

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

Part Two: “Ahah!”s 4-6. Grieving, Self-Empathy, Collaborative Meetings, Bottom-Up organization

I am Dr. Kathy McGuire, and I have been offering this e-newsletter e-course through Constant Contact since 2006. However, knowing I will not live forever, I have put the e-course, 9 months of 3 e-newsletters, with practice videos, into this Word File. I have left all the links live so that you can walk yourself through the course at your own speed, reading relevant articles, downloading manuals, and watching practice videos. You will also receive instructions and encouragement to start your own Empathy Focusing Practice/Support Group.

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

I have pretty much just copied the e-newsletters below, so this is not edited like a book but allows you to repeat the practice exercises, with additional explanation and examples, over several times so that you can really learn the skills.

Go to the separate Word Document, Part One, for Instant “Ahah!”s #1-3

Instant "Ahah!"s #4: Five-Minute Grieving

Being with your own tears and those of patients, friends, and co-workers

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

Grieving and the holidays

For those just joining us, perhaps expecting to learn about Listening and Focusing and business, you may be surprised to find yourselves in a month-long exploration about the power of tears. Yet, you can see in your [Instant "Ahah!" Mini- Manual](#) that I believe in covering the whole person, personal growth, relationships and intimacy, conflict resolution and collaborative decision-making. And this topic of tears of joy but also of grieving is especially relevant for the holiday season. And it has applications at work as well as at home.

Last year, shortly after my birthday, I found myself at a family-oriented Christmas Concert. As I prepared to go in, I felt like I was going to burst into tears. I retreated to the bathroom, and there I sobbed: at age 70, my children are grown, and, moreover, I was leaving the area where we shared our Christmas memories. So I grieved for these endings, felt lightened and relieved, and went on to enjoy the concert. Well, I did tear up again for a moment when a group of children arrived on stage shaking jingle bells...

Anyway, the holidays can hold many opportunities for grieving, as well as for being "moved and touched" to tears in many glorious ways. So, stay open to your tears.... like rain showers, they will pass through and leave you refreshed.

A "Sheen of Tears" Signals An Opening

From Instant "Ahah!" #4, Mini-Manual p. 13:

"Opening Up", Not "Breaking Down"

Most of the time, we walk around "being" our symptoms instead of "relating" to them. The physician's office is a place where accidental openings into the "felt senses" underlying symptoms have an increased likelihood of happening. It thus becomes important for physicians, and other health professionals, to capitalize on these moments where the defenses fall, and the preverbal felt experiencing underlying symptoms, becomes available for transformation.

Inter-office conflict or stress at home can also cause a co-worker or employee to "break down" and start crying. Or a friend may become teary while sharing. Instead of being afraid of a "break down," see it as an "opening up," an opportunity to unblock and build anew. See Creative Edge Focusing at www.cefocusing.com to understand the [Core Concepts](#) underlying growth and creativity.

People Are Skilled At "Not Crying"

Five-minute grieving is based upon the following premises, drawn from my 25-year experience as a psychotherapist and peer counseling teacher:

1. In general, people do not fall apart and cry and cry without stopping. In general, people do not cry for more than a few minutes at a time.
2. If tears are present, it is healthier for body and mind to allow their expression than to repress them. Tears also are the doorways into The Creative Edge, the possibility for change.
3. In general, people have a life-time of experience in being able to call up their defenses again, and go on as needed after a few moments of crying.
4. In the few cases where crying is uncontrollable, it is better to discover this vulnerability and get help, by referring to a counselor for psychotherapy and/or a psychiatrist for exploration of the appropriateness of anti-depressant medication.
5. In general, spending a few minutes making words for the "intuitive sense" underlying the tears will bring relief to the person, energy to the Listener, and a deep feeling of bonding and care between the two.
6. Allowing the tears also actually releases energy, letting the person go on to next steps of problem solving and action to be taken."

Here is a 16-minute video where I (20 years ago!) help a woman find her tears of grief but also forward movement as she uses Focusing upon her depression and stuckness and incipient migraine headache:



Listening, Focusing, and Grieving With
Migraine and Depression

Five-Minute Grieving Protocol

Here follows a first step into the Creative Edge Core Skills of [Intuitive Focusing](#) and [Focused Listening](#) which I call "Five Minute Grieving," especially for health professionals, but also for co-workers and friends in a pinch, if someone tears up or starts crying.

FIVE MINUTE GRIEVING

Example from a physician's office:

You have just told a patient that tests have shown her to be infertile. Tears well up in her eyes.

1. **Invite** her to cry. Say something like the following:

- "In a minute we can discuss options, but let's make room for your tears."
- "It's okay with me to let your tears come."
- "It's okay to cry."
- "You don't have to hold back your tears."
- "It's important to let yourself cry."
- "Just be gentle with yourself. Put your arms around yourself."

2. **Empathize** with the feeling without trying to "fix" it or take it away:

- "I know it seems bleak right now."
- "I know it's hard."
- "I see your sadness."
- "I'm sorry for your sadness."

3. Help her to **find words or images** for the tears. After she has cried for a while or at a natural pause in her tears, say something like:

- "What are the words for your sadness?"
- "Are there any words or images with your tears? It helps to get a handle on the feeling."
- "Can you say what's the worst of it?"
- "Can you say what you're thinking?"

Just be quiet and give the person some time to grope for words.

4. Empathize again, often by **paraphrasing**:

- "So it's (her words: "the fear that you'll never be a mother;" "feeling like a dried up stick," etc.) that's hard."

5. Continue Steps 1-4 as long as makes sense.

6. Establish closure:
 - "We have to stop now."
 - "We only have a minute before we have to stop."
 - "I have to go, but you're welcome to sit here for a minute until you're ready to go."
 - Or, if you are now going to continue with other aspects of the visit, "Let's see if we can put aside the tears for now so that I can give you some more information and we can look for solutions to your situation."
7. Orient the person, if necessary, by doing a "present time" exercise:
 - "I want to make sure you're back out in the world before I send you off to drive home (or before we continue talking). How about if you name all the circular (or orange, or striped, etc.) things in the room?"
8. At the end of the appointment, make a referral to a counselor or support group as appropriate and/or make arrangements for the person to check back with you for a future appointment.

Of course, Five Minute Grieving is just a first step toward fully incorporating Core Skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focused Listening into your personal and professional life. I hope it will whet your appetite to pursue further training in PRISMS/S and the Creative Edge Pyramid for application of Listening and Focusing at all levels and at home as well as work .

You can begin with Free manuals and MP3 audio downloads in The Store at www.cefocusing.com at Creative Edge Focusing (TM) . Helping professionals can find a free download of Dr. McGuire's manual, [*The Experiential Dimension in Therapy*](#) (anyone can now find this manual as a FREE computer download also at the website for Focusing-Oriented Therapy, www.focusingtherapy.org).

You can find a series of papers on the role of tears in self-help, therapeutic change, and medical situations in Dr. McGuire's description of Experiential Focusing Therapy .

Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

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

This month: From [Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual](#), p. 13, #4. *Five Minute Grieving: What To Do If A Patient, Friend, or Co-worker Starts Crying.*

E-Newsletter Archives Now Available!

Newcomers, you can start with any issue and, in a year, you will have practiced all the exercises. This issue is the beginning of a new four-week cycle, so you haven't missed anything of that.

Anyone can also access the e-newsletter archives from the top right corner of the Home Page or the Free Resources submenu at Creative Edge Focusing.

"Relaxation" and "Getting A Felt Sense" Exercises for the Month

Later in the week, you will receive two other e-reminders, one for Relaxation Exercise #4. Counting Meditation (p. 6 in [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)) and Getting A Felt Sense #4: The "Felt Sense," The "Intuitive Feel" of A Situation (p.12).

In the totally free Store at www.cefocusing.com, you can use the MP3 audio file download of the Intuitive Focusing CD to follow Dr. McGuire as she speaks these exercises. But there are now videos included in each e-newsletter to help you practice. And you can find all the videos at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube channel](#) .

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.

Relaxation #4: Counting Meditation

Quick, Reliable Stress Reduction Rescue!!!

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

COUNTING MEDITATION

Over many years, this has become my favorite Relaxation exercise, the one I turn to when I cannot fall asleep. It is simple but requires a concentration that lets go of everything else. So, you can "count on" this Counting Meditation when all else fails for calming.

Our first Relaxation exercise #1 was Noticing. Then, in exercise #2 we did Guided Imagery At The Beach, then exercise #3, Guided Imagery in The Forest. Now, with Exercise #4 (p. 6 in the Free Download Complete Focusing Instructions), we go back to a meditation more like Noticing:

Counting Meditation-Allow 10-15 minutes

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

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

And here is a video version where I will walk you through the meditation, so that you can close your eyes and just follow along instead of reading the exercise as written below:



Simple Counting Meditation: Immediate stress relief, sleep help, preparation for Gendlin's Focusing

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

1 minute

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

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

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

30 seconds

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

30 seconds

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

1 minute

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

5-10 minutes

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

From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise: COUNTING MEDITATION

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

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

Any of the relaxation exercises in the [Complete Focusing Download](#) can be used as a first step in "clearing a space" for a longer Focusing Turn. But they can also stand on their own as stress reduction exercises for putting down all the issues you are carrying in your body, and, for some moments, living stress-free.

The quiet time between instructions is an important time for just breathing---and relaxing.

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

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

Newcomers: Catch up at E-Newsletter Archive

This is the beginning of a new four-week cycle, the first week on this Relaxation Exercise. So, you have not missed anything. Within a year, we will cycle through all the exercises, covering those you have missed. However, if you are curious about any earlier cycles, you can check out

[E-Newsletter Archive](#)

Anyone Can Always Access the e-Archive

At the Creative Edge Focusing website, in the top right corner of the Home Page or in Free Resources section, in the submenu, [right sidebar](#) .

Print and Practice!!!! Counting Meditation

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

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) download at Creative Edge Focusing, p.6: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #4: Counting Meditation.

And, if you go to the totally free Store at www.cefocusing.com , you can download MP3 audio files and listen on audio CD Intuitive Focusing: Disk one, Track 5, with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!! However, now you can get the same voice company in the video links in the e-newsletters. And you can find all of the videos anytime at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube channel](#).

Getting A Felt Sense #4:

Finding The "Intuitive Feel" of a Situation

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

4. The "Felt Sense," The "Intuitive Feel" of a Situation-Allow 15 to 20 minutes

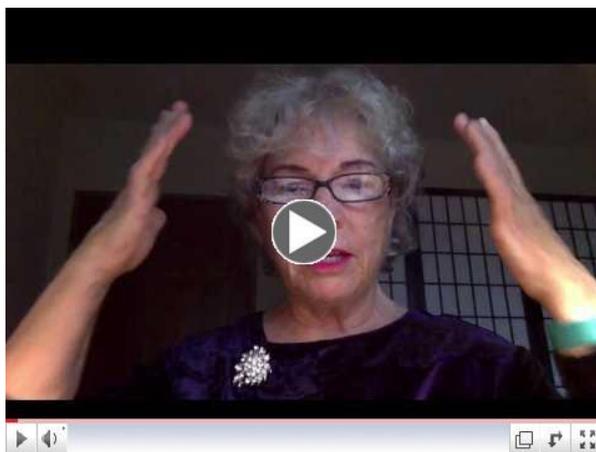
In this exercise, you are going through a first round of [Intuitive Focusing](#), looking for [The Creative Edge](#), the something-new-that-is-more-than-words about an actual situation during the week that felt unfinished.

Holiday gatherings, visits to family, can easily stir up old, stuck, unfinished business that leaves you reeling.

Although you may have gone around and around in your head, trying to find a solution, to figure out what happened that was strange in that situation, now you will set aside that left-brain problem solving and consult your "right-brain wisdom, the bodily "intuitive feel" of "that whole thing."

First, we use a Relaxation exercise as a way of clearing some space inside for Focusing, then we look for the "bodily-felt sense" of a situation from this week that left an impact, an unresolved "intuitive feel." We are practicing Step Two of Intuitive Focusing. In order to get a "shift" in the "felt sense" of a situation, you would need to carry on with the other steps of a complete Focusing Turn.

Here is a link to the video where I walk you through this meditation, so you can just close your eyes and follow along. Or you can read it to yourself:



Getting the "felt sense," the "intuitive feel" of an unresolved situation.

---Let's start with The Counting Meditation for initial Relaxation:

---First, stretch---and relax, stretch---and relax, stretch---and relax---30 sec.

---Now, begin noticing your breathing, just noticing the breath going in---and out---in---and out---30 sec.

---Now, on each exhale, count starting with "1" and continuing, on each exhale, until you reach "9"---1---2---3---4---5---6---7---8---9

2 minutes

---If you lose track, just start counting over again with "1". When you get to "9," start over and count to "9" one more time---

2 minutes

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

2 minutes

---Now, bring to mind an incident or a situation from the past week which feels unfinished, left behind an uncomfortable or confusing feeling---

2 minutes

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

If you wanted to continue with another round of Focusing, you would simply ask again, "And why is this important to me?", wait to see what comes as an "intuitive feel," look for words or an image that are "just right," checking and resonating until something shifts inside. You can find full Focusing Instructions in Complete Focusing Instructions, p.12-17 or [Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing --- Find Out What Is Bothering You](#) .

Newcomers, Print and Practice!!!!

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

"Clearing a Space" through a Relaxation or other meditative exercise is the first step of [Intuitive Focusing](#). "Getting a Felt Sense," through setting aside already-known intellectualizations and waiting for the "intuitive feel," the "bodily-felt sense" of an issue to form, is the second, and really crux, step of Focusing.

E-Newsletter Archives!!!!

This is the first e-newsletter in this new four-week cycle, so you haven't missed anything. Within a year, we will cycle through all the exercises again. But, if you want to catch up with previous e-newsletters, you can go to the Creative Edge Focusing Archives. You can access these from the link under Free Resources at [Creative Edge Focusing](#).

Pre-Focusing Practice B. Getting A Felt Sense #4: "Finding the Felt Senses of A Situation"

(from [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)) Week One of four weeks of practice

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

E-Newsletter Archives

Past Creative Edge Focusing (TM) e-newsletters are now available in [Creative Edge Focusing archive](#). You could email this link to friends to interest them in this "Email Focusing Course." There is also a link from the website in the menu under Free Resources.

More Help and Support: Audio Tapes, Teachers

Remember, it can be much easier to learn Intuitive Focusing in the company of a Focused Listener. You can learn all about Focusing Listening, and find resources and teachers, at the website for [Creative Edge Focusing](#) and at the website for [The International Focusing Institute](#), which lists Certified Focusing Trainers internationally.

You will also find this Getting a Felt Sense exercise in the [Complete Focusing Instructions download](#) at Creative Edge Focusing, p.12 : B. Getting A Felt Sense #4: "The Felt Sense of a Situation".

If you go to the completely free Store at www.cefocusing.com, you can download the MP3 audio files and listen on audio CD Intuitive Focusing: Disk One , Track 12, "The Felt Sense of a Situation," with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!! But now, you can also use the video links in each e-newsletter to follow along. And you can find all of the videos anytime at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#).

And many of these exercises are in the Spanish version of the manual, *Focusing En Comunidad*, also free in the Store with other manuals.

Instant "Ahah!"s #4: Five-Minute Grieving

Grieving = Alchemy

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

Grieving = Alchemy

Alchemy is about transforming something gross and terrible into gold, the most precious metal. Alchemy needs going through a fire of transformation within a protective container.

Grieving is alchemical. If you can welcome it and stick with it and see it through, you will come out the other end having created something new and valuable.

In grieving properly, we are welcoming and honoring the memories and meanings of our loss. We are viewing our grieving Self with compassion. We create love and self-love.

C.S. Lewis wrote one of the best, short books about grieving, [A Grief Observed](#) (this is a link to Amazon listing). He describes, upon the death of his wife, going down into despair, then, one day, coming out the end of the tunnel, being able to really hear, really experience the birds singing again.

Please see my articles [Active Grieving Part one](#) and [Active Grieving Part Two](#) for a philosophy about welcoming grieving and actual techniques for using Focusing to enhance the journey through grief. While I used childbearing losses as the example, the philosophy and procedures apply to Actively Grieving any loss --- facilitating transformation.

Here again is the short video which shows a woman using Focusing, with Empathic Listening and Inner Child work, to move through grief and toward hoping, and relieving a migraine as the tears are found:



Listening, Focusing, and Grieving = New hope, less migraine!

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"Relaxation" and "Getting A Felt Sense" Exercises for the Month

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Relaxation #4: Counting Meditation

Are You Counting For Calming?

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation

Exercise: COUNTING MEDITATION

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

Learning to "clear a space inside" through Relaxation, Guided Imagery, Meditation, and the formal [Clearing A Space exercise](#) (also in your [Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual](#)) is the first step of the longer problem-solving process, [Intuitive Focusing](#).

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

Kathy's Experience With Counting

Ahhhh! I looked and found the Counting e-reminder waiting, and I actually felt a "leap" inside of relief, of the relief I would find from just counting---and breathing---counting---and breathing.

So, I did the exercise. I noticed here it says "Count to 7," where elsewhere I have said, "Count to 9." Ahhh!!! Breath it out. A mistake that means nothing---

Some people believe that, in the moments of relaxation brought by meditation, your body might just re-organize itself, self-healing.

Others believe that, with repetition, the meditative state of relaxation carries over in your everyday living.

Me, I welcome any moments of relaxation, I can feel their healing power, and I welcome these e-reminders, because I really might not ever "pause" without them.

But I still turn to the additional steps of [Intuitive Focusing](#) when I need to sort through something and look for deep change at the level of [paradigm shifts](#).

COUNTING MEDITATION

Our first Relaxation exercise #1 was Noticing. Then, in exercise #2 we did Guided Imagery At The Beach, then exercise #3, Guided Imagery in The Forest. Now, with Exercise #4 (p. 6 in the Free Download [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)), we go back to a meditation more like Noticing

Here is the link where you can follow along with my voice instead of reading the instructions below:



Counting Meditation: Holiday stress/sleep help. Just counting...and breathing...

Counting Meditation-Allow 10-15 minutes

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

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

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

1 minute

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

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

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

30 seconds

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

30 seconds

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

1 minute

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

5-10 minutes

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

Print and Practice!!!! Counting Meditation

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

You will also find this in the Complete Focusing Instructions download.

And, if you download the free MP3 files in The Store at www.cefocusing.com, you can listen on audio Intuitive Focusing: Track 5, with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!! However, you can now listen to the videos in e-newsletters for help.

Are You Pausing to Actually Do the Exercise? Are You Counting for Calming?

After thirty years working with Relaxation and Focusing, I am still delighted to be given a reminder to actually pause and practice what I preach! I hope you can welcome yourself to take the ten-twenty minutes to just relax, reducing stress, "clearing a space inside," increasing mental clarity and probably prolonging your life as well!

The quiet time between instructions is an important time for just breathing---and relaxing.

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

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

Any of the Relaxation Exercises can be used at the beginning of a longer [Intuitive Focusing](#) session, as a way of "clearing a space" inside, so notice which are your favorites you could call upon.

Getting A Felt Sense #4: Felt Sense of Situations

Do your situations leave an uncomfortable residue in your body?

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

Do your situations leave a felt "residue" behind?

Have you noticed that real-world situations, interactions can leave behind a "residue" of "something-more-than-words"? Our bodily knowing, our intuitive

sensing, lives in the situation and can "pick up" aspects that affect us without giving us words. We might have to pay attention to the "intuitive feel" left behind a while just to be able to say we feel "anxious," or "Something is not right here" or "What is being said doesn't match the feeling being generated" or "I want to get out of here!" or "This is not safe." Even getting this far, any words at all, may take a first step of Getting A Felt Sense of a Situation," paying attention to the "whole thing," the larger "intuitive feel" under the initial wordless emotional reaction.

Intuitive Focusing is made exactly for going further to find words for exactly what is going on in such situations. Finding words allows you to take action to change the situation, because now you know what the problem is.

By taking a moment to sit down, "clear a space" inside, and ask an open-ended questions, like, "What is this all about?", and, instead of answering with the already-known in your head, waiting at least a minute for "the feel of the whole thing" to form, you can begin to find words and images and, eventually, the "Ahah!," the relief of knowing consciously what your body has been carrying "unconsciously." Now, you can take action steps to change the situation, clarify the interaction.

Kathy's three experiences (there are so many!):

So, I share my experiences of Felt Sensing of A Situation:

These are three situations that left a strange feeling behind, a "felt underbelly" that was a "More" in my body after these situations:

#1. (This is from the past. The baby is now ten plus years old!) My daughter-in-law, after three stressful weeks of semi-labor, was finally admitted to the hospital with decision to induce labor, 75% chance of a Caesarean section. I woke at 4:30AM, wanting to know what was happening. But, I didn't want to call and wake she or my son at the hospital or her grandma, my sources for information. And I didn't think they would call to wake me unless something dramatic, birth or C-Section happened.... but I was soon up and pacing with anxiety.

Rationally, I told myself this was ridiculous. Logically, I knew they would have called me if there was any real news to report. But, I felt cut off. I couldn't stop being anxious.

Finally, I decided to do "Getting the Felt Sense of a Situation": I started doing some Emotional Freedom meridian tapping tapping in the middle of my forehead,

between the eyes This actually immediately broke through the anxiety into a teariness. What a relief already (I'd rather feel anything than anxiety, a kind of spinning "inability to feel below it").

The words: "This is out of my control. This 'not knowing what will happen' is freaking me out." Led to deeper sensing about the whole larger "issue" of life not being "in control." It was actually soothing to connect with this larger, universal, "not knowing," this universal angst -- but, also, it held less foreboding about this actual specific situation of awaiting birth.

Doing the exercise consciously led me to realize how often I do use "Focusing upon the Felt Sense of a Situation" to get through a week!

I will just name the other two situations where I found myself stopping to "focus into," "sit with" a "residue" of bodily feeling left from an interaction:

#2. was the "feel" left by an indirect message given by the garage repairing my damaged auto tire (I found the words "ominous" as I sensed into the bodily discomfort left in me after the conversation). I decided I had to call back and clarify, rather than suffer this "ominous feeling" any longer.

#3. was a more like a "sheer emotion," a kind of ongoing depression/shut down/giving up feeling which only days later I traced to an interaction where I felt that "Thinking" and "Feeling" in [the Jungian sense \(see this article\)](#) were clashing, and that Feeling was losing, in a subtle, hard-to-define way. Being able to name this led to a release of the background feeling of depression and inaction and an idea for action steps.

That is just three of many times during the week that I automatically turned to "Focusing into the Feel of a Situation" because I had an uncomfortable "residue" left from a real-world situation.

Pre-Focusing Practice B. Getting A Felt Sense #4: "Finding the Felt Senses of A Situation"

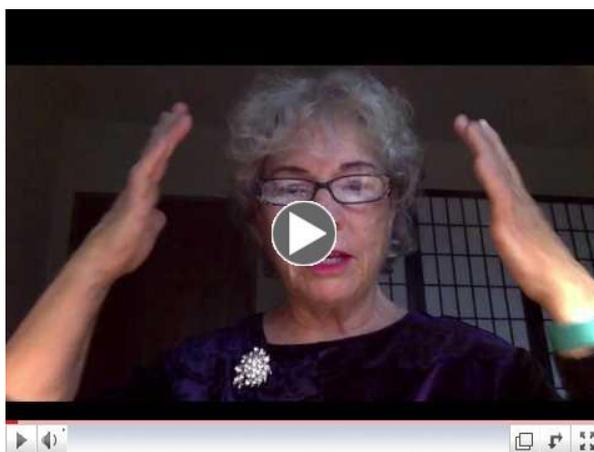
(from Complete Focusing Instructions) Week Two of four weeks of practice

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

4. The "Felt Sense," The "Intuitive Feel" of a Situation-Allow 15 to 20 minutes

In this exercise, you are going through a first round of Intuitive Focusing, looking for [The Creative Edge](#), the something-new-that-is-more-than-words about an actual situation during the week that felt unfinished. Although you may have gone around and around in your head, trying to find a solution, to figure out what happened that was strange, now you will set aside that left-brain problem solving and consult your "right-brain wisdom, the bodily "intuitive feel" of "that whole thing." First, we use a Relaxation exercise as a way of clearing some space inside for Focusing, then we look for "the intuitive feel," the "bodily-felt sense" of the situation

Here is the video link where I walk you through the exercise, if you prefer that to reading the instructions below to yourself:



Finding the Body-feel of an unresolved situation or interaction = relief!

---Let's start with **The Counting Meditation** for initial Relaxation:

---First, stretch---and relax, stretch---and relax, stretch---and relax---30 sec.

---Now, begin noticing your breathing, just noticing the breath going in---and out---in---and out---30 sec.

---Now, on each exhale, count starting with "1" and continuing, on each exhale, until you reach "9"--
-1---2---3---4---5---6---7---8---9

2 minutes

---If you lose track, just start counting over again with "1". When you get to "9," start over and count to "9" one more time---

2 minutes

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

2 minutes

---Now, bring to mind an incident or a situation from the past week which feels unfinished, left behind an uncomfortable or confusing feeling---

2 minutes

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

If you wanted to continue with another round of Focusing, you would simply ask again, "And why is this important to me?", wait to see what comes as an "intuitive feel," look for words or an image that are "just right," checking and resonating until something shifts inside. You can find full Focusing Instructions at [Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You](#).

Newcomers, Print and Practice!!!!

This is your Getting A Felt Sense exercise for these four weeks. Print it out, keep it handy, and try it whenever you have time...I will also send a "reminder" copy

by email every week...YOU CAN TRY IT IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE EMAIL COMES! a MOMENT TO RELAX AND CHECK INSIDE!

E-Newsletter Archives!!!!

Within a year, we will cycle through all the exercises again. But, if you want to catch up with previous e-newsletters, you can go to the [Creative Edge Focusing Archives](#). You can access these from the link under Free Resources at [Creative Edge Focusing](#) or in the right upper corner of the homepage..

"Getting A Felt Sense"

"Getting a Felt Sense" is the second step of the self-help problem solving skill, [Intuitive Focusing](#). First, you do a Relaxation or Clearing A Space exercise to get in touch with your body. Then, Step Two you set aside everything you already know and pay attention to the "intuitive feel," the "bodily felt sense" of an issue or situation. If you proceed with a complete Focusing session, in Step Three, you will look for a "handle" word or image that captures the "felt sense;" Step Four you resonate and check this handle word against the felt sense until the fit between the two is "just right." Step Five, you ask the "felt sense" open-ended questions, like "And why is this important?" or "And what is so ____ (sad, bad, meaningful, moving, etc.) about that?" Step Six, you "receive whatever has come in your body-steps with gratitude. If needed, you can then go back to Step Five, ask another question, and wait to see what comes....

But, here, we are just practicing Step Two: setting aside the "already-known" and "getting a felt sense" for a situation.

Newsletter Archive

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More Help and Support: Manuals, Audio Tapes, DVD, Teachers

Remember, it can be much easier to learn Intuitive Focusing in the company of a Focused Listener. You can learn all about Focusing Listening, and find resources and teachers, at the website for Creative Edge Focusing

If you download the free MP3 files in The Store at www.cefocusing.com, you can listen on audio Intuitive Focusing: Track 12, "The Felt Sense of a Situation," with Dr. McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!!

And many of these exercises are in the Spanish version of the manual, *Focusing En Comunidad*, also a free download in The Store.

Kathy McGuire, Director

Instant "Ahah!"s #4: Five-Minute Grieving Tears of Being Touched and Being Moved

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

BEING TOUCHED AND BEING MOVED: THE SPIRITUAL VALUE OF TEARS

In his book, *Feelings: Our Vital Signs* (Harper, Row Perennials, 1979), Willard Gaylin makes the following distinction:

"Touched is generally a light emotion, although we do experience feelings of being deeply touched. The fact that we speak of it so (and it is not considered redundant) merely affirms the sense of touch as being a gentle feeling. The caress is its symbol. It arises almost inevitably in terms of something that is done for us by someone. It is a person-to-person emotion.

Being moved, on the other hand, is a deep and intense emotion and it rarely relates to a transaction between people. More often than not, the feeling of being moved is in relationship to certain abstractions, events, concepts, and sensations---The most common experience of being moved is in relationship to some encounter with grandeur(p.196)---

There is a physical feeling implicit in the very name of the emotion "being moved." We do tend to feel "transported" by this emotion---the feeling of our being lifted out of ourselves---establishes an identification of ourself as a part of something bigger. (p.197) It is the emotion of spiritual communion, and, as such, may be the essential feeling of the religious experience."

It is so pleasing to me to hear someone make such fine distinctions between "feelings" as are more often made between "ideas."

In my experience, "being touched" and "being moved" are very often signalled by a sheen of tears in the eyes, nature's signal to us that "This here-and-now is important." We think of tears as related to painful experiences and overlook how often they signify love, happiness, joy, awe, reverence.

If we pause and use Intuitive Focusing to "sense into" the meaning signalled by the tears, we find ourselves enriched by a "tap root to the core of your Being and to the Universe" See this excerpt below on using Focusing to find the meaning in tears:

From Chapter Six, manuscript *The Wisdom of Tears* © Dr. Kathy McGuire

FINDING THE MEANING IN TEARS

By now you have experienced the sheen of tears. Perhaps you have come to treasure moments of being touched and moved. They are an instant channel to energy, a tap root to the core of your Being and to the Universe.

You may find yourself asking some questions:

- What does it mean to "be moved by" something?
Am I supposed to do something?

- Do my tears mean anything? Are they trying to tell me something?

- Why do I always cry when I see a particular thing?

-- Are my tears related to something from my childhood?

-- Do the same things touch other people as touch me?

What Is 'Meaning'?

You experience the meaning of living by having feelings in your body, not from ideas in your head. "Meaning" lies in your unique feeling response to any situation, based on your own lifetime of experiences. One man might experience a terrible grief when his father is dying: "Oh, I can't go on living. He means so much to me. Everything that is important to me is wrapped up in him." Another man may have a different experience at his father's death, a sadness tinged with joy: "I'll miss him, but it means that he is free. His time has come." By carefully making words for feelings, you can find your own unique meanings.

Being open to tears, anger, embarrassment, love, and other emotions allows you to discover, through the exploration of the "felt meaning," the personal meanings which give value and direction to your life. It might help to think of feelings as "felt meaning"-- your feeling of the meaning of the situation to you. They are your access to the network of thoughts and beliefs which gives a goal and a direction, a meaning or a purpose, to your life.

For instance, when I saw a slender, Asian woman stand up as the violin soloist at a concert and launch into sound, I welled up with tears. The tears indicated that the situation had meaning for me. I found the precise meaning as I made words for the texture of the feeling: "It's not just that she is a woman, but that she is small and feminine. I can be feminine and be powerful. A small, feminine person can be the vehicle for excellence. I have never seen this before. Always before the vehicle has been a man. Women can do this. I can do this."

If I had not allowed myself to experience the emotion, to taste the tears and look for words to describe them, I would have been cut off from the profound meanings in the situation, meanings that could affect the entire course of my life.

The capacity to feel the meaning in situations, to be moved to tears, is a skill and a gift overlooked in our society. Psychologists and philosophers note the feelings of isolation, alienation, and despair called the "existential neurosis:" "What's the meaning of my life?" The loss of meaning can be traced to the downplaying of the ability to feel and thus to discover the personal values which can guide meaningful action."

You can begin to notice the landscape of your tears as an Eskimo can decipher 100 different kinds of snow.

Download "Being Touched and Being Moved: The Spiritual Value of Tears for many examples of how tears and Focusing interrelate and

["Finding The Meaning In Tears"](#)

for exercises for using Focusing to find the meaning in your tears. Both articles are packed with real-life examples of how tears "touch us" and "move us" in positive ways.

And, if you haven't yet, watch this 15 minute video of a woman going from depression and migraine to the beginnings of hope, from following her tears and nurturing her Inner Child:



From tears of depression to tears of "wanting to dance," to be alive

Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

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

This month: From Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual, p. 13, #4. *Five Minute Grieving: What To Do If A Patient, Friend, or Co-worker Starts Crying.* **E-Newsletter Archives Now Available!**

Newcomers, you can start with any issue and, in a year, you will have practiced all the exercises. In order to catch up on this cycle, see [Instant Ahah #4 Five Minute Grieving Week 1](#) and [Instant Ahah #4 Grieving = Alchemy Week Two](#) .

Anyone can also access the [e-newsletter archives](#) from the Free Resources submenu at [Creative Edge Focusing](#) or the link in upper right of home page.

"Relaxation" and "Getting A Felt Sense" Exercises for the Month

Later in the week, you will receive two other e-reminders, one for Relaxation Exercise #4. Counting Meditation (p. 6 in [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)) and Getting A Felt Sense #4: The "Felt Sense," The "Intuitive Feel" of A Situation (p.12).

If you download the free MP3 files at www.cefocusing.com in The Store, you can use the Intuitive Focusing CD to follow Dr. McGuire as she speaks these exercises. However, you can also use the free videos in the e-newsletters and find them all anytime at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#).

Relaxation #4: Counting Meditation

HOLIDAYS! Take Ten Minutes to Relax!

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

Are You Pausing to Actually Do the Exercise? Are You Taking Just Ten Minutes To Relax?

After thirty years working with Relaxation and Focusing, I am still delighted to be given a reminder to actually pause and practice what I preach! I hope you can welcome yourself to take the ten-twenty minutes to just relax, reducing stress, "clearing a space inside," increasing mental clarity and probably prolonging your life as well!

The quiet time between instructions is an important time for just breathing---and relaxing.

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

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

Any of the Relaxation Exercises can be used at the beginning of a longer Focusing session, as a way of "clearing a space" inside, so notice which are your favorites you could call upon.

COUNTING MEDITATION

Our first Relaxation exercise #1 was Noticing. Then, in exercise #2 we did Guided Imagery At The Beach, then exercise #3, Guided Imagery in The Forest. Now, with Exercise #4 (p. 6 in the Free Download [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)), we go back to a meditation more like Noticing.

Here is the video if you want to follow along with my voice:



Counting for Calming!

:

Counting Meditation-Allow 10-15 minutes

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

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

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

-

1 minute

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

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

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

30 seconds

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

30 seconds

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

1 minute

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

5-10 minutes

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

From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise : COUNTING MEDITATION

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

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

Learning to relax and "clear a space" inside is the first step of longer [Intuitive Focusing](#) problem solving sessions. And, simple relaxation exercises also give your body some moments of stress reduction and tension release, healing in and of itself.

Anyone Can Always Access the e-Archive

At the Creative Edge Focusing website, Free Resources section, in the submenu, [right sidebar](#), or link top right corner of homepage.

Print and Practice!!!! Counting Meditation

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

If you download the free MP3 audio files at www.cefocusing.com in The Store, you can listen on audio CD Intuitive Focusing: Disk one, Track 5, with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!! But you can also find all of the practice videos, for free, at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#).

Getting A Felt Sense #4:

Use Focusing To Clear Situation Pile Ups and Negative Spirals

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

SITUATION PILE UPS AND NEGATIVE SPIRALS

While I can use "sensing into" the "intuitive feel" left by situations to clear my inner space, sort through meanings, and come up with action steps many times a week, there are two other inner events related to outer situations and interactions that are harder to unravel. I call them "situation pile ups" and "negative spirals." They are especially likely DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON!

SITUATION PILE UPS

Sometimes I find myself feeling overwhelmed, or maybe numb, like concrete, or stiffened from stress and anxiety. When I find time to gently "sit with" the "feel of it all," I can start to unravel what may have been a "situation pile up." The final feeling state is the result of several situations or incidences during the week where the "felt residue" went unnoticed and unattended to. Hence, the "pile up" into complete overwhelm or numbness.

Perhaps starting with a Relaxation Exercise like #1. Noticing (p. 3) or #4. Counting Meditation (p.6), I might then move to Felt Sensing # 3, Clearing a Space (p. 10 in Complete Focusing Instructions). As I ask myself, "What is between me and feeling totally okay?", I can sit with each issue or situation or interaction that arises, taking a moment to find a "handle" word for it, then setting it outside of me (ahhhhh!). Eventually, I will find a cleared space inside and be able to say, "Except for all of that, I am totally okay." I will realize that a series of unresolved situations or interactions have "piled up." I can now choose to take them one at a time and use [Instant Ahah #1, Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You](#), to go more deeply into problem resolution.

NEGATIVE SPIRALS

Similarly, I might find myself falling into negative statements and beliefs about myself, saying "I am so stupid," "Nobody wants me," "There is something terribly wrong with me," "I never do anything right," etc. There seems to be a negative spiral, going deeper and deeper into despair and negative thinking.

Again, such a negative spiral can be the end result of a number of situations or interactions that left an unresolved "residue." In this case, they may all have coalesced around a theme, like "I am worthless." And again, the solution is to stop and commit some quiet time to Intuitive Focusing. Start with a Relaxation Exercise, then perhaps Clearing A Space followed by a longer Focusing session. Simply by sitting with the negative feelings, giving them an empathic hearing, and asking open-ended questions like "What is this all about?", you can begin to trace the negative feelings back to actual situations and interactions. Now, knowing what really happened, you can begin to look for solutions and action steps.

Especially with overwhelming negative spirals, you will want to use some specific techniques for dealing with the inner Critic and for finding a way to give a negative feeling a voice without falling into it. Ann Weiser Cornell, with her [Inner Relationship Focusing methods](#), has specialized in helping Focusers to "disidentify" from all the various "parts" or "voices" or "aspects" inside, giving each an empathic hearing.

Pre-Focusing Practice B. Getting A Felt Sense #4: "Finding the Felt Senses of A Situation"

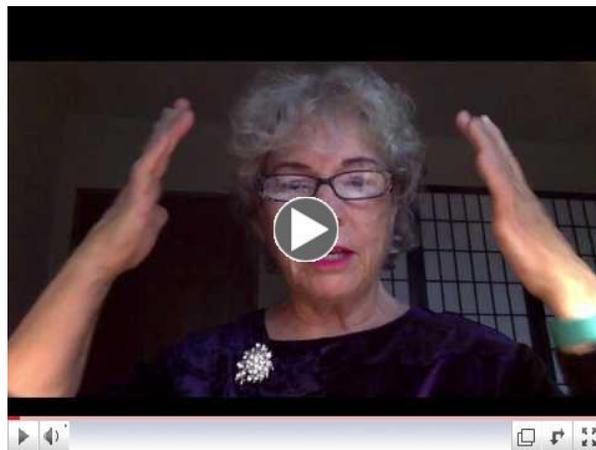
(from Complete Focusing Instructions) Week Three of four weeks of practice

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

4. The "Felt Sense," The "Intuitive Feel" of a Situation-Allow 15 to 20 minutes

In this exercise, you are going through a first round of Intuitive Focusing, looking for [The Creative Edge](#), the something-new-that-is-more-than-words about an actual situation during the week that felt unfinished. Although you may have gone around and around in your head, trying to find a solution, to figure out what happened that was strange, now you will set aside that left-brain problem solving and consult your "right-brain wisdom, the bodily "intuitive feel" of "that whole thing." First, we use a Relaxation exercise as a way of clearing some space inside for Focusing.

Here is the video link if you want to follow along with my voice. You can free yourself from situation spirals by finding words and images for "the feel of it all":



Free your body by finding words and images for situation residues!

---Let's start with The Counting Meditation for initial Relaxation:

---First, stretch---and relax, stretch---and relax, stretch---and relax----30 sec.

---Now, begin noticing your breathing, just noticing the breath going in---and out---in---and out---30 sec.

---Now, on each exhale, count starting with "1" and continuing, on each exhale, until you reach "9"---1---2---3---4---5---6---7---8---9

2 minutes

---If you lose track, just start counting over again with "1". When you get to "9," start over and count to "9" one more time---

2 minutes

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

2 minutes

---Now, bring to mind an incident or a situation from the past week which feels unfinished, left behind an uncomfortable or confusing feeling---

2 minutes

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

If you wanted to continue with another round of Focusing, you would simply ask again, "And why is this important to me?", wait to see what comes as an "intuitive feel," look for words or an image that are "just right," checking and resonating until something shifts inside. You can find full Focusing Instructions in Complete Focusing Instructions, p.12-17.

Newcomers, Print and Practice!!!!

This is your Getting A Felt Sense exercise for these four weeks. "Getting A Felt Sense" is the second, and essential, step of [Intuitive Focusing](#). It is from the "felt sense," the "intuitive feel," of issues and situations that new solutions and action steps can unfold.

Print it out, keep it handy, and try it whenever you have time...I will also send a "reminder" copy by email every week...YOU CAN TRY IT IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE EMAIL COMES! a MOMENT TO RELAX AND CHECK INSIDE!

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Download Complete Focusing Instructions

If you haven't gotten them by joining one of our yahoo e-groups, you can now download [The Complete Focusing Instructions](#). Many of the Pre-Focusing Relaxation, Guided Imagery, and Meditation exercises, as well as the "Getting a Felt Sense" exercises and Complete Focusing Sessions, are all in that download.

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CEF News: Holiday Fun and Stress Relief?

Free Personality Tests and Focusing Reminders

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

December

FREE PERSONALITY TESTS FOR FUN WITH FAMILY

Got some extra time on your hands? Family and friends to entertain? You could spend some time in the [Individual Differences: Personality Tests](#) section at Creative Edge Focusing's website. You'll find websites offering free and fun versions of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Keirsey Temperament Sorter, Enneagram, Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, and info on EQ, the business version of Goleman's Emotional Intelligence. Play around with several tests. Compare among family members. Of course, these are free versions, for fun. It is more important to think about yourself and others from a variety of perspectives, "shake up" fixed images, than to put anyone in a "box."

HELP WITH HOLIDAY ADDICTIONS OR CODEPENDENCY?

Unfortunately, the holidays can also stir up alcohol addiction and codependency as families gather. See [Recovery Focusing](#) by Suzanne Noel for a gentle combination of Focusing with the 12-Step Programs.

HOLIDAYS INCLUDE GRIEVING WHAT IS MISSING

The holidays can also include some grieving for what or who is missing. Take the opportunity to use these moments to discover ["The Meaning in Tears"](#) and to allow yourself to notice ["Being Touched and Being Moved: The Spiritual Value of Tears"](#) .

Try out the simple [Five Minute Grieving: What To Do If A Friend, Colleague, Loved One Starts Crying"](#) .

CREATIVE EDGE FOCUSING (tm) INSTANT "AHAH!" E-COURSE

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

Here's a review of what we have learned so far and an encouragement to join us if you haven't yet or to continue practicing if you have! Most of you are already subscribed but, if not, [email me](#) and I will subscribe you.

You can start any time, and, in one year, we will have walked through the entire [Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual \("Ajas" Instantaneos\)](#), the [Complete Focusing download](#), the Interest Areas from the website at www.cefocusing.com, and a special mini-course on Interpersonal Focusing for [conflict resolution](#).

If you started at the beginning in September, you have learned four ways to relax:

- #1 Noticing Your Breathing,
- #2 Guided Imagery: The Beach,
- #3 Guided Imagery: The Forest,
- #4 Counting Meditation.

Any one might help you (and your body) take a welcome rest from holiday stress.

You have learned four ways to Get A Felt Sense:

- #1 The "Feel" of Two Different People (try that with your holiday guests!),
- #2 From The Bottom (Big Toe) Up (To the Center of the Body,
- #3 Clearing A Space (always handy for "Instant Serenity), and
- #4 Getting The Felt Sense Of A Situation (again, well-suited to all those holiday interactions!)

We have reviewed four Instant "Ahah!"s:

Instant "Ahah!" #1: Focusing: Find Out What Is Bothering You (a Complete Focusing Instruction which you might revisit now that you have practiced the first steps, Relaxation, Clearing A Space, and Felt Sensing).

#2 Active Listening: Short-Circuiting Angry Confrontations (with Pure Reflection),

#3 Passive Listening Turns: Stopping Arguments (with simple, no-interruption timed equal turns, and

#4, Five-Minute Grieving: What to do if someone starts crying

Grief is a natural part of the holiday season, as we become aware of loved ones who are not there, memories of past holidays (pleasant and unpleasant), or simply become aware of some loneliness and lack of that image of holiday joy. Welcome all of these as part of the package and let them pass through with a sheen of tears acknowledging deep meaning.

That is a lot of resources to draw on!

WANT SOMETHING NEW TO PRACTICE?

You might want to try Instant "Ahah!" #8 Sharing Your Day: Instant Intimacy as a simple way to get and stay connected with your significant other, regardless of surrounding turmoil. Here is a [mini-course on Intimacy and Sexuality](#) if you want to spend special time over the holidays.

You might want to try Instant "Ahah!" #9 Focusing on Creativity: From Blocks To Predictable "Ahah!"s or #10 Focusing on Spirituality: Being Touched and Being Moved. Read about [Focusing and Creativity](#) and [Focusing and Spirituality](#)

E-Newsletter Archives Now Available!

Anyone can also access [the e-newsletter archives](#) from the Free Resources submenu at [Creative Edge Focusing](#) and in right upper corner of homepage.

SELF-HELP PACKAGE: MANUAL, CDS, DVD DEMONSTRATIONS

If you download the free MP3 audio files in The Store at www.cefocusing.com, you can use the Intuitive Focusing CD to follow Dr. McGuire as she speaks these exercises. However, you can now access any of the

videos of the exercises for free any time at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#).

THE GIFT OF INNER SERENITY: FORWARD THIS EMAIL TO FRIENDS, COLLEAGUES, FAMILY

Use the Forward This Email link at the bottom or the Forward command in your own email program, which might give you better access to your whole address book. Happy holiday, trusting in the wisdom of your body

Instant "Ahah!"s #4: Five-Minute Grieving

Medical Change Event: From Migraine To Tears of Meaning

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

HOLIDAY STRESS RELIEVER

Take a few moments to use [Intuitive Focusing](#) with a bodily pain or tension (headache, churning stomach, etc.), release that stress, and go on to enjoy your holiday! Here is an example of the power of Focusing:

MEDICAL CHANGE EVENT: FROM MIGRAINE TO TEARS OF MEANING

While Instant "Ahah!" # 4 specifically addresses what to do if a patient, friend, or co-worker begins to cry, the excerpt below shows how using Intuitive Focusing to "sit with" the "intuitive feel" of a physical symptom can allow that symptom to open into an "Ahah!" of deeper meanings, with a sheen of tears in the eye often the body's signpost of a place to stop and go deeper into "the feel of the whole thing."

The excerpt is a tiny portion of a [Focusing Partnership](#) session. The Focuser is experienced in using Intuitive Focusing. Early on, as the Focuser talks about waking with the beginnings of a migraine headache and related issues, the Listener notices a faint "shimmer of tears." She suggests that the Focuser stop and "sense into" the place of tears. By the end of the session, the Focuser has

moved through deep sobbing about the heavy burden of depression she has carried "for soooo long" and experiences the liveliness of a "felt shift," "being lighter, wanting to dance!" She states that the migraine has abated.

The session begins with Focuser and Listener in chairs facing each other. The Focuser, because of her comfort with the Experiential Focusing process from past practice, chose to keep her eyes closed throughout the session, attending to her inner experiencing. The Listener, Dr. McGuire, begins:

Listener: So just take a moment to sit quietly, eyes closed, and pay attention to the "feel of it all" as it comes in your body:

Focuser: (10 second pause) ---"---This morning when I awakened, I had a headache on the left side of my head, and I thought, 'Oh, it's migraine coming on'--- so I'm just sensing into what that was about, um, like, my body was really full of toxins, like I just wanted to kind of shake the toxins out."

Listener: "So, even on waking, you noticed there was the beginning of a headache on the left side of your head, and you spent some time with it, just sensing into it, and the feeling was of toxins in your body, and you just wanted to shake them out, shake them out."

Focuser: (30 second pause) ----- "And I notice that my throat is stopped up this morning, and that's something I've been working on, we've been working on together---something deep emotional there in my throat, getting kind of choked up."

[The Focuser is doing the first step of Experiential Focusing, "clearing a space," noticing and naming the various issues she is carrying so she can choose one to work on]

Listener: "Yea, so you're aware of that now, too, your throat getting choked up, and that's something we've worked on before, and it's connected to deep emotional things---and it seemed like I even saw a shimmer of tears as you described that---maybe just be with that, sit with that 'choked up.'"

[The Listener notices the beginnings of tears and gives an Experiential Focusing Instruction, suggesting that the Focuser stop talking and pay attention to the "felt sense."]

Focuser: (tears visible under closed eyelids, face reddening, voice thickening) "What bothers me about it is I keep trying to clear my throat, and it doesn't clear. I keep trying to clear it, and it prevents me from speaking the way I want to speak, and it's **annoying** to people, I think."

Listener: "Uhhuh."

Focuser: "It somehow prevents me from projecting my voice---"

Listener: "Umhm."

Focuser: "I keep trying to get it out, and it just stays there, it's uh---"

Listener: "Umhm---so what bothers you is you keep trying to clear it out, and it won't go, and you also think it makes it difficult for **other** people. You want to project your voice and get it out, and that's hard for the other people, too, you can't really speak."

Focuser: "That really prevents communication."

Here is the entire 15-minute video once more for you to view and see how the listening and focusing skills you are learning integrate into this deep process of healing:



Listening/Focusing Inner Child Nurturing releases migraine and depression

You can read the entire excerpt, with commentary, and see the "felt shift" for yourself in [Medical Change Events Through Experiential Focusing](#).

Download "Being Touched and Being Moved: The Spiritual Value of Tears for many examples of how tears and Focusing interrelate and "Finding The Meaning In Tears"

for exercises for using Focusing to find the meaning in your tears. Both articles are packed with real-life examples of how tears "touch us" and "move us" in positive ways.

Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

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This month: From [Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual](#), p. 13, #4. *Five Minute Grieving: What To Do If A Patient, Friend, or Co-worker Starts Crying*.

E-Newsletter Archives Now Available!

Newcomers, you can start with any issue and, in a year, you will have practiced all the exercises. In order to catch up on this cycle, see [Instant Ahah #4 Five Minute Grieving Week 1](#) and [Instant Ahah #4 Grieving = Alchemy Week Two](#) and [Instant Ahah #4 Being Touched and Being Moved Week Three](#)

Anyone can also access the e-newsletter archives from the Free Resources submenu and also the top right corner of the homepage at Creative Edge Focusing.

"Relaxation" and "Getting A Felt Sense" Exercises for the Month

Later in the week, you will receive two other e-reminders, one for Relaxation Exercise #4. Counting Meditation (p. 6 in [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)) and

Getting A Felt Sense #4: The "Felt Sense," The "Intuitive Feel" of A Situation (p.12).

If you download the free MP3 audio files in The Store at www.cefocusing.com, you can use the Intuitive Focusing CD to follow Dr. McGuire as she speaks these exercises. But now we have video versions embedded in the e-newsletters, and all the videos available anytime at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#).

Relaxation #4: Counting Meditation

When Counting Meditation Instead of Focusing?

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

From Creative Edge Focusing: This month's Relaxation Exercise : COUNTING MEDITATION

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

Some people find it easy to drop all their stress and enter into an interior [Focusing](#) space. But, many people need easy first steps of practice for "going quietly inside." And even experienced Focusers get caught up in stress and business and welcome a reminder to take a moment to....pause.....(sigh!)...pay attention to their breathing.....(ahhhhhh!).....and...relax. So I teach people a number of different methods of "clearing a space" inside for Focusing. You can find these Relaxation, Guided Imagery, and Meditation exercises, along with the formal "Clearing A Space" Exercise in the [Complete Focusing Instructions PDF File](#). And throughout the year we will practice them all in this e-course.

WHEN DO COUNTING MEDITATION INSTEAD OF FOCUSING?

Often a [Focusing session](#) can begin with just a turning toward the body and noticing and acknowledging each bodily sensation or tension that arises, a kind of gentle, automatic "clearing a space" as a way of entering inside space.

But sometimes I am so wound up with tension and stress that I just can't "sit down" with my body in any way. My attention keeps jumping away. I keep forgetting what I am meant to be doing and return to the worrying and spiraling thoughts that are part of that tension and stress.

At these times, I find that the #1 Noticing Breathing or this #4 Counting Meditation is the only thing that can keep bringing my attention back in a way that eventually cuts through the stress and leads to the deeper breathing and sighing associated with "the relaxation response." Then, I can begin a Focusing session.

And, sometimes, this skill I have developed through practicing Relaxation #1 Noticing Breathing and #4 Counting Meditation serves me well throughout the process of Clearing A Space and going through a longer, full Focusing session. Often, I will notice that my mind has strayed and can use paying attention to my breathing as a way of bringing it back to Focusing. In fact, I use these "meditation" skills often to break the spinning of my mind and come back to the Focusing question I am working with.

So, practicing these meditation-like skills has application not only when relaxation is needed (like trying to go to sleep!) but to stay on track throughout regular Focusing sessions.

So, Take A Moment to Develop The Practice of Counting Meditation

The quiet time between instructions is an important time for just breathing---and relaxing.

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

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

Any of the Relaxation Exercises can be used at the beginning of a longer Focusing session, as a way of "clearing a space" inside, so notice which are your favorites you could call upon.

COUNTING MEDITATION

Our first Relaxation exercise #1 was Noticing. Then, in exercise #2 we did Guided Imagery At The Beach, then exercise #3, Guided Imagery in The Forest. Now, with Exercise #4 (p. 6 in the Free Download [Complete Focusing Instructions](#)), we go back to a meditation more like Noticing.

Here is the video if you want to close your eyes and just follow along:



Easiest meditation: Breathing and Counting...let everything else go...

Counting Meditation-Allow 10-15 minutes

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

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

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

--

1 minute

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

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

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

30 seconds

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

30 seconds

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

1 minute

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

5-10 minutes

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

Newcomers: Catch up at E-Newsletter Archive

This is the fourth week of a four-week cycle on this Relaxation Exercise. Within a year, we will cycle through all the exercises, covering those you have missed. However, if you are curious about any earlier cycles, you can check out [E-Newsletter Archive](#) .

Anyone Can Always Access the e-Archive

At the Creative Edge Focusing website, in the upper right corner of the homepage.

Print and Practice!!!! Counting Meditation

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

You will also find this in the [Complete Focusing Instructions download](#) at Creative Edge Focusing, p.6: Pre-Focusing Practice A. Relaxation Suggestions #4: Counting Meditation.

And, if you download the free MP3 audio files in The Store at www.cefocusing.com, you can listen on audio CD Intuitive Focusing: Disk one, Track 5, with Dr, McGuire's peaceful voice to keep you company -- and help you stay on track!!

BONUS! Free Video: Dr. McGuire demo

"The Focuser is in charge": Focusing with a Listener

Being committed to Focusing Partnership and the Changes self-help model, I set out in this video to show how peer counseling is safe because the Focuser is "in charge" of the session, asking for what she or he needs, making corrections until reflections by the Listener feel "just right." The Listener is just a peer, trying to help, not a therapist with unequal, magical power.

My Listener, Edwin Rutsch of The Center for Building A Culture of Empathy and Compassion, has some exposure to Focusing but, as a Listener, he uses only Empathic Reflection and no other form of guiding for me as the Focuser. Remember, Carl Rogers used ONLY reflection throughout his career as the founder of Client-Centered Therapy. It was we Gendlinites who added Focusing Suggestions as a way to go deeper. So, you will see a great example of the power of "just Listening."

And, I give myself Focusing Guiding as I take myself deeper, demonstrating "the Focuser is in charge."

I start out with a work-related issue which opens into deep meanings related to my broader living.

After 25 minutes, suddenly a stuck, frozen body posture unfreezes and opens and carries forward into deeper meanings, so the video also illustrates the importance of gestures and body postures as 'symbolizations' of felt experiencing.

And also, seeing how much more deeply my Focusing turn goes after the first 25 minutes reinforces my belief that Focusing Partnership turns, each way, need to be at least 40 minutes, giving time to get below 'clearing a space' and more deeply into felt meanings.

I hope you will stick it out to minute 25 to see the deep unfolding of the body

posture! The content of my turn is the History of Focusing wiki, which was what came up. But, don't get stuck on the content. It is the process that is important.



"The Focuser is in charge": Focusing with an Empathic Listener

Instant "Ahah!"s #5: Collaborative Decision Making

Everyone goes to meetings! Let's make them efficient.

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

EVERYONE PARTICIPATES IN MEETINGS! LET'S MAKE THEM PRODUCTIVE AND PLEASANT

If you are in a business or academic setting, you may have decision making meetings many times a week, even several times a day. They may be in a twosome, a small group or team, or a larger group.

There are meetings of religious community committees and non-profit organizations we belong to. And, we have decision making meetings with our significant others, our partners, children, or whole family every day!

Below you find the simple "How To's For Groups" which arose from my dissertation research, *Listening and Interruptions in Task-Oriented Groups*, University of Chicago, 1977, with [Eugene Gendlin](#), creator of [Focusing](#) (*Focusing*, Bantam, 1981, 1984) as advisor. My [Collaborative Edge Decision Making](#) process creates an atmosphere where articulating from right-

brain, creative, preverbal "hunches" and "intuitions" becomes possible, direct access to [The Creative Edge](#) for creation of new ideas and solutions.

Over the next four weeks, we will look at incorporating the procedures into groups that you belong to:

INSTANT "Ahah!" 5 Collaborative Decision-Making

Coordinated Collaboration: The Best of Consensus and Hierarchy

Here are some *Task-Roles* and *Impasse Resolution Procedures*, for use when a group has a limited time to make decisions. This model can also be used, as **Coordinated Collaboration**, as a way of gathering information and input, in work groups where there is a boss, a Project Manager, or a Coordinator who will make the final decisions.

As with all the Applied Methods of Creative Edge Focusing, the procedures create quiet, protected moments where participants can pay attention to the "intuitive feel," The Creative Edge, and create innovative ideas and solutions.

The tasks can be rotated in a "**shared leadership**" model, where appropriate, each person on the team learning the various skills. Or, for instance, on the Board of a Corporation or Non-Profit Organization, the formal Chairperson might serve as the agenda keeper more regularly.

Shared Leadership Tasks

The group appoints or gets volunteers for the following tasks:

1. **Agenda keeper:** This person watches over the content of the meeting, while the process monitor is watching over its process. This is like the typical chairperson, who :
 - Collects an agenda of items to be discussed and/or decided-upon.
 - Prioritizes them in terms of order and amount of time allotted to each. The group helps with this.

- Makes sure that the group adheres to the agenda and the time limits for agenda items (see also below, under "time keeper"). When the group wants to spend more time on an item, the time has to be taken away from another item, if the ending time of the meeting is fixed. Redistribution of time must be a conscious decision of the group.

2. **Process monitor:** This person watches over the process, as the agenda keeper watches over the content of the meeting. The process monitor :

- Keeps a list of people waiting for a turn to speak (they raise a finger to indicate this desire). Now participants can listen to others instead of trying to figure out how to interrupt and get a chance to speak.
- Calls on people from the list. This is especially important when conversation becomes heated and everyone wants to talk at once!
- Enforces a limit of 3 minutes (or another agreed-upon length) on any speaking turn. A polite way to get on to the next speaker. (See also below, under "time keeper").
- Reminds people that "No interruptions are allowed". A ground rule of the group process is "No Interrupting".
- Can suggest that the group use [Focused Listening](#) to resolve a conflict or make sure someone can be understood.
- Can suggest that the group use some of the other suggested procedures for "**Creative Edge Impasse Resolution**" (see below).

Anyone in the group can ask for **Focused Listening** or [Interpersonal Focusing](#) between two people, but it is the Process Monitor's job. This is plenty to do without trying to monitor content, or the agenda, as well.

3. **An Alternate Process Monitor:**

- Takes over if and when the Process Monitor needs to enter the discussion at the meeting and can't do this job for a while!

4. **A Time Keeper:**

- Keeps time for 3-minute speaking turns (see above, "process monitor").
- Keeps track of time allotted for each agenda item (see above, "agenda keeper").

- Insists that the group re-negotiate time if it wants to continue on with an item after the time limit is up.

5. Recorder:

- Takes minutes.
- Notes any decisions which have been reached on items.
- Asks the group to state any decision made before moving on, if no decision has been formally made. It's surprising how often a group will spend time discussing an item then drift on to the next without making a decision.

These are very basic structures that can be tried in any task-oriented group situation immediately. This approach really can work for board meetings and other situations where people have to make decisions in a fixed amount of time.

Creative Edge Impasse Resolution: When the Going Gets Rough

When the going gets rough, the group can stop and do a variety of methods from The Creative Edge Pyramid which increase access to The Creative Edge, and thus to creativity, innovation, and win/win decision making:

- a **Group Intuitive Focusing** exercise, taking a few moments of quiet, each person sensing into the "intuitive feel" of the question or issue is facing the group
- a "**Round Robin**" after a Group Focusing exercise, where each person gets one - three minutes to have their say on an item, no interruptions allowed
- **Interpersonal Focusing:** a **Listening** facilitator, can, by turns, use **Focused Listening** to reflect each of two speakers who are having a conflict or difficulty understanding each other, allowing a creative solution to emerge
- **Focusing Partnership** break out: breaking out into pairs or triads for equal Focusing/Listening turns on an issue, then coming back with perhaps a Round Robin for sharing new insights
- Brainstorming and any other techniques helpful in other forms of group process, followed by Group Intuitive Focusing and Round Robin sharing of new "intuitive feels", Creative Edges, stirred by the technique.

You can begin learning now by thinking about the groups you belong to, the meetings you attend.

- What are the pluses and minuses of these meetings?
- What is the "whole body feel" of being at these meetings?
- Do people interrupt each other?
- Are conflicts polarized and never changing?
- Do people feel free to share their negative feelings about a decision?
- Does a minority do all the talking?
- Is there a chance to pause to formulate a new but vague idea?
- Can you imagine asking the group to try out the Shared Leadership model in Instant "Ahah!" #5?
- Can you imagine incorporating [Listening](#) and [Focusing](#) skills into these meetings? What would the difference be?

For a complete explanation of the theory behind access to The Creative Edge and innovative decision making, you can download Dr. McGuire's comprehensive article,

"Collaborative Edge Decision Making Method, "

As a bonus, the Appendix of this article includes Handouts you can use at actual meetings, one for each role in Shared Leadership.

The PRISMS/S Problem Solving Method, with its Core Skills of Intuitive Focusing and Focusing Listening, and the seven methods from The Creative Edge Pyramid for incorporating PRISMS/S at every level of organization, can be explored in the Core Concepts area at Creative Edge Focusing's website, and the many Free and Purchased resources found there.

Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

For four weeks, we practice one Instant "Ahah!" and various steps of the Intuitive Focusing process, such as Relaxation, Getting a Felt Sense, Clearing A Space, and a complete Focusing Session.

Our purpose: Helping you incorporate Listening and Focusing into your everyday life.

This month's three practice areas (one email each per week):

1. From Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual, p. 16, #5. *Collaborative Decision Making*

2. Felt Sensing: *Creating a Caring Feeling Presence --- The Focusing Attitude* (a new one, not in Complete Focusing Instructions download)

3. Complete Focusing Instruction: "How Am I Today?", p. 13 in Complete Focusing Instructions

Later in the week, you will receive e-reminders to practice each of these exercises.

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Self-Empathy: Creating A Caring Inner Relationship

A "Caring Feeling Presence" Inside

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

THE FOCUSING ATTITUDE: CREATING A "CARING FEELING PRESENCE" INSIDE AND AS A FOCUSED LISTENER

For the next four weeks, we will work on perhaps the most essential aspect for successful [Intuitive Focusing](#), creating a positive attitude, inside of yourself, for whatever might arise during a Focusing turn. This is The Focusing Attitude.

Empathy, Congruence, and Unconditional Positive Regard

It is also the essential attitude which you convey to a Focuser when you are being a [Focused Listener](#):

"I am here for you, without judgment. I am happy to receive anything that comes up inside of you, without criticism. I will set aside my own reactions, judgments, own experiences and be here as a Caring Feeling Presence simply to listen to and to give back to you your own experiencing." It is a necessary component of the "empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard" which [Carl Rogers](#) defined as the crux ingredients for the healing relationship.

Leaning in with Tenderness: A "Caring Feeling Presence"

Once I was having a prolonged argument with another Focusing Trainer at a workshop I was teaching. I kept emphasizing going with the tears and anger, letting them be experienced. He said it was sufficient to work his feelings through in his imagination, that he did not have to say them out loud, that he did not need to feel them. Then, in a Focusing turn, the Listener used his name: "So, H, you are saying---" "So, H, what mattered was" My friend reported to me that just hearing his name created an intimacy that allowed him to feel his tears, and the deeper meanings in his experience, in the Listener's presence, and how valuable that was to him--- The Listener had responded to him with a Caring Feeling Presence, and that had allowed the Focuser to turn toward his inner experiencing with the same attitude of unconditional love and self-compassion.

Another time, I was the Focuser, being Listened to accurately but---well, it felt distant, too objective---I didn't feel "safe" becoming vulnerable in front of that distance. I asked the Listener to "lean in toward me more---be tender toward me---" When she did this, I was able to feel compassion for myself, and to touch into the place of tears, the deeper meanings for me, the part of me that needed to be comforted in order to grow forward.

The Real "First Step" of Focusing: Self-Empathy, Self-Love

Pete Campbell and Ed McMahon, creators of the Biospiritual Focusing approach, always started their workshops by teaching The Focusing Attitude, which they called "A Caring Feeling Presence." They did not think anyone should begin to try out Focusing Instructions without first learning how to be kind and gentle with everything that arises inside.

And they knew that Focusers had to have this experience in a bodily-felt way, not just as an intellectual idea. Learning to take this Focusing Attitude toward oneself is a life-long learning for anyone wanting to "make peace" with all the different "parts" or "aspects" of themselves.

Please try out their introductory exercise for finding a "felt sense," an "intuitive feel" for this kind of inner caring. It involves learning how it feels, in your body, when you are trying to show complete love and safety to someone. Then, turning that same loving attention, that Caring Feeling Presence, toward your own inner experiences. You will imagine you have found an abandoned infant and must show it, through your bodily-holding, that it is completely safe and totally wanted. Then, you will find your own Inner Nurturer and Inner Woundedness, and bring them together.

Here is the video if you would like the company of my Caring Feeling Presence as I walk you through the exercise. Or you can read it below:



Self-Empathy: Creating A Caring Feeling Presence inside yourself

A CARING FEELING PRESENCE INSIDE

"Take a moment to find a comfortable sitting position---

Loosen any clothing that is too tight---

And begin to come quietly inside by closing your eyes and starting to just notice your breathing---

Just noticing your breathing---going in---and out---in---and out---Let any sighs or deeper breathing arise naturally---

(one minute)

Now, notice your body, how it feels in the chair ---

Massage any spots that feel sore---

Massage your head---

Wrinkle up your face and stretch your jaw---and relax!!!!

Make a few circles with your shoulders, bringing them up to your ears, around toward the back, and dropping them down---and repeating four or five times---

(one minute)

And now bring your attention inside, to the place where you find a "felt sense" or an "intuitive feel" when you are using Focusing, often in the center of your body, around the chest/heart area----

(one minute)

And now, imagine that you work in a hospital---

An infant has been left on the hospital steps---

Let yourself feel the impact of this situation in your body---

It is your job to pick up that infant and to convey to it, through your body, your way of holding it, that it is safe, that it is perfectly and truly wanted in this world.

Imagine picking up that infant---

Now, imagine what you would do in your body to convey to that infant that it is perfectly safe, that it is truly wanted in this world---

(one minute)

Notice what you do in your body to convey this loving attention, without words---

(one minute)

Now, imagine turning that same kind of Caring Feeling Presence toward your own inner places, whatever they may be---

(one minute)

Bring to your mind times in your life when you felt loved and valued in this way. Look for particular places or people or animals or situations where you felt completely safe, completely wanted, basking in the warmth of loving attention---

(one to three minutes)

Choose one of these images/places/people/situations that could stand as such a strong symbol of this kind of safety that you could use the memory of it as an anchor or talisman to bring you to that sense of Caring Feeling Presence to your own inside experiences. We'll call that your Inner Nurturer---

(one to three minutes)

Now, look through your life and store of memories and images and see if you can find an image of a part of yourself that is now or was at some point very much in need of that kind of Caring Feeling Presence. It could be an Inner Child, yourself at a certain age or time of life. But it could be another kind of image: like "a wounded animal" or "a butterfly with a crumpled wing" or "a gangrenous leg---I just want to cut it off" or a particular physical tension (headache, tight jaw, stomach knot) that you often suffer from. We'll call that your Inner Woundedness---

(one to three minutes)

Now, imagine taking your Inner Nurturer and turning that Caring Feeling Presence toward your Inner Woundedness---

(one to three minutes)

Just spend some time seeing if you can touch your Inner Woundedness with that Inner Nurturing---

(one to three minutes)

And come back into the room when you are ready.

Things That Get In The Way of This Inner Attitude

This exercise is just a first step. You might have found that Inner Critical Voices arose while you tried this exercise ("This is silly!" "I don't have any weaknesses!" "It's too late. The past is the past," etc. In the next weeks, we will continue working with establishing a Caring Feeling Presence inside, and the things that can get in the way of that. Turning toward oneself, and others, with love and self-love, is a life-long learning! But we are starting today.

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION #1

"How am I today?"

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

HAVING A PARADIGM SHIFT: COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION INSTRUCTIONS

Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing Process: McGuire's PRISMS/S

In [Intuitive Focusing](#), first, you relax and find a felt sense, an "intuitive feel" that is before words and more than words. Then, you go back and forth between open-ended questions ("Why is this hard for me?", "What's the meaning for me?", "How is this related to that other decision?") and the "intuitive feel," looking for words or images that exactly capture "the feel of the whole thing," until you find a sense of resolution, of knowing the meaning, an "Ahah!" experience.

At this moment of "Ahah!" you are experiencing a "felt shift," a Paradigm shift. The kaleidoscope turns, and the whole situation is new. New ideas, emotions, and action steps suddenly become possible.

[Eugene Gendlin](#) (*Focusing*, 1981, 1984) was the first to describe Focusing as a series of steps which could be practiced as a self-help, problem solving method. Please see [Intuitive Focusing](#) for a full explanation of Gendlin's six-steps of the Focusing process.

Also review the PRISMS/S Problem Solving Process for Dr. McGuire's version of the steps leading from Pausing to Paradigm Shifts.

Below is a set of instructions taking you through the complete Intuitive Focusing process.

Be Gentle With Yourself

At all times, please remember the Focusing Attitude, the Caring Feeling Presence inside which we are also practicing these four weeks! Having a Caring Feeling attitude toward whatever arises inside is the best insurance for a wonderful quiet time with your own inner experiencing.

Try these long instructions only as long as you feel comfortable. Don't be judgmental of yourself if nothing huge seems to be happening. It can take a long

time to learn to recognize a felt sense, the "intuitive feel," amidst all of the other things going on inside of your body (thoughts, images, muscular sensations, etc.).

If you've recently joined this e-newsletter, later exercises will take you back to practicing separate steps of Focusing, like Relaxation, Clearing A Space, and Getting A Felt Sense. Impatient? You can check earlier e-newsletters about these exercises at [the Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Archives](#). And/or you can start at the beginning of Intuitive Focusing, Disc 1, and try each exercise in sequence. And/or you can download [Complete Focusing Instructions](#) and read through and try the exercises you have missed.

Don't force yourself to stay quietly inside longer than is pleasurable for you. Remember, many people learn the basics of Intuitive Focusing and having "felt shifts," or Paradigm Shifts better if they can be in interaction with a Listening partner. Start your own self-help group, using the *Focusing In Community (Focusing en Comunidad)* manual which you can download for \$5 in The Store at www.cefocusing.com. Or look for a Focusing Trainer in your geographic area or online at [The International Focusing Institute](#).

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

Three Different Approaches To A Complete Focusing Session

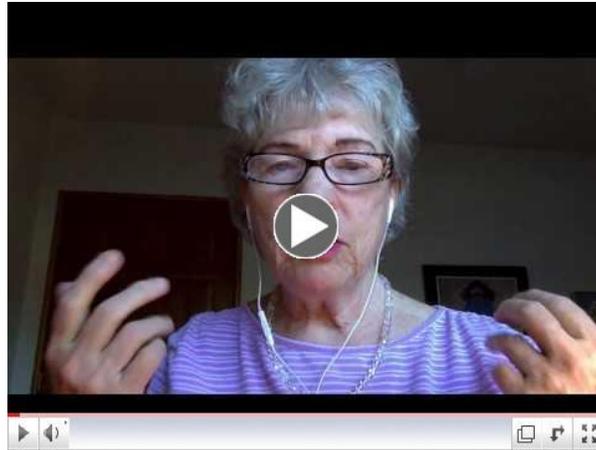
Each of the three sets of complete Focusing instructions we will try in the next lessons emphasizes a different way of getting a "felt sense" or "intuitive feel."

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

Try each set. You may find that one way works consistently better for you, or you may find that you like to use different instructions to work on different kinds of issues. But, for the next four weeks, we will practice #1:

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

Here is the video where I walk you through. First, a relation exercise. Then asking "How am I today?" and waiting for a 'felt sense' to form. Eventually, asking yourself, "What would this be like if it were totally okay?" and "What is in the way of that?" Then you will see if you can find "one small step" in the direction of "okay." At each stage, you will learn, not to answer from your head, but to wait quietly for an 'intuitive feel' to form in the center of your body, then carefully look for words/images/gestures that are "just right" in capturing that felt sense:



Complete Focusing Session: "How am I today...?" "What's in the way of being totally okay...?"

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

1 minute

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

--- Find a peaceful place inside of yourself, a place of Caring Feeling Presence. Bring to mind the Anchoring images, your inner Nurturers, from this week's Caring Feeling Presence exercise---30 seconds

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

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

5-10 minutes---

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

You should feel relaxed, refreshed, less stressed, after a Focusing Session. If, however, you don't feel better, but perhaps feel disoriented or sunk in an unpleasant feeling, you can try the "Present Time" procedure, borrowed from Re-Evaluation Co-Counseling to bring you back "into real time":

Look around the room and name every one of a certain color (all black, all white, or all yellow -- whatever!) or shape (round, square, rectangular, or whatever!) of object in the room. Look around very carefully at this outer world. Continue with variations of this exercise until you feel grounded in "present time" again.

If you download the free MP3 audio files in The Store at www.cefocusing.com, you can use the Intuitive Focusing CD to follow Dr. McGuire as she speaks these exercises and view actual demonstrations of Listening/Focusing turns on the DVD. You can also find all the instructional videos at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#).

Instant "Ahah!"s #5: Collaborative Decision Making

Sharing Leadership and Impasse Resolution

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

SHARING LEADERSHIP AND IMPASSE RESOLUTION

"Rather than depending upon the skill of a naturally talented chairperson, being held captive by the caprice of a bad one, or suffering from the chaos and anarchy of "the leaderless group," in the Collaborative Edge Decision Making method, the skill of leadership is broken down into a number of tasks which are then assigned to various group members. No one person carries the onus of staying on top of all aspects of the task, and all group members come to feel responsible for contributing to good group process." Dr. Kathy McGuire

This is Week Two of a four-week cycle on Instant "Ahah!" # 5 from your free [Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual](#) download, the simple ["How Tos" for Creative Edge Meetings](#). If you want to "catch up," see ["Having Great Meetings Week One"](#) .

From Dr. McGuire's article, "Collaborative Edge Decision Making":

"5. Shared Leadership Component at Decision Making Meetings

Rather than depending upon the skill of a naturally talented chairperson, being held captive by the caprice of a bad one, or suffering from the chaos and anarchy of "the leaderless group," in the Collaborative Edge Decision Making method, the skill of leadership is broken down into a number of tasks which are then assigned to various group members. No one person carries the onus of staying on top of all aspects of the task, and all group members come to feel responsible for contributing to good group process.

The five task roles can be rotated among group members from meeting to meeting, or, with group agreement, certain members can specialize in a particular task. In a more hierarchical setting, the supervisor or coordinator may take the role of agenda keeper each meeting. In a different group, a person too shy to be process monitor may be a very assertive time-keeper, and so on. However, in general, it is a good idea to keep rotating the roles in order to insure equality of ownership and responsibility. As everyone shares the tasks involved in group leadership, everyone will also take ownership of the group process and more actively participate in decision making.

6. Creative Edge Impasse Resolution Component

According to the [Creating At The Edge principles](#), the solutions to problems are implicit in the intuitive "feel of the whole thing," the Creative Edge. Similarly, conflicts and arguments hold within them important information for decision making, accessed through the Creative Edge "intuitions" of the participants.

[Intuitive Focusing](#) and [Focused Listening](#) are the Core Skills for articulating innovative solutions from the Creative Edge. So, when decision making breaks down at meetings, the way out of the impasse can be found through turning to a variety of approaches which use the Listening and Focusing skills and the Interpersonal Focusing method to facilitate the creation of new solutions, and Paradigm Shifts, out of the Creative Edge intuitions of participants."

For a complete explanation of the theory behind access to The Creative Edge and innovative decision making, you can download Dr. McGuire's comprehensive article, "Collaborative Edge Decision Making Method, ". **As a bonus, the Appendix of this article includes Handouts you can use at actual meetings, one for each role in Shared Leadership.**

Reread the simple "How To's For Groups" (Instant "Ahah!" #5 in Mini-Manual). They define the five roles in Shared Leadership and various Listening/Focusing methods for Impasse resolution. The "How To's" arose from my dissertation research, *Listening and Interruptions in Task-Oriented Groups*, University of Chicago, 1977, with Eugene Gendlin, creator of Focusing (*Focusing*, Bantam, 1981, 1984) as advisor.

Over these four weeks, we are looking at incorporating the procedures into groups that you belong to:

Please [email Dr. McGuire](#) with your questions or answers to the questions below about the groups you belong to, the meetings you attend.

- What are the plusses and minuses of these meetings?
- What is the "whole body feel" of being at these meetings?
- Do people interrupt each other?
- Are conflicts polarized and never changing?
- Do people feel free to share their negative feelings about a decision?
- Does a minority do all the talking?
- Is there a chance to pause to formulate a new but vague idea?
- Can you imagine asking the group to try out the Shared Leadership model in Instant "Ahah!" #5?
- Can you imagine incorporating Listening and Focusing skills into these meetings? What would the difference be?

Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support: Week Two

For four weeks, we practice one Instant "Ahah!" and various steps of the Intuitive Focusing process, such as Relaxation, Getting a Felt Sense, Clearing A Space, and a complete Focusing Session.

Our purpose: Helping you incorporate [Listening](#) and [Focusing](#) into your everyday life.

This month:

From Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual, p. 16, #5. *Collaborative Decision Making*

Later in the week, you will receive e-reminders to practice two other Focusing exercises.

E-Newsletter Archives Now Available!

Newcomers, you can start with any issue and, in a year, you will have practiced all the exercises. So, just join in here-and-now and follow along. However, if you want to experience previous e-newsletters, you can find them in [Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Archive](#).

To catch up with this four week cycle, you can read [Instant "Ahah!" #5 Having Great Meetings! Collaborative Decision Making](#).

Anyone can also access the e-newsletter archives from the Free Resources submenu at [Creative Edge Focusing](#) or the top right corner of the home page.

You can also find all the e-course practice videos free at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#).

Self-Empathy: Caring Feeling Presence

Caring for "Unpleasant" Parts of Ourselves

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

THE FOCUSING ATTITUDE: CARING FOR "UNPLEASANT" PARTS OF OURSELVES

"The parts or aspects or 'images' of ourselves that most need our own Caring inner attention are often parts that we have most wanted or needed to ignore, push down, turn away from, often feeling that leaving these parts behind is really the only way to survive.

So, now, to turn toward and embrace these very aspects of the Self? Very difficult, a life-long task." Kathy McGuire

For these four weeks, we are working on perhaps the most essential aspect for successful Intuitive Focusing, creating a positive attitude, inside of yourself, for whatever might arise during a Focusing turn. This is The Focusing Attitude. To "catch up" on Week One, see [Creating A Positive Inner Relationship Week One](#).

Empathy, Congruence, and Unconditional Positive Regard

"Caring Feeling Presence" is also the essential attitude which you convey to a Focuser when you are being a Focused Listener:

"I am here for you, without judgment. I am happy to receive anything that comes up inside of you, without criticism. I will set aside my own reactions, judgments, own experiences and be here as a Caring Feeling Presence simply to listen to and to give back to you your own experiencing." It is a necessary component of the "empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard" which Carl Rogers defined as the crux ingredients for the healing relationship.

Caring for "Unpleasant" Parts of Ourselves

In the first part of the Caring Feeling Presence exercise below, you are asked to imagine picking up an abandoned infant and conveying to it, through your body, that it is totally wanted and safe in the world. That is a "relatively" easy task!

But the parts or aspects or "images" of ourselves that most need our own Caring inner attention are often parts that we have most wanted or needed to ignore, push down, turn away from, often feeling that leaving these parts behind is really the only way to survive. So, now, to turn toward and embrace these very aspects of the Self? Very difficult, a life-long task.

Unpleasant Images for Abandoned Parts

Here are some images people have given for their wounded part:

"A gangrenous leg --- I just want to cut it off."

"The Golum --- it has been underground so long that it is white and totally blind, cannot survive in the light."

"That fat, little crying girl from childhood --- Ughhhh!"

"Quicksand, waiting to suck me down!"

"A dark well of pain without bottom---"

Using Touchstones and Anchors to Establish a "Safe Distance"

Initially, you may need to establish some "safe distance" from it, some firm ground where you can "take a whiff" of it without getting sucked in, stick a toe in the water and quickly step back to the shore. The Inner Anchors in the second part of the exercise, be they pleasant places, remembered nurturers, fantasy warriors or guides, can serve this purpose as safe harbors, touchstones to return to when beginning to approach an old, sore, long-ignored, negatively judged inner aspect or felt sense.

Being Willing To Take Time To Establish Contact, Healing Relationship

And the feeling is mutual! Left alone, pushed out, uncared for for many years, the wounded part is not always immediately welcoming of your attention now:

"A dirty, little girl and she is screaming 'Get away from me!'

"A porcupine --- all quills, waiting to shoot them at me."

"A wounded dog ---biting my hand!"

Gene Gendlin, creator of *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981, 1984) used to say in these tenuous inner moments: "Can you just pitch a tent and settle down nearby, letting it know you will just hang out there, as long as it needs to feel comfortable with you?"

Try The Exercise Again With Special Attention To Negative Images, Inner Anchors, and Taking Time To Re-Establish Mutual Trust

Please try out again Pete and Ed's introductory **Biospiritual Focusing** exercise for finding a "felt sense," an "intuitive feel" for developing Caring Feeling Relationship inside. It involves learning how it feels, in your body, when you

are trying to show complete love and safety to someone. Then, turning that same loving attention, that Caring Feeling Presence, toward your own inner experiences. You can read it to yourself or close your eyes and follow along as I lead you through in the following video:



Learning Self-Empathy: Show an abandoned infant "Caring Feeling Presence." Find your own Inner Nurturer, Inner Woundedness

A CARING FEELING PRESENCE INSIDE

"Take a moment to find a comfortable sitting position---

Loosen any clothing that is too tight---

And begin to come quietly inside by closing your eyes and starting to just notice your breathing---

Just noticing your breathing---going in---and out---in---and out---Let any sighs or deeper breathing arise naturally---

(one minute)

Now, notice your body, how it feels in the chair ---

Massage any spots that feel sore---

Massage your head---

Wrinkle up your face and stretch your jaw---and relax!!!!!!

Make a few circles with your shoulders, bringing them up to your ears, around toward the back, and dropping them down---and repeating four or five times---

(one minute)

And now bring your attention inside, to the place where you find a "felt sense" or an "intuitive feel" when you are using Focusing, often in the center of your body, around the chest/heart area----

(one minute)

And now, imagine that you work in a hospital---

An infant has been left on the hospital steps---

Let yourself feel the impact of this situation in your body---

It is your job to pick up that infant and to convey to it, through your body, your way of holding it, that it is safe, that it is perfectly and truly wanted in this world. Imagine picking up that infant---

Now, imagine what you would do in your body to convey to that infant that it is perfectly safe, that it is truly wanted in this world---

(one minute)

Notice what you do in your body to convey this loving attention, without words---

(one minute)

Now, imagine turning that same kind of Caring Feeling Presence toward your own inner places, whatever they may be---

(one minute)

Bring to your mind times in your life when you felt loved and valued in this way. Look for particular places or people or animals or situations where you felt completely safe, completely wanted, basking in the warmth of loving attention---

(one to three minutes)

Choose one of these images/places/people/situations that could stand as such a strong symbol of this kind of safety that you could use the memory of it as an anchor or talisman to bring you to that sense of Caring Feeling Presence to your own inside experiences. We'll call that your Inner Nurturer---

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Now, look through your life and store of memories and images and see if you can find an image of a part of yourself that is now or was at some point very much in need of that kind of Caring Feeling Presence. It could be an Inner Child, yourself at a certain age or

time of life. But it could be another kind of image: like "a wounded animal" or "a butterfly with a crumpled wing" or "a gangrenous leg---I just want to cut it off" or a particular physical tension (headache, tight jaw, stomach knot) that you often suffer from. We'll call that your Inner Woundedness---

(one to three minutes)

Now, imagine taking your Inner Nurturer and turning that Caring Feeling Presence toward your Inner Woundedness---

(one to three minutes)

Just spend some time seeing if you can touch your Inner Woundedness with that Inner Nurturing---

(one to three minutes)

And come back into the room when you are ready.

Things That Get In The Way of This Inner Attitude

This exercise is just a first step. You might have found that Inner Critical Voices arose while you tried this exercise ("This is silly!" "I don't have any weaknesses!" "It's too late. The past is the past," etc. In the next weeks, we will continue working with establishing a Caring Feeling Presence inside, and the things that can get in the way of that. Turning toward oneself, and others, with love and self-love, is a life-long learning! But we are starting today.

You can always access any of the e-course videos at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#)

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: "How am I today?"

Getting Help Learning Focusing

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

SELF-HELP AIDES

Some people are "natural focusers" and, once trying an [Intuitive Focusing](#) Session, say, "Oh! I've been doing this all my life. Now I can do it better!"

But most people have a harder time learning this special kind of inner attention. "Inner actions," [Gendlin](#), creator of *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981, 1984, 2007, www.focusing.org), called it, naming his six-step process:

1. Clearing a Space Inside
2. Getting A Felt Sense
3. Finding a Handle (words/images/gesture) that capture the "feel of it all"
4. Resonating and Checking (going back-and-forth between symbols and "felt sense" until there is an exact "fit" ---- "Ahhh! That's exactly it!")
5. Asking Open-Ended Questions and waiting for a "felt sense" response, then, again, finding words and images to capture it
6. Experiencing A Felt Shift and Receiving What Has Come

These are a lot of specific inner "moves" to learn to make/recognize.

And then there is a matter of The Focusing Attitude, turning a Caring Feeling Presence toward whatever comes inside. And, as part of that, learning to deal with critical inner voices, various forms of the Critic who try to stop Focusing, stop change.

So, for further self-help instruction in Focusing:

- visit the Store at www.cefocusing.com for four free manuals, and free audio MP3 files of exercises
- visit the Store at The Focusing Institute to find many books and audio and visual materials to help you learn Focusing

CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS WORLDWIDE

There is also a wide array of Classes and Workshops you can take, by phone or locally in many regions and languages, one-to-one or in less expensive class situations.

You can find classes and workshops worldwide at The Focusing Institute [website](#) where you can find a listing of Certified Focusing Professionals by geographical area and also a listing of online classes.

HAVING A PARADIGM SHIFT: COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION INSTRUCTIONS

Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing Process: McGuire's PRISMS/S

In [Intuitive Focusing](#), first, you relax and find a felt sense, an "intuitive feel" that is before words and more than words. Then, you go back and forth between open-ended questions ("Why is this hard for me?", "What's the meaning for me?", "How is this related to that other decision?") and the "intuitive feel," looking for words or images that exactly capture "the feel of the whole thing," until you find a sense of resolution, of knowing the meaning.

At this moment of "Ahah!" you are experiencing a "felt shift," a [Paradigm shift](#). The kaleidoscope turns, and the whole situation is new. New ideas, emotions, and action steps suddenly become possible.

Be Gentle With Yourself

At all times, please remember the Focusing Attitude, the [Caring Feeling Presence inside](#) which we are also practicing these four weeks! Having a Caring Feeling attitude toward whatever arises inside is the best insurance for a wonderful quiet time with your own inner experiencing.

Try these long instructions only as long as you feel comfortable. Don't be judgmental of yourself if nothing huge seems to be happening. It can take a long time to learn to recognize a felt sense, the "intuitive feel," amidst all of the other things going on inside of your body (thoughts, images, muscular sensations, etc.). If you've recently joined this e-newsletter, later exercises will take you back to practicing separate steps of Focusing, like Relaxation, Clearing A Space, and Getting A Felt Sense. Impatient? You can check earlier e-newsletters about these exercises at the [updated e-newsletter archive](#). And/or you can start at the beginning of the free MP3 files for Intuitive Focusing, and try each exercise in sequence. Download them in The Store at www.cefocusing.com

Don't force yourself to stay quietly inside longer than is pleasurable for you. Remember, many people learn the basics of Intuitive Focusing and having "felt shifts," or Paradigm Shifts better if they can be in interaction with a Listening partner. Start your own self-help group, using the *Focusing In*

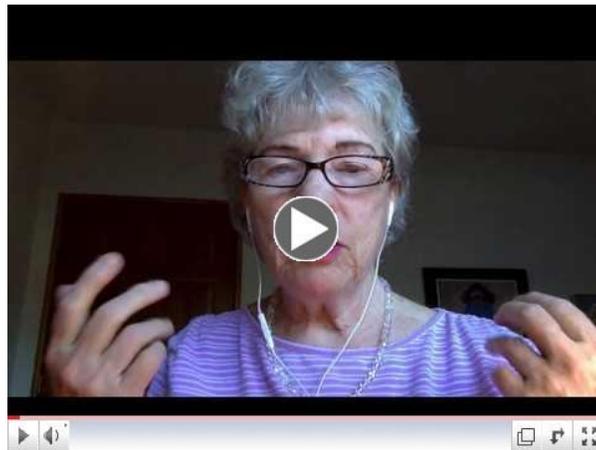
Community (Focusing en Comunidad) manual free for download in The Store at www.cefocusing.com, or seek individual coaching or group classes with a Certified Focusing Trainer at www.focusing.org

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

There are many different "protocols" for Complete Focusing Sessions. For this four weeks, we are practicing:

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

You can read to yourself below or close your eyes and follow along with my voice on the video below. Remember, practice makes perfect! And practice bringing a "caring feeling presence" of curious, warm non-judgement to any "unwelcome" parts of yourself that appear:



Complete Focusing Session: "How am I today?" with special attention to non-judgmental Caring Feeling Presence toward "unwelcome" parts of yourself

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HAVING A PARADIGM SHIFT: COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION INSTRUCTIONS

Gendlin's Six-Step Focusing Process: McGuire's PRISMS/S

In Intuitive Focusing, first, you relax and find a felt sense, an "intuitive feel" that is before words and more than words. Then, you go back and forth between open-ended questions ("Why is this hard for me?", "What's the meaning for me?", "How is this related to that other decision?") and the "intuitive feel," looking for words or images that exactly capture "the feel of the whole thing," until you find a sense of resolution, of knowing the meaning.

At this moment of "Ahah!" you are experiencing a "felt shift," a Paradigm shift. The kaleidoscope turns, and the whole situation is new. New ideas, emotions, and action steps suddenly become possible.

Be Gentle With Yourself

At all times, please remember the Focusing Attitude, the Caring Feeling Presence inside which we are also practicing these four weeks! Having a Caring Feeling attitude toward whatever arises inside is the best insurance for a wonderful quiet time with your own inner experiencing.

Try these long instructions only as long as you feel comfortable. Don't be judgmental of yourself if nothing huge seems to be happening. It can take a long time to learn to recognize a felt sense, the "intuitive feel," amidst all of the other things going on inside of your body (thoughts, images, muscular sensations, etc.). If you've recently joined this e-newsletter, later exercises will take you back to practicing separate steps of Focusing, like Relaxation, Clearing A Space, and Getting A Felt Sense. Impatient? You can check earlier e-newsletters about these exercises at the [updated e-newsletter archive](#). And/or you can start at the beginning of the free MP3 files for Intuitive Focusing, and try each exercise in sequence. Download them in The Store at www.cefocusing.com

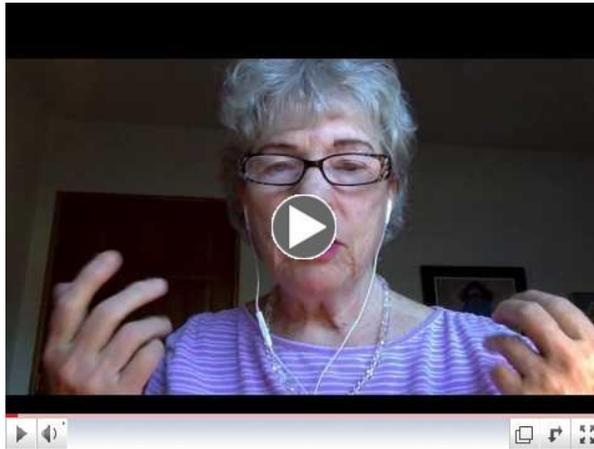
Don't force yourself to stay quietly inside longer than is pleasurable for you. Remember, many people learn the basics of Intuitive Focusing and having "felt shifts," or Paradigm Shifts better if they can be in interaction with a Listening partner. Start your own self-help group, using the *Focusing In Community (Focusing en Comunidad)* manual free for download in The Store at www.cefocusing.com, or seek individual coaching or group classes with a Certified Focusing Trainer at www.focusing.org

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

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

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

--- Find a peaceful place inside of yourself, a place of Caring Feeling Presence. Bring to mind the Anchoring images, your inner Nurturers, from this week's Caring Feeling Presence exercise---30 seconds

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

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

5-10 minutes---

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

You should feel relaxed, refreshed, less stressed, after a Focusing Session. If, however, you don't feel better, but perhaps feel disoriented or sunk in an unpleasant feeling, you can try the "Present Time" procedure, borrowed from Re-Evaluation Co-Counseling to bring you back "into real time":

Look around the room and name every one of a certain color (all black, all white, or all yellow -- whatever!) or shape (round, square, rectangular, or whatever!) of object in the room. Look around very carefully at this outer world. Continue with variations of this exercise until you feel grounded in "present time" again.

You can also find all the e-course videos free at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#).

Instant "Ahah!"s #5: Collaborative Decision Making

"Caring Feeling Presence" and Empathy at Work

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

"CARING FEELING PRESENCE" AT WORK

As our "Felt Sensing" exercise these four weeks we are practicing turning a Caring Feeling Presence toward whatever arises inside during our [Intuitive Focusing](#) and toward the Focuser when we are the Empathic (or [Focused Listener](#)). (see [Creating A Caring Feeling Presence Inside Week One](#) and [Caring For Unpleasant Parts Of Yourself Week Two](#)) What about turning a Caring Feeling Presence toward our co-workers at work?

Hmmm...do you have a reaction to seeing these words in the same line? Are "work" and "caring" incompatible?

Once I told my Business Professor husband that I was going to market what I teach to business people and that I was going to call it "Compassionate Awareness." He shuddered: "Awareness, yes. Compassionate? No. Compassionate people do not make good competitors. Compassion is exposing weakness. Business people do not want this." And, in trying to "market" Listening/Focusing to business, I have changed the name from

Empathic (who in the workplace wants empathy!) Listening to Focused Listening.

However, now, because of changes in the business world demanding skills at team work and collaboration, my husband teaches the [Myers-Briggs Type Indicator](#) (recognizing differing "gifts," differing personality and leadership styles) and Listening and other conflict resolution skills to students working in groups in almost every class, on almost every project. He even has a procedure whereby team members can get "a divorce" from a non-participating member!

When the newly elected President of Chile was asked, "What are you going to do for Chile?" by a *Newsweek* reporter, she replied, "I'm going to create love."

In *Consumer Reports on Health* (Vol.20, No.2, Feb., 2008), the heading reads: **Find Friends At Work:**

"A study published in the American Journal of Public Health analyzed survey data of some 24,000 men and women and found a strong link between social support at work and overall emotional health. People who said they had few close friends at work were two to three times more likely to report depression than those with strong social ties. Other research has shown that good relations on the job can spill over to a happy home life too. So, if your cubicle neighbor invites you to lunch, say yes."

Read more about the integration of caring and empathy into the workplace in my article [Creative Edge Organizations: Businesses and Organizations as a "Kind" of Focusing Community](#)

Collaboration and Listening Increase Productivity and Quality of Decisions

Aggressiveness, competitiveness, one-up-manship, gossiping, back-stabbing: these are all negative emotions brought up in a workplace based upon competition. Cooperation, mutual help, warmth, care, friendship, back patting: these are positive emotions brought about when collaboration, not competition, is the norm.

Sound too "touchy-feely" for the workplace? Remember what it feels like to turn a Caring Feeling Presence, instead of a judgmental, critical attitude, toward your own vulnerable inner places. Now, imagine being greeted with this same Focusing Attitude, this same treasuring of difference, vulnerability, neediness at work. Not such a bad goal to strive for!

And Collaborative Edge Decision Making Methods take a step in this direction. The direct goal: the most creative, innovative decisions imaginable, with the motivation to carry them out. The by-product: feelings of warmth, collegiality, empathy, and mutual support among co-workers.

For a complete explanation of the theory behind access to The Creative Edge and innovative decision making, you can download Dr. McGuire's comprehensive article, "Collaborative Edge Decision Making Method, ".

As a bonus, the Appendix of this article includes Handouts you can use at actual meetings, one for each role in Shared Leadership.

Reread the simple "How To's For Groups" (Instant "Ahah!" #5 in Mini-Manual). They define the five roles in Shared Leadership and various Listening/Focusing methods for Impasse resolution. The "How To's" arose from my dissertation research, *Listening and Interruptions in Task-Oriented Groups*, University of Chicago, 1977, with Eugene Gendlin, creator of *Focusing* (*Focusing*, Bantam, 1981, 1984) as advisor.

Now, imagine incorporating these procedures into the groups you belong to, holding in mind the idea of bringing The Focusing Attitude, a Caring Feeling Presence, into these groups and other aspects of the organizations involved.

Please [email Dr. McGuire](#) with your questions or answers about the groups you belong to, the meetings you attend:

1. Do people treat each other with respect?
2. Do people take time to hear and to value the words of the other?
3. Do people try to be understanding, to see things from the other person's point of view?
4. Are people sympathetic with expressions of weakness, neediness, vulnerability?

5. If not, why not? Why aren't people as tender with each other in the workplace as we are learning to be with our own Inner Children/Woundedness and that of the Focuser when we are the Listener?
6. If advancement were tied to collaboration and cooperation rather than competition and aggressiveness, what difference would that make in feelings/attitudes/interactions among coworkers?
7. Can you imagine incorporating Listening and Focusing skills into your workplace? Where would you begin?

Think about whether there are any small groups, sub-groups or teams, committees where you would feel safe enough, and empowered enough, to explain to coworkers about cooperation vs. competition, about the Focusing Attitude toward originality, uniqueness, and mutual support, and suggest trying out Instant "Ahah!" #5, Collaborative Decision Making, using the "How To's" for groups.

Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Weekly Support

For four weeks, we practice one Instant "Ahah!" and various steps of the Intuitive Focusing process, such as Relaxation, Getting a Felt Sense, Clearing A Space, and a complete Focusing Session.

Our purpose: Helping you incorporate Listening and Focusing into your everyday life.

This month:

From Instant "Ahah!" Mini-Manual, p. 16, #5. *Collaborative Decision Making*

Later in the week, you will receive e-reminders to practice two other Focusing exercises.

E-Newsletter Archives Now Available!

Newcomers, you can start with any issue and, in a year, you will have practiced all the exercises. So, just join in here-and-now and follow along. However, if you want to experience previous e-newsletters, you can find

them in [Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Archive](#) , with a link in upper right corner of my website.

To catch up with this four week cycle, you can read Week One [Instant "Ahah!" #5 Having Great Meetings! Collaborative Decision Making](#) and Week Two [Shared Leadership and Impasse Resolution](#)

Anyone can also access the e-newsletter archives from the Free Resources submenu at Creative Edge Focusing.

You can also find all the practice videos included in these e-newsletters at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#).

If you'd like friends and colleagues to try out Creative Edge Focusing (TM), you can forward this e-newsletter to them or send them to the e-newsletter archive.

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

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Getting A Felt Sense: Caring Feeling Presence

Dealing With Inner Critics, Inner Abusers

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

DIFFERENT FORMS OF INNER CRITICAL VOICES AND DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO THEM

For these four weeks, we are working on perhaps the most essential aspect for successful [Intuitive Focusing](#), creating a positive attitude, inside of yourself, for whatever might arise during a Focusing turn. This is The Focusing Attitude. In [Week One](#), I talked about turning a Caring Feeling Presence toward your inner experiencing, finding an Inner Nurturer and an Inner Woundedness. In [Week Two](#), I talked about establishing an inner, trusting relationship between "parts" of the Self that had perhaps been at war for years and didn't really like each other.

Now, we take on Inner Critical Voices: recognizing them and dealing with them. These, too, will each have an "intuitive feel" to them, a "felt sense" holding a lot more information, if you can take time to separate out the various aspects and "sit with" the "intuitive feel," the "felt sense," the "something more" about each of them.

The Inner Abusive Relationship: "I Hate Myself, I'm So Stupid, I'm So Worthless"

Actually, we are going to start with the most difficult Inner Critical Voice, and that is the one you don't recognize and you don't have a "felt sense" for. When you are having the most negative feelings about yourself, you are actually suffering as the Victim of an Inner Abuser...only, instead of hearing the Inner Abuser saying, "You are hateful! You are so stupid! You are so worthless!" you are saying these words to yourself: "I am hateful, I am so stupid, I am so worthless."

So, here the first step is just separating out these two things. You need to begin to hear the voice of the Inner Abuser saying "You are so...!" and, separately, experience the "felt sense" of your Inner Victim --- feeling afraid, beaten down, overpowered, overwhelmed. And, then, the Inner Victim, with the help of Inner and Outer Listeners/Nurturers/Anchors, needs to be able to stand up to the Inner Abuser and say, sometimes very strongly, "Shut up!", "Go sit over there!" "I'm putting you behind this brick wall and locking the gate!" Or the Inner Nurturer can join with the Inner Victim and stand together, saying, "We are not going to let this go on!" or "I am not going to let you talk to her that way."

If you have a really strong inner "self-hate," a really strong Inner Abuser/Inner Victim "stuck together," then [Focusing-Oriented Therapy](#), or Focusing Training with a Certified Focusing Professional (www.focusing.org), individually or in a class, may be the best way to go. It helps to have an outside Listener helping you to recognize and to "stand up against" a strong Inner Abuser.

At some point, if you can separate from, recognize, and take a stand against an Inner Abuser, then, eventually, your relationship with that part of yourself might soften and change. You may find a way to, with safe containment, begin to get a "felt sense" for "all of that" related to the abusing voice, to give that Inner Abuser

a chance to "say how it is" for them, to explain why they responded to you the way they did. You may even come to have some more compassionate understanding of that part.

But that is not usually the first step. The first step is getting separate, experiencing the feelings of the Victim part with Caring Feeling Presence as company, getting out of the victim role, and taking a strong stand to quiet the Inner Abuser, with whatever help, inner and outer, you can find.

Other Inner Critical Voices

There are a lot of other Inner Critical Voices which might arise which are easier to deal with. [Ann Weiser Cornell](#), creator of the Inner Relationship approach to Focusing, recently called the Inner Critic the Inner Worrier: a part of yourself that really thinks it has your best interests at heart and is trying to warn you, trying to protect you. It may say things like, "Oh, you don't want to open yourself up like this," or "Oh, you are not getting anywhere with this Focusing" or "It really isn't safe to trust other people" or even "You don't really need anyone. You'll just get hurt," an endless variety of, it thinks, "helpful" comments like this.

Ann points out that, if you can give this Inner Worrier an "equal hearing," turn some Caring Feeling Presence toward it, then it can come to tell you how much it cares about you, how hard it is trying to protect you, what it doesn't want you to have to feel or experience. And, at some point, another part of you may say to it, "I do understand what you have done for me, how you protected me in the past. And now I don't need that kind of protection anymore. I am strong enough to live in a different way."

Making Space for Every Voice, Every Different "Aspect" of Yourself Inside: Inner Conflict Resolution

Although an Inner Abuser/Victim relationship may need special efforts, as described above, often what you discover inside as you progress in a Focusing Session is a "conflict." Usually, when your life is "stuck" or "blocked" or there is a problem you can't resolve, it is because there are at least "two sides" to the issue.

So, at that point in Focusing, it is extremely useful to be able to separate the different "felt senses" or "intuitive feels," to differentiate them, to be able to say, "Okay, so there is this part of me that wants to go forward, and this other part that wants to stay right here." Then you can turn some Caring Feeling Presence to each "side" of the issue in turn: "Okay, there's something about 'going forward.' Let me sense into and articulate that whole thing..." and, later,

"And then there's this 'whole thing,' this 'whole felt sense' about 'staying here.' Now, let me sit with this side and see what comes."

When you are a [Focused Listener](#), you will often find yourself giving a similar Reflection: "So I'm hearing a part of you that wants to go forward, and a part that wants to stay the same. Would it make sense to turn toward one of those and be with it for a little while, see what is there, knowing that we can spend time with the other side a little later?"

See [Core Concept: Conflict Resolution](#) at Creative Edge Focusing(TM) website for descriptions of Internal and External Conflicts and how they are often reflections of each other.

Try The Caring Feeling Exercise Again With Special Attention To Noticing Any Critical Inner Voices That Arise and Just Saying "Hello" to them (Ann Weiser Cornell created this wonderful terminology), Just Acknowledging Them

Please try out again Pete and Ed's introductory [Biospiritual Focusing](#) exercise for finding a "felt sense," an "intuitive feel" for developing Caring Feeling Relationship inside. It involves learning how it feels, in your body, when you are trying to show complete love and safety to someone. Then, turning that same loving attention, that Caring Feeling Presence, toward your own inner experiences. And, at this point, also noticing any Inner Voices that rise up, criticizing you, criticizing the Focusing process, etc.:

A CARING FEELING PRESENCE INSIDE

Here is the link to the video where I walk you through the exercise if you prefer that to reading it to yourself below:



Self-Empathy: Caring for yourself inside

"Take a moment to find a comfortable sitting position---

Loosen any clothing that is too tight---

And begin to come quietly inside by closing your eyes and starting to just notice your breathing---

Just noticing your breathing---going in---and out---in---and out---Let any sighs or deeper breathing arise naturally---

(one minute)

Now, notice your body, how it feels in the chair ---

Massage any spots that feel sore---

Massage your head---

Wrinkle up your face and stretch your jaw---and relax!!!!

Make a few circles with your shoulders, bringing them up to your ears, around toward the back, and dropping them down---and repeating four or five times---

(one minute)

And now bring your attention inside, to the place where you find a "felt sense" or an "intuitive feel" when you are using Focusing, often in the center of your body, around the chest/heart area----

(one minute)

And now, imagine that you work in a hospital---

An infant has been left on the hospital steps---

Let yourself feel the impact of this situation in your body---

It is your job to pick up that infant and to convey to it, through your body, your way of holding it, that it is safe, that it is perfectly and truly wanted in this world. Imagine picking up that infant---

Now, imagine what you would do in your body to convey to that infant that it is perfectly safe, that it is truly wanted in this world---

(one minute)

Notice what you do in your body to convey this loving attention, without words---

(one minute)

Now, imagine turning that same kind of Caring Feeling Presence toward your own inner places, whatever they may be---

(one minute)

Bring to your mind times in your life when you felt loved and valued in this way. Look for particular places or people or animals or situations where you felt completely safe, completely wanted, basking in the warmth of loving attention---

(one to three minutes)

Choose one of these images/places/people/situations that could stand as such a strong symbol of this kind of safety that you could use the memory of it as an anchor or talisman to bring you to that sense of Caring Feeling Presence to your own inside experiences. We'll call that your Inner Nurturer---

(one to three minutes)

Now, look through your life and store of memories and images and see if you can find an image of a part of yourself that is now or was at some point very much in need of that kind of Caring Feeling Presence. It could be an Inner Child, yourself at a certain age or time of life. But it could be another kind of image: like "a wounded animal" or "a butterfly with a crumpled wing" or "a gangrenous leg---I just want to cut it off" or a particular physical tension (headache, tight jaw, stomach knot) that you often suffer from. We'll call that your Inner Woundedness---

(one to three minutes)

Now, imagine taking your Inner Nurturer and turning that Caring Feeling Presence toward your Inner Woundedness---

(one to three minutes)

Just spend some time seeing if you can touch your Inner Woundedness with that Inner Nurturing---

(one to three minutes)

And come back into the room when you are ready.

You can also find all of the e-course practice videos at [Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel](#).

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: "How am I today?"

Noticing Critics and Conflicts Inside

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

NOTICING CRITICS AND CONFLICTS INSIDE

Caring Feeling Presence Inside

These four weeks, while practicing a Complete [Intuitive Focusing](#) Session, we are learning about turning a Caring Feeling Presence, the Focusing Attitude of friendly, curious, non-judgmental, gentle attention to whatever arises inside. We practiced finding [Inner Nurturers and Inner Woundedness \(Week 1\)](#), [Reestablishing Trust With Exiled, "Unpleasant" Inner Aspects \(Week 2\)](#), and [Dealing With Critical Voices and Conflicts \(Week 3\)](#).

Just Acknowledge Critical Voices, Say "I'll be back later to spend time with you"

Today, when you practice the Complete Focusing Session #1: "How Am I Today?", pay special attention to any Critical Voices which arise. In general, seeing a Critical Voice as an Inner Worrier or Inner Protector, you can simply notice it: "Okay, there is something saying 'You're no good at this; nothing is happening; Focusing is stupid'" and, simply by noticing it, acknowledging it (saying "Hello," Ann Weiser Cornell says), you can often just set it aside for the moment and go back to your steps of Focusing.

At a later point, you might go back to that Critical Voice as part of your Focusing process: "Okay, now I would like to spend some time with the part that says "This is ridiculous; you are failing like always," etc., and ask yourself, "Okay, what is that all about?", and wait for the "feel of that whole thing" to form, and continue with the Focusing Steps:

- (a) looking for words, images, symbols that capture the "intuitive feel,"
- (b) resonating and checking until you find symbols that are "just right" and
- (c) experiencing a release, a small or large "felt shift" or "paradigm shift."

Articulate "Conflicts" Into "Two Sides" and Spend Time With Each

Similarly, if you notice a conflict coming up, two conflicting "felt senses" about the same issue, allow yourself to just acknowledge both sides of it: "So there is this...and there is this other side." Then, choose to spending Focusing time with

one side, letting the other side know you will come back later. Just continuing hearing from the different "aspects" until something shifts inside, some new understanding arises.

Ann Weiser Cornell, in her Inner Relationship approach, has a specific protocol for dealing with such inner conflicts. She suggests that you ask each side specific questions, like "What is it that you are wanting me to experience?" and "What are you trying to keep me from experiencing?" Learn more about her methods at [Focusing Resources](#) .

Put Inner Abusers "In Their Place" Until You Are Ready To Deal With Them

And, remember, if you find a particularly forceful, self-hating Abuser inside, you may need to take firmer action, including getting help from Inner Allies, to tell it, in no uncertain terms, "No. You will not talk to me like that. Go sit over there and be quiet until I am ready and able to spend time listening to you."

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: "HOW AM I TODAY?"

In [Intuitive Focusing](#), first, you relax and find a felt sense, an "intuitive feel" that is before words and more than words. Then, you go back and forth between open-ended questions ("Why is this hard for me?", "What's the meaning for me?", "How is this related to that other decision?") and the "intuitive feel," looking for words or images that exactly capture "the feel of the whole thing," until you find a sense of resolution, of knowing the meaning.

At this moment of "Ahah!" you are experiencing a "felt shift," a [Paradigm shift](#). The kaleidoscope turns, and the whole situation is new. New ideas, emotions, and action steps suddenly become possible.

Be Gentle With Yourself

At all times, please remember the Focusing Attitude, the [Caring Feeling Presence inside](#) which we are also practicing these four weeks! Having a Caring Feeling attitude toward whatever arises inside is the best insurance for a wonderful quiet time with your own inner experiencing.

Try these long instructions only as long as you feel comfortable. Don't be judgmental of yourself if nothing huge seems to be happening. It can take a long

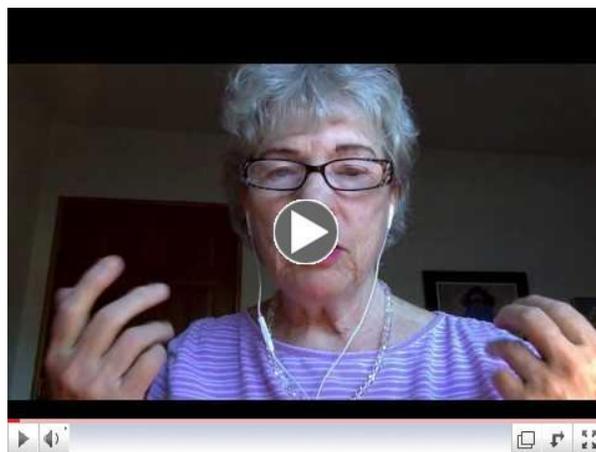
time to learn to recognize a felt sense, the "intuitive feel," amidst all of the other things going on inside of your body (thoughts, images, muscular sensations, etc.).

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

There are many different "protocols" for Complete Focusing Sessions. For these four weeks, we are practicing:

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

Here is the video if you prefer to close your eyes and listen to my voice as I walk you through the exercise:



Complete Focusing Session: "How am I today?" while noticing inner critics, abusers

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

--- Find a peaceful place inside of yourself, a place of Caring Feeling Presence. Bring to mind the Anchoring images, your inner Nurturers, from this week's Caring Feeling Presence exercise---30 seconds

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

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

5-10 minutes---

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

You should feel relaxed, refreshed, less stressed, after a Focusing Session. If, however, you don't feel better, but perhaps feel disoriented or sunk in an unpleasant feeling, you can try the "Present Time" procedure, borrowed from Re-Evaluation Co-Counseling to bring you back "into real time":

Look around the room and name every one of a certain color (all black, all white, or all yellow -- whatever!) or shape (round, square, rectangular, or whatever!) of object in the room. Look around very carefully at this outer world. Continue with variations of this exercise until you feel grounded in "present time" again.

SELF-HELP AIDES

Some people are "natural focusers" and, once trying a Focusing Session, say, "Oh! I've been doing this all my life. Now I can do it better!"

But most people have a harder time learning this special kind of inner attention. "Inner actions," [Gendlin](#), creator of *Focusing* (Bantam, 1981, 1984, 2007), called it: Clearing a Space Inside, Getting A Felt Sense, Finding a Handle (words/images/gesture) that captures the "feel of it all," Resonating and Checking (going back-and-forth between symbols and "felt sense" until there is an exact "fit" ---- "Ahhh! That's exactly it!"), Experiencing A Felt Shift, Receiving What Has Come. These are a lot of specific inner "moves" to learn to make/recognize.

And then there is a matter of The Focusing Attitude, turning a Caring Feeling Presence toward whatever comes inside. And, as part of that, learning to deal with critical inner voices, various forms of the Critic who try to stop Focusing, stop change.

So, for further self-help instruction in Focusing:

- visit The Store at www.cefocusing.com for four free manuals and MP3 audio files to download. Order the Listening and Focusing Demonstrations DVD for examples of Empathy Focusing pairs.
- visit the Store at The Focusing Institute to find many books and audio and visual materials to help you learn Focusing

CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS WORLDWIDE

There is also a wide array of Classes and Workshops you can take, by phone or locally in many regions and languages, one-to-one or in less expensive class situations.

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You can now find all of the e-course practice videos at Dr. Kathy McGuire's YouTube Channel

Please forward this e-newsletter to friends, family, and colleagues or send them to the e-newsletter archive at www.cefocusing.com for a taste of Creative Edge Focusing(TM).

Instant "Ahah!"s #5: Collaborative Decision Making

COORDINATED COLLABORATION: THE BEST OF HIERARCHY AND CONSENSUS

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

COORDINATED COLLABORATION: THE BEST OF HIERARCHICAL AND CONSENSUAL METHODS OF DECISION MAKING

Here is how I introduce these topics in my article explaining the [Collaborative Edge Decision Making method](#) and, particularly, the Coordinated Collaboration component for allowing collaborative decision making within time-limited and hierarchical settings:

"COMBINING HIERARCHY AND COLLABORATION

Hierarchical and collaborative models of decision making both have strengths and weaknesses. Hierarchical models can breed apathy and alienation, and the absenteeism, low productivity, and carelessness which can result. Collaborative models can lead to an inability to reach conclusions and to carry out effective action and can degenerate into power struggles over leadership. The Collaborative Edge Decision Making Method combines the benefits of both collaboration and hierarchy:

1. Benefits of Collaboration

Collaboration, where people work together as equal colleagues toward a common goal, has the following benefits compared to strict, hierarchical, top-down decision making:

- (a) The equal hearing of every viewpoint and the contribution of each person's unique expert knowledge can lead to win/win decisions which are more inclusive and creative;**
- (b) Egalitarian expression of disagreement can address weaknesses, producing decisions that are objectively higher in quality;**
- (c) When participants have a say in decisions affecting them, even when they do not get all of what they want, they experience greater "ownership" of decisions and become more willing and motivated to carry the decisions out;**
- (d) Working together toward a common goal also produces feelings of friendship and collegiality which lead to greater enjoyment in working together and greater commitment to the group and the organization itself.**

2. Benefits of Hierarchy

In most business settings, clear, hierarchical lines of authority and responsibility insure that:

- (a) Decisions can be made within prescribed time limits;
- (b) Specialized expertise of individuals can be utilized effectively;
- (c) An overview of the entire organization's objectives and projects can be developed by executives, in communication with any advisory Boards and shareholders. This overview can be communicated to managers, who can organize the efforts of work groups toward accomplishing these over-all objectives.
- (d) "The buck stops here." Clear lines of responsibility, and the accompanying power and authority needed to take responsibility, are established.

3. Coordinated Collaboration Component

In pure consensual decision making, a decision is not made until everyone in the group feels able to go along with it. At the very least, dissenting group members have to be willing to say, "I'm not willing to participate in the project that way, but it's okay with me if you three want to carry it out, "or, "I think there's a better way to be found, but I'm willing to go along as long as we review the outcome in a month" or some such qualified assent.

If someone is not able to agree in any way, it is assumed that the decision is flawed, some piece of information needed for problem-solving is missing, or not yet articulated, and the group will benefit from spending more time sitting with the decision until an acceptable solution arises. Committees can be formed to gather more information, and group members can spend time individually or in pairs using Intuitive Focusing to look for innovative solutions.

However, in many situations within an organization, decisions have to be made on a timetable and passed along to other collaborative teams or up the hierarchy. Using the Coordinated Collaboration approach of the Collaborative Edge Decision Making method, a Coordinator or Project Manager can set time limits for Collaborative Decision Making and be empowered to make final decisions when the time limits are up and take these to other levels. Coordinated Collaboration allows the benefits of collaboration within the time limits and structured responsibility of hierarchical organization, capitalizing upon the best of both models."

Actual Steps of Coordinated Collaboration Procedure

Read on to discover the actual steps of the Coordinated Collaboration procedure:

"USING THE COLLABORATIVE EDGE DECISION MAKING METHOD

1. Coordinated Collaboration

If needed, a Coordinator or Project Manager will volunteer or be assigned to oversee a project

(a) The Coordinator will establish a timeline including more than one time-limited period for Collaborative Edge Decision Making. At the end of each time-limited period, the Coordinator will take responsibility for putting the collaborative group's "product," up to that point, into a comprehensive report which captures the points of agreement while maintaining the many facets of Creative Edge input which are still up in the air.

(b) Then, the Coordinator passes this input before the collaborating group again, for another time-limited period of Collaborative Edge Decision Making, repeating this process until the time-limit for collaboration is up.

(c) At this point, the Coordinator formulates the final report, including making remaining essential decisions, attempting as best as possible to maintain the spirit, or Gestalt, of the group's collaborative effort."

Ten Easy Steps For Bringing Collaborative Edge Into Your Decision Making Groups

See our Interest Area: Creative Edge Organizations for ten, simple first steps you could take for bringing Collaborative Edge Decision Making into groups you belong to.

For a complete explanation of the theory behind access to The Creative Edge and innovative decision making, you can download Dr. McGuire's comprehensive article, "Collaborative Edge Decision Making Method, ". **As a bonus, the Appendix of this article includes Handouts you can use at actual meetings, one for each role in Shared Leadership.**

Reread the simple "How To's For Groups" (Instant "Ahah!" #5 in Mini-Manual). They define the five roles in Shared Leadership and various Listening/Focusing methods for Impasse resolution. The "How To's" arose from my dissertation research, *Listening and Interruptions in Task-Oriented Groups*, University of Chicago, 1977, with Eugene Gendlin, creator of Focusing (*Focusing*, Bantam, 1981, 1984) as advisor.

Now, imagine incorporating these procedures into the groups you belong to, holding in mind the idea of bringing The Focusing Attitude, a Caring Feeling Presence, into these groups and other aspects of the organizations involved.

Please [email Dr. McGuire](#) with your questions or answers about the groups you belong to, the meetings you attend

Think about whether there are any small groups, sub-groups or teams, committees where you would feel safe enough, and empowered enough, to explain to coworkers about cooperation vs. competition, about the Focusing Attitude toward originality, uniqueness, and mutual support, and suggest trying out Instant "Ahah!" #5, Collaborative Decision Making, using the "How To's" for groups.

E-Newsletter Archives Now Available!

Newcomers, you can start with any issue of this e-newsletter and, in a year, you will have practiced all the exercises of the e-course. So, just join in here-and-now and follow along. However, if you want to experience previous e-newsletters, you can find them in [Creative Edge Focusing E-Newsletter Archive](#).

To catch up with this four-week cycle, you can read Week One: Instant "Ahah!" #5 Having Great Meetings! Collaborative Decision Making and Week Two: Shared Leadership and Impasse Resolution and Week Three: Caring Feeling Presence at Work, all in the archives.

Anyone can also access the e-newsletter archives from the Free Resources submenu at [Creative Edge Focusing](#), and in the upper right corner of the home page.

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

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[Certified Focusing Trainers and therapists](#)

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

[Case Studies](#)

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

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

[E-newsletter Archives](#)

[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.

Self-Empathy: Caring Feeling Presence

How Can I Heal My Own
Aloneness?

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

"I Can't Fix Myself! It's too late! My parents should have done it! I don't have an Inner Nurturer!"

Now, we take on a common "Inner Child Focusing" problem. As [Focused Listener](#) or [Focusing-Oriented Therapist](#), I might say, when a [Focuser](#) is sobbing with shame, emptiness, being unlovable, having a hole inside of themselves, "Can you find a way that your Inner Nurturer can comfort, can put her arms around that unloved part and let her know she is okay, she is loveable?" And the Focuser might say, "I don't have an Inner Nurturer!!!" or "I can't fix that! It's too

late. It needed to happen when I was a child, come from my parents." Or "I don't have a lover or a spouse, someone who can hold me so I can feel better."

Everyone Has An Inner Nurturer, and Healing Can Begin NOW

If this were true, then people really would be trapped. There would be no way they could heal their own aloneness, their own emptiness.

However, this really isn't true. Almost all of us (and those who really can't need the help of an external Nurturing Therapist until they can incorporate this outer presence inside of themselves) can find a "part" of ourself that knows how to love someone else, knows how to be a friend, would know what to do if confronted by an actual sobbing child or wounded animal, for many of us, a part that is a wonderful counselor/therapist/guide for many other people!!!

And it is perfectly possible, once you find images for these nurturing parts of yourself and "sense into" the whole bodily-felt sense, the "intuitive feel" of how these parts of yourself offer Caring Feeling Presence to others, then you CAN turn this inner nurturing attention toward the wounded, empty, hurting parts of yourself and heal them NOW, hold them NOW, tell them NOW that they are perfectly loveable and acceptable and wanted and deserving.

And this is a most hopeful possibility, a way of healing your own inner aloneness, your own emptiness, your own "unworthiness" without a desperate and, usually unsuccessful, search for some "outer lover" to do this for you.

Try The Caring Feeling Exercise Again With Special Attention To Believing That You Can Heal Your Own Inner Aloneness, To Finding Some Representation of Your Own Inner Nurturer

Please try out again Pete and Ed's introductory [Biospiritual Focusing](#) exercise for finding a "felt sense," an "intuitive feel" for developing Caring Feeling Relationship inside. It involves learning how it feels, in your body, when you are trying to show complete love and safety to someone. Then, turning that same loving attention, that Caring Feeling Presence, toward your own inner experiences. And, at this point, also noticing any Inner Voices that say, "Its too late. I can't fix this myself. I can't fill myself up," and turning a Caring Feeling Inner Nurturer towards those parts: "I can hold you right now." [Email me](#) with experiences, questions that come up:

A CARING FEELING PRESENCE INSIDE

Here is the link to the video if you would like to close your eyes and follow my voice instead of reading to yourself:



Heal Your Aloneness with Self-Empathy: Caring Feeling Presence Exercise

"Take a moment to find a comfortable sitting position---

Loosen any clothing that is too tight---

And begin to come quietly inside by closing your eyes and starting to just notice your breathing---

Just noticing your breathing---going in---and out---in---and out---Let any sighs or deeper breathing arise naturally---

(one minute)

Now, notice your body, how it feels in the chair ---

Massage any spots that feel sore---

Massage your head---

Wrinkle up your face and stretch your jaw---and relax!!!!

Make a few circles with your shoulders, bringing them up to your ears, around toward the back, and dropping them down---and repeating four or five times---

(one minute)

And now bring your attention inside, to the place where you find a "felt sense" or an "intuitive feel" when you are using Focusing, often in the center of your body, around the chest/heart area----

(one minute)

And now, imagine that you work in a hospital---

An infant has been left on the hospital steps---

Let yourself feel the impact of this situation in your body---

It is your job to pick up that infant and to convey to it, through your body, your way of holding it, that it is safe, that it is perfectly and truly wanted in this world. Imagine picking up that infant---

Now, imagine what you would do in your body to convey to that infant that it is perfectly safe, that it is truly wanted in this world---

(one minute)

Notice what you do in your body to convey this loving attention, without words---

(one minute)

Now, imagine turning that same kind of Caring Feeling Presence toward your own inner places, whatever they may be---

(one minute)

Bring to your mind times in your life when you felt loved and valued in this way. Look for particular places or people or animals or situations where you felt completely safe, completely wanted, basking in the warmth of loving attention. Make a special effort to find the part of you that knows how to nurture others, and to turn that toward yourself---

(one to three minutes)

Choose one of these images/places/people/situations that could stand as such a strong symbol of this kind of safety that you could use the memory of it as an anchor or talisman to bring you to that sense of Caring Feeling Presence to your own inside experiences. We'll call that your Inner Nurturer---

(one to three minutes)

Now, look through your life and store of memories and images and see if you can find an image of a part of yourself that is now or was at some point very much in need of that kind of Caring Feeling Presence. It could be an Inner Child, yourself at a certain age or time of life. But it could be another kind of image: like "a wounded animal" or "a butterfly with a crumpled wing" or "a gangrenous leg---I just want to cut it off" or a particular physical tension (headache, tight jaw,

stomach knot) that you often suffer from. We'll call that your Inner Woundedness---

(one to three minutes)

Now, imagine taking your Inner Nurturer and turning that Caring Feeling Presence toward your Inner Woundedness---

(one to three minutes)

Just spend some time seeing if you can touch your Inner Woundedness with that Inner Nurturing---

(one to three minutes)

And come back into the room when you are ready.

BOOKS AIDING HEALING YOUR INNER ALONENESS, INNER CHILD

When using exercises from any of these books, be sure to take the extra step of "sitting with" the "felt sense," the "intuitive feel" that comes with images, and using Focusing to go deeper in a non-linear way. Going from image to image, in a linear way, is not the same as letting the "intuitive feel" of an image arise, and using Focusing to find the something new, the something "more than words" that can come from the "felt sense":

[Healing Your Aloneness: Finding Love and Wholeness Through Your Inner Child by Margaret Paul and Erika J. Chopich](#)

[Homecoming: Reclaiming and Championing Your Inner Child \(Paperback\) by John Bradshaw](#)

[BioSpirituality: Focusing As a Way to Grow by Peter A. Campbell and Edwin M. McMahon](#)

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: "How am I today?"

With Inner Nurturing For Self-Healing

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

HEALING YOUR ALONENESS THROUGH INNER NURTURING

Caring Feeling Presence Inside

These four weeks, while practicing a Complete Focusing Session, we are learning about turning a Caring Feeling Presence, the Focusing Attitude of friendly, curious, non-judgmental, gentle attention to whatever arises inside. We practiced finding Inner Nurturers and Inner Woundedness (Week 1), Reestablishing Trust With Exiled, "Unpleasant" Inner Aspects (Week 2), Dealing With Critical Voices and Conflicts (Week 3), and now, Healing Your Aloneness Through Inner Nurturing (Week 4). You can find these in the [e-newsletter archive](#) for review.

Developing Strong Images-With-Felt-Senses of Your "Inner Nurturer" Self

As I said in Week 4 Healing Your Aloneness e-newsletter above, almost everyone can find their own Inner Nurturing Self, the part of them that knows how to reach out to someone else who is scared or in pain or hurting or ashamed or embarrassed.... all the things our Inner Woundedness might be experiencing. The trick to practice is recognizing and turning this Inner Nurturing Awareness, this Caring Feeling Presence, toward whatever we find inside.

Try the Complete Focusing Session below again, with special attention to the actual bodily-feel, the felt sense, that goes with turning caring inner attention toward whatever comes inside, as you would in embracing that abandoned child of the hospital steps and communicating, "You are totally OK. You are wanted in this world. You are deserving of loving attention. I will help to make you safe."

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: "HOW AM I TODAY?"

In [Intuitive Focusing](#), first, you relax and find a felt sense, an "intuitive feel" that is before words and more than words. Then, you go back and forth between open-ended questions ("Why is this hard for me?", "What's the meaning for me?", "How is this related to that other decision?") and the "intuitive feel," looking for words or images that exactly capture "the feel of the whole thing," until you find a sense of resolution, of knowing the meaning.

At this moment of "Ahah!" you are experiencing a "felt shift," a Paradigm shift. The kaleidoscope turns, and the whole situation is new. New ideas, emotions, and action steps suddenly become possible.

Be Gentle With Yourself

At all times, please remember the Focusing Attitude, the [Caring Feeling Presence inside](#) which we are also practicing these four weeks! Having a Caring Feeling attitude toward whatever arises inside is the best insurance for a wonderful quiet time with your own inner experiencing.

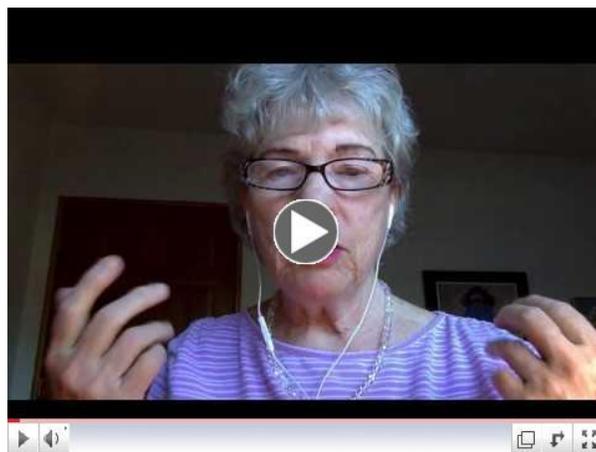
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If any tears arise during Intuitive Focusing, let them come. Be very gentle and curious with the place the tears come from, asking "What are these tears all about?", "Why does this move me?", "What's the meaning of these tears?"

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

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Complete Focusing Session: "How am I today--really...?" with Inner Nurturing

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

1 minute

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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the Anchoring images, your inner Nurturers, from this week's Caring Feeling Presence
exercise---30 seconds

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

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minute for the "intuitive feel," the more-than-words, of the whole thing to form, probably in
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---Again, find some words or an image that are just right for the feeling.

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

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---Find some words or an image to capture it just right, going back-and-forth between intuition
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---Now, ask yourself, "What would this be like if it were all okay?" and see if you can get some
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---Now, ask yourself gently, "What's in the way of that being okay?" and just wait and see what comes as a bodily sense, an "intuitive feel" around your heart center.

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

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

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

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But most people have a harder time learning this special kind of inner attention. "Inner actions," Gendlin, creator of Focusing, called it: Clearing a Space Inside, Getting A Felt Sense, Finding a Handle (words/images/gesture) that capture the "feel of it all," Resonating and Checking (going back-and-forth between symbols and "felt sense" until there is an exact "fit" ---- "Ahhh! That's exactly it!"), Experiencing A Felt Shift, Receiving What Has Come. These are a lot of specific inner "moves" to learn to make/recognize.

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So, for further self-help instruction in Focusing:

- order the Self-Help Package with manual, audio CDs of exercises, and DVD of people practicing Focusing with a Focused Listener as helper
- visit the Store at The Focusing Institute to find many books and audio and visual materials to help you learn Focusing

CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS WORLDWIDE

Ann Weiser Cornell of Focusing Resources teaches ongoing teleclasses in her particular Inner Relationship method of Focusing.

And you can find classes and workshops worldwide at The Focusing Institute website where you can find a listing of Certified Focusing Professionals in your local area and online.

Instant "Ahah!"s #6: EMPOWERMENT ORGANIZATION

MOTIVATING FROM THE BOTTOM UP

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

EMPOWERMENT ORGANIZATION: MOTIVATING FROM THE BOTTOM UP

Motivation = Engagement: Apathy Is The Enemy!

You are charged with finding that "one small thing" which will get every employee or volunteer or citizen fully engaged in your larger projects. No apathy allowed in a [Creative Edge Organization](#)! You want to become alert to noticing apathy, people at any level who are not caring, not involved, and then work at involvement. You want every person actively involved at [The Creative Edge](#), the lively, creative, energized "intuitive feel" of being a living, thinking, involved Co-Creator or Collaborator.

Finding "One Small Thing"

In the ongoing life of your Creative Edge community or organization, the weekly exchange of [Listening/Focusing](#) turns in [Focusing Partnerships/Groups/Teams](#) will keep individuals involved at their own personal, unique Creative Edge. However, in addition, or perhaps first or independently, you can use the "One Small Thing" method to find one over-arching project that will get everyone involved.

You want to find "One Small Thing" that every person in the community or organization can become involved in with minimal effort but maximum sense of satisfaction in contributing something to the larger mission. If the first step of involvement is too big, too difficult, then most people won't be willing to do it.

So, you have to keep looking until you find something so small that everyone can do it, easily, willingly, yet so important that it will feel like a real contribution, a first step of commitment to the larger cause. Then, you can invite these involved, engaged people into further [Collaborative Decision Making](#) about the project.

If your "One Small Thing" project is not having the desired effect, then the step is too big, requires too much motivation or commitment. If that is the case, then you need to look for a smaller step until you find the one that works.

Round-Robin Sharing For Group Brainstorming

In a group, after the initial Focusing Instructions, let people quietly take notes or Mind Map to capture their fresh "intuition," then use a Creative Edge Round Robin sharing structure for an initial go-round. Someone keep time, limit turns to 3 -5 minutes per person.

Each person gets an uninterrupted turn to say what came up during the Intuitive Focusing, paying attention to the "intuitive feel" while speaking, creating fresh, innovative words and images --- Everyone else just listens, taking notes as desired, noticing what new ideas or Creative Edges arise as the others speak ---

After this initial sharing from the Creative Edge, the group can turn to a more traditional "brain storming" method, bouncing ideas off of each other, interrupting if that stimulates creativity --- but returning to the Creative Edge Round Robin sharing structure, time-limited turns with no interruptions

allowed, if more access to The Creative Edge of intuitive, right-brain problem solving is desired.

Then, of course, try out any ideas that have come up --- test them on co-workers or focus groups --- ask the people at the bottom what would work for them --- follow your usual product development and marketing strategies, the measure of success being whether people willingly become engaged --- or, if they are not stepping up, consider if the step too big, in which case, it's back to the drawing board, The Creative Edge, to come up with a smaller step, until the "One Small Thing" is found.

Intuitive Focusing on "What is the One Small Thing?"

Your Turn

So, let's use the Intuitive Focusing skill to find the "one small thing" to engage and motivate your target audience, be it consumers, citizens, volunteers, or employees. This could be the most important decision you make, so, one small session may not be enough, but it will start you thinking about Creative Edge engagement. It will put the pot on the burner so that creative insights can arise now or later. Of course, asking the people who will be involved directly is great, if possible!

You can also always find the "One Small Thing exercise" on [The Creative Edge Focusing \(TM\) website](#), under [Empowerment Organization](#).

You can do this first step alone, by yourself, but even more productively with the appropriate group of problem solvers, benefiting from the Creative Edge Collaborative Thinking of many people.

However, the best way to generate ideas for the "one small thing" is to initiate a Listening/Focusing Brainstorming process with the people at the bottom! We are not going to do that here, but it is essential to the process of motivating from the bottom up.

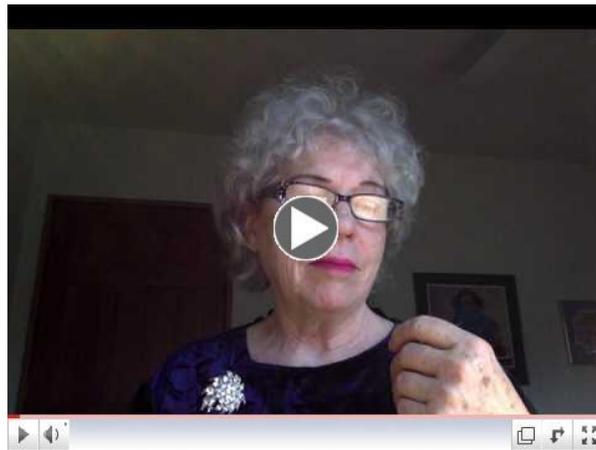
As a group or individually, sit down and get comfortable, preparing to spend up to twenty minutes letting right- and left- brain problem solving interact. Add another twenty minutes for group sharing. Keep a blank pad of paper in front of each person for gathering ideas.

In a group, have one person read the following instructions aloud to everyone else. Or play the video aloud. Everyone, except the reader, close your eyes, focusing inward, on The Creative Edge --- or, at least, look off "into space". You

want to access right-brain, intuitive thinking before you turn to more traditional "brainstorming" methods.

Upon hearing the instructions, pay attention, inside, looking for the "intuitive feel" of answers --- not what is immediately, intellectually known, but the right-brain, intuitive, murky, vague feel of what you know that is "more than words" -- leave at least a minute of silence between each instruction.

Here is a video where I give the instructions and you, or your work group, can follow along instead of reading the instructions below aloud:



Bottom Up Motivation: "One Small Thing" Exercise alone or in groups

Focusing Instructions

Close your eyes and get comfortable --- let your "focus" turn inward, your attention toward the "intuitive feel" that is more than words ---
(one minute or more)

Just notice your breathing going in --- and out --- don't try to change it. Just notice your breathing as a way of coming inside, more in tune with your intuitive-knowing ---
(one minute or more)

Take a moment to choose an area of interest, or, if the problem to be explored is already known, name it:

"I (or we) are going to spend some Intuitive Focusing time on the problem of (name it) ---
(one moment or more)

Now ask yourself, "Where is the apathy that I am concerned about? Who is it that I want to engage in this project?" and just sit quietly, bringing the whole concern into the center of your attention, setting aside the already known, and

letting an "intuitive feel" for "the whole thing" to arise ---

(one minute)

Find some words or an image or make a drawing --- try to capture the "intuitive feel" ---

Don't worry if you don't get a clear answer --- you are drawing closer to an "intuitive feel" for the whole situation --- If you want to write anything down, using Mind Mapping or any other method, take a few moments to do so ---

(one minute or more)

Now, ask yourself, "What could be 'one small thing' people could do, 'one small thing' this audience would be happy to do, which could be a first step toward full engagement?" ---

(one minute)

Don't get into thinking the "already-known" --- set aside what you already know and just pay attention to The Creative Edge --- the "intuitive feel" of the whole thing that is more than you are already thinking --- don't try to do anything --- just notice the "unclear feel" that comes up ---

(one minute or more)

And find some words or an image that can capture that "intuitive feel" ---if you want to write anything down, feel free ---

(one minute or more)

If you are working alone, you can go back-and-forth, internally, trying out an idea in your mind, sensing into how people might react, imagining how it might work --- going back and forth between trying out possibilities and checking with the "intuitive feel": "Would that work? --- How would that be? --- " Take notes as needed or desired --- continue as long as you want.

Being At The Creative Edge Also = Innovative Thinking

For a complete explanation of the theory behind access to The Creative Edge and innovative decision making, you can download Dr. McGuire's comprehensive article, "Collaborative Edge Decision Making Method, " . **As a bonus, the Appendix of this article includes Handouts you can use at actual meetings, one for each role in Shared Leadership.**

Please [email Dr. McGuire](#) with your questions or answers about the groups you belong to, the meetings you attend

Think about whether there are any small groups, sub-groups or teams, committees where you would feel safe enough, and empowered enough, to explain to coworkers about empowerment from the Creative Edge, the "felt sensing" of each individual. Or try out the "One Small Thing" exercise on your own with organizational or social issues that matter to you.

Practice The Exercises!

The intention of this e-newsletter is not just to read but to actually practice the exercises. After four weeks with an exercise, it really can become part of your tool bag to pull out when needed. And join the Creative Edge Practice e-group below for continuing demonstration and support of Listening, Focusing, Interpersonal Focusing, and Collaborative Thinking/Decision Making.

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Getting A Felt Sense of Interpersonal Situations

Honoring Subjectivity: "This flower is beautiful TO ME "

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

Honoring "Subjectivity": "This flower is beautiful TO ME"

We tend to use pseudo- objectivity, pseudo-factualism, pseudo-logic to assert our view of the world over others, to "win" arguments: "Mine is the only, the right, the correct way of seeing. The way I see it is 'the facts.'" This way of communicating either crushes The Other or makes them defensive. It does not encourage person-to-person communication and problem resolution.

Rollo May, a founder of the existentialist tradition in psychology and philosophy (May, R., Angel, E., and Ellenberger, H.F., Eds., *Existence*, p.63) states:

"Suzuki has remarked that in Eastern languages, such as Japanese, adjectives always include the implication of 'for-me-ness.' That is to say, 'this flower is beautiful' means '*for me* this flower is beautiful.'"

Self-Reflection Instead of Reaction: "Owning" Instead of "Blaming"

"You are a f_____b_____!" (to me)

"It's not fair!" (from my point of view)

"You are hurting me!" (Something in me says "You are hurting me!")

"I want to tear your eyes out!" (Something in me wants to tear your eyes out!)

"I am deeply offended by what you have done" (Being the kind of person I am, I am deeply offended by what you have done)

Just these little steps of self-ownership begin to locate our reactions to other people inside of ourselves, to turn them into "felt senses," "intuitive feels" that we can work with in an [Intuitive Focusing](#) way: "What is all of this TO ME?" "What is the feel of this interaction from the inside?" "How is it that this grabs me?" We can begin to become self-reflective rather than purely reactive, completely "controlled" by the other person and our situations.

Similarly , as a [Focused Listener](#) in an [Interpersonal Focusing](#) process, we can help the Focuser, the Speaker to "disidentify" from their projections upon The

Other and to turn their attention, in a Focusing way, toward the "feel of this interaction FOR ME," the "felt sense" of how this situation is FOR ME.

The Focuser, the Speaker says "He did it on purpose. He is trying to control me!" The Listening Facilitator can reflect, "Something in you is saying, 'He did it on purpose. He is trying to control me!' Can you sense how that feels inside?" Or "Just say 'Hello' to that part of yourself." Or "So the way you see it, he is doing it on purpose --- Can you stop and sense into how that is for you?"

"Dis-identifying" From Our Reaction To The Other

[Ann Weiser Cornell](#) has eloquently defined the importance of "dis-identifying" ourselves from the many different "parts" or "aspects" of our felt-experiencing. In her model, as we stand in a neutral position of Presence, not identified with any of the warring inner "parties," we are able to acknowledge, to say "Hello" to, to make space for each of these. And, as we do, we can become aware of the "intuitive feel," the "bodily-felt sense," The Creative Edge of deeper meaning called forth by each.

Similarly, we can use "dis-identification" in separating ourselves from our reactions to other people, finding the "felt sense" within ourselves of an interpersonal situation.

Self-Empowerment and Hope For Communication

This step from reactivity to self-reflection empowers us. Instead of being "hooked," a puppet on the strings of our triggers, we regain the power to change our interpersonal situations: "What is this all about FOR ME?"

Does this mean other people can't hurt you, can't be doing something to hurt you or make you angry? No it does not. It is possible for people to hurt each other, for someone to act in such a way as to hurt or humiliate another person. However, even if this is somewhat the case, screaming with blame "You are _____! You did _____!" is not going to reach the other person, allow you to communicate. Even if you are sure you are "in the right," the best way to communicate with the other is from the position of "owning": "Because of the kind of person I am, I saw you as trying to control me --- I'd like to explore that feeling in me and share with you in that way."

A favorite image: Two cats, their hackles up, caught on the brink of attack, each totally "hooked in" to reactivity toward the other. Instead of attacking, one lies down on its back, bares its throat to the other, a posture of peace-making. The other is then allowed to relax, and confrontation is avoided.

So, by beginning to look inside of ourselves for the wider "felt sensing," the "intuitive feel" of our interactions with others, we become equipped with a tool that is not just self-empowering but has the capacity for peacemaking.

Throughout the month, we will explore a variety of methods for finding the "felt sense" in the midst of interpersonal situations and using it effectively, for self-empowering "felt shifts" as well as conflict-resolving communication.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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Hooray! New Store At Creative Edge Focusing, All FREE!!!

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Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Creative Edge Focusing Store Now Completely FREE!

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

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

FREE MANUAL DOWNLOADS

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

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

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

Manual in Spanish.

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

First published in 1978, this book represents the fresh thinking of many of the members of the original Changes Listening/Focusing community started in 1970 in Chicago as a response to the Kent State Massacre. Read the first attempts of Eugene Gendlin, Mary Hendricks-Gendlin, Kristin Glaser, Jim Iberg, Ann Weiser Cornell and many others as they articulate why an egalitarian therapeutic community based upon Listening and Focusing is essential, how to teach Listening and Focusing, how to run a basic Listening or Focusing training group, and much more. See how the fervor of those times applies to today and how the Changes tradition carries on.

The Experiential Dimension in Therapy (180 pp.)

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

new meanings and forward action steps could be articulated.

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

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

FREE MP3 DOWNLOADS OF CD SETS

Audio Digital Download: Alchemy (105 minutes)

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

Audio Digital Download: Intuitive Focusing Training (100 minutes)

Dr. McGuire's soothing voice takes you through five different relaxation exercises as you learn to spend quiet time inside; then five different exercises for learning to find a "felt sense" or "intuitive feel" in your felt experience. Finally, she walks you through two different versions of a Complete Focusing Session.

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

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

Getting A Felt Sense of Interpersonal Situations

INTERPERSONAL FELT SENSING EXERCISE !!!!

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

INTERPERSONAL FELT SENSING EXERCISE !!!!!

Exercise: The "Felt Sense" of Various Interpersonal Situations

In the Complete Focusing exercise for these four weeks, we will do a [Focusing process](#) with a variety of Interpersonal Situations, hoping to experience a "felt shift," a true "[paradigm shift](#)" in our experiencing of ourselves and the Other in such situations.

But, for today, I'm asking you just to make a map, or a list, of unresolved Interpersonal Situations you are carrying and to try to find a bodily "felt sense," the "intuitive feel" and a "handle" word or image which can help you go back to each of these Interpersonal Situations during later Complete Focusing Sessions. I'm suggesting that you take some notes for later reference, on The Specific Situation/Person, the "whole body feel" of being in that situation/with that person, and some words/images/gestures which capture "the feel of it all."

Initially, we will work internally, using Felt Sensing and Complete Focusing to clarify the interpersonal dimension of situations for ourselves. As we proceed, we will also study and practice procedures for resolving such situations with the other person, if necessary. However, you will not be asked or forced to speak about any of your material to another person if you choose not to!!!! A lot of "resolution" can be done internally. Sharing Interpersonal Focusing with another is for the purpose of increased bonding and support for change. It is not required.

Felt Sense of Interpersonal Situations Exercise (at least 20 minutes)

--- First, get paper and pen so you will actually take notes.

--- Work with up to five unresolved Interpersonal Situations (Also, if dealing with left-over anger and unresolved interpersonal situations is morally or spiritually repugnant to you, then perhaps you can spend the time instead coming up with up to five ways in which you "move beyond" unsettled Interpersonal Situations: the "bodily feel" of each of these, and some words/images/gestures which capture each for you. Or list interpersonal situations which have a good feeling, and find out why.

Here is a video of the exercise if you want to close your eyes and follow along, but keep that paper and pen handy:



Using Focusing to Resolve Interpersonal Conflicts: Listing problems

--- Taking the first situation, close your eyes, go inside by beginning to follow your breathing --- in --- and out --- in --- and out --- in --- and out ---

--- Bring to mind the person you have difficulty with ---

--- Holding an image of that person in your mind, and experiencing how you feel about them in your body, make a list of at least three positive attributes of that person (from your point of view!), and write them down

--- Now make a list of at least three negative attributes of that person (from your point of view!) and write them down.

--- Now bring to mind an exact specific interpersonal exchange with the person which captures the difficulty in your interaction --- one specific incident ---

--- And, imagining being in that situation again, notice what comes up in your body, the "bodily feel," the "felt sense" of the interaction FOR YOU. Sit quietly, sensing into the "intuitive feel" of "that whole thing."

--- Carefully look for some words or an image that can capture the "feel" of you-being-in-that-situation. Resonate and check any symbols against the "intuitive feel" until you find a "handle" for that "felt sense:" some words, images, or gestures that exactly capture it --- How it was for you: the internal "feel" of being in that situation.

--- Write down the specific situation and the "handle" words or images.

--- Repeat for each of up to five unresolved interpersonal situations with five different people.

--- Lastly, holding all of that information in your mind/body "feel of it all," scan and see if there are any similarities, patterns, or contrasts, differences between the five people-in-situations. And note this down as well.

--- If you find yourself "stirred up" be 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

This is the beginning of a new four week cycle. 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!

Complete Focusing Session

"Sitting With" The Creative Edge of an Interpersonal Situation

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week One

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: SITTING WITH THE CREATIVE EDGE OF AN INTERPERSONAL SITUATION

Earlier this week you received Interpersonal Focusing: "This flower is beautiful To ME", showing how owning our own reactions, instead of blaming them on the other, actually empowers us to begin to change interpersonal situations, and Interpersonal Felt Sensing Exercise, inviting you to find the bodily, "intuitive feel" of five unresolved interpersonal situations.

In the Complete Focusing Session for each of the next four weeks, you will be invited to take one of these interpersonal situations and sense into, "sit with" it in a Focusing way, seeing what new information about yourself-in-this-situation can unfold.

Throughout the month, we will also explore methods for communicating and using Listening/Focusing turns with the actual other person as a way of resolving interpersonal conflict. The "felt sense" in each person in an interpersonal situation contains a Creative Edge which, when shared, can carry both problem solving and relationship forward.

But, in Complete Focusing, you are going more deeply into "owning" the personal dimension of the interaction for yourself, given the person that you are.

If you have done the Interpersonal Felt Sensing exercise this week, take out your list of problematic situations and choose one to work on more deeply. Otherwise, choose a problematic interpersonal situation from the past or just the past week, and be ready to understand it more deeply.

Remember not to choose the most problematic people or situations for this exercise, like a childhood abuser for instance. Just choose a person and situation from your present life.

Here is a video of the exercise if you want to close your eyes and follow along:



**Complete Focusing Session
Understanding A Problematic
Interpersonal Situation**

Focusing On A Specific Interpersonal Situation (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 --- 30 seconds

---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 interpersonal situation about which you want to know more ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, carefully try to find words for the 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.

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

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

--- If you find yourself "stirred up" be 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.

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Instant "Ahah!"s #6: EMPOWERMENT ORGANIZATION

One Small Thing" Examples:

Corporate "Buy-In," PTO, Global Warming, Self-Help Groups

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

Empowerment Organization = Motivating From The Bottom Up

You want to use Intuitive Focusing to find the "One Small Thing" that every person in the community or organization can become involved in with minimal effort but maximum sense of satisfaction in contributing something to the larger mission.

If the first step of involvement is too big, too difficult, then most people won't be willing to do it.

So, you have to keep looking until you find something so small that everyone can do it, easily, willingly, yet so important that it will feel like a real contribution, a first step of commitment to the larger cause. Then, you can invite these involved, engaged people into further Collaborative Decision Making about the project.

If your "One Small Thing" project is not having the desired effect, then the step is too big, requires too much motivation or commitment. If that is the case, then you need to look for a smaller step until you find the one that works.

(see [Week One Empowerment Organization](#) for Introduction)

Kathy's Experience with "One Small Thing" Focusing Exercise

I did the "One Small Thing" Focusing Exercise included below on my own problem/goal: Getting Listening/Focusing Partnership skills incorporated into existing support groups, such as 12-Step, divorce/bereavement, cancer/other medical conditions, etc.

Here's what came up! Certainly a novel idea I had never thought of before. I'm not sure I will implement, need to talk with others, but here it is: "Offer a free copy of the *Focusing In Community* manual to audiences filled with support group facilitators (magazines, e-discussion groups, websites) as a PDF file to support group facilitators signing up for the e-newsletter and/or Creative Edge Practice e-group --- or something like that --- assume, once they have seen the manual, they will buy the supporting audio/visual materials --- or, at least, the word will get out and some will try the skill-training out.

"Spaghetti Binds Community"

Here's another recent example from my own experience:

For two years, my rural fire department (I was on the Board) has been trying to find a volunteer, a "strong leader," to head up a federal program called Citizen's Emergency Response Teams (CERT). Candidates appeared but chose not to proceed.

I wanted to do a Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser, start at the grass roots, with the community I knew that we did or would or could have easily: people who were willing to bring spaghetti sauce or desserts and help out at a the dinner.

I put out sign-up sheets at community events, built up an email network of willing volunteers, and got it all going. Two weeks before the event, a massive ice storm hit, wiping out the town's electricity. I continued contacting my volunteers by phone, hearing their ice storm stories, meeting new people.

Along the way, I discovered that the husband of one of the spaghetti volunteers was a retired Fire Captain. I put out feelers: "Would he be interested in helping with the CERT Program?"

By the evening of the dinner, 40 volunteers were involved, 100 people came, we had located two possible co-chairs for the CERT program, and neighbors who had been through the ice storm together were ready to mobilize into CERT Teams.

So, starting from the bottom, with the "One Small Thing" of bringing food to the fundraiser, we started the motions to accomplish a larger community goal.

I hope you try out the Exercise on a project important to you. Here are examples for a variety of corporate, non-profit, and grass-roots endeavors, all where "empowerment organization = motivating from the bottom up" was being sought (taken from Instant "Ahah!" #6 in Mini-Manual):

Example One: Achieving Corporate Buy-In

At Old Navy (*Business Week*, June, 19, 2006), Innovation Champion Ivy Ross, catching the MySpace-type lifestyle of today, used a Facebook-style CD in an effort to bind old and new employees into one new group. Every employee filmed three minutes of "something so personal it would take years to discover it." Ross had new and old employees hungrily viewing the CD. They quickly became bonded into one, new group, "infused --- with a close tightness essential for innovation." Ross had found the "One Small Thing."

Example Two: Revitalizing the PTO at a public school

The PTO of a public school was languishing. A handful of parents were doing all the work. A new property tax bill dramatically cut funding to the public schools, wiping out PE teachers, art, music, librarians, nurses --- The parents suddenly had to raise a whole lot of money from a population of middle to low income parents.

The small group of committed parents started selling Grocery Store Gift Certificates. The PTO could purchase the "scrip" at a 5% discount, resell it to parents to use to buy groceries, and make a 5% profit on something parents had to buy anyway. Everyone had to buy groceries! They sold "scrip" in the front hallway before school and at school events and PTO meetings.

Suddenly, everyone was buying "scrip" - grandparents, neighbors, as well as parents and teachers. People were coming into the school to purchase "scrip" and staying to paint walls or help with reading. The only people who were unhappy were parents who were on food stamps - they were furious that they couldn't contribute!!!! The PTO had found the One Small Thing that allowed everyone to become involved.

Now, parents had a "stake" in how the money would be spent. Attendance at PTO meetings grew to thirty, making decisions about how to distribute the funds, how to enlarge the "scrip" program. Teachers came to present proposals for funding.

In the first year, the PTO raised \$11,000 (at the 5% net profit, gross sales of \$220,000!) to hire a part-time PE teacher who would teach the other teachers how to run PE classes. The "scrip" program spread to other public schools and, ten years later, a large banner in front of the town high school reads "Buy Grocery Scrip".

But, more importantly, the entire school was revitalized. The parents had to establish a "volunteer lounge" at the school to accommodate all the volunteers!

Hypothetical Example: Global Warming

You want to get every day citizens involved in the issue of Global Warming. But most people feel apathetic: "Oh, there is nothing that one person can do -- it is up to governments."

Well, maybe it is up to governments --- but non-apathetic, engaged citizens are the ones to put pressure on governments. So, you are looking for that "one small thing." "What is one small thing that masses of people would be willing to do and which would act as a first step toward full engagement?"

Here's a possibility: Purportedly, "idling" your car greatly increases the output of pollutants. Yet, everyone, without giving it a thought, "idles" at drive-up banks, fast food take-outs, school pick ups. What about a "Stop Idling! Stop Greenhouse Gases" campaign? With bumper stickers, flyers on car windows or handed out at drive-up locations --- the double-entendre "Don't idle and don't be idle!" ---

If you can get people, all over the world, to "Stop Idling!", you will have them engaged in thinking about global warming every day --- and primed to engage in other actions which you initiate.

INTUITIVE FOCUSING ON "WHAT IS THE ONE SMALL THING---?"

Your Turn

So, let's use the Intuitive Focusing skill to find the "one small thing" to engage and motivate your target audience, be it consumers, citizens, volunteers, or employees. This could be the most important decision you make, so, one small session may not be enough, but it will start you thinking about Creative Edge engagement> It will put the pot on the burner so that creative insights can arise now or later.

You can do this first step alone, by yourself, but even more productively with the appropriate group of problem solvers, benefiting from the Creative Edge Collaborative Thinking of many people.

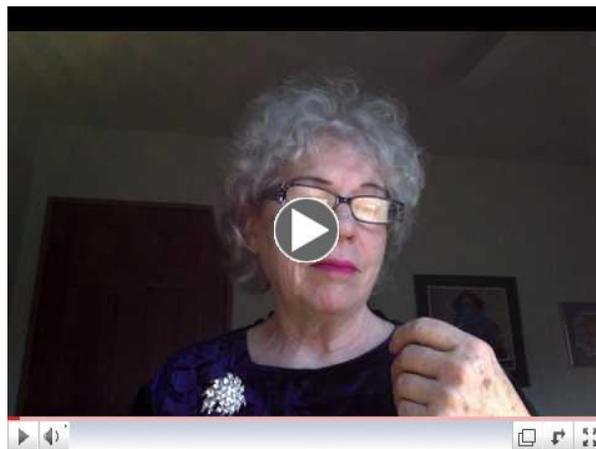
However, the best way to generate ideas for the "one small thing" is to initiate a Listening/Focusing Brainstorming process with the people at the bottom! We are not going to do that here, but it is essential to the process of motivating from the bottom up.

As a group or individually, sit down and get comfortable, preparing to spend up to twenty minutes letting right- and left- brain problem solving interact. Add another twenty minutes for group sharing. Keep a blank pad of paper in front of each person for gathering ideas.

In a group, have one person read the following instructions aloud to everyone else. Everyone except the reader, close your eyes, focusing inward, on The Creative Edge --- or, at least, look off "into space". You want to access right-brain, intuitive thinking before you turn to more traditional "brainstorming" methods.

Upon hearing the instructions, pay attention, inside, looking for the "intuitive feel" of answers --- not what is immediately, intellectually known, but the right-brain, intuitive, murky, vague feel of what you know that is "more than words" --- leave at least a minute of silence between each instruction.

Here is a video if you want to close your eyes and follow my voice instead of reading the instructions aloud:



"Finding the one small thing" exercise for bottom-up motivation

Focusing Instructions

Close your eyes and get comfortable --- let your "focus" turn inward, your attention toward the "intuitive feel" that is more than words ---

(one minute or more)

Just notice your breathing going in --- and out --- don't try to change it. Just notice your breathing as a way of coming inside, more in tune with your intuitive-knowing ---

(one minute or more)

Take a moment to choose an area of interest, or, if the problem to be explored is already known, name it:

"I (or we) are going to spend some Intuitive Focusing time on the problem of (name it) ---

(one moment or more)

Now ask yourself, "Where is the apathy that I am concerned about? Who is it that I want to engage in this project?" and just sit quietly, bringing the whole concern into the center of your attention, setting aside the already known, and letting an "intuitive feel" for "the whole thing" to arise ---

(one minute)

Find some words or an image or make a drawing --- try to capture the "intuitive feel" ---

Don't worry if you don't get a clear answer --- you are drawing closer to an "intuitive feel" for the whole situation --- If you want to write anything down, using Mind Mapping or any other method, take a few moments to do so ---

(one minute or more)

Now, ask yourself, "What could be 'one small thing' people could do, 'one small thing' this audience would be happy to do, which could be a first step toward full engagement?" ---

(one minute)

Don't get into thinking the "already-known" --- set aside what you already know and just pay attention to The Creative Edge --- the "intuitive feel" of the whole thing that is more than you are already thinking --- don't try to do anything --- just notice the "unclear feel" that comes up ---

(one minute or more)

And find some words or an image that can capture that "intuitive feel" ---if you want to write anything down, feel free ---

(one minute or more)

If you are working alone, you can go back-and-forth, internally, trying out an idea in your mind, sensing into how people might react, imagining how it might work --
- going back and forth between trying out possibilities and checking with the

"intuitive feel": "Would that work? --- How would that be?--- " Take notes as needed or desired --- continue as long as you want.

Round-Robin Sharing For Group Brainstorming

In a group, after the initial Focusing Instructions, let people quietly take notes or Mind Map to capture their fresh "intuition," then use a Creative Edge Round Robin sharing structure for an initial go-round. Someone keeps time, limit turns to 3 -5 minutes per person. Each person gets an uninterrupted turn to say what came up during the Intuitive Focusing, paying attention to the "intuitive feel" while speaking, creating fresh, innovative words and images --- Everyone else just listens, taking notes as desired, noticing what new ideas or Creative Edges arise as the others speak ---

After this initial sharing from the Creative Edge, the group can turn to a more traditional "brain storming" method, bouncing ideas off of each other, interrupting if that stimulates creativity --- but returning to the Creative Edge Round Robin sharing structure, time-limited turns with no interruptions allowed, if more access to The Creative Edge of intuitive, right-brain problem solving is desired.

Then, of course, try out any ideas that have come up --- test them on co-workers or focus groups --- ask the people at the bottom what would work for them --- follow your usual product development and marketing strategies, the measure of success being whether people willingly become engaged --- or, if they are not stepping up, consider if the step too big, in which case, it's back to the drawing board, The Creative Edge, to come up with a smaller step, until the "One Small Thing" is found.

Being At The Creative Edge Also = Innovative Thinking

For a complete explanation of the theory behind access to The Creative Edge and innovative decision making, you can download Dr. McGuire's comprehensive article, "Collaborative Edge Decision Making Method, ". **As a bonus, the Appendix of this article includes Handouts you can use at actual meetings, one for each role in Shared Leadership.**

Please [email Dr. McGuire](#) with your questions or answers about the groups you belong to, the meetings you attend

Think about whether there are any small groups, sub-groups or teams, committees where you would feel safe enough, and empowered enough, to explain to coworkers about empowerment from the Creative Edge, the "felt sensing" of each individual. Or try out the "One Small Thing" exercise on your own with organizational or social issues that matter to you. Besides in the Mini-Manual, [Empowerment Organization: Finding The "One Small Thing"](#) on the Creative Edge Focusing (TM) website.

Getting A Felt Sense of Interpersonal Situations

Non-Violent Communication

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

USING NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

Marshall Rosenberg's Basic Rubric:

"When you did (observable behavior), I thought (my interpretation), and THEREFORE I felt (my internal feeling state). I want (a specific action as a step in resolving the situation)."

In [Interpersonal Focusing: This Flower is Beautiful TO ME Week One](#), I contrasted domination through "objective" statement of the "facts" or "blaming" through locating causation in the Other with empowering communication through "owning" and sharing one's own more vulnerable subjective experiencing of situations.

In [Interpersonal Felt Sensing: Exercise](#), I invited you to look for the "intuitive feel," the experience in your own body, of being in up to five different "unresolved" interpersonal situations.

Today, I ask you to take these same five experiences and try formulating them in the [Non-Violent Communication](#) (NVC) paradigm of Marshall Rosenberg.

Marshall Rosenberg has been teaching his model for Non-Violent Communication since at least the 1970's, when many of us involved in the original Changes [Listening/Focusing](#) Community also studied with him. He has refined his model over the years and published [numerous books](#) for applying NVC to relationships, parenting, and conflict resolution in organizations and the global community. But I am going to lay out his paradigm in the simple terms which have stuck with me for over thirty years.

A. Observable Behavior

The observable behavior of the other which led you to have an interpersonal "reaction." This must be as specific, concrete, non-interpreted, and observable as you can make it. E.g., anyone could see the same behavior, although "interpretation" of it might vary:

1. "When you clinched up your teeth and shook your fist..."

2. "When you arrived one hour after our appointed time..."
3. "When you sat down next to Jane..."
4. "When you handed in your report two days early..."
5. When you borrowed \$100 dollars from me and had not repaid it by Jan. 1..."

B. Your Interpretation

Your interpretation of the observable behavior: What you thought:

1. "...I thought you were angry at me..."
2. "...I thought you didn't care about me, didn't respect my time..."
3. "...I thought you liked her more than me..."
4. "...I thought you were trying to earn brownie points..."
5. "...I thought you were never going to pay it back..."

C. Your Feeling "Reaction" To Your Interpretation

The feeling or "felt sense" that came inside of your body because of this interpretation:

1. "...and THEREFORE I felt afraid..."
2. "...and THEREFORE I felt angry..."
3. "...and THEREFORE I felt jealous and insecure..."
4. "...and THEREFORE I felt fearful and like fighting back..."
5. "...and THEREFORE I felt insecure and angry..."

(see [List of feeling words](#) on NVC website for help)

D. Your Want or Need in This Situation

A specific action step you "want" to resolve the situation:

1. "I would like you to tell me if I did something specific to anger you."
2. "I would like you to tell me how you do feel about me and what caused you to be late."
3. "I want you to clarify how you feel about Jane and how you feel about me."

4. "I want you to tell me your own thinking about handing the report in early."
5. "I want you to tell me when and if you are planning to pay the money back."

(see [List of Wants/Needs](#) on NVC website for help --- actually, this step is more complicated, a deeper acknowledgment of your Core Beliefs and related Needs/Wants)

"Thinking" Masquerading as "Feeling"

I ask you to take your own specific unresolved interpersonal situations from last week's Interpersonal Felt Sensing Exercise and try to formulate a sentence for each using Rosenberg's rubric ---

"When you (observable behavior) ...I thought (interpretation)...and THEREFORE I felt (internal feeling state)...I want (specific action)."

Please notice especially how often "thinking," ("interpretation," "blaming the other") masquerades as "feeling" (an actual internal emotional experience, like sadness, anger, joy, elation, nervousness, fear, greed):

"I feel like you don't care about me" = "I think you don't care about me, and therefore I feel..."

"I feel like you are angry with me" = "I observe your clinched teeth, shaking fist, and I think you are angry with me, so I feel frightened..."

"I feel oppressed" = "I think I am being oppressed by you, and I feel small, paralyzed, angry..."

"I feel manipulated" = "I think you are manipulating me, and I feel anxious, powerless, angry..."

Next week I will tell why I prefer an Interpersonal Listening/Focusing exchange to pure use of Non-Violent Communication for problem resolution.

And, I am not an expert in NVC, especially the latest refinements (you might see [Leona's blogs on NVC](#) for a more thorough version of the exercise above , including the relationship between Thinking Interpretations, Core Beliefs, and

unmet Needs/Wants, and many other applications of NVC exercises to real life situations). But you will learn a lot if you just try the simple rubric ---

"When you (specific behavior), I thought (interpretation)...and THEREFORE I felt...I want..."

- What were the specific behaviors I observed which I then interpreted?
- What might be some alternate interpretations for those behaviors?
- What do I learn about myself from my interpretations?
- Can I see how I might use "blaming" interpretations of the other's behavior as a mask over "owning" and sharing my more vulnerable feelings and needs?
- How do my Core Beliefs about myself and my Wants/Needs color my interpersonal "reactions" and "interpretations"?

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!

Complete Focusing Session

"Sitting With" The Creative Edge of an Interpersonal Situation

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Two

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: SITTING WITH THE CREATIVE EDGE OF AN INTERPERSONAL SITUATION

Last week you received [Interpersonal Focusing : "This flower is beautiful To ME"](#), showing how owning our own reactions, instead of blaming them on the other, actually empowers us to begin to change interpersonal situations, and [Interpersonal Felt Sensing Exercise](#), inviting you to find the bodily, "intuitive feel" of five unresolved interpersonal situations.

Here is the link again to the Interpersonal Felt Sensing Exercise, where I help you make a list of 3-5 troublesome Interpersonal Situations that you can work on this month:



Making A List of 3-5 Problematic Interpersonal Situations to work on this month

This week, you received Rosenberg's Non-Violent Communication Exercise.

In the Complete Focusing Session for each of the four weeks, you are invited to take one of your interpersonal situations and sense into, "sit with" it in a Focusing way, seeing what new information about yourself-in-this-situation can unfold.

Throughout the month, we will also explore methods for communicating and using Listening/Focusing turns with the actual other person as a way of

resolving [interpersonal conflict](#). The "felt sense" in each person in an interpersonal situation contains a Creative Edge which, when shared, can carry both problem solving and relationship forward.

But, in Complete Focusing, you are going more deeply into "owning" the personal dimension of the interaction for yourself, given the person that you are.

Focusing On A Specific Interpersonal Situation (20 minutes)

Here is a link to the video if you want to close your eyes and follow my voice:



Complete Focusing Exercise Exploring Problematic Interpersonal Situation

---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 interpersonal situation about which you want to know more ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, carefully try to find words for the 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.

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

-

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

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

--- If you find yourself "stirred up" be 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!

Instant "Ahah!"s #6: EMPOWERMENT ORGANIZATION

Finding Each Person's "Touchstone Mission": Creating a Culture of Creativity

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

CREATING AT THE EDGE: THE CULTURE OF CREATIVITY

(To catch up with this topic, see [Week One Empowerment Organization](#) , [Week Two Examples of "The One Small Thing "](#))

Motivation is a bottom-up, not top-down thing. Each unique individual must be in touch with their own Creative Edge, their own "felt experience" of aliveness and creativity.

Below you find an explanation of why taking the time to "sit with," pay attention to the "intuitive feel," the "something more than words" leads to maximum motivation as well as maximum creativity and innovation:

"Core Creativity [Cultura De Creatividad](#)

- Every individual is born with a unique blueprint. Personal growth is the unfolding of this blueprint
- Every problem holds within itself the exact next steps needed for solution
- The site of new insights and creative solutions is at the edge of what is already known. This edge, The Creative Edge, holds implicit within it all past and future knowing about the problem, more than could ever be put into words in a linear way
- The Creative Edge is a right-brain phenomenon and is physically experienced as the murky, intuitive "feel" of the whole issue

Intuitive Focusing

- Creating at the Edge involves a back-and-forth nonlinear process between left-brain "symbolizations" and right brain "felt experiencing"
- The Intuitive Focusing skill teaches specific steps which make problem-solving at The Creative Edge and "Ah, hah!" insights a predictable process

- Central to Intuitive Focusing is learning to silently "sit with" the murky, intuitive, preverbal "felt sense" underlying an issue before attempting to find words, gestures, or images as "symbolizations"

Focused Listening

- The [Focused Listening](#) skill is a powerful tool for helping another person to create symbolizations out of The Creative Edge and especially in finding the "intuitive feel" for each person in interpersonal situations, turning conflict into creativity
- Focused Listening also allows for empathic understanding of the Other and the possibility for conflict resolution which comes from empathic understanding.

Creative Edge Organizations

- 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.
- Individuals are motivated when they are engaged at their 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, can only happen by engaging The Creative Edge 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.

Paradigm Shifts

- Paradigms are fixed perceptual schemata, or Gestalts, which determine beliefs, emotional reactions, and behaviors
- Paradigm shifts are the source of true creativity, innovation, and change
- Intuitive Focusing results in shifts at the level of paradigms. The kaleidoscope turns, a new Gestalt is created, and new thoughts, emotions, and behaviors are able to arise
- Paradigm shifts at The Creative Edge release blocked energy as well as creating new solutions"

[Read on at this link](#) or [en espanol](#) for the full model of how the use of Listening/Focusing turns within organizations insures motivation rather than apathy and creativity rather than stultification.

INTUITIVE FOCUSING EXERCISE: THE "TOUCHSTONE MISSION"

So, let's modify the "One Small Thing" Focusing Exercise a little and use the Intuitive Focusing skill to find the unique "Touchstone Mission" which engages and motivates each of us in our work and living. In groups, teams, or organizations, it is also possible to go further by sharing and nurturing these "Touchstone Missions" in each individual person, while meeting the over-all goals of an organization.

Finding A Talisman Object Symbolizing Your Work

Each individual will use Focusing to find words and images for their unique mission, in their individual work and/or within an organization, the unique contribution which would matter enough TO THEM as an individual to keep them motivated. Then, the individual will use Intuitive Focusing to come up with a symbol and an actual object which could stand as a personal Talisman for this Touchstone Mission, a reminder to return to this source for energy and inspiration. The symbolic object could be kept on their desk or worn as a lapel button or jewelry, as a reminder to the individual to stay in touch with their Creative Edge and also a way of easily communicating to others this core motivating factor.

For example, for me, the symbol of my Touchstone Mission is a prism: conveying the idea to as many people as possible that finding the "new" comes from using Intuitive Focusing to allow ideas and solutions to arise from the "pause," from intuitive, right-brain knowing. So, I could wear a prism as a reminder to myself and to others about what matters to me, what motivates me or keep one on my desk. A kaleidoscope serves as a similar talisman for me: a reminder that, through Intuitive Focusing, the entire Gestalt changes, and new ideas and action possibilities arise.

For another person, the motivating factor might be interconnections throughout the globe, and they might wear a globe as their symbol.

For an engineer, it might be perfectly elegant designs, and a symbol of this.

For a human resources person, it might be something about the perfect match between person and job, or low turn-over.... whatever it is, a simple symbol of that motivating factor.

Sharing Your Talisman and Touchstone Mission With Others

If deciding to share this exercise with others in a group or team or organization, individuals could share about their symbol and talisman after the Focusing exercise, or a game could be devised throughout an organization, with people visiting colleagues, discovering the talisman object, and learning the Touchstone Mission of the others. A prize at the end for whoever learns the most talismans and missions! Or some such version as an icebreaker at an organizational gathering.

Focusing Instructions: "What is my unique Touchstone Mission, the motivation that can keep my work fresh and alive? What could be a symbol representing this to myself and to others?" 20 minutes

As a group or individually, sit down and get comfortable, preparing to spend up to twenty minutes letting right- and left- brain problem solving interact. Add another twenty minutes for group sharing. Keep a blank pad of paper in front of each person for gathering ideas.

In a group, have one person read the following instructions aloud to everyone else. Everyone except the reader, close your eyes, focusing inward, on The Creative Edge of the question "What is my Touchstone Mission --- what is the idea or action or factor which would keep my work alive for me every day?" You want to access right-brain, intuitive thinking, your unique, personal "gut sensing" of your own Creative Edge. Upon hearing the instructions, pay attention, inside, looking for the "intuitive feel" of answers --- not what is immediately, intellectually known, but the right-brain, intuitive, murky, vague feel of what you know that is "more than words" --- leave at least a minute of silence between each instruction.

And here is a video where I give an explanation and the instructions so you can follow along alone or with your group:



Fun! Alone or in work group: Use Focusing to find your Touchstone Mission, your Core Motivation for best work, and find a symbolic object you can share with others or use yourself as a reminder

Close your eyes and get comfortable --- let your "focus" turn inward, your attention toward the "intuitive feel" that is more than words ---

(one minute or more)

Just notice your breathing going in --- and out --- don't try to change it. Just notice your breathing as a way of coming inside, more in tune with your intuitive-knowing ---

(one minute or more)

Now ask yourself, "What is the motivating factor in my work? What is the Touchstone Mission so important to me that working toward it would give me fresh energy in approaching my work every day?" and sit quietly, paying attention to the "intuitive feel" that comes in answer in the center of your body ---

(one minute or more)

Take a moment longer to "sit with" that whole thing---perhaps there are several motivating factors to sift through --- take the time to find the one or

more which exactly capture your Creative Edge, your aliveness in relation to your work life---

(one minute or more)

Now find some words or an image that can "stand for" that motivation, that begin to capture "that whole thing about motivation, my Touchstone Mission," that might lead to a symbolic representation, a talisman object---

(one minute or more)

Take any words or images that come and check them against the "intuitive feel of it all," going back and forth between symbolizations and the "intuitive feel" until the symbols are "just right," the body says "Yes. That is exactly it."

(one minute or more)

Now ask yourself, "What aspect of this motivating factor, this Touchstone Mission, would I feel comfortable sharing with others as a symbol they would know me by...something that conveys what matters to me as a motivating factor at work in a way that I would be comfortable with..."

(one minute or more)

Again, go back and forth between any images or symbols that arise and your "intuitive feel" about what would be an acceptable symbol.....

(one minute or more)

Now, if you haven't got one yet, continue looking for an object or other symbol, something you could find and wear on your lapel or set on your desk, which would exactly capture the "feel of it all," that could serve as a symbol to remind yourself, and perhaps communicate to others, your "Touchstone Mission," the underlying Creative Edge, the motivation keeping your work alive.

(one minute or more)

And, when you are finished, open your eyes and make notes or a drawing of the kind of symbol you are looking for. Then, when you have a chance, go out and find it in a form which you could wear as a lapel button or pin or place on your desk.

Round-Robin Sharing For Group Brainstorming

In a group, after the initial Focusing Instructions, let people quietly take notes or Mind Map to capture their fresh "intuition," then use a Creative Edge Round Robin sharing structure for an initial go-round. Someone keeps time, limit turns to 3 -5 minutes per person. Each person gets an uninterrupted turn to say what came up during the Intuitive Focusing, paying attention to the "intuitive feel" while speaking, creating fresh, innovative words and images and describing their Touchstone Mission, and they symbol they have chosen to represent it.

Organization-Wide Game: Who Has Learned The Most "Touchstone Missions" and symbols of coworkers?

Devise a game, with prizes, where people search out their colleagues talisman symbols and learn about their Touchstone Mission. For instance, for two weeks, have everyone wear their symbolic representation on their lapel or place it on their desk. Using the Face Book idea, give a prize to the person who can list the most symbols of coworkers and what they mean.

Being At The Creative Edge Also = Innovative Thinking

For a complete explanation of the theory behind access to The Creative Edge and innovative decision making, you can download Dr. McGuire's comprehensive article, "Collaborative Edge Decision Making Method, ". **As a bonus, the Appendix of this article includes Handouts you can use at actual meetings, one for each role in Shared Leadership.**

Please [email Dr. McGuire](#) with your questions or answers about the groups you belong to, the meetings you attend.

Getting A Felt Sense of Interpersonal Situations

Verbal Abuse Vs. The Interpersonal Focusing Protocol

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

Verbally-Abusive Patterns of Speech: Dominance The Goal

In her remarkable book, [The Verbally Abusive Relationship](#), Patricia Evans walks us "blow-by-blow" through transcripts illustrating how an individual can use verbal abuse to establish dominance over another person.

She states that the verbally abusive person sees every interaction as a contest for dominance. There is no equality. One person will be one-up, the other person one-down. Verbalizations are used with this purpose, constantly establishing dominance: "I am better than you. I am more powerful than you. I am saner than you. I am more worthy than you."

Often the abuser is not shouting but presenting a "totally rational" view: "Why are you being so emotional?" "Everyone knows that you are too dramatic." "Such-and-such expert does it my way," "You made the same mistakes with your previous husband," etc., etc.

Read the transcripts in the book to see how the other, who may be approaching the conversation with a more egalitarian, vulnerable point of view, cannot understand what is going on and comes to accept the blame, seeing him- or herself as crazy and bad.

Evans has a second book, [Controlling People: How To Recognize, Understand, and Deal With People Who Try To Control You.](#)

Taking a Focusing Turn: Immediately Acknowledging "Ownership"

On the contrary, in an interpersonal conflict, as soon as I initiate "taking a [Focusing turn](#) to 'sense into' 'How is this whole thing FOR ME?'" , I move from dominance into vulnerability and the use of "personal power," the congruence of my own inner truth, instead of coercion, convincing YOU what to think/feel. The language of [Intuitive Focusing](#) immediately points to the existence of a "felt sense" in me, an "intuitive feel" that I can explore:

"Being the kind of person I am, I find this kind of situation controlling. Let me 'sense into' how that is for me, where that feeling comes from."

"I don't know how you are seeing things, but, for me, this is scary and anxiety-provoking. Let me take some time to 'sit with' that whole thing in me, and then you can have a turn to say how it is for you."

"Something is going on here, in this group, I don't know what it is, but I'm finding myself all balled up, unable to think clearly. I'd like to sense into 'that whole thing' and see what my body has to say."

Yelling At The Wall: Space for Irrationality Can Lead To Felt Sensing

Although I like the power of [Marshall Rosenberg's rubric for Non-Violent Communication](#) in illustrating that we create our own "felt response" out of our interpretations of the behaviors of others, I find that trying to use such a rubric to frame my communications in the actual moment of confusing interaction is too intellectual for me. It takes me away from my "felt-sensing" of the situation, the place for Intuitive Focusing.

Sometimes, I actually need to be able to start out screaming in a blaming way: "You --- You --- You --- !". Once I have stepped into the "owning" position of my own Focusing Turn, I can yell these blaming statements at the wall. I am already owning that they are my own "reaction." Perhaps a [third](#)

[person Listening Facilitator](#) can [reflect them back to me](#) so that I can begin to take the reaction back inside of myself, find the "intuitive feel" of "How this whole thing is for me, being the person I am":

"So, Kathy, you are so furious that you feel that Sally is doing this on purpose."

"So, Kathy, the way you are seeing it, Sally really is trying to steal your husband."

"So, Kathy, I'm hearing that, because of the person you are, you are experiencing this situation as a manipulation. WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE A MOMENT TO SENSE INTO HOW THIS IS FOR YOU, WHAT COMES IN THE FOCUSING PLACE INSIDE?".

And, here, because a [Focusing turn](#) points to and assumes each person's own inner experiencing as a 'felt sense' which underlies their way of being-in-a-situation, there is a natural movement into "owning" and the vulnerability of sharing that personal inner truth. Often, as soon as a Focuser turns from blaming the other to "This is how it is for me," the Focuser's anger turns into the vulnerability of tears and hurt. Seeing this vulnerability, the other person becomes much more likely to respond with empathy and a willingness to work toward a mutual solution.

The Interpersonal Focusing Protocol

So, I prefer the use of the Interpersonal Focusing protocol, Listening/Focusing Turns for each participant.

Because this issue of Interpersonal Focusing is so important to me, I have made 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. In the chapter, you will find :

A perspective for seeing an angry person as a hurting person

Martin Buber's view that the only appropriate "confrontation" has the goal of moving from "I-It" to "I-Thou" relationship

Complete presentation of the actual protocol for Interpersonal Focusing

Many examples of "felt shifts" in relational difficulties through the exchange of Listening/Focusing Turns.

For your exercise today, please read the entire chapter as your best introduction to the actual practice of Interpersonal Focusing, which we will consider in Week Four of this cycle.

If you haven't yet, you could also do the exercise below where you use Focusing to find the "felt sense" for each of three-to five interpersonal situations or interactions where you are left with an incomplete or confusing 'body sense' and would like to figure out why so that you can take action steps for changing the situation:



First Exercise for Finding The 'Felt Sense' of Interpersonal Situations So That You Can Discover How To Change Them

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!

Complete Focusing Session

"Sitting With" The Creative Edge of an Interpersonal Situation

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Three

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: SITTING WITH THE CREATIVE EDGE OF AN INTERPERSONAL SITUATION

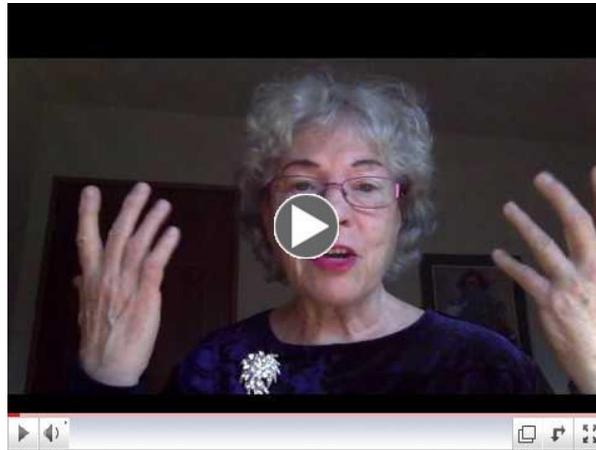
In the [Complete Focusing Session](#) for each of the four weeks, you are invited to take one of your interpersonal situations and sense into, "sit with" it in a Focusing way, seeing what new information about yourself-in-this-situation can unfold.

In [Week One: Interpersonal "Felt-Sensing" Exercise](#), we found the "felt sense," the "intuitive feel" of up to five problematic interpersonal situations.

Throughout the month, we are also exploring methods for communicating and using Listening/Focusing turns with the actual other person as a way of resolving interpersonal conflict. The "felt sense" in each person in an interpersonal situation contains a [Creative Edge](#) which, when shared, can carry both problem solving and relationship forward. So, in [Week Two: Non-Violent Communication](#), we explored how to "own" one's own reactions by using Marshal Rosenberg's rubric: "When you (specific behavior), I thought (my interpretation), and THEREFORE I felt (my own feeling response). I want (need to be filled and possible solution)."

But, in Complete Focusing, you are going more deeply into "owning" the personal dimension of the interaction for yourself, given the person that you are. So, I invite you to take another of the troublesome interpersonal situations which you worked with in a "felt sensing" and "non-violent

communication" way, and spend Intuitive Focusing time to see if you can find a "felt shift," a Paradigm Shift, in your way of understanding this situation. Or, if you have just joined us, you can still follow the Focusing Instructions below. And here is the link to a video where you can follow along with my voice instead of reading the instructions to yourself:



Complete Focusing Exercise: Exploring Interpersonal Situation and Finding Steps of Change

Focusing On A Specific Interpersonal Situation (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 interpersonal situation about which you want to know more ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, carefully try to find words for the 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.

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

-

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

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

--- If you find yourself "stirred up" be 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!

Instant "Ahah!"s #6: EMPOWERMENT ORGANIZATION

TOPPLING THE PYRAMID = JOY AT WORK.

CHANGE = INTUITIVE FOCUSING AT THE CREATIVE EDGE

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

TOPPLING THE PYRAMID = INCREASING INNOVATION

Of course, the idea of motivation, creativity, and innovation all being rooted in the "grass roots," the bottom-up level of organizations and corporations is not new to Creative Edge Focusing™. What is new is providing [Intuitive Focusing](#), paired with [Focused Listening](#), as an actual easy-to-learn self-help method for actually connecting with, and articulating, the Creative Edge of right-brain problem solving at every level of organization.

Even when I was in graduate school in the 1970's, the prevailing wisdom was that the Japanese model of small groups/teams creating innovative ideas from "the bottom up" led to superior creativity and success in some areas.

In their 1994 book, [Toppling The Pyramid](#), business gurus Gerald Ross and Michael Kay, forecast "that global businesses are heading for a once-in-200-year revolutionary change." Tracing this transformation in six major global corporations, they "introduce the molecular management structure - a new kind of organization that is positioned to meet the challenges of business today":

"The old hierarchical pyramid structure no longer allows companies to respond quickly enough to a rapidly changing marketplace in which customer wants and needs must be met instantaneously. Those who get ahead of these changes will be the business leaders of tomorrow --- Packed with examples, [Toppling The Pyramid](#) answers the question, "How do you change?" ---This book is a must-read for anyone seeking to motivate their organization to change to the flatter, more empowered, more molecular environment critical to economic survival in the twenty-first century."
(book jacket)

The explosion of "Web 2.0" applications (social media, wikipedias, pod casts, etc.) validate this prediction. Interaction now can happen at the interface between consumer and innovation managers twenty-four hours a day, with consumers actively offering ideas, feedback, advise on product design.

It is now at this grass-roots, bottom-up level that innovation is happening, both inside companies and at the interface between companies and consumers. Even America's new President thrives on this bottom-up information structure!

EMPOWERMENT ORGANIZATION = JOY AT WORK

Being encouraged to contribute from one's individual Creative Edge of intuitive problem solving is also central to enjoyment in the workplace. Here's the jacket statement from Dennis W. Bakke's [Joy At Work](#), 2005:

"Imagine a company where people love coming to work and are highly productive on a daily basis. Imagine a company whose top executives, in a quest to create the most 'fun' workplace ever, obliterate labor-management divisions and push decision-making responsibility down to the plant floor --- (Bakke tells the true story of AES) "a worldwide energy giant with 40,000 employees in 31 countries and revenues of \$8.6 billion ---

Bakke sought not the empty 'fun' of the Friday beer blast but the joy of a workplace where every person, from custodian to CEO, has the power to use his or her God-given talents free of needless corporate bureaucracy. In *Joy of Work*, Bakke tells how he helped create a company where every decision made at the top was lamented as a lost chance to delegate responsibility - and where all employees were encouraged to take the 'game-winning shot,' even when it wasn't a slam-dunk."

FOCUSING = THE CRUX OF CHANGE

Eugene Gendlin took the question, "How does change come about?" as his central one when he studied personality change. His research led to the definition of Focusing as the crux skill for bringing about personality change, with Empathic Listening as the crux skill facilitating this change.

Change did not come about unless the client in therapy was using Focusing to create words and images freshly from the immediacy of present, "felt experiencing," the "intuitive feel" of problems and situations.

Gendlin's early research also showed the relationship between [Focusing and Creativity](#).

Gendlin's latest creation, [Thinking At The Edge \(TAE\)](#), provides concrete steps for turning one's "intuitive feel" into one's own unique, generalizable theory about some universal aspect of reality. See Nada Lou's [Grass Roots Introduction To TAE](#) for a user-friendly workbook.

CREATIVE EDGE FOCUSING = INDIVIDUAL ALIVENESS AT EVERY LEVEL

Creative Edge Focusing™ is a concrete package of skills and methods for keeping every individual, group/team, and meeting at The Creative Edge of intuitive problem solving.

The goal, with the One Small Thing and Touchstone Mission Focusing exercises as examples, is to give a concrete method, [Intuitive Focusing](#) and [Focused Listening](#), for keeping people, in families, communities, organizations, and corporations, connected to this grass roots, individual level of new ideas and creative problem solving.

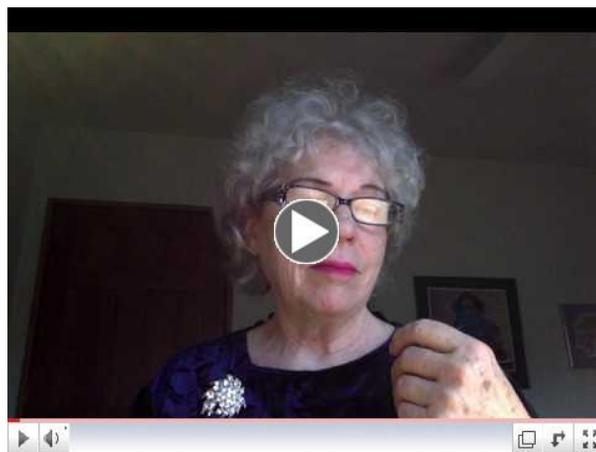
The [Creative Edge Pyramid](#) provides methods for applying the basic Listening/Focusing skills at all levels in a Creative Edge Organization: Focusing Alone (including Focusing Coaching), Focusing Partnerships, Focusing Groups/Teams, Interpersonal Focusing, Focusing-Oriented meetings, Focusing Communities, Creative Edge Organization.

INTUITIVE FOCUSING EXERCISE: "WHAT IS THE ONE SMALL THING I CAN DO TO CAPTURE MY ALIVENESS, MY CREATIVE EDGE IN MY WORK RIGHT NOW?"

So, for the last time as this cycle ends, (to catch up on previous e-news on Instant "Ahah!" #6: Empowerment Organization, see [the new e-newsletter archive](#)), please spend some time with the Focusing exercise, "One Small Thing", but this time looking for "the one small thing," some small step you can take to make your work and work place more motivating, more Creative Edge for you :

So, let's use the Intuitive Focusing skill to find the "one small thing" to engage and motivate YOURSELF in terms of your work.

Here is a link to the YouTube video where I give instructions if you prefer to follow my voice instead of reading the instructions below:



"Finding the one small thing Focusing Exercise: Motivation and 'Buy-In' in Organizations

Focusing Instructions

Close your eyes and get comfortable --- let your "focus" turn inward, your attention toward the "intuitive feel" that is more than words --- (one minute or more)

Just notice your breathing going in --- and out --- in --- and out --- in --- and out --- don't try to change it. Just notice your breathing as a way of coming inside, more in tune with your intuitive-knowing --- (one minute or more)

Spend a moment "clearing a space" if you need to, acknowledging and setting aside any issues that arise ---

(one minute or more)

Now, in that "cleared space" inside, ask yourself, "What is The Creative Edge of my own work, the spark of motivation right now?" and just sit quietly, bringing the whole concern into the center of your attention, setting aside the already known, and letting an "intuitive feel" for "the whole thing" arise ---

(one minute)

Find some words or an image or make a drawing --- try to capture the "intuitive feel" ---

Don't worry if you don't get a clear answer --- you are drawing closer to an "intuitive feel" for the whole situation --- If you want to write anything down, using Mind Mapping or any other method, take a few moments to do so ---

(one minute or more)

Continue to "sit with" this sense of your Creative Edge --- using Focusing to go back-and-forth between words and images and the "intuitive feel" of the "whole thing, until you find symbolizations that exactly capture that "intuitive feel" --- "Ahah! It's this!!!"

(one minute or more)

Now, ask yourself, "Is there anything in the way of my being at The Creative Edge at work? Anything specific, or perhaps something more general, like a 'background feeling,' getting in the way of my creativity, aliveness at work?"---

(one minute)

Don't get into thinking the "already-known" --- set aside what you already know and just pay attention to the "intuitive feel" of the whole thing that is more than you are already thinking --- don't try to do anything --- just notice the "unclear feel" that comes up of " anything getting in the way of my Creative Edge aliveness at work?" ---

(one minute or more)

And find some words or an image that can capture that "intuitive feel" ---if you want to write anything down, feel free ---

(one minute or more)

Now, ask yourself, "What would be one small step I could take right now to bring that aliveness, that Creative Edge, into my present work or to clear away obstacles in the way?", and again use Focusing, going back and forth

between symbols and "felt sensing," until you find a small step that feels just right, feels "doable." ---
(one minute or more)

Go back-and-forth, internally, trying out an idea in your mind, sensing into how people might react, imagining how it might work, sensing what might get in the way--- go back and forth between trying out possibilities and checking with the "intuitive feel": "Would that work? --- How would that be?--- "

(one minute or more)

And, when you feel that you have a clear sense of "one small step" you could take, or one small obstacle you could remove, then come slowly back into the room. Take notes as needed or desired ---

If you have a [Focusing Partnership](#), you could continue exploring this issue with the company of Focused Listening. If you use Focusing as part of a [Focusing Group/Team](#), you could use a Round-Robin sharing, an short uninterrupted turn for each person, to say what came up for them and do some group problem solving about bringing all of these individual Creative Edges into the work project.

Being At The Creative Edge Also = Innovative Thinking

For a complete explanation of the theory behind access to The Creative Edge and innovative decision making, you can download Dr. McGuire's comprehensive article, "Collaborative Edge Decision Making Method, " . **As a bonus, the Appendix of this article includes Handouts you can use at actual meetings, one for each role in Shared Leadership.**

Please [email Dr. McGuire](#) with your questions or answers about the groups you belong to, the meetings you attend

Think about whether there are any small groups, sub-groups or teams, committees where you would feel safe enough, and empowered enough, to explain to coworkers about empowerment from the Creative Edge, the "felt sensing" of each individual. Or try out the "One Small Thing" exercise on your own with organizational or social issues that matter to you.

Getting A Felt Sense of Interpersonal Situations

Myth of Dominance and Interpersonal Focusing Protocol

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

Replacing The Myth of Dominance With The Personal Power of Focusing

In his book, [Beyond The Myth Of Dominance: An Alternative To A Violent Society](#), Father Ed McMahon, co-founder of the Biospiritual Focusing approach, makes the same point as Marshall Rosenberg's Non-Violent Communication: our greatest power in trying to persuade another is, not coercion, but personal power: sharing from our own inner experiencing.

McMahon makes the additional point that "personal power" comes from becoming congruent with our own inner Selves. We have to know our own Selves thoroughly in order to communicate honestly with the other and to take responsibility for moral action.

(See [new e-newsletter archive](#) if you want to "catch up" on Weeks One-Three on "Interpersonal Felt-Sensing," which include Rosenberg's Non-Violent Communication Rubric and Patricia Evan's ways of recognizing verbally abusive and controlling relationships)

Trying To Dominate Ourselves, Our Familiars, Our Global Neighbors

McMahon questions the idea of dominance when applied at all levels:

Intrapsychically, we try to dominate our own inner selves, telling ourselves what we should feel, instead of turning a Caring Feeling Presence toward all the different aspects of ourselves, our conflicts, and using Focusing to let the "whole" story unfold from our body's intuitive knowing of the whole situation, being honest with ourselves.

Interpersonally, we try to dominate other people by telling them what they should feel, instead of vulnerably sharing our own perspective through [Intuitive Focusing](#) and using [Focused Listening](#) to hear the perspective of another until a mutually-acceptable solution arises.

As whole cultures and communities, we try to force people to conform, tell them what they should feel, invite them to "give their personal power over" to us and our institutions, instead of encouraging and facilitating "inner congruence with one's own truth," the root of conscience and personal power.

Dominance Erodes The Basis Of Civilization

In describing the rise and fall of great previous civilizations, McMahon says:

"However, the dark side of such a basically closed system of authority residing not in the people but in the preservation of ritual and in the absolute powers of the leader was that corruption and the abuse of people soon wormed their way into the system. Disintegration of the culture was inevitably not far behind. In all these civilizations, there was really no empowerment given to the ordinary person, and thus no lasting source for continuing growth and health in the society. When the power source became corrupt, the civilization fell to pieces" (p. vi)

Dominance Includes Trying To "Fix" Others

And in describing even the attempts of "social activists" to "fix" the world by telling people what they "should" do, he quotes a feminist learning about using Focusing to turn a Caring Feeling Presence toward the inner experiencing of herself and others:

"I have been active in working for women's rights for years, and I can see now what a difference it would make in our effectiveness if we were as

committed to caring for and listening to our own anger and hurt as we are to this important cause. I think it would change the 'feel' people have when they encounter many of us, as well as our tactics in trying to bring justice and peace into the world." (p. 92)

Approaching people with confrontation and antagonism and blaming makes people defensive. Dominance disempowers the other. Sharing from your own "personal power," your own vulnerability and experience of being-you-in-the-world allows people to listen instead of arguing back. At the same time, it strengthens your own "congruence," your own capacity to take a stand for your own point of view. And refusing to dominate strengthens the personal power of the other.

The Interpersonal Focusing Protocol

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](#)

However, here is the simple Interpersonal Focusing Protocol as summarized in that chapter:

TABLE 5.1

HOW TO USE INTERPERSONAL FOCUSING

ALLOW TWO HOURS

FIRST STAGE: CLARIFICATION OF THE ISSUE

(several five or ten minute turns)

(a) **Owning instead of blaming:**

"I feel ---" instead of "You are ---"

(b) **Behavioral specificity instead of generalizations:**

"When you ---" instead of "You are ---"

"When you do --- , I feel ---"

SECOND STAGE: GOING DEEPER
(one or more twenty minute turns for
each person)

- (a) Use Focusing on your own hurt feeling:
"What's in this for me?"
- (b) Honestly try to discover your own
part in the interaction:
"Why does this bother me so much?"
- (c) The other person uses Focused Listening to respond

AN OPTION: USING A THIRD PERSON AS A LISTENING FACILITATOR
The Third Person uses Focused Listening to respond to each person in turn

- (a) Allows for the expression of angry
feelings in a protected way
- (c) Protects against issues of distortion
And mutual distrust

You can also see Mary McGuire and Janet Klein's similar model which they call
[Interactive Focusing](#)

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 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.

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!

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

Free Articles in English and en espanol

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

[Experiential Focusing Therapy manual](#)

Creative Edge Focusing website

[Certified Focusing Trainers and 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](#)

Ultimate Self Help Blog

Complete Focusing Session

"Sitting With" The Creative Edge of an Interpersonal Situation

Dr. Kathy McGuire, Director

Week Four

COMPLETE FOCUSING SESSION: SITTING WITH THE CREATIVE EDGE OF AN INTERPERSONAL SITUATION

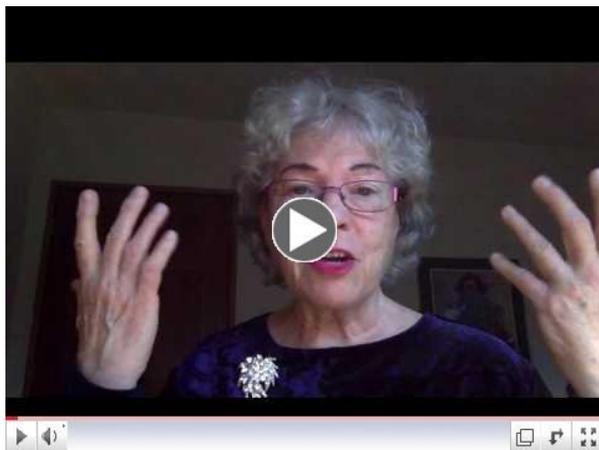
In the Complete Focusing Session for these four weeks, you are invited to take a troublesome interpersonal situation and sense into, "sit with" it in a Focusing way, seeing what new information about yourself-in-this-situation can unfold. This could be a fresh, new situation from the present week, or, if you have been with us since the beginning of this four week cycle, it could be another of the interpersonal situations from the list you created. You can "catch up" with Weeks One-Three on "Interpersonal Felt Sensing" in the [new e-newsletter archive](#).

Throughout the four week cycle, we have also been exploring methods for communicating and using Listening/Focusing turns with the actual other person as a way of resolving interpersonal conflict. The "felt sense" in each person in an interpersonal situation contains a Creative Edge which, when shared, can carry both problem solving and relationship forward.

But, in Complete Focusing, you are going more deeply into "owning" the personal dimension of the interaction for yourself, given the person that you are. So, I invite you to take another of the troublesome interpersonal situations which you worked with in a "felt sensing" and "non-violent communication" way, and spend Intuitive Focusing time to see if you can find a "felt shift," a Paradigm Shift, in your way of understanding this situation.

If you have just joined us, simply follow the instructions below, looking for the "intuitive feel" of an Interpersonal Situation that comes to mind.

Or follow my instructions on this YouTube video:



Complete Focusing Session to Explore a Stuck Interpersonal Situation

Focusing On A Specific Interpersonal Situation (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 interpersonal situation about which you want to know more ---

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

---Now, carefully try to find words for the 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.

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

1 minute

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

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

--- 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!

Go back to The Free Store and look for the download for Part Three of the e-course so you can continue. Good for you for getting this far!!!!