

**ATTUNING TO NATURAL PROCESS ACTION STEPS:
How does one find the natural action, the unforced next step?
(*Maybe with a Little Wind from Your Fingertips!*)**

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We can prepare for an action by caring for it in the way we care for a felt sense: not doing anything with it, just being with it, and feeling into it. Then a natural way will emerge for us to act in the world when the time is right: this is a *natural process action step*.

INTRODUCTION

This article grew from my own experience of living with ongoing pain from an injury. There are many ways that I find meaning for my life and also contribute creatively to my community, even with daily pain and disabilities. Living with pain has become an adventure: each day, each hour I explore what is possible and learn to befriend whatever limitations arise. As a former ballerina I cherish even the smallest movements! These small movements led me to develop a series of attunements, which cultivate a natural process, and in turn lead me to my best action steps. These attunements are also the cornerstone of the Focusing classes I teach and are central to the theme of this article.

The distinction between “process steps” and “action steps” is especially vital for people in their later years, and also for those learning to live with disabilities from injury, illness, or unfortunate circumstances. I need to maintain a good level of balance so that I will not fall and injure myself; I need to rest and recover from exertions so my thinking can become fresh and resourceful again. Gendlin’s Process Model provides a springboard for recognizing when my impulse to do something is a process step, and how I can trust myself to move with this process step into my next action.

This article is for those who are aging, thinking about aging, or who may be carrying pain — at any age. I introduce a concept of natural process action steps and include examples from Focusing sessions and classes, which bring lightness and balance to the issues of aging. Isolating the problems of aging is almost like ostracizing. I trust that we can find a more community-based approach by honoring the talents and wisdom that come with aging or with disabilities, while at the same time addressing some of the immediate dilemmas.

Included are four sections:

1. A LITTLE WIND FROM MY FINGERTIPS

For people who experience any kind of physical pain, even those with so much pain that their movements, thoughts, and everyday life seems to revolve around their pain, Focusing provides a way to live with pain and return to some favorite activities. In this section I

tell my own story and offer three Focusing exercises for creating a new relationship to pain. You will see how Focusing leads to tangible support in my everyday life with pain, bringing me interesting ways to view our world, and helping me find comfort in what I am able to do. Included are three Focusing poems. Perhaps my Focusing story will be a springboard for you, a glimmer towards your very own Focusing comfort!

2. TWO WAYS OF FORMING AN ACTION OR PERCEIVING AN ACTION

Introducing a simple concept of *natural process action steps*, I describe how process steps and action steps inform the physical, psychological, and social well being of elderly Focusing students. Focusing can help in thinking about living — and dying — in the aging process.

3. THREE SKETCHES

- * A series of Focusing sessions and tutorials for a man 75 years old.
- * A weekly Focusing class for five months at an independent living facility for four women 80 to 95 years old.
- * An eight-week Focusing class at a church for six people 70 to 90 years old.

4. ATTUNEMENT — A DEVELOPING SEQUENCE

In this section I present a long version of a special form of Focusing attunement that includes some patterns from Gendlin's book, *A Process Model*. When I am teaching, I gradually expand the attunement processes over successive lessons so the students can experience a deeper settling into the space where we hold our Focusing. These attunements serve as a bridge to *natural process action steps*.

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A LITTLE WIND FROM MY FINGERTIPS

Fingertips send a gentle wind to the door, and it closes softly

In this example from my own Focusing, you will see how images that arise in Focusing bring me a sense of safety and help me to stay within my limits. As you read, you might place your hand on your heart . . . or your collarbone . . . and imagine how it would be for you to feel this Focusing session as your own.

- * *Focuser*: Staying on my side of the door and not rushing out after what is on the other side . . . feels like a kind of stillness, a quiet stillness.
- * *Companion*: You're sensing a quiet stillness, the stillness of staying on your side of the door, not rushing out to the other side.

- * *Focuser:* The door is . . . the door itself is almost invisible, and there is a kind of . . . pressure in me everywhere in a soft way . . . it is a gentle moment, more gentle than the tears that are sharp and shivery and cold.
- * *Companion:* You are sensing how the closing of the door is very soft, and more gentle than the sharp shivery tears.
- * *Focuser:* The moment of closing the door is so complete and so soft and real, it's so warm and a kind of a . . . kind of a whole body, whole body gently pressing the door.
All of me senses right down to the ground beneath me, as that door closes . . . as if my fingertips were sending a little bit of wind to the door at a distance and the door closes softly on its own!
- * *Companion:* You are aware of a wind . . . your fingertips are sending a wind to the door, and it closes softly.
- * *Focuser:* Yes, I am receiving that fully in me . . . that gesture that promises me that I have a place to rest, it promises me that this is my own Place.

During this session I sense into the tears that pain is bringing to me. Those tears turn into tiny flower buds bursting into even smaller clusters of buds. The flower bud clusters become a lovely buffer and container for the intensity of the tears and pain. Then (in the section written above) I become aware of how my fingertips can send a little wind towards a door, and the door will gently close, giving me a sense of safety and comfort. The wind is streaming from my fingertips, and my whole body is in the movement.

The gestures and images from this Focusing session come back to me again and again. When I most need a bit of comfort, I rest my eyes on a real door, and I experience that same sense of safety, a little ease and gentleness. Sometimes when tears are wanting to come, and something in me says that I shouldn't take the time to cry, I look towards a cluster of flower buds or to my tiny Focusing vase. This gesture of looking towards buds or vase (imaginary or real) reminds me to sense my body and let any tears and feelings and thoughts bring me back to life itself in this very moment.

In this Focusing moment I take time to sense the weight of my body . . . and my breathing. Then I am naturally drawn to honoring what is wanting to happen right here and now. My feelings and thoughts grow in ways to support whatever needs doing: perhaps a practical task or some more rest.

I experience a whole body knowing of how to ever so softly close a door, have my own space, just be, and let the world wait for awhile, even two minutes. Letting wind flow from my fingertips . . . I am carried forward by the gesture . . . comforted by the gesture . . . amazed at the gesture, and curious about how it continues to unfold in each day. The gesture, the door, the wind, my fingertips, and the flower buds in the session are my symbols of wholeness. Each of these symbols point to the living whole that is my life, as I live it today. Tomorrow other symbols may come.

Exercise 1: Finding Your Own Symbols of Wholeness and Creating A Safe Place within Each Day

You might take some time to sense into your feelings about this Focusing session. Can you recall a time, even a moment, when you experienced a similar feeling of ease, of comfort in your very own movement? Sense where in your body this comes for you? . . . maybe place a gentle hand there . . . and sense what comes for you now . . . perhaps a gesture, a thought, a feeling or another symbol, something like the door or flower buds, but your very own symbols of wholeness.

Maybe you would like to write a few notes about your response. How do you gather your symbols of wholeness to create a safe place for yourself within each day?

In the last parts of section 1, Little Wind, I continue to show you what helps me find my natural process action steps. Included are two more exercises for you to try, if you wish to. After each exercise I give you a short poem, which summarize for me what I feel from the exercise. The poem captures for me some of the spirit of the exercise.

The Joy of Being Out and About

Now I will share with you my joy of being out and about for a half hour! There is a feeling of ease, a moment of ease along the time line of a life with pain. When I have rested with the pain and let my spine settle, I can go out in my neighborhood. I enjoy meeting people at the post office and people on the street, some scowling, some returning my smile. With a “radical acceptance of everything” (Ann Weiser Cornell’s apt phrase) I walk with Focusing presence . . . being with all that is there. Walking lightly, I feel the air floating all around me as I move out into the world. The trees are steady and dear. This is a moment to treasure in a Focusing way, letting it be there as fully as it wants to be!

Exercise 2: Inviting You to Focus on Your Own Joy of Being Out and About

You could imagine that you are out and about in your neighborhood on a pleasant day, feeling an ease of movement and the soft caressing air, even for just a few moments . . . take some time to truly experience that ease within yourself, that gentle moment of being . . . how does it feel in your arms, your face, your legs . . . your hips, your whole body?

Notice what comes to you. You might like to write a few notes about your joy of being out and about.

Quality Time

Included in this section are six verses with commentary which come when I sense the joy of being out and about, a moment to just be with the feeling of ease. This ease is followed by what Gendlin calls a “stoppage” where I encounter a sense of shame that turns into my Focusing and more verses.

Hello, how are you?
Oh, it's lovely to see you
Sun shines in the sky

Let's listen with care
A word, a sigh, and a smile
Bamboo folds and sways

I mention to a friend that I had not done an errand, that errand I had planned to do several times over several days. But I found myself too tired . . . My friend seems annoyed, and a cloud of shame envelopes me . . . sensing something in me that is wondering if she is annoyed that I had not done the errand . . . or that I had talked about it . . . or that she didn't want to hear about my pain? Well, another chance for Focusing! Perhaps there is some good reason for her to be annoyed . . . if in fact she really is annoyed. I register all this quietly to myself, yes, she just might be annoyed.

Listen to whispers
Dance between our spoken words
Wind rustles and flows

Hark the whisper now
Speak, listen, and wait again
Leaf is broad and green

That may be enough for now. Quiet moments like this keep our friendship safe. Just walking together for another moment before she catches the bus and I turn to go home.

Time to say good-bye
Strong and willowy Bamboo
Sway and dance my friend

Hark the whisper now
Act, slow down, and stop again
Leaf is green and still

In the moment of ease and freedom, that half hour out and about in the world, I had talked about the missed errand, only to find that I may have annoyed my friend. Gendlin says that the past goes on in the present, and thus the past becomes changed in the present. Even though I may cause annoyance, impatience, and grouchiness in others, I do not necessarily need to try to make amends. My *natural process action step* is to turn quietly away and gather myself awhile in a Focusing space. Thus the past can soften in this very moment, and the past can soften in times to come.

Healing Time

Now I am inside the house again, lying down and letting the tears come once more until this round of Focusing is complete and I return to our everyday world. A private time of Focusing alone, as I have already done so many times today.

Goodbye, God bless you
Sun dips below horizon
We shall meet again

Time to go inside
Listen to my own heartbeat
Rest and breathe Bamboo

Time to be alone
Mother Earth will keep me safe
As pain comes and goes

Sometimes I wonder
Where is the healing power?
Whispering Bamboo

A quiet prayer
Gentle Wind cools my body
Blessed Mystery

Once again I listen
Time to walk and meet our world
Earth, Sun, Wind, Bamboo

Being With The Present Moment

Writing this article, I sit here with my fingers tapping on the keyboard, lighter and lighter, a bit of wind there (just like in my Focusing session). The wind in me flows all around, eases my eyes and the other hurting parts. Something in me lets me know that to sit in this chair is not easy. A pause, and a sigh, a moment of Focusing, sensing my feet on the ground, letting my eyes soften, then typing some more.

Focusing is a big part of living my life with pain as it reminds me to work at a project in small amounts, stopping to rest when the pain calls me to rest. When I acknowledge the pain and sense how IT is feeling, I also sense something in me that feels I am being chased by the pain . . . IT needs me to slow down and rest. I also sense *more*: something in me that finds it so hard to work at a cherished project in small bits! I am sensing something in me that wants to finish this right now! Sensing more into that, IT tells me that IT is afraid I won't ever finish anything on time if I keep stopping to rest. I let IT know I hear that IT wants me to finish on time.

Accepting what is there . . . Being with it . . . Letting it know that it can be the way it is for as long as it needs to be . . . that is the Focusing way. Also, I am sensing something in me that is saying it is not easy living with constant pain and just letting it be . . . Yet a sense of freedom can come during those moments of rest, when I am just being with pain in my body. As I rest, I sense subtle ways of letting the pain itself take me to feelings of more and more acceptance.

When I am with another person, sometimes I race to be as capable as that person, and the pain becomes much worse. Afterwards I must lie quietly for hours, just being there with more pain until eventually I can move about and slowly find my way again. Not so easy at first. Yet the presence of Focusing glimmers in those struggling moments. Trust, hope, and a gentle wind.

Exercise 3 — Accepting All That Is and Finding Your Gentle Movement

You could take a moment to settle into your body even more than you already are. Inviting a warm flowing energy along the soles of your feet . . . slowly begin to make very small movements, movements so small that someone in the room might not even know that you are moving at all . . . soft movements from within yourself, even from within the pain if there is pain in you today. Then rest a few moments. After awhile let your small movement come again, this time let it come gently from the air all around you as if you were a branch blowing in the wind . . . sensing that warmth along the soles of your feet . . . then lifting your breastbone, ever so slightly . . . feeling the weight of your eyelashes as you slowly open and close your eyes . . . inviting your body to let you know what small movement it would like to make.

Take time to sense that movement, your very own movement, even as you rest awhile. Become aware of how your whole body feels now. Maybe thank your body for what it has brought to you, and write a few notes.

A Gentle Conclusion for now and Time to Dance

Whether you have pain or not, perhaps you will enjoy your own version of the three exercises in this article. With Focusing and small movements, you too can find your very own life patterns, patterns that carry your whole self forward, patterns which are your own life direction and joy.

Time To Dance

Gentle sacred dance
Lifts the pain from my eyes and
Whispers of Bamboo

Oh, the soft broad leaf
An old friend touches my hand

Now we wait in peace

Wait for the whispers
In each corner of my soul
Hope rustles and grows

The pain in my eyes
Asks for truth and quiet time
Bamboo's dance unfolds

Oh, the soft stillness
Where Earth and sky become one
Let it be freedom

Freedom to flow with
Solitude and communion
Keep the sacred dance

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2. TWO WAYS OF FORMING AN ACTION OR PERCEIVING AN ACTION

Pain can teach us a great deal. For whenever people have some limitation, physical or otherwise, there is a possibility of a wider way of being and living. This wider way can not only fill in the gaps of the missing talents or abilities, but also bring creative ways of contributing to our world. This is the basis for natural process action steps.

A. A NATURAL PROCESS INTO ACTION STEP FROM THE INSIDE (natural process action step)

A process step is a term referring to the process of developing a sense of something, such as a sense of a situation or a sense of a person. A process step can naturally lead to an appropriate action: a natural process action step. This kind of action step comes from a process inside of us. It comes by sensing what is implied by our whole life situation and the very moment that we are living. This way of acting in the world naturally develops from a process of being aware of, and in tune with, our inner authenticity. We prepare for this action, caring for it in the way we care for a felt sense: not doing anything with it, just being with it, and feeling into it. Then a natural way will emerge for us to act in the world when the time is right: this is the natural process action step.

B. AN IMPOSED ACTION STEP FROM THE OUTSIDE (imposed action step)

An action step is doing something, performing an action. The action can be physical or mental or even speaking. In contrast to a *natural process action step* described above, there is a kind of action which comes when a person is driven by rules or assumptions that are not in harmony with the person's best interest. I call this an *imposed action step*. We could think of this action step as imposed from the outside, as something we do because of a certain social structure.

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3. THREE SKETCHES

The distinction between *imposed action steps* and *natural process action steps* can be very useful. I often benefit from watching how I get caught up in what I am "supposed" to do rather than what is really needed. In developing Focusing lessons for seniors I find ways for them to become more conscious of which kind of action they are engaged in at any given moment. The following case studies bring examples of these two ways of forming an action, or perceiving an action, and how the students learn to choose their best next steps. The students learn to sense into what is needed and to receive feedback from their environment, or situation, before they act.

Bradley The Engineer

Bradley, a 75 year old engineer, arrived for his biweekly Focusing session at my studio. He came in limping with a very swollen foot. At the end of the one-hour session, Bradley remarked that the pain and swelling were gone; he announced that his foot was okay, and he could get on with his life.

Before he left the studio, I took some time to talk with Bradley about the distinction between an *imposed action step* and a *natural process action step*. He listened intently as I invited him to sense into that in him which welcomed the recovery of his foot; and at the same time to hold a space for the whole of his process, including that in him which might not be ready for leaping back into action immediately. Thus, I encouraged him to welcome all aspects of his experience and sense into the whole of his situation.

Bradley wanted his foot to be well, and as he became more and more in tune with this wanting during his session, he actually experienced what it was like for his foot to be well! He was in touch with the implying, the life forward movement, of his whole self wanting to be well, and in Focusing he experienced himself moving towards that wholeness.

After his Focusing session Bradley felt that his foot was just fine. He walked out the door thinking he would be back at his workshop within minutes. He got into his car and started driving to his workshop.

Until this moment, Bradley seemed to use Focusing like an instrument or an applied medicine to help his foot. But during his Focusing he had expanded his awareness and he became more open to his own process. Although he “thought” he would be driving to his workshop, Bradley was amazed to find himself turning around and going in the opposite direction to the emergency room of the nearby hospital. We see here the exact moment when Bradley chose between the two kinds of action steps. The *imposed action step* of driving to his workshop was transmuted into the *natural process action step* of driving to the hospital instead.

The emergency room staff took one look at Bradley’s foot, and they could tell by the color that it was a serious condition. Bradley was given vital medical treatment that saved his foot and his life! Two days earlier Bradley had stepped on a barnacle, and now he had a deadly barnacle poisoning in his foot.

Bradley’s response to his Focusing session shows how a vital process step developed from his inner sensing, in other words how his process carried forward. Bradley is an engineer, and he is clever at fixing things. He knows about making new arrangements of parts. Right at the end of his Focusing session, Bradley thought he could take the *imposed action step* of going back to work, thinking that his foot was okay. Then following his felt sense, which he had developed during the session, he ended up just where he really needed to be and got the medical help he needed. Thus the wishful *imposed action step* of going back to work immediately was transmuted into his *natural process action step* of driving to the hospital. This occurred because Bradley remembered his inner sensing and followed it. The doctor’s diagnosis that his foot needed treatment was the feedback Bradley needed in order for him to live and carry on with his life.

Alicia and Her Piano

Over a period of five months I taught a weekly Focusing class for four women, 80 to 95 years old, at an Assisted Living Center. We developed themes from Levels One and Two of Inner Relationship Focusing and included gentle Tai Chi exercises for five minutes at the beginning and end of the forty-five minute meetings. These women had been participants in a Tai Chi class that I taught at the center over the preceding three years. It was a natural development to move into the Focusing lessons at a time when they had become less able to move comfortably for a longer Tai Chi class.

Andrea Koch (2009) writes, “some movements might be less flexible with age and there may also be some processes and abilities which are widening at the same time. There are some things in a Focusing process that will come more naturally for older people. Examples are the slowness of a Focusing process, the-sitting-with-what-comes in Focusing.”

And older people have a special way of sensing. They have to sense carefully to keep enough balance to move from one place to another. The following sketch includes a clear example of *natural process action steps*: how doing things in a brand new way, with a new kind of strength, brings much joy and a new kind of balance!

When we first started meeting for Focusing classes, a petite woman, Alicia, was especially sad and tired. Each day she struggled and tried to keep up with activities that were beyond her physical limits. Even her hearing was not what it had been only two months prior. She strained to catch every word when people talked with her. Alicia's stance had become a kind of cringing contraction, making it all the more difficult for her to even breathe.

Slowly Alicia became more and more interested in how Focusing acknowledged all of her life, and she felt supported by the exercises in our little class. One day when we were engaged in a Round Robin Reflecting Circle, Alicia's eyes suddenly sparkled, and her arms danced in the air above and around her . . . Alicia had found her *natural process action step*! She reached for her walker and slowly rolled her way over to the piano in the corner of her room. That piano had not been played for years because Alicia had been too weak. Now Alicia sat in the tiny seat of her walker, and she played a lovely tune. There were tears of amazement and wonder for each of us in that moment, and a hushed silence after the music. A day to remember always!

We know that something remarkable happened in Alicia's Focusing, but it is not clear precisely what it was. This is the nature of Focusing. Until now Alicia had been living in restricted ways; she felt at the mercy of *imposed action steps*, which had come from outside of her. Then in her Focusing she became more and more able to trust her deeper self; she grew in awareness and started living by sensing her inner process.

When we met for class the following week, each woman spoke of how each day during the week she had found many occasions for letting go of imposed action steps. Each of the women developed natural process action steps inspired by Alicia's music! Alicia had found ways to care better for herself and to live naturally within the joy of her music even within the physical limitations that she encountered each day.

Susan Tries to Sell Her Trinkets

One summer I gave eight Focusing classes at a local church. Six men and women, 70 to 80 years old, participated. Only a few knew each other before coming to my class. At the beginning of the series, the students seemed unhappy and without much energy. They were hesitant to write on the writing blocks and tablets of paper I provided, and did not look into each other's eyes when talking.

In this group we covered the basic syllabus for Level One of Inner Relationship Focusing. We did lots of Round Robin Focusing. As the lessons developed, I wrote notes in large letters on a big easel and welcomed each person to let me know what they would like me to add to the notes. By the third class they started writing for themselves and enjoyed chatting with each other.

During the first class, Susan, a woman with beautiful flowing garments, very much wanted each of us to buy some small trinkets that she had for sale. Susan felt compelled to use the gathering of the class as a mini market place. There was an air of sadness in this example of an imposed action step.

During the following classes Susan found a growing interest in the Inner Relationship Focusing Level One readings and practice, and she became absorbed in the special attunements and exercises similar to those in Sections 1 and 4 of this article. As soon as Susan relaxed into the ambiance of Focusing, she enjoyed the Round Robin exchanges and found her natural process action steps.

By the end of the eight weeks other small and wonderful natural process action steps developed for each student. The participants were more and more kind to each other, and they genuinely took an interest in each other's Focusing. This was a natural development, a small and lovely change since the beginning of the series.

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4. ATTUNEMENT — A DEVELOPING SEQUENCE

A Focusing attunement marks the beginning, middle, and end of the classes and sessions described in this article. Over the weeks I gradually expand the attunement processes so the students can experience a deeper settling into the space where we hold our Focusing. These attunements serve as a bridge to natural process action steps.

Included in the sample attunement below are some patterns from A Process Model and Focusing. Also included are the following touchstones: soles of feet, palms of hands, top of head; breathing along left side and right side, noticing the differences; gentle contra-lateral gestures; mid-line, easy diagonals; moving inside to outside. There is a special emphasis on the middle line of the body, that center of Being — that middle which grows and flows and becomes a place for holding all of our experience. The sample is long to give you an overview of how the attunements flow. In actual practice we may use only one or two sections or an abbreviated version.

SETTLING

Taking a moment to sense your surroundings
... sensing if you would like to be more comfortable
... sensing for a way for that to happen.

Maybe there is a pillow, or a different way of sitting
... maybe you would rather sit on the floor than on a chair
... maybe stand up
... or give your self a soft hug
... maybe even place your warm hand on your heart or on your forehead
... or maybe a gentle hand on your belly.

Sensing how you can be that much more comfortable during this time of tuning in to your very own process.

YOUR RIGHT SIDE

Becoming aware now of the whole right side of your body
... your right arm and leg, the right side of your ribs
... the sole of your right foot, becoming warm and flowing
... the palm of your right hand
... the right side of your face and neck
... even your right ear.

Maybe there is a small movement that wants to come
... a wave
... or a circle
... maybe a shifting into your whole right side
... the right side of you.

Including the right side of your room
... maybe a wall with a picture
... maybe there is a window with a garden
... maybe a bird with a river
... or a street with a car
... something you are aware of on the right side of you.

The right side of what Gendlin calls your “skin envelope” melts into the way you are just now, and where you are just now.

Letting your breathing flow along your right side
... including the right side of your environment
... letting it flow
... maybe in a spiral
... maybe on a wave
... sensing your own pattern.

Your very own breathing flowing along your right side.

Maybe there is a color, a texture, a warmth, or a coolness
along the right side of you.

Now slowly bringing your awareness to the palm of your right hand, sensing the quality,
maybe a gentleness there
... and slowly awareness moves to the sole of your right foot
... and then maybe even the top of your head on your right side.

Resting another gentle moment in awareness of your right side.

THE MIDDLE OF YOU

Gathering your awareness again and slowly coming to the middle of you
... including your belly, your throat, your heart
... sensing in the middle of you.

Settling in there now
... maybe there is a kind of weight, a kind of plumb line
... or maybe it is soft like a feather.

Being there, finding your very own sense of your middle.

YOUR LEFT SIDE

Just resting, gathering your awareness for a moment
until it is time to move to
... your left side, the whole left side of you.

Being aware of your left side
... sensing how this side might be a little different
from your right side.

Sensing your left arm
... your left leg
... the left side of your ribs and back
... your left ear.

Maybe there is a smile that comes as your left ear listens for a
sound, the sound outside or inside the room where you are.

Settling your awareness softly now towards your left eye
... the left side of your nose
... and whatever place along your left side that you would
like to sense into for this moment.

Becoming aware of the breathing on your left side
... letting your breath be a little more full.
It can be full and soft at the ... same time.

Or perhaps you want to wake up a little and your breath
can be a bit more lively. . . even sparkly
... Sensing for the quality of breath that is wanting to be there now.

Sensing an awareness of your “skin envelope” along the left side of you . . . and then bring-
ing awareness to your room or wherever you are.

Maybe it is a sunny day and you are outside.

Maybe you want to pretend it is a sunny day and you are outside.

. . . letting your awareness just be there on your left side for another moment.

Maybe there is a movement, a pattern, or some way that your left side is speaking to your awareness

. . . Gently being with whatever you are sensing there on your left side.

THE MIDDLE OF YOU

Then slowly, slowly coming back to your midline, that glowing line in the middle of you that includes your belly, your throat and your heart

. . . sensing for what areas

. . . are calling for your awareness along your midline, the middle of you . . . and then just resting.

SETTLING INTO A PROCESS MODEL CIRCLE

Now including in your awareness your whole body resting into the support of where you are

. . . your whole body being supported by the ground, the earth

. . . and being supported by this Process Model Focusing circle.

We are going to take a little journey for a few more moments before finding that comfortable

. . . stopping place.

PLANT SPACE

Being aware of the breathing in you

. . . just as the plants breath in the garden

. . . your breath comes and goes

. . . sensing the lovely processes that happen with the breath

. . . the exchange of oxygen and other gases in you breathing just like the plant

. . . you in your plant body can rest now in your breathing.

Just like the plant in the sunlight turns toward the sun

. . . you can turn toward the sun just now.

Maybe with a shoulder gently curling, looking in the direction of the sun.

Maybe pointing your nose, sniffing the slight warmth of the air in the winter sunlight

. . . then settling back into your garden bed like the plant which you are.

Now feeling your feet like roots down, down into the ground
... and
let your feet push a bit
... push into the ground!
... noticing the waves that come into your body
... one foot pushes
... the other foot pushes, a kind of trot, trot, trot, a push, push, and another gentle push
... easily, lightly, finding a small movement there
... and
... then letting it go.

Resting a moment,
... and now the next time you find that small movement
... there you are, leaping out of the garden bed!

ANIMAL BEHAVIOR SPACE

Now you are running, running as the animal you have become!
... leaving the plant space just for a moment now, although it always does stay with you.
Awareness now goes to being in your animal space
... looking for the nut to bury
... scurrying up the tree to watch the branch shiver and shake
... finding your own animal pattern for this moment.

DANCE OF THE HOMINID

Then after a long . . . long while . . . you become a hominid, something between . . . animal
and human being.
... One day by the river you find a stick
... picking up that stick in your paw
... that is almost a hand.
You see another hominid on the other side of the river who also
has a stick
... suddenly there becomes a dance between the two of you!
... With the water of the river flowing onwards between you.

PROCESS MODEL CONTINUES

In Process Model, a first movement could be from being a plant to being an animal
... sensing in you the running and the delight in moving freely, no longer bound to the
garden bed
... now you are in the behavior space of purposeful ways of moving in your world, gathering
and resting, chasing and collecting.

Then comes a new movement, a kind of symbolic dance
... sensing you with the stick in your paw that is almost a hand
... hominid gesturing to the other across the flowing river.

LANGUAGE SPACE

After a long while, many weeks and chapters
... lots of reading and sensing in the Process Model book
... we come to the symbolic space of
... language.

Sensing now how that is
... just sensing in your body now
... as you rest into your support
... bringing your awareness again
to your breathing just as the plant that is you too
... and the weight of you resting there.

The plants: sensing you as plant.

The animals: being aware of you as animal
... and your behavior ... sensing how your behavior becomes a space for you to move
forward in
... to move forward in so many ways ... behavior space.

Then sensing the space of language. . .

All these ways of being ... mixing together in your own special way.

Resting your awareness a moment as we come even closer to that comfortable stopping
place
... there is one more leap to sense, when we come to the
... Focusing space!

THE FOCUSING SPACE

Sensing the journey of A Process Model, all along to Chapter Eight
... where everything ties together and we find the ground of Focusing.

Those of you who like to read ahead might enjoy reading there
... and for now just sensing in you a glowing wonder about
something more than language
... a wider way of sensing and being
... sensing the crispness of your life carrying forward
... patterns folding one into the other.

YOUR COMFORTABLE STOPPING PLACE

Slowly turning your awareness one more way
... maybe giving yourself a soft hug
... or maybe pressing your hand on your thigh
... a way of welcoming your very own movement
... towards that gentle stopping place
... finding you own way
... to come back.

Attuning to your very own natural process and steps!

* * * * *

ENDNOTE

A Round Robin Reflecting Circle in Focusing is a way of pairing people so each person has a turn with someone in the group and does not repeat until each in the group has had a chance to speak. For example:

- Alicia speaks to Betty,
- Betty then reflects back to Alicia what she heard Alicia say, or the sense of what she heard when Alicia spoke,
- Alicia then responds to let us all know how Betty's reflection feels to her:
 - Perhaps one of Betty's words or phrases resonated especially well for Alicia
 - What Betty reflected may have deepened Alicia appreciation of her own process
 - Or perhaps Betty's words sound completely different from what Alicia wanted to say
 - Perhaps something new comes for Alicia,
- Now Betty has a turn to speak about her own process.
- And Cecilia reflects for Betty,
- Who in turn lets us know how Cecilia's reflection resonates for Betty, etc.
- Then Cecilia has a turn to let us know about her process
- And Dianna reflects for Cecilia,
- Then Cecilia has a chance to respond.
- Now Dianna has a turn
- And Alicia reflects for Dianna,
- Who then says how Alicia's reflection was for her.

Each person has a chance to speak about her process and be responded to by the person next to her in the Round Robin. Sometimes several people in the group will become engaged in the reflection process; then the Round Robin pattern still holds, but others in the group can chime in with their responses. After that, the Round resumes again as the next person in the circle takes her/his turn to speak about his/her own process.

* * * * *

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