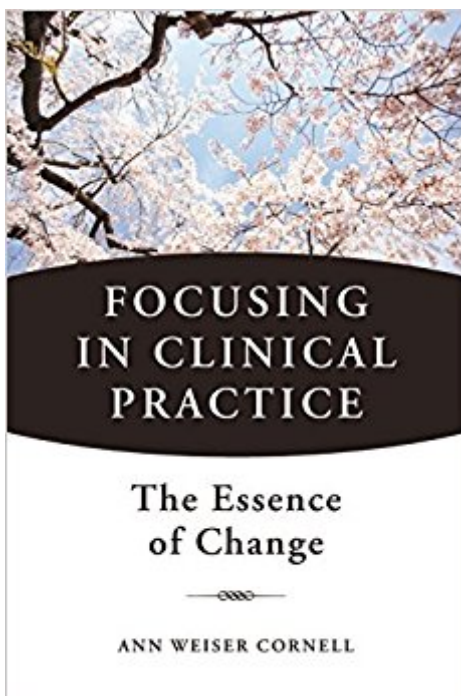


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# Focusing In Clinical Practice: The Essence Of Change



## Synopsis

A therapy technique for inner awareness and meaningful change. Focusing is a particular process of attention that supports therapeutic change, a process that has been linked in more than 50 research studies with successful outcomes in psychotherapy. First developed by pioneering philosopher and psychotherapist Eugene Gendlin, Focusing quietly inspired much of the somatically oriented, mindfulness-based work being done today. Yet what makes Focusing a truly revolutionary approach to therapeutic change has been little understood until now.

Focusing is based on a radically different understanding of the body as inherently meaningful and implicitly wise. Mere intellectualizing or talking about problems can keep clients stuck in their old patterns of behavior. Focusing introduces the concept of the "felt sense," a moment in process when there is a potential to experience more than is already known and to break through old, frozen, stuck patterns. Clients who see real change during the course of their therapy work are often those who can contact and stay with a felt sense but how to help them do so is not obvious. Ann Weiser Cornell, who has been teaching Focusing to clinicians for more than 30 years, shows how to help clients get felt senses and nurture them when they appear, how to work with clients who have difficulty feeling in the body, how to facilitate a "felt shift," how to support clients who experience dysregulating emotional states, and much more. Beginning with a clear explanation of what makes Focusing so potentially transformative, she goes on to show how to effectively incorporate Focusing with other treatment modalities and use it to treat a range of client issues, notably trauma, addiction, and depression. Designed to be immediately applicable for working clinicians and filled with practical strategies, clinical examples, and vignettes, this book shows step by step how to bring Focusing into any kind of clinical practice. Cornell expertly demonstrates the Focusing process unfolding, moment by moment, in the therapy room, and illuminates its powerful capacity to support a client's growth and change.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Cornell’s new book offers clinicians guidance to bring Focusing into the consulting room. . . . Felt sensing, as the essence of chance, is the take-home message repeatedly pointed to throughout this volume. Though not a new finding that accessing the felt sense has great transformative power Cornell gracefully and eloquently articulates how Focusing works in a fresh, new way. . . . [C]linicians can also benefit from Focusing as a therapist who Focuses may also be more genuinely available and capable of doing self-care. - International Journal of Psychotherapy

“Focusing in Clinical Practice is enlightening primarily for its rich and detailed client-therapist transcripts. . . . Whether you pick up the book as a professional or simply as an observer, you will come away with insights into sensing and some helpful ways to apply them. - PsychCentral

“Cornell has been involved with the development of Focusing for many years and is a wonderful exemplar of the method, in which she has trained many professionals. . . . Focusing in Clinical Practice communicates the very subtle, essentially non-verbal process of Focusing for client and therapist very well. It is so hard to express the ineffable, but she does it after years of experience and practice articulating the felt sense. - Somatics

“Since Eugene Gendlin’s landmark book Focusing, first published in 1978, there has been too little in the way of clinical application of his seminal work. In her thorough, illuminating book, Ann Weiser Cornell fills this need. She clearly outlines the essence of change, explaining how it emerges from the client’s relationship with his or her living sensing body. She demonstrates, step by step, just how these innate transformative moments occur and how we can guide our clients in that direction. It is magic made simple, pure and simple. - Peter A. Levine, PhD, author of In an Unspoken Voice: How the Body Releases Trauma and Restores Goodness; recipient of the USABP Lifetime Achievement Award

“When caught in emotional suffering, our core question is, ‘What will help?’ In her wise and compelling new book, Ann Weiser Cornell highlights the centrality of attention to the felt sense, showing through clear case studies how this attentiveness encourages the natural unfolding of a client’s wholeness of being. Applicable

and enriching for a wide range of therapeutic modalities, this book offers a precious set of insights and tools for healing professionals. — Tara Brach, PhD, author of *Radical Acceptance* and *True Refuge*

“Ann Weiser Cornell and I have been working closely together for thirty years, and she knows as much about Focusing as I do. Ann has a knack for making the complex understandable and the theory of Focusing accessible to all readers. This book will be helpful to anyone who wants to know my philosophical work and better understand how to bring Focusing into clinical practice. I recommend it very strongly.” — Eugene Gendlin, PhD, founder of the *Clinical Division Journal Psychotherapy: Theory Research and Practice*; author of *Focusing* and *Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy*

Ann Weiser Cornell, PhD, the founder of Focusing Resources, has been teaching focusing for more than thirty years. She lives in Berkeley, California.

I am delighted to be reading Ann Weiser Cornell's new book introducing the value of Focusing practice to therapists! Being in touch with the living edge of our own present-moment experience can be a fertile source of fresh meaning and whole-body insights, opening into authentic growth and transformation. A bit of self-disclosure here: I am not unbiased, as I have been a Focusing practitioner since 1998. Still, the research base for this contemporary, body-based awareness practice, originally developed by Eugene Gendlin in the 60's, has been growing slowly but steadily for the last 50 years, along with a world-wide network of practitioners, so there are many of us who find this work enormously helpful. Any therapist who wants to help clients connect more deeply with their own selves will find something of value here. In particular, clinicians who are already drawn to mindfulness practices will find great value in this Western approach that blends both mind and heart. Clinicians who are already practicing "inner relationship modalities" such as Voice Dialogue and Internal Family Systems therapy, will find that an awareness of the Focusing process supports and deepens their work with clients. Similarly for those already working with somatic approaches... Of course, we can most effectively share this with others, when we ourselves are engaging in this deeply renewing and life-enhancing practice. In addition to enhancing the work we are already doing with clients, Focusing (and Focusing-based peer supervision groups, and/or Focusing partnerships) can be a vital part of self-care as mental health practitioners. And so I am celebrating this extremely well-written, thorough, and clear book, designed to introduce clinicians to the world of Focusing... kudos to Ann Weiser Cornell, and a warm welcome to all!

Wonderful book! As a Focusing teacher, and after learning with you Ann so much, and many other wonderful Focusing teachers - I didn't know what to expect from this book. Will it be new to me? And I was even more suspicious since it was written for people who don't know Focusing. But anything you wrote taught me so much. So of course I pre-ordered it. What a pleasant surprise! From the very beginning of the preface, I was fascinated with your clear description of the origin of Focusing, then the comparison to other methods - very eye opening! Then you continue to clear and informative descriptions of how to use Focusing with clients, when, why... It is true that I know a lot of it - but some tips and empasys here and there are PRICELESS! and I do think that people that learned less with you Ann will have many many surprises here. Bottom line - if you work with people (therapists, coaches) and don't know Focusing - amazing introduction and learning of this powerful tool, which has changed my whole career as a coach and escalated my ability to work with clients.. And if you do know Focusing - this book is pure enjoyment and some more learning. Thank you!

Ann Weiser Cornell's latest book *Focusing in Clinical Practice*, is one of the most clearly articulated books about Focusing I have read; and I say this as a 35 year member of the Focusing community. She builds on her years of experience and teaching skills to make the Focusing process come alive. Her chapters flow from one to the other as she moves into what I think is the heart of her book: the felt sense as the key to successful therapy. It is here that I most appreciate the clear, empathetic instructions on teaching how a felt sense forms, how to be with it and allow our inner knowing to tell its story in its own time. While there are many modalities of therapy the heart of each is being able to access the felt sense and gradually learn to create the inner environment which then allows change to happen. Ann writes, key to this forward movement is fostering a strong witnessing self. It is from this self that disidentification versus identification happens, so that the client can eventually move from saying, 'I am afraid,' to 'something in me is afraid'. From here it doesn't take long for an inner trust to develop which then enables one to begin to experience change that brings a new way of perceiving along with new possibilities. The ease with which Ann moves from one modality to another incorporating Focusing into each one is very instructive. An image I have as I write this review is of someone gently holding my hand as I'm lead in and through to the beginning of a journey of self awakening. For anyone interested in learning Focusing for the first time or becoming inspired once again by a practice that is already familiar, I can't think of another book on the subject that I'd recommend more highly.

I find it pleasantly ironic that a book targeted at professional therapists provides the most practical advice, common sense wisdom about how to Focus that I, a mere layman, have yet read. Advice I can understand without having to google arcane terminology. The book builds upon the original insights of Eugene Gendlin with Cornell's decades of cumulative personal and clinical experience with and study of the process. In addition, she shows how the process can work in combination with other popular therapies including Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), and Internal Family Systems Therapy (IFS). Cornell's compassionate and common sense modus operandi is that therapy should be fitted to the client, rather than the client fitted to the Procrustean bed of any particular therapy. I heartily recommend this book to anyone interested in learning the art and praxis of Focusing. This is THE most useful book on the process I have read.

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