

## Somatic Focusing Guidelines

My body knows things as well as my head.

How does my body know things? Through, feelings, body sensations and things I know but can't yet put in words. We call these "felt senses".

Therefore, my body has its own language through which it wants to talk to me. There is always a story waiting to be told in my body whenever I notice feelings, sensations, and "felt senses".

How do I let my body tell its stories? By learning a special way of caring for, holding, and listening to my body's language.

This special way of owning my bodily experience is called "Focusing".

### Focusing Steps

Ask yourself, "What inside me feels like it most needs to be listened to right now?" Take time to notice what that is. Notice where you feel it and how it feels in your body.

Then ask yourself, "Is it OK to be with it right now?" If the answer is "no", ask, "Can I be with how saying "no" feels?" If not, ask "What can I be with right now?"

If the issue is one that doesn't feel good, sense whether you can give it some caring presence while you notice how it feels.

Next, ask yourself, "Can I let myself feel the whole thing in an open, gentle way, waiting for something to come...a word, a feeling, an image, a memory...that fits with the way it feels? If the answer is "no", ask "Can I be with the feeling of not wanting to be with it?"

If something comes...words, images, feelings, memories...notice how this feels in your body (don't just try to figure it out in your head). If it's OK to continue, stay with the body feel of whatever comes, along with an *attitude of caring presence*... allowing your inner story to unfold until it feels right to stop.

If nothing comes, or if you have to stop before finishing, always promise this unfinished place that you will come back to listen again.

If something has unfolded, take time to notice the difference in how it feels now as compared with how it felt when you started. Allow time to notice and savor the body feel of that change.