

Self Care for Social Care Professionals

Presented by:

Derek Mc Donnell Dip Social Care
Certify Coordinator
with The International Focusing Institute

www.focusing.org





“Taking time to pause...
and create a space for learning...”

(Clearing a Space...)

Invitation to “ Stand in a Different Place”

Our body is the environment

“A human being is interaction, we are interactions, living bodies are interaction with the air and the ground and the food and other species members, and from that view, if you look at a person, if you are looking at me, you can see that I’m interaction. I’m interaction with other people” - Eugene Gendlin

Agenda

- What is Focusing? How it nurtures wellbeing
- What Happens when we listen in a Focusing manner?
- Self Care as Practitioner: The Focusing Flow
- Clearing a Space
- Next Steps

“Your lived Experiences of Self Care”.

Concepts in our head versus Lived Experience

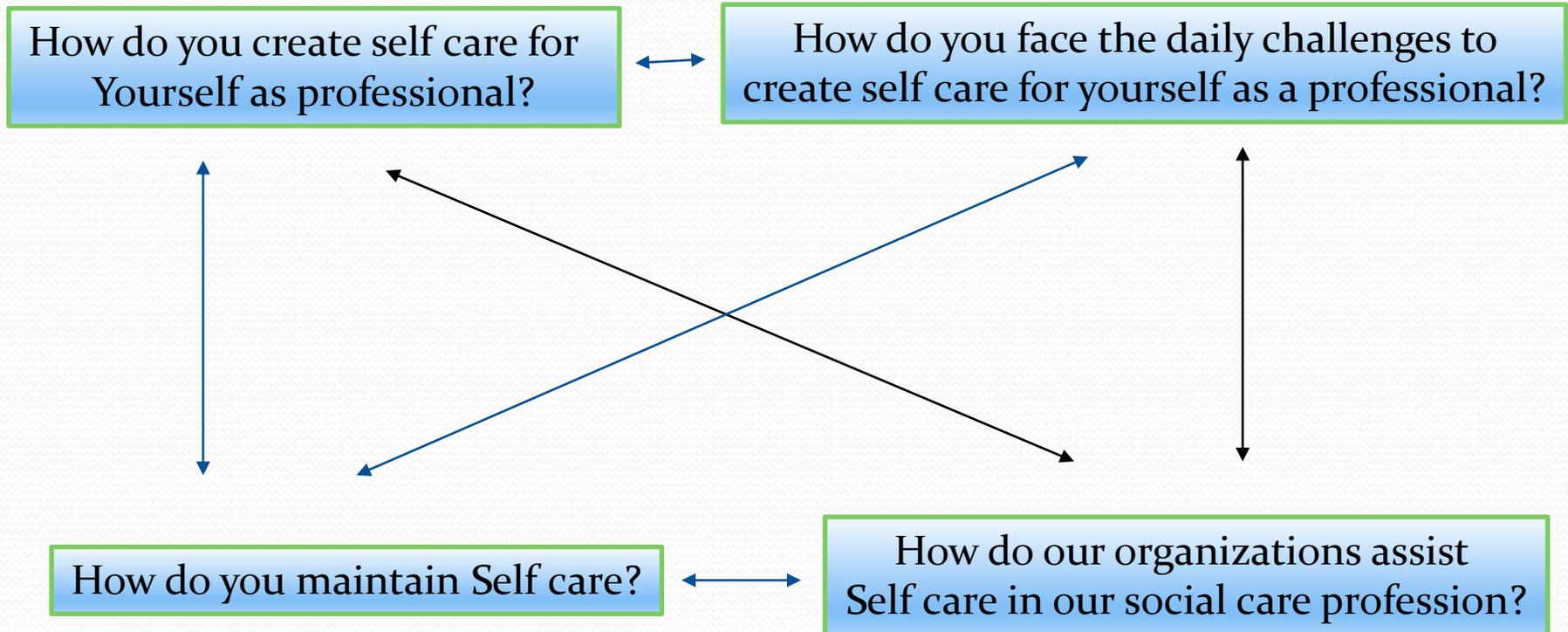


EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE

YOUR JOURNEY WITH YOUR LIVED
EXPERIENCE OF SELF CARE

- IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE
- DOES IT TOUCH YOUR PERSONAL
LIFE

“Your lived Experiences of self care”





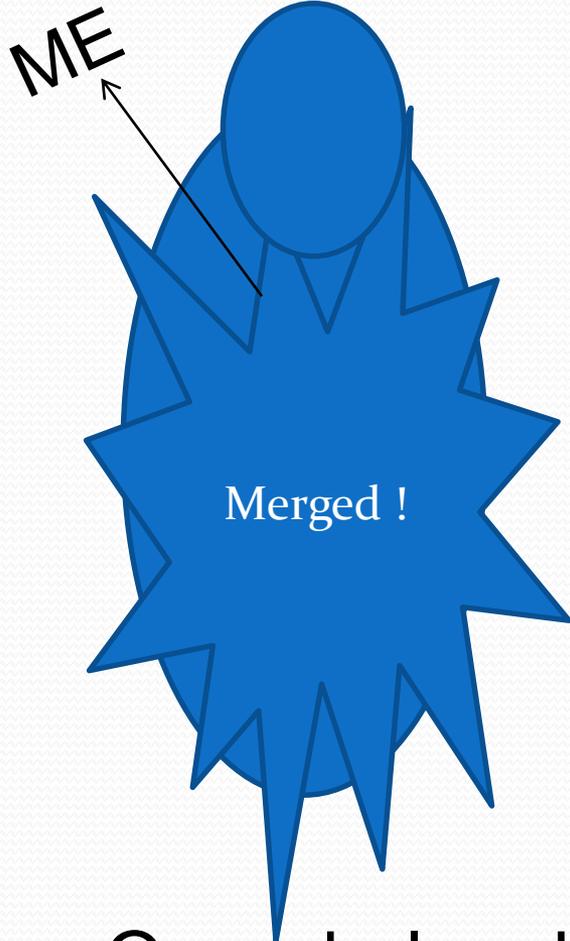
Caring for Social Care Professional starts with your “Self” interacting with what is within your body but not merged with it...

THE GUEST HOUSE

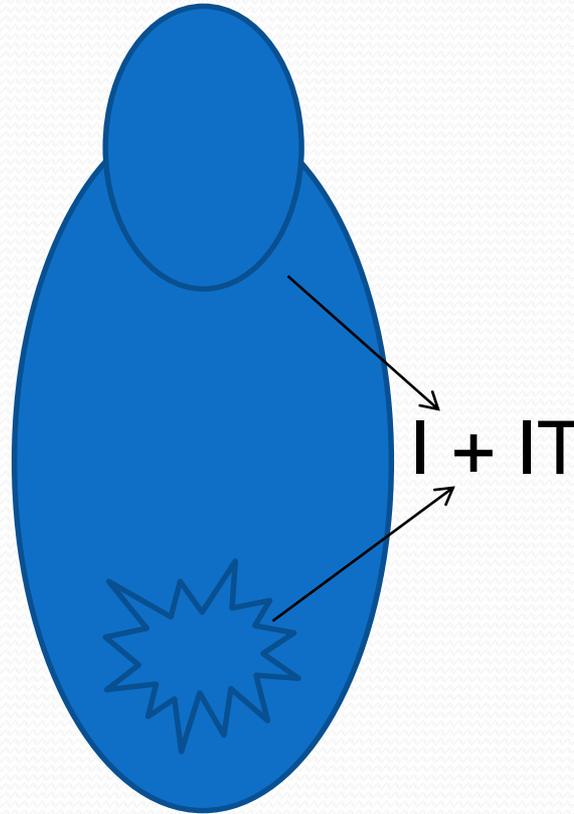
“This being human is a guest house. Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture, still, treat each guest honourably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.
The dark thought, the shame, the malice, meet them at the door
laughing, and invite them in.
Be grateful for whoever comes, because each has been sent as a
guide from beyond.”

Inner Relationships:

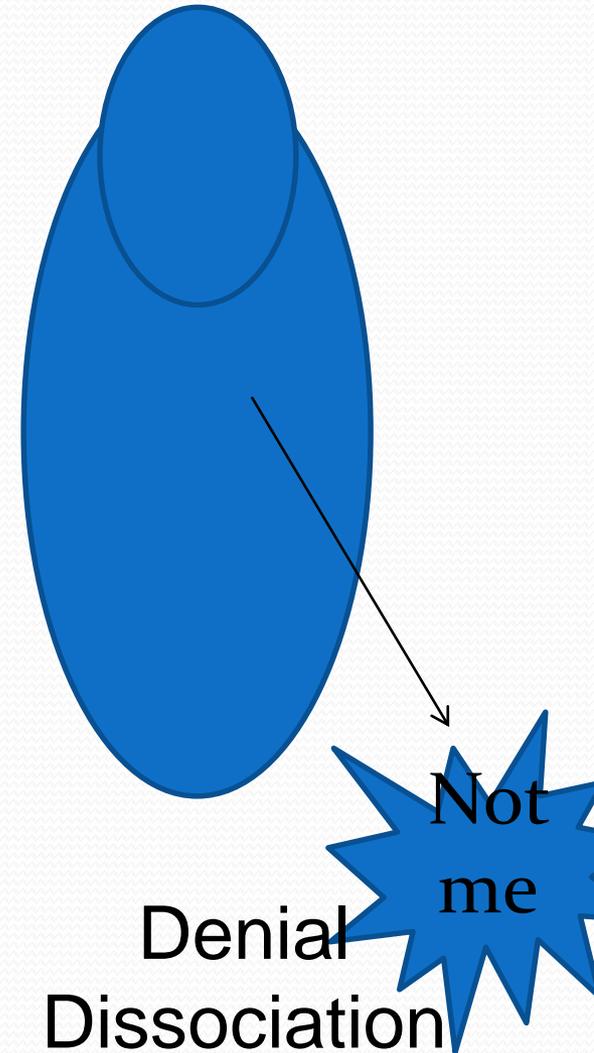
The three ways of “being” as a Social Care professional



Overwhelmed
Identification



Right Relationship
Association
It nurtures self care



Denial
Dissociation

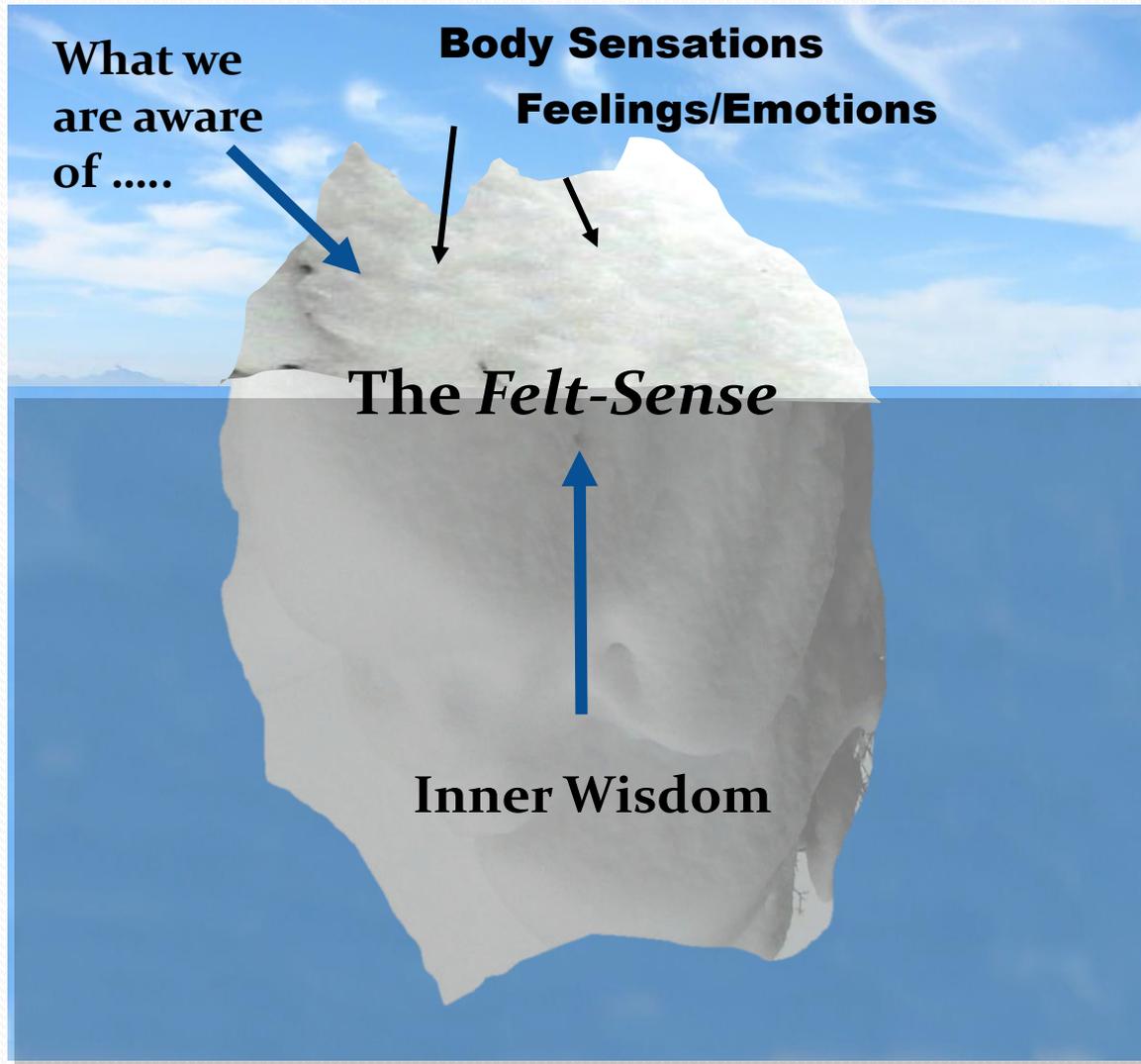
The World of our Senses ...



Our “ Sixth Sense” ...

- An *internal bodily knowing* ...
- Separate from our linear cognitive minds
- Communicates through feelings and sensations
- Connects us to the totality of our life experience
- “Our feelings are like a phone ringing....”

The “*Felt-Sense*”



The *Felt-Sense*

- Felt-senses are not emotions – but are how our bodies **hold** emotions...
- You cannot think your way to a *felt-sense*
- Your physical connection to your body felt meaning ...
- Murky, subtle at first: “something more than words”
- Channels the language of symbols, images, words, movement, sounds and sensations that arise from our inner knowing into our conscious awareness...

The “Felt-Sense”

- Our inner physical feelings and sensations are the *manifestations* of our inner bodily knowing
- Our inner bodily knowing communicates with us through these manifestations.
- These manifestations are called “*felt-senses*”



“Focusing”

Focusing is an experiential way of becoming/being aware of the depths of what your body knows by going beneath your feelings to the felt-senses that unfold your body’s wisdom.

Focusing Flow

“Noticing”



“Being with
the felt-sense”

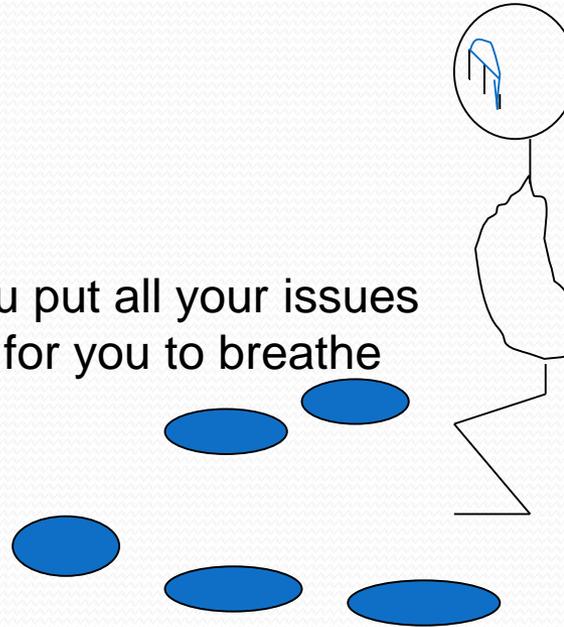


“Nurturing
what comes”



CLEARING A SPACE

Like clearing a cluttered room – you put all your issues to one side so that there is a place for you to breathe and sit in temporary comfort.



What is Clearing a Space?

“Clearing a space is five to ten minute introduction into a state of reduced stress and enhanced receptivity. It differs from other stress-reduction methods in that it is a process that explicitly names and places aside each person’s list of current stressors.

It is both a means of becoming aware of one’s stress load, and reducing it at the same time.

Joan Klagsbrun.

“Interacting with” what is in your inside place

“ You don’t want to fall into your problems, sink in them , become them”.

Conversely, you don’t want to run away from them, ignore them, or repress them. Those approaches are not usually fruitful.

There is a third way, a much more useful one.

It is the inner act of distancing yourself from what is troubling you but still keeping it before you don’t go into the problems.

You stand back just a little way – far enough so that the problems no longer feel overwhelming, but close enough so that you can still feel them. You do this with each of your problems.

They are still there, but you have stepped into a little sheltered space where for a time they cannot hurt you.

“Your body always tends in the direction of feeling better”.

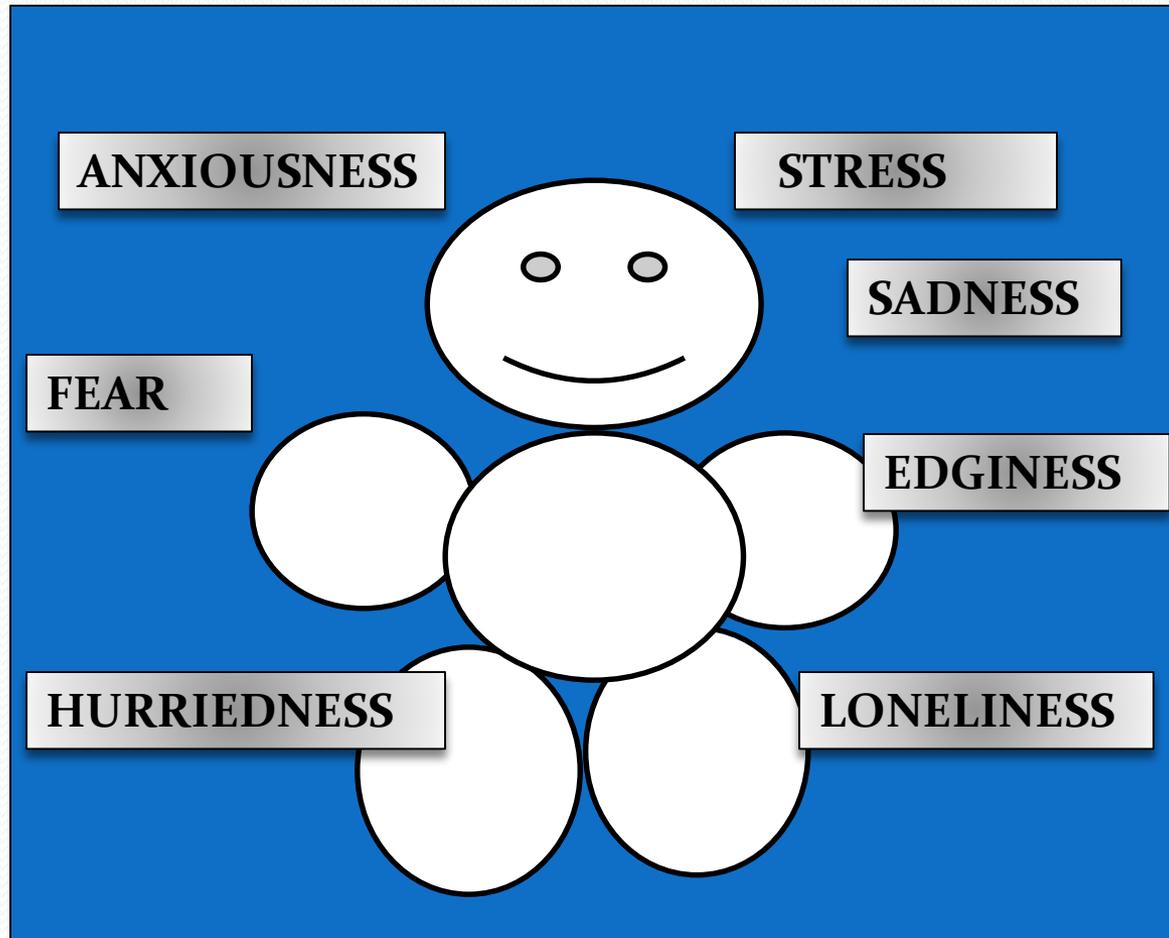
Dr. Eugene Gendlin

Clearing a Space: “ Pausing”

The Flow:

- Bring Awareness to Breath and Breathing
- Set Random Thoughts Aside
- Body Scan/ Points of Contact
- Setting Aside: What’s between me and feeling good?”
- Cycle back and set aside again....
- Setting background feeling aside
- Rest in the fresh air place.....
- Again focus on breath

THE BACKGROUND FEELING: “THE ALWAYS FEELING”





“Clearing a Space” Experience

FEEDBACK

- What was that like for you?
- Was is difficult?
- Could you place things aside ?
- Did you notice any sense of more space inside?



What makes clearing a space unique ?



“Three explanations for how CAS reduces stress:

- 1. It invites us to separate each distinct issue, thereby incrementally releasing bodily tension.**
- 2. It teaches us to name and relate to each issue without trying to solve it**
- 3. It welcomes us to be in the ‘clear’ or ‘all fine’ space for a few moments in a stress-free zone.**



Why Clearing A Space is effective ?

- 
- 1. “ Creates a “frame” which has as its basic assumption the idea that feeling “ok” is our natural state.**
 - 2. Shows us how to have a relationship with our “issues”**
 - 3. Gives a name to whatever we are sensing inside that was previously unnamable but which has been a source of stress, tension, or anxiety.**



4. Helps us to put each of these issues at the right distance away, *outside the body* – thus creating a sense of a larger self that is not constrained by our problems and limitations.

5. Brings to light our *background* sense.

6. Gives us a glimpse of what it would be like to experience ourselves without our familiar concerns and weighty issues.

Paradigm Shift Experience

We are inviting you to think of a person as being interaction

- I am able to interact with my life experiences
...and not be merged with them
- “I” am not my emotions!
 - Say “*I am angry*” and then “*There is a part of me that is angry*” --- what is the difference?
- This shift has the Potential to Change Everything.....
- New Interactions that Free Places where we are “stuck”











Children and Young People



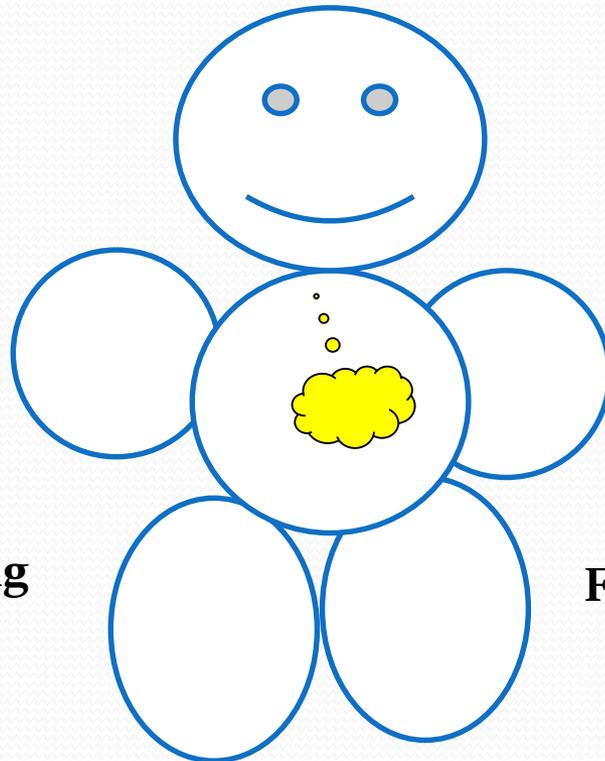
What are all the ways children's emotions impact you, your family and the community?

Road Map

Learning the process of Focusing offers a doorway to recovery and reconnection for the child from within her or himself. They learn to trust their inner knowing like an inner compass that can show them the way forward. It can become an anchor of stability to regulate their emotional world on a daily basis.

Pausing

Noticing



Listening

Following

How Do You Listen ?

- What do you do when you hear a problem?

Do you:

- Try to explain everything?
- Try to solve the problem?
- Try to make everything “ok?”

Or:

- Try to just listen with your inner place?
- *What works best is to just listen and be there*

Body Map

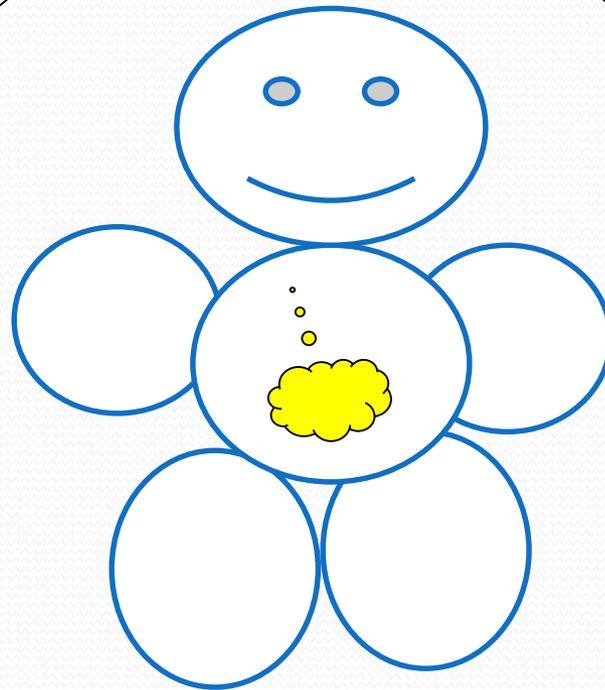
Myself

Myself and others

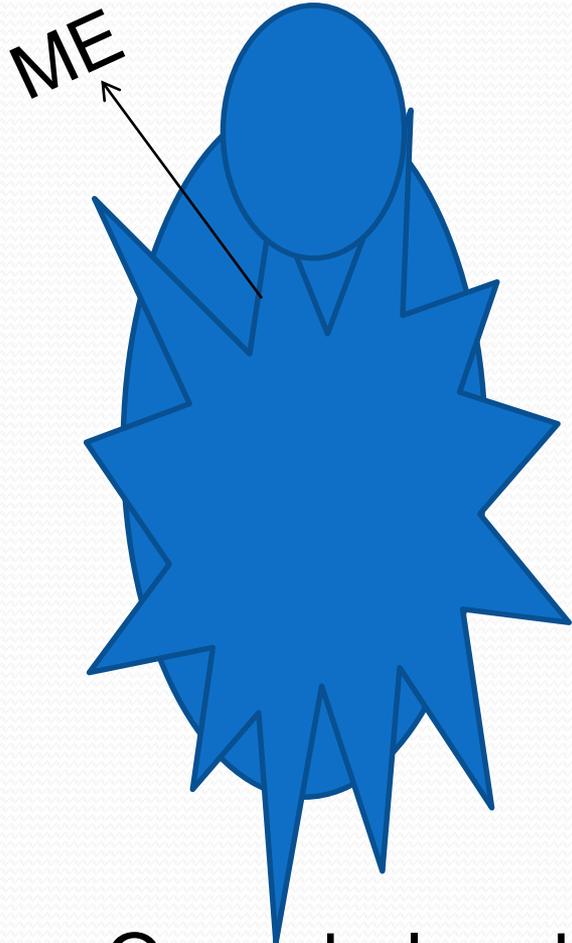
Myself and the
wider world

Your Private
Space

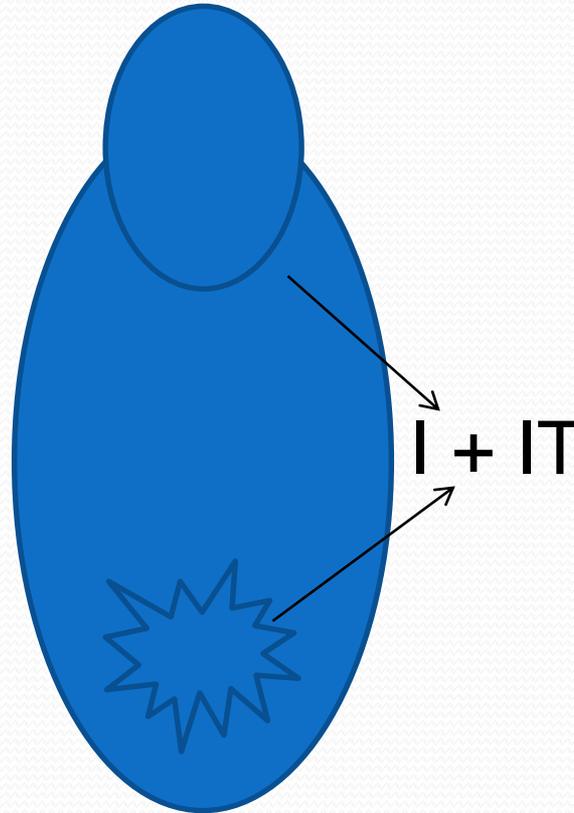
Where and how do you sense “it” in your body?



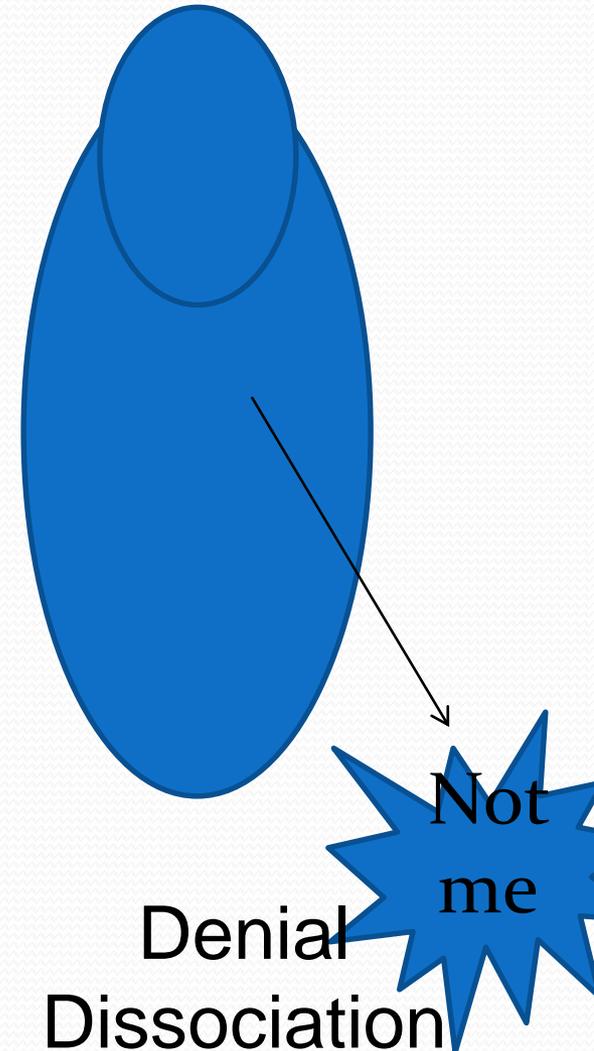
The Inner Relationship the three ways of being as a child



Overwhelmed
Identification



Right Relationship
Association
It nurtures stability



Denial
Dissociation

How is this possible?

Dr. Gendlin spoke of how it **is not** the trauma of past experiences or the pain we have encountered in our lives that has caused us to be stuck, hemmed in or cramped and unable to change or grow.

It's our being out of touch and unable to interact with the meanings of these experiences in our bodies.

When you interact with those meanings through the Focusing process, your hurt parts are able to move change and heal.

It is then this personal experience that enables you to then accompany the child with their own traumatized parts. This helps the child to feel safe and a sense a stability forms within their inner place that helps grow and move forward.

Focusing does not know AGE. Our innate blueprint enables a 6 year old trauma to move in exactly the same way as a 60 year old.

In fact children are naturally closer to their edge of awareness than adults!



Examples of Young people's
art work from their 'inside
place' all about Clearing
their Space” .

Lucy Burke



Level of Feelings 

Chapter 1 emotions

Happy

Excited

Exhilarated

Expressive

Joyful

Loving

good

positive



Tired

Sad

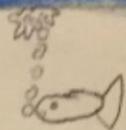
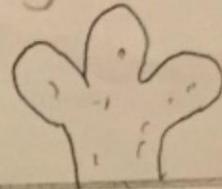
Angry

Unpleasant

Upset

Unhappy

negative



Mia

hen

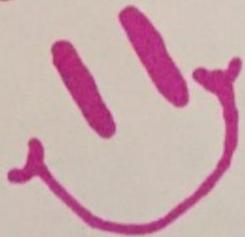
pod

Happy

Cheerful

More

Space



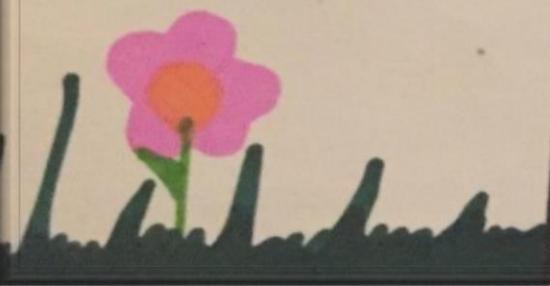


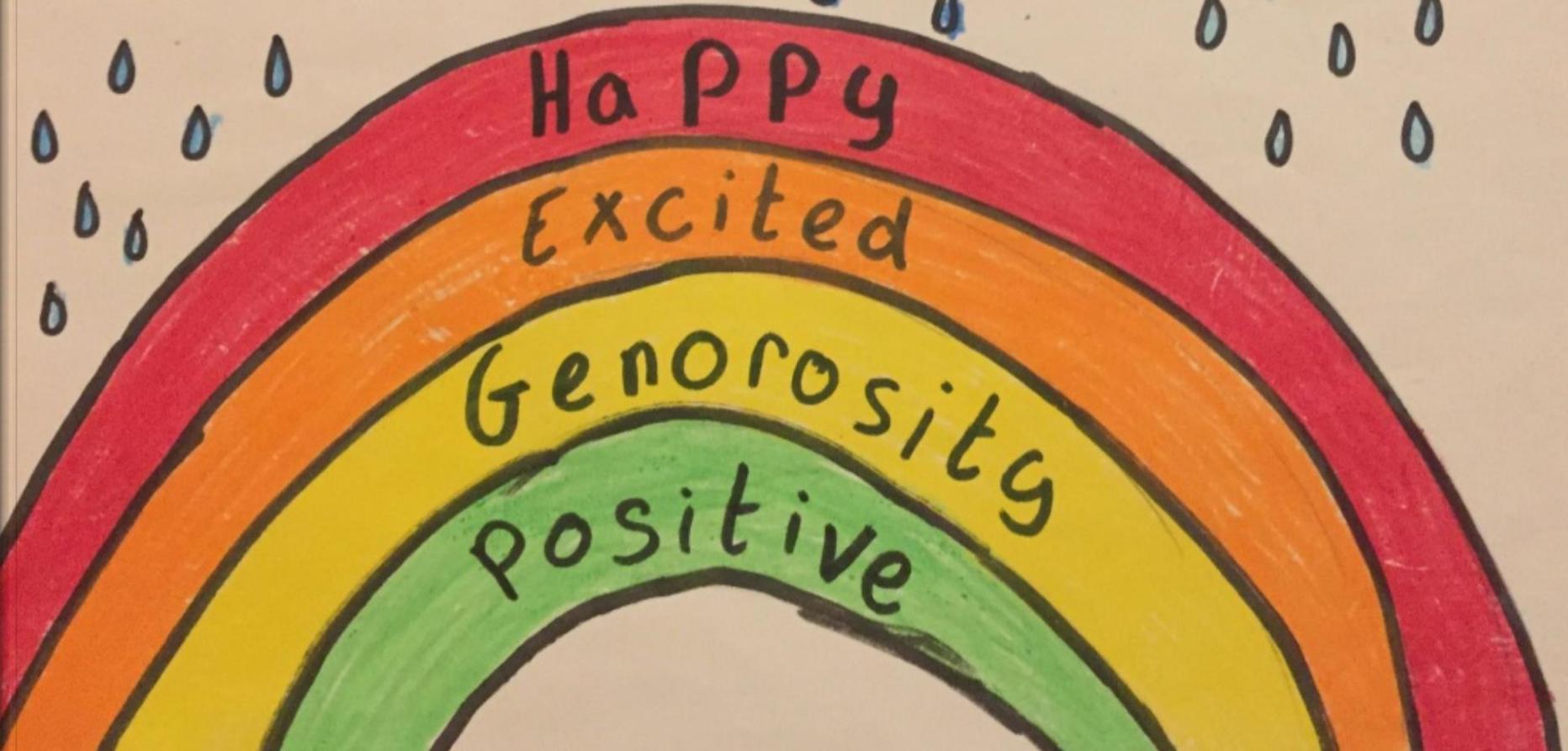
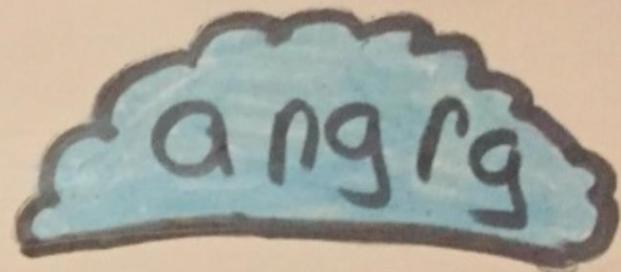
Leaf
Lemon
Lemon
Lemon
Lemon
Lemon
Lemon
Lemon

happy
Lazful
excited
Loving.



Cameron







Disgusted

Fear

angry

prettyness

Happyness

SADNESS

Demi K



Focusing Insights

- New relationship with feelings and emotions
- Experience the transformation from “negative” emotions to “doorways to positive movement forward”.
- Key to on-going personal transformation
- “ You are not the guest, you own the house...”

Teaching Children to Focus

- To Pause and connect with their Inside Place
- Children Learn to Self-Regulate Their Emotions
- Children Learn to Support Each Other in a New Way



Next Steps

A note of importance...

Please note that all contents of this presentation are not offered as substitutes for professional psychotherapeutic care. Be sure to refer any directee or companion to the appropriate licensed professional for therapeutic care as appropriate.



Thank you—*namasté!*