

Checking In with the Body – Focusing Practice

According to Ann Cornell Ph.D. of the Focusing Institute, the following are the *key stages of focusing*:

- “I’m sensing into my body.”
- “What wants my awareness now?” or “How am I feeling about that issue?”
- “I’m saying hello to what’s here.”
- “I’m finding the best way to describe it.”
- “I’m checking back with my body.”
- “Is it OK to just be with this right now?”
- “I’m sitting with it, with interested curiosity.”
- “I’m sensing how it feels from its point of view.”
- “I’m asking...”
- I’m letting it know I hear it.”
- “I’m saying I’ll be back.”
- “I’m thanking my body and the parts that have been with me.”

FOCUSING INSTRUCTIONS: SHORT FORM BY EUGENE GENDLIN, PH. D

1. Clear a space

How are you?

What’s between you and feeling fine?

(Don’t answer; let what comes in your body do the answering. Don’t go into anything. Greet each concern that comes. Put each aside for a while, next to you.) Except for that, are you fine?

2. Felt sense

Pick one problem to focus on. Don’t go into the problem. What do you sense in your body when you sense the whole of that problem?

Sense all of that, get a sense of the whole thing, the murky discomfort or the unclear body-sense of it.

3. Get a handle

What is the quality of the felt sense? What one word, phrase, or image comes out of this felt sense? What quality-word would fit it best?

4. Resonate

Go back and forth between word (or image) and the felt sense. Is that right? If they match, have the sensation of matching several times. If the felt sense changes, follow it with your attention. When you get a perfect match, the words (images) being just right for this feeling, let yourself feel that for a minute.

5. Ask

What is it, about the whole problem, that makes me so _____? When stuck ask questions:

What is the worst of this feeling? What's really so bad about this? What does it need? What should happen? Don't answer; wait for the feeling to stir and give you an answer. What would it feel like if it was all OK?

Let the body answer.

What is in the way of that?

6. Receive

Welcome what come. Be glad it spoke. It is only one step on this problem, not the last. Now that you know where it is, you can leave it and come back to it later. Protect it from critical voices that interrupt. *Does your body want another round of focusing, or is this a good stopping place?*

Source: Eugene Gendlin Ph.D. (2012). The Focusing Institute. *In Carrying Life Forward Through Thought*. Retrieved 10/18/2024, from <http://www.focusing.org>.