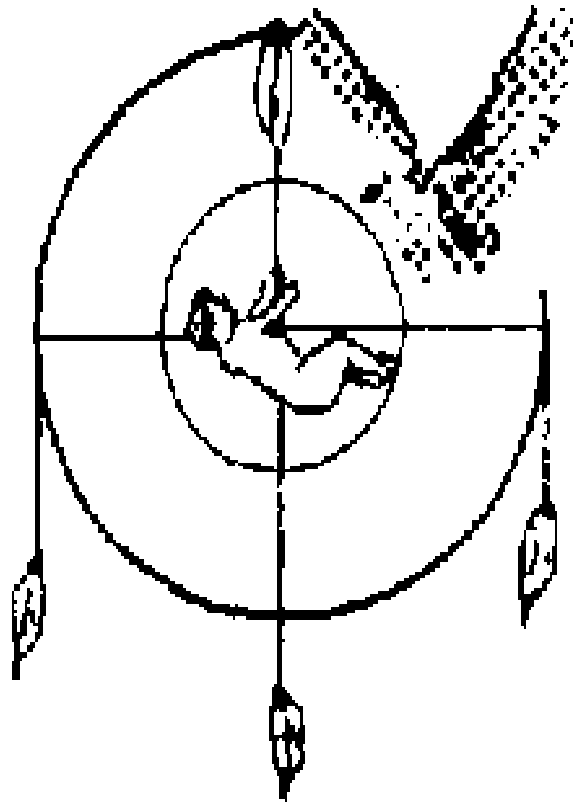


*...Aboriginal Peoples Training Programs*

## *PROGRAM OUTLINES*



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*Dennis Windego*  
*Aboriginal Therapist, S.F.P.T.*  
*Supervising Focusing Practitioner and Trainer*

**Dennis Windego is a graduate of the Prairie Region Centre for Focusing in Winnipeg, Manitoba and a Coordinator on faculty with the International Focusing Institute in New York. Dennis mentored with Shirley Turcotte for more than a decade. He is extensively trained in the therapeutic technique of "Focusing and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder", for therapists, counsellors and those working in the helping profession. Focusing is a way of bringing attention to your body and listening in a very compassionate way to what is there. Focusing is a remarkable respectful technique that helps one to develop and observe self, attuned to the body's knowing. Focusing is a gentle way to heal those parts that seem the most stuck and unresolved. By listening with care and compassion to those places in you that are the hardest to resolve, then those places can naturally begin to shift towards wellness. Special emphasis is placed on therapeutic intervention for Post Traumatic Stress due to childhood trauma. Focusing is a body-centered, client-centered approach to healing. Dennis is trained to develop and conduct therapy programs and groups, presenting topics such as family violence, family systems, beliefs, sexuality, physical and sexual abuse. This segment of the training enabled him to assist clients in working through their anger, grief and pain.**

**Dennis Windego is the founding member and principal director of the Aboriginal Peoples Training Programs, in Timmins, Ontario. Dennis works as a therapist and facilitates several healing programs. In this profession he handles all life issues, for example, conflict, childhood trauma, residential school issues, intergenerational abuse, sexual abuse, grief or survivors of torture. Dennis travels to First Nations across Canada and internationally, both on and off reserve. Dennis provides clients with one on one counselling within an out patient program settings. He assists communities in evaluating their healing needs and developing healing and aftercare programs. Dennis designs and facilitates training conferences for front line workers. He participates as a guest speaker at abuse conferences and healing circles for such organizations involving the judicial and health systems. The programs aid to facilitate community health, empowerment and self-sufficiency by building on existing community resources and organizational structures. Dennis provides training to community front line workers, to enhance therapy skills, suicide prevention, intervention, post-vention.**

**Dennis is a survivor of residential school, drug and alcohol abuse and family violence. It is with this knowledge and his personal healing journey that has made him the admirable therapist, activist and teacher he is today and the reason he can relate so personally with people. Dennis has helped many people in overcoming trauma and deal with unfinished business stemming from their childhood, thus enabling individuals to move onto productive, self asserting lives.**





***Dennis Windego, Facilitating Residential School Workshop in Webequie First Nation.***

## **Certification Program in Focusing**

### **General Program Information**

**Aboriginal Peoples Training Programs is pleased to announce the establishment of its Focusing Practitioners Program. We are associated with Prairie Region Centre for Focusing in Winnipeg and the building of a strong alliance with the Focusing Institute in New York. Shirley Turcotte, in Vancouver, is our International Director of training for Focusing and is whom Dennis works closely with to deliver this extensive training program.**

### **What is Focusing?**

**Focusing is a body-centred and client-centred approach to healing, developed more than two decades ago at the University of Chicago by Dr. Eugene Gendlin. Focusing oriented psychotherapy is based on the humanistic principle of practice; it is also congruent with indigenous healing practices which connect with the implicit and authentic self. Focusing connects with the psycho-spiritual aspects of personality and helps the client to gently sit with issues experienced in the body where unresolved problems actually exist and where they can be resolved. The Focusing technique allows clients to have total control of the pace and the direction of their healing. Because it is such a safe and gentle process, Focusing psychotherapy is particularly effective in the treatment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. It enables the clients to move through the healing process with curiosity and with respect and compassion for self.**

**The Focusing technique is based on the values of respect and non-interference; as such the training has been repeatedly requested by Aboriginal communities and by counsellors and therapists who work in cross-cultural settings.**

**The program is intended for counsellors and therapists who are interested in developing advanced clinical treatment techniques and strategies essential to the healing of traumatic life situations presented by many clients. Focusing is particularly helpful to counsellors and therapists who work with survivors of Residential School, sexual, physical, and or emotional abuse and neglect. On successful completion of the program, students are recommended for Professional membership as Focusing Practitioners with The International Focusing Institute, in New York.**

### **Who Should Apply?**

**The program is intended for counsellors and therapists who are interested in developing advanced clinical treatment techniques and strategies essential to the healing of traumatic life situations presented by many clients. Focusing is particularly helpful to counsellors and therapists who work with residential school survivors, and with survivors of sexual, physical and emotional abuse—including clients who seek treatment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD).**

**Applicants must have the following: Minimum of 1 year previous education and/or experiential training in counselling/therapy; Minimum of 2 years of previous work experience in counselling/therapy; 2 professional references/recommendations; personal readiness and suitability (autobiography, interview).**

## **Program Modules**

**Module 1 – Basic Focusing 1 and 2**

**Module 2 – Intermediate Focusing 1 and 2**

**Module 3 – Advanced Focusing 1 and 2**

**Module 4 – Therapy and Support Groups**

**Module 5 – Interactive Focusing 1 and 2**

**Module 6— Focusing and Spirituality 1 and 2**

## **Application/Selection Process**

**The program intake is limited to 20-22 students. Those interested are encouraged to apply immediately in order to reserve their space in the program. Spaces will fill quickly, and will be reserved on a first come first served basis. Students will be selected according to previous training and/or experience in the helping field.**

## **Course Description:**

**Basic Focusing I: interpersonal communication skills; advances listening skills, including body language, advanced empathy, principle of client centered therapy; role playing; and Gestalt therapy techniques; ethics and confidentiality in therapy practice; personal clinical, and professional boundaries; understanding of and practice in cross cultural settings; indigenous healing approaches; mind, Body, and spirit therapies, and healing ceremonies versus western approaches and techniques, including the difference between implicit and explicit therapy; basic use of the six steps of Focusing; definition and assessment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD); client safety in therapeutic relationships and techniques; grounding and management techniques in working with overwhelming emotions; and the use of implicit techniques, including Focusing, in working with PTSD.**

**Basic Focusing II: definition, impact, assessment, and treatment of abuses such as neglect and physical, sexual, emotional, or group abuse; impact of family, culture, class, gender, and politics on abuse issues; abuse statistics—Canadian and Global; family dynamics and treatment techniques; triangulation issues and their impact on relationships; attachment disorders and treatment techniques; child development and the effects of trauma on the development of children; dynamics and realities of family violence; roles in a trauma based family; intergenerational abuse and long term prognosis for families affected by it; assessment and treatment of traumatic bonding; dynamics and impact of collusion in long-term abuse; Biderman's chart of coercion; secondary post trauma prevention assessment, and treatment techniques; system induced trauma, including the impact and treatment of Residential School Abuses, dispossession, oppression and colonization: empowering approaches in healing, including Focusing therapy; and practice of basic skills and techniques leading a client through a focusing session.**

**Intermediate Focusing I: Van Der Kolk's brain imaging research on memory and PTSD; effects of single episode and long term trauma on psychological brain functioning; the impact of trauma triggers on brain functioning; declarative versus non-declarative memory; differentiation and screening for real versus false memory, indicator memory, and flooding and flashbacks; implicit versus explicit experience and expression of trauma; effects of single episodes trauma on coping mechanism in PTSD. Ie. Disassociation, splitting, traumatic bonding, projection, fragmentation, and attachment disorders; transference and counter-transference; management and techniques in working with the inner "critic"; normal ego states and human development; further development and**



*integration of Focusing in working with PTSD; and practice of intermediate skills and techniques in leading a client through a Focusing session.*

***Intermediate Focusing II:*** vicarious traumatization, its effects and treatment; the theory and dynamics of relationships; the use of Focusing and other implicit techniques in couples therapy; the effects and treatment of PTSD in relationships, use of art therapy, including the in treatment of PTSD; suicide intervention and the impact of suicide; addictions and PTSD, and the use of Focusing In the treatment of addictions; gender equality, gender differences, and gender issues in treatment; child pornography and pornography rings—including world wide impact; cults and ritual abuse, effect and healing approaches; forensic psychiatry research; working with “speechless” clients in a client centered way; boundaries and self care for therapists; management of administrative aspects of therapy practice, such as the use of supervision, case conferencing, and debriefing; charting, other documentation, legal issues, case management and analysis, including cross cultural issues in assessment; systems/team approaches to healing/therapy; further development and integration of Focusing in working with PTSD; and practice of intermediate skills and techniques in leading a client through a Focusing session.

***Therapy and Support Groups:*** group dynamics; principles of group facilitation; issues and skills in co-facilitation and team facilitation; group leadership issues and skills; personal clinical and professional boundaries and ethics in group facilitation; facilitation of empowerment in group process; differences between support groups and therapy groups in terms of structure, screening, content, and follow up; the structure and process of traditional groups such as healing circles and sharing circles; respect for culture and values in facilitation;

***Advanced Focusing I:*** understanding the use of medicine wheel concept in Focusing psychotherapy; management of affect due to trauma in the process of reviewing, understanding and accepting extreme incidents experienced by clients tools and techniques for working through defense mechanisms such as suppression, repression, disassociation, projection, borderline behavior, projective identification, Disassociative Identity Disorder; understanding and management of PTSD symptoms such as flashbacks, rage, numbing, self inflicted injury, i.e. Slashing, burning, hair pulling, eating disorders, addictions, obsessive compulsive behaviors, splitting/fragmentation, abreaction, intrusive thoughts, paranoid fantasies, suicidal/homicidal thoughts, abusive behaviors, nightmares etc. working with amnesia or hypernesia when trauma has occurred; the therapeutic use of client-centered imagery; and practice of advanced skills and techniques in leading a client through a focusing session.

***Advanced Focusing II:*** mental health issues in therapy practice; DSM IV, personality disorders and treatment techniques, and how to differentiate them from PTSD; overview of research on sexually deviant behavior; mood disorders and assessment; uses and application of serotonin re-uptake inhibitors (SSRI's) when PTSD is overwhelming clients; allopathic medicine in the treatment of PTSD; assessment of clinical depression and its impact on PTSD and its treatment; assessment of “memory depression” versus current depression in order to determine treatment; the use of psychodrama in treatment; the grieving process; working with speechless clients; and practice of advanced skills and techniques in leading a client through a Focusing session.

***Focusing and Spirituality 1:*** the role of spirituality and healing; ceremonies and rituals; essential spiritual boundaries in personal and therapeutic relationships; use of symbolism in the healing process; traditional Medicine Wheel Teachings, ceremonies and story telling, and their place in contemporary spiritual practice; traditional and contemporary

*aspects of spiritual journeys and vision quests; the role of Elders and healers; and practice in deepening the spiritual connection with the client in a Focusing session.*

**Focusing and Spirituality II:** *spirituality in a global context; indigenous spiritual healing values, and concepts; differentiation between religion and spirituality in the healing process; Whole body focusing sessions skills in working with “memory energies” both internal and external to the client’s physical self; therapeutic use of client-centered imagery; Focusing and dreams; and practice in deepening the spiritual connection with the client in a Focusing session, including working with dreams and client centered imagery.*

***Courses underlined: most but not all of the topics may be covered depending on time restrictions.***



*The following programs are designed to begin the healing process for individuals and families who wish to live more empowering and healthier lives. The workshops and services can be utilized by individuals in various ways, for example, for recovery from Post Trauma, due to illness, accident, abuse, violence or neglect, for chronic pain due to illness or accident, for stress management, depression, grief and/or complex life issue, for self awareness and personal development.*

## **OBJECTIVE**

*To aid individuals and communities to go forward on their healing journey. Through positive change, individuals heal, when individuals heal, communities heal. Healing results in well communities where alcohol, drugs and violence become matters of the past and happy constructive individuals are our future.*

## **PURPOSE FOR THESE TRAINING PROGRAMS**

*Our people have been subjected to cultural and spiritual oppression as examined by history through the relationship we have had with the newcomers in the last five hundred years. As people of this great land, our native ancestors were very accepting and hospitable to our guests. These visitors came with sicknesses and imbalances of all kinds, which we have inherited. Now we need to heal ourselves, together with our brothers and sisters of all races of the medicine wheel. We all need to regain our spirituality and our people need to find their heritages.*

*The principle of these personal development training programs is to assist people with redirecting negative aspects such as feelings, beliefs and attitudes into positive life serving ones. We begin the process of self-healing by learning to move from the problems to solutions and begin letting go of our past. In this way, we begin to look towards a healthy, prosperous and content future for our children and ourselves. We can achieve our dreams by recognizing the gifts we were born with, taking a risk and fulfilling our life positively through unconditional love and by doing the best that we can.*

*The workshops and services can be utilized by individuals in various ways, for example, recovery from Post Trauma, due to illness, accident, abuse, violence or neglect, for chronic pain due to illness or accident, for stress management, for depression, grief and/or complex life issues, for self-awareness and personal development.*

## **ABOUT THE PROGRAMS**

*The immense pain and suffering of the people resulted in societies becoming abusers of alcohol, drugs, solvents and worse of themselves and loved ones. The extent of the abuse is so overwhelming that it is difficult to deal with. The following programs are designed to begin the healing process for individuals and families who wish to live more empowering and healthier lives.*

### **Healing the Early Wounds**

*Healing the earlier "self" is developed because individuals, families and communities realized that they have to go through a healing process. The destruction caused by family violence, sexual abuse, the residential school experience, abandonment and neglect devastates people and the communities they live in.*

**Healing the earlier “self” is a 5-day intense personal development training program geared to begin to change the legacy. The destruction caused by the residential school experience, intergenerational effects such as family violence, sexual and physical abuse, alcoholism and neglect, devastates the people and the communities they live in. The immense pain and suffering has resulted in our communities to abuse alcohol, drugs, solvents and worse, themselves and loved ones. In more of the extreme cases, the trauma is so overwhelming that it is often difficult to deal with.**

**First Nation’s people have been powerfully affected by the destruction of their culture. To live with this pain, people turned to alcohol and drugs. Abuse of these substances helped destroy the family and created families who were victims of abuse and often these abused children became abusers themselves. This training program assists people to deal with their pain and begin the process of healing. Although healing begins here participants must realize this is only the first step. The process of healing is a long journey and people have to continue their healing when they complete the 5-day program. It is vitally important that people understand the need to continue their healing journey.**

**This training program is open to individuals and families who wish to live more empowering and healthier lives. A commitment to attend the five full days is required to achieve maximum benefits. Participants will gain awareness through workshop presentations on topics such as family violence, institutional abuse, sexuality, relationships, grieving, addictions and beliefs (intergenerational).**

**The focusing model will be applied to initiate a very personal, body focused process. Focusing oriented psychotherapy allows participants total control of the pace and direction of their healing journey. It is particularly effective in the treatment and healing of post traumatic stress disorder caused by residential school, illness, accident, abuse, violence or neglect, chronic pain, stress management and other complex life issues. Focusing has been especially well received in the Aboriginal communities due to its deep level of process referred to as an “internal vision quest.” Other methods of intervention will include art therapy, journaling, group work, peer support, role-playing, group discussion, music therapy, treatment intake and aftercare plan.**

**The overall aim of the program will:**

**\*Introduce a safe frame work for examining childhood issues and experiences affecting the adult, for example, observe memory, process feelings, dreams and physical symptoms from a safe distance versus reliving, re-experiencing the place of trauma.**

**\*Assist in understanding behaviours and body sensations caused by withholding overwhelming feelings, (isolating, aggression, eating disorders, etc), body sensations (anxiety, numbing, body pain, etc.)**

**\*Develop additional skills to manage childhood issues safely, gently and productively.**

**\*Develop a spiritual base for dealing with childhood, residential school, family, relationships and community issues.**

## **YOUTH WORKSHOP**

**The Youth Workshop is for young people between the ages 10 to 16, depending on the maturity of the youth. This training is designed to help young people recognize how they treat themselves and others. Young people are shown a better way to communicate with others. Within the program, the youth are given a lot of love, caring, understanding and patience. Adults providing the program take time to listen to them and to hear their**

**stories. They also take them to their pain and support them as they work through their hurt.**

**Young people, like adults, learn to hide their pain early in life and it is surprising to see the pain they hide within themselves. When young people act out, fight, drink, uses drugs, sniff solvents, are shy, withdrawn, suicidal, they are asking for help. Then they are shown how to vent their anger in a constructive way, without hurting themselves or other people. Many of the young have low self-esteem, are untrustworthy, perhaps dishonest and may suffer from neglect and abandonment. The program cannot answer these dysfunctional issues but it begins the process of healing caused by growing up in dysfunctional homes. They program helps the youth to deal with these significant issues in their lives and helps them begin the journey to recovery.**

**The workshop requires that youth receive support from within their family unit, along with community resources, such as, elders, NADAP, social workers/counsellors who are experienced with giving aftercare. Patience is one of the most important keys in assisting the youth in their growth. This program attempts to involve more parents in the growth of their children. Recovery is easier when the family unit, both parents and children, are involved. The family, as a unit, can see clearly the dynamics that are involved and better understand what their children are dealing with. The program gets families to sit together and set goals that will give direction in their lives.**

### **COUPLE'S TRAINING**

**This training is for couple's that are experiencing relationship problems, due to lack of communication, trust, infidelity or past marital relationships.**

**The training assists couples to identify the problem areas and to work at finding a solution. Through small group experience and working together, couple's learn how to resolve past experiences that affect their relationship. The power of love and acceptance is realized once the couple's find balance through equality.**

### **RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL AWARENESS AND HEALING**

**For survivors of Residential School, who are still silently suffering from the effects of their experiences and want to begin their healing journey to wellness and freedom.**

**First Nation's people are powerfully affected by the destruction of their culture. Residential School was one of the destructions that affected our people. Children were taught to be ashamed of who they were and where they came from. Our communities and cultural traditions have been dealing with devastating after effects. Our families were torn apart and are still suffering the consequences of this forced separation. To live with this pain, people turned to alcohol and drugs. Abuse of these substances helped destroy the family and created families who were victims of abuse. Often these abused children became abusers themselves, passing from one generation to another.**

**This program helps people deal with their pain and advance while healing. The program focuses on healing from the trauma, removal from family, feelings of abandonment, cultural destruction, mental, emotional, sexual and physical abuse. Using a combination of both traditions and western therapeutic methods we begin the healing journey to recovery. We start by building safety and trust between the participants and counsellors. Then introduce education and information sharing on residential schools. The short term and long term affects of residential schools and its effects on the people today and in the future. The healing journey begins here, when the participants regain their lost cultural**

*values, through education and ceremonies. The participants have an opportunity to deal with past issues and to turn them into more positive experiences.*

*People who cannot love or accept themselves can develop abusive, victimized or codependent behaviour. Training takes them on an enlightening journey where they begin to love themselves and understand how the abuse affected them. As people begin to understand who they are and why they are that way, then steps can be taken to change behaviour. Negative feelings can be changed into positive life serving ones.*

### **HEALING THE HEALERS WORKSHOP**

*For professionals or workers who want to heal from their own pain. In doing this work with self, they really become more effective workers. The helpers will learn more about dealing with family violence, sexual abuse and incest issues. How these affect the individual, the family and the community. They will learn how disclosure affects the client and family, both immediate and extended family members. Learn more about dealing with the offender and the effect that his/her return has on others.*

### **SEXUAL ABUSE WORKSHOP**

*This workshop helps people deal with their pain and advance in the process of healing. The workshop focuses on healing from the abuse, which begins by taking people on a journey into the abuse, however painful. The healing journey begins here. People who cannot love or accept themselves either develops abusive, victimized or codependent behaviours. Trainings takes one on an enlightening journey where you begin to love yourself and understand how the abuse affects the way one is. As people begin to understand who they are and why they are this way, then steps can be taken to change behaviours. Negative feelings can be changed into positive life serving ones.*

### **FRONT LINE WORKERS TRAINING**

*For professionals and volunteers willing to enhance their counselling skills. Workers will learn:*

- \*to run support groups*
- \*how to conduct productive one on one session*
- \*how to deal with disclosures in a positive none traumatizing way*
- \*how to develop trusting professional relations with their clients*
- \*how to empower their clients for self-growth*
- \*the importance of the workers mental and physical health*
- \*suicide intervention*

*We will cover the subject of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and how trauma takes place and affects their clients:*

- \*how to identify signs and symptoms of PTSD*
- \*how clients develop defense: suppression, repression, dissociation, displacement or diversion, splitting, denial, projective identification, stopping mechanism, intellectualizing, transference, projection and triangulation*
- \*how the critic affects the client's growth*
- \*understanding a health psyche*
- \*how memory is stored and what happens when a person is traumatized*

## **LOSS AND GRIEVING WORKSHOP**

*The Loss and Grieving Workshop will focus on recovery from single and multiple losses. The recovery process will be facilitated in a kind, respectful and natural approach to gain personal insight and wisdom. Participants will be able to determine the difference between suffering and grieving through a loss(es). When a loss is experienced, individuals tend to undergo stages of denial, guilt, anger, shock and isolation (which may lead to depression). This workshop assists participants on the process of grieving and being with the emotional aspects in a safe and gentle manner in order to promote the healing.*

*The goals and objectives of the workshop will introduce a safe framework for examining loss, for example, observe memory, feelings, dreams and physical symptoms from a safe distance versus reliving, re-experiencing the incident. Understanding behaviours and body sensations caused by withholding overwhelming feelings (behaviours, withdraw, alcohol use...), body sensations (anxiety, body pain, difficulty sleeping). Develop additional skills to manage loss and grief safely, gently and productively. Develop/enhance a spiritual base for dealing with loss/death.*

*People who suffer multiple losses and left untreated are prone to a condition referred to as complicated grief, which lead to post traumatic stress disorder. According to its definition, post traumatic stress disorder may result when a person suffers an event or situation that is outside the range of normal human experience, exceeds the individual's perceived ability to meet its demands and poses a serious threat to the loss of life.*

*Many of us suffered the loss of a loved one in a way that was traumatic, stigmatized or unexpected. One may have been present when these deaths occurred. Perhaps one suffered several losses in a short period of time. Important facts concerning the cause and circumstances of the loss may be unknown to us. These factors make the mourning process much more difficult.*

*When a tragedy occurs within a community the psychological effects may continue from generation to generation. In order to break this pattern, one must learn to validate the impact of losses, which may include suicides, substance abuse, family violence, sexual abuse and neglect. Acknowledging the impacts will validate the pain and suffering of an individual and the individual will not feel alone. We can begin to identify the factors that cause one to suffer unresolved grief.*

## **SUICIDE PREVENTION, INTERVENTION AND POST-VENTION**

*The principle of this program is to develop a crisis team or provide training to an existing team, which can work together to educate the community about suicide. Participants will gain the knowledge and skills to work with individuals, families and groups in suicide prevention, intervention and post-vention as the need arise.*