

FOCUSING: A Force for Growth and Healing

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I come from Perú, a beautiful land, but also a land of pain and fear. Even though I was born on the “sunny” side of Perú, I was never able to be indifferent to such an unjust society. That injustice enabled the eruption of the famous Shining Path guerillas and the spread of drug trafficking.

At the height of this convulsion in our society, my husband lost his job, our only source of our income. Even though I was already a licensed psychologist, I was devoted to the care of our four children, one of them disabled

God gives light in difficult moments so we decided to emigrate. I decided I could only take the two younger children with me, leaving my only daughter and the disabled child in the care of my mother. Tears come to my eyes when I remember this experience...

After a time in California, we landed in Costa Rica where my husband found a job in a pharmaceutical company. The other kids arrived safe and sound and we started a new life. It was like newly weds...but with four children already.

Focusing appeared in my life in 2002. I took a two-year training for Focusing Oriented Psychotherapists, with Changes groups, weekly partnerships, attending the excellent Changing the Unchangeable workshop and the 2004 International Conference. Much hope arose in my heart from these encounters and I decided to work for peace.

Now, two years later, I would like to share a transcript of a Focusing session that came at the end of an intense time of inner work. By sharing this, I want to show what Focusing has meant in my life. The series of sessions I experienced in the last few weeks were sometimes astonishing to me — as we never know where Focusing will take us. But I am sure that Focusing always moves us ahead...giving us steps to carry on...to fulfill our lives in a better and more gentle way...not forcing...but accepting...our own pace.

SYRUP

This morning I woke up early with a word in my mind: “syrup”. What does this word mean to me?

Syrup...a medicine to heal all wounds...This is Focusing to me...the syrup “para sanar todos los males”...to heal all malaise...in a sweet, tender way...But I feel a little bad talking about “my wounds”...it is not that I don’t want you to know about what has happened to me...I just feel...I am being unfair...with God...that has given me so much...I feel I am unfaithful ...and that makes me sad...

...There is a part of me telling that I am unfaithful towards life..."which has granted me everything"

...everything I need for living...

...But something has been growing inside of me lately ...something like a little tree...which wants the light...it comes up...slowly...but securely...looking for light...

...This is a new voice I am hearing...within myself...There are two voices inside of me...one tells me I should not be unfaithful ...The other one...tells me...I have a right to live...a right to have my own space...How should I make peace inside of me...?

...Two voices...telling me different things...it seems they collide...but, do they collide?...What do you need to feel better...? Try to sense into your body...I don't feel anything...just wait and see...

...Now I feel they do not collide...my need to live...to breathe...is the need to surmount my limitations ...Family limitations...and others...my disabled child...my demanding husband...the holes in my education...

...my menopause!!

...Now I sense relief...what a joy...!!

...I am looking at these limitations from another angle...they are...opportunities to grow...!!

... "Se volteó la tortilla!!"... "Things have changed to the opposite...!!" ... "Eso sí me gusta...!!! (I like that...!!!)... Qué bueno...!! (How good...!!)

...And I look at myself differently...I look inside me and I have an image of a little tree growing...in spite of the many limitations...the tree...keeps growing...searching for the light...keeps growing...searching for the light...

...The limitations...which seem to suffocate me sometimes...don't matter...The tree looks for air and warmth...

...the branches find their way...through the limitations.....and keep growing...

...Now I sense a lot of light...the branches have surmounted the limitations...a good time to breathe and keep warm!!