

## 48 hours and 75 minutes later...

by Lynn Rosen

Two days earlier the therapist was led to something new in herSelf.  
Two days later she transmitted Something-new to her client.

Two days after participating in my 75-minute group at the 2011 International, a therapist made a gentle suggestion to her client. It was a surprise for the therapist:

“I was working with a very concrete client, someone who has difficulty with metaphor. Often when I work with her, she'll have trouble with instructions that may be hard to understand in concrete terms.”

A gentle suggestion, an invitation that seemed to have no connection with the real world, allowed something new to happen:

[We were] “in a (seated) psychotherapy session. When I encouraged my client to feel the support of the earth coming up through her feet, she uncrossed her legs without my prompting, and I could visually see her legs relax and drop as she started to really ground herself. This enabled her to relax her breathing (which is often held very high and tight).”

Two days earlier, in that 75-minute session of directly experiencing her Whole Body in relationship to others in the room, the therapist was led to something new in herSelf. Two days after those 75 minutes she had already integrated the experience of herSelf as container, as Embodied Be-ing. Transformation had occurred in her. It was this Something-new that she transmitted to her client and,

“... it enabled her [the client] to deepen the work in that session, with regard to accessing more painful feelings and also taking risks in expressing herself to me in the transference.”

How do I understand what happened to the therapist in my workshop? I had offered a series of experiential, sensory activities – each building on the previous one. My intention, as always, was to invite a global experiencing of Self within the immediate space of the room **and** in relationship with the others.

Gene has written that “Focusing is an experiential, body-oriented method for generating insights and emotional healing.” How interesting that the therapist's own bodily experience of transformation was able to bring about a bodily transformation in her client and help her gain “insights and emotional healing.” How interesting that what emerged in her client was not because the therapist had guided her client in a Focusing intunement. It came about simply because of the transformation in herSelf, which she shared energetically with her client.

Because our skin is the body's largest sensory organ, Whole Body Focusing invites access to directly experienced sensations surrounding us. For me, that access allows a deeper inner-

sensing, a deeper accessing of the something-in-me which has been waiting for the safety and loving acceptance it needs in order to come forward, in order to become apparent to me in its freshness.

My own practice of Whole Body Focusing allows me to sense the alchemical transformations that occur within and around me as I choose to “enter” this way of being in relationship with myself. Put more simply: something in and surrounding me transforms. And it's that transformation which gets shared when I partner in Whole Body Focusing with another. When I invite someone to “sense the support that comes up from the ground,” I'm not merely saying those words, not merely parroting – I am directly experiencing the support that flows upwards within me. And my direct experiencing of that invitation affects how my words are shared and received. My direct experiencing affects *where the words come from within me*. When I am in touch with that place, the alchemical, energetic meaning of my words are understood regardless of their linguistic meaning. The understanding doesn't come from particular guiding language, but from my own grounded, embodied Self.

In my training some 30 years ago to become a teacher of The Alexander Technique, the word “energy” wasn't then in use. Surely Mr. FM Alexander—late 19<sup>th</sup> century Tasmanian auto-didact--didn't use the word either. And yet my teachers did talk about “flow” and “a stream of flowing” as various structural parts of the Self come into right relationship with the Whole of Self.

Over the years, Kevin McEvenue, another teacher of The Alexander Technique, has continued the interweaving of Gendlin's Focusing with Alexander's principles and awareness, bringing a fuller-ness to each practice that neither holds for me on its own. The crossing of these two phenomenological experiences – directly experiencing the wholeness of Self-who-exists-and-is-alive in 3-dimensional space – brings new life to me. And it brought new life to the therapist's practice.

Something about the therapist's way of being in relationship with her own Be-ing/Self allowed something to occur in the other even if she didn't make explicit reference to it by guiding or inviting. For me these experiences (Grounding, Presencing, Embodying the Living Awareness of My Whole Body) have been transformational and continue to be so. I know that what resonates and enlivens me is the Whole-Body-ness of this work. Something about these direct experiences of Me/Self, and You/Self, and The Space Surrounding Us brings me into mySelf in ways that nothing else ever has. And that opens up new possibilities to come into relationship with what's within.

One of my Whole Body Focusing partners has observed – sensed – that I “listen” with my Whole Body. Although each of us trained in Whole Body Focusing expresses and shares it differently, this quality of “body listening” is what first drew me to study with Kevin McEvenue. And is what sustains me in my own Practice as well as in the ways that Practice lives out in the world.