

A Short Story



'Dynamic Focusing'

"A fresh approach towards working with children"

René Veugelers

I really need some support!"

How a Focusing approach allows a child's inner voice to emerge.

Introduction

Are you able to step into a child's unknown world and let whatever emerges guide the next steps you take together? We will practice attuning to, and empathising with, a child's story and deeper needs using art materials and experiential process to connect with and express our playfulness, creativity and inventiveness. I will show a session with Rex (a depressed 13 year old) who had few words and often said "I don't know". You will learn how to be with these situations.

My experience;

This informs my understanding that the body carries all the important information and answers for us. It's all in there and can remain not connected yet. So when I work with children of all ages, through listening, I stay connected with my own FS: building up safety, clear boundaries and interest in whatever is there inside the child and reflecting many new and unexpected feelings, movements or non-verbal language, shown from the child's behavior and posture. The more that I can be with this subtle step by step process, the more a child can build up their own inner and outer connections. I never know the next step. My basic attitude is always to step gently and consciously into this unknown and unexpected territory. This brings always a fresh experience, subtlety and joy to every connection with children and with adults.

Background;

Anyone living close to the energy of a child knows there are profound life skills that adult carers can nurture in children that empower them to grow up, more open to the guidance of their felt senses. As more adults come to understand the advantages this can bring to themselves and the children in their lives, this 'self-empowerment' of children will spread. By supporting each other worldwide, we can help children have the intrinsic motivation and support they need to bring something new into the world. Here is an illustration of how to guide a child to use their own inner responses, rather than substituting "adult" experience or reactions.

The benefits of Focusing for a child's development:

Children have a better sense of who they are and manage to communicate better with other children and adults about their feelings, choices and underlying needs. They are better able to protect themselves against the influences of the outside world and also develop a kind of inner *radar* for what is right/good/supported or wrong/bad/ for their own development. They are calmer and more able to stay in contact with their boundaries. And they create, new

possibilities and choices. They are able to express their feelings, not only in words, but also in many other ways. They can develop greater inner safety and a strengthened identity, giving them a grounded presence in many different situations.

Benefits for Adults

*To learn & develop the practical skills, approaches and techniques required to build resilience & confidence in the children and young people that you are working with or . . . being with.

*To discover & learn how to tap into the natural capacity of children and young people for imaginative play, drawing, storytelling and other forms of symbolisation, to support better management of their emotional experience ~ while developing your own creativity and playfulness.

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*In particular, to learn how to do all of the above in a safe space ~ with clear boundaries, that respect both the privacy and vulnerability of much of childhood and adolescent experience and also yourself as an adult.

René is an art therapist, psychiatric nurse and group social worker, trained in Emerging Body Language (EBL), who teaches Children Focusing internationally. He is a Focusing coordinator for the Netherlands where he works with parents, toddlers, children and adolescents, emphasising the non-verbal world.

More trainings possibilities in 2017;

“**Being In REAL contact**”: a 4 day training in working with children with Attachment Disorder. From the 4th till the 8th of may in The Netherlands

And the First **Children Focusing Summer School** from 14th till the 20th of July in The Netherlands. With Emanuela Fonticoli, Laura Bavalics, Harriet Teeuw & René Veugelers. Topics are 1) working with your inner child and partial selves. 2) how to manage a group or a class of young children 3) (non-verbal) communication and creativity with Adolescents and 4) working with parents and family systems.

More info with René Veugelers

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