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Why Focalizing Now?

Michael Picucci, PhD, MAC, SEP

Our world has been deeply impacted by confusion and suffering stirred up by worldwide economic insecurities and resultant rapid shifts in experience and perceptions. On the other hand, never before in history has our global, human inter-connectedness been so tangible. To not seize the opportunity for self-growth and transformation in these times would be tragic.

Focalizing is one of many nature-based energy and somatic psychologies that teach us how we can *naturally* meet collective and individual challenges in ways that allow us to move forward with grace and dignity. We are swiftly moving from healing systems that are limited to linear biographical stories towards modalities that are holographic and sensed in our bodies. These evolving methods take some learning, going beyond traditional modes into the world of phenomena, yet the results felt are substantial. Focalizing is best defined as a process that helps individuals and groups remove blind spots that prevent achieving goals and realizing intentions. It is a dynamic and effective process that allows us to respectfully set aside familiar thoughts and feelings to access nature's gift to us: our innate intelligence. For the purpose of this article, I will also define Focalizing as a method for experiencing wholeness in your body.

The Focalizing method incorporates three decades of my experience with traditional psychotherapy, addictions recovery and trauma healing, as well as somatic, and other experimental modes. It also integrates the work of many colleagues: Eugene Gendlin's *Focusing*, Colette Aboulker-Muscat's *Healing Imagery*, Bert Hellinger's *Spiritual Constellations*, Dayashakti's *Wave Work*, Otto Sharmer's *Presencing* and Peter Levine's *Somatic Experiencing*. (For others, see the Acknowledgements page of *Introduction to Focalizing: Organic Solutions to Real-Time Challenges*.)

Focalizing assists in the transformation of overwhelming life situations into opportunities for change by suspending the everyday thinking mind. It allows for the development of an enlightened intelligence where healing and transformation occur. In

effect, Focalizing works in a different dimension and reorganizes emotional and psychological DNA, the historic imprint on our psyches. Through it, one can be transported to a place of serenity where intentions and desires can be safely expressed and manifested.

I was doing a session on the telephone with a woman who'd had a double mastectomy and was undergoing chemotherapy. She also had recently lost her job, and her husband left her, it was one crisis after another. Since a component of the Focalizing process is a series of guided visualizations, it can also be very effective on the telephone.

Focalizing starts from an intention, so to clarify hers I asked what was the one thing she wanted to feel good about in the morning when she reflected back on this session. "The ability to sleep," she said. "I want to be able to get some sleep."

Once we established that she was comfortably resting on the bed with her beloved dog next to her, we began several exercises to create a *grounded presence*, where Focalizing takes form. You want to feel a physical connection to what ever you are sitting or standing on, and a sense of being present in the room.

Then I instructed her to suspend any voices of judgment, cynicism or fear, bringing the body to a calmer, more grounded place. From there I asked her to imagine a moment in time where there was meaning or delight, from yesterday or decades ago. She responded nearly immediately, "the county fair." For the past 21 years she has taken her daughter every summer to a county fair in New Hampshire. "My daughter is coming home from college this weekend, and I'm thrilled we'll be going again then."

We continued to work through the next few phases of the process and she was able to eventually perceive how she hadn't allowed herself to feel the betrayal and anger over her husband leaving. She recognized and acknowledged that those feelings were there and that gave her the ability to not lose sleep worrying over them. With practice, she became skilled at calming down her own nervous system using Focalizing techniques and began to be able to sleep.

Focalizing demonstrates that logical systems of thought can limit fulfillment and texture in our lives. Our rational minds cannot fully experience our capacity for joy and rapture. Through Focalizing, we tap into our consciousness – a fundamental quality of

nature – and experience its innate capacities to connect us with that which is ordinarily hidden due to conditioned binary thinking.

Something was stirring in me in 2002, around the time when I led my first retreat called “Reinventing Ourselves.” I recall having an awareness that certain things in our world were coming to an end; change was in the air. I remembered a quote from Winston Churchill, “We create our buildings; thereafter, they create us,” and what that meant to me was perhaps when those buildings fall apart, we can find ourselves anew.

That was also when my work in addictions recovery began evolving towards a wider span to include trauma recovery. You can’t heal an addiction without eventually dealing with the underlying trauma in the systemic nervous system, making trauma an underlying factor in all addictions. I came to realize, after that first retreat, that recovery spans beyond addictions and trauma. At the bottom of many of our struggles is the trap of being stuck in our very limited, conditioned linear thinking: Those admonishing voices of judgment that say *right*, or *wrong*, *this way*, or *that way*.

Through my continued research, I discovered a way to access a place inside myself where I could suspend those voices of judgment. Instead, I could focus my awareness to a more natural, dynamic and felt expression to discover answers and directions toward healing. Our conditioned thinking is limited to only what we’ve experienced and been exposed to so far.

When we reconnect with this latent natural resource within us, we can experience luminous insight, clear inner instruction, and a state of knowing that far surpasses our previous understanding. Enlightening new perspectives unmask previously unseen possibilities, giving us boundless capability to become unstuck from our limited thinking, and gracefully move forward. For me personally, it now seems that all my personal and client encounters are even deeper and more mutually gratifying than ever before.

Focalizing and the other nature-informed processes are superbly suited to the task of refinding and/or reinventing ourselves. To learn more about the energy-rich and life-transforming journey of Focalizing, visit www.focalizing.com.

Michael Picucci, PhD, MAC, SEP, is a practicing psychotherapist/consultant in NYC and the creator of Focalizing. His professional expertise spans a wide-range of psychology, counseling, and neuroscience disciplines. He has 30 years experience researching addictions, trauma healing, sexuality, and interpersonal and group dynamics. He has authored *Organic Solutions to Real-Time Challenges: An Introduction to Focalizing*, *Ritual as Resource: Energy for Vibrant Living*, and *The Journey Toward Complete Recovery: Reclaiming Your Emotional, Spiritual & Sexual Wholeness*. Go to www.focalizing.com/booksandpubs.htm for additional information on these books.