

## **Memorial for Eugene Gendlin**

by Ann Weiser Cornell

Over 250 people from all around the world participated in the memorial for Eugene Gendlin, the originator of Focusing, who died on May 1, 2017.

The memorial was held on August 12 at Hebrew Union College in New York City, and was sponsored by The International Focusing Institute. Approximately 120 people attended in person and 130 attended the livestream to the Institute's YouTube channel.

The formal memorial service lasted two hours, anchored by Catherine Torpey. Live piano was provided by Allison Mickelson.

The candle that burned throughout the ceremony was lit at the start by Gene's caregivers, Nola Sinclair and Aldean Armstrong. Nola's daughter Allyah read words to accompany the lighting of the candle. A photo of Gene sat by the candle along with a photo of Mary Hendricks-Gendlin.

There were eulogies by Kye Nelson (read by Catherine Torpey), Rob Parker, Ann Weiser Cornell, and Gene's son Gerry Gendlin. A video of Gene speaking (compiled by Nada Lou) allowed Gene's presence to be felt in a very real way.

When Aaffien de Vries read short selections from Meister Eckhart (one of Gene's favorite authors), she gave space for pausing between each reading, giving us all a chance to sense into the meaning of each selection.

The service was ended by the reading of Kaddish (Jewish Prayer for the Dead), led by Ruth Rosenblum, and singing by Rob Parker. TIFI Board member Kevin Krycka then gave the official announcement of the formation of the Eugene T. Gendlin Center for Research in Experiential Philosophy and Psychology.

After a break for refreshments, there was an opportunity for open sharing where anyone could speak to the assembly. Speakers included Bebe Simon, Frans Sandbergen, Marty Cohen, Bob Scharff, Bala Jaison, Marine de Freminville and Gail Miklatek. Gisela Uhl, who (with Rob Parker) was with Gene when he died, was asked to extinguish the candle.

Lunch was provided for those present, and it was a beautiful occasion for connecting with old and new friends united in sadness and gratitude. More informal sharing happened through a live Facebook stream during lunchtime.

In the afternoon there were two Symposia on Carrying Forward Gene's Legacy, one on philosophy with a panel consisting of Rob Parker, William Potocnik, and Bob Scharff, and one on psychology with a panel consisting of Bala Jaison, Lynn Preston, and Ruth Rosenblum, with an attunement by Joan Lavender. Both were very well attended and were a great opportunity to consider not only what Gene has left for us, but how we can continue in his spirit.

Mary DuQuaine moderated the comments and participation on the livestream on YouTube, including offering a question to the afternoon Symposia. Participation included people from Belgium, Hong Kong, Mexico, Japan, Argentina, the Netherlands, and Spain, as well as the US. Many people wrote in their own languages and expressed their appreciation at being able to be part of the event.

The recording of the livestream is still available on YouTube at this link:  
[https://youtu.be/OBJcNn63\\_CU](https://youtu.be/OBJcNn63_CU)