

Body-Environment through Whole Body Focusing

Chen Ein Habar

What is body? Where the body begins and where is it end? Can my body be environment too?

Those are questions we can all ask ourselves as focusers. The felt sense arises, as we feel it, in the body and outside of it, in its environment (there can be something that sits on my shoulder or presses on my chest). So is the environment is what I know that surrounds me or is it what I have interaction with? In Gendlin's philosophy he discusses those questions and defined body & environment differently as we know them from the unit model. When I first read chapter one of 'Process Model', where he lays the foundation for understanding the body-environment, I felt immediately how I know those new observations from the practice.

From the Process Model we know that body and the environment are one event, each implies the other. They imply each other in that they are part of one interaction process. Wholebody Focusing is a method of directly contacting and maintaining conscious awareness of the flow of living energy as it moves through our body, mind and spirit. So when we practice it, we directly experience this "Body-En. One event". The interaction is already in our awareness. The border between the two often blurred, and the concept of 'I' is not something that stays fixed and known. Body-environment is becoming one as a movement. Mutual actions happened, and I cannot dichotomous isolate myself from what surrounds me.

In WBF we see great importance in creating a space in which the focusing process will occur and will be carried forward. It is like the grounded presence which constructs the process, is the foundation of the great life process itself. Already there - at the entrance to the space, expansion is possible for me. I am aware of my body with the connection of the environment in which it is right now. As I start, I'm not bringing my attention to the center of my body, but rather to the sense of my whole body and the space around it.

From this wider attention, the inner movement is becoming more alive. As I'm staying with what is, my body is naturally unfolding. For example: Background stress, which was felt as smoke, fog, turned into a cloud around me, and took a role of absorption, cushioned me. Then, from the depths of my center, a pure anger came, free of feelings related, even delicate, which brought with him a relief. The process found its unique way to create inner space. We can see in this example, the natural flowing of the energy around the body and inside of it. The skin envelope didn't play a role of boundaries of the body. Here we can also look at the body as an environment in that sense of "environment in which body-process goes on further".

The environment we experience in focusing "is not the separable environment but the environment participating in a living process". Sometimes I notice people bring their attention so much into themselves through the process, so they lose the opportunity to experience a wider feeling which is coming from and in the natural life energy movement that brings healing from the depth.

Gendlin writes in Chapter One: "The main "environment" of any animal is its species members, other animals like it", so when we consider environment in our process, we must consider the person who is there with us. Indeed, another way that body-en. Interaction is essential in WBF is reflected in the co-presence space between the focuser and his supporter. This shared space has a meaning in the personal process. It is shared from that interaction which is present and cannot be separated from the process. So we bring our attention also to this felt connection during the process. From a philosophical point of view, if we're not thinking from the perception of the unit model, what happens to the focuser and to the listener going on there together, as an interconnected living process.

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Focusing trainer (coordinator in training) and a Yoga teacher. The WBF way I learned from Glenn Fleisch and feel very connected to it. In Israel my partner and I developed a method of Focusing Oriented Breathwork Therapy (FOBT) and we teach it in our program. Another field I integrate focusing in the last 2 years is in school with teachers & teenagers.

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