



# Interactive Focusing

One Way to  
Learn and Teach  
Empathy and Compassion

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# introduction

GREETING FROM TIFI

POLL

EXPLORING INTERACTIVE FOCUSING

LEARNING AND TEACHING EMPATHY  
AND COMPASSION

DEMONSTRATIONS AND EXERCISE

SHARING

CLOSING



# exploring interactive focusing

- **BENEFITS** ~ Improving Relationships and Addressing Cultural Norms that do not support healthy relationships
- **LEARNING** ~ Compassion and Empathy
  - How it is from the point of view of the other
  - Self-compassion first; compassion for the other comes next.
- **TEACHING** ~ Compassion and Empathy
  - Janet Klein was ahead of the many educators in this
- **TAKEAWAYS**
  - Improving relationships can be taught
  - Help can be found with challenging cultural norms that don't support healthy relationships
  - Community can be built around improving relationships
  - There are ways to strengthen and teach empathy and compassion and teach empathy and compassion (which is a Social and Emotional Learning goals in Schools in US)
- **HANDOUT**
  - Slides, including invitation to the “Learn Focusing/Exploring Interaction” website



DR JANET KLEIN

“The program we have developed, including the bodysense, compassionate, empathic communication and ‘Inside-Me’ Teaching Stories, is unique among Social and Emotional Learning Programs.”

# “single wing”

- Focuser as Storyteller
- Focuser as Teacher
- Listener reflects without judgment, criticism, commentary, or advice
- Focuser comes to a resting place
- Listener takes into his/her bodysense the essence of how it is for the Focuser, using empathy – feeling how it is – and compassion – as he/she would like to be heard.
- Listener offers a symbol of the empathic essence
- This is the Double Empathic Moment
  - Compassion for self
  - Compassion for other



# During the Demo

- Notice what happens when you put yourself in the “shoes” - in the place of - the Storyteller. Make note of any symbol that comes to you.
- Notice how the Listener captures the essence of how it is for the Storyteller by giving a symbol. What form did the symbol take?

# “double empathic moment”

- Focuser comes to a resting place
- Listener takes into his/her bodysense the essence of how it is for the Focuser, using empathy – feeling how it is – and compassion – as he/she would like to be heard.

“I will now take into my bodysense the essence of how this is for you. I will give you back a symbolic expression of what comes. While I do that, please take a few moments of quiet time to be very gentle with yourself.”


- Listener offers a symbol of the empathic essence
- This is the Double Empathic Moment. Why “double”?
  - Compassion for self
  - Compassion for other



# During the Demo

- Notice what happens when you put yourself in the “shoes” - in the place of - the Storyteller. Make note of any symbol that comes to you.
- What form does the symbol take? It could be an image, word or words, a poem, a gesture, or even a melody.





would someone  
like to share  
their symbol?

IMAGE

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WORDS

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MOVEMENT

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MUSIC

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POEM

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# “double wing”

- 1<sup>st</sup> Focuser as Storyteller
- 1<sup>st</sup> Focuser as Teacher
- 1<sup>st</sup> Listener reflects without judgment, criticism, commentary, or advice
- 1<sup>st</sup> Focuser comes to a resting place
- 1<sup>st</sup> Listener takes into his/her bodysense the essence of how it is for the Focuser, using empathy – feeling how it is – and compassion – as he/she would like to be heard.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Listener offers a symbol of the empathic essence
- This is the Double Empathic Moment
  - Compassion for self + Compassion for other
- Interactive Response – What touched the Listener?
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Focuser as Storyteller; Teacher
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Listener reflects without judgment, criticism, commentary, or advice
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Focuser comes to a resting place
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Listener provides Double Empathic Moment
- 1<sup>st</sup> Focuser begins Relationship Check
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Focuser continues Relationship Check to completion
- This ends the “Double Wing” of Interactive Focusing

# relationship check

SELF  
HOW AM I NOW?  
(HOW WAS I BEFORE?)

EMPATHY  
+  
COMPASSION

WITH PARTNER  
HOW AM I NOW IN THIS  
RELATIONSHIP?  
(HOW WAS I BEFORE?)

WHAT DO I ADMIRE  
ABOUT MY  
PARTNER?

“...FEARED AND  
SIMULTANEOUSLY DESIRED  
CHECKING IN...”



DR JANET KLEIN

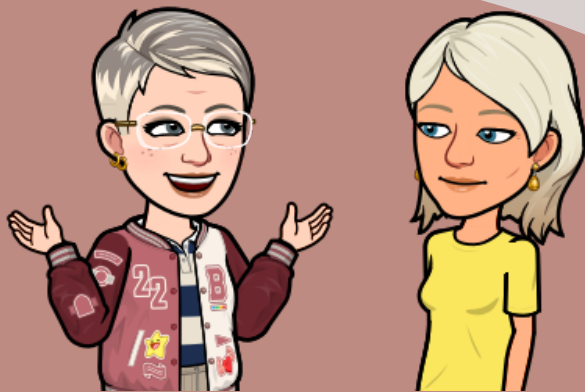
“The model includes a relationship check which I call an anomaly in relationships – the feared and simultaneously desired checking in with one another to see where you are in the relationship with each other and with yourself in this new moment after having shared yourself so deeply.”

# During the Demo

- Notice how each partner expresses their sense of how they are individually
- Notice how each partner expresses how they are with the partner
- Notice your own body sense of how it would be to express these two “checks” to a partner of your own

We invite you to share  
about your experience  
today.

no pressure



# “double wing”

- 1<sup>st</sup> Focuser as Storyteller & Teacher
  - Tell the Story
  - Sense into the body
- 1<sup>st</sup> Listener reflects without judgment, criticism, commentary, or advice
- 1<sup>st</sup> Focuser comes to a resting place
- 1<sup>st</sup> Listener takes into his/her bodysense the essence of how it is for the Focuser, using empathy – feeling how it is – and compassion – as s/he would like to be heard.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Listener offers a symbol of the empathic essence that formed from the Listener’s bodysense
- This is the Double Empathic Moment
  - Compassion for self + Compassion for other
- Interactive Response – What touched the Listener?
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Focuser as Storyteller; Teacher
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Listener reflects without judgment, criticism, commentary, or advice
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Focuser comes to a resting place
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Listener provides Double Empathic Moment
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Focuser begins Relationship Check
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Listener continues Relationship Check to completion
- This ends the “Double Wing”, or full session of Interactive Focusing

# references

Articles by Dr. Janet Klein



AVAILABLE AT [LEARNFOCUSING.ORG](https://www.learnfocusing.org):

“What is Interactive Focusing” by Dr. Janet Klein

“A Brief History and Hallmarks of the Interactive” by Dr. Janet Klein

“The Empathic Moment and the Empathic Response” by Dr. Janet Klein

Seminar Papers by Dr. Janet Klein

“Interactive Focusing”, published in “The Focusing Connection, May 2002



# references

## Books by Dr. Janet Klein



### *INTERACTIVE FOCUSING THERAPY\**

by Janet Klein Psy.D. 126 pages which fully describe Interactive Focusing. Extremely helpful to those who want to learn and teach the process.

### *EMPATHIC FELT SENSE LISTENING AND FOCUSING MANUAL\**

by Janet Klein, Psy.D.

### *INSIDE-ME-STORIES "SOMETHING IS HAPPENING INSIDE-ME!"*

Janet Klein Psy.D. Teacher's combined edition. Volume One: Grades 3-5 and Volume Two: Grades 1-2 The Inside-People Press, 1998 (Revised Feb.2000)  
A manual for children and teachers. It has stories that can be read to children to help them focus and exercises and suggestions to teachers.  
(Limited availability)

\* Available from [The International Focusing Institute](#)

# references

YouTube Videos of the  
Developers



[Introduction to Interactive Focusing with Janet Klein and Mary McGuire](#)

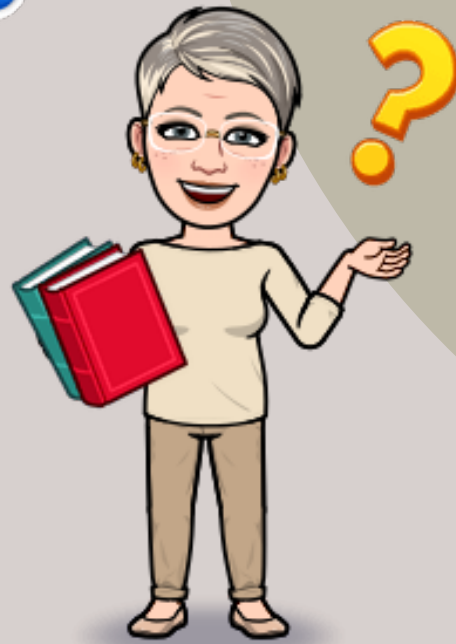
[Interactive Focusing - Safety with Janet Klein and Mary McGuire](#)

[Interactive Focusing - Storyteller as teacher with Janet Klein and Mary McGuire](#)

More Video Clips like these are available on YouTube

The Interactive Focusing DVD, Available for Sale through [Nada Lou](#)

Any Questions?



# next steps

REACH OUT TO US WITH  
QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS,  
COMMENTS

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER  
ONLINE COURSE  
OFFERED BY FII  
DEMONSTRATIONS  
CHANGES MEETINGS  
BLOG

VISIT “EXPLORING  
INTERACTION”, PART OF  
SANDY’S “LEARN  
FOCUSING” WEBSITE

INTERACTIVE FOCUSING  
OPPORTUNITIES COMING  
SOON!

STARTING IN JANUARY 2024  
ONLINE COURSE OFFERED  
BY BARBARA AT “LEARN  
FOCUSING”

# thank you

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