

Self-Help Manual of Focusing for Therapists

Trial Version (ver. 1.2, Kyoto)

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A. Picking a specific case

1. Recall a specific case you are dealing with or struggling with, or a case that just came across your mind.

You can also pick your concern about your colleague or your work situation when no case comes to your mind.

B. Checking in: what do you sense about the specific case (survey the terrain for any number of your felt senses you may have about this case).

2. What do you feel when you recall the whole of the case?
 - Just notice right now that “Oh, I have this kind of felt sense when I recall this case”
 - Are there other felt senses about the case?
 - If you feel any other felt sense, just notice them too. “I also have this felt sense”
 - When you notice become overwhelmed with the felt sense of this case, just take a deep breath. Breathe your concern out and put it on the chair next to you. Distance yourself from the concern.

Listener: Carefully listen with reflective listening, such as “You have a sense of ... about this case”.

3. Survey the felt senses that arise in you about this case.
 - Repeat 2 until you feel no other senses.
 - When you list all the felt senses you have towards this case, take a moment to look over all your senses, or the “whole feel”, and say to yourself “I have had all these felt senses about this case”.
4. Choose an a particular felt sense or the “whole feel” you would like to bring your attention to.

C. Engaging the felt sense of the case

5. Take a moment to pay your attention with interest towards the felt sense you chose.

- What do you feel when you feel the felt sense of the case with a friendly attitude.
- You may have a certain felt sense in or around your throat, chest, or stomach. Articulate where and how you feel it. If you don't have any bodily sensation, it's OK. The important thing is not to force you to feel something.
- * No need to explain the details of the case, such as the client's occupation and clinical or developmental history. — You may want to talk about the details, but it is advisable not to do so today. Your time will be up before you can focus on your felt sense, or you might even end up having an argument with your partner, who happens to have the same profession as you do. You may feel awkward and hesitate to talk about details or even be afraid that you would be blamed about your therapy. Today we would like to invite you to pay attention to your experiencing process which requires minimal or no detailed information about the case.
- * Be friendly to your experience, even if you do not like it.

Listener: Try to reflect things your partner articulated rather than asking about the detailed contents on the case.

6. Find an expression, a “handle” which fits the felt sense — a word, phrase, gesture or a single Chinese character. Any expression you have articulated in the prior step is OK if it fits with the felt sense.
7. Check if the expression really fits your felt sense by going back and forth between the expression and the bodily felt sense.
 - If you feel that “the expression does not feel right”, wait for another expression which fits the felt sense better to arise.
8. Once you found an expression that fit the felt sense, ask the felt sense. Variations of questions to ask the felt sense are:
 - “What is it, about the case, that makes me so ...?”
 Ask the above question first. When nothing arises, try following questions. No need to try them all.
 - “What does it need?”
 - “What is the ... telling me about the case?”
 - “What is the worst of this?”
 - “What's in the way?”
 Ask and Wait until something arises. Then something you had not realized might

appear or some change may happen to the perspective of the case.

9. Welcome and listen to what comes.

- Something you had never thought or realized might appear. Although they often surprise you, be friendly to and receive the new findings.
- Take a minute or two to stay with the new findings.
- End the session when you feel you adequately stayed with it.

How to end the session:

Inform your partner when there's only " 5 minutes left" in case your partner is talking a lot. If you have new findings, welcome and receive it. When nothing new come up to, end the session by confirming the felt sense of the case. For example, you might say, "Now I know, at least, that it was this felt sense I was feeling about this case" The listener can help to sum up the session, by referring to the felt senses that arose in this session. For example, "First you had a heavy felt sense about this case, and then there was also a soft felt sense, and then the client's mother felt like thorns to you."