



**FOCUSZART The Focusing Studio**

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## Creative Compassion Practice – Art Directive FOT 2023

### The Fresh Urgency of NOW and the Transformational Power of Focusing-Oriented Therapy

Welcome dear focusers from all over the world at the screen and focusers on the recording watching later!

The workshop will introduce you to a practice building basics of Relational Empathy on a symbolic level, the level of the arts. I call this practice „Creative Compassion practice“. The practice is designed to widen up your range of empathy and to enable you to sense towards yourself as individual (ME HERE) **and** towards the collective (THE OTHER/YOU THERE).

#### 1. What kind of practice are we going to do?

The practice of Creative Compassion allows to feel agency on the issue of Relational Empathy when Relational Empathy is difficult to practice in life.

Relational Empathy (social) – Maureen o’Hara: To tune in to your own needs (self compassion) *and* to tune in to the needs of the people around you (peers you are part and not part of! = the collective), and to shift between both kinds of needs depending on the situation.

Artistic Relational Empathy is to be able to sense into and work with *all of what an artpiece is offering*: Aesthetics that match your preferences, and aesthetics that are of no interest or conflicting to you. Artistic Relational Empathy is to approach both kinds of aesthetics with same care from bodily feeling, and to shift between both aesthetics with same presence and unconditional positive regard ... so that *the More of* what speaks through the arts can reveal to the fullest.

## 2. Benefit of the practice

The practice will widen up your range of self-actualization and range of empathy.

Example client: Reaching out to others is not possible for feelings of fear, being expelled, feeling bullied, being too shy ... There are assumption about the others that make it even hard to connect. Trying out how it feels like to connect with parts of a picture is not dangerous, it is possible to reach out on this symbolic level. The client gete hold of the experience: 'I can approach the other side and interrelate with the

other side in ways I keep under control. I do not have to stress myself with this. It's the body and the Inner Artist doing the relational work for me'

Example coachee: Getting enabled to feel respect (instead of disgust) for fellow workers who have contradictory ideas, divergent work ethics or other values in life. Learning that the body sense can create co-existence (to be felt as a real feeling) when being engaged in the arts from the body sense. The person feels: 'It is okay to stay distant to them and stand in my own truth, and to have respect for them instead of fighting them'.

### 3. How to adapt the practice in FOT

- Invitation to *do* something that brings desidentification from the problem = action oriented practice when Focusing does not work.
- Invitation to find new ways to look at the problem because of looking at it with the eyes of a creative/artist
- Invitation to try out something in a creative and playful way using more of the body than sitting in the chair
  - Integrating insights from the practice into FOT session through invitation of feel the Felt Sense of it all, finding a handle etc
  - Important for the FOT therapist: Stay with the drawings of the client and not go back to the issue/problem of the client too fast. Let all of the practice sink into the client's body and wait what comes from there as fresh start. – Important for the client: Appreciate the effects of artistically experimenting without looking for direct solutions on your problem.

## Doing the exercise

We will use museum based visuals, tools of Sensorimotor Art Therapy and interventions of Focusing/FOAT® interventions. We will be doing receptive-active arts engagement.

Our artistic resource ([PDF](#), [screen share](#)) comes from an early pioneer of Modern Arts, a European artist, art teacher and musician who had tremendous influence on the Bauhaus Movement. This artist, Adolf Hölzel, composed his colors from musical harmonious Triads.

We follow his late body of work, - simple colorful pastel drawings - composed to create harmony and balance.

**To bridge to our art practice** let's do a conscious breathing together that brings us into presence.

### Tuning in

- Find a comfortable seat. You can change your position on the chair during the session whenever you like.
- Become aware of your breathing as it comes and goes.
- We are now going to do three deep breaths together. The breathing is adapted from [Cathy Malchiodi](#). It goes like this:
- 1. Breathing in: becoming aware of our body – exhaling: let go of what is keeping you from being present in the very moment.

- 2. Breathing in: becoming aware of your body – exhaling: let go of what is outside of this moment and ahead in time.
- 3. Breathing in: Being aware of our body – exhaling: allow yourself to be in the presence of the here and now.
- Lets start breathing together with the sound of the bell
- (( ... .. ))- Go on breathing naturally ...

I.

- Now have a look at your reference picture. *Which part of the picture speaks to you most?* - Imaging you have a magnifying glass in your hand to focus on what is speaking to you most
- Once you have found the part that speaks to you, repeat its forms and lines with your index finger directly on the surface of your computer screen
- Move your finger around several times, repeat to get a bodily sense of what *this* is about (eyes open)
- Now take your move into the air using your arm ... to own the move wholebodily (eyes open or closed). Repeat „drawing“ into the air, notice the move becoming more and more natural to you. Be aware how the move echos from within

- Hold the body move, grab colored pencils or crayons/oil pastels and put the move directly onto the paper ([drawing No 1](#))
- Notice how you feel about it now that the move is placed down and made visible. Acknowledge what you notice

## II.

- Now look at the reference picture freshly : *What else is there that has been of no interest ?* - Maybe you see forms, colors and lines not fitting your taste at all. Be friendly with what you find
- Use your index finger and follow forms, colors and lines of the part that has been of no interest or is conflicting. Directly touch the surface of your computer screen
- Move your finger around several times, repeat to get a bodily sense of what *that* is all about (eyes open)
- Now take your move into the air using your arm to own the move wholebodily (eyes open or closed). Repeat „drawing“ into the air. Notice the move becoming easier to draw the more you repeat it
- Be aware how it echos from within repeating the move

- Hold the body move, grab colored pencils or crayons/oil pastels and put the move directly onto the paper. Draw from bodily knowing ([drawing No 2](#)).
- Notice how you feel with the whole of it. Acknowledge what you notice

### III

- Place both your drawings in front you. Place them at right distance to your body.
- Now see how to place them to each other best (check from your body sense, move them around till you get a sense of rightness). Place them down in a way that both drawings can rest (Tape both down if you got tape).
- Take a deep breath and look at both your drawings freshly now without judging.
- Ask yourself: *How do both pieces relate to each other? - How do both pieces interact?* - To get a bodily feeling of how both pieces interact, recapture both drawings with your index fingers simultaneously. either directly on top of the drawings (TAPE) or on the table with eye-hand coordination

- Recapture bilateral with eyes open. Ask yourself with friendly curiosity: *How does it feel moving body energy around?*
- Perhaps you notice that recapturing bilateral is not so easy. You may notice that each piece has its own body energy wanted to be moved around. - Do you feel to pause one hand to be able to recapture one piece with your finger? - Do you feel to slow down moving both your hands? - Do you feel to alter the rhythms of your moves? - How is it for you?
- Take a next step and recapture bilateral now with eyes closed. Let go and allow yourself to be guided from your bodily knowing
- Go for spontaneous movements occurring. Ask yourself: *What is needed to fully follow my hands doing the work?*
- Give space to what is shifting in moving and breathing. Allow yourself to make space for the *More of* it, following the body

#### IV

- Take the third paper and trust your bodily knowing. **If you got tape:** Place your bilateral moves onto the fresh paper using two colored pencils/crayons/oil pastels in each hand (eyes closed). **If you got no tape:** place books at the 2 edges of the paper to fix it on the



table. Alternatively move with one pencil (holding the paper with one hand) and then change hands

- Allow your hands to create for you (drawing No 3)
- Open your eyes and look at what has been created with a friendly eye. Maybe it looks chaotic. Be empathic with what you find
- Turn your drawing (drawing No 3) around several times and connect with your drawing freshly with friendly curiosity
- Place the drawing in front of so that your body feels comfortable with.
- Viewing the drawing you may ask, sensing inside: *What do you have to say to me ? ... What do you know about relating I did not know up to now? ... What is the message you have for my life?*
- Just pause and wait, the answer comes from within
- Whatever comes from within is welcome, just wait and receive. ... You may receive a bodily feeling, an image, a word, a phrase, a gesture or a sound. ... Just acknowledge what you get
- Before wrapping up, take some time and ask inside: *What is the overall feeling I get from it all as a whole? What is the More of it all my body wants to forward?*
- ... Receive and ancor.

- Maybe you want to express gratitude to your body having forwarded the process. Maybe you want to thank yourself for having stepped out.

## Group sharing

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