

# STAYING IN FOCUS

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APPLICATIONS OF FOCUSING

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### TEACHING FOCUSING IN BUSINESS: REVELATIONS AND CAUTIONS

By CATHERINE JOHNSON, PH.D., *Certified Focusing Trainer, South Africa*

*This article arises out of a Focusing program I ran in Cape Town, South Africa, in October and November 2007 with a group of business executives and embodies two aims--to record a personal learning experience, and to highlight several issues that may be helpful for others who are considering teaching Focusing in the world of business.*

#### Spinning Straw into Gold?

**Origin of the Program:** The brief of the program emerged from a presentation a colleague and I made to the director at a university business school. We proposed working with business executives, teaching them how to “think with the gut,” inspired by the work of Flavia Cymbalista with traders in financial markets. The director was taken with Focusing and the challenging prospect it offered for executive education.

I wanted to work with Focusing in an area outside of psychotherapy—with a “normal” as opposed to “clinical” population. Also, after 18 months of mostly unpaid work pioneering Focusing in South Africa, I was determined to drive a stake into the ground: “Here begins my mission to earn a living teaching Focusing.”

The context: My colleague, who had the business experience I lacked, withdrew from the program before we reached the design stage. This left me in an uncomfortable position. I was a very inexperienced Focusing teacher, largely self-taught because I live in South Africa where, until now, Focusing has not existed. Working exclusively as a psychotherapist, I had no experience in the business sector and very little experience facilitating non-clinical groups. Growing up in a small mining village in a working class family, I saw the world of business as filled with people to whom I could not relate and with whom I felt I could not compete. In my Focusing process at the time, I resonated strongly with the tale of Rumpelstiltskin and the predicament of the miller’s daughter whose father had promised her into the impossible situation of spinning straw into gold for a greedy king. Facing the prospect of solo facilitation with a group of business leaders was a knee-buckling prospect.

Beyond these personal factors, South Africa offers a complex context for skills development work. Our country has a history of institutionalized racial discrimination under Apartheid, and the social and economic inequality has become further entrenched under the current capitalist system. As a white woman teaching Focusing in Cape Town, language and race are real issues, which would have been pronounced if this program had, for example, been run at a public hospital across several levels of staff. With



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business executives, the issues are apparent by their relative absence. Although black economic empowerment is swelling at managerial level in some sectors, this group of ten people included only one black person.

Also the conservatism of South Africa's business environment has an impact. Soft skills such as "self mastery" and "emotional intelligence" are only inching their way in through individual coaching, but larger scale group trainings aimed at developing self-mastery as a leadership skill do not have easy appeal. The group that attended my program comprised ten executives (three of whom were women) who self-selected to attend the course.

**Waking the Samurai:** The six months preparation time for the program allowed for a rich process of drawing on Focusing to transform my "miller's daughter" angst into a sense of quietly confident possibility (which, in my Focusing process, was symbolized by the image of a Samurai warrior calmly and mindfully preparing for battle).

During this time, I drew hungrily on my support system—including my life-partner Richard Jordi, who is skilled in adult education, and a mentor, Maryse Barak, an experienced executive coach and trainer. Invaluable sustenance came from my Focusing process and the Focusing community: the living, nourishing work of Eugene Gendlin, Sondra Perl and Robert Lee; assistance from Ann Weiser Cornell and Suzanne Noel; and particularly the calm and resourceful presence of my Focusing coordinator and supervisor, Lynn Preston, in New York.

I used Focusing to work with my personal assumptions about successful, wealthy business people. The hurried white rabbit of Alice in Wonderland has previously come up as a symbol for my pressured personal lifestyle. While Focusing on my fear of the business executives, this symbol reappeared. This new rabbit was black and sleek, with a palm-top computer to replace his gold watch on a chain, but babbling those familiar words, "I'm late, I'm late... for a very important date." This was the "something in me" that could relate to the business execs I was about to teach. After this, Lynn and I worked with a series of dreams I had had about the workshop, opening the way for a slow-growing sense of courage and calm readiness.

#### **Business As Usual...**

**The program:** All participants but one had an individual pre-session with me. Feedback from the group indicates that these sessions were essential "safe" introductions to me as facilitator, and to this unusual, mode-challenging process. The one person who didn't attend an individual session struggled to find his feet in the program on the first few days. These sessions were vital in my own "experiential revelation," which I will explain later.

The program was designed as a three-day initial program with a one day follow-up a month later. I wouldn't repeat this format knowing what I now know. An initial three consecutive days doesn't allow time for integration and practice of the initial steps. A better design would have been to have two consecutive days followed by a day two weeks later and a final follow-up day a month after that.

The First Day was taken up with introducing Focusing experientially using Mindfulness practice as a container. Then, I guided the group in what I called a Body Storming session where they shared their experiences with the felt sense and their characteristic ways of "resonating" with it. This theme was carried through in the "Upstairs - Downstairs exercise," which Lynn Preston spontaneously developed during one of our supervision sessions. It provides the opportunity to tap into and ease the participants' fears and assumptions about being "too cognitive" (and thus unable to learn Focusing). To introduce the Focusing Attitude (which featured prominently throughout the workshop), I used Ann Weiser Cornell's "sensing an object exercise." I also taught Gendlin's six step Focusing Instructions.

On the Second Day, we concentrated on Listening, using Ann Weiser Cornell's experiential "listening-in-a-circle" exercise, plus a Focusing demonstration with me as the Focuser guiding a volunteer listener and finally, practice in Focusing partnerships.

The Third Day was taken up with the role of thinking in Focusing, which we explored through big group and partnership practice. Adapting Robert Lee's Domain Focusing, I used an exercise of "Titling an inspiration or positive challenge" and later gave the group a taste of working with a small "Action Step." This approach to working with thinking and "the issue" was my answer to having no training in Thinking At The Edge, which could have been very useful for this group.

**Take-home tasks:** I asked the group to start a journal—recording felt sensing in their day-to-day lives at home and at work, and monitoring the implementation of their small action step from Day Three. I also asked them to do

weekly partnership practice (and was pleasantly surprised when they spontaneously and with great enthusiasm organized themselves into partnerships on the spot). Lastly, I provided a CD to guide them in solo Focusing.

The Follow up Day involved checking in on the take-home tasks and introducing working with the Inner Critic, supported by demonstration and further Focusing partnering.

**Some Revelations:** In the weeks before the workshop, when I began seeing the participants for individual sessions, I realized that the “cold hard cynic” stereotype of a business executive wasn’t coming up! Rather the participants were stressed, sometimes troubled people engaged in a search for personal meaning that I could strongly relate to. This was my first experiential revelation.

Integrating this insight allowed me to turn my attention to the second emerging experiential “revelation:” Most of the participants had difficulty finding the “meaningful sensation” of the felt sense in their bodies. My various instructions (previously about 80% successful with other groups) like “Sense inside your throat, chest, stomach...” and “What comes in your body as you bring the problem X to mind?” and “Can you check inside if that’s the right word for it?” or “How is that in your body?” or even “How is that inside?” were meeting with difficulty with all the men with whom I did sessions. (The three women in the group were fine with my usual format.)

I could sense that this was unfolding in a very different way from my previous teaching experience. Concepts like “the body,” “resonating” and “going inside” were fragmenting in front of me. My conceptualization of the body had to change into an understanding of the particularity of individual experience.

I want to emphasize this realization in the hope that it’s useful to other Focusing teachers. My understanding of Focusing was shaped by my own experience learning it—I had been delighted to discover my body as a welcome corrective to living in my thoughts and emotions. However some people do not experience their bodies as their primary point of connection with the world of experience, but rather they experience thoughts, emotions or energy. Our concepts and our Focusing teaching can and must accommodate variation in people’s experience.

Having made this experiential and theoretical shift before I started the program enabled me to teach differently and brought some surprising results. Five people on the program who thought they couldn’t felt-sense and then that they couldn’t trust their felt sense when it came, realized they could. They reported on the follow-up day that they had developed a sense of “when something just doesn’t sit right for me at work” and were experimenting with allowing this sense to form part of what guides them in decision-making and taking action.

Less dramatic than the above revelations has been my growing recognition of the need for our Focusing training programs to include some kind of effective monitoring and evaluation. I’m taking this new direction in my work now, as a result of wanting to be able to follow up in a systematic way on the participants in this business program. As trainers, we need to know how our students benefit and how they sustain these gains over time, and if we’re looking for work, we need to be able to demonstrate the benefits to directors and financial managers. Writing up these experiences is also important in contributing to ongoing Focusing research; so I encourage trainers to find the energy of the curious researcher inside them, as they design, plan and facilitate programs.

### **In the Belly of the Beast**

**Some Cautions:** Working in the business sector requires giving particular thought to the integrity, authorship and control of your work. As a psychotherapist used to operating in a protected world of ethics, respect and trust, my integrity was sharply tested by the profit-making orientation of business. If you agree to work with a business organization, you will need to think carefully about how to ensure your optimal or at least bottom-line conditions.

With regard to marketing, I had to resist the pressure to bill the program as what I jokingly call “sexy Focusing.” Putting Focusing through the business world’s publicity machine would have created a slick, fast, instantly accessible creature that certainly wouldn’t still be called Focusing! I grappled with finding a middle way where the marketing would honor what I felt was most precious to me in Focusing. It was important to me that the marketing not hide the introspective, slowed down, awareness-oriented way of being that Focusing cultivates. I accepted that this approach would probably result in fewer business people being interested in the course.

Originally I had felt pressured to agree to an inappropriately large group in order to ensure that the business school would profit from the program. Three days before the program started I discovered that the director had offered a place in my program as a prize in a magazine competition to promote the business *Continued on page 8*



## FOCUS ON: *EDGARDO RIVEROS, COORDINATOR, CHILE*

By *DIONIS GRIFFIN, Certified Focusing Trainer, USA*

### HOW DID YOU FIRST HEAR ABOUT FOCUSING?

In 1974, as a psychology student at the University of Chile in Santiago, researching my thesis: "Why does Empathy Cause Therapeutic Change?" I read an article by Gene Gendlin called "A Theory of Personality Change" in *New Directions in Client Centered Therapy*. Though different from any theory I had encountered, there I found the answer to my question which is still a part of my life, and I discovered a new language, with a concept of "experiencing," with its own creation of meaning, "carrying forward." I was converted right away.

As a client-centered therapist, against interventions, techniques or rationalism, I was not a behaviorist or psychoanalyst, like most psychologists in my department, but had become interested in Psycholinguistics, or what type of language facilitates change. So Focusing fit. I translated Gendlin's article into Spanish and handed out copies around campus. Somehow it stuck the right chord and was well received.

### DID YOU START TEACHING FOCUSING THEN?

No, but I did start using some "experiencing" ideas in my practice. After the military coup, I found myself using Focusing with political ex-prisoners, some of whom had been tortured, and it worked remarkably well for them.

In 1989 I went to the US to meet Gene. He was moved and happy to learn that his theory on Experiencing had helped people to be alive physically and spiritually. On this trip I also discovered that Focusing had taken root in the US, flourished, and grown. I attended Gene's workshop on Dreams, which was a marvelous experience. Gene gave me his book on dreams, and I found that Focusing with dreams is a way of curing people, not just interpreting dreams.

I have taught Gene's Theory in universities since 1975, in Bolivia first and then Chile, as part of the undergraduate program in Humanistic Psychology. In 2000 I taught a Graduate Program at the University Adolfo Ibáñez where people really believed in me and Focusing. I should also explain that in 2000 I paid a second visit to the Focusing Institute and became a Coordinator. My post-graduate course, entitled "Focusing: a Dialogue with the Body," essentially taught my students to be Trainers. The course extended over a 9-month period and gave 120 hours of instruction. Over the past five years, I have certified 152 Trainers, most of whom are now therapists and psychotherapists. I have just gotten back from Iquique in the North of Chile, where sixteen new Focusing Trainers were 'born' on April 5th.

### TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR OWN DIALOGUE WITH THE FELT SENSE.

I was driving my car from Viña del Mar to Santiago, and I got a terrible feeling of anger inside me because I was not able to get support for my third book. So I focused on my feelings for about an hour. I discovered I would like to publish on my own with a new editor. I changed my schedule and went to see a new editor. I explained what Focusing was. We had a wonderful conversation, and at the end he told me, "I will present your book to the Committee, and you will have the support you need." Six months later my new book was a reality. From the implicit came the keys to publish it.

### DO YOU HAVE A SPECIAL APPROACH TO TEACHING?

In 2007 I received a teaching Award of Excellence at the University Adolfo Ibáñez. They said I used non-traditional, experiential methods. They called it "empathy teaching". They said, "You listen. You don't answer your students questions. You try to find out the meaning behind their questions." After the student has this experience, I find it



*"Focusing is the art of dialoguing with the stars of our soul, through learning to listen to the implicit language of our felt sense." from his book Experiential and Existential Focusing. Edgardo Riveros can be contacted at [edgardoriveros@vtr.net](mailto:edgardoriveros@vtr.net)*

easier to teach them how to complete the meaning from their felt sense.

Because it is a graduate course, we also deal with theoretical concepts like the law of change, carrying forward, the hierarchy of meaning, the direct reference, paying attention to what is functioning (instead of what is not functioning), and the creation of meaning from the body. I include humanistic authors like Mearleau-Ponty, Rogers, Maslow, May, but mainly Gendlin. From Gendlin, Frankl and Jourard, I have created “Existential Focusing,” which is a new design of the client’s future life based on his felt sense.

**TELL US ABOUT THE LATEST COURSE YOU ARE PLANNING.**

Well, Adolfo Ibáñez University is known as the top business school in Chile, although it offers many other courses as well. Beginning in August, I will teach a course for engineers and entrepreneurs called “Organizational Focusing.” Already 40 people have enrolled, so there will be two sections: Organizational and Clinical Focusing.

Clinical Focusing will cover how to handle psychological diagnosis and the felt sense that comes from the Implicit, plus the background feeling, depression and losses, how to use Focusing with dreams, and how to design a clinical program with the clients. I plan to stress how the felt sense, by experiencing new meaning, crosses the “frozen wholes” where issues get stuck, and creates a mutation of content.

In Organizational Focusing, we will cover the contextual felt sense, or the felt sense in a current situation. We will teach Focusing with another person, such as selecting or firing employees (This leads to a different kind of interview); Focusing on a vision for the future, or goal-setting for leaders; decision making of all kinds; how to select issues when clearing a space; coaching with the experiential dimension of Focusing; and TAE. We stress that Focusing enables an organization to deal with its “new territory,” not just its “frozen zones.”

**YOU HAVE WRITTEN SEVERAL BOOKS, I THINK.**

Yes, *Experiencing: the New Paradigm* was published in 2000; *Existence and Change* in 2001. My third book is *The Experiential and Existential Focusing*. I will publish my newest book, *Experiencing: the Dawn of Focusing*, when funding becomes available. This book includes 1) the history and evolution of Focusing, including TAE and some advance issues about A Process Model; 2) “A Theory of Personality Change”; 3) “Experience as a Variable of Change” (both my translations of articles by Gene Gendlin); 4) my own article, “Psycho-Diagnosis and the World of the Implicit.” (This article contrasts diagnosis, which is the analysis of what is not functioning, with the implicit, which is finding out what is functioning), and finally 5) “Contradictions and Frozen Wholes” or the way experiential change occurs. I am also translating “A Process Model” into Spanish. My home community in Chile has a pocket of Spanish-speaking people who are anxiously waiting to learn about its over-arching principles

**CAN YOU ADD SOMETHING ABOUT THE IBERION SUMMIT CONFERENCE?**

I am excited about the upcoming Focusing conference to be held next year from Sept. 30 to Oct. 4, 2009, a follow-up to the first Iberion (Spanish & Portuguese) conference in Argentina last year (2007). This vision of all the Spanish speaking Coordinators since the Costa Rica Conference in 2004 is currently seeking sponsors, in order to keep the costs down. It will have the same format as other International Focusing Conferences, including translators for our English-speaking friends, who are very much included; the main language will be Spanish. Our theme is: “Focusing: an Adventure to New Meaning.” Our world needs a lot of new meaning. We are working intensively with the Creative Committee. The conference will take place in a beautiful and international setting, Viña del Mar, about an hour and a half from Santiago, at Marabella by the sea.

**FINALLY, HOW DOES FOCUSING IMPACT YOUR PERSONAL LIFE?**

For one thing, I do not have a Focusing partner; I focus by myself. In Chile we are hesitant to speak of our personal lives with others; in the United States people can be more open. Elena Frezza is my closest Focusing sister with whom to talk, and I am happy to have her so near. Focusing has allowed me to be in contact with myself, with people, and with their true way of seeing the world, also to be humble with people, and to care.

Focusing needs to be taught as an attitude, not just a technique. Let’s teach it as a way of living, not something on the side. We need to have the same attitude that Gene has—one of “enthusiastic empathy.” Then Focusing can really change the way people interact. Focusing helps us see the world in an authentic way.



# APPLYING TAE TO UNIVERSITY COMPOSITION CLASSES IN JAPAN

By **SATOKO TOKUMARU**, *Focuser, Japan*

I have been teaching Japanese composition or essay writing, based on TAE (Thinking at the Edge), in universities since 2004. I taught eleven courses at three universities this year alone.

It is a joy for me to offer young people the opportunity to know and practice TAE. I set two course goals for my students, who are mostly physical education majors: (1) to have a deeper understanding of how body and language are related, and (2) to learn to use the language coming from the body. I believe it is of great significance to introduce TAE in a Japanese language course at a physical education university.

Challenges to teaching TAE in an educational setting are also presented by various institutional requirements:

- (1) Teacher/student ratio: There is one teacher for 50-60 students; this ratio requires effective teaching methods.
- (2) Time: Each class is 90-minutes. The work needs to be understood and generally completed within 90 minutes.
- (3) Content: Students new to Focusing and TAE need to feel some accomplishment with every classroom experience and to achieve some goal by the end of a semester. I arranged the fourteen TAE steps developed by Gendlin and Hendricks into twenty short “works,” designed to build on each other until the students find themselves practicing all the Steps.

Each class begins with a lecture on the day’s work, showing examples. Then, students, alone or in pairs, do the assignment, while I walk around the classroom, advising individuals, and answering questions.

The courses comprise five different levels: Introductory, Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Further Application, each of which has a purpose and “works,” with corresponding TAE steps (Table 1).

Table 1	Goal	Works	TAE Steps
Introductory	Let a felt sense form	1-6	1
Beginners	Speak and write from the felt sense	7-11	1-5
Intermediate	Find patterns from facets	12-16	6-9
Advanced	Build theory	17-21	10-12
Further application	Review the steps. Apply your learning to a specific theme	22-23	1-12

Freshmen cover Introductory and Beginning “works” during one semester. Sophomores review Introductory and Beginning and go to Intermediate. Advanced-level works are designed to teach TAE Steps 10-12 in a year-round course. Further Application students, who are few in number, use TAE Steps 1-12 for qualitative analysis of interview data, or in writing Masters theses.

**Introductory** Students have never heard the term “felt sense.” Week 1 helps them answer the question, “What is a felt sense?” I ask them, “Do you ever experience coming across someone with whom you are acquainted; you certainly know her name but you can’t remember it, and so on.” In this way I guide them to know more about the felt sense. The “Relaxation Work” helps them pay attention inwardly by taking deep breaths and getting relaxed.

The next few weeks are a preparation for TAE. TAE encourages us to pay attention, not to the usual definition of a word, but to what a felt sense wants the word to mean. As it is not easy for students to let go of the usual definition, I have invented two exercises, “Onomatopoeia Work” and “Analogy Work.” In the former, paired students are instructed to listen to each other while one describes the felt sense of being in “a favorite place.” I give suggestions to use onomatopoeia as much as possible. The Japanese language is said to have a reservoir of mimetic words or onomatopoeia. Quite naturally adults improvise and use mimetic words in daily life. Therefore, this “Onomatopoeia Work” gives them a good start.

“Analogy Work” uses cards with illustrated figures. A group of students describe the same card-figure using



*Satoko Tokumaru has taught over 1500 college composition students using Focusing and TAE in Japan.*

metaphors. Or one student asks the others to guess the described figure by using analogy. Both works encourage them to describe their felt sense with fresh words.

Beginning

TAE Step 1 is to write a short sentence from a felt sense, while TAE Step 5 is to write one or two (new) sentences. As it is difficult for students to experience the felt sense in its entirety or describe it in one or two sentences, I have designed several exercises:

I suggest, “Think of what you are good at that involves a physical motion, get a felt sense of when this physical activity is going well, and describe it in a short sentence. This sentence is called “My Sentence.” One student, good at basketball, wrote, “Be alert to every move. Don’t lose the field.” A gymnast, good at standing on her hand, wrote, “I grip the ground and thrust my weight against it.” What they have learned from Onomatopoeia Work and Analogy Work is useful when writing “My Sentence.”

TAE Step 2 is to write an illogical sentence or a paradox. Most often “My Sentence” goes no further than a usual logical expression. To help not get stuck with usual logic, I show template patterns: “A is B, and also A is more than that,” “A is X, and also A is not X,” and ask them to write My Sentence using the template. Through this work, they are gradually able to pay attention to what is intricate and subtle in their felt sense.

TAE Step 3 and 4 are to write the usual definition of the word or phrase, then write a phrase or sentence that speaks from the felt sense. These steps are exciting, but technically complicated, and cause confusion to students, distracting their attention from their felt sense. At this juncture, my “Fill-In Sheet” is helpful (see below). I explain what to do and give them time to do it. Conventionally, they have been taught to trust the dictionary definition and have never given thought to how valuable their felt sense is. They ask for my advice, “What should I write?” or for my approval, “Is this all right?” I always respond, “The answer is in yourself. Trust your felt sense. Write whatever is coming up,” encouraging them individually.

At this stage, with a good understanding of TAE Steps 1-5, students are asked to write an essay or a poem. I conclude with a poem composed by one student. The term, “this knowing,” refers to a student’s felt sense about his/her specific theme and the examples come from one particular student.

**Fill-In Sheet** (1) Choose a theme, and have “this knowing” as a felt sense. Write it down.

Example: *The first ride on my new motorcycle.*

(2) Stay with *this knowing*, and write down words or phrases coming up, such as:

Light. Wind. Wind pressure. Sound. Motor. Color. Heat. Heaviness. Lightness. Acceleration. Response...

\*Underline the key word(s).

(3) Write *this knowing* in one short sentence, creating words and sentence patterns freely. “My Sentence” temporarily is:

*The soaring sound is blocked by wind pressure.* \*Double-underline the most important keyword.

(4) Take out underlined words from the above sentence and leave a blank:

*The soaring ( ) is blocked by wind pressure.*

\*Let a word/phrase come and fill in the blank from your felt sense.

Write the usual definition of the keyword, and what *this knowing* wants it to mean:

(5) Keyword 1 <i>Sound</i>	(8) Keyword 2 <i>Heartbeat</i>	(11) Keyword 3 <i>Moving-forward mind</i>
(6) Usual definition <i>1. Vibrations that travel through the air</i> <i>2. An animal or bird’s voice.</i>	(9) Usual definition <i>1. The pulsation of the heart</i> <i>2. Excited feeling.</i>	(12) Usual definition <i>1. Going forward</i> <i>2. Gaining momentum</i>
(7) <i>This knowing</i> wants it to mean: <i>The sound of the engine, the sound of the wind, sound of the gear, vibration, voice</i> Dotted-underline key word(s).	(10) <i>This knowing</i> wants it to mean: <i>Feeling, response from the mind</i>	(13) <i>This knowing</i> wants it to mean: <i>The mind hurrying forward, wanting to move forward, wanting to see ahead</i>





(14) Write fresh sentences freely, along with a sentence with keyword 1, 2, 3...in the slot.

*The resistance of wind pressure doesn't matter, the sound is soaring.*

*The resistance of wind pressure doesn't matter, the heartbeat is soaring.*

*The resistance of wind pressure doesn't matter, the moving-forward mind is soaring. Light is passing by.*

*The soaring (sound) is blocked by wind pressure. The soaring (heartbeat) is blocked by wind pressure.*

*The soaring (moving-forward mind) is blocked by wind pressure.*

*\* Complete a poem, by changing the order, adding or deleting.*

Poem: *Route 7*

*Whatever resistance of wind pressure doesn't matter*

*The sound is soaring*

*Light is approaching from ahead*

*Whatever resistance of wind pressure doesn't matter*

*The heartbeat is soaring*

*Light is getting closer*

*Whatever resistance of wind pressure doesn't matter*

*The moving-forward mind is soaring*

*Light is pushing my back*

*Student's comment: "The poem expresses how I felt as a beginner rider when team-motorcycling, how the rider and the motorcycle were together going through the wind, with the changing effects of light."*



*Catherine Johnson continued from page 3*

school, without consulting me and without considering the implications of drawing in a participant who had no idea about the nature of the program or the demands it would make on personal openness, participation or self discovery.

When I arrived on the first day, I discovered that our venue had been shifted out of the pleasant room we had booked, into a small third-floor room with no windows or natural light, with faulty air conditioning and with our partnership breakaway space on the first floor of another building, eight minutes away.

Since the program ended, I have encountered a new challenge. I have been approached by one of the participants to run a similar program in his company, invoking demands by the business school director for introduction fees, "ownership" of my program design and material and an attempt to restrict me in an exclusive contract. None of these conditions was indicated at the outset.

This experience has led me to hammer another firm stake into the ground. I fully subscribe to the ethos within the Focusing community of sharing knowledge; however, if I work again with the business community, I will ensure the integrity of my work by explicitly retaining ownership of and control over my programs.

### Conclusions

The process of writing this article has brought me an answer to the question, "How do I feel now about doing further work in the business sector?" I am sensing an uprightness in my posture, a lightly lifting clearness in my chest, as I am moved and collected by this reflective writing process. What comes now is a knowing that I can safely open myself to doing more business work, because a "how" is emerging. This "how" is the Way of Integrity—integrity of the self, and of Focusing as both a methodology and a community.



## STAYING IN FOCUS THE FOCUSING INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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