



FOCUSZART The Focusing Studio

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Introduction to Expressive Arts Focusing (ExAF) Hands-on Methods: Finding Ground in Experiential Arts

Expressive Arts Focusing (ExAF) is a body-focused approach rooted in the culture of European Focusing, along with Art and Design, using the creative and the expressive arts for facilitation and engagement. This presentation includes: An overview of Expressive Arts Focusing (ExAF) methods and their therapeutic understanding, along with a museum art-based exercise that provides an example of experiential best practice tools of ExAF. In addition, Eugene Gendlin's concept of 'the More' will be introduced and explored through Expressive Arts Focusing (ExAF). Participants will gain insight in how to find meaning through artmaking from the body sense that is pointing beyond already known concepts of aesthetic impression (perception) and aesthetic expression (action). Stepping into aesthetics beyond social and cultural constructs, participants will find new ground in connecting to the open space of being-and-becoming.

Suggested Materials:

- **Paper:** Any kind or size that you feel drawn to– canvas, acrylic, etc.
- **Tape:** Needed to anchor your paper to the table during the art exercise!
- **Drawing/writing materials:** Pens, pencils, crayons, markers, colored pencils, oil pastels, etc. Whatever you have is great!
- **Optional:** Glue, scissors, simple paints. In addition, Gesso (white primer) is also a helpful addition.

Presenter: Freda Blob, Ed (Grad), CP (Grad), AT, PCT, FOT-FOAT, GDP

Freda Blob is a Certifying Coordinator and Trainer of The International Focusing Institute (TIFI), and a Certified Focusing-Oriented Therapist and Focusing Professional with Specialization in Focusing-Oriented Expressive Arts (FOAT-TIFI). Freda has been teaching Focusing nationally and internationally for more than 20 years. She has 30 years of experience as a Person-centered and Experiential therapist in private practice. Freda is a Registered Art Therapist DFKGT located in Germany. She holds two university degrees in Clinical Psychology and Adult Education, and has a background in design techniques. She is founder and director of FOCUSZART The Focusing Studio. To learn more: expressiveartsfocusing.com.

Culture of European Focusing

European Focusing started with Eugene Gendlin's teachings in Switzerland and Germany.

As early as 1975 Agnes Wild-Missong (1931-2022), one of the founders of the Person-centered Society in Europe (GwG), invited Eugene Gendlin for a presentation at the GWG Symposium in Zurich, Switzerland. It was the first time Gene was teaching in Europe and Prof. Johannes Wiltschko, one of the leaders of European Focusing, was attending.

From 1978-79 the first Focusing workshops in German speaking countries took place with Linda Olsen (Germany), Agnes (Switzerland), and Johannes (Germany) as workshop teachers. Agnes became the first Focusing Coordinator of Switzerland, Johannes the first Coordinator of Austria and their colleague Friedhelm Köhne (+2004) the first Coordinator of Germany.

In 1979 Gene and his wife, Mary Hendricks, were teaching in Munich and Bonn/Cologne, spending holidays with Johannes in Italy, and in 1980 Johannes and Friedhelm went to Chicago to study with Gene. The same year, Johannes started teaching Focusing with two Swiss co-teachers, Ernst Juchli (1944 - 1923), a Reichian Body-Psychotherapist, and Anne Wunderle. They crossed Focusing with Person-Centered Psychotherapy and Body-Psychotherapy, experimented with Focusing partnerships and Focusing in groups, translated Gene's work, and developed concepts for a Focusing Summer School (running from 1981 on). Christiane Geiser (Switzerland), wife of Ernst, was involved in their intense collaboration projects from the beginning on.

It was the time of the early pioneers. The Focusing Institute New York had been founded informally in 1979. In 1980 Gene founded the International Focusing Network IFN for Focusers from around the world (today focusing.org). The IFN office for Focusers from German speaking countries was run by Johannes in Munich.

In 1981 the first German speaking Focusing Journal was published (semi-annual publications till 1990) with a ground-breaking article on 'Models of Focusing Modalities'. Focusing was taught in Switzerland, Austria and Germany, and Focusing workshops were also running in Belgium where Gene and Mary started teaching from 1980 on.

In 1982 various Focusing Schools were founded within German speaking countries: The German Focusing Institute DFI, the German Focusing Association DFG, the German-Swiss Focusing Network FN and the Swiss Institute GFK (Person-centered Psychotherapy, Focusing and Body Psychotherapy). Agnes founded her own school in Austria incorporating shamanism into Focusing. She translated Gene's book 'Focusing' into German (published 1983).

From 1992-1997 Gene came to Achberg, an international culture center at Lake of Constance, the borderline of Austria, Switzerland, and Germany. There he taught Focusing during the annual three-week Focusing Summer School, speaking German with a Vienna accent and using interventions hardly known today. Most of his teachings of the summer school lectures were recorded, transcribed and published as books by the German Focusing Institute DFI (from 1998 on).

Our Focusing trainings were with the school of the early pioneers Ernst and Christiane ('Focusing Plus' of FN and GFK). We started with training in 1994, benefitting from fourteen German speaking Focusing teachers and the Dutch Focusing pioneer René Maas. In 1996 we had the opportunity to attend Gene's teachings at Berlin. In 2001 we got certified as Focusing Teacher of the German Focusing Network FN and in 2013 certified as TIFI Coordinator.

European 'Focusing Plus'

European 'Focusing Plus' is a specific Focusing style taught at the Focusing schools of FN and GFK (Germany/Switzerland). Two main concepts of 'Focusing Plus' got international interest throughout the years. They had been published and presented at international conferences by Christiane Geiser, co-founder of the German-Swiss Focusing Network FN and the Swiss Institute GFK.

Both concepts were developed from decades of clinical experience and Focusing teachings with numerous students. The FN and GFK experience in clinical settings and teachings had revealed gaps in Focusing theory and practice.

The essential statements of the concepts are introduced here (1 and 2).

1. Focusing instructions can miss out the uniqueness of people and the differences between people

Focusing instructions used and taught in general phrases do not meet 'sensitivities' (Geiser) of people. Sensitivities are people's specific patterns of being in the world with talents and limitations coming from those patterns. The patterns are stereotypical reactions (always-reactions) of one-sided structure boundness (Geiser with reference to Gendlin: '*structure bound repetition*').

Therapeutic interactions have to meet those 'sensitivities' in order to bring stoppages (frozen wholes) of clients forward.

Focusing processes are always happening structure bound (structure boundless of both the Focuser and the Focusing facilitator). Findings of felt truth from body sense stay within the ranges of personal sensitivities. Processing becomes problematic when structure boundness increases towards complete stoppages.

It can happen that Focusing does not work due to structure boundness being polarized to extremes (e.g. pain patients cannot focus on other issues but their pain). No fresh input can land within the client as the client is heavily stuck in one-sided thinking, feeling and sensing (this affects the therapist and their structure-boundness as well). Felt Sense experiencing is far beyond the client's option then. Listening from empathic curiosity for differences (Geiser) (e.g. trying to perceive micro differences in pain perception) is the only way to bypass (and maybe resolve) structure-bound stoppages.

2. Focusing instructions can miss out the client's main modality and bring along stoppages not being noticed by the facilitator

Focusing instructions used and taught in general phrases might not match the inherent modality preference of a client (the main modality often unknown to the therapist). Clients can have their main modality on:

- The auditory channel: Emerging of words, sentences, melodies, sounds, noises as symbolization
- The visual channel: Emerging of images or colors. The client is describing their experiencing in ways of describing a picture or movie (falsely being labeled as 'storytelling' that needs to be brought down to felt sensing)
- The kinaesthetic channel: Emerging of bodily felt sensations, move, gestures. The client's need is to symbolize by bodily expression
- The emotional channel: Emerging of emotions with a sense of atmosphere. Clients may communicate their feelings through words and thoughts

Instead of using standardized phrases or general invitations, Geiser suggests adapting Focusing invitations to the client's language as it occurs freshly during the session.

Clients are trying to put to language what comes to their senses in the given moment. They verbalize according to what is actualizing in the here and now, and they verbalize according to their structure-boundness (their stoppages of freshly felt experiencing) at the same time.

Structure-boundness are outcomes of bodily frozen wholes. They limitate what can be actualized in the here and now. It can happen that the client has access only to what emerges as their main modality (which can be felt as 'safe' within structure boundness). They are not met by invitations pointing to modalities beyond their safe modality channel.

Therapists can orientate to the client's language and differentiate their Focusing interventions linguistically according to the client's verbalization of modalities.

Examples:

- Mirroring: 'See if there is ...' when corresponding to inner images of the client emerging (addressing the client through visual modality)
- Mirroring: 'Listen inside ...' when corresponding to inner words of the client emerging (addressing the client through auditive channel)
- Mirroring: 'Sense inside' ... when corresponding to bodily feelings the client is noticing coming up (addressing the client through kinaesthetic modality)
- Mirroring emotions by 'feel inside ... ' instead of 'sense inside'

According to my experience as a Focusing-oriented clinician, other ways of mirroring could be: 'Notice what's inside', 'take into focus what's inside', 'address what's inside'.

Paying respect to structure boundness, the therapist can also use invitations like: 'Can you show me?' or: 'What could be a good way to make me understand how it is like for you?' or simply: 'Can you express?'. These invitations activate and respond to modalities on all channels.

In my experience as a Focusing-oriented clinician, those three invitations turned out to be helpful for the client as they imply the specific safe modality of the client (whatever modality that is in the given moment).

Reference Literature:

[Geiser, Christiane/Moore, Judy, 2018, Beyond Rogers, beyond Gendlin: widening our understanding of the theory.](#) European Focusing Conference, Loutraki/Greece, May 2018

[Geiser, Christiane/Moore, Judy, 2014, New Ways of Processing Experience. How to Work with Structure-Bound Processes.](#) In: Greg Madison (ed.), *Theory and Practice of Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy. Beyond the Talking Cure*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, p. 130-145.

[Geiser, Christiane, 2010: Moments of Movement: Carrying forward structure-bound processes.](#) In: Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies PCEP Journal Vol. 9, June 2010 No. 2, p. 95-106.

[Geiser, Christiane, 2009, How to Work With „Stopped Processes“.](#) Paper presented at the 21th Focusing International Conference, Japan 2009

[Geiser, Christiane, 2004, About Focusing Modalities,](#) in: The Focusing Connection, Vol. XXI, No. 4, July 2004, p. 1-5.

Expressive Arts Focusing Methods

Expressive Arts Focusing (ExAF) is part of the **person-centered and experiential approach** (PCA for short), using various methods across different approaches along the experiential paradigm.

The term 'experiential' (adjective of the noun: 'experiencing') was created by Gendlin, the founder of Focusing as method. The term describes a kind of experiencing that is exclusively organizing along the order of the living body and implying a next move forward yet unformed (Gendlin in Frie, 2023). In such, the term is distinctive to other uses of the words 'experiencing' or 'experiential'.

Expressive Arts Focusing methods come from putting the experiential paradigm into practice through:

1. Use of experiential arts engagement
2. Use of 'crossing' ('crossing': An experiential concept of Gendlin's philosophy of the Implicit)
3. Use of creating best conditions possible for interactive bodily forwarding ('forwarding': a term referring to Gendlin's concept of the situational body).

We describe and explain those three points in the following.

1. Use of experiential arts engagement

Expressive Arts Focusing uses different therapeutic understandings and approaches in ways that individuals and groups get the most of **experiential arts engagement**.

Experiential arts engagement is arts engagement coming from the living body and processing along the order of the living body. It is a kind of artmaking that cannot be defined in ways artmaking is defined in general, as 'what is experienced cannot be defined' (Gendlin 1999, 205). What is experienced depends on what is happening next, whether experiencing 'will be carried forward or left stuck' (Gendlin 1999, 205).

The fact that experiential arts cannot be defined has some implications. The main implication is that experiential arts are no method but a living and a pointing to something where a More of life is generating.

The term 'a More of' refers to Gendlin's experiential concept of the implicit (one of the main concepts of his philosophy).

The experiential body sense or Felt Sense is a kind of experiencing that is situational, preconceptional, unspecific and of high complexity, and with implicit meaning reaching beyond the situation (Gendlin 1994, 35). What is reaching beyond the situation has 'a More of' that is at the edge of awareness and undefinable.

The complexity (or 'intricacy') of the Felt Sense is unfolding in steps that follow a specific order, the bodily order of carrying forward. This bodily order is organized along the forwarding direction of the life force.

Each step of this order implies another step forward (a step that has no occurrence yet but is to come into forming freshly). The body is its own order of implying into the next implying (implying into the next move forward). There is always 'a More of' *something* not yet unfolding but on its way to unfolding (with not yet defined direction, but with precision in following the bodily order). The process of unfolding never succeeds in getting final, as any being is always a being-and-becoming. 'Experiencing ... never has just one form or >propositional< content' (Gendlin 1999, 204).

2. Use of 'crossing'

Experiential Arts Focusing uses Gendlin's concept of '**crossing**' to integrate different therapeutic understandings and approaches for best practice of forwarding art informed experiencing.

Crossing is more than adding or combining separate parts. Crossing can be explained best through a metaphor: Crossing is like mixing colors. A new color tone is created freshly, it has not been there before. The new color tone is expressing a kind of quality that the colors mixed in cannot contribute by their own. Being mixed up (colors mixing up can not be 100% controlled by the artist), the new color tone contains a More of all the colors being mixed in.

Crossing can have many results and they are not arbitrary. What comes into crossing is what truly can cross in the given moment (Gendlin, 2017). In relationships a truly happening crossing is felt as 'understanding each other'.

3. Use of creating best conditions possible for interactive bodily forwarding

Expressive Arts Focusing is crossing therapeutic approaches from the body sense in ways that the individual can process moment-to-moment under conditions that make **interactive bodily forwarding** most likely to happen.

The body sense of both the therapist/facilitator and the client provides information of what is needed next. It tells about situational therapeutic co-creation completion and coherent methods that are forwarding the therapeutic situation as a whole.

Forwarding is happening most likely in a space that is generating unpredictable shifts in body, arts and meaning with focus on the kind of forwarding that is most enlivening for the

client. Such a space is characterized by specific interactive qualities in the triassic of therapist, client and art as living process (Blob 2022).

The set of approaches Expressive Arts Focusing is referring to (fully or in parts) through crossing is this:

- Focusing with its various Focusing developments
- Focusing-Oriented Expressive Arts (FOAT®) (Laury Rappaport)
- Experiential Collaging (Akira Ikemi)
- Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy (Nathalie Rogers)
- Person-Centred Creative Arts (Ani de la Prida)
- Client-Centered Art Therapy (Norbert Groddeck)
- Intermodal Expressive Arts Therapy (Paolo Knill)
- Trauma-informed Expressive Arts Therapy (Cathy Malchiodi)
- Trauma-informed Guided Drawing®/Sensorimotor Expressive Arts Therapy® (Cornelia Elbrecht)
- Museum art-based Therapy (Receptive Art Therapy)

For getting access to short explanations of each approach and links of reference, please check out: <https://expressiveartsfocusing.com/expressive-arts-focusing>

Reference Literature:

[Blob, F. \(2022\): Das Experienzielle Dritte. Focusing Konzepte für die Kunsttherapie.](#) Abschlussarbeit Wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung Kunsttherapie (Diploma Of Advanced Studies), Katholische Hochschule Freiburg.

Gendlin, E. T. (2017): A Process Model. Northwestern University Press.

[Gendlin, E. T. \(2003\): Beyond Postmodernism: From Concepts to Experience.](#) In: Frie, R. (Ed.): *Understanding Experience: Psychotherapy and Postmodernism*, Routledge, p. 100-115.

[Gendlin, E. T. \(1999\): Authenticity after Postmodernism.](#) In: *Changes, An International Journal of Psychology and Psychotherapy*, 17(3), p. 203-212.

Gendlin, E. T. (1994): Körperbezogenes Philosophieren. Gespräche über Philosophie von Veränderungsprozessen. Focusing Bibliothek, Bd 5, DAF, Würzburg.

ExAF Techniques for Grounding

Taking Up Space

- Clearing up desk and changing desk to art table
- Exploring the art table as second ground with both hands, connecting outside

Connecting to Inner Space

Connecting To Situational *Befindlichkeit* (What Kind Of Setting Do I Need Today?)

- Exercise: 'Owning One's Ground', working with paper size and dynamic frames
- Exercise: 'Giving In To Sound and Imperfection', working with paper textures
- Exercise: 'Ice Skating', working with variations of dots and lines

Clearing A Space (Art Informed Approach Of Setting Aside)

- Clearing a Space through spiral writing in different directions (using different writing tools)
- Clearing a Space through writing with multiple layering (using different art tools)

For access to directives of ExAF techniques for grounding please email via:

<https://expressiveartsfocusing.com/more>

Additional Body Related Techniques For Grounding:

- Grounding through rhythmics, using boots as percussion instruments (experiencing audio and kinaesthetic modalities)
Workshop example: Traditional Swedish Folk Music - Instrumental, first piece of:
<https://youtube.com/watch?v=kcciHQDsYqQ> (minute 0:00 – 1:47)
- Grounding Through Focusing With The Whole Body by Astrid Schillings, GER
<https://focusing-institut.eu/en/focusing-institute/schillings-gb>
- Grounding Through Tree Breathing by Ernst Juchli, CH, co-founder of the Swiss Institute for Person-centered Psychotherapy, Focusing and Body Therapy GFK
<https://gfk-institut.ch/>

ExAF Grounding Method: Experiential Dynamic Shape Drawing (DSD)

WORKSHEET to work with clients

For What	Building Resilience Self-Empowerment Tool for Grounding Pre-/Post indicator
Where to use	Clinic, Practice, Education
Helpful for whom	Clients with difficulties concentrating or calming down
Indication	Addictive disorders psychiatric patients (only simple forms)
Contra-indication	Dementia, mentally handicapped people
Material	High quality oil pastels, tape, paper (best: 16.5" x 23.4"), table or wall
Duration	Max: 20 minutes
Space	Single work places in square
Group offering	8 - 10 participants
Guidance	Making the moves in large size before onto paper, role modeling as guide
Dialoging	FOAT dialoging / 10 min. questions afterwards
Learning Target	Getting focused, learning "I can master ...", sync of breath-move-draw, harmonious output
Variation	Pencil, charcoal, bilateral, meditation
Extras	Lombardic brands originals

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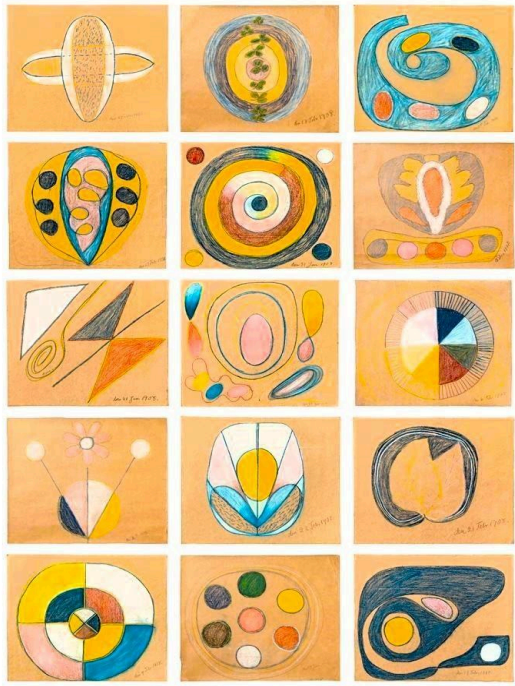


Guidance: Find a comfortable position at your table (or stand in front of the wall). Tape your paper on the table. Work with your oil pastel(s) slowly and from bodily feeling. Try to coordinate your movement with breathing. Follow the breathing directive (coordinating in-breath and out-breath along the moving direction). Go along the dynamic shape you've been introduced to with your oil pastel(s). You can do this with just one hand (dominant or non-dominant) or bilateral. Repeat the move along the shape several times. Allow yourself to feel inside while re-experiencing the shape. How is the move resonating inside? What kind of bodily feelings, thoughts, or images are showing up? Be friendly with what comes. Appreciate without judging and return to breathing and moving your oil pastel(s) along the line. If you notice your shape is changing, follow the fresh shape emerging.

FOAT informed dialoguing: Looking at your shape draw: How does the whole of it resonate from inside? Ask while looking at your lines: 'What are you showing to me that I did not know about myself up to now (about my emotional state, my physical state, my *Befindlichkeit* as a whole)?'

Questions afterwards in conversation with client:

How do you feel drawing your shape today (in contrast to yesterday)? What was easy for you to follow, what was difficult today? How and where was your breathing today? What next step do you feel right to go on experimenting with (a different shape or repeat of the same shape)?

<p>Experiential Museum Art-Based Engagement (MAE) WORKSHEET to work with clients Example: Fine Art by Hilma af Klint</p> <p><u>Questions To Explore:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose one symbol in the squares to work with. Why did you choose it? 2. What comes up as a bodily echo (as a whole) looking at the symbol chosen? 3. What kind of emotions/words/phrases pop up looking at your symbol? 4. What kind of body posture fits the symbol chosen? 5. How to describe what it all means to you communicating with someone who is: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) blind b) deaf? <p><u>Artistic Prompts To Experiment With:</u></p>	 <p><small>HILMA AF KLINT - CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ Reproductions: 1997 Published by the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm Edited by: Barbara Hagen, 1997</small></p> <p><u>Practical Invitations For Support:</u></p>
<p>Taking the symbol in the square as reference... What kind of artistic forwarding wants to happen?</p>	<p>Create with parts of the symbol. Alternatively try to multiply it and work in series. What kind of art material fits here? Where does all of it lead to?</p>
<p>Resonate to the symbol from Art Sense: What kind of atmosphere is depicted through the symbol? What is needed to express your response?</p>	<p>Create an artistic expression of the atmosphere you felt as a response. Notice different artistic atmospheres coming up with different art materials</p>
<p>What color(s) of the symbol calls for being highlighted? What serves highlighting best?</p>	<p>Highlight the color(s) by use of mixed media and/or by putting multiple layers of color on top to intensify the color value(s). How do you respond to the symbol as a whole now from the inside?</p>
<p>Are there any color(s) of the symbol calling you to delete? What is emerging from this kind of change?</p>	<p>Cut out pieces that call to be deleted. How to fill up the empty space? Try to fill up with lettering, collage, leave it blank, etc. Check how this feels!</p>
<p>Transfer the colored symbol to black-and-white. What is changing now? What is changing in meaning?</p>	<p>Outline the symbol in lines. Now take different pencils for different tones. Create contrasts. Use different kind of hatchings. What does this evoke?</p>
<p>What happens when you change the size of the symbol and/or the size of the space/square around it?</p>	<p>Make the symbol larger, smaller. Alter the shape of the frame or create a new colored background. What comes from all these changes?</p>

Choose a landscape, time of day, season, etc. that fits your 'always feeling' (background feeling) and bring your symbol into this context	Draw your inner landscape (or ...). Cut out the original symbol and find a place for it on your drawing. How do both (foreground and background) relate to each other?
Find relationships between symbols in different squares	Cut out symbols matching and place them in groups. What kind of story do they tell all together? ... Do some symbols call to be placed in alternative order? What does this do to you as a viewer?
Write a sentence/poem to each symbol	Make sure your sentence has the word 'I' in it. How do the symbol and sentence bridge to your life?
Make photos of items in your environment matching the symbol(s)	Use your smartphone or choose pictures in magazines. How do they connect all in all?
Make a collage of different symbols matching from Art Sense, you may want to add color to your collage	Cut out symbols or print out their photos, glue all together experientially. What title is matching all representatives as a whole?
Imagine the symbols representing a group of people: What are the people's characters? How do they relate to each other? Do you like to be part of this group?	Try to see each symbol as a person's photograph in a family album. Start by drawing circles as heads or use collage. What is the characters' family or tribe name? Communicate the name through gestures.

Reference Artist of Worksheet MAE: Experiential Museum Art-based Engagement

Artist Hilma af Klint (1862 – 1944), Sweden

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hilma_af_Klint

Pioneer of Abstract Arts producing her first abstract drawing 1904 and her first abstract painting 1906 (five years before Kandinsky's first abstract piece in 1911)

Work and Life of Hilma af Klint (by Guggenheim Museum, New York):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHdud9km7bQ>

Hilma af Klint Paintings for the Future at the Guggenheim Museum:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qt_kTt_dveE&t=3379s

[Almqvist, K. \(2020\) Hilma af Klint: Visionary: on Hilma af Klint and the spirit of Her Time, Stople Publishing](#)

The 2018 exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, Hilma af Klint: Paintings for the Future, introduced the general public to the abstract mystical masterpieces of Swedish painter Hilma af Klint (1862-1944). Based on a seminar held at the Guggenheim Museum at the opening of this acclaimed exhibition, this volume compiles the insights of the seminar's contributors alongside reproductions of works, archival photographs, and images from af Klint's journals.

Reference Material for Worksheet MAE

Fine Art by Hilma af Klint: The Fives (1908)



HILMA AF KLINT - CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ
Spontaneous Drawings 1899-1909
The Five Variants: Five panels on paper, 1908, oil
Published by Bildmuseet, Stockholm, Sweden, by the Hilma af Klint Foundation

Experiential Museum Art-Based Engagement: A Method of Expressive Arts Focusing

Museum art-based engagement is introducing Fine Art pieces to settings of Focusing, Focusing-oriented psychotherapy, counseling, education, arts facilitation, palliative care, etc.

Referring to Fine Art materials, the client can start from a stand of indirect creativity (receptive arts engagement) and step forward (or not) to active arts engagement.

For many clients, especially in verbal therapeutic settings, indirect creativity is easier to do. At the same time, logistics for indirect creativity are easier for the therapist to organize.

On theoretical grounds, ExAF informed Museum art-based engagement uses the term 'Art Sense' (instead of body sense or Felt Sense). The term 'Art Sense' has been introduced by Swiss lecturer, curator, artist, and cultural publicist Paolo Bianchi. Bianchi speaks of the body sense or Felt Sense as Art Sense when the body is relating explicitly to the Fine Arts. On other occasions Bianchi uses Gendlin's term Felt Sense.

A conceptual distinction between body sense/Felt Sense and Art Sense is helpful for professionals for several reasons. Focusing and Art Therapy have shown that the self-actualizing life force of a client can be different in expression and outcome depending on the setting.

A client can be able to forward their process in Focusing-oriented settings but stay structure-bound in arts-informed settings. The Inner Client (the body sense/Felt Sense of the client) can feel very alive in the therapeutic context, and the Art Sense (body sense/Felt Sense) is not forwarding at all in an artistic framed setting. Sensing inwardly and verbalizing a Felt Sense is okay for this client but expressing the Felt Sense arts-related is not okay for this client, as doing arts is happening in a modality that clients feels shut down with or is not at ease with. The client's art process stays stuck.

The same can happen vice versa: The person feels artistically fully alive, creative, and ready to express but cannot forward clinical issues, relate to other persons or communicate adequately what they feel inside. Support from the facilitator or therapist is most effective when the professional is in tune with the modality most alive in the client. Differentiating Art Sense from body sense/Felt Sense is helping the professional to intervene person-centered across modality preferences of the client. In addition, the therapist can speak about their client's bodily forwarding with a more precise description.

Reference Literature:

[Bianchi, P. \(2018\): Einen Kunstsinn suchen und finden. Wir können porös sein wie ein Schwamm.](#) In: Kunstforum International. Vom Sinn der Kunst, vol. 253, p. 45-56.