

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Before we embark upon each *Folio*, it is our custom to post a letter to the Focusing community to get a ‘feel’ for what topics are of current interest to our very diverse group. Needless to say, we never know what the current areas of interest or requests will be, and as Editors, get something of a thrill as we watch the responses come in.

To our surprise—and delight—many people requested/suggested the topic of Neuroscience, and how the recent findings in that field might contribute to the Focusing process, as we know it. Further, we received suggestions that we view Focusing from the perspective of Contemporary Science and Quantum Physics and Genetics, adding high quality empirical research on the implications of various applications to Focusing. We hope that this issue on *Focusing, Research, and Contemporary Science: New Movements Forward* begins to touch upon what we see as the cutting edge of Focusing.

We are in a period where science, especially areas such as neuroplasticity and psychology—in particular process-oriented models such as Focusing—are beginning to ‘find’ each other. For example, when we experience a felt-shift in the body, a process is also taking place in the brain. When Focusing, we don’t tend to think that much about what is actually happening in our brains given that our attention is so naturally focused in the body, but indeed, ‘something’ in the brain is, in fact, getting ‘rewired’ with each shift or *ahha*. Alternatively, we can study what exactly happens in a brain when we experience a felt-shift in consciousness, and can even get the brain to memorize what the felt-shift has given us—and—when we do, we are actually ‘crossing’ a scientific process with an experiential process.

Said another way, and in the context of actually crossing Focusing and Science, no matter how hard we try to change our brains, e.g. how we ‘think’ about something (or things, or points of view) unless the body actually ‘buys’ it, the change will not last—so we see the marriage between Focusing and Science as a both/and process—and indeed very timely.

Our writers for this issue each have their own distinctive understandings of these crossings that utilize two different areas of the brain, as well as their research on the topic.

In our opening article, *Process Generates Structure: Structures Alone Do Not Generate Process*, Gene Gendlin expands our understanding of how things “are” more intricate than the current models favored by science, wherein an object’s structure determines its process. Gendlin suggests that science can be limited because it often defines the world in terms of objects rather than *process*. But instead, he proposes a much bigger picture: that the way life unfolds is that processes interacting with each other implicate endless possibilities.

Bruce Nayowith, author of *Folio’s Zigzagging Our Way to Expanded Possibilities for Focusing*, outlines how certain unexpected discoveries in physics and epigenetics may be applied to Focusing, allowing us to expand our understanding of the ‘more’ that may be ahead for Focusing practices. For example, you will read about how startling findings in recent scientific experiments may encourage us to explore the possibility that through the

combination of intention and bodily-felt connection, we can influence much smaller (cellular) and much larger (social) systems than we may have imagined.

The relatively new field of affective neuroscience affirms Gene Gendlin's revolutionary insight that human beings (and all living organisms) are *processes* that cannot be understood as discrete, static units, nor apart from each other or their environment. Leslie Ellis, a Focusing-Oriented psychotherapist, presents fascinating data exploring current neuroscientific research about the brain in interaction, particularly Focusing on mutual emotional regulation, attachment, and empathy. Her article, *The Attuned Brain: Crossings in Focusing-Oriented Therapy and Neuroscience*, is rich with specific examples demonstrating how certain Focusing-Oriented-Therapy processes, can facilitate emotional healing.

In a reversal from the previous articles which described how science might influence Focusing, Carol Nickerson's, *Attachment and Neuroscience: The Benefits of Being a Focusing-Oriented Professional*, argues that neuroscience is finally catching up with Focusing. She discusses how the fundamental philosophy and practices of Focusing-Oriented Therapy are in accord with recent findings about brain plasticity and cortical executive function. Included in her discussion is an extended therapy session with another psychotherapist, demonstrating how a Focusing-Oriented therapist's presence, attunement and acceptance provide the kind of support that neuroscientists are discovering integrates underdeveloped neural circuits.

Having been at the forefront of Focusing since its inception in Chicago, Zack Boukydis' article, *Thoughts about Advancing Focusing Related to the Broader Scientific Community*, offers readers innovative strategies on ways to integrate Focusing research more solidly on the map of traditional scientific inquiry and scientific endeavor. It is time, he writes, that Focusing presents itself as a paradigm worthy of scientific attention and develops research networks and collaborations with the broader scientific community. His thoughtful article contains a wealth of practical suggestions for further Focusing research.

Kevin Kryka encourages readers to conceptualize their own unique contributions to Focusing research as a way to create 'inspired knowledge' which offers science a way to midwife the birth of new thought relevant to its own focus. Titling his article, *Incorporating Research into Your Experiential and FOT Practice*, Kryka brilliantly details how the process of Implicit Inquiry can legitimize body-sensing in many aspects of scientific research, leading to deeper exploration of human life.

Doralee Grindler Katonah has undertaken a comprehensive literature review of research studies that have investigated the effects of Clearing a Space on physical, emotional, spiritual, and educational well-being. Her article, *Research on Clearing a Space*, has as its inspiration Gendlin's 'model of processes', where the human 'self-reflexive dimension of living' becomes the content of scientific investigation. Her thorough review clarifies the nature of the process of Clearing a Space and under what circumstances it may be of particular value for facilitating change, healing, learning and transformation.

In *Clearing a Space: An Evidence-based Approach for Enhancing Quality of Life in Women with Breast Cancer*, Joan Klagsbrun and Susan Lennox demonstrate how a

rigorously designed, executed, and evaluated research can quantify measurable positive changes in women during all stages of cancer treatment and recovery. This meticulous study, supported by research in neuroscience, is an example of the high standards that must be met before the medical community accepts and incorporates Focusing as part of their multi-modal treatment plans.

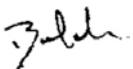
What do people new-to-Focusing say about the specific benefits of Focusing as they first experience the process for the first time? And do very experienced Focusers share those same ideas as novices? Mako Hikasa writes about her year-long international research in order to empirically differentiate the surprising similarities and differences. The results of her study, *The Benefits of Focusing: A Qualitative Analysis of 30 Interviews with Focusers*, will prove to be both enlightening and invaluable for all who teach Focusing.

In her most interesting and personal article, *A Process Model Scientist: What Does It Really Mean in Practice?* Dana Ganihar Raz tells us a most compelling story. After wanting to be a scientist since she was a young child, and after completing her Master's degree in Neurotheology, she felt (as she well describes it) that she was in the wrong field. In the interim, she learned Focusing, and through the process decided—17 years later!—to go back to science, now using and integrating the felt-experience with her work in the lab. Dana takes the time from working on her Ph.D. proposal to share her most unusual story.

Peter Afford's first line: "Our experience tells us that our heads are full of thoughts and our bodies are full of feelings" sets the foundation for his article, *Focusing in an Age of Neuroscience*. He compiles scientific research that addresses the complexity of what occurs in the brain during a Focusing session, using scientific data to illustrate his points. You'll be fascinated with his stimulating conclusion that the Focusing process integrates both hemispheres of the brain by liberating the left hemisphere from the trap of the virtual world it has created for itself, and actuating the right hemisphere, whence all our experience originated in the first place.

When Karen Whalen and Glenn Fleisch submitted their article, *Quantum Consciousness: An Explanatory Model for Life Forward Movement in Wholebody Focusing*, we found ourselves with a bit of a dilemma. The article was excellent, but it was also 30 plus pages! So after some soul-searching and 'process-contemplation' between us (!) we decided—for the first time ever in the *Folio*—to break up the article into a Part 1 and 2. In Part 1, Karen and Glenn have pooled their innumerable resources to write about how Quantum Field Theory interfaces with Gendlin's Process Model of the Implicit. Part 2, develops this 'crossing' using clinical examples to illustrate the integration of Quantum Consciousness, Quantum Mechanics, and Gendlin's Process Model with clients.

With regards from your Editors,



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