inward by closing your eyes and beginning to just notice your breathing, noticing the breath going in --- and out --- in --- and out--- in --- and out ---
1 minute

---Notice where you have tension in your body, perhaps your neck, shoulders, legs, face 30 seconds

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

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

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

---Now, bring to mind a specific positive experience about which you want to know more ---

1 minute

---Bring back the detailed memory of that experience ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, carefully try to find words for the bodily feel, or an image or gesture. Go carefully back and forth between the symbols and the feel of the whole thing until you find words or an image or a gesture that are just right. Take your time to explore the experience thoroughly, making symbols for many aspects of it, enriching it.

1 minute or more

---Now, gently ask yourself, "What was so special about this experience for me?", and see what comes in the center of your body, the place where you have "intuitions" or the "bodily felt sense," the "intuitive feel"---

1 minute

---Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that felt sense ---

1 minute

---And ask yourself, "What else makes that experience special?" and see what comes as an "intuitive feel," somewhere in the center of your body ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, think of some symbol, a word or phrase or a picture, a song or movie or book, anything that you can find that would "represent" the feel of this whole positive experience for you, so that you could use that symbol as a "doorway" back into this whole positive experience ---

1 minute

---And ask your body, "Is there any way that I want to bring this into a present relationship or share it with someone? Any way to make this kind of experience more present in my life right now?" and see what comes---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---See if you can imagine some small step you could take to make this positive experience more present in your life ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

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

--- If you find yourself "stirred up" by reflecting upon these situations, use the "Present Time" exercise to separate from that reactivity and come fully back to the present: Choose a shape, like round or rectangular, or a color, like black or orange, and name everything in the room that falls into that category, looking very carefully at everything around you. This "outer focus" should allow you to put the "internal focus" aside until another day.

--- If that is actually impossible for you, then take out Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You and follow the Complete Focusing Instructions included, until something "shifts" inside ---

You can use the symbol to help you get back to the "bodily feel" of this positive experience any time you want, as well as enriching your relationship by sharing it with your partner.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

If you just joined us, you can "catch up" on this cycle, which is in Week One, by reading [archived e-newsletters](#) on Instant 'Ahah' #8: Sharing Your Day and also Interpersonal Help! Third Party Listening Facilitator.

If you want to learn more about past teaching/exercises related to Interpersonal Focusing to resolve conflicts, scroll down through the archives to the previous month of exercises about Focusing and Getting A Felt Sense of Interpersonal Conflict Situations, also Non-Violent Communication, The Verbally Abusive Relationship, and The Myth of Dominance.

Instant "Ahah!"s #8: Sharing Your Day = Instant Intimacy

Finding Your Partner Fascinating: What You Can Learn

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week 2

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

The Creative Edge Focusing (TM) e-newsletter is unique in that it teaches actual applied exercises in each issue which you can practice at home. To maximize

learning, you will of course not just read about the exercises but try to find time to try them out.

Every four-week cycle, we practice the same three different exercises, or variations, each week. We practice them deeply enough to integrate [Intuitive Focusing](#) and [Focused Listening](#) into your life at home and work as actual tools in your tool box. So, opening each email and practicing the exercise leads to learning.

Please feel free to pass these e-newsletters on to your friends and colleagues. This is one way to start building your own supportive community of like-minded people.

Catch up on this cycle in the [new e-newsletter archive](#), starting with Week One of Instant "Ahah!" #8: Intimacy.

Kathy's Experiences:

So, in the week outlined below, my husband and I shared every day, using Instant "Ahah!" #8, as we always do. We shared in front of the fireplace, or by candle light, in the hot tub, etc. We had a glass of wine, 20-40 minutes usually, shorter when we had spent the day together anyway. One night we had more wine, more conversation, and ended up in passionate love-making (this in addition to our "planned dates" for love making, a concept which I will introduce in next week's e-newsletter).

Mind you, at the time, we had a 17-year-old handicapped daughter at home who needed almost constant supervision. We put her on the treadmill or sat her down with her meal or set up a good movie. We used to do this with two children at home, one a teen with ADHD needing constant homework supervision. We still did it.

My husband was getting up at 5:30AM to get my daughter to the bus, commuting an hour to and from a very responsible job, getting home around 5PM, we usually started sharing by 6PM, before dinner. He looked forward to this regular sharing time even more than I. We've been doing it for over 10 years (I had been divorced once, he twice. I said, "If we don't do this, we will likely get divorced. He believed me.)

I know all about his job: the assessment committee he chairs, peer review evaluations, the Faculty Senate, the new dean and new department chair, faculty leaving and being hired, interpersonal dynamics among staff, his own

plans for retiring, the courses he designs and runs, his 200 students and how their personal concerns enter into his teaching.

Mind you, he is a professor of business and, when we began, I actually had a prejudice against business, finding it "meaningless."

I also know a lot about his home projects: how wood twists if not used right away, why he uses screws instead of nails when making decks, the ins and outs of various light bulb choices, how many trips to the home center it takes to find just the right piece to fix a toilet or dripping sink, etc.

I also know all about the many "bells and whistles" on his new car, his excitement about them, what he is learning from reading the manual, what he learns from reading lots of manuals for cars, boats, computers, etc., which we have. I never read manuals.

Actually, there were years when I thought his day was too boring, that he should be a "deeper person" like me, be doing something more "meaningful." (He is a Sensor on the MBTI, very tied to present reality through the five senses, an ISTJ Guardian, a Beaver; I am an Intuitive, tied to the sixth sense, an INFJ Idealist, a Dolphin. See [Personality Tests](#) at Creative Edge Focusing so you and your partner can take them). Then, I began to tackle my own inferior Sensing, learning how to deal with accomplishing things in reality. As I became more "boring" myself, I gained more respect for his way. And he learns about "intuition" from me.

He reminds me of intimate moments we have had which come back to him. He catches me up on his family in Holland and Oregon, interactions with our daughter's teachers and other staff. He tells me how beautiful I am. Etc.

Actually, I just thought it would be quite difficult for him or anyone else doing "Sharing Your Day" to be having an affair and not telling, or to be keeping other secrets. We look into each other's eyes while sharing.

Don't most affairs happen because the Other Person "listens to me," "finds me interesting, special," as well as more sex? Let's think of "Sharing Your Day," and the increased intimacy leading to more sexuality it provides, as "Anti-Affair Innoculation"!

I'd be interested to know what my husband would tell you about me from our "Sharing Your Day.": my night-time dreams, hypochondriacal body sensitivities, the interpersonal interactions in the 10 organizations I belong to and 10 e-discussion lists, my website marketing learnings and hassles and problems, the battles I am fighting to make the world a better place (there are always several), my worries about our son's little family, where I went shopping and what I bought, my gardening endeavors, etc., etc.

If you aren't already, please get to know your significant other in this intimate way. Sensuous and sexual intimacy will follow.

Use what we are learning in the Interpersonal Focusing series in this cycle, as well as the Complete Focusing Session on Articulating Positive Experiences to help you if you are "stuck." And Instant "Ahah!" #1 to work on "What is in the way?" in terms of finding a partner or getting your existing relationship back on track.

INSTANT INTIMACY, FINDING PARTNERS, DEEPENING SENSUALITY: The "Sharing Your Day" Exercise Itself

These four weeks, the exercise is to be done between committed partners, friends, family members. It is a basis for keeping intimacy alive in long-term relationships. I will also share what I know about how this intimate sharing can carry over into increased sensuality/sexuality.

But I will also teach what I know about finding a Focusing-Oriented partner.

Here is the basic exercise. It is extremely simple. Perhaps you are already doing this with your significant other. Perhaps all you have to say is "Let's try this," and you and your partner will make it happen. However, perhaps it will seem impossible to get from where you are now to this kind of sharing. Or maybe you don't even have a significant other. We will spend four weeks working on overcoming these obstacles! For today, read with your significant other, if you have one, and start practicing as many days of the week as you can.

If you don't have a significant other, or you can't imagine bringing this idea up with yours, you can begin using [Instant "Ahah!" #1, Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You](#) to explore the "felt sense" of this whole issue for you, look at "What is in the way---?," and look for a possible first step:

INSTANT "AHAH!" 8

Sharing Your Day: *Instant Intimacy*

© Kathleen McGuire, Ph.D., 2007

Time = Love

With your significant other: Every day, and I mean religiously, set aside about 40 minutes to sit down and "share your day." Get a drink or a snack or go in the hot tub -an uninterrupted space away from other family members. It might only take 20 minutes, but it is ideal to have plenty of time available.

At a separate time, you can also do this with your children, each person having an uninterrupted turn.

Just Warm, Silent Attention: No Interruptions, No Criticism

Each person gets to talk without interruption, refreshing in his/her own mind and describing to the other the events of the day, usually in chronological order, often starting with the night before: anxieties, dreams. The speaker gets to share every event of the day which rises to consciousness, no matter how trivial it seems. This can easily take about twenty minutes

The other person simply listens quietly, not saying a word (Well, maybe an occasional "Wow!" or "How interesting!" or "Oh, no!" or "Yikes!").

Then, when the first speaker is done, it is the other person's turn - same deal: No interruptions, no opinions, no judgments.

No Problem Solving

And no problem solving. At least initially, save problem solving for another time, or do it before or after. Too easily, problem solving can eat up the sharing space, and intimacy is lost. Problem solving can also bring up conflicts, not wanted in this sharing space. And fear of problem solving can make people dread sharing time, instead of looking forward to this peaceful, intimate lull in a busy day.

Intimacy = Sharing

That's it!!! You will thoroughly understand what your significant other does all day, the frustrations, the tedium, the other people in his or her world, the small joys, the conflicts, the stresses, the successes, the low points, the high points. And each person will feel that their life is valid and valuable, no matter how trivial or repetitious it may seem to be.

Over time, you will get to know each other intimately, and this intimacy will carry over into other areas of your shared life. Intimacy increases sensuality and sexuality between partners. Intimacy also leads children to turn to their parents when needing help.

Instant "Ahah!" s 2 and 3 show how to use both [passive](#) and [active](#) listening for problem solving. But, here, you are using passive listening simply to let your partner or child be the center of attention. At the same time, the speaker becomes the "center of attention" to him- or her-self, taking the time to fully receive his or her day.

If you feel the need of more interpersonal communication to clear old distancing, here are links to simple self-help communication exercises:



Open communication with Passive Listening:
Equal turns, No interruptions!



Conflict resolution with Active, Empathic
Listening

Getting A Felt Sense of Interpersonal Situations

One Minute Apology

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

THE ONE MINUTE APOLOGY

Ken Blanchard, creator of *The One Minute Manager* idea, and Margret McBride wrote a lovely short book called [The One Minute Apology](#). It's for executives and others (and their employees and friends!) who have made a big mistake

The book tells a parable about an assistant who sees that his boss has made this kind of mistake and is trying to cover it up. Through conversations with a number of helpful people, the assistant finds a way to help his boss "fess up" and fix the problem.

It's a message for everyone, a great holiday gift for everyone you know. Although perhaps the method has a lot in common with the 12-Step approach to recovery from addiction, what is great is that the book sets a new norm. It provides a rationale, it makes it acceptable, it makes it possible for executives and others who find it difficult to acknowledge weakness and error to --- just follow this simple method! Now, they could just walk into a Board Meeting and say, "I need to make a One Minute Apology." The door has been opened.

Here is Blanchard's summary of The One Minute Apology method:

"I ask myself the following questions, and answer truthfully:

What mistake did I make?

Did I dismiss another person, their wishes, feelings, or ideas?

Did I take credit when it wasn't due?

Why did I do this?

Was it an impulsive, thoughtless act? Was it calculated?

Was it a result of my fear, anger, or frustration?

What was my motivation?

How long have I let this go on? Is this the first or repeated time?

Is this behavior becoming a pattern in my life?

What is the truth I am not dealing with?

Am I better than this behavior?

Then I do the following:

I begin my one-minute apology with *Surrender*

- I am truthful and admit to myself that I've done something wrong and I need to make up for it.
- I take full responsibility for my actions and sincerely recognize the need to apologize to anyone I have harmed, regardless of the outcome
- I have a sense of urgency about apologizing - I act as soon as possible
- I tell anyone harmed specifically what I did wrong
- I share how I feel about what I did with those harmed

I complete my one-minute apology with *Integrity*

- I recognize that what I did is inconsistent with who I want to be
- I reaffirm I am better than my poor behavior and forgive myself
- I recognize how much I have hurt another person by making amends and demonstrate my commitment not to repeat the act by changing my behavior

Use Intuitive Focusing As An Aid In A One Minute Apology?

(20 minutes)

Intuitive Focusing can help you get to the deeper roots of a problem, to get below the rational thoughts that spin in your mind but don't help you move forward or find out something new. Intuitive Focusing means pausing, for just a moment, and letting the "whole body feel," the "right-brain, intuitive information" come as A Creative Edge, a something-more-than-words from which new, non-linear answers can come.

If this fits for you in anyway, you can use a modification of Instant "Ahah!" #1, Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering to spend some time sitting with the "intuitive feel" that comes to Blanchard and McBride's basic questions, and then use their action suggestions to facilitate an apology:

You can read the instructions below to yourself or follow along with me at this YouTube video:



Gendlin's Focusing with Blanchard's "One Minute Apology": Find deeper meanings about your mistakes and how to change

Set aside some uninterrupted time and take a seat in a comfortable chair. Close your eyes if you can be comfortable doing that. Otherwise just stare into space ---

Notice the feel of your body everywhere that it touches the chair, your feet on the ground, as a beginning step in going inside, becoming aware of your whole-body "intuition" ---

**Now just pay attention to your breath, just noticing the breath going in --- and out --- in --- and out --- in --- and out ---
One minute**

**Now notice where you have tension in your body. Massage those spots a bit with your hands if you want --- your head and face, your neck and shoulders, wherever ---
One minute**

**Now imagine that all that tension becomes a stream of water, running down your arms and legs and out of your body --- just letting go ---
One minute**

Now ask yourself, "What mistake have I made that could benefit from a One Minute Apology? ----

"Is there something I have done which I carry as a weight, a fear, an unresolved tension?" ---

"Have I dismissed another person, their wishes, feelings, or ideas?" ---

"Have I taken credit when it wasn't due?" ---

These are just possibilities. Ask yourself, "Is there a mistake I have made?" Just wait quietly, as long as a minute, for the "intuitive feel," the "felt sense" of that "whole thing" to form in the center of your body:

One minute or more

Spend some time going back and forth between the "feel of it all" and words or images or gestures that might capture it, until your body-feel says, "Yes, that's right. That captures it. That captures my mistake" ---

One minute

Now, if it fits for you, ask Blanchard's next question: "Why did I do this? Some suggestions: impulsivity, thoughtlessness? Calculated? Out of fear, anger, or frustration? But ask yourself, "What was my motivation?" and see what comes inside, the "intuitive feel," the not-yet words about the motivation for this whole mistake ---

One minute

And, again, take some time to go back and forth between the "feel of it all" and words, images, or gestures which capture it ---

One minute

And now ask yourself Blanchard's question, "How long have I let this go on? Is this the first or repeated time? Is this behavior becoming a pattern in my life?" and see what comes --- again, not the words you already know but the "intuitive feel" of the answer: "Is this the first and only time? How widespread is this behavior in my life?" ---

One minute

And again carefully find words or images to capture "all of that" ---

One minute

And Blanchard's next question: "What is the truth I am not dealing with?" or "Is there a truth I am not dealing with?" and see what comes ---

One minute

Go back and forth between the "intuitive feel" and words and images until the symbols fit and capture the "feel of it all" and your body says, "Oh, yes. That." --

-

One minute

And ask yourself Blanchard's question: "Am I better than this behavior?" and see what comes --- not the known words but the "intuitive feel" ---
One minute

And go back and forth until you find words or images to capture that ---
One minute

And now spend some time with Blanchard's action steps as listed above, asking yourself each time, "Am I ready and able to do this?" "What would be needed for me to take this action? What kind of support or help, if needed?" and make a list of how you are going to carry out these action steps. And then start your One Minute Apology!!!

For more support, for a "story" that makes sense of all of this, of course read [Blanchard and McBride's little book](#) that can make a huge difference!

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

THIS FOUR WEEKS ON INTERPERSONAL FOCUSING

I've decided that, since there is so much to learn about Interpersonal Focusing, I will spend another four-week cycle on this topic. Last week, I covered [Using A Third Person As A Listening Facilitator](#). This week I review Ken Blanchard and Margaret McBride's book, [The One Minute Apology: A Powerful Way To Make Things Better](#) and offer an Intuitive Focusing exercise to help you begin a "One Minute Apology" if there is some mistake you have made festering and needing resolution.

If you haven't yet, click here for a free download of my [complete Chapter 5: Interpersonal Focusing](#) from the manual, *Focusing in Community (Focusing en Comunidad)*. Also, click here to find [Interpersonal Focusing Case Studies](#) at my website.

Complete Focusing Session

Using Focusing to Completely Articulate a Positive Experience or "What's In The Way?"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

If you just joined us, you can "catch up" on this cycle, which is in Week Two, by reading [archived e-newsletters](#) starting with Instant "Ahah!" #7.

If you want to learn more about past teaching/exercises related to Interpersonal Focusing to resolve conflicts, scroll down the archive another month and see Interpersonal Felt Sensing: This flower is beautiful TO ME Week 1, Interpersonal Felt Sensing Exercise, Interpersonal: Non-Violent Communication Week 2, Interpersonal: Verbal Abuse Vs. Focusing Protocol Week 3 , and Interpersonal: Myth of Dominance and Focusing Protocol Week 4.

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: "Sitting With" and Completely Articulating A Positive Experience

But, today, we are going to be reminded that Intuitive Focusing can be used to experience fully, articulate, and "keep" and "revisit" and "recreate" positive experiences, as well as for problem solving "stuck" situations.

So, I am going to ask you to spend some time with a positive experience related to intimate relationship: perhaps something new if you tried the Instant Intimacy exercise this week; perhaps an older memory of intimacy in your present relationship, perhaps, if you have no significant other now, a memory of a time when intimacy and sharing was present in the past. You will simply spend Intuitive Focusing time with this memory, fully tasting and making words/images for what was so special about it, asking yourself how you might

bring this intimacy into your life now, if it is missing, or savoring it if it is present.

Or, if "intimacy" doesn't feel right, then choose another positive experience to spend Focusing time with.

And, if what you really need is problem solving, perhaps on why you and your partner couldn't do the "sharing your day" exercise or where it got stuck or, if you have no partner, where you are "stuck" in finding one, then go back to Instant Ahah! #1, either in your mini-manual or online as [Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You](#) and adapt those instructions to your need.

You can read the instructions to yourself below or follow me on this YouTube Video:



Gendlin's Focusing to explore and enhance a Positive Experience: Love, Joy, Fun, Friendship...

Focusing On A Positive Experience (20 minutes)

---Get comfortable in a chair or lying on the floor, letting your weight fall into the surface under you, trusting it to support you ---

---Turn inward by closing your eyes and beginning to just notice your breathing, noticing the breath going in --- and out --- in --- and out--- in --- and out ---
1 minute

---Notice where you have tension in your body, perhaps your neck, shoulders, legs, face 30 seconds

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

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

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

---Now, bring to mind a specific positive experience about which you want to know more ---

1 minute

---Bring back the detailed memory of that experience ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, carefully try to find words for the bodily feel, or an image or gesture. Go carefully back and forth between the symbols and the feel of the whole thing until you find words or an image or a gesture that are just right. Take your time to explore the experience thoroughly, making symbols for many aspects of it, enriching it.

1 minute or more

---Now, gently ask yourself, "What was so special about this experience for me?", and see what comes in the center of your body, the place where you have "intuitions" or the "bodily felt sense," the "intuitive feel"---

1 minute

---Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that felt sense ---

1 minute

---And ask yourself, "What else makes that experience special?" and see what comes as an "intuitive feel," somewhere in the center of your body ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, think of some symbol, a word or phrase or a picture, a song or movie or book, anything that you can find that would "represent" the feel of this whole positive experience for you, so that you could use that symbol as a "doorway" back into this whole positive experience ---

1 minute

---And ask your body, "Is there any way that I want to bring this into a present relationship or share it with someone? Any way to make this kind of experience more present in my life right now?" and see what comes---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---See if you can imagine some small step you could take to make this positive experience more present in your life ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

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

--- If you find yourself "stirred up" by reflecting upon these situations, use the "Present Time" exercise to separate from that reactivity and come fully back to the present: Choose a shape, like round or rectangular, or a color, like black or orange, and name everything in the room that falls into that category, looking very carefully at everything around you. This "outer focus" should allow you to put the "internal focus" aside until another day.

--- If that is actually impossible for you, then take out Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You and follow the Complete Focusing Instructions included, until something "shifts" inside ---

You can use the symbol to help you get back to the "bodily feel" of this positive experience any time you want, as well as enriching your relationship by sharing it with your partner.

Instant "Ahah!"s #8: Sharing Your Day = Instant Intimacy

FROM INCREASED INTIMACY TO INCREASED SEXUALITY

For those just joining this e-course, I want to say that, out of ten months of new learnings about Listening and Focusing, this is the one month where I place special emphasis upon intimacy in relationship, including sexual intimacy. However, it is my goal to address the 'whole person,' at home and at work and as deeply integrated into a relational world. So, I am also addressing our most intimate and committed relationships, and how to make them better.

Go to the [new e-newsletter archive](#) and scroll down a bit to the first week of Instant "Ahah"#8, if you want to catch up on the earlier emails in this four weeks on Intimacy, especially practicing the "Sharing Intimacy" exercise (also repeated at the bottom of this e-news) to increase communication and closeness before moving on to more explicitly sexual exercises below).

Setting Up "Dates" To Insure Opportunity

Instant "Ahah!" # 8: "Sharing Your Day" (see below) will increase intimacy, sensuality, the desire for sexual closeness. However, even in the best of relationships, keeping sexuality alive seems to be aided by "making dates," setting up specific times as protected space for sexual intimacy.

Remember, within a set up time, you can be as spontaneous as you want. Some people may find a certain routine creates a ritual "Sacred Space," for others it may be important that "anything can happen." However, once the early romance is over, and especially when jobs and children and chores and TV can gobble up all available time, it is important to set up "dates" (just like when you were first getting to know each other) which guarantee an opportunity for sexual intimacy to arise.

The longer couples go without having sex, the harder it can become to bridge that gap. And having sex really does increase intimacy for some people, rather than the other way around (increased intimacy increasing sexual desire). So, many couples find that aiming for two to three sexual encounters per week, along with daily "Sharing Your Day," can be optimum for keeping the sexual channel open in the midst of busy lives.

Even including lighting candles, starting music, doing massage to increase sensuality, 45 minutes to an hour can be plenty of time for a wonderful sexual encounter. In the beginning, it may be important to allow more time to take away pressure. But having a wonderful, memorable "date" takes little enough time that couples can make a commitment to fit that time into their schedules.

Erotic Equality: Untangling Sexual Desire

So, one partner might say, "Two to three times a week! But I hardly ever feel like having sex!" and the other might say, "Two or three times a week! That is nowhere near enough times to meet my need!" And upon this difference in sexual desire many relationships have foundered.

Here are some possible solutions. They are based in the ideas of equality and negotiation basic to the entire Creative Edge Focusing model. However, for some people, they may break sexual taboos, so, if you are uncomfortable with these suggestions, feel free to stop reading! These are all links to Dr. McGuire's blogs:

[Erotic Massage To Increase Desire](#)

[Self-Satisfaction To Equalize Desire](#)

[Learning Self-Satisfaction](#)

[Sensitivity To Issues Of Sexual Abuse](#)

[Increasing Intimacy With Sexy Board Games](#)

INSTANT INTIMACY, FINDING PARTNERS, DEEPENING SENSUALITY: The "Sharing Your Day" Exercise Itself

These four weeks, the exercise is to be done between committed partners, friends, family members. It is a basis for keeping intimacy alive in long-term relationships. I will also share what I know about how this intimate sharing can carry over into increased sensuality/sexuality.

INSTANT "AHAH!" 8

Sharing Your Day: *Instant Intimacy*

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www.cefocusing.com

Time = Love

With your significant other: Every day, and I mean religiously, set aside about 40 minutes to sit down and "share your day." Get a drink or a snack or go in the hot tub -an uninterrupted space away from other family members. It might only take 20 minutes, but it is ideal to have plenty of time available.

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Here are short videos for practicing Listening if you need to clear some misunderstandings through better communication: (see these videos above on page _____,)

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QUICK LINKS TO CLASSES, BLOG, ARTICLES, ETC.

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

[Experiential Focusing Therapy manual](#)

[Certified Focusing Trainers and Therapists](#)

[Creative Edge Focusing website](#)

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

[Case Studies](#)

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

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

[New E-Newsletter Archive](#)

[Ultimate Self Help Blog](#)

Getting A Felt Sense of Interpersonal Situations

Group Conflict Resolution Using Dynamic Facilitation vs. Collaborative Edge Decision Making

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN GROUPS: Dynamic Facilitation (DF) and Collaborative Edge Decision Making (CEDM) as two models

DF and CEDM are two models which increase [Listening](#) and access to the [Creative Edge](#), the "intuitive feel" of non-linear creativity in group decision making contexts. CEDM teaches rules and roles for efficient, time-limited task-oriented meetings in hierarchical as well as nonhierarchical organizations. DF introduces an outside Listening Facilitator, doesn't require participants to learn

any skills, and can be especially helpful in dealing with huge, polarized conflicts.

Collaborative Edge Decision Making (CEDM)

In CEDM, Dr. McGuire's method for avoiding and also resolving interpersonal conflict during group decision making meetings, there are basic simple rules and norms which everyone can learn. They protect the quiet, uninterrupted space needed for individuals to access the Creative Edge, the "intuitive feel" of innovative thinking and creative problem solving. They also enable other group members to hear new possibilities for Win/Win solutions. The main rules are:

1. "No Interruption" during speaking turns.
2. Indicate wish for a turn by raising a finger.
3. Maximum of three minutes per speaking turn
4. Use of Focused Listening before disagreeing
5. Prioritized agenda with agreed time limits
6. Use of "When The Going Gets Rough Procedures" during conflict or confusion, which can include:
 - a) Silent Group Focusing followed by Round-Robin (no cross-talk sharing)
 - b) Interpersonal Focusing between two people facilitated by a third-person Listener
 - c) Break Out Groups for Round-Robin Sharing, Focusing Partnerships, or Interpersonal Focusing
 - d) Traditional Brainstorming and other techniques

Leadership, or facilitation of meetings, is divided into several roles which can be rotated among group members, e.g., every group member can learn the skills involved in each role and can take active responsibility during group meetings.

Breaking leadership down into specific tasks also ensures that all of these tasks get done, instead of one "leader" trying to keep tabs on everything at once. The "shared leadership" roles are:

1. Agenda Keeper: keeps track of "content" of the meeting, keeps the group "on task"
2. Process Monitor: keeps track of the "process" at meetings, how group members are treating each other in terms of turn-taking, not interrupting, Listening Response.
3. Time-Keeper: makes sure that the group sticks to the time schedule for agenda items as well as timing individual speaking turns
4. Alternate Process Monitor: takes over if the actual Process Monitor becomes involved as a participant in discussion

5. Recorder: records minutes of the meeting, especially including specifically asking the group if a decision has been made.

- 6.

CEDM is especially effective for time-limited meetings among coworkers who meet together frequently, can learn and follow the rules and shared leadership roles, and need to move through an agenda or specific problem solving tasks, reaching decisions.

CEDM, with its Coordinated Collaboration model, adapts the best of collaborative problem solving within hierarchical decision making structures.

At the same time that CEDM looks for maximum collaborative input, Coordinators/Project Managers/Team Leaders/Executives can still take the collaborative information and make decisions as needed within the hierarchical goals of the organization.

Click here for Dr. McGuire's short-form "[Collaborative Thinking How To's](#)" which can introduce the model to all group members and here to download Dr. McGuire's full article, [Collaborative Edge Decision Making \(CEDM\)](#), and, [en espanol](#), both with actual handouts outlining rules and roles to be passed out at meetings.

Dynamic Facilitation (DF)

Dynamic Facilitation, formulated by Jim Rough, is a method of conflict resolution that seems to be very compatible with the goals of CEDM. It also shares similar means for discovering innovative, win/win solutions: uninterrupted speaking turns with a Third Person Listening Facilitator as moderator. This allows speakers to tap into The Creative Edge, the "intuitive feel" of non-linear creative thinking and other group members to actually listen to what speakers are saying instead of interrupting and arguing.

However, DF is also very dissimilar from the structured CEDM model for efficient, time-limited meetings. DF is specifically designed for those times when rules and roles might get in the way. Because the DF Facilitator takes over the role of Active Listener, group members "do not have to learn any specific skills" and can "let it all hang out." DF can be especially useful in breaking log jams, resolving large, stuck, polarized situations, as well as for every day creative thinking. Here is the description at the Dynamic Facilitation Website, www.DynamicFacilitation.com :

"Dynamic Facilitation is the essence of leadership, where one person helps others face difficult issues creatively and collaboratively and achieve unanimous, win/win solutions. It achieves this magic by eliciting a nonlinear,

heartfelt, transformational quality of thinking called "choice-creating" - vs. "decision-making" or "problem-solving" or "creative problem-solving."

Dynamic Facilitation doesn't require that participants learn new steps or commit to certain behaviors. People can just be themselves. The dynamic facilitator works with each person's natural inclinations and genius, helping all come together with a better solution in faster time. The process builds trust and new levels of capability in each person. It's different than traditional forms of facilitation.

You can use Dynamic Facilitation in many different areas ... building teams, conflict resolution, transformational leadership, communication, education, personal transformation, community dialogue, innovation, trust-building, coaching, and especially for addressing big impossible-seeming issues. It opens new doors of possibility for large organizations, communities and even democracy through a new whole-system change process known as the "Wisdom Council". The Wisdom Council process is now being used to involve and empower employees, citizens, conference participants, and members of organizations in many parts of the world."

Rosa Zubizarreta, Certified Focusing Professional, at www.diapraaxis.com , is combining her knowledge of DF with her knowledge of Focusing and Listening and Gendlin's theoretical model and offering training in DF. Her website is rich with readings and even manuals for using DF in groups.

In a world full of conflict and need for creative problem solving and decision making at the group level, it is wise to welcome as many models as possible for incorporating Intuitive Focusing and Listening into models for collaborative thinking.

EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

Spend your time learning as much as you can about DF at www.DynamicFacilitation.com and www.diapraaxis.com .

Also study Dr. McGuire's Collaborative Edge Decision Making model from the links above. Click here for Dr. McGuire's short-form "Collaborative Thinking How To's" which can introduce the model to all group members and here to download Dr. McGuire's full article, Collaborative Edge Decision Making (CEDM), and, en espanol, both with actual handouts outlining rules and roles to be passed out at meetings.

Spend some Focusing time just sitting with your "intuitive sense" of these two models, their similarities and differences, their possibilities of application in different group situations you are involved in.

Take any action steps you can to implement one or both models in groups you are involved in.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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THIS FOUR WEEKS ON INTERPERSONAL FOCUSING

I've decided that, since there is so much to learn about Interpersonal Focusing, I will spend another four-week cycle on this topic. Week One e-newsletter covered Using A Third Person as a Listening Facilitator. Week Two reviewed Ken Blanchard and Margaret McBride's *The One Minute Apology* and offered an Intuitive Focusing exercise to help you begin a "One Minute Apology" if there is some mistake you have made festering and needing resolution (links are in [e-newsletter archives](#) for catch-up).

If you haven't yet, you can also click here for a blog link to a free download of my [complete Chapter 5: Interpersonal Focusing](#) from the manual, *Focusing in Community (Focusing en Comunidad)*. Also, click here to find [Interpersonal Focusing Case Studies](#) at my website.

Complete Focusing Session

Using Focusing to Articulate Love, Beauty, Awe... or "What's In The Way?"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: "Sitting With" and Completely Articulating A Positive Experience

Today, again, we are going to be reminded that Intuitive Focusing can be used to experience fully, articulate, and "keep" and "revisit" and "recreate" positive experiences, as well as for problem solving "stuck" situations.

So, I am going to ask you to spend some time with a positive experience related to intimate relationship: perhaps something new if you tried the Instant Intimacy exercise this week; perhaps an older memory of intimacy in your present relationship, perhaps, if you have no significant other now, a memory of a time when intimacy and sharing was present in the past. You will simply spend Intuitive Focusing time with this memory, fully tasting and making words/images for what was so special about it, asking yourself how you might bring this intimacy into your life now, if it is missing, or savoring it if it is present.

Or, if "intimacy" doesn't feel right, then choose another positive experience to spend Focusing time with.

And, if what you really need is problem solving, perhaps on why you and your partner couldn't do the "sharing your day" exercise or where it got stuck or, if you have no partner, where you are "stuck" in finding one, then go back to Instant Ahah! #1, either in your mini-manual or online as Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You and adapt those instructions to your need.

Focusing On A Positive Experience (20 minutes)

Here is a link to the YouTube video where you can follow my voice instead of reading the below instructions to yourself:



Gendlin's Focusing To Enhance Positive Experiences

---Get comfortable in a chair or lying on the floor, letting your weight fall into the surface under you, trusting it to support you ---

---Turn inward by closing your eyes and beginning to just notice your breathing, noticing the breath going in --- and out --- in --- and out--- in --- and out ---
1 minute

---Notice where you have tension in your body, perhaps your neck, shoulders, legs, face 30 seconds

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

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

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

---Now, bring to mind a specific positive experience about which you want to know more ---

1 minute

---Bring back the detailed memory of that experience ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, carefully try to find words for the bodily feel, or an image or gesture. Go carefully back and forth between the symbols and the feel of the

whole thing until you find words or an image or a gesture that are just right. Take your time to explore the experience thoroughly, making symbols for many aspects of it, enriching it.

1 minute or more

---Now, gently ask yourself, "What was so special about this experience for me?", and see what comes in the center of your body, the place where you have "intuitions" or the "bodily felt sense," the "intuitive feel"---

1 minute

---Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that felt sense ---

1 minute

---And ask yourself, "What else makes that experience special?" and see what comes as an "intuitive feel," somewhere in the center of your body ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, think of some symbol, a word or phrase or a picture, a song or movie or book, anything that you can find that would "represent" the feel of this whole positive experience for you, so that you could use that symbol as a "doorway" back into this whole positive experience ---

1 minute

---And ask your body, "Is there any way that I want to bring this into a present relationship or share it with someone? Any way to make this kind of experience more present in my life right now?" and see what comes---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---See if you can imagine some small step you could take to make this positive experience more present in your life ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

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

You can use the symbol to help you get back to the "bodily feel" of this positive experience any time you want, as well as enriching your relationship by sharing it with your partner.

--- If you find yourself "stirred up" by reflecting upon these situations, use the "Present Time" exercise to separate from that reactivity and come fully back to the present: Choose a shape, like round or rectangular, or a color, like black or orange, and name everything in the room that falls into that category, looking

very carefully at everything around you. This "outer focus" should allow you to put the "internal focus" aside until another day.

--- If that is actually impossible for you, then take out Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You and follow the Complete Focusing Instructions included, until something "shifts" inside ---

Here is a YouTube video walking you through the "Find Out What Is Bothering You" with Complete Focusing instructions:



Something Bothering You? Use Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing Process to Explore

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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If you stick with us for a year, you will eventually experience all the past lessons as the sequence restarts in the Fall. If you want to catch up on previous e-newsletters on Interpersonal Focusing now, go to the [e-newsletter archive](#) and scroll down.

INSTANT "AHAH!" #8: SHARING YOUR DAY

"I don't want to talk about my day! I hate my job! I hate my life!" Try Re-Evaluation Co-Counseling

AND "How do I find a life partner?"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

"I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT MY DAY!"

"I hate my job! I hate my life!"

Many people feel like they hate their job, and will say, when asked to participate in "Sharing Your Day": "I hate my job! The last thing I want to do when I get home is talk about it!" and go off for a drink and TV, or some other diversion, something that helps them avoid talking about their day.

I think it is obvious that this is a big problem, not only in terms of increasing intimacy, but also in terms of the health and happiness of that person, as well as the relationship.

If a person is that unhappy in their job, then something needs to be done about it. And perhaps the first step on that path is to begin talking, begin "Sharing Your Day" with their partner. Through talking, without interruption or judgment, something new can happen, a new possible action step arises.

Talking without being interrupted allows automatic access to The Creative Edge, the "intuitive feel" from which new possibilities can arise. Finding the "intuitive feel" is the first step of Intuitive Focusing. So, painful though it may seem, the first step to a new, happier life can be the simple "Sharing Your Day." You will find this exercise, Instant "Ahah!" #8 at the bottom of this email and in the free download, Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual.

Re-evaluation Co-Counseling: Just Telling Your Story Is Healing

In a form of peer counseling called Reevaluation Co-Counseling (click this link to find lots of information on actually trying out "RC" <http://www.rc.org/>), the main "intervention" is simply "Warm, caring, non-judgmental attention." The two people sit close enough so that they can hold hands. The Listener simply

looks into the Speaker's eyes with "warm, caring, non-judgmental attention." Each person takes an equal turn as Speaker and Listener, anywhere from 20 minutes to one hour turns.

The Speaker starts with their earliest memories and just tells the story of their life, looking into the Listener's eyes. As they tell their memories, the Speaker welcomes and allows any manifestation of emotion or tension discharge. In the founder, Harvey Jackin's, list of forms of discharge, are shaking as a discharge of fear, laughing as a discharge of light fear (embarrassment, shame), yawning as a discharge of boredom, crying as a discharge of hurt and pain.

For the first several months (or perhaps the first year?!), this is all that was done. The Speaker tells their memories over and over, as long as more emotions are being discharged. New memories arise and are healed through emotional discharge. Listeners eventually also learn other "interventions" to help Speakers get out of stuck patterns and into emotional discharge, but "warm, caring, non-judgmental attention" is the main one.

See if you can start "Sharing Your Day." Nonjudgmental listening, no interruptions is key! If you and your partner want to add holding hands and looking into each other's' eyes, give it a try. Read up on RC at <http://www.rc.org> and try out these simple peer counseling skills.

If either partner's pain is so great that "Sharing Your Day" is absolutely not possible, then professional help can be sought. Click here to read about Focusing-Oriented Therapy (FOT). Visit The Focusing Institute under Learning Focusing to find both FOTs and Focusing Teachers who can help you get started in the geographical search section under Learning Focusing.

Passive and Active Listening to Open Communication

Here are two other simple exercises, based upon empathic listening in non-interrupted speaking turns, to open communication and resolve conflicts in the way of starting "Sharing Your Day" and other exercises leading to increased emotional and sexual intimacy:

**Passive Listening Turns: Uninterrupted,
equal turns to stop arguing, increase
communication**

**Active Listening: Use active, empathic
listening to increase communication and
resolve conflicts in relationships**

**Remember, scroll down in this email to find the simple "Sharing Your Day"
exercise if you are ready to try increasing intimacy right now.**

"How Do I Find A Life Partner?"

**In the original Changes group, any person could have a "team" of
Listening/Focusing peer helpers to help them solve a difficult life problem or**

write a book, whatever. I had a "team" to meet with me and plan how I was going to find a life-partner.

And we carried out the plan: with my team's support, I presented on Listening/Focusing at the Association For Humanistic Psychology in Chicago that year, and I also went to a presentation that Eugene Gendlin, creator of Focusing, was doing there. The idea: maximize the statistical probability of finding a Focusing-Oriented person to relate to. And, at the Gendlin presentation, I saw him. And, at my presentation, I met his friend. And --- eventually, I married him, even though he lived in Canada ---

So, I thought, "How about a Focusing Singles Network---- something like 'speed dating,' where you get to meet a lot of people, a few minutes each, but, of course, we could just use the Changes meeting format: Check In (introduction of self), then, perhaps, a Round Robin of short listening/focusing turns --- well, really, just Check -In might be sufficient?", just each person saying a little by way of introduction.

Anyway, someone could organize it FOR A FEE or for fun and run it as a phone free conference call or locally...I know, it might sound crazy, but, really, finding a Focusing-Oriented significant other, when you are Introverted like many of us, can be really difficult ---- of course, this model could be developed locally, or regionally (would be ideal to have them in different languages, in different countries). Anyway, this is the seed of an idea.

Also, likely there might be a separate Focusing Gay Singles Network, or maybe address this issue in the introductions? I know for many gays it is difficult to somehow find out who in a group is also gay...a lot of difficult undercover work unless this is addressed directly somehow.

Lori Ketover is also starting to use a Focusing Support Group model to introduce small groups of people to each other by phone in order to find partners for Focusing Partnership through the Focusing Institute Focusing Partnership program --- just hearing someone's voice, seeing how they do listening/focusing, seems to really help some people match up. So, why not extend this idea to more conscious matching up of Focusing Singles?

Otherwise, my best advice to find a Focusing-oriented life-partner is to attend Focusing workshops, conferences, presentations, in your area and internationally, do presentations, participate on e-lists --- I started an interesting long-distance relationship when I met someone at a Focusing International in Chicago, and he lived in California, me in Oregon.

Although, I met my present life-partner through the persistent efforts of a friend who was a business professor --- and kept introducing me to business professors --- and I have taught him Listening/Focusing since we married.

Instant "Ahah!" # 8

Sharing Your Day: Instant Intimacy

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Creative Edge Focusing™
www.cefocusing.com

Time = Love

With your significant other: Every day, and I mean religiously, set aside about 40 minutes to sit down and "share your day." Get a drink or a snack or go in the hot tub -an uninterrupted space away from other family members.

At a separate time, you can also do this with your children, each person having an uninterrupted turn.

Just Warm, Silent Attention: No Interruptions, No Criticism

Each person gets to talk without interruption, refreshing in his/her own mind and describing to the other the events of the day, usually in chronological order, often starting with the night before: anxieties, dreams. The speaker gets to share every event of the day which rises to consciousness, no matter how trivial it seems. This can easily take about twenty minutes

The other person simply listens quietly, not saying a word (Well, maybe an occasional "Wow!" or "How interesting!" or "Oh, no!" or "Yikes!").

Then, when the first speaker is done, it is the other person's turn - same deal: No interruptions, no opinions, no judgments.

No Problem Solving

And no problem solving. At least initially, save problem solving for another time, or do it before or after. Too easily, problem solving can eat up the sharing space, and intimacy is lost. Problem solving can also bring up conflicts, not wanted in this sharing space. And fear of problem solving can make people dread sharing time, instead of looking forward to this peaceful, intimate lull in a busy day.

Intimacy = Sharing

That's it!!! You will thoroughly understand what your significant other does all day, the frustrations, the tedium, the other people in his or her world, the small joys, the conflicts, the stresses, the successes, the low points, the high points. And each person will feel that their life is valid and valuable, no matter how trivial or repetitious it may seem to be.

Over time, you will get to know each other intimately, and this intimacy will carry over into other areas of your shared life. Intimacy increases sensuality and sexuality between partners. Intimacy also leads children to turn to their parents when needing help.

Instant "Ahah!" s 2 and 3 show how to use both passive and active listening for problem solving. But, here, you are using passive listening simply to let your partner or child be the center of attention. At the same time, the speaker becomes the "center of attention" to him- or her-self, taking the time to fully receive his or her day.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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If you just joined us, you can "catch up" on this cycle, which is starting Week Four, by reading [archived e-newsletters](#), scrolling down to Instant "Ahah" #8: Intimacy Week One and reading each of the e-newsletters Week Two and Three.

INTERPERSONAL: KLEIN'S INTERACTIVE FOCUSING PROTOCOL

The Double-Empathic "Golden Moment"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

INTERACTIVE FOCUSING

"What is the purpose or intention of Interactive Focusing?"

Most simply said, the purpose or intention of Interactive Focusing is to allow you to touch into your direct experience in the presence of another person and through your direct experience in the safe, empathic, accepting and compassionate environment which you create together to become aware of and to share your inner truths thereby building bonds of intimacy."

So states Janet Klein (R.I.P., March, 2010)'s introduction to the website for the self-help skill called Interactive Focusing created by Janet and Mary McGuire.

And further:

"Interactive Focusing"

Interactive Focusing develops directly from intrapersonal and transactional Focusing. Interactive Focusing requires that the participants get in touch with an unclear issue that is carried in their bodysense. It requires that there is a listener using reflective responding as their listening modality. But it further requires that the full experience is one that is created jointly and dependent on a balanced participation by both. Because it is a mutual experience, certain safeguards must be in place. Interactive Focusing has developed into a practice of empathy and compassion in a safe environment, and Interactive Focusing has become the mode for developing empathy, acceptance and compassion in a safe environment."

Here is one version of the full Interactive Focusing Protocol:

Interactive Focusing Format

By Mary Melady, reviewed and edited by Janet Klein

Part One: The Focuser's Story

A.

Focuser: Tells a reasonable part of her story, always touching into the bodysense.

Listener: Listens from the bodysense and offers reflective responses throughout the story-telling.

B.

Focuser: Resonates the reflection for accuracy, to see if the inner experience shifts, to see if more comes. Gives Listener feedback, e.g. "I need more time with that," "I'd like to hear that again," "Yes---," "No, it's more like---," "There's another part I need you to hear ---"

Listener: Reflects the feedback to acknowledge the correction and to let the Focuser resonate it, e.g. "So it's more like ---," "It's not ---, it's ---"

C.

Focuser: Checks to see if she has come to a resting place with this part of her story.

Listener: Also, can check with the Focuser to see if this part feels complete.

Part Two: The Double Empathic Moment *The "Golden Moment"*

D.

Focuser: Invites the Listener to go inside to the bodysense to form the empathic response: How does the Listener get that it is for the Focuser from the Focuser's internal frame of reference. At the same time, the Focuser checks inside to get the edge of where she is with her own story and to be gentle with what is there for her.

Listener: Goes inside: Takes time to let a bodysense form. Listens inside *as if* she were the Focuser. How might all that feel for the storyteller?

E.

Note: Usually the Listener goes first with the empathic response.

Listener: Offers the *empathic response*: The metaphor or image that has formed. It is usually brief and more poetic, capturing the essence of it.

Focuser: The Focuser resonates the Listener's empathic response to see if it fits and gives feedback if needed, e.g. "That really captures it," or "It's more like --- for me."

F.

Focuser: Offers what came when she went inside to get how it is for her *now* in this new moment.

Listener: Gives reflective responses.

G.

Focuser: Quiet moment to savor how it feels to share oneself and feel empathically heard.

Listener: Quiet moment to savor how it feels to hear and take someone into your space, empathically.

Part Three: The Interactive Response

The pair switches roles

H.

The Focuser becomes the "new" Listener. Asks what got touched inside the "new" Focuser by what she just shared.

The Listener becomes the "new" Focuser. Checks inside to see what got touched by the first Focuser's story.

They follow A-G above so the Listener has a chance to tell her story and feel empathically heard.

Part Four: The Interactive Closing - The relationship check

I.

Focuser and Listener: How do I feel about you now that we have shared all of that?

Focuser and Listener: How do I feel about myself after sharing all of that with you?

How do I feel about *us*?

Summary: The Interactive Focusing Model Short form for Dyads

Part One: The Focuser's Story

- The Focuser tells her story
- The Listener gives reflections
- The Focuser resonates and gives feedback if necessary

Part Two: The Double Empathic Moment

- Full *Empathic Response* by both the Listener and Focuser

Part Three: The Interactive Response

- Exchange roles and repeat Part One and Part Two

Part Four: The Interactive closing, The Relationship Check

- How they *now* feel about each other and
- How they *now* feel about themselves.

Since Janet Klein's death in 2010, this website no longer exists. However, here is a link to a [free PDF file of one of her manuals](#) .

Here you can see a short Introduction to Interactive Focusing with Janet Klein and Mary McGuire in 2009:



Introduction to Interactive Focusing with Janet Klein and Mary McGuire

I do believe that Janet (and Mary McGuire, co-developer) have a role of Coach perhaps similar to the use of the Third-Person Listening Facilitator role in my, Kathy McGuire's earlier model for Interpersonal Focusing. The protocol as given above seems to rely on both the Focuser and Listener having a good degree of skill in speaking from an "owning," felt-sensing place and being able to Listen without reacting. The "Double Empathic" or "Golden Moment" does give a good moment for both parties to share their empathic understanding of the experience of the other and would make a nice addition to Kathy McGuire's Interpersonal Focusing Protocol ([find links to Free Downloads of Kathy McGuire's Interpersonal Focusing Chapter, in English and Spanish at top of this blog](#)).

EXERCISE: INTERACTIVE FOCUSING

Interactive Focusing can be practiced when there really isn't any big misunderstanding the two people can simply develop the habit of one as Listener taking in what the other is saying as the Focuser, reflecting it, letting the Focuser "check and resonate and clarify."

Next, the Listener goes inside and senses into a deeper Empathic Response, trying to really grasp what it is like to BE the Focuser. The Focuser also checks deeply whether this Empathic Response "captures all of it." This is the Double Empathic, Golden Moment.

THEN the Listener has a turn to use Focusing upon the new "felt sense" stirred in him or her by hearing the other's Focusing Turn. This is different from the usual Focusing Partnership Turn, where each Focuser works on their own individual issue, not their bodily-felt sense "reaction" or response to the turn of the other.

Interactive Focusing can be used as a first, non-threatening step to learning how to deal with the "felt senses" in us that are stirred "interactively," by the words of another. Develop the habit of Interactive Focusing so that the skill will be there when there IS a problem in the relationship.

Learn as much as you can and download the free manual!!!! Then, try it out with a partner or significant other!!! Or try it with several different people. And/or try it out with your partner every week! Then you will be ready, already having the habit of "empathy in relationship" when troublesome "felt senses" arise interpersonally.

NEED MORE PROFESSIONAL HELP WITH YOUR RELATIONSHIP?

Go to [The International Focusing Institute website](http://www.focusinginstitute.org) to find a listing of Certified Focusing Trainers and Focusing-Oriented Therapists (FOTs) worldwide. You can also find FOTs listed at www.focusingtherapy.org.

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Complete Focusing Session

Using Focusing to Completely Articulate a Positive Experience or "What's In The Way?"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: "Sitting With" and Completely Articulating A Positive Experience

Today, again, we are going to be reminded that Intuitive Focusing can be used to experience fully, articulate, and "keep" and "revisit" and "recreate" positive experiences, as well as for problem solving "stuck" situations.

So, I am going to ask you to spend some time with a positive experience related to intimate relationship: perhaps something new if you tried the Instant Intimacy exercise this week; perhaps an older memory of intimacy in your present relationship, perhaps, if you have no significant other now, a memory of a time when intimacy and sharing was present in the past. You will simply spend Intuitive Focusing time with this memory, fully tasting and making words/images for what was so special about it, asking yourself how you might bring this intimacy into your life now, if it is missing, or savoring it if it is present.

Or, if "intimacy" doesn't feel right, then choose another positive experience to spend Focusing time with.

And, if what you really need is problem solving, perhaps on why you and your partner couldn't do the "sharing your day" exercise or where it got stuck or, if you have no partner, where you are "stuck" in finding one, then go back to Instant Ahah! #1, either in your mini-manual or online as Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You" and adapt those instructions to your need.

Focusing On A Positive Experience (20 minutes)

Here is the link to the You Tube video where I will walk you through the exercise, so you can close your eyes instead of reading to yourself:



Focusing Upon and Enriching Positive Experiences

---Get comfortable in a chair or lying on the floor, letting your weight fall into the surface under you, trusting it to support you ---

---Turn inward by closing your eyes and beginning to just notice your breathing, noticing the breath going in --- and out --- in --- and out--- in --- and out ---
1 minute

---Notice where you have tension in your body, perhaps your neck, shoulders, legs, face 30 seconds

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

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

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

---Now, bring to mind a specific positive experience about which you want to know more ---

1 minute

---Bring back the detailed memory of that experience ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, carefully try to find words for the bodily feel, or an image or gesture. Go carefully back and forth between the symbols and the feel of the whole thing until you find words or an image or a gesture that are just right. Take your time to explore the experience thoroughly, making symbols for many aspects of it, enriching it.

1 minute or more

---Now, gently ask yourself, "What was so special about this experience for me?", and see what comes in the center of your body, the place where you have "intuitions" or the "bodily felt sense," the "intuitive feel"---

1 minute

---Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that felt sense ---

1 minute

---And ask yourself, "What else makes that experience special?" and see what comes as an "intuitive feel," somewhere in the center of your body ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, think of some symbol, a word or phrase or a picture, a song or movie or book, anything that you can find that would "represent" the feel of this whole positive experience for you, so that you could use that symbol as a "doorway" back into this whole positive experience ---

1 minute

---And ask your body, "Is there any way that I want to bring this into a present relationship or share it with someone? Any way to make this kind of experience more present in my life right now?" and see what comes---

1 minute

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

1 minute

---See if you can imagine some small step you could take to make this positive experience more present in your life ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

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

You can use the symbol to help you get back to the "bodily feel" of this positive experience any time you want, as well as enriching your relationship by sharing it with your partner.

--- If you find yourself "stirred up" by reflecting upon these situations, use the "Present Time" exercise to separate from that reactivity and come fully back to the present: Choose a shape, like round or rectangular, or a color, like black or orange, and name everything in the room that falls into that category, looking very carefully at everything around you. This "outer focus" should allow you to put the "internal focus" aside until another day.

--- If that is actually impossible for you, then take out Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You and follow the Complete Focusing Instructions included, until something "shifts" inside ---

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

If you just joined us, you can "catch up" on this cycle, which is in Week Four, by reading [archived e-newsletters](#) , scroll back to Instant "Ahah" #8, Week One, then Week two, then Week Three. If you stick with us for a year, you will cycle through all ten Instant "Ahah's," beginning with Ahah! One in the Fall.

INSTANT "AHAH!" # 9: CREATIVITY

From Blocks to Predictable "Ahah!"s

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

FOCUSING ON THE CREATIVE EDGE

"Sitting with" The Unclear Edge

Intuitive Focusing, applied to creative expression, is a methodical, predictable road to "Ah, hah!" experiences. Gendlin's *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981, 1984) is a step-wise procedure for paying attention to the murky,

intuitive, whole-body "feel" of a creative project and going back-and-forth between this Creative Edge and words or images for describing it. When you hit on just the right words or image, you will experience that "Ah, hah! --- Yes, that's it. That is exactly the next step." With continued rounds of Focusing, you can carry the creative project through many steps of problem-solving.

Focusing simply provides specific steps to encourage the "Ah, hah!" process which creative people have always accessed, usually accidentally. Fortunately, the "unconscious," or the concretely available Creative Edge, "the intuitive body sense," can carry more information, all at once, in that murky, wordless "feel," than we can ever carry in our minds consciously. So, during Focusing, the creative problem-solver has access to "all of it," "the whole thing," more than could ever be recited consciously.

From Creative Block To Next Step

For example, a painter is stuck on what a particular painting needs next, right now. She can step back, take a look, and then, ask herself, "What does this painting need?" and, instead of answering from her head, the already-known, she can wait, as long as a minute or more, for the bodily-feel, the intuitive sense, the Creative Edge of "the whole thing, and what it needs now --- " to arise as a murky, wordless "feel," usually in the center of the body, between the throat and stomach --- "What does it need?" --- and waiting, just paying attention to the intuitive feel --- then carefully looking for words or an image or just the right gesture, the next painterly act, the next step toward "completion." Stuck again later? Just follow the same process, stepping back, sensing in, waiting for "the exactly right" next move to arise.

A writer is stuck in a novel: "What does this story need? What does this character need? What happens next?" Again, the writer steps back, takes a moment to go quietly inside, perhaps with eyes closed, and sits with the creative question, setting aside any already-known guesses or solutions, and just waiting, for at least a minute, for the intuitive feel of the "whole thing --- this whole question" to arise. Then, just as carefully, he looks for words or images or metaphors that are exactly "right" in capturing the "feel of it all." And, then, "Ah, hah! That is exactly it." Or, in writing even more than in painting, he can try out the body's best guess, and, again, check with the body sense: "Is that it?"

Same thing for creative problem solving in a business, engineering, scientific research situation. When "stuck," not knowing the answer in a left-brain way, the problem solver can simply pause for a moment, go quietly inside, and look for the Creative Edge, the "intuitive feel" for "this whole problem," wait at least a minute for the intuitive feel to form, then use Intuitive Focusing to carefully find the exact words or images which "fit" bringing that experience of "Ahah! That is exactly it!"

Often, naturally, artists, writers, dancers "check in" with their "intuitive feel" for a project at many steps throughout the creative process. Learning Intuitive Focusing as a specific Skill will enhance this natural process, as well as giving you a reliable tool for those times when you are "stumped" or "blocked" about what comes next.

The Blurry, Vague, "Feel of the Whole Thing" Holds the Next Steps

Intuitive Focusing is one-half of the two Core Skills of Creative Edge Focusing™. Focusing can be used any time to find out what is bothering you. Focusing specializes in sitting 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 ---

I ask you to choose one or more "creative projects" you can spend Focusing time with during this four-week cycle: an article, a book, a poem, a song, a dance, a marketing campaign, an engineering breakthrough, some project needing creative ideas. This week, we will use Intuitive Focusing on the creative project itself. Next week, we will work more specifically on "blocks" that come up.

In the exercise below, you will practice the six-step Focusing process:

1. Clearing A Space: relax in order to come in touch with your body.
2. Getting A Felt Sense: bring to mind a creative problem or project. You will set aside what you already know and wait, as long as a minute or more, for the "intuitive feel" of the "whole thing" to form in the center of your body.
3. Finding A Handle: look for words or an image that capture the "intuitive feel."

4. **Checking and Resonating:** Go back and forth between the "intuitive feel" and words/images until the symbols are just right and the body says, "Yes, that's it."
5. **Asking:** Then, you will ask an "open-ended question," like "What is so important about that?" or "And what is the feel of that?" or "And what comes next here?" and, instead of answering from your head, you will, again, wait as long as a minute for the "bodily-felt sense" to form in the center of your body. You will use Checking and Resonating again to find symbols that are just right, bring a tension release, a large or small "shift" of "Yes, that is it!" You can repeat 5. several times until you get to a stopping place.
6. **Receiving:** Stopping for a moment to let any new insights register in your body. Appreciating your body/mind for new information. Noticing gratitude or perhaps a feeling of being graced with new insights.

Focusing On A Creative Problem or Project

Here is a link to the YouTube video where I walk you through the exercise. Good idea to have an actual creative project beside you, a story, a poem, a piece of art, if you have something concrete like that you are working on, so you can stop and try out the new ideas, the "intuitive feel" that comes from Focusing:



Gendlin's Focusing Upon A Creative Project:
"Ahah!" Next Steps

(You can read these to yourself now, download them for continuous use, read them into a tape recorder for playback. Leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction)
(One minute)

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 ---)

Now, bring to mind a creative problem or project that needs attention (pause) ---

(One minute or more ---)

Think about it or get a mental image of it ---

(One minute ---)

Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about possible solutions, and, as you carry a
mental image of the problem or project in your mind, just wait and see what comes in the
center of your body, around your heart/chest area, in response (pause) --- not words, but
the intuitive feel of the whole situation, The Creative Edge ---

(One minute ---)

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

Now, gently ask yourself, "Is that it? Would that work here?", and wait, at least a minute,
to see what comes in your wordless intuition, your whole-body sense, The Creative Edge

(One minute ---)

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

(One minute ---)

Now, try that possible solution out in the creative situation, either in your imagination or
by actually writing, painting, tinkering with a model ---

(One minute ---)

Now, ask yourself, "Does that work?" and, again, don't answer from your head, what you
already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for an answer to come in the center of your
body, your wordless intuition, The Creative Edge ---

(One minute ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image for that, "Does that solution work?" ---

(One minute ---)

If the answer is "Yes," a release of bodily tension, a sense of coming unstuck --- then
return to the creative project and work again until there is another place of not-knowing,
where you can begin the whole Focusing process again ---

If the answer is "No," your body remains tense and your energy still blocked, flat, then, set aside everything you have already thought and tried and ask your "subconscious," the "intuitive feel" at The Creative Edge, again: "What does this situation need?", and, again, wait, as long as a minute or more, to see what comes in the center of your chest, an intuitive "feel" for the whole thing ---

(One minute)

Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for whatever has come ---

(One minute)

Keep at this as long as you are comfortable, asking an open-ended question, waiting for an "intuitive feel" of "the whole thing" to emerge, looking for words or an image or even a gesture or action step that fits the intuitive feel "exactly."

(One minute or more ---)

But, if no clear next step arises, just remind yourself that, by spending Focusing time sitting with The Creative Edge, you have added energy and started a new living-forward, and, especially if you continue to hold "the feel of it all" on the back-burner of your mind, later something new will likely pop up ---

(One minute)

Appreciate yourself and your "subconscious," the "intuitive feel," for taking time with this, trusting that taking time is the important thing -- solutions can then arise later.

Remember, it is often easier to learn Intuitive Focusing with the company of a Focused Listener. See links below to find many resources, including self-help groups, and Creative Edge Focusing Consultants for individual Coaching or Classes and Workshops.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise or Interpersonal Exercise to practice this step of Focusing, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually, doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter ensures that you can call upon these new skills when needed! This is Week One of a new four-week cycle.

INTERPERSONAL: PERSONALITY TESTS FOR UNDERSTANDING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and The Keirsey Temperament Sorter

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES: PERSONALITY TESTS

Differences So Vast You Can't Imagine

People are so different in their basic personality and learning styles, talents, and goals that you simply cannot understand anyone deeply without using the Focused Listening skill.

However, personality differences are actually so great that it can be as if the other person sees the world in a completely different way. Even Focused or Empathic Listening may not be enough for you to grasp how different the other person is from you.

At Creative Edge Focusing™, we use a variety of personality tests and measures of individual difference like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) or The Enneagram to make this point about individual differences and uniqueness. We are more interested in getting people to consider the depth and range of individual differences than we are allied with any one measure.

When you really become embattled with someone who is widely different from you, you believe that the person must be from a different planet. They must be crazy. They are evil. All you know is that they are not like you - and that they are not okay. They represent a threat to how you see the world, and you have to get rid of them. This misunderstanding about deep personality differences, or basic differences in ways-of- seeing-the- world, is the root of much violence in this world.

Almost everyone has had such a clash, for instance the stereotypical clash between masculine and feminine, between Thinker and Feeler, between

the responsible Ant and the playful Grasshopper as portrayed in numerous films. These clashes are violent. They destroy relationships, families, students, and business relationships.

In the weeks of this cycle, you will find descriptions of some of our favorite measures of individual differences and links to online tests and more complete descriptions. We suggest that you try out lots of different measures and even several different versions of the same measure, building an "intuitive sense" of your own personality and style rather than rigidly forcing yourself into a pigeon hole, and also trying out various approaches to understanding your family, friends, and colleagues.

Below, you'll find descriptions and links for the MBTI and the Keirsey Temperament Sorter. The MBTI is meant to be given by certified professionals expert in its administration and interpretation (although there are self-scoring versions available). The Keirsey is a user-friendly, less professional version based upon the same Jungian theory.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI): Differing Gifts

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), widely used in business and education, is one way to understand the "differing gifts" of each individual. Based upon psychiatrist Carl Jung's theory, The MBTI measures two orientations (Introversion vs. Extroversion; Judging vs. Perceiving), and four psychological functions (Sensing vs. intuition; Thinking vs. Feeling). Scoring creates 16 distinct personality types, each described with four letters (INFJ; ESTP; ENTJ, etc.). However, there are further complexities. For instance, in each type, two of the four functions are introverted; two are extroverted . You need a chart to figure that out (click here to find a chart, along with Dr. McGuire's summaries, in her article, "Jung, MBTI, and Experiential Theory. For more on masculine and feminine, Thinking and Feeling, according to Jung, Gilligan, and Gendlin, see McGuire's [The Body As A Source Of Knowledge](#)).

The MBTI has been administered to millions in education and business settings, and individuals are surprised to recognize themselves in the personality descriptions. Much research has also shown that MBTI personality types accurately predict career choices ([Myers, Gifts Differing, Consulting Psychologists Press, 1980](#), link to Amazon.com). Even more importantly, the MBTI is widely used in business for personnel decisions and to develop teams that are balanced in terms of contributions from different personality types.

Personality Differences Are Vast, Inexplicable

At a workshop, the trainers had all the Introverts sit at a table together for lunch, and all of the Extroverts at a different table. The Introverts ran out of things to say and excused themselves quickly, needing time to gather energy by taking a walk alone or taking a nap or meditating or reading quietly before the next session.

The Extroverts filled up every silence, competing for turns to talk rather than listening to each other. They could have talked forever, gathering energy from the interaction regardless of whether they understood each other.

The Association for Personality Types (www.apinternational.org) makes it clear that the MBTI should be administered by a trained professional who can appropriately explain and interpret test scores. However, for an informal idea of your Jungian personality type, we can suggest the following websites. Take several different versions of the tests for greater clarity. Some of the sites ask you to pay for further information:

- www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp (free test)
- www.similarminds.com (free tests)
- www.personalitytype.com (free quiz)
- www.16types.com (inexpensive, self-scoring test for organizations)
- www.myersbriggs.org (official site with descriptions of functions)
- <http://tap3x.net/ENSEMBLE/main.html> (extremely interesting articles on Jung's Four Functions and applications of the theory in organizations)

The Keirsey Temperament Sorter: Four Basic Temperaments

Keirsey and Bates (*Please Understand Me*, Prometheus Nemesis, 1984) trace how, since earliest written reports, humans have continuously defined each other into four types, basically "fire, water, air, and earth" in many different versions.

Please Understand Me (link to Amazon.com) includes a self-administered test derived from the Myers Briggs (MBTI) which produces the same 16 personality types marked by four letters (INFJ, ENFJ, ESTJ, etc.) as the MBTI. The book also includes excellent descriptions of learning, leadership, and relationship styles of the various types. This book is an excellent bargain, since it includes a test equivalent to the Myers Briggs plus user-friendly theory for about \$15.

The description of the SP learning style, and its clash with the traditional SJ orientation of the majority of school administrators and teachers, provides a positive way of understanding children diagnosed as "ADHD" and their clash with traditional education.

In *Please Understand Me II* ([link to Amazon.com](#)) (Prometheus Nemesis, 1998) Keirsey further develops his own typology of the four basic "temperaments," which he calls, after Plato's categories, Artisans (The Fox), Guardians (The Beaver), Idealists (The Dolphin), and Rationals (The Owl). He discusses forms of intelligence, social roles, self-image, values, and interests of each temperament. His book includes the original MBTI-like test and a new one for his four temperaments. It also has chapters on Mating, Parenting, and Leading according to the different temperaments. Keirsey, in describing the SP learner as his Artisan, provides a further positive description of the hands-on, active learning style of those called "ADHD" and "ADD" in our educational systems. His descriptions validate the many positive attributes of this "learning and personality style" which can be capitalized upon rather than denigrated. See Dr. McGuire's article, "Don't Fight 'Em, Join 'Em: A Community-Wide Intervention for ADHD, School Failure, and Juvenile Delinquency for more.

Best bargain: buy *Please Understand Me* and get the test as well as useful information about the sixteen types. You can use the test over and over again with friends and family.

You can take a brief Four Temperaments test online for free, to discover if you are an Artisan, Guardian, Idealist, or Rational, but, in order to also get your one of the sixteen Jungian-based types and a full report, you will be asked to pay a small charge. Keirsey's website contains lots of interesting information, for instance, his ratings of personality types of US Presidents and other famous people:

<http://keirsey.com> (short, free quiz; small charge for longer report)

Exercise for the week: visit the websites and take several versions of these tests, with friends and family and coworkers if possible, discussing varying personality styles discovered.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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Complete Focusing Session. Actually, doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter ensures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

Complete Focusing Session

Review Ahah! #1: Gendlin's Basic 6-Step Process

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: Instant "Ahah!" #1

Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You

We are going back to the basics, reviewing Eugene Gendlin's (creator of Focusing) Six Steps of the Focusing Process. Intuitive Focusing does not always happen in neat and tidy steps, and others teach it in totally different steps or processes, but it is helpful to review the original Six Step Process that Gendlin articulated from watching actual people do Focusing "naturally."

Here is a link to the YouTube video which walks you through the six steps and then guides you through your own Focusing session on something that is unclear, confusing, stuck, wanting your attention, in case you do not want to read about it below instead:



**Introduction to Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing
Process and First Attempt to "Find out
what is bothering you."**

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

© Dr. Kathy McGuire, Ph.D., 2007

Creative Edge Focusing

www.cefocusing.com

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 ---

The Crux of Change

In the 1960's research showed that the single most important variable predicting success in psychotherapy was, not what the therapist was doing, but the client's own ability to speak from present, felt experiencing rather than intellectualization. Dr. Eugene Gendlin of the University of Chicago decided we'd better learn how to teach that skill to people. He called it Focusing and broke it down into six steps to teach it in a self-help way. His book, *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981), has been translated into over 15 languages and is used throughout the world.

Description of Gendlin's Six Step Focusing Process

First, I will describe Gendlin's process, then I will walk you through some actual instructions below. 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).

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 or just follow me in the video above. Also, free MP3 audio downloads and manuals in The Store at 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 ---
(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.

--- If you find yourself "stirred up" by reflecting upon these situations, use the "Present Time" exercise to separate from that reactivity and come fully back to the present: Choose a shape, like round or rectangular, or a color, like black or orange, and name everything in the room that falls into that category, looking very carefully at everything around you. This "outer focus" should allow you to put the "internal focus" aside until another day.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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Our "Ahah!" this cycle is #9, our Interpersonal is Understanding Individual Differences Through Personality Tests, and our Complete Focusing is a return to Gendlin's basic 6-step process. Access the e-newsletter archives and scroll down to the beginning of Ahah! 9, week one.

INSTANT "AHAH!" # 9: CREATIVITY

Finding Treasure In Blocks

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

RELEASING BLOCKS TO CREATIVITY

"Treasure Maps To The Soul"

Ann Weiser Cornell and Barbara McGavin, Certified Focusing Trainers, have made a life's work at discovering the treasures that lie within our deepest conflicts, action blocks, addictions, depression, and other forms of "stuckness." They have developed a workshop called "Treasure Maps To The Soul" which introduces participants to many forms of "stuckness," like the Swamp, The Fog, The Dragon, and how to use Focusing to find the treasure, the life-direction forward, in each of these blocks.

Central to their method is "the radical acceptance of everything." Taking a neutral position of Presence inside, the Focuser then welcomes and greets with curiosity ANY inner experience that wants to come forward, without judgment. With respectful and compassionate Listening to EVERY part, EVERY aspect, their Inner Relationship Focusing allows even the most hated "blocks" and "critics" to soften, to express their own positive wants and needs and wishes to protect the Focuser.

In experiencing a "block," there is a "part" of us that wants to go forward, to do our creative project, and a "part" that holds us back. We plan to paint, and never get to it. We sit down to write, and become totally blank, feeling suffocated. We try to write a report, and find ourselves daydreaming. Usually, we try to "beat up" or "beat down" the "part" that we see as getting in the way, holding us back. In Focusing, we stop this inner battle and finally turn with compassionate Listening to this blocking part, asking, "Okay, what is going on for

you ---? What do you need? --- What are you trying to protect us from?---How can I allow you to be welcome and present while we attempt this task?"

And the Focuser also then takes time to Listen with compassionate curiosity to the "part" that DOES want to go forward, its needs, wishes, fears, hopes, etc. By going back and forth between the two, Focusing allows something to "shift" inside, and a new possibility for going forward to arise.

Here is the Introduction to one of Ann's Articles from her website for Focusing Resources:

How To Use Focusing To Release Blocks To Action
by Ann Weiser Cornell, PhD

This article originally appeared in the January 1993 issue of *The Focusing Connection* ([Subscribe](#)).

Writer's block, procrastination, being a pack rat... all these are action blocks. If you want to start an exercise program but you don't, if you want to keep your desk clean but you don't, if you want to be more creative but it just doesn't happen, you are experiencing an action block--and Focusing can help.

Action blocks are painful, and everyone experiences them at times. For some people, the struggle dominates their lives. Are you familiar with wanting to do something day after day, even cursing and criticizing yourself for not doing it? Do you know about making resolution after resolution, even changing for a little while, but always sliding back? Wouldn't you love to be able to break that cycle and act easily and confidently instead?

Focusing releases the stuck system by changing the dynamic that holds the action block in place. In an action block, there is a part of you that isn't being heard. Ironically, that's the same part of you that seems to be in charge: the one that isn't taking action. It has you in its iron grip, and yet it's lonely, isolated, unacknowledged. No one has really asked it yet, "How come you're so set against taking action?" (Remember, being sure that you already know why is not the same thing as asking it!)

The Focusing process starts by bringing in self-compassion instead of self-criticism. This alone begins the process of release, because self-criticism is the glue that holds the action block in place. It's funny, isn't it, that it often feels like just the opposite is true? I feel like my criticism of the part of me that won't exercise is my only hope of moving it, and that if I accept it, it will really take over my life! But actually, self-criticism holds the system in place because it ensures that the criticized part will not be heard, and everything will stay the same. And remember: compassion and acceptance are not the same as agreement or giving in. I can still want to change, while being

compassionate to the part of me that doesn't want to.

Through Focusing, we create an inner atmosphere of safety, where any part of us can be heard without being attacked or criticized. This is important, because if you want to hear the truth and be released, you can't put pre-conditions on what you hear. "You can tell me anything except..." just won't work. In Focusing, it is quite literally true that the truth will set you free. So if you want to set the stage for allowing truth to come, start with an inner atmosphere of compassion, if possible. (If something in you says "No" to being compassionate, see if you can be compassionate to that!)

Listening to the Part that Blocks You ---

READ ON AT ANN'S WEBSITE and check out the many other great articles in her Library and Workshop Offerings.

FOCUSING EXERCISE: RELEASING BLOCKS TO CREATIVITY

Last week, we used Focusing just to work with the "intuitive feel," the "bodily-felt sense" of next steps in a creative project. We will return to this. But, for today, I ask you to look for a place in your life where you are "stuck" or "blocked" in terms of a creative project, where you are trying to move forward but continuously are holding yourself back at the same time.

To begin the Focusing Exercise below, I will ask you to scan your life and choose a "blocked project," then lead you through Focusing instructions which allow you to "listen to" both sides in the conflict, allowing new possibilities for moving forward to emerge:

Leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction
(One minute)

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 ---)

Now, bring to mind a creative problem or project that needs attention, particularly one where there is some blockage to forward movement. Take as long as you need to scan your life, looking for something with this kind of "stuckness" (pause) ---

(One minute or more ---)

Choose one "blocked" project, and spend a moment just bringing it fully to mind, thinking about where you are in relation to it, where you "left off," the "next step," the "block" ---

(One minute ---)

Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about the situation and possible solutions, and, as you carry a mental image of the problem or project in your mind, **just wait and see what comes in the center of your body**, around your heart/chest area, in response (pause) --- not words, but the intuitive feel of the whole situation, The Creative Edge ---

(One minute ---)

Now, carefully try to find words or an image for that Edge --- **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 ---)

Now, gently ask yourself, "What is in the way here? What is the body-sense for the part that gets in the way, doesn't want to work on the project", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in your wordless intuition, your whole-body sense, The Creative Edge -

--

(One minute ---)

Carefully look for some words or an image or metaphor that exactly fit that Edge ---

(One minute ---)

Now, ask that "resisting" or "critical" part, "What is this like for you? Why are you holding back? Is there something you are wanting to protect me from? Is there something you are wishing for?" Take some time just to "listen to" how it is for this part of yourself. Go back-and-forth between words/images and the "bodily feel" of that part until you have captured the "feel of it all" ---

(One - three minutes ---)

Now, turn your attention to the other side, the "part" of you that wants to move forward, to tackle the project, to have the pleasure of creating. Spend some time looking for the "intuitive feel" of this forward-moving, creating part or energy. Don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for an answer to come in the center of your body, your wordless intuition, The Creative Edge

(One minute ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image for that, " the part that wants to create" Weiser Cornell suggests that you imagine yourself working on the project, being free-flowing

creative, and get the "body-feel" for what that is like, and find some words or images/metaphors to capture that--

(One to three minutes ---)

And ask that part some open-ended questions, like "What is this like for you, being creative? --- What are you wanting/needing?--- What is a first step you can imagine for moving forward?". Again, don't answer from your head, but wait as much as a minute for "the feel of that whole thing" to arise, and then carefully go back-and-forth, finding words/images/metaphors/gestures to capture the "intuitive feel."

(One to three minutes ---)

Continue in this way, going back and forth between the two sides, asking each, "And how is that for you?", waiting to see what comes in your body, finding words and images for that, letting each side fully express itself. If other "parts" arise, make room for them as well, giving them time to express themselves.

As you spend compassionate, non-judgmental Listening time with each aspect of the situation, you will find the different "sides" softening and blending, becoming more understanding of each others' needs, more willing to look for an acceptable "next step forward."

Weiser Cornell and McGavin suggest you pay special attention to what the "blocking, holding back" aspect is "afraid of" or "wanting to protect" the Focuser from, and what it does want for the Focuser. They find that Critical and Blocking parts are often motivated by **FEAR** and think they are working in the best interest of the person, guarding and protecting from fearful outcomes in the only way they know how.

Spend as long as is comfortable listening to the various aspects of your "conflicted" situation, looking for a possible step forward. If no clear next step arises, just remind yourself that, by spending Focusing time sitting with The Creative Edge, you have added energy and started a new living-forward, and, especially if you continue to hold "the feel of it all" on the back-burner of your mind, later something new will likely pop up ---

(One minute)

Appreciate yourself and your "subconscious," the "intuitive feel," for taking time with this, trusting that taking time is the important thing -- solutions can then arise later.

Remember, it is often easier to learn Intuitive Focusing with the company of a Focusing Listener. See links below to find many resources, including

Certified Focusing Trainers worldwide for individual Coaching or Classes and Workshops.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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QUICK LINKS TO CLASSES, BLOG, ARTICLES, ETC.

Free Articles in English and en espanol

Self-Help Package, CDs, DVD, manual English and espanol

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Case Studies

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Personality Tests: Embracing "Differing Gifts"

[New E-Newsletter Archives](#) (with videos)

Ultimate Self Help Blog

INTERPERSONAL DIVERSITY:

The Enneagram: Meeting Your Shadow-Side

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

DIVERSITY TRAINING: UNDERSTANDING PERSONALITY DIFFERENCES

Within this strand on Interpersonal Focusing, I am going to place the emphasis upon Personality Style Instruments, coupled with Empathic, Focused Listening, as a method for Diversity Training within organizations.

Listening/Focusing Turns To Increase Empathy

Besides educational material and workshop experiences typical of Diversity Training workshops, Round-Robin Listening/Focusing partnership (you can download instructions from Chapter Three of manual from links at top of the blog) turns in small groups can provide a safe place for co-workers to come to understand each other's experience.

As Intuitive Focuser, one person "senses into" and articulates their experience in terms of ageism, sexism, racism, or their MBTI or Enneagram style, in a personal way. As empathic Focused Listener, the person next to them uses Focused Listening to "say back," simply reflecting their understanding of the other's words, learning to set aside judgment and prejudice and concentrate only on hearing how it is for the other person, their inner world. Turns can proceed around the circle, each person having 10-20 minutes as Focuser and then as Listener for the next Focuser. Empathic understanding, a deeper form of change than any educational information, is the natural outcome of such exchanges.

Visit my blog [Learning Listening/Focusing Partnership](#) and look at the top for link to a free download of Chapter Three from my self-help manual, *Focusing in Community (Focusing en Comunidad)*, which gives explicit instructions for exchanging Listening/Focusing turns. Find free downloads of the [Self-Help Package](#), including manuals, and MP3 downloads of CDs with Complete Focusing Instructions in The totally free Store at www.cefocusing.com

Understanding Personality Differences Can Bridge The Gap

We tend to think of Diversity Training as coming to understand "the other side" in terms of gender, ethnic, and age differences. However, exposing co-workers to understandings of differing personality and leadership styles can loosen their prejudices and broaden their appreciation of all kinds of different people.

For instance, while 60-70% of males score as Thinkers on the Myers-Briggs (MBTI), that leaves 30-40% of females who are also Thinkers, having this in common with the opposite gender. Same for the 30-40% of males who score as Feelers on the MBTI -- sharing their experience as Feelers can bridge the gender gap.

The goal-oriented, organized Judging type can come to understand the creativity, spontaneity, and playfulness of the Perceiving type whom they have only judged as "irresponsible." The Extrovert can come to understand the Introvert's need for quiet escape during lunchtime and after work. See [the e-newsletter archive](#) and scroll to last week's Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Keirsey Temperament Sorter for links to informal tests of these dimensions.

The Enneagram: Looking At Your Shadow Side

While the MBTI stresses the positive, our "differing gifts," The Enneagram also helps us to take a brave look at our shadow side, our personal demon, and the motivations driving us. There are nine basic personality types, refined by degree of interaction with the other types. One author names them as 1.The Reformer, 2.The Helper, 3.The Motivator, 4.The Artist, 5.The Thinker, 6.The Loyalist, 7.The Generalist, 8.The Leader, and 9.The Peacemaker. However, complexities involve leaning toward one "wing" or

the other and passing into a different type when ideal vs. under stress, etc.

My favorite new website for great insight into the Enneagram is by Dr. Mary Bast, long-time coach and Enneagram expert. Here is her introductory description from her website for [Break Out of The Box Coaching](#) :

"What is the Enneagram?"

The Enneagram is a practical psychological system that describes nine different views of the world. Each of us has a central way to make sense of reality, a set of personality patterns that help us cope but also narrow our perceptions. I can help you confirm your Enneagram style and your blind spots as well as your gifts."

Her website includes descriptions of the nine personality styles, charts showing the basic needs driving each style, the different variations within each style, and the interaction between them. She gives a quick summary along many dimensions derived from a variety of Enneagram theorists. I like her [Poems](#) illustrating the various personality styles.

Bast includes Claudio Naranjo's naming of the nine styles and their "Driving Force and Development Need," their "shadow side" in need of transformation. They are:

1. The Idealist: Anger
2. The Mentor: Pride
3. The Star: Vanity
4. The Innovator: Envy
5. The Synthesizer: Hoarding
6. The Partner: Fear of Fear
7. The Futurist: Gluttony
8. The Advocate: Lust/Excess
9. The Diplomat: Indolence

Notice, for instance, that the 9. Diplomat, who may pride themselves on being the ultimate Peacemaker and harmonizer, has a "shadow-side" of Indolence, laziness, lack of engagement in living, loss of self-development in giving over to the opinions of others, not having an "opinion."

The 8. Advocate, seeing herself as fighting for the rights of all underdogs, has a "shadow side" of Lust/Excess.

Which are you? What is your shadow-side? How about your boss, co-workers, family members?

You can find out at [Mary's website](#). Bast includes many case examples from her life-time of coaching experience, showing some light-hearted ways to deal with one's shadow side. For instance, an 8. Leader, who scares and overwhelms her staff with her overly assertive and confrontive style, is asked to hand out squirt guns to her staff at meetings so they can let her know when she becomes over-bearing.

Descriptive essays, and, best of all for me, poems by many authors help capture the "gist," the "intuitive feel" of each personality style. Spend an hour or so on her site, and you will find yourself, your family, your coworkers exactly captured.

There are a variety of theorists with somewhat differing "takes" on The Enneagram. Riso's book, *Discover Your Personality Type: The New Enneagram Questionnaire* (Houghton Mifflin, 1995) provides a simple description and test for exploring your Enneagram profile. However, Helen Palmer's work with the Enneagram can lead to somewhat different results. Again, try several tests and see what you learn:

- www.enneagramspectrum.com (free quiz, good articles like "Enneagram Styles As Personality Paradigms")
- www.enneagraminstitute.com (Riso and Hudson; free and paid tests; lots of info)
- www.enneagramworldwide.com (Palmer; \$10 test; lots of info)
- www.similarminds.com (lots of free Enneagram-based informal tests; test combining Enneagram and MBTI)
- www.enneagramcoachandmentor.blogspot.com (Mary Bast's summaries, case examples and poetry capturing the "intuitive feel" of each style)

Exercise for the week: visit the websites and take several versions of these tests, with friends and family and coworkers if possible, discussing varying personality styles discovered.

Intuitive Focusing Turn On Your Enneagram Style

If you would like, do a Focusing Turn on your "shadow side" and other learnings once you have guessed at your style:

1. Clear a Space: Relax and come into your body by following your breathing.
2. Get A Felt Sense: Ask yourself, "How is this personality style reflected in my life? How does this "Driving Force" manifest in my work and relationships?" Set aside any thinking and wait quietly, for at least a minute, for the "intuitive feel" of "that whole thing" to form in the center of your body, around your heart/chest area.
3. Find A Handle: Slowly look for some words or an image or gesture that exactly capture the "feel of it all."
4. Resonate and Check: Go back and forth between any symbols that come and the "felt sense," the "feel of it all," until the symbols and "felt sense" fit exactly, with a sense of "Ah, yes" and some tension release.
5. Ask An Open-Ended Question: Ask a question like "And why is that so important to me?" or "And where does that come from in me?" or "And how do I feel about that whole thing?" and, again, set aside what you already know and wait quietly, at least for a minute, for the "felt sense," the murky, unclear Creative Edge to form in your body.

Again Resonate and Check until you find symbols (words, images, gestures) that exactly "fit" the bodily-feel.

6. Receive: Take some time to receive and integrate anything new that has come, appreciating your body for sharing its wisdom, letting new insights settle in.

Then, you can choose whether to stop or begin another round of Focusing: Asking An Open-Ended Question, Letting a Felt Sense Form, Finding a

Handle, Checking and Resonating until "Ahah!", symbols and bodily-feel come together.

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INSTANT "AHAH!" # 9: CREATIVITY

Creativity, Intuition, and Gladwell's "Blink Thinking"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

INTUITIONS GUIDE CREATIVE DECISION MAKING

"Blink Thinking"

In his best-selling book, *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking* (Little Brown, 2005), Malcolm Gladwell justified the importance of intuitive, "gut" thinking in decision making. In fact, he pointed out that, contrary to our assumptions about our rationality, many high-level decisions are based more upon a "gut sense" or a "blink of an eye" impression than upon rational, logical thinking.

While they believe they are using objective indicators for choices, people are often influenced by subjective, peripheral factors "outside of awareness." For instance, for generations, classical music orchestras believed that women could not master the instruments or the nuance of the music. Women were seldom hired.

Then, orchestras started having performers audition behind a screen, cutting out visual cues in making hiring decisions. To everyone's surprise, chosen through "listening" alone, women were actually chosen a majority of the time, even for instruments "presumed" to be more "masculine," like French Horn and other brass instruments.

Gladwell distinguished between two kinds of intuitive decision making:

- In the one case, a person has a "gut sensing," an unclear, preverbal "feel" about something, which is very real and substantial and resilient, impossible to put aside or ignore, even though words for it can't be found. An example: some museum curators have a "sense" that there is something wrong about an antique statue. They don't know what it is, but their "body-sense" tells them there is something. Eventually, following this "intuition," they discover concrete evidence that it is a facsimile.
- In the second case, a person makes a decision in "the blink of an eye," without even awareness of an "intuitive feel" but out of an immediate, precognitive assessment of a situation. An example: a fireman deciding where to step, which way to go, what to do in a split-second emergency situation.

Gladwell says that we can't really "unpack" our "gut senses." However, although this is true about the split-second decisions in emergency situations, it is not true for the more common situations in his first case, where there is a gnawing, long-lasting "gut sensing," an "intuitive feel," for which words HAVE NOT YET been found. In these latter situations, Intuitive Focusing, "sitting with" the "intuitive feel" of "the whole thing," and carefully looking for words and images which are exactly "right" in capturing this preverbal "intuition," is a premiere way for increasing the usefulness of "intuitive" or "gut" information.

Using Intuitive Focusing In Situations Of Uncertainty

In her Market Focusing approach (www.marketfocusing.com), Flavia Cymbalista taught Gendlin's Focusing to people like George Soros, financier, and others needing to make decisions in situations of "uncertainty", like the ever-changing stock market. Traders often had to follow their "intuition" and wished for something more substantial to base decisions upon.

Soros thought he used logical, rational indicators for decisions. Through work with Cymbalista, he realized that, actually, he got a "pain in his back" when his portfolio needed adjusting, and the pain disappeared when he got it "right." He was following an "intuition," a "bodily feel" without words. He and others learned that consciously using Gendlin's Focusing to find words and images for "gut intuition" allowed even greater access to the "intuitive feel" for market decisions.

"Gut Sensing" Is Everywhere In Creative Decision Making

Here are just a few situations where pausing for some minutes of Intuitive Focusing can provide a way forward:

- You have a "gut feeling" of exactly what problem you want to work on, but you don't have any words or images to describe it.
- Your boss hands you a problem to solve out of the blue, and you have no idea where to begin, how to approach it.
- You are "stuck" on a creative project, "blocked," no inspiration about where to go next.
- You know that something is bothering you, your whole body is tense, you can't sleep, but you have no idea what the problem is.
- You have an "inkling," an "intuition," but you can't put it into words.
- You have a "hunch" about what to do, an action you want to take, but you can't verbalize any reasons to justify it.
- You wake up with the "feel" of a forgotten night-time dream.
- You have a wonderful feeling of well-being, a "spiritual" feeling, and you would like to spend more time with it, finding a way to describe it.
- You have an uncomfortable feeling after an interaction with someone, but you don't know exactly what it is about, so you don't know what to do about it.
- You know exactly what you want to do but find yourself blocked, unable to move forward.
- You might have no feelings, no creative ideas. You feel like a flat piece of concrete.
- You feel totally stressed out, confused, overwhelmed ---

Focused Listening To Aid In Creative Problem Solving

While a person can use Intuitive Focusing on their own to find words for "gut sensing," having the help of a Focused Listener, in a Focusing Partnership or Focusing Group/Team, can make this process of "finding words" easier. Here is a hypothetical example.

The Focuser sits with The Creative Edge, the murky, intuitive "feel" of the whole Gestalt, and attempts to make new words and images using the Intuitive Focusing skill. The Listener uses Pure Reflection, simply saying back the words and images of the Focuser, without judgment or advice, and with emphasis upon reflecting "the unclear edge," the "bodily, intuitive feel." The Focused Listener can reflect back the Focuser's actual words as well as the less-clear nuances, until the Focuser finds exactly the right new symbolizations to capture The Creative Edge.

Example:

The Focuser starts out with a "gut sense" about a problem. He knows there is something wrong, but he can't put his finger on what that is nor on a solution:

Focuser: "There is something about the mechanical execution of this model that is not going to work --- I don't know what it is, but I can sense it. I'm uneasy about it ---"

Listener: "So there's an uneasiness there --- something not right about the mechanical execution ---"

Focuser: (sitting quietly, pondering at the Creative Edge ---) "All I get so far is an image of red intertwining with white, two triangles intersecting --- "

Listener: "So there's an image --- two triangles intersecting --- red and white intertwining ---"

Focuser: (some excitement in voice, opens eyes) Let me draw that (starts drawing with pen and paper, grabs red and white chalk --- soon, a gear-like drawing emerges) --- (evident excitement) Yes, it's something there , in that gear box!!!

Listener: "So, you can see clearly now --- it's something in that particular gear box --- "

Focuser: (closes eyes) "Let me sense into that some more (sits quietly, pondering at The Creative Edge --- over a minute ---) --- something, something twisty there ---"

Listener: "Twisty ---"

Focuser: (more closed-eyed Focusing, pondering at The Creative Edge --- minute or more --- sighs, shifts in seat --- more pondering ---)"

Hmmmm --- I think I'm getting it --- something about the ratios there, the red too dominant over the white --- "

Listener: "The ratios --- red over white ---"

Focuser: "I've got it --- needs to be 8:6!"

Clearly, the Listener doesn't even have to understand what the Focuser is talking about, but, still, having that outside person offering Reflection can carry forward the process of creating new symbolizations out of The Creative Edge.

Even though Focused Listening allows the Listener to occasionally use other kinds of responses (Asking For More, Focusing Invitations, and Personal Sharings), pure reflection is still the most powerful form of response to someone using Intuitive Focusing at The Creative Edge.

If you do not have a Listening/Focusing Partnership, consider whether there is a colleague at work, a friend or family member who is already an excellent listener and might be interested in learning the formal Listening/Focusing Partnership method with you. Then, use the manual and multi-media materials FREE in The Store at www.cefocusing.com or the free download of Chapter Three: The Listening/Focusing Exchange (a link at the top of the following blog entry)

The Blurry, Vague, "Feel of the Whole Thing" Holds The Next Steps

I invite you to use Intuitive Focusing again below to find next steps on a "creative project": an article, a book, a poem, a song, a dance, a marketing campaign, an engineering breakthrough, some project needing creative ideas.

If you need to work more specifically on "blocks" to creativity, you could use Cornell and McGavin's technique from last week, using Focusing to

give a gentle hearing to the "part" that wants to "hold back," as well as the "part" that wants to "go forward," until steps toward resolution arise. Go to [Week Two, Treasures in Blocks, in e-newsletter archive.](#)

Focusing On A Creative Problem or Project

(You can read these to yourself now, download them for continuous use, read them into a tape recorder for playback .

And here is a YouTube video where I walk you through the steps of this exercise. In this case, get your creative project handy, if it is easily accessible, so you can try out new steps, and get "Instant Ahah!" feedback, as you go along:



Gendlin's Focusing Upon Next Steps for a Creative Project

(Leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction if you are reading them to yourself)

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 ---)

Now, bring to mind a creative problem or project that needs attention (pause) ---

(One minute or more ---)

Think about it or get a mental image of it ---

(One minute ---)

Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about possible solutions, and, as you carry a mental image of the problem or project in your mind, just wait and see what comes in the center of your body, around your heart/chest area, in response (pause) --- not words, but the intuitive feel of the whole situation, The Creative Edge ---

(One minute ---)

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

Now, gently ask yourself, "Is that it? Would that work here?", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in your wordless intuition, your whole-body sense, The Creative Edge ---

(One minute ---)

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

(One minute ---)

Now, try that possible solution out in the creative situation, either in your imagination or by actually writing, painting, tinkering with a model ---

(One minute ---)

Now, ask yourself, "Does that work?" and, again, don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for an answer to come in the center of your body, your wordless intuition, The Creative Edge ---

(One minute ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image for that, "Does that solution work?" ---

(One minute ---)

If the answer is "Yes," a release of bodily tension, a sense of coming unstuck --- then return to the creative project and work again until there is another place of not-knowing, where you can begin the whole Focusing process again ---

If the answer is "No," your body remains tense and your energy still blocked, flat, then, set aside everything you have already thought and tried and ask your "subconscious," the "intuitive feel" at The Creative Edge, again: "What does this situation need?", and, again, wait, as long as a minute or more, to see what comes in the center of your chest, an intuitive "feel" for the whole thing ---

(One minute)

Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for whatever has come ---
(One minute)

Keep at this as long as you are comfortable, asking an open-ended question, waiting for an "intuitive feel" of "the whole thing" to emerge, looking for words or an image or even a gesture or action step that fits the intuitive feel "exactly."

(One minute or more ---)

But, if no clear next step arises, just remind yourself that, by spending Focusing time sitting with The Creative Edge, you have added energy and started a new living-forward, and, especially if you continue to hold "the feel of it all" on the back-burner of your mind, later something new will likely pop up ---

(One minute)

Appreciate yourself and your "subconscious," the "intuitive feel," for taking time with this, trusting that taking time is the important thing -- solutions can then arise later.

Remember, it is often easier to learn Intuitive Focusing with the company of a Focusing Listener. See links below to find many resources, including self-help groups, and Creative Edge Focusing Consultants for individual Coaching or Classes and Workshops.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise or Interpersonal Exercise to practice this step of Focusing, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed! This is Week Three of a four-week cycle. Catch up with Weeks One and Two in the [e-newsletter archive](#).

INTERPERSONAL DIVERSITY:

Gardner's Multiple Intelligences

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES: MANY WAYS TO LEARN AND PERFORM

Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences provides another rubric for recognizing the differing gifts and talents of each student and each worker, including observation of student learning preferences from the earliest age. Gardner, of Harvard University, has argued persuasively for different kinds of intelligences other than the academic intelligence usually valued in schools. His Project Zero (<https://www.edutopia.org/multiple-intelligences-howard-gardner-video#graph2>) actively applies and researches the model in actual schools.

Gardner (*Frames of Mind*, 1985) defines seven "intelligences:"

1. linguistic
2. logical-mathematical
3. musical
4. bodily-kinesthetic
5. spatial
6. interpersonal
7. intrapersonal.

The traditional learning environment, especially beginning in fourth grade, when reading and writing become the major modality of teaching and learning, greatly favors those students who learn through linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences. Children whose major learning modality is musical, spatial, and/or bodily-kinesthetic languish in such classrooms. The very gregarious child specializing in interpersonal intelligence is also wasting time, sitting quietly working alone. The strongly intrapersonal, introspective child is also not given opportunity to develop his or her special skills.

In a "multiple intelligences" classroom, students are exposed to learning opportunities through all the different "intelligences." Different stations in the classroom approach a topic through the various modalities. Students learn through movement, music, artistic creation, interpersonal teamwork, as well as language and mathematics. They are graded on skits, portfolios, peer ratings as well as traditional test scores. They are stretched to develop all of Gardner's "intelligences" as well as being

allowed to develop their natural propensities toward certain of the "intelligences.

Like the MBTI and Keirsey Temperament Sorter, Gardner's model can be especially helpful in giving a positive definition, and teaching methods, for the active, hands-on learning style of children called ADHD. Click [here](#) to read Dr. McGuire's article "Don't Fight 'Em, Join 'Em: Community-Wide Intervention for ADHD, School Drop Out, and Juvenile Delinquency."

The multi-modality learning presentation can be extended into the college classroom and into presentations in the workplace. Everyone responds better when they are approached through music, art, movement, interpersonal and intrapersonal modalities, as well as traditional language, logic, and math.

Although preferred "intelligences" are best discovered through observation of an individual's choices of modalities over time, an informal online paper-and-pencil measure can give you an idea of your own preferences:

- <http://surfaquarium.com/> (free test; lots of information; consulting)
- <http://www.institute4learning.com> (Thomas Armstrong's many books applying MI in schools)
- <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/search/resources> (Gardner's school-based programs and research)

All Kinds Of Minds: A Niche For Each Student, Each Person

"The problem is not a lack of intelligence but a learning style that doesn't fit the assignment." Out of his experience as a pediatrician, Mel Levine defines the following systems making up learning and performance. Levine looks specifically for where a person's strengths and weaknesses lie, rather than stopping with global "diagnoses" of learning difficulties:

1. Attention Control
2. Memory
3. Language
4. Spatial Ordering
5. Sequential Ordering

6. Motor
7. Higher Thinking
8. Social Thinking

Every child and adult will have strengths and weaknesses in the various systems.

While adults are expected to have certain areas of competence, students are expected to be good at everything and to approach learning in the same way. Instead, Levine helps students, parents, and teachers to define the strengths and weaknesses of learners, and to find a "niche" for each person which capitalizes upon his or her strengths. His books, *A Mind At A Time* (Simon and Schuster, 2002) and *The Myth of Laziness* (Simon and Schuster, 2003) have led to an actual in-school program called Schools Attuned.

www.allkindsofminds.org (Levine's organization)

Exercise for the week: visit the websites and take several versions of these tests, with friends and family and coworkers if possible, discussing varying personality styles discovered.

If you have a special interest in education, please consider how you might bring these ideas into that area. Gardner, Armstrong, and Levine give many concrete examples of schools and school districts using these methods.

Intuitive Focusing Turn On Multiple Intelligences

If you would like, do a Focusing Turn on the various "intelligences" of yourself, your family and friends, your co-workers.

- Consider whether the cultural emphasis upon the "linguistic/logical-mathematical" has handicapped you or those you know and observe.
- "Sense into" the various manifestations of your "multiple intelligences" strengths and weaknesses as revealed through the tests and explorations above

- Consider how you might enhance your creativity and performance by incorporating this knowledge of "multiple intelligence," multiple modalities for learning and performing.

1. Clear a Space: Relax and come into your body by following your breathing.

2. Get A Felt Sense: Ask yourself, "How are 'multiple intelligences' manifested in my life? Have I been the victim or perpetrator of prejudice and stereotyping based upon misunderstanding of the multiplicity of intelligences people can manifest?" Set aside any thinking and wait quietly, for at least a minute, for the "intuitive feel" of "that whole thing" to form in the center of your body, around your heart/chest area.

3. Find A Handle: Slowly look for some words or an image or gesture that exactly capture the "feel of it all."

4. Resonate and Check: Go back and forth between any symbols that come and the "felt sense," the "feel of it all," until the symbols and "felt sense" fit exactly, with a sense of "Ah, yes" and some tension release.

5. Ask An Open-Ended Question: Ask a question like "Is there something I need to do about this?" or "And how do I feel about that whole thing?" or "How could I enhance my life or work with this understanding?" and, again, set aside what you already know and wait quietly, at least for a minute, for the "felt sense," the murky, unclear Creative Edge to form in your body.

Again Resonate and Check until you find symbols (words, images, gestures) that exactly "fit" the bodily-feel.

6. Receive: Take some time to receive and integrate anything new that has come, appreciating your body for sharing its wisdom, letting new insights settle in.

Then, you can choose whether to stop or begin another round of Focusing: Asking An Open-Ended Question, Letting a Felt Sense Form, Finding a Handle, Checking and Resonating until "Ahah!", symbols and bodily-feel come together.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise or Interpersonal exercise to practice this step of Focusing, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

This four-week cycle, we are "getting a felt sense" for differing personality, learning, and leadership styles by exploring a variety of personality tests. Our emphasis is upon realizing the huge, wide diversity among people and using Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening to explore these differences in ourselves and others.

Click here to go to the [e-newsletter archive](#) where you can scroll down and find Week One on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Week Two on the Enneagram.

Visit my blog [Learning Listening/Focusing Partnership](#) and look at the top for link to a free download of Chapter Three from my self-help manual, *Focusing in Community (Focusing en Comunidad)*, which gives explicit instructions for starting Focusing Partnerships for the exchange of Listening/Focusing turns at home or in the workplace.

Free resources in The Store at www.cefocusing.com, including four downloads of manuals, and MP3 audio files of CDs with Complete Focusing Instructions.

Complete Focusing Session

Ahah! #1: Gendlin's Basic 6-Step Process Used With Creative Project or "Stuckness"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing or an Interpersonal Focusing exercise, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

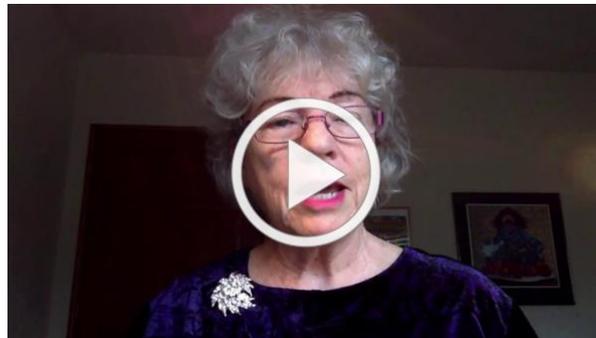
COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: Instant "Ahah!" #1

Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You (see below)

OR Focusing on Creative Projects

OR Focusing upon Blocks to Creativity or Action

We are going back to the basics, reviewing Eugene Gendlin's (creator of Focusing) Six Steps of the Focusing Process. Intuitive Focusing does not always happen in neat and tidy steps, and others teach it in totally different steps or processes, but it is helpful to review the original Six Step Process that Gendlin articulated from watching actual people do Focusing "naturally." (However, if it would be more helpful to you today, here is the YouTube of Complete Focusing on a Creative Project or Block:



Gendlin's Focusing: Instant "Ahah!"s on Creative Projects

Back To Basic Explanation

First, I will define Gendlin's Six Step Basic Focusing Process; then I will walk you through an actual Basic Focusing Exercise. If you prefer, here is the YouTube video where I describe the process and walk you through a complete Focusing exercise:



**Gendlin's Basic Six-Step Focusing Process
Explained and Demonstrated**

INSTANT "AHAH!" 1

Focusing: *Find Out What Is Bothering You*

© Dr. Kathy McGuire, Ph.D., 2007

Creative Edge Focusing

www.cefocusing.com

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 ---

The Crux of Change

In the 1960's research showed that the single most important variable predicting success in psychotherapy was, not what the therapist was doing, but the client's own ability to speak from present, felt experiencing rather than intellectualization. Dr. Eugene Gendlin of the University of Chicago decided we'd better learn how to teach that skill to people. He called it Focusing and broke it down into six steps to teach it in a self-help way. His book, *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981), has been translated into over 15 languages and is used throughout the world.

Description of Gendlin's Six Step Focusing Process

First, I will describe Gendlin's process, then I will walk you through some actual instructions below. 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 or online course from the Focusing Institute Listings (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:

(You can read these to yourself now or find free MP3 download of Complete Focusing Instructions CD in The Store at www.cefocusing.com or just watch the YouTube video above -- 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 -

--

(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.

--- If you find yourself "stirred up" by reflecting upon these situations, use the "Present Time" exercise to separate from that reactivity and come fully back to the present: Choose a shape, like round or rectangular, or a color, like black or orange, and name everything in the room that falls into that category, looking very carefully at everything around you. This "outer focus" should allow you to put the "internal focus" aside until another day.

INSTANT "AHAH!" # 9: CREATIVITY

PRISMS/S PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS AND PARADIGM SHIFTS

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

PRISMS/S PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS AND PARADIGM SHIFTS

Creativity = Thinking Outside The Box = Paradigm Shifts

Creative genius includes thinking "outside the box," setting aside preconceived concepts and ideas and being able to "look at" a problem from a totally new angle. Actually, this "looking at" is really the "sitting with" the "intuitive feel," the fresh, present "felt experiencing" that underlies existing concepts and can lead to the articulation of new, non-linear, creative ideas.

In his e-newsletter, *The Simple Truth's Newsletter*, (see the website and subscribe to the e-newsletter at <http://www.simpletruths.com/index.asp>) Mac Anderson reviews cutting-edge models for increasing creativity and innovation. In the newsletter quoted below, he leads to a link to a beautiful, three-minute video clip which exactly captures the essence of "the paradigm shift":

"Dear Kathy,

Tom Peters gets it. He said...

"I've spent a good part of my life studying economic successes and failures.

Above all, I've learned that everything takes a back seat to innovation."

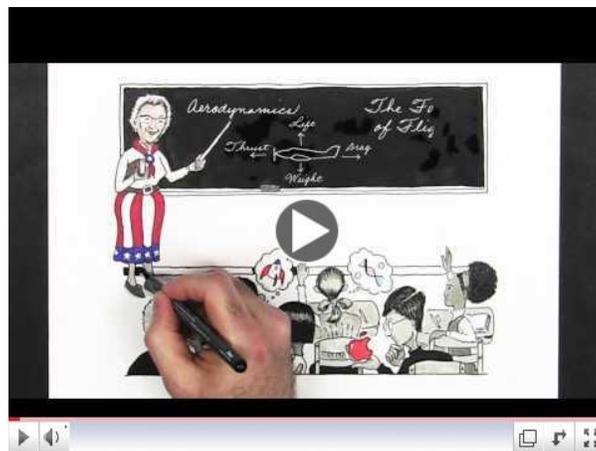
Tomorrow comes at us with lightning speed, and your competitive advantage is a fleeting thing. As leaders, we must create an environment that puts innovation front and center. Your people must know it is the key to your company's survival.

You must create a climate that rewards risk and creative effort. Your people must not fear mistakes but understand that honest mistakes can be life's main source for learning.

SO TEACH THEM TO FAIL QUICKLY, AND OFTEN, TO ENABLE THEM TO REACH THE NEXT PLATEAU.

Every now and then a simple book comes along that deals with a profound subject in an unforgettable way. Paper Airplane is that book; and it teaches a valuable lesson about courage and creativity for people of all ages. It takes less than 30 minutes to read, but the "a-ha moments" are priceless. It's one of my all-time favorites.

So, if you haven't seen Michael McMillan's 3-minute inspirational movie titled Paper Airplane, you're in for a treat! Just click on the



Paper Airplane video: thinking outside the box with Michael McMillan

and share it with friends and co-workers.

Usually, consultants coming in to help corporations with "creativity and innovation" provide a variety of games and other experiences which allow participants to "drop" or "step out of" existing schemata and access the fresh, new pre-verbal experiencing from which new paradigms can be articulated. Here is an introduction to one such "package" of "shake up" exercises:

"WHAT THE CATERPILLAR CALLS THE END OF THE WORLD, GOD CALLS A BUTTERFLY"

If you always think the way you've always thought, you'll always get what you always got. The same old, same old ideas over and over again. The future belongs to those thinkers who embrace change, break new ground, forge new paths, and transform the way they think. Discover how to look at the same information as everyone else and see something different by using the creative thinking techniques and strategies that creative geniuses have used throughout history.

Internationally acclaimed creativity expert Michael Michalko's Thinkertoys: A Handbook of Creative Thinking Techniques have inspired business thinkers around the world to create the innovative ideas and creative strategies they need to achieve unimaginable success in today's changing business environment of complexity and uncertainty. Change the way you look at things and the things you look at change.
[Available at www.amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, and most major bookstores.

DeBono's Six Thinking Hats, and Parallel and Lateral Thinking
(see http://www.debonogroup.com/what_we_do.php for description of trainings and books to purchase) approaches are at the cutting-edge of creativity as breaking out of old structures, accessing the new.

Mind Mapping Techniques
(<http://www.mindmapper.com/?gclid=CMHz54C975ICFQJtIgodQT-75w> for a complete description) are another method for breaking out of linear thought structures and allowing the presentation of facets of problem/solution from the non-linear, "intuitive feel" of "the whole thing."

Intuitive Focusing: "Direct Access" to Paradigm Shifting

As I presented last week, Flavia Cymbalista has helped George Soros and others dealing with the complexity and uncertainty of financial markets to use

Gendlin's Focusing to articulate from the "intuitive feel" in her Market Focusing approach at www.marketfocusing.com .

While games and exercises can "shake up" thinking from the outside in, at some point, the "new" answer emerges because someone in the group becomes free of old concepts and able to access The Creative Edge, the preverbal "felt sensing" of new possibilities.

Intuitive Focusing allows anyone to access the Creative Edge of new, non-linear problem solving at any time. Rather than looking to the outside for new ideas, the Focuser goes inside, getting in touch with the raw, new, "preverbal" complexity of situations from which new solutions, Paradigm Shifts, emerge.

Reflecting Before Acting or Reacting

The radical contribution of Gendlin's Focusing (Bantam, 1981) and McGuire's Creative Edge Focusing™ is that the problem solver makes the explicit choice to pause and take some moments for silent reflecting before acting or reacting.

Instead of simply repeating past reactions, the Focuser can create new, completely innovative solutions and behaviors from the "intuitive feel" of the whole situation.

A quiet pause is needed in order to sense into the "intuitive feel," The Creative Edge, of problems. Whether in private or in group decision making settings, these opportunities for pauses to contact and articulate the Creative Edge are what allow the creation of totally new ideas and solutions. No pauses, no creation of the new!!!!

Using the PRISMS/S Problem Solving Process is like passing light through a prism. A few moments of pondering, and The Creative Edge opens into a whole spectrum of new possibilities and action steps.

Pausing To Ponder: From Problems To Possibilities

The PRISMS/S Problem Solving Process includes seven ingredients of predictable "Aha!" experiences using Creative Edge Focusing™. With its Core Skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening , PRISMS/S is based

upon Eugene Gendlin's "[A Theory of Personality Change](#)" and his *Focusing* self-help book (Bantam, 1981), as well as Dr. McGuire's thirty years of experience integrating Listening/Focusing skills into task-oriented groups and supportive communities.

PRISMS/S is Dr. McGuire's attempt to create an easily teachable rubric, especially applicable to business settings, combining Gendlin's 6-Step Focusing Process with the unfolding steps of change, the "felt shift," or "paradigm" shift facilitated by Focusing.

PRISMS/S can be used on one's own or with the help of Focused Listening in a Creative Edge Focusing Partnership, Focusing Group or Team, or Focusing Community. In any case, problem solving goes through the following steps:

Pausing : Clearing A Space for Problem Identification

Reflecting: Listening To Oneself or [Focused Listening](#) from Another

[Intuitive Focusing](#): Back-and-Forth Between Symbols and Intuition

Shifting: The Kaleidoscope Turns And A New Paradigm Arises

Movement: Innovative Solutions and Action Steps Arise Spontaneously

Satisfaction: Tension Releases in the Sureness of "Ahah! That's It!"

Support: Listening/Focusing Partnerships Build Empathy and Community

[Click here to read and download the complete description of the steps of PRISMS/S from \[www.cefocusing.com\]\(http://www.cefocusing.com\)](#). You will find there a link to the Spanish translation as well.

Focusing Partnerships, Groups/Teams, Communities

While anyone can learn to use PRISMS/S for creative problem solving on one's own, the process can be greatly facilitated by having an outside Focused Listening Partner.

Read about all the options for Focusing Alone, Focusing Partnership, Focusing Groups/Teams, etc. under [Case Studies](#) at www.cefocusing.com .

If you do not have a Listening/Focusing Partnership, consider whether there is a colleague at work, a friend or family member who is already an excellent listener and might be interested in learning the formal Listening/Focusing Partnership method with you. Then, use the multi-media materials in our Self-Help Package or the free download of Chapter Three: The Listening/Focusing Exchange (a link at the top of this blog entry). You can also enroll in

Listening/Focusing classes worldwide and online with Certified Focusing Trainers at www.focusing.org .

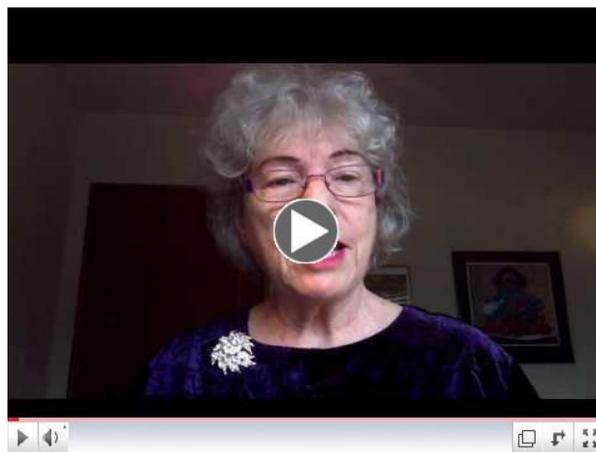
The Blurry, Vague, "Feel of the Whole Thing" Holds The Next Steps

I invite you to use Intuitive Focusing again below to find next steps on a "creative project": an article, a book, a poem, a song, a dance, a marketing campaign, an engineering breakthrough, some project needing creative ideas.

If you need to work more specifically on "blocks" to creativity, you could use Cornell and McGavin's technique from last week, using Focusing to give a gentle hearing to the "part" that wants to "hold back," as well as the "part" that wants to "go forward," until steps toward resolution arise. Go to [e-newsletter archive](#) and scroll down until you find Week Two: Treasures in Blocks.

Focusing On A Creative Problem or Project

(You can read these to yourself now, download them for continuous use, read them into a tape recorder for playback. Leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction). Here is the link to the YouTube video where I walk you through the exercise if you prefer:



Gendlin's Focusing with Next Steps in Creative
Project/Blocks

(One minute)

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 ---)

Now, bring to mind a creative problem or project that needs attention (pause) ---

(One minute or more ---)

Think about it or get a mental image of it ---

(One minute ---)

Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about possible solutions, and, as you carry a
mental image of the problem or project in your mind, just wait and see what comes in the
center of your body, around your heart/chest area, in response (pause) --- not words, but
the intuitive feel of the whole situation, The Creative Edge ---

(One minute ---)

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

Now, gently ask yourself, "Is that it? Would that work here?", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in your wordless intuition, your whole-body sense, The Creative Edge --

(One minute ---)

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

(One minute ---)

Now, try that possible solution out in the creative situation, either in your imagination or by actually writing, painting, tinkering with a model ---

(One minute ---)

Now, ask yourself, "Does that work?" and, again, don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for an answer to come in the center of your body, your wordless intuition, The Creative Edge ---

(One minute ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image for that, "Does that solution work?" ---

(One minute ---)

If the answer is "Yes," a release of bodily tension, a sense of coming unstuck --- then return to the creative project and work again until there is another place of not-knowing, where you can begin the whole Focusing process again ---

If the answer is "No," your body remains tense and your energy still blocked, flat, then, set aside everything you have already thought and tried and ask your "subconscious," the "intuitive feel" at The Creative Edge, again: "What does this situation need?", and, again, wait, as long as a minute or more, to see what comes in the center of your chest, an intuitive "feel" for the whole thing ---

(One minute)

Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for whatever has come ---

(One minute)

Keep at this as long as you are comfortable, asking an open-ended question, waiting for an "intuitive feel" of "the whole thing" to emerge, looking for words or an image or even a gesture or action step that fits the intuitive feel "exactly."

(One minute or more ---)

But, if no clear next step arises, just remind yourself that, by spending Focusing time sitting with The Creative Edge, you have added energy and started a new living-forward, and, especially if you continue to hold "the feel of it all" on the back-burner of your mind, later something new will likely pop up ---

(One minute)

Appreciate yourself and your "subconscious," the "intuitive feel," for taking time with this, trusting that taking time is the important thing -- solutions can then arise later.

Remember, it is often easier to learn Intuitive Focusing with the company of a Focusing Listener. See links below to find many resources, including self-help groups, and Creative Edge Focusing Consultants for individual Coaching or Classes and Workshops.

INTERPERSONAL DIVERSITY:

Goleman's "Emotional and Social Intelligence" Learned Through Listening/Focusing Training

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

Emotional Intelligence: More Important Than IQ At Work And Home

Daniel Goleman, in his initial book *Emotional Intelligence* (Bantam, 1995) (click to go to Amazon.com description, reviews, other related books, and purchase), looked at actual neurological grounds in the brain for different kinds of problem solving, often referred to as "right-" vs. "left-" brain. He argues that a series of intrapsychic and interpersonal competencies, with involvement of the limbic and other areas of the brain, actually account for the expert behavior of the most successful managers more than intellectual IQ. He called this "emotional intelligence."

Goleman got the concept of "emotional intelligence" from earlier theorists, Salovey and Mayer, who coined the term in 1990. They defined it as "a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action."(quoted in "Emotional Intelligence: What it is and Why it Matters" by Cary Cherniss, Ph.D., available at

www.eiconsortium.org

The concept of "emotional intelligence" and competence in the workplace has been widely explored. As EQ, many have developed measures for various aspects of emotional intelligence and training programs for increasing these competencies.

Goleman's latest book is *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships* (click to [Amazon.com](#) description and purchase). Here's one review from Amazon:

"I am a huge fan of Daniel Goleman. He's the bestselling author who coined the term "Emotional Intelligence" with his 1995 book of the same name. Now he's got a new book, "Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships."

Social intelligence is the ability to read other people's cues and then act on them. Life is all about relationships, and there is a science to how we relate to each other. It's fascinating to see how Goleman breaks down each aspect of communication. We can learn how to more effectively express ourselves so that we feel understood. And we can learn how to better "read" other people so that we can better understand. This helps to improve our interactions and ultimately strengthen our relationships.

He talks about "synchrony" or interacting smoothly at the nonverbal level, which is an important, yet often overlooked, part of relating. Goleman also scientifically explains "the capacity for joy" and how that affects our social intelligence. He shows how our resilience plays an important role in our happiness, which comes into play as we express ourselves to others." Lissa Coffey, www.coffeytalk.com

I haven't found a free, online test of EQ, although a variety of consulting businesses offer extensive testing and training programs.

- www.eiconsortium.org (International consortium for theory and research with many articles to download but no free quiz)

Creative Edge Focusing (TM): Emotional and Social Intelligence

Forty Hours of Training for Human Literacy

We at Creative Edge Focusing™ believe that our core skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening, applied throughout levels from individual to interpersonal to organizational in The Creative Edge Pyramid (click to read descriptions of the seven applications), provide a most basic yet broadly applicable form of increasing "emotional intelligence," or "human literacy," across the board. Remember the definition from above:

"a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action."(quoted in "Emotional Intelligence: What it is and Why it Matters" by Cary Cherniss, Ph.D., available at www.eiconsortium.org.)

Intuitive Focusing is exactly about learning to "monitor and discriminate among feelings and emotions and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action." Focused Listening is exactly about understanding other people's feelings and emotions. Interpersonal Focusing teaches exactly how to use Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening as "social intelligence" to sort through interpersonal and group conflict situations.

In approximately forty hours of training, CE Focusing Consultants teach everyone involved the PRISMS/S Problem Solving Process, with its two Core Skills, Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening, and how to use PRISMS/S in the Creative Edge Pyramid of Applied Methods. Students, parents, teachers, physicians, executives, managers, employees, or

community members, in approximately 40 hours of training, can acquire the "emotional and social intelligence" skills to:

- Create new ideas
- Change problem behaviors
- Listen to another

- Resolve interpersonal conflicts
- Start a support group
- Build supportive community

- Create innovative solutions
- Create win/win decisions in groups
- Motivate others for collaborative action

In our Case Studies section, you will find specific examples of each of the seven applications of The Creative Edge Pyramid.

Exercise For This Week: Study Emotional and Social Intelligence and Compare To Listening/Focusing Skills

Consider the basic premise that Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening, taught as self-help skills, are the actual basis of the various capacities that manifest as "emotional" and "social" intelligence.

Follow the links above and read articles about Goleman's work and its application in business settings as EQ training. Order Goleman's books through www.amazon.com . Google EQ and "Emotional Intelligence" and "Social Intelligence" and Daniel Goleman.

[Tell me what you think !](#)

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise or Interpersonal exercise to practice this step of Focusing, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which

arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

This four-week cycle, we are "getting a felt sense" for differing personality, learning, and leadership styles by exploring a variety of personality tests. Our emphasis is upon realizing the huge, wide diversity among people and using Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening to explore these differences in ourselves and others.

Click on [e-newsletter archives](#) and scroll down to Week One: Myers/Briggs; Week Two: The Enneagram; Week Three: Gardner's Multiple Intelligences.

Visit my blog [Learning Listening/Focusing Partnership](#) and look at the top for link to a free download of Chapter Three from my self-help manual, *Focusing in Community (Focusing en Comunidad)*, which gives explicit instructions for starting Focusing Partnerships for the exchange of Listening/Focusing turns at home or in the workplace.

Order the complete Self-Help Package, including the manual, CDs with Complete Focusing Instructions, and DVD demonstrations of Focused Listening for a full multi-media (multiple intelligences) approach.

Complete Focusing Session

Ahah! #1 : Gendlin's Basic 6-Step Process Used With Creative Project or "Stuckness"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing or an Interpersonal Focusing exercise, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon

these new skills when needed! This is the last week in the four-week cycle on Focusing and Creativity. Go to the [e-newsletter archive](#) if you want to see what we have already covered this cycle.

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: Instant "Ahah!" #1

Here is a link to a video where I walk you through an exercise in applying Focusing to a Creative Project or stuckness:



Using Gendlin's Focusing With A Creative Project

But today, we are going back to the basics, reviewing Eugene Gendlin's (creator of Focusing) Six Steps of the Focusing Process. Intuitive Focusing does not always happen in neat and tidy steps, and others teach it in totally different steps or processes, but it is helpful to review the original Six Step Process that Gendlin articulated from watching actual people do Focusing "naturally."

First, I will define Gendlin's Six Step Basic Focusing Process; then I will walk you through an actual Basic Focusing Exercise.

If you prefer to experience this lesson and exercise as a YouTube video, here is the link:



**Gendlin's Basic Six-Step Focusing Process
Explained and Demonstrated**

INSTANT "AHAH!" 1

Focusing: *Find Out What Is Bothering You*

© Dr. Kathy McGuire, Ph.D., 2007

Creative Edge Focusing

www.cefocusing.com

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 ---

The Crux of Change

In the 1960's research showed that the single most important variable predicting success in psychotherapy was, not what the therapist was doing, but the client's own ability to speak from present, felt experiencing rather than intellectualization. Dr. Eugene Gendlin of the University of Chicago decided we'd better learn how to teach that skill to people. He called it Focusing and broke it down into six steps to teach it in a self-help way. His book, *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981), has been translated into over 15 languages and is used throughout the world.

Description of Gendlin's Six Step Focusing Process

First, I will describe Gendlin's process, then I will walk you through some actual instructions below. 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).

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:

(You can read these to yourself now or into a tape recorder for playback -- leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction. Alternatively, you can follow the video above)

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.

--- If you find yourself "stirred up" by reflecting upon these situations, use the "Present Time" exercise to separate from that reactivity and come fully back to the present: Choose a shape, like round or rectangular, or a color, like black or orange, and name everything in the room that falls into that category, looking very carefully at everything around you. This "outer focus" should allow you to put the "internal focus" aside until another day.

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

Free Articles in English and en espanol

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Core Concepts Descriptions (also en espanol)

Case Studies

About Us: Biographies Dr. McGuire, Gendlin, Rogers, CE Associates

Personality Tests: Embracing "Differing Gifts"

[New E-Newsletter Archive](#) (with videos)

Ultimate Self-Help Blog

INSTANT "AHAH!" # 10: FOCUSING ON SPIRITUALITY

Experiencing The Sacred

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

EXPERIENCING THE SACRED

Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening can be used purposefully to "attend to," "sit with," "articulate" the "intuitive feel" of spiritual experiences. But more importantly, the practice of Listening/Focusing opens our eyes to seeing the Sacred around us by encouraging attention to those moments when the Sacred enters our lives.

It's called Immanent Spirituality, God as experienced in the world, moments when the Sacred underpinning of the world "breaks through" and becomes visible, palpable, feel-able. Experiential spirituality is separate from any particular sect or creed. You can incorporate it into any religion and into everyday living without organized religion.

Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat call it *Spiritual Literacy: Reading the Sacred in Everyday Life* (Scribner, 1996), and their book jacket reads:

"These remarkable readings tutor us in the art of lingering with our experiences and seeing the world with fresh eyes --- Life's meaning and the presence of Spirit are found in the shape of a child's foot, in an encounter with a wild animal, in the memories evoked by a rocking chair, in the process of doing a hobby, or in the messages on a computer screen."

Like ideas and personal problems or interpersonal conflicts, spiritual experiences also have an "intuitive feel," a Creative Edge that can be expanded upon and deepened by using the Intuitive Focusing process. If you have just an "inkling" or a "flash" of experience that feels Sacred, you can go back to that experience during a specific Focusing Process, recover the spiritual feeling, and find ways to carry it with you. I will walk you through an actual session of Focusing upon an Experience of the Sacred which you have had, understanding it more deeply, and finding a way to bring it back consciously.

Exercise: Focusing on Spirituality: Experiencing The Sacred

You will choose an experience to spend Intuitive Focusing time on that had spiritual meaning for you, a moment when you might have said that you were experiencing God or The Sacred or Something Profound - often, this can be something that touched you or moved you, perhaps bringing a sheen of tears to your eyes. It might be a piece of music, a prayer or passage from the Bible, a poem, a sunset, the smile of a child, the touch of a friend.

By spending time with "the intuitive feel of it all," you are going to make more words and meanings for what is Sacred, to you. Please find a comfortable chair in a quiet place, and give yourself at least 30 minutes for Intuitive Focusing. You may read the instructions below to yourself, being careful to wait at least one minute between each instruction.

Here is the link to the YouTube video where Dr. McGuire walks you through this exercise, if you prefer to close your eyes and follow along:



Using Gendlin's Focusing to Explore and Enhance Spiritual Experiences

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 ---)

Now, bring to mind an event or piece of music or art or religious symbol that felt Sacred, or had a spiritual significance for you (pause) --- Take your time to find a powerful, meaningful symbol or event ---
(One minute or more ---)

Think about it or get a mental image of it --- take your time to choose something that matters to you ---
(One minute ---)

Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about this experience, and, as you carry a mental image of the event or symbol in your mind, just wait and see what comes in the center of your body, around your heart/chest

area, in response (pause) --- not words, but the intuitive feel of that whole thing ---

(One minute or more ---)

Now, carefully try to find words or an image for that intuitive feel --- 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 ---)

Now, gently ask yourself, "What was so important for me about that?" or, "What about that touched me or filled me with awe?", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in the center of your body, the place where you feel things ---

(One minute or more ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that felt experiencing ---

(One minute or more ---)

Now, ask yourself, "And what was so Sacred to me about that, what do I mean by 'Sacred'?" and, again, wait quietly, for at least a minute, to see what comes in the center of your body, without words, just the "feel" of "the whole thing" about "Sacred."

(One minute or more ---)

And find some words or an image to capture that "whole thing," The Sacred ---

(One minute or more ---)

Now, ask yourself, "Does that capture what I mean by 'spiritual'?", and, again, don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for an answer to come in the center of your body, your wordless intuition, The Creative Edge ---

(One minute or more ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image for that, and check, "Is that it?" --
-

(One minute ---)

If the answer is "Yes," a release of bodily tension, a sense of "rightness," then turn your attention to noticing any "spiritual" experiences that are present around the edges of this experience, right now --- feelings of Sacredness, of floating in Oneness, of Awe or Gratitude, of being moved or touched with tears --- stay with these immediate spiritual feelings as long as you like ---

(One minute or more ---)

Try to find an image or other symbol or gesture that might serve as a "handle" for this particular spiritual feeling, something that would remind

you of how to find your way to this place again, at any time during the day when you want to revisit the Experience of the Sacred ---
(One minute or more)

And, when you are finished, come back into the room.

If the answer is "No," your body remains tense, then, set aside everything you have already thought and tried and ask your body, The Creative Edge, again: "What is Spirituality for me, and where might I find it?", and, again, wait, as long as a minute or more, to see what comes in the center of your chest, an intuitive "feel" for the whole thing ---

(One minute or more ---)

Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for whatever has come ---

(One minute or more ---)

Keep at this as long as you are comfortable, asking an open-ended question, waiting for an intuitive sense of "the whole thing" to emerge, looking for words or an image or even a gesture or action step that fits the intuitive feel "exactly."

(One minute or more ---)

But, if no clear "felt" experiencing of Spirituality arises, just remind yourself that, by spending Focusing time sitting with The Creative Edge, you have added energy and started a new living-forward, and, especially if you continue to hold "the feel of it all" on the back-burner of your mind, later something new will likely pop up ---

(One minute)

Appreciate yourself and your body for taking time with this, trusting that taking time is the important thing - new experiences can then arise later.

(One minute or more ---)

Remember, Intuitive Focusing is often learned more easily in the company of a Focused Listener. Go to Creative Edge Focusing™ at www.cefocusing.com

to find many resources, from self-help groups to Certified Focusing Trainers for individual Coaching or Classes and Workshops.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing or an Interpersonal Focusing exercise, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

This is the start of a new four-week cycle. We will be applying Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing process to spiritual experiences.

DEVELOPING THE "HABIT OF FELT SENSING":

Starting A Listening/Focusing Practice Group

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

Starting Your Own Listening/Focusing Partnership or Group

In these weekly Felt Sensing newsletters of this four-week cycle, I will give instruction (including free Chapter downloads from the manual *Focusing In Community: Starting A Listening/Focusing Support Group (Focusing en Comunidad)*) and encouragement for starting your own, local Listening/Focusing Practice Group.

Most people learn Intuitive Focusing more easily in the presence of a Focused Listener, an outside, non-judgemental "witness." The Listener can use Pure Reflection to help you hear and resonate/check your own words against your "felt sense," and Focusing Invitations to remind you to slow down, be quiet, and sense into the "bodily feel," the Creative Edge. Only then can you let new words and images arise from that wealth of non-linear, right-brain information. The Listener can help you spot the many voices of your Inner Critic, Wounded Child, and other aspects of your experiencing.

I can think of no better way than a weekly group meeting to support you in developing "the habit of felt sensing," a life style of paying attention to and spending time articulating the wealth of mind/body wisdom that comes every day as The Creative Edge. This "intuitive feel" of your situations, relationships, and creative problem solving contains the possibility of the Paradigm Shifts leading to the most innovative problem solving, the most lasting personal change. Not only will your group learn Listening and Focusing skills, but also you will reap the benefits of "bonding" that come from sharing your inner journey with another.

Finding Your First Person Or Core Group

Beginning your Listening/Focusing Practice Group can be as easy as finding one other person to share the Self-Help Package (or with Spanish manual) with. You will have a manual download in English or Spanish giving explicit instructions, two 2-CD sets explaining the basic philosophy and including many Focusing Exercises you can use to begin your meetings.

You can find the FREE downloads of the manuals and the CD sets in the Store at www.cefocusing.com

You can also start by downloading the free PDF files (or in Spanish) of the Introduction to the manual which gives many suggestions for finding people for your practice group. And next week you can download Chapter Three, explicit instructions for the first ten meetings of your Listening/Focusing exchange.

- You can start just with one best friend or colleague who is already a great listener.
- You can take the skills into an existing support group or work team.
- You can do a presentation to the kind of people you would like in your group (counselors, church members, business colleagues, couples, parents, artists --- your own peer group!). Or
- You can take a Listening/Focusing Class from a Certified Focusing Professional and then carry on as a self-help practice group.

Here are the first pages of the Introduction to inspire you to action! You really can start your own group:

FOCUSING IN COMMUNITY: Introduction

Free sample excerpt of manual by Dr. Kathy McGuire, Creative Edge Focusing™, www.cefocusing.com, part of The Self-Help Package available FOR FREE in The Store:

INTRODUCTION

1. How to Use the Manual

The manual has been written so that any individual can

- sit down and read the manual;
- find a friend or two who will also read it and practice the skills in Part Two; and
- build a supportive community for himself.

However, the manual can also be used by professionals:

- as the basis for a course in community mental health or counseling skills
- as an aid in beginning supportive communities in a variety of settings.
- It can be used by professionals and non-professionals alike who want to build non-hierarchical and emotionally supportive work environments for themselves.

The peer counseling model for community offered here also ensures a further step toward intimacy to groups who are already meeting some needs through mutual support. The manual is based on thirty years of experience with groups in many contexts and is the best solution I have found to the difficulties of living, meeting and working collectively.

The manual teaches peer counseling skills of empathic listening and experiential focusing and tells how to use these skills to provide emotional support, to work through interpersonal conflicts, and to arrive at consensual, cooperative decisions. It tells how to build a peer counseling community, be it as small as four close friends or one open to anyone in a larger community who wants to come.

In a peer counseling community, there is no distinction made between

helper and helpee. Everyone learns the core skills, Focused Listening and Intuitive Focusing. Participants exchange counseling turns as equals: I listen to you while you use Focusing on some concern of yours; then you listen to me while I use Focusing on my concern.

The depth of intimacy generated during the exchange of empathic listening turns grows into a feeling of connectedness and mutual regard which soon blossoms into a supportive community: a throughout the week network of friendships and mutually supporting relationships extending into all aspects of participants' life and work.

The manual should be useful to:

- helping professionals who bring people together for mutual support in a variety of settings, including churches, schools, prisons, halfway houses, community mental health centers, senior citizen centers, 12-Step organizations, hospitals;
- paraprofessionals who offer peer counseling through hotlines, crisis centers, student centers;
- self-help and support groups who want to deepen their level of sharing and commitment;
- businesses, non-profit organizations, and political groups who want to incorporate "the intuitive feel," The Creative Edge, for innovative problem solving;
- those living in spiritual and other residential communities;
- individuals who are looking for their own solution to isolation and loneliness.

The skills described in the manual, and the theory behind them, can be easily comprehended and practiced by any individual or group of individuals who want to create a more intimate and healing environment for themselves.

Every person should have the skills to respond to emotional crisis, to be in touch with and to share his own inner experiencing, to resolve interpersonal conflicts, and to make decisions without conflict. The need for such skills arises constantly in everyday life: in marriage, friendship, the relationship between employer and employee, any attempt of people to meet or work together.

When such skills remain the province of mental health professionals alone,

there is a general mystification which leads individuals to feel dependent upon mental health practitioners and, in the most damaging way, to perceive themselves as not responsible for their feelings and actions and their effects upon other people.

I hope through this manual to give confidence and skills to those wishing to understand the psychological and interpersonal phenomena which arise in everyday friendship and work and thereby to empower individuals. I have received some of my own best mental health care and mental health training in support groups and peer counseling groups. I have come to see the core skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening as the basis of "human literacy," skills of "emotional and social intelligence."

CLICK HERE FOR A LINK AT CREATIVE EDGE FOCUSING WHERE YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE ENTIRE "INTRODUCTION," IN ENGLISH OR SPANISH, AS A FREE PDF FILE.

AND/OR CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE FREE MANUALS AND AUDIO DOWNLOADS IN THE STORE!!! ALL FREE!!!!

It is my hope that, before the end of this four-week cycle, 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 chapter 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.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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This is the start of a new four-week cycle. We will be applying Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing process to spiritual experiences, and learning to start a listening/focusing practice group.

INTEREST AREA: CREATIVE EDGE ORGANIZATIONS

Ten First Steps For Bringing Listening/Focusing Into Organizations

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

INTEREST AREA: CREATIVE EDGE ORGANIZATIONS

Below you will find the Introduction to bringing Creative Edge Focusing into businesses, corporations, non-profits, volunteer organizations, any place that has meetings. From www.cefocusing.com with active links to website descriptions of core concepts:

Core Principles of Creating At The Edge

- The Creative Edge Organization Method ensures maximum creativity and motivation at every level by encouraging **Intuitive Focusing** by individuals and **Coordinated Collaboration** in groups and teams

- Maximum motivation arises when people are encouraged to create their lives and solutions to problems from their own **Creative Edge**.
- When organizational structures lose touch with **The Creative Edge** of individuals, apathy is created.
- True change, at any level, from personal to global, happens by engaging **The Creative Edge El Borde Creativo** of individual human beings. There is no lasting way to impose change from the outside. Lasting change is empowered from the individual entering into collaborative action with other individuals.

The Core Skills of Focused Listening and Intuitive Focusing provide the basic method for individuals, alone, in pairs, or in groups, to access The Creative Edge of thinking and experiencing from which totally new ideas and solutions can arise. They increase creativity and deepen communication and support in any volunteer organization or for-profit corporation.

The Creative Edge Pyramid

The seven methods of The Creative Edge Pyramid insure the application of the Core Skills at every level of organization:

- Focusing Alone allows an individual to access the Creative Edge, anytime, anywhere.
- Focusing Partnership provides a structure where pairs of individuals can help each other to articulate from **The Creative Edge**.
- Interpersonal Focusing can be used to find The Creative Edge inherent in interpersonal conflicts.
- Focusing Groups/Teams support continued Creative Edge exploration.
- Collaborative Edge Decision Making provides structures for access to the **Creative Edge** during group and team meetings, creating innovative, win/win decisions.
- Focusing Communities use Listening/Focusing skills to welcome diversity and overcome conflict.
- Creative Edge Organization, including The One Small Thing component, ensures motivation and "buy-in" from the bottom up, The Creative Edge of each individual.

Focusing and Group Decision Making

The fast-paced, argumentative, competitive nature of much group decision making discussion makes it impossible for anyone to pay attention to and speak from The Creative Edge, the right-brain, "intuitive feel" which can contain the newest, freshest, most innovative solutions. Given the energy expended on simply trying to interrupt and get a turn, participants cannot really listen to the contributions of others. Under Instant "Ahah!" Collaborative Thinking, you'll find the simple "How To's" for groups which Dr. McGuire discovered when she undertook research to describe the difference between aggressive, competitive, and "listening" task-oriented groups. More on Focusing and Group Decision Making.

Win/Win Decision-Making

The most creative solutions, either in individual or in group decision-making, arise when the individual or the group is able to sit with polarized oppositions and wait until a newly-created "third way" can arise. We call this a "win/win" decision: instead of a painful compromise where each side really gives up more than they are willing to, and, later, finds reasons not to carry out the decision, a "win/win" decision, a totally new option, really does contain enough aspects from both sides to produce satisfaction, and thus motivation.

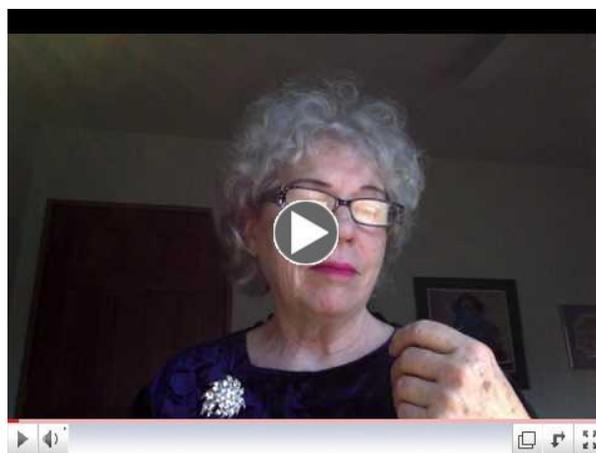
Pure consensual decision making can be extremely time-consuming, since no action can be taken until every member agrees to go along with it. The Collaborative Edge Decision Making (CEDM) method includes the use of **Coordinated Collaboration** as a method for brainstorming from the bottom/up without having decision-making bog down. More on Win/Win Decision Making.

Bite-sized Projects

The Creative Edge Organization method, with The One Small Thing component, continually breaks down projects to the level where as many individuals as possible can be actively involved in problem solving and decision-making from The Creative Edge and in carrying out projects.

This gives participants a feeling of "ownership" of the group's work and also the benefits to community building of working together on a joint goal. Although top/down hierarchical structures can also be used for aspects of the work, The One Small Thing component works from the bottom/up to involve every person actively in action and decision-making where that is possible. More on [Bite-Sized Projects](#).

See [Instant "Ahah!" Empowerment Organization](#) for a Focusing exercise to find "The One Small Thing." Or find this YouTube Video of the exercise:



One Small Thing Exercise

[CLICK HERE AND SCROLL DOWN TO CONTINUE WITH "THE FIRST TEN STEPS FOR BRINGING LISTENING/FOCUSING INTO ORGANIZATIONS YOU BELONG TO"](#)

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

Choosing Your Own "Complete Focusing Exercise"

This is the start of a new four-week cycle. For the Complete Focusing session, we will be applying Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing process to spiritual experiences:



Using Gendlin's Focusing with Spiritual Experiences

However, especially for those who have been practicing through these e-newsletters for a while, I also suggest that you become able to choose whatever kind of Complete Focusing Instruction fits your needs today and throughout the week. This makes you independent of my direction and lets you take charge of your own Focusing experience.

You can do this by going to the [e-newsletter archives](#) and browsing until you find the exercise that "fits" for you, be it Focusing on a Situation, Clearing A Space, Focusing on Creativity, "How Am I Today?", etc. You can also browse through exercises on [Dr. McGuire's YouTube channel](#) .

If you are just joining us and have never learned Focusing, probably best to start by trying this video exercise:



Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing Process:
Explanation and Exercise

Starting Your Own Listening/Focusing Partnership or Group

In the weekly Felt Sensing newsletters of this four-week cycle, I am giving instruction (including free Chapter downloads from the manual *Focusing In Community: Starting A Listening/Focusing Support Group (Focusing en Comunidad)* and encouragement for starting your own, local Listening/Focusing Practice Group. See the link below if you haven't already downloaded the free Introduction to the Self-Help manual, *Focusing In Community*, which tells you many ways to find a first person for a Listening/Focusing Partnership and to expand into a core self-help practice group.

Interest Areas: Seven Places To Start Practice Groups!!!

The Interest Areas under "Is This You" at The Creative Edge Focusing website (www.cefocusing.com) give the First Ten Steps you might take to bring the model of Listening/Focusing into seven whole different areas of living: Organizations, Support Groups and

Communities, Relationships, Parenting, Education, Spiritual Communities, and Helping Professions (psychotherapy, counselling, medicine, body work, etc.).

In the next e-newsletters, I will introduce you to each of these Interest Areas and possible First Steps so that you might start a Listening/Focusing practice group in any of these areas.

START YOUR LOCAL LISTENING/FOCUSING PRACTICE GROUP

CLICK HERE FOR A LINK AT CREATIVE EDGE FOCUSING (tm) WHERE YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE ENTIRE "INTRODUCTION," IN ENGLISH OR SPANISH, AS A FREE PDF FILE.

AND/OR CLICK HERE TO find four manuals and 2 audio downloads NOW ALL FOR FREE IN THE STORE!

It is my hope that, before the end of this four-week cycle, 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 chapter 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 CLASSES, BLOG, ARTICLES, ETC.

Free Articles in English and en espanol

Self-Help Package, CDs, DVD, manual English and espanol

[Experiential Focusing Therapy manual](#)

Creative Edge Focusing website

[Certified Focusing Trainers](#)

[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"

[New E-Newsletter Archive](#) (with videos)

Ultimate Self-Help Blog

INSTANT "AHAH!" # 10: FOCUSING ON SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality and Religion

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

EXPERIENCING THE SACRED

Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening can be used purposefully to "attend to," "sit with," "articulate" the "intuitive feel" of spiritual experiences. But more importantly, the practice of Listening/Focusing opens our eyes to seeing the Sacred around us by encouraging attention to those moments when the Sacred enters our lives.

If you have just joined us, click here to read the rest of last week's first e-newsletter introducing this cycle, [Instant Ahah # 10: Experiencing the Sacred Week One](#).

Spirituality Is Different than Religion

Elfie Hinterkopf, in her book *Integrating Spirituality into Counseling: Using the Experiential Focusing Method* (available in The Store at The International Focusing Institute, <http://previous.focusing.org/docs/Focusing-products-available-2019-11-09.pdf>), makes the following distinction:

"It is important to distinguish spirituality from religiousness --- in this book religiousness will be used to mean adherence to the beliefs and practices of an organized church or religious institution (Shafranske and Malony, 1990). Spirituality will be used to refer to a unique, personally meaningful experience (Shafranske and Gorsuch, 1984). Although spirituality may be positively related to specific forms of religiousness, spirituality is not necessarily reliant upon any given form or appearance of religion."

And:

"The spiritual experience is one of bodily felt release, more life energy, feeling more fully present, a sense of feeling larger and being able to reach out to more parts of oneself, to more people, and to more of life (Campbell and McMahon, 1985)."

Notice that Hinterkopf is not at all diminishing the experience of being "religious," of following the practices of an organized religion. She is saying that this other thing, this "spiritual experience" can happen within those formal confines and also separately. Hinterkopf's work has helped people

to overcome those times when organized religion, for whatever reason, has dampened their access to the actual bodily-felt experience of The Sacred in the world.

Our purpose here is to enrich your spiritual experience in relation to any symbols or belief systems.

Exercise: Focusing on Spirituality: Experiencing The Sacred

(You can read these to yourself now, download them for repeated use, read them into a tape recorder for playback; leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction. Or you can follow the YouTube video below)

If you need a different kind of Focusing Exercise for where you are today, please [click here](#) to access the e-newsletter archives and choose any Focusing Instruction that fits for you.

As last week, you will choose an experience to spend Intuitive Focusing time on that had spiritual meaning for you, a moment when you might have said that you were experiencing God or The Sacred or Something Profound - often, this can be something that touched you or moved you, perhaps bringing a sheen of tears to your eyes. It might be a piece of music, a prayer or passage from the Bible, a poem, a sunset, the smile of a child, the touch of a friend.

By spending time with "the intuitive feel of it all," you are going to make more words and meanings for what is Sacred, to you. Please find a comfortable chair in a quiet place, and give yourself at least 30 minutes for Intuitive Focusing.

Here is the link to the YouTube video:



Using Focusing to Explore a Spiritual Experience

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 ---)

Now, bring to mind an event or piece of music or art or religious symbol that felt Sacred, or had a spiritual significance for you (pause) --- Take your time to find a powerful, meaningful symbol or event ---

(One minute or more ---)

Think about it or get a mental image of it --- take your time to choose something that matters to you ---

(One minute ---)

Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about this experience, and, as you carry a mental image of the event or symbol in your mind, just wait and see what comes in the center of your body, around your heart/chest area, in response (pause) --- not words, but the intuitive feel of that whole thing ---

(One minute or more ---)

Now, carefully try to find words or an image for that intuitive feel --- 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 ---)

Now, gently ask yourself, "What was so important for me about that?" or, "What about that touched me or filled me with awe?", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in the center of your body, the place where you feel things ---

(One minute or more ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that felt experiencing -
--

(One minute or more ---)

Now, ask yourself, "And what was so Sacred to me about that, what do I mean by 'Sacred'?" and, again, wait quietly, for at least a minute, to see what comes in the center of your body, without words, just the "feel" of "the whole thing" about "Sacred."

(One minute or more ---)

And find some words or an image to capture that "whole thing," The Sacred ---

(One minute or more ---)

Now, ask yourself, "Does that capture what I mean by 'spiritual'?", and, again, don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for an answer to come in the center of your body, your wordless intuition, The Creative Edge ---

(One minute or more ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image for that, and check, "Is that it?" ---

(One minute ---)

If the answer is "Yes," a release of bodily tension, a sense of "rightness," then turn your attention to noticing any "spiritual" experiences that are present around the edges of this experience, right now --- feelings of Sacredness, of floating in Oneness, of Awe or Gratitude, of being moved or touched with tears --- stay with these immediate spiritual feelings as long as you like ---

(One minute or more ---)

Try to find an image or other symbol or gesture that might serve as a "handle" for this particular spiritual feeling, something that would remind you of how to find your way to this place again, at any time during the day when you want to revisit the Experience of the Sacred ---

(One minute or more)

And, when you are finished, come back into the room.

If the answer is "No," your body remains tense, then, set aside everything you have already thought and tried and ask your body, The Creative Edge, again: "What is Spirituality for me, and where might I find it?", and, again, wait, as long as a minute or more, to see what comes in the center of your chest, an intuitive "feel" for the whole thing ---

(One minute or more ---)

Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for whatever has come ---

(One minute or more ---)

Keep at this as long as you are comfortable, asking an open-ended question, waiting for an intuitive sense of "the whole thing" to emerge, looking for words or an image or even a gesture or action step that fits the intuitive feel "exactly."

(One minute or more ---)

But, if no clear "felt" experiencing of Spirituality arises, just remind yourself that, by spending Focusing time sitting with The Creative Edge, you have added energy and started a new living-forward, and, especially if you continue to hold "the feel of it all" on the back-burner of your mind, later something new will likely pop up ---

(One minute)

Appreciate yourself and your body for taking time with this, trusting that taking time is the important thing - new experiences can then arise later.

(One minute or more ---)

Remember, Intuitive Focusing is often learned more easily in the company of a Focused Listener. Go to Creative Edge Focusing™ at www.cefocusing.com to find many resources, from self-help groups to Creative Edge Focusing Consultants for individual Coaching or Classes and Workshops.

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This is the second of a new four-week cycle. We will be applying Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing process to spiritual experiences. See [Week One , Experiencing The Sacred](#).

If you are just joining us and have never learned Focusing, probably best to start by reading the introduction to [Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing -- Find Out What Is Bothering You](#), which lays out the six steps. Or watch below:



Gendlin's Six Step Focusing Process
explanation and exercise

DEVELOPING THE "HABIT OF FELT SENSING":

Actual Instructions for Focusing Partnership Exchange and
First Ten Practice Group Meetings

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

Starting Your Own Listening/Focusing Partnership or Group

Intuitive Focusing can be practiced alone. But many people learn Focusing more easily in the presence of a Focused Listener. And, when people practice Listening/Focusing as a mutual exchange of turns, in Focusing Partnerships, Groups/Teams, and Focusing Communities, additional benefits of mutual support, collaboration, and community building occur. See The Creative Edge Pyramid for description of these various methods for applying Listening and Focusing as mutual help.

Below you will find instruction (including free Chapter downloads from the manual *Focusing In Community: Starting A Listening/Focusing Support Group (Focusing en Comunidad)* and encouragement for starting your own, local Listening/Focusing Practice Group. Click here to read [Week One: Starting A Listening/Focusing Practice Group](#), including links to Free Downloads of Introduction from the manual, *Focusing in Community*, in English and Spanish. This Introduction gives many suggestions for finding that one first person to exchange Focusing Partnership and/or how to start a core practice group.

FIRST TEN PRACTICE GROUP SESSIONS

I promised that this week I would give free download of Chapter Three of the manual, *Focusing in Community (Focusing en Comunidad)*, telling you exactly how to do the actual exchange of Listening/Focusing Partnership Exchange: exactly what the Focuser does, and exactly what the Listener does. And here it comes! But, first, I want to present an outline for the First Ten Sessions of a practice group, in case you want to go beyond exchanging turns with one person and build a small group. These appear at the end of Chapter Three, but I wanted to highlight them here so that you could see that this is really, really simple, really possible.

You can do this, start your own self-help group. And, of course, if you want more formal help, you can take a Listening/Focusing Level 1 and 2 Class, learning the basic skills from a Certified Focusing Professional. Links to finding those classes internationally are at the end of this e-newsletter. So, from the end of Chapter Three (after this, you'll get the link that completely explains the four types of response alluded to here: Pure Reflection, Asking For More, Focusing Invitations, and Personal Sharings):

Instructions for Small Group Practice (The Listening Exchange)

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 listenee 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 listenee 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 listenee, 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, listenee, 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 listenee 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 listenee to stay with her "felt sense," and make words for it. The listenee 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).

It is also a good idea to begin turns with some short, group Focusing Instructions (Chapter Four gives a thorough introduction to Focusing). The instructions can be read to the whole group by one person. In general, they give everyone a chance to step out of the tensions of the day and to choose an issue or a feeling they would like to work on. Table 3.5 gives some short, pre-listening turn Focusing Instructions.

Once you have established your listening exchanges you should meet to exchange turns once a week for at least ten weeks. Since you will be continuing to read the manual and to learn new skills, you might want to schedule in one-half to one hour of time at your listening exchange for discussion of additional chapters of the manual.

Here is a short Listening/Focusing turn where you will see the Focuser close her eyes and pay attention to her own inner experiencing, while the Listener uses mainly Rogerian Empathic Listening:



Short demo of Focusing with a Listener

And here is a short demo of a Round-Robin Empathic Listening circle, where one person speaks while another listens, going around the

circle. This was actually an Empathy Circle hosted by Edwin Rutsch of The Center for a Culture of Empathy and Compassion, so the speakers did not know Focusing, did not close their eyes, go inside, and pay attention to their own inner experiencing. However, Dr. McGuire was a participant and, in her turn, she did demonstrate Focusing while being Listening to:



Round-Robin Empathic Listening Training Circle

Now, [click here to go to my blog where, at the top, you will find the links to download the complete "Chapter Three: Listening/Focusing Partnership Exchange" in English or Spanish if you haven't already done this or ordered the FREE complete manual and multi-media help in our Store.](#)

Finding Your First Person Or Core Group

And just an easy reminder from last week's lesson, if you haven't yet taken that first step of finding one person or a small group to start practicing with:

Beginning your Listening/Focusing Practice Group can be as easy as finding one other person to share the [Self-Help Package](#) (or [with Spanish manual](#)) with. NOW FREE IN [THE STORE](#) AT MY WEBSITE. You will have a manual download in English or Spanish giving explicit instructions, two 2-CD sets explaining the basic philosophy and including many Focusing Exercises you can use to begin your meetings.

Not ready to commit to a whole manual? You can start by [downloading the free PDF files](#) (or in [Spanish](#)) of the Introduction to the manual which gives many suggestions for finding people for your practice group. And next week you can download Chapter Three, explicit instructions for the first ten meetings of your Listening/Focusing exchange. You could print and hand out these chapters to potential members.

CLICK HERE FOR A LINK AT CREATIVE EDGE FOCUSING WHERE YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE ENTIRE "INTRODUCTION," IN ENGLISH OR SPANISH, AS A FREE PDF FILE.

AND/OR CLICK HERE TO FIND FOUR FREE MANUALS AND TWO AUDIO DOWNLOADS OF CD SETS IN THE [NEW TOTALLY FREE STORE](#) at my website.

It is my hope that, before the end of this four-week cycle, 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 chapter 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.

INTEREST AREA: THE WAY OF RELATIONSHIP

Ten First Steps For Bringing Listening/Focusing Into Intimate Relationships and Friendships

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

INTEREST AREA: CONSCIOUS RELATIONSHIP

Below you will find the Introduction to the Conscious Relationships Interest Area at www.cefocusing.com . Just as one might undertake an ongoing, disciplined "practice" in yoga or meditation or piano or public speaking, I suggest that we turn the same kind of "conscious, disciplined practice" to our intimate relationships and friendships. Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening, the Listening/Focusing Partnership Exchange skills, makes the perfect tool for growing through The Way of Relationship:

The Way of Relationship

Intimate relationships can be seen as a spiritual path, The Way of Relationship. Relationships can be a self-therapy. Relationships will point up your "blind spots" or "shadow sides" more effectively (or shall I say more quickly, anyway!) than psychotherapy.

The Way of Relationship can be practiced between lovers. The experiences of empathy which arise during the exchange of Listening/Focusing turns lead to increased emotional and physical intimacy.

The Way of Relationship can also be practiced between friends or in a spiritual or other community. The experiences of empathy, of

individual uniqueness as well as common humanity common in Listening/Focusing Exchanges, can be a spiritual experience of the love called Agape, or Buber's "I-Thou" vs. "I-It" relationship.

Harville Hendrix' book, *Getting The Love You Want*, was an early one stating that it's okay for your relationship to be "therapy." We are attracted to people who have the capacity to heal us in some way, to move us on our journey toward wholeness. Hendricks calls it The Imago, a kind of template of the kind of person needed for your healing. Ideally, you will find a person enough like your parent to offer the experiences needed healing but also capable of going through this healing journey with you.

At www.gettingtheloveyouwant.com , you will find more books and training programs connecting you to a network of people, through Imago Relationships International, who are committed to conscious relationship.

Gay and Kathleen Hendricks' book, *Conscious Loving: The Journey To Co-Commitment*, names the bedrock of good relationship as complete, absolute, and utter honesty at all times. This book and their many other books and workshops through the Hendricks Institute, www.hendricks.com , give many concrete techniques and practices for conscious relationship.

Although there are many wonderful, established programs for Conscious Relationship such as the two above, Intuitive Focusing, as aided by Focused Listening, is the missing link in almost every program, the one thing that is usually not taught but makes all the difference in terms of whether people actually succeed in the programs or not.

Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening, used in Focusing Partnerships and Interpersonal Focusing, are the bedrock self-help skills which provide a way through. They help you to stick with it when buttons get pushed. They tell you how to mine the treasure in "confrontations." These are really confrontations with your own shadow side-- the parts of yourself you can't see - the positive aspects you devalue as well as negative aspects you do not want to accept.

The goal for everyone is "wholeness," the integration of positive and negative shadow aspects, and we choose friends and partners who will push us toward wholeness.

Love Relationships

Perhaps there is no more important place for the use of Empathic Listening and Experiential Focusing skills than in love relationships.

When we "fall in love," we are drawn to something in the Other that intrigues and fascinates us---[CLICK HERE TO GO TO INTEREST AREA: CONSCIOUS RELATIONSHIP AT OUR WEBSITE AND READ ON, INCLUDING FIND THE FIRST TEN STEPS FOR BRINGING LISTENING/FOCUSING INTO INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS AND FRIENDSHIPS.](#)

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing or an Interpersonal Focusing exercise, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

Interest Areas: Seven Places To Start Practice Groups!!!

The Interest Areas under "Is This You" at The Creative Edge Focusing website (www.cefocusing.com) give the First Ten Steps you might take to bring the model of Listening/Focusing into seven whole different areas of living: Organizations, Support Groups and Communities, Relationships, Parenting, Education, Spiritual Communities, and Helping Professions (psychotherapy, counselling, medicine, body work, etc.).

In the next e-newsletters, I will introduce you to each of these Interest Areas and possible First Steps so that you might start a Listening/Focusing practice group in any of these areas.

HAVE YOU STARTED YOUR LISTENING/FOCUSING PRACTICE PARTNERSHIP OR GROUP YET???????

CLICK HERE FOR A LINK AT CREATIVE EDGE FOCUSING WHERE YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE ENTIRE "INTRODUCTION," IN ENGLISH OR SPANISH, AS A FREE PDF FILE.

CLICK HERE FOR A BLOG WITH LINKS TO FREE DOWNLOAD OF CHAPTER THREE: FOCUSING PARTNERSHIP EXCHANGE, IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH. PASS IT OUT TO YOUR FRIENDS AND START PRACTICING!

AND/OR CLICK HERE TO FIND FOUR FREE MANUAL DOWNLOADS AND TWO AUDIO DOWNLOADS OF CD SETS IN OUR NEW TOTALLY FREE STORE.

It is my hope that, before the end of this four-week cycle, 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 chapter 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.

INSTANT "AHAH!" # 10: FOCUSING ON SPIRITUALITY

Campbell and McMahon's BioSpirituality

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

EXPERIENCING THE SACRED

Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening can be used purposefully to "attend to," "sit with," "articulate" the "intuitive feel" of spiritual experiences. But more importantly, the practice of Listening/Focusing opens our eyes to seeing the Sacred around us by encouraging attention to those moments when the Sacred enters our lives. If you have just joined us, click here to read the rest of the first e-newsletter introducing this cycle, [Instant Ahah # 10: Experiencing the Sacred Week One](#) and also [Week Two: Spirituality and Religion](#)

This e-course walks you through the 10 exercises in the "Instant 'Ahah!' Mini-Manual, a free download. In a year, we will cycle through all ten, plus a special additional course in Interpersonal Conflict Resolution. If you just joined us, expecting applications of Intuitive Focusing and Listening to business, organizations, or creativity, you may be surprised to have landed in exercise #10, Focusing and Spirituality. I hope you will find something of interest here and stick with us as the other topics cycle around. If you are impatient for these other applications, you might scan the [e-newsletter archives](#) for topics from the cycle that are of most interest to you.

Let me make it clear that Focusing does not HAVE TO BE a spiritual experience for you or anyone. I am only pointing out that, just as one might decide to use Intuitive Focusing specifically upon a Creative Project or an Interpersonal Situation, one can choose to turn Focusing-attention to a Spiritual Experience.

Biospirituality

Jesuit Fathers Pete Campbell and Ed McMahon (*Bio-Spirituality: Focusing As A Way To Grow*, 1985) have made a life's work out of looking at the specifically spiritual aspect which can be present in any use of Intuitive Focusing. They see entering the bodily "felt sense" through Focusing as a way of entering into The Body of Christ from the Christian perspective and also into the common ground of all spiritual experience. They call their approach Bio-spirituality (www.biospiritual.org).

In any Focusing process, the Focuser will often experience a Felt Shift or Paradigm Shift, an opening of tension release into forward movement and new energy. Fathers Pete and Ed tell us to pay more attention to the "bodily-feel" surrounding these felt shifts in experiencing. They show us that, if we attend fully to the feelings surrounding the felt shift, we will find experiences of gratitude, of awe, of being "graced" by the presence of the Almighty.

While they started with Christianity, the Fathers now see Focusing as an access path to the Experience of the Sacred which underlies all religions. They elaborate upon Gendlin's sixth step of Focusing, called Receiving: thanking and acknowledging your Body's Wisdom for the new steps of healing that have emerged through Focusing and taking the further step of noticing the presence of grace and awe and thanking the Greater Source from which felt shifts, and spiritual and emotional growth, emerge.

Exercise: Focusing on Spirituality: Experiencing The Sacred

(You can read these to yourself now, download them for repeated use, read them into a tape recorder for playback; leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction)

If you need a different kind of Focusing Exercise for where you are today, please [click here](#) to access the e-newsletter archives and choose any Focusing Instruction that fits for you.

As last week, you will choose an experience to spend Intuitive Focusing time on that had spiritual meaning for you, a moment when you might have said that you were experiencing God or The Sacred or Something Profound - often, this can be something that touched you or moved you, perhaps bringing a sheen of tears to your eyes. It might be a piece of music, a prayer or passage from the Bible, a poem, a sunset, the smile of a child, the touch of a friend.

According to the BioSpirituality work, you might pay special attention to any feelings or experiences that come "around" any experiences of Felt Shifting or Paradigm Shift. Do you notice any feelings of Awe or Gifting, the presence of Grace or Something More?

By spending time with "the intuitive feel of it all," you are going to make more words and meanings for what is Sacred, to you. Please find a comfortable chair in a quiet place, and give yourself at least 30 minutes for Intuitive Focusing.

You can read the instructions to yourself, or follow along with Dr. McGuire's instructions on this YouTube video:



Gendlin's Focusing Upon A Spiritual Experience

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 ---)

Now, bring to mind an event or piece of music or art or religious symbol that felt Sacred, or had a spiritual significance for you (pause)

--- Take your time to find a powerful, meaningful symbol or event ---

(One minute or more ---)

Think about it or get a mental image of it --- take your time to choose something that matters to you ---

(One minute ---)

Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about this experience, and, as you carry a mental image of the event or symbol in your mind, just wait and see what comes in the center of your body, around your

heart/chest area, in response (pause) --- not words, but the intuitive feel of that whole thing ---
(One minute or more ---)

Now, carefully try to find words or an image for that intuitive feel ---
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 ---)

Now, gently ask yourself, "What was so important for me about that?" or, "What about that touched me or filled me with awe?", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in the center of your body, the place where you feel things ---
(One minute or more ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that felt experiencing ---
(One minute or more ---)

Now, ask yourself, "And what was so Sacred to me about that, what do I mean by 'Sacred?'" and, again, wait quietly, for at least a minute, to see what comes in the center of your body, without words, just the "feel" of "the whole thing" about "Sacred."
(One minute or more ---)

And find some words or an image to capture that "whole thing," The Sacred ---
(One minute or more ---)

Now, ask yourself, "Does that capture what I mean by 'spiritual?'" and, again, don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for an answer to come in the center of your body, your wordless intuition, The Creative Edge ---
(One minute or more ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image for that, and check, "Is that it?" ---
(One minute ---)

If the answer is "Yes," a release of bodily tension, a sense of "rightness," then turn your attention to noticing any "spiritual" experiences that are present around the edges of this experience, right now --- feelings of Sacredness, of floating in Oneness, of Awe or Gratitude, of being moved or touched with tears --- stay with these immediate spiritual feelings as long as you like ---
(One minute or more ---)

Try to find an image or other symbol or gesture that might serve as a "handle" for this particular spiritual feeling, something that would remind you of how to find your way to this place again, at any time during the day when you want to revisit the Experience of the Sacred -

--

(One minute or more)

And, when you are finished, come back into the room.

If the answer is "No," your body remains tense, then, set aside everything you have already thought and tried and ask your body, The Creative Edge, again: "What is Spirituality for me, and where might I find it?", and, again, wait, as long as a minute or more, to see what comes in the center of your chest, an intuitive "feel" for the whole thing ---

(One minute or more ---)

Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for whatever has come ---

(One minute or more ---)

Keep at this as long as you are comfortable, asking an open-ended question, waiting for an intuitive sense of "the whole thing" to emerge, looking for words or an image or even a gesture or action step that fits the intuitive feel "exactly."

(One minute or more ---)

But, if no clear "felt" experiencing of Spirituality arises, just remind yourself that, by spending Focusing time sitting with The Creative Edge, you have added energy and started a new living-forward, and, especially if you continue to hold "the feel of it all" on the back-burner of your mind, later something new will likely pop up ---

(One minute)

Appreciate yourself and your body for taking time with this, trusting that taking time is the important thing - new experiences can then arise later.

(One minute or more ---)

Remember, Intuitive Focusing is often learned more easily in the company of a Focused Listener. Go to Creative Edge Focusing™ at www.cefocusing.com to find many resources and to [The Focusing Institute](#) to find Certified Focusing Trainers worldwide and online.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing or an Interpersonal Focusing exercise, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

This week three of a four-week cycle. We are applying Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing process to spiritual experiences. If you are just joining us and have never learned Focusing, probably best to start by reading the introduction and watching the video at [Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing -- Find Out What Is Bothering You](#), which lays out the six steps.

Creative Edge Focusing News and Goods:

Why Cry? Wonder, Joy, Being Touched and Moved

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

TAKING TEARS SERIOUSLY

As you watch the YouTubes of Listening/Focusing turns, often you will see the Focuser get teary eyed, or even enter some deep sobbing, perhaps later to come out of this laughing with the

release of energy. Tears often signal our places of deepest meaning, our values, as well as places of past hurt or disillusionment. Tears can be very healing. And, yes, tears can happen in a business setting as well as at home!

William Frey, in his book *Crying*, states research which found that women cry five times as often as men. Certainly, there is a difference, and perhaps a skill, worth exploring here, if we take the value of tears and crying in a positive way.

TEARS OF WONDER/JOY, BEING TOUCHED AND BEING MOVED, AS POSITIVE, TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES

Some tears are simply repetitive, "sheer" emotion, and change will not happen unless the Focuser pays attention to the wider, deeper, "felt sensing" under the tears: "What are these tears about for me?" and pausing for a "felt sense" of "the whole thing" to form.

Sometimes tears and crying seem repetitive, stuck, often cried from a helpless, "victim" stance.

But there is another kind of tears and crying which I experience as deeply transformative, as part of Gendlin's "felt shift," the crux of change within the Focusing model. I call these tears "cathartic unfolding": tears and crying accompanying a deep shifting and opening and "carrying forward" at the bodily level. I experience these kinds of "tearful felt shifts" as among the deepest in terms of true, lasting transformation of the psyche.

Gendlin tends to say, "Yes, receive these tears, value them, but they are a 'side product,' not an essential aspect of the 'felt shift' through Focusing." I agree that ALL "felt shifts" do not have to include tears, in fact, most do not. But I think I disagree with Gendlin and others on what I see as the ADDITIONAL significance

of felt-shifts accompanied by "cathartic unfolding."

I also see more subtle "tearing up," the slight sheen of tears in the eye, as an indication of places of deep meaning. So, when being a Listener for a Focuser, or a Focusing-Oriented Therapist, I am likely to ask the Focuser if it would make sense to stop and "sense into" the place of tears, as a pathway to profound personal meanings.

Being Touched: Kelly Corrigan on Transcending: Words on Women and Strength

I got this message by email from my "Women Relatives" group:

"I wonder if you've seen this ~ it's perfect and so are all of you ~ friends, sisters, moms." And the following link:

Transcending: Words on Women and Strength

If you can't open this, go to www.youtube.com and search for Kelly Corrigan and watch Transcending: Words on Women and Strength. You will see Corrigan "being touched" and "being moved" to tears as she speaks, and you may well find yourself having a corresponding emotional response. My women friends and relatives communicate between each other in this way as a matter of course, sending each other "touching" emails, as well as humorous ones. Corrigan and the women experiencing their tears with her are also being "bonded together" by their shared empathetic response. Feelings are inherently relational and draw people into contact

Tears Described Through Phenomenological Research

I have collected countless paragraphs from works of fiction which mention the "coming of tears" as harbingers of deep meaning ---

profound love, relief, connection, millions of things. We all know that people cry at births and weddings, beautiful, moving music, sunsets, moments of compassion seen between people, etc. Even grieving, if looked at without prejudice, contains many warm, joyful memories and re-connections with the beloved. Etc., etc.

What matters to me in terms of Focusing is that, noticing even the tiniest sheen of tears in the eyes, or sometimes just the softening of the skin around the eyes, or the quivering of a cheek muscle, or a slight wiping gesture toward the eyes --- if the person or the Listener/therapist notices these "openings," and suggests spending some Focusing time with "Whatever brings the tears," huge wealth of personal, profound, meaning/carrying forward usually arises, as well as life-giving moments of I-Thou connection between the participants (even a whole group of "witnesses") that is Sacred/soul-building.

I presented this question to the Focusing Discussion e-list, and received the following wonderful responses, which I summarize below.

"Tears of Wonder/Joy" by William Braud

A list member sent me the link to a wonderful qualitative research article. The author, William Braud, is doing a "phenomenology" of the experience he calls "tears of wonder-joy," with many concrete examples. He asked people to exactly describe this experience. In a section called "Felt Experience," (I wonder if the author is a Focuser!), Braud describes that participants reported positive affect and "feelings of joy, peace, awe, love, compassion, empathy and acceptance. There are feelings of unity, union, oneness, closeness, connection and immersion." Read Braud's article for a complete description of these powerful, positive experiences.

Braud goes on to define "wonder-tears" as an innate biological "empathy indicator," an indicator of entering the numinous (holy,

sacred) and a "signal" toward what is meaningful for each individual, a "sign post" on the path.

Now, imagine adding Intuitive Focusing to go deeper, to articulate these deeper meanings, as I teach in my article, "Finding The Meaning Of Tears." The Focuser can articulate the landscape of their own soul, their "unique blueprint" in the Rogerian sense, using tears of being touched and moved as a kind of moral "compass," keeping the keel of one's soul-ship on one's unique path, leading to action steps toward "carrying forward" on this path of meaning.

Here is the link to the entire article, ["Experiencing Tears of Wonder-Joy: Seeing With The Heart's Eye" by William Braud.](#)

Tears ARE Transformation, Felt-Shifting Happening

I have found another wonderful phenomenological study of tears, this one, ["Nine Psycho-Spiritual Characteristics of Spontaneous and Involuntary Weeping" by Rosemarie Anderson, Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, Palo Alto, CA.](#) Anderson confirms my own experience that a certain kind of tears IS transformation happening, is our body's sign that something is changing, shifting at the deepest level, an "integration," not simply a by-product of the deepest felt-shifting but part and parcel of it. She states that tears may be the border between mind/body/spirit, an essential part, perhaps even a causative factor in transformation.

See my paper "Affect in Focusing and Experiential Therapy" , which makes the same argument in terms of tears of "cathartic unfolding."

Anderson cites the dissertation of one of her students, Dufrechou, J. (2001). Coming home to nature through the body: An intuitive inquiry into experiences of grief, weeping, and other deep emotions in response to nature. Unpublished doctoral dissertation

proposal, Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, Palo Alto, CA. I have not found a copy, but I would love to read it.

The Fountain and The Furnace: The Way of Tears and Fire by Maggie Ros AND Rosemarie Anderson cites the book on The Way of Tears that I have been seeking since a friend loaned it to me over twenty years ago:

Ross, Maggie. (1987a) *The Fountain and the Furnace: The Way of Tears and Fire*. NY: Paulist Press. And a related article: Ross, M.

(1987b) Tears and fire: Recovering a neglected tradition.

Sobornost, 9(1), 14-23

Now to find the book! You can get it used from \$12 up through Amazon.

The Opening of Vision: "Crying For A Vision" by David Michael Levin

Dave Young brought attention to the work of David Michael Levin, a Focuser and philosopher-colleague of Eugene Gendlin, creator of Focusing, particularly Levin's book, *The Opening of Vision*, Chapter 2, "Crying for a Vision." Here are Dave's comments interspersed with quotes from Levin. I include the entirety, since most will not have the Levin book at hand.

A key quote from Levin:

"Crying, of course, is involuntary. But the experience of crying, with which we are all familiar, can be taken up by the self, taken to heart, and turned, through the gift of our thought, into a PRACTICE of the self. The practice is concerned with the cultivation of our capacity for care --- Crying becomes a critical social practice of the self when the vision it brings forth makes a difference in the world, gathering other people into the wisdom of its attunement."

Crying as a PRACTICE, a discipline like yoga or meditation or Focusing, a social practice for CULTIVATION OF OUR CAPACITY FOR CARE!!!

Dave says:

[Kathy]You challenge us brilliantly & beautifully: "So, just wanting people to look and then ask themselves, "What is this about humans being 'touched and moved' to tears, and how does it relate to guiding oneself and others during Focusing?"

I'm presenting some quotes, with a bit of my own commentary, from the best philosophical writing on crying that I know, this from one of Gene's closest philosophical colleagues, himself a Focuser, David Michael Levin. It's found in his marvelous book, The Opening of Vision, Chapter 2, "Crying for a Vision".

Levin: "This work on vision began, not with a vision, but with an experience of crying. Crying for the earth, the earth itself, whose devastation I see all around me. Crying over the plundering of the land. Crying from the depths of my ancestral body for the victims of the Holocaust. Crying for the Indians massacred in my country --- "

Let me urge our discussion of crying, as Focusers, begin here: with specific experiences of our crying, not merely of our sense of crying in general. And let it include our own crying & our own struggles with crying.

Levin makes a startling claim, based on his Focusing-oriented experiences: "With crying, I begin to see, briefly, and with pain. Only with the crying, only then, does vision begin."

Perhaps carefully, caringly examining our own specific experiences of crying we can bring Levin's claim within us.

Levin: "Our eyes are not only articulate organs of sight; they are

also the emotionally expressive organs of crying. The site where vision takes place is sometimes a site where a very different kind of process takes place. We will now give some thought to the character of this process. What is crying? Is it merely an accidental or contingent fact that the eyes are capable of crying as well as seeing? Or is crying in the most intimate, most closely touching relationship to seeing? Is crying essential for vision?"

Understand that Levin is a Focuser. Therefore, as he will point out later, vision is never divorced from the body, and in particular, vision is never divorced from what he calls the body's "moodedness" or as he says, "our capacity for care, 'Sorge', feeling: our care-taking capacity, that is, as visionary beings." More strongly, he says, "Crying is visionary feeling, and feeling is inherently closer to a sense of wholeness than the disembodied intellect."

This, then, is what Levin means when he says that crying & "vision" are linked, when through his question he implies that crying is "essential for vision".

Levin: "Only human beings cry. Animals are beings endowed with sight; but only we are capable of crying. What does this show about us? What does this show TO us? Is it this capacity for crying, then, which ennobles our vision, makes it human? And is it not the ABSENCE of this capacity which marks off the inhuman? By the 'inhuman' I mean the monstrous and the inwardly dead: the Nazi commandant, for example, and his victim, the Jew, locked into a dance of death, neither one, curiously, able to shed a tear: for different reasons, their eyes are dry, empty, hollow."

Very strong, what Levin is challenging us to examine. And yet, on a deeply felt-sensed level, we know this. I would hold that, in any discussion of crying, the state or rather the stopped-processing of not-crying must also be closely examined, experientially, in ourselves and in others. What, societally, that stops us from crying is, of course, what we most need to cry about. And as this need is a stopped-processing, that means the need always remains within us, waiting, crying to come forth.

Levin: "What does this capacity [for crying] make visible? What is its truth? What is the truth it sees? What does it know as a 'speech' of our nature? How does it guide our vision?"

Certainly, these are questions which we, as Focusing/Listening guides need to address.

Levin: "Crying is not something we 'do'. Crying is the speech of powerlessness, helplessness --- As a response to what history has made visible, crying calls for vision, for thought, for understanding; we need to SEE what IT make VISIBLE."

Levin points what, to me, is a key in crying: that crying isn't a self-chosen act. Though we do, of course, choose to embody-open ourselves up to seeing what calls for crying. Yet crying, genuine crying always comes as a kind of cleansing & joining gift. But more on this later, when I have time to better think it through, based on my own personal experiences.

Continuing & developing this thought, Levin states,

"Crying, of course, is involuntary. But the experience of crying, with which we are all familiar, can be taken up by the self, taken to heart, and turned, through the gift of our thought, into a

PRACTICE of the self. The practice is concerned with the cultivation of our capacity for care --- Crying becomes a critical social practice of the self when the vision it brings forth makes a difference in the world, gathering other people into the wisdom of its attunement."

This will take an unbundling I cannot do now. But know: crying does make a difference. Kathy, it's not only pointing to meaning, but to a special type of meaning. And this meaning is a connecting, an act that reaches out and makes a difference in the world. This I know from my own crying for abused & neglected clients who have been alienated from their capacity to cry for themselves and, worse, have become alienated from the truth that they are worth crying over. And that is only one example. But this points to a powerful truth which, when we guide those who have greatly suffered, we should not shirk from. Always, of course, we see how our crying affects, not only is affected by, in our intense "interacting first". But we must never rule away our crying out-of-hand.

Additionally, when I allow myself to cry for my clients, not only does this crying -- not all crying, not the crying of pre-empting or communicating this is too much, but the crying of being deeply touched which can be held & presented -- not only does this crying usually bring for depths & healing from within my clients or rather from within our interacting. I myself, by our genuineness, by my congruence, am far less likely to be drained & burned out. This healing capacity of crying should also be noted in our discussion.

Levin gives us a starting point to understand the types of "moods" in crying, paralleling yours, Kathy:

"We could think of our eyes as capable of three kinds of mood: (i) the ontical moodedness of everyday seeing, which can differentiate and articulate what it beholds only in a more or less dualistic, objectifying, re-presentational manner; (ii) the transitional moodedness of a seeing which cries for vision, immersed in painful seeing, immersed in the processes of its subjectivity; and (iii) the moodedness of a more joyful, more fulfilled seeing, clear and bright and articulate, and capable of being deeply touched and moved, even at a distance, by what it is given to see."

--- As a taste of where this leads, permit me one more Levin quote: "Crying is the rooting of vision in the ground of our [universal, shared & interacting] needs: [our] need for openness, [our] need for contact, [our] need for wholeness." Dave

And Franc Chamberlain also dives into Levin's work, with more on Vision and Crying:

"Hello, I haven't been following closely, so apologies if I'm repeating --- I've recently been dipping back into some of the Levin books, such as *The Opening of Vision* --- and there's also a questioning about tears in the early part of *The Philosopher's Gaze*, in the section entitled 'Blindness, Violence, Compassion' (which seems to link the two threads of tears and (non) violence).

After discussing briefly T.S. Eliot's 'I see the eyes but not the tears/this is my affliction' he goes on to say:

"What must we say about philosophers? When have philosophers seen the tears? When have they given thought to what, without words, tears are saying? Is the history of philosophy a history of blindness, a discourse disfigured by traces of this terrible, unavowable affliction? Is there something inherent in the philosophical gaze that compels this affliction to remain unavowable? (*The Philosopher's Gaze*, 1999 p.4)

So, is there something in the philosophical gaze that both arrests crying whilst at the same time prevents us from knowing that crying is arrested? So, could we discuss 'crying' in a philosophical sense, and even discuss the arrest of crying, without even knowing that our own crying is a stopped process? Because western philosophy often splits itself off from 'experiencing' even when speaking about 'experience'

Franc

Articles by Dr. Kathy McGuire: Being Touched and Being Moved, The Alchemy of Grieving, Focusing Inner Child Work, Finding The Meaning of Tears

Crying and vision, crying and opening the heart, crying and connecting (this is such a profound experience when it happens --- as a Listener, I tear up in empathy with a Focuser, who may also be touching on tears, and, in my experience, the walls, the envelopes of flesh separating us simply melt away, and we meet in Buber's I-Thou space --- the two of us and The Something More, The Sacred entering in).

In my own journey to understand the place of crying, being touched and being moved, particularly, I have found

(a) an early book by William Frey called *Crying*, which, when first published, was a media event. He collected tears in test tubes from people watching a tear-jerker movie, and compared them, their chemical analysis, with "non-emotional" tears, collected questionnaire data on frequency of crying (women five times as often as men!), etc.

(b) The book by Anglican hermit Maggie Ross, *The Fountain and The Furnace*, cited above.

(c) Pema Chodrin's (Buddhist nun) work on the "way of compassion" as a complement to, for instance, Tolle's "way of enlightenment." While much of Eastern philosophy seems to emphasize "detachment," "objectivity," Chodrin talks about going DOWN into the morass of human pain and living through it and into it, with other humans, with compassion.

(d) William Gaylin, *Feelings: Our Vital Signs* (Harper & Row Perennial, 1979), where he has chapters that are a phenomenology of many different feelings. He has a chapter on "being touched" as a human to human happening, and one on "being moved" as between a human and The Something Greater.

Here are links to some of my articles (all found on my website, www.cefocusing.com , Category Free Resources, then Articles):

"On Tears and Focusing," a mini-research where Focusers spoke about their experience with tears (I have tons of great quotes!). SHORT BUT SWEET

"Being Touched and Being Moved: The Spiritual Value of Tears", with lots of quotes about how Focuser value their tears.

"Finding The Meaning of Tears," a book chapter, with more great quotes about how Focusers use their tears and giving actual Focusing exercises for following the path of tears.

"Affect in Focusing and Experiential Therapy", containing quotes from dialogue between Gene Gendlin and myself about the value and role of what I call "cathartic unfolding" vs. "sheer, repeating emotions."
THEORETICAL WITH EXAMPLES

"Medical Change Events Through Experiential Focusing," including the complete transcript of the 12- minute session (also on my DVD Listening/Focusing Demonstrations) where a woman goes from depression/migraine to felt shift, including joyful releasing teariness, and also including my "Five-Minute Grieving" procedure for helping professionals, immediate application for all physicians and helping professionals.

"Active Grieving Part One," a perspective on grieving as an alchemical, transformative process

"Active Grieving Part Two," an actual protocol for active grieving of a loss.

"Focusing Inner Child Work With Abused Clients", which is not about tears directly but about the extreme attitude of awareness toward subtle nuances of word or body gesture which can indicate repressed memories of emotional/sexual/physical abuse in childhood and the extreme attitude of gentleness needed to allow clients to "be with" and work through, "carry forward," these painful experiences.

It was enlightening to me to see how much of my work has this emphasis upon a kind of "going deeper" and "connection" that is associated with even a slight SHEEN OF TEARS in the eyes (sobbing not necessary but welcome!)

GREAT BOOK: WHY GOOD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE

By Stephen Post and Jill Neimark, Why Good Things Happen To Good People: The Exciting New Research That Proves The Link Between Doing Good And Living A Longer, Healthier, Happier Life, Broadway Books, 2007. Read about the Ways of Celebration, Generativity, Forgiveness, Courage, Humor, Respect, Compassion, Loyalty, Creativity, and

Chapter 11: The Way of Listening: Offer Deep Presence

DEVELOPING THE "HABIT OF FELT SENSING":

Focusing Partnership Exchange: The Focuser Is In Charge

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday

life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing or an Interpersonal Focusing exercise, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

If you are just joining us and have never learned Focusing, probably best to start by reading the introduction to [Instant "Aha!" #1: Focusing -- Find Out What Is Bothering You](#) , which lays out the six steps, and watching the video.

Starting Your Own Listening/Focusing Partnership or Group

While Focusing can be practiced alone, there are many benefits to learning and practicing Focusing in the equal exchange of Listening/Focusing turns basic to a [Focusing Partnership](#) or [Focusing Group/Team](#).

In this four-week cycle, I am giving instruction (including free Chapter downloads from the manual *Focusing In Community: Starting A Listening/Focusing Support Group (Focusing en Comunidad)* and encouragement for starting your own, local Listening/Focusing Practice Group. Click here to read [Week One: Starting A Listening/Focusing Practice Group](#), including links to Free Downloads of Introduction from the manual, *Focusing in Community*, in English and Spanish. This Introduction gives many suggestions for finding that one first person to exchange Focusing Partnership Turns with and/or how to start a core practice group.

Click here to read [Week Two: Basic Listening/Focusing Exchange and First Ten Sessions of Practice Group](#) . Included are links for free download of Chapter Three: Listening/Focusing Partnership

Exchange, in English and Spanish, from the manual *Focusing in Community*.

These are major downloads well-worth getting. If you have just joined this e-course, the chapters will orient you.

Finding Your First Person Or Core Group

And just an easy reminder from last week's lesson, if you haven't yet taken that first step of finding one person or a small group to start practicing with:

Beginning your Listening/Focusing Practice Group can be as easy as finding one other person to share the Self-Help Package (or with Spanish manual) with. You will have a manual download in English or Spanish giving explicit instructions, two 2-CD sets explaining the basic philosophy and including many Focusing Exercises you can use to begin your meetings, and a two-hour DVD with four different demonstrations of being a Focused Listener while someone else is using Intuitive Focusing. **ACTUALLY, NOW ALL BUT THE DVD ARE FREE IN THE STORE AT WWW.CEFOCUSING.COM**

Not ready to commit to a purchase? You can start by downloading the free PDF files (or in Spanish) of the Introduction to the manual which gives many suggestions for finding people for your practice group. And you can download Chapter Three, explicit instructions for the first ten meetings of your Listening/Focusing exchange.

ACTUALLY NOW, THE STORE IS TOTALLY FREE, SO YOU CAN DOWNLOAD FOUR MANUALS AND ACCOMPANYING MP3 AUDIOS ALL FOR FREE.

It is my hope that, before the end of this four-week cycle, 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 chapter 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.

INTEREST AREA: BUILDING SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Ten First Steps For Bringing Listening/Focusing Into Community Mental Health and Task-Oriented Work Situations

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

INTEREST AREA: BUILDING SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY AT HOME, IN THE COMMUNITY, AND AT WORK

The Building Supportive Community Project brings the Creative Edge Focusing™ Model, with its two Core Skills, Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening, and seven Applied Methods of The Creative Edge Pyramid, into existing support groups and communities, as well as starting new Focusing Communities.

Some applications are 12-Step Groups, Support Groups, Community Mental Health, Religious and Spiritual Communities, Hospitals , Prisons , Schools , Conflict Resolution, Participatory Democracy , and Collaborative Work Groups and Collectives. See [\(PDF file\) Focusing and Twelve Step by Steve Crawford](#) and [Focusing Recovery by Suzanne Noel](#) for an integration of Gendlin's Focusing theory and the 12-Steps.

What Is Community?

Community means a felt-experience of interconnection and mutual support as well as the capacity to work together toward a common cause. In a community everyone can belong, respected for their uniqueness or their role but working toward the common good. For community to work, people need ways to respect and to capitalize on differences and to resolve interpersonal conflicts.

Community can be built starting with people who initially come together for mutual emotional support, as in a support group. That experience of sharing can build outward into an actual community which can organize toward a common goal, for instance, advocacy.

Or, community can be built starting with people who initially come together to accomplish a shared goal, as in a grass-roots campaign or a non-profit or for-profit organization. The good feelings created through collaboration can end up having also created feelings of mutual care and supportive community.

Dr. McGuire's manual, [*Focusing In Community: How To Start A Listening/Focusing Support Group \(in Spanish, Focusing en Comunidad: Como Empezar un Grupo de Apoyo de Escucha Y Focusing\)*](#) teaches the basic skills needed. NOW AVAILABLE AS A FREE DOWNLOAD IN THE STORE AT WWW.CEFOCUSING.COM

See the attached article [The Focusing Community](#) for a full description of the model.

Support Groups/ Twelve-Step Groups

The Listening/Focusing peer counseling model for building community starts at the emotional support end. The exchange of Listening/Focusing turns in [Focusing Partnerships](#) provides the empathic glue that bonds people together and motivates them to want to take care of each other, individually and in terms of uniting around a shared goal.

In a support group, usually around a particular topic like divorce, cancer, adoption, addiction, grief, we have the opportunity of discovering that we are not alone. Others have had similar experiences. They are interested, also, in hearing our own unique story, in all of its detail. Pooling all that we have learned, we can solve our problems. Support groups are places for powerful bonding because of this shared experience.

The Listening/Focusing exchange in Focusing Groups/Teams and Focusing Communities can be as powerful as psychotherapy in terms of healing and moving forward, yet it is safe, self-empowering, and inexpensive. These are bonuses to support group participation too good to pass up! ([See More on Focusing in Support Groups.](#))

Community Mental Health

The Focusing in Community model can also be applied as a grass-roots method for integrating mental health care, as a peer counseling method, into communities.
[See APPLICATION: Community Mental Health](#)

Creative Edge Organizations Are Communities

In addition to incorporating Creative Edge Focusing into emotional support groups, building supportive community can start with groups who come together to accomplish a common task. [The Creative Edge Organization model](#) can be used for motivation from the bottom up. [The Collaborative Edge Decision Making Method](#) (PDF file to download), with components of Shared Leadership, Coordinated Collaboration, and Creative Edge Impasse Resolution, grounds power and responsibility for decision making in each individual. [See More on Task-Oriented Community Building.](#)

Starting either with emotional support groups or collaborative work situations, by teaching the two simple skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening, and the seven applied methods of [The Creative Edge Pyramid](#), you can strengthen community through

---the personal, creative, and spiritual growth of each member

---the relational aspects of mutual care and conflict resolution

---the task-oriented level of problem-solving, group decision-making, and concerted action toward a goal.

[Click here to visit the Building Supportive Community Interest Area and to find the Ten First Steps For Bringing Listening/Focusing into Support Groups, Community Mental Health, and Task-Oriented Settings](#)

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

For four weeks, we practice an actual exercise in three different categories: An Instant "Ahah!" to integrate into your everyday life at work and at home, a Felt Sensing exercise to practice this step of Focusing or an Interpersonal Focusing exercise, and a Complete Focusing Session. Actually doing the

exercise which arrives in each e-newsletter insures that you can call upon these new skills when needed!

Choosing Your Own "Complete Focusing Exercise"

This is Week Three of a new four-week cycle. For the Complete Focusing session, we are applying Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing process to spiritual experiences as in [Week One: Experiencing The Sacred](#) .

However, especially for those who have been practicing through these e-newsletters for a while, I also suggest that you become able to choose whatever kind of Complete Focusing Instruction fits your needs today and throughout the week. This makes you independent of my direction and lets you take charge of your own Focusing experience.

You can do this by going to the e-newsletter archives and browsing until you find the exercise that "fits" for you, be it Focusing on a Situation, Clearing A Space, Focusing on Creativity, "How Am I Today?", etc. Go to www.cefocusing.com , choose Free Resources Category button, and click on E-Newsletter Archive from the submenu or [click here](#). Now you are on your own!

If you are just joining us and have never learned Focusing, probably best to start by reading the introduction to [Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing -- Find Out What Is Bothering You](#), which lays out Gendlin's basic six steps of Focusing, and try it with the video instructions.

Starting Your Own Listening/Focusing Partnership or Group

In the weekly Felt Sensing newsletters of this four-week cycle, I am giving instruction (including free Chapter downloads from the manual *Focusing In Community: Starting A Listening/Focusing Support Group (Focusing en Comunidad)*) and encouragement for starting your own, local Listening/Focusing

Practice Group. See [Week One: Starting A Listening/Focusing Practice Group](#) if you haven't already downloaded the free Introduction to the Self-Help manual, *Focusing In Community*, which tells you many ways to find a first person for a Listening/Focusing Partnership and to expand into a core self-help practice group. And [Week Two: Basic Listening/Focusing Partnership Exchange](#) to find links to download Chapter Three, complete instructions for the first ten sessions of your practice groups (English and Spanish versions).

Interest Areas: Seven Places To Start Practice Groups!!!

The Interest Areas under "Is This You" at The Creative Edge Focusing website (www.cefocusing.com) give the First Ten Steps you might take to bring the model of Listening/Focusing into seven whole different areas of living: Organizations, Support Groups and Communities, Relationships, Parenting, Education, Spiritual Communities, and Helping Professions (psychotherapy, counselling, medicine, body work, etc.).

HAVE YOU STARTED YOUR LISTENING/FOCUSING PRACTICE PARTNERSHIP OR GROUP YET?????????

CLICK HERE FOR A LINK AT CREATIVE EDGE FOCUSING WHERE YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE ENTIRE "INTRODUCTION" TO THE *FOCUSING IN COMMUNITY* MANUAL IN ENGLISH OR SPANISH, AS A FREE PDF FILE.

[CLICK HERE FOR A BLOG WITH LINKS TO FREE DOWNLOAD OF CHAPTER THREE: FOCUSING](#)

PARTNERSHIP EXCHANGE, IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH. PASS IT OUT TO YOUR FRIENDS AND START PRACTICING!

ACTUALLY, NOW BOTH COMPLETE MANUALS, PLUS TWO MORE MANUALS AND mp3 AUDIO SETS ARE ALL AVAILABLE AS FREE DOWNLOADS IN THE STORE AT www.cefocusing.com

It is my hope that, before the end of this four-week cycle, 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 chapter 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.

INSTANT "AHAH!" # 10: FOCUSING ON SPIRITUALITY

AGAPE: The Spiritual Love Of The Other

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

EXPERIENCING THE SACRED

Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening can be used purposefully to "attend to," "sit with," "articulate" the

"intuitive feel" of spiritual experiences. But more importantly, the practice of Listening/Focusing opens our eyes to seeing the Sacred around us by encouraging attention to those moments when the Sacred enters our lives. If you have just joined us, click here to read the rest of the first e-newsletter introducing this cycle, [Instant Ahah # 10: Experiencing the Sacred Week One](#) , [Week Two: Spirituality and Religion](#), [Week Three: Biospirituality --- The Body As A Doorway To Spirit](#) .

Let me make it clear that Focusing does not HAVE TO BE a spiritual experience for you or anyone. I am only pointing out that, just as one might decide to use Intuitive Focusing specifically upon a Creative Project or an Interpersonal Situation, one can choose to turn Focusing -attention to a Spiritual Experience.

If you are just joining this e-course, start with [Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing---Find Out What is Bothering You"](#) for a basic introduction to Focusing.

AGAPE: THE SPIRITUAL LOVE OF THE OTHER

Experiencing God in The Other

For me, intense spiritual experiences of the love known as Agape happen regularly through the experience of exchanging Listening/Focusing turns in a [Focusing Partnership](#) or a [Listening/Focusing Community](#). Through the use of [Focused Listening](#), I am able to set aside my own stereotypes and prejudices and really enter into the world of the other person. In these moments of empathy, when the [Focuser](#) touches upon her deepest values and most profound truths, as the Listener, I am often moved and touched by the absolute uniqueness, yet universal humanness, of the Other.

In these moments, often with a sheen of tears in our eyes, it seems that the boundaries separating one person from the other drop, and

we stand together in a shared, sacred space. I believe this is what is meant by experiencing The Christ Within The Other or Universal Oneness or Martin Buber's "I-Thou" vs. "I-It" experience. For me, there is no more sacred experience.

Here is how I recently described this experience of Agape during Listening/Focusing Partnership Exchange:

"I like Listening/Focusing better than Focusing Alone because, when people share Listening/Focusing turns, they actually build up Love between each other, the Love of "the unique otherness" of the other which is Agape, which is "seeing Christ in the other person," which is Buber's "I /Thou vs. I / It experience." I am way more interested in promoting a method that creates Love in the world than I am in any individual's personal growth.

And so I like to spread Listening/Focusing partnership, but even more important, Listening/Focusing groups, and, most importantly, Listening/Focusing Communities. In a Community, there is Listening/Focusing for conflict resolution and for Win/Win decision making, two more HUGE VAST ways to create love rather than conflict, prejudice, stereotyping.

The experience of Love being created? I am Listening to another. That person touches down, often, into a place of tears, a place of deepest, most profound meaning for them. I am also moved to tears of empathy. In that moment, it is "as if" the boundary between the other person and myself dissolves or broadens or merges --- I am still there, and they, but there is also this Togetherness --- and, in it this feeling of Love --- my heart swelling, sometimes tears in my eyes, and a sense that Something Sacred has entered into the room. Something beyond the two of us, and something with qualities of Awe and Grace and the kind of Love that God or a Universal positive force --- well, something like that!!!

And, this Love lasts. I am now bonded to this person. In a Focusing Community, out of this Love, people take each other to doctor's appointment, sit with each other through chemo therapy, help each

other move furniture, celebrate each other's Birthdays, show up at a meeting just to hear each person Check In, each person say their News and Goods from the week. I do think that this mutual "touching into tears" may actually be a crucial, almost physiological/spiritual part of this "melting and merging."

It is possible that the quality of sharing in my Focusing Communities is different or deeper than in other Focusing Groups because of the emphasis I place on teaching Focusers and Listeners alike to move toward, move into, welcome, the places that start with a shimmer of tears in the eyes, and, if the Focuser stops and "senses in" right there, at the "place of tears," hugely deep meanings unfold.

It is that, building community (not just partnership) in a world of isolation and mistrust and hate, that I love above all else, and it is Listening, more than Focusing Alone, that allows this to happen, really, really predictably. Creating Love predictably! What could be better! You can take any group of people, no matter how polarized and hating, and, if they will do Listening/Focusing turns with each other, seeing each other's mutual Uniqueness-yet-Commonality, they will find themselves loving each other, having deep compassion for each other, and being willing to take action steps to help each other (at least, this is my belief! Carl Rogers has done more of these actual world-peace making gatherings than I. Mine have been local Focusing Communities --- but six of these over 30 years, all creating love and bonding, each lasting 5-10 years)."

See articles in PDF:

[Focusing and Spirituality: The Still, Small Voice Within](#)

[Being Touched and Being Moved: The Spiritual Value Of Tears](#)

[Finding The Meaning Of Tears](#)

[Click here to see the whole Experiencing The Sacred Interest Area and scroll down to find Ten Ways to Bring Focusing into Spiritual Communities](#)

EXERCISE: FOCUSING UPON A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE OF AGAPE

(You can read these to yourself now, download them for repeated use, read them into a tape recorder for playback; leave at least one minute of silence between each instruction)

If you need a different kind of Focusing Exercise for where you are today, please [click here](#) to access the e-newsletter archives and choose any Focusing Instruction that fits for you.

As last week, you will choose an experience to spend Intuitive Focusing time on that had spiritual meaning for you, a moment when you might have said that you were experiencing God or The Sacred or Something Profound - often, this can be something that touched you or moved you, perhaps bringing a sheen of tears to your eyes. It might be a piece of music, a prayer or passage from the Bible, a poem, a sunset, the smile of a child, the touch of a friend.

Perhaps this week you could bring to mind an experience of Agape that you have had: A time when you felt a special closeness to another person which had a spiritual feel to it

By spending time with "the intuitive feel of it all," you are going to make more words and meanings for what is Sacred, to you. Please find a comfortable chair in a quiet place and give yourself at least 30 minutes for Intuitive Focusing.

Here is the YouTube video of this exercise if you want to follow along to Dr. McGuire's voice:



Focusing to Make Words for A Spiritual Experience

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 ---)

Now, bring to mind an event or piece of music or art or religious symbol that felt Sacred, or had a spiritual significance for you. If it fits for you, look for a time when you experienced the special closeness of Agape with another person (pause) --- Take your time to find a powerful, meaningful symbol or event --- (One minute or more ---)

Think about it or get a mental image of it --- take your time to choose something that matters to you ---

(One minute ---)

Now, try to set aside all of your thoughts about this experience, and, as you carry a mental image of the event or symbol in your mind, just wait and see what comes in the center of your body, around your heart/chest area, in response (pause) --- not words, but the intuitive feel of that whole thing ---

(One minute or more ---)

Now, carefully try to find words or an image for that intuitive feel --- 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 ---)

Now, gently ask yourself, "What was so important for me about that?" or, "What about that touched me or filled me with awe?", and wait, at least a minute, to see what comes in the center of your body, the place where you feel things ---

(One minute or more ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image that exactly fit that felt experiencing ---

(One minute or more ---)

Now, ask yourself, "And what was so Sacred to me about that, what do I mean by 'Sacred'?" and, again, wait quietly, for at least a minute, to see what comes in the center of your body, without words, just the "feel" of "the whole thing" about "Sacred."

(One minute or more ---)

And find some words or an image to capture that "whole thing,"
The Sacred ---

(One minute or more ---)

Now, ask yourself, "Does that capture what I mean by 'spiritual'?", and, again, don't answer from your head, what you already know, but wait, as long as a minute, for an answer to come in the center of your body, your wordless intuition, The Creative Edge ---

(One minute or more ---)

Again, carefully find words or an image for that, and check, "Is that it?" ---

(One minute ---)

If the answer is "Yes," a release of bodily tension, a sense of "rightness," then turn your attention to noticing any "spiritual" experiences that are present around the edges of this experience, right now --- feelings of Sacredness, of floating in Oneness, of Awe or Gratitude, of being moved or touched with tears --- stay with these immediate spiritual feelings as long as you like ---

(One minute or more ---)

Try to find an image or other symbol or gesture that might serve as a "handle" for this particular spiritual feeling, something that would remind you of how to find your way to this place again, at any time during the day when you want to revisit the Experience of the Sacred ---

(One minute or more)

And, when you are finished, come back into the room.

If the answer is "No," your body remains tense, then, set aside everything you have already thought and tried and ask your body, The Creative Edge, again: "What is Spirituality for me, and where might I find it?", and, again, wait, as long as a minute or more, to see what comes in the center of your chest, an intuitive "feel" for the whole thing ---

(One minute or more ---)

Take a moment, again, to carefully find words or an image for whatever has come ---

(One minute or more ---)

Keep at this as long as you are comfortable, asking an open-ended question, waiting for an intuitive sense of "the whole thing" to emerge, looking for words or an image or even a gesture or action step that fits the intuitive feel "exactly."

(One minute or more ---)

But, if no clear "felt" experiencing of Spirituality arises, just remind yourself that, by spending Focusing time sitting with The Creative Edge, you have added energy and started a new living-forward, and, especially if you continue to hold "the feel of it all" on the back-burner of your mind, later something new will likely pop up ---

(One minute)

Appreciate yourself and your body for taking time with this, trusting that taking time is the important thing - new experiences can then arise later.
(One minute or more ---)

Remember, Intuitive Focusing is often learned more easily in the company of a Focused Listener.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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This is week three of a four-week cycle. We are applying Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing process to spiritual experiences. If you are just joining us and have never learned Focusing, probably best to start by reading the introduction to [Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing -- Find Out What Is Bothering You](#) , which lays out the six steps, and try the video exercise.

DEVELOPING THE "HABIT OF FELT SENSING":

Focusing Partnership Exchange: What The Listener Does

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

FOCUSING PARTNERSHIP: WHAT THE LISTENER DOES

This month in this year-long e-course, I am teaching how to start your own Listening/Focusing Practice Group, including a free download, in English and Spanish, of Chapter Three, "Focusing Partnership Exchange," from the manual, *Focusing In Community: How To Start A Listening/Focusing Support Group*. The first week showed how to find your first person or core of people to start practicing with. The second week gave an outline of the first ten weeks for a practice group. The third week explained what the Focuser does while being Listened to. You'll find links to these e-newsletters at the end.

Below, for Week Four, from the manual Chapter Three, is a simple introduction to the Focused Listening skills used by the Listener while the other person in a Partnership Turn is using Intuitive Focusing. The complete Chapter Three download gives very specific instructions for trying out the Four Basic Kinds of Response outlined below:

The following are the most "simple" instructions I could come up with to help people start trying the new way of relating I call "Focused Listening". The list of Suggested Readings at the end of the Chapter directs you to some other people's attempts at explaining empathic, or reflective, listening. The exercises at the end of the Chapter enable you to start practicing Listening with a few other people. You will want to come back to the instructions below many times after you start practicing Listening. You may also want to arrange to attend a Listening/Focusing workshop or to have a Listening/ Focusing teacher come to work with your group. Resources are listed in Chapter Eight.

Focused Listening is based on a philosophy which says that, when a person is being unclear on what to do next, or needing help, the best possible thing you can do is to help her find words for the "intuitive feel" of the issue-that being able to symbolize The Creative Edge of confusion or trouble leads to change in that trouble and the possibility for new actions and decisions. Once the person has been able to symbolize in words what is going on inside, solutions and next steps will come from within the

person herself. So Focused Listening is used to help the person to find words. The best way to do this is mainly by (In 2007, see the multimedia examples in the Self-Help Package):

- 1) Helping the person to talk and saying back, either in her own words or in a paraphrase of your own, what you have heard her say.
- 2) Then she can check these words against the feelings inside, and
- 3) Try talking again, trying to find better words for those feelings.

Again, you help just by saying back what you have heard her say. It is the process of saying back, and not any advice or opinions or suggestions of your own, which is most powerful as a way of helping the person to find her own words for the experience she is having (as of 2007, see DVD: Listening/Focusing Demonstrations for many examples).

When Listening is successful in helping a person to get words connected with "felt meanings," the person being listened to has the experience of getting "unstuck", releasing tension (often tears or anger), and forming some concept for the situations, past and present, which are involved in this feeling in her. She also has the experience of saying feelings which she has been taught to be ashamed of or to fear and of having them received with warm understanding by another person. The Listener has the experience of seeing and understanding the other person without distortion and sharing intimately in his or her inner world. This "seeing" can be a powerful almost magical experience which may bring tears of recognition, or empathy.

Listening is best done as a sharing between equals, an exchange of Listening/Focusing turns. Each person has a chance at helping and a chance at finding words for her own troubled place. Two people set aside some time (usually from twenty minutes to an hour for each of them), and sit facing each other and close enough to touch if that kind of support arises in the interaction. First, one person talks while the other listens. Then, for the second hour, it's done the other way around. Listening turns should feel, not like a dreaded "psychotherapy hour", but a looked-forward-to chance to get some time for yourself, to go inside and get in touch with yourself.

Here are the four basic types of response a Focused Listener can use:

FOUR BASIC TYPES OF RESPONSE

1. Pure Reflection (Basic Reflective Listening):

Saying back or paraphrasing what the person has said, with an emphasis on reflecting the feeling tone: "It sounds like you're saying ---" or "You are saying --- " or "The important part in there seems to be ---"

2. Asking for more:

Asking the person to say more about words she has already used; inviting her to go further: "Can you say more about --- " or "What did you mean by the word 'jealousy'?"

3. Intuitive Focusing Invitation:

Inviting the listenee to be quiet and "sense into" the "intuitive feel": "Can you just sit quietly and pay attention to The Creative Edge?" "Would it be okay to 'sit with' sense of 'sadness' and see what comes?"

4. Personal sharings:

Any responses which are your own thoughts, feelings, or intuitions (to be used only in turns longer than twenty minutes and to be used sparingly, followed by a return to reflection of feelings).

Here is a YouTube video where Dr. McGuire demonstrates Focused, or Empathic, Listening with a beginning Focuser:



Focused, Empathic Listening with a New Focuser

Please go to [this blog with links at the top for the complete Chapter Three Download](#) for exact instructions, find your first person to practice with, and give Focused Listening a try! Or you can now go to the completely free Store at www.cefocusing.com and download the complete manual in English or Spanish and also *The Changes Book: A Manual...*, the first attempt in 1978 to write about the power of Listening and Focusing to build community and exactly how to do it.

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In this four-week cycle, we are applying Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing process to spiritual experiences. If you are just joining us and have never learned Focusing, probably best to start by reading the introduction to [2](#) and watching the video, to [Instant "Aha!" #1: Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You,](#) which lays out the six steps and walks you through a first attempt.

Experiencing Agape Starting Today!!!!

As the last in our four-week cycle on Focusing Upon Spiritual Experiences, I discussed the experiences of Agape, the love of Spirit in the Other Person, which can arise during Listening/Focusing turns in Focusing Partnerships/Groups/Communities. If you haven't yet, please wrack your brains to find that one person with whom you could share Chapter Three and begin your own Focusing Partnership and, eventually, your Focusing Group or Community.

Starting Your Own Listening/Focusing Partnership or Group

If you are new, here are explicit instructions for starting your Partnership or Group (including free Chapter downloads from the manual *Focusing In Community: Starting A Listening/Focusing Support Group (Focusing en Comunidad)* and encouragement for starting your own, local Listening/Focusing Practice Group. Click here to read [Week One: Starting A Listening/Focusing Practice Group](#), including links to Free Downloads of Introduction from the manual, *Focusing in Community*, in English and Spanish. This Introduction gives many suggestions for finding that one first

person to exchange Focusing Partnership and/or how to start a core practice group.

Click here to read [Week Two: Basic Listening/Focusing Exchange and First Ten Sessions of Practice Group](#) . Including are links for free download of Chapter Three: Listening/Focusing Partnership Exchange, in English and Spanish, from the manual *Focusing in Community*.

Click here to read [Week Three: Focusing Partnership Turns: The Focuser Is In Charge](#), explicit instructions for the Focuser.

Finding Your First Person Or Core Group

And just an easy reminder from last week's lesson, if you haven't yet taken that first step of finding one person or a small group to start practicing with:

Beginning your Listening/Focusing Practice Group can be as easy as finding one other person to share the [Self-Help Package](#) (or [with Spanish manual](#)). Both manuals, along with audio downloads of practice CDs, are now available as FREE computer downloads in The Store at www.cefocusing.com

It is my hope that, before the end of this four-week cycle, 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 chapter 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.

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Ultimate Self-Help Blog

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.

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.

INTEREST AREA: CREATIVE EDGE EDUCATION

Every Gift Awakened, Including ADHD-labelled "Hands-On Learners"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

INTEREST AREA: CREATIVE EDGE EDUCATION, ESPECIALLY FOR ADHD-LABELLED "HANDS-ON LEARNERS"

Core Concepts

1. Educating for human literacy: "Emotional" and "Social" Intelligence

Specific to the Creative Edge Focusing™ model, the core "human literacy" skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focused

Listening can be integrated into education along with the traditional literacy of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Basic to the many aspects of "emotional" and "social" intelligence outlined in Daniel Goleman's books, *Emotional Intelligence* and *Social Intelligence*, Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening, the core of the PRISMSS Problem Solving Process, are two simple, self-help skills that everyone can learn. They translate into every sphere of home and work life, from personal growth and creativity to interpersonal relationship and conflict resolution to collaborative work in groups and teams to problem solving in our local, national, and global communities.

Through The Creative Edge Pyramid of seven applied methods, every student can learn, in about forty hours of instruction and in preschool through post-graduate education, how to:

Create new ideas

Change problem behaviors

Listen to another

Resolve interpersonal conflicts

Start a support group

Build supportive community

Create win/win decisions in groups

Create innovative solutions

Motivate others for collaborative action

Basic philosophy: Each child has a unique inner blueprint. Education serves, not to fill the child with "content," but to facilitate the unfolding of his or her unique interests and talents and to teach communication, team-work, and creative problem-solving skills.

See also [Interest Area: Positive Parenting](#)

2. Creative Edge Education is active, hands-on, always striving to engage The Creative Edge of each child

In [Creative Edge Organizations](#), every worker is engaged at the Creative Edge of their own "intuitive felt sensing," their specific motivating passion of the moment. So, too, in Creative Edge Education, each student should be actively engaged, actively interested, actively motivated to create out of their own Creative Edge, their own "intuitive sensing."

In Business Schools, at the undergraduate and graduate level, hiring companies want employees skilled in working in collaborative teams. They have pushed professors from passive lecturing to aiding students to work in groups and teams. Students work on real-life, hands-on projects, including computer-generated business simulation "games" as well as actual business projects.

So, too, in our elementary and secondary education, if we want to educate future workers for creativity and innovation, students need to be taught to be active learners, to be engaged at their Creative Edge, and to work in groups and teams on collaborative, real-life projects. Read More about [Focusing in Education](#).

3. Creative Edge Education respects differing gifts and talents

In business settings, there is great appreciation for the fact that teams need a balance of people with different skills, interests, and talents. The [Myers-Briggs Type Indicator \(MBTI\)](#) is one personality test widely used in organizations to help co-workers come to appreciate the "differing gifts" each brings to the table and to avoid conflict by respecting these

differences. The MBTI helps businesses to hire personnel, organize teams, and increase conflict-free collaboration.

The MBTI is also widely used in education, to identify students' differing gifts and to offer guidance in terms of career choices utilizing various gifts. The MBTI, has proved highly valid in predicting future career choices and guiding students into careers which are a good fit for their particular skills, talents, and interests (Myers, Gifts Differing, 1980).

Keirsey's *Please Understand Me*, Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, and Mel Levines' *All Kinds Of Minds* all offer additional perspectives for appreciating the "differing gifts" of each child. See [Personality Tests](#) for thorough descriptions and sample tests from these models.

The Career Academy model for high school education, sponsored by the federal Department of Labor in the USA, allows students to become exposed to a variety of possible career choices through hands-on, real-life activities. It also helps students to specialize in an area of interest leading directly into actual jobs or next-step accreditation programs, such as community colleges and technical schools, as well as colleges and universities.

4. Creative Edge Education pays special attention to the needs of students with ADHD and other non-traditional learning styles. It joins with Juvenile Justice in prevention of school dropout and juvenile delinquency

[Click here to download Dr. McGuire's PDF file, "Don't Fight 'Em, Join 'Em: A Community-Wide Approach to ADHD, School Failure, and Juvenile Delinquency"](#)

[Click here to read on at Interest Area: Creative Edge Education, Especially for ADHD](#) and scroll down to the bottom

to find The Ten First Steps for Integrating Creative Edge Focusing into education

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Choosing Your Own "Complete Focusing Exercise"

This is Week Four of a four-week cycle. For the Complete Focusing session, we are applying Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing process to spiritual experiences as in Week One: Experiencing The Sacred.

However, especially for those who have been practicing through these e-newsletters for a while, I also suggest that you become able to choose whatever kind of Complete Focusing Instruction fits your needs today and throughout the week. This makes you independent of my direction and lets you take charge of your own Focusing experience.

You can do this by going to the e-newsletter archives and browsing until you find the exercise that "fits" for you, be it Focusing on a Situation, Clearing A Space, Focusing on Creativity, "How Am I Today?", etc. Go to www.cefocusing.com , choose Free Resources Category

button, and click on E-Newsletter Archive from the submenu. Now you are on your own!

If you are just joining us and have never learned Focusing, probably best to start by reading the introduction to [Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing -- Find Out What Is Bothering You](#), which lays out Gendlin's basic six steps of Focusing, and trying the video exercise.

Starting Your Own Listening/Focusing Partnership or Group

In the weekly Felt Sensing newsletters of this four-week cycle, I am giving instruction (including free Chapter downloads from the manual *Focusing In Community: Starting A Listening/Focusing Support Group (Focusing en Comunidad)*) and encouragement for starting your own, local Listening/Focusing Practice Group. See [Week One: Starting A Listening/Focusing Practice Group](#) if you haven't already downloaded the free Introduction to the Self-Help manual, *Focusing In Community*, which tells you many ways to find a first person for a Listening/Focusing Partnership and to expand into a core self-help practice group. And [Week Two: Basic Listening/Focusing Partnership Exchange](#) to find links to download Chapter Three, complete instructions for the first ten sessions of your practice groups (English and Spanish versions). [Week Three: The Focuser Is In Charge](#) to learn exactly what the Focuser does while being Listening To.

Interest Areas: Seven Places To Start Practice Groups!!!

The Interest Areas under "Is This You" at The Creative Edge Focusing website (www.cefocusing.com) give the First Ten

Steps you might take to bring the model of Listening/Focusing into seven whole different areas of living: Organizations, Support Groups and Communities, Relationships, Parenting, Education, Spiritual Communities, and Helping Professions (psychotherapy, counselling, medicine, body work, etc.).

HAVE YOU STARTED YOUR LISTENING/FOCUSING PRACTICE PARTNERSHIP OR GROUP YET???????

Go to [The Store](http://www.cefocusing.com) at www.cefocusing.com to find completely FREE manuals and audio downloads telling you how.

It is my hope that, before the end of this four-week cycle, 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 chapter gives many suggestions about how to find your first one or more people, how to present the idea, how to demonstrate the skills.

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Please send feedback!

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

If you have found this e-course useful, please send me a paragraph describing why or how which I can share to attract others to this free course. You don't

have to include your name, but helpful if you include some kind of identifying info, like your career or interest so people will see what kinds of people find the course useful (psychotherapist, gardener, meditator, yoga teacher, business woman, musician...whatever!) I would post some such comments in places like Focusing discussion e-lists or Facebook when I invite people to sign up for next Fall's new beginning of the course.

Also feel free to send me any feedback that would help me make this e-course more helpful or easier to use. Since I am retired and pretty much sending out the course "as is" from year to year, I can't change it too much, but I am always interested to hear people's experience.

I also just like to hear who is out there! So, if you just want to tell me a little about yourself, what country you are from, how you found Focusing, or whatever, I welcome that as well.

You can send to kathy@cefocusing.com . Thank you very much!

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