

Peter Afford

London, UK

www.focusing.co.uk

I am a psychotherapist and Focusing teacher, living in south London with my wife Sue, we do not have children. I turned 65 in 2019.

Focusing

I met Focusing in 1984 in Sydney, Australia, but needed at least two years to learn it. It pretty much saved my life and changed everything! I have been practicing and teaching it ever since.

In 1990 I made it to Chicago for the Weeklong, where I met Gene Gendlin and the wonderful people around him. Afterwards I became a trainer, and later a co-ordinator for the Focusing Institute.

In the 1990s I joined with Rob Foxcroft, Barbara McGavin and others to create what is now the British Focusing Association. I have occupied the roles of chairperson and treasurer at different times.

I was on a steering group that explored setting up a European Focusing network from 2010.

Having enjoyed many of the International conferences over the years, I took it on myself to make the 2016 conference happen in Cambridge, and chaired the organising committee.

As well as teaching workshops on aspects of Focusing and listening, including ones on dreams, decision making, creative thinking and Thinking at the Edge, I have taught and supervised Focusing-oriented therapy in university settings.

A current interest is exploring the use of the felt sense outside Focusing practice in addressing the environmental threats we face collectively, including by people who have not learnt Focusing.

Other professional activity

I have worked as a counsellor and therapist, in private practice and in business organisations, since 1993. I gained an MA in Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy in 1998.

In recent years I have developed and taught courses in neuroscience for counsellors and therapists.

Life before Focusing

I got a law degree from Bristol University in 1975 but never became a lawyer. I spent six years in the international telecoms business, including a spell in New York in 1978, where I also began teaching meditation. In 1981 I quit the corporate rat race and went to live at the Findhorn community in the north of Scotland for a while. I got into organic horticulture and cathartic personal growth courses, and spent time living in spiritual communities before returning to London to train as a psychotherapist. I learnt a lot of things from all this that have stood me in very good stead over the years.

Publications

My book *Therapy in the Age of Neuroscience*, dedicated to the memory of Gene Gendlin, is being published by Routledge/Taylor & Francis in late 2019. I contributed a chapter on psychological change to *Theory and Practice of Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy* edited by Greg Madison. I have written articles on Focusing and neuroscience which are on my website.