



# WIYS and Focusing Train the Trainer

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# 1 Focusing

## 1.1 History

is a psychotherapeutic process developed by psychotherapist Eugene Gendlin. He wrote the first book about Focusing was written in 1978.

At the [University of Chicago](#), beginning in 1953, Eugene Gendlin did 15 years of research analyzing what made psychotherapy either successful or unsuccessful. The conclusion was that it is not the therapist's technique that determines the success of psychotherapy, but rather the way the patient behaves, and what the patient does inside himself during the therapy sessions.

Gendlin found that, without exception, the successful patient intuitively focuses inside himself on a very subtle and vague internal bodily awareness—or "felt sense"—which contains information that, if attended to or focused on, holds the key to the resolution of the problems the patient is experiencing.

*The way the patient behaves leads to  
Success in therapy und not the  
Method of the therapist*

If the patient feels the solution, the probability to be healed is greater than with a process. From this study he developed his method Focusing. (from lat. Focus).

He said: Focusing is the time, where someone feels something without knowing, what it is.<sup>1</sup>

Key words are „**Felt Sense**“, „**Felt Shift**“ and „**Handle**“ .

Gendlin gave the name "**felt sense**" to the unclear, pre-verbal sense of "something"—the inner knowledge or awareness that has not been consciously thought or verbalized—as that "something" is experienced in the body. It is not the same as an emotion. This bodily felt "something" may be an awareness of a situation or an old hurt, or of something that is "coming"—perhaps an idea or insight. Crucial to the concept, as defined by Gendlin, is that it is *unclear* and vague, and it is always *more* than any attempt to express it verbally. Gendlin also described it as "sensing an implicit complexity, a wholistic sense of what one is working on".<sup>[4]</sup>

According to Gendlin, the Focusing process makes a felt sense more tangible and easier to work with.<sup>[3]</sup> To help the felt sense form and to accurately identify its meaning, the focuser tries out words that might express it. These words can be tested against the felt sense: The felt sense will not resonate with a word or phrase that does not adequately describe it.<sup>[3]</sup>

Gendlin observed clients, writers, and people in ordinary life ("Focusers") turning their attention to this not-yet-articulated knowing. As a felt sense formed, there would be long pauses together with sounds like "uh...." Once the person had accurately identified this felt sense in words, new words would come, and new insights into the situation. There would be a sense of felt movement—a "**felt shift**"—and the person would begin to be

<sup>1</sup> See 1) Gendlin S. 207 in the German book



able to move beyond the "stuck" place, having fresh insights, and also sometimes indications of steps to take.<sup>2</sup>

## 1.2 **The Method Focusing in 6 Steps**



1. **Clear Space** – making free from everything



2. **Felt Sense** – feel all the problems without details



3. Find the exact word or picture, which fits the Felt Sense, called **Handle**



4. Ask whether the Word or picture fits well. Change from the word (or picture) to the feelings. (Resonating)



5. Ask questions for your patient or yourself....



6. Do you want to do something, is there a change or **Felt Shift**

## 1.3 **The process in detail**

### 1. free space

- Let thoughts come to rest
- Be calm and mindful inwardly
- E.g. one could observe the breath, consciously breathe deeply up to the stomach.
- Let go
- Be friendly to yourself.

### 2. Felt Sense

- You have a topic and want to ask your inner voice about it or let it come to you.
- It's **more** than what I already know and it's the origin of the new.
- It's a hunch, a vague feeling.
- Do not rate!

### 3. Handle

<sup>2</sup> [www.Wikipedia.com](http://www.Wikipedia.com) - Focusing



- It's about being able to grasp this vague feeling.
- It can be a word or a picture

#### 4. Questions

- This handle is like a handle on which the Felt Sense can be grasped.
- One wonders whether the word or the picture is appropriate and switches between word (or picture) and feeling back and forth.
- One feels inside oneself whether it fits.
- The feeling or the word can change.

#### 5. Questions

- Where is the Felt Sense noticeable?
- How do I feel the Felt Sense?
- What about my problem feels the same?
- What is the worst thing about it?
- What would this...? need? (e.g. blocking / bulky)
- What would that part in me need? (e.g. who blocks himself against a change)
- What's beside the Felt Sense, is there more?
- What is the good, the motivating thing about what I feel right now?
- What would need this sensation and to spread further?
- What can give me support?
- How will it feel when my problem is solved?
- Does something in my Felt Sense change immediately as I think about it?
- Does the original description still apply, or does another word fit better now?
- What stands in my way to feel the solution?
- How would my body feel if everything was solved?

#### 6. Felt Shift

- There is a change. Relief. A cognitive process.
- It's like in the situation when you look for a name and it finally occurs to you. This is how it feels when a Felt Shift develops from the Felt Sense. It is an impulse for action

### **1.4 How can Focusing helps with WIYS**

#### **What is similar**

When walking we have similar sections; only movement is added.

In both Walking and Focusing, the description of the steps is only a tool to better understand the process. It is possible that the steps merge into each other and that's okay. The first step to creating the free space is similar to the step of walking, where we empty ourselves before you walk. And the change between feeling and action is repeated until the walk is complete.

#### Obstacles when you don't feel anything

When walking, we actually assume that someone can feel and express feelings.

But if someone has problems with it, it can help to study Focusing (course) or to read a book about Focusing.

While reading Gendlin's book, I had the idea that these problems could be taken as a theme for a walk, e.g. "my resistance to letting my feelings fully work" or "my fear of not having my feelings under control".





In Focusing it is important to bring feeling and mind together. The problem is when one of them dominates that success (according to this study) is compromised.

In walking we bring this together and can help those seeking advice by walking themselves.

There is also an interesting approach: the question, what would be the feeling if this difficulty were somehow completely solved?

*When the person walks his own solution and feels it, then focusing says he is better able to adapt his solution. So we can use this study in walking by letting the person walk*

## 1.5 Focusing - WIYS

### What is different

Focusing	WIYS
The client does it himself	Someone else can do it and sometimes it is easier
Scientifically researched	%
	It is with movement, that may be easier too
The questions are different <sup>3</sup>	
The method is different	

### What is similar

Focusing/WIYS
You can facilitate your own process
It helps to do it with another person
T is a method with feeling and based on the body
You ask your body
Felt Sense/ Felt Shift

## 2 Bibliography

Eugene Gendlin

Focusing

<sup>3</sup> See 1) Gendlin im Anhang oder S. 128



	„Selbsthilfe bei der Lösung persönlicher Probleme“; pages with the German book
Diana von Kopp	Focusing- die Sprache der Intuition



### 3 Introduction to the 6 steps

From <http://www.focusing.org/sixsteps.html>

Most people find it easier to learn focusing through individual instruction than through simply reading about it. The actual process of focusing, experienced from the inside, is fluid and open, allowing great room for individual differences and ways of working.

Yet to introduce the concepts and flavor of the technique, some structure can be useful. We offer one approach here: six steps. Although these steps may provide a window into focusing, it is important to remember that they are not THE six steps. Focusing has no rigid, fixed agenda for the inner world; many focusing sessions bear little resemblance to the mechanical process that we define here. Still, every Focusing Trainer is deeply familiar with these six steps, and uses them as needed throughout a focusing session. And many people have had success getting in touch with the heart of the process just by following these simple instructions.

There are other ways of describing the focusing process. Indeed, every Focusing Trainer has his or her own way of approaching it. [Click here](#) to see short forms of steps that other Focusing Teachers have developed.

So, with the caveat that what follows is a simple scaffolding for you to use as long as it's useful and then to move beyond, we offer to you six steps, a taste of the process.

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#### **What follows is a lightly edited excerpt from The Focusing Manual, chapter four of *Focusing*.**

The inner act of focusing can be broken down into six main sub-acts or movements. As you gain more practice, you won't need to think of these as six separate parts of the process. To think of them as separate movements makes the process seem more mechanical than it is – or will be, for you, later. I have subdivided the process in this way because I've learned from years of experimenting that this is one of the effective ways to teach focusing to people who have never tried it before.

Think of this as only the basics. As you progress and learn more about focusing you will add to these basic instructions, clarify them, approach them from other angles. Eventually – perhaps not the first time you go through it – you will have the experience of something shifting inside.

So here are the focusing instructions in brief form, manual style. If you want to try them out, do so easily, gently. If you find difficulty in one step or another, don't push too hard, just move on to the next one. You can always come back.



### **3.1 Clearing a space**

What I will ask you to do will be silent, just to yourself. Take a moment just to relax . . . All right – now, inside you, I would like you to pay attention inwardly, in your body, perhaps in your stomach or chest. Now see what comes *therewhen* you ask, "How is my life going? What is the main thing for me right now?" Sense within your body. Let the answers come slowly from this sensing. When some concern comes, DO NOT GO INSIDE IT. Stand back, say "Yes, that's there. I can feel that, there." Let there be a little space between you and that. Then ask what else you feel. Wait again, and sense. Usually there are several things.

### **3.2 Felt Sense**

From among what came, select one personal problem to focus on. DO NOT GO INSIDE IT. Stand back from it. Of course, there are many parts to that one thing you are thinking about – too many to think of each one alone. But you can *feel* all of these things together. Pay attention there where you usually feel things, and in there you can get a sense of what *all of the problem* feels like. Let yourself feel the unclear sense of *all of that*.

### **3.3 Handle**

What is the quality of this unclear felt sense? Let a word, a phrase, or an image come up from the felt sense itself. It might be a quality-word, like *tight, sticky, scary, stuck, heavy, jumpy* or a phrase, or an image. Stay with the quality of the felt sense till something fits it just right.

### **3.4 Resonating**

Go back and forth between the felt sense and the word (phrase, or image). Check how they resonate with each other. See if there is a little bodily signal that lets you know there is a fit. To do it, you have to have the felt sense there again, as well as the word. Let the felt sense change, if it does, and also the word or picture, until they feel just right in capturing the quality of the felt sense.

### **3.5 Asking**

Now ask: what is it, about this whole problem, that makes this quality (which you have just named or pictured)? Make sure the quality is sensed again, freshly, vividly (not just remembered from before). When it is here again, tap it, touch it, be with it, asking, "What makes the whole problem so \_\_\_\_\_?" Or you ask, "What is in *this* sense?"

If you get a quick answer without a shift in the felt sense, just let that kind of answer go by. Return your attention to your body and freshly find the felt sense again. Then ask it again.

Be with the felt sense till something comes along with a shift, a slight "give" or release.



### **3.6 Receiving**

Receive whatever comes with a shift in a friendly way. Stay with it a while, even if it is only a slight release. Whatever comes, this is only one shift; there will be others. You will probably continue after a little while, but stay here for a few moments.

IF DURING THESE INSTRUCTIONS SOMEWHERE YOU HAVE SPENT A LITTLE WHILE SENSING AND TOUCHING AN UNCLEAR HOLISTIC BODY SENSE OF THIS PROBLEM, THEN YOU HAVE FOCUSED. It doesn't matter whether the body-shift came or not. It comes on its own. We don't control that.....

