

FOCUSING AND TWO PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE PREFERENCES

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ABSTRACT

The Myers Briggs Type Indicator, a personality assessment device based on Jung's theory of psychological types is widely used in business as well as personal and career counselling. Focusing, an inner experiential process developed by Gendlin, has been shown by researchers to be an important factor in therapeutic change. This study investigated, from a phenomenological perspective, the way in which five participants, two introverts who preferred sensing perception and three introverts who preferred intuitive perception, personally experienced the focusing procedure. The participants focused on three occasions; twice in training groups held one week apart and the third time immediately prior to the qualitative interview. The phenomenological analysis showed that four of the five participants experienced focusing in a way which may be considered indicative of their preference for sensing or intuitive perception. Two main categories of responses emerged, the subjective (inner) experience of focusing and focusing in the context of the subject's life or the meaning or value the participants attributed to focusing. The two participants who preferred sensing perception gave detailed descriptions of their experience using concrete imagery,

expressed frustration with their tendency to let facts or details "get in the way" and used focusing to seek solutions to problems that were presently concerning them and were situation related. Two participants who preferred intuitive perception labelled themselves as "intuitive," recognized intuition as being an important mode of perception to them, felt self-actualizing kinds of activities were important, and used focusing to examine ongoing concerns that were relational in nature (the relationship was with either self or another person). These two participants stressed the importance of developing, using and trusting their "hunches." The fifth participant, although preferring intuition on the Myers Briggs Type Indicator, fell clearly into neither perceptive mode in the circumstances of this study. Reasons for this occurrence are discussed. Significance of the findings and implications for the use of focusing by counsellors are discussed and recommendations for future research are made.

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DEDICATION

To all those who dare enough to risk—
to find themselves—
Spirit and Will together—
and understand.

PREFACE

When I sat down to think about what I wanted to research as a thesis topic there was one thing I knew for sure, I wanted to do a piece of work that might in some way reach as many people as possible. I soon realized, however, that helping the world in one study was highly unlikely. Not only was this all but impossible, it was, shall we say, slightly grandiose of me to think that I could do such a thing. What did occur to me as being possible, though, was to initiate a line of research that might prove of some use to counsellors and clients along the way as well as any endpoint that might be achieved. I hope that this happens.

I strongly believe in the importance of focusing, not only in the ways described in the body of this text, but in ways that intuitively seem to me to be possible. I believe that humans store information on many levels, both conscious and unconscious. Focusing helps to access unconscious information. I believe that unconscious information includes not only stored memories of lived experiences, but what we term "psychic" awarenesses and abilities such as telepathy, telekinesis, precognition, clairvoyance, clairaudience and clairsentience. I believe that these abilities are the birthright of all humans and that it is possible that focusing or a form of focusing may help people to access and

become more aware of these aptitudes. I also believe it is possible that focusing can help people access and integrate transpersonal experiences and further augment spiritual growth in general. How would focusing help? I am not totally sure, but I think it has to do partly with structure, in that focusing provides a way to frame the internal questioning and search in such a way that access to deeper unconscious levels becomes easier. This is a hunch, though, not proven yet. However, I think there is some evidence to support this view in the thesis, especially in regard to the experience of Marion.

I think it may also be that there is some important connection here with "type." It is possible that types as defined by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator may access unconscious information differently or approach it in a different way that further research might elucidate. Since knowing type characteristics can be a very useful tool for helping a person to understand him/herself, further research attempting to add more information to typological profiles in terms of how a person accesses and deals with unconscious information of all kinds might be useful. Any takers yet?

It is my fervent hope that these lines of research and their implications will be taken up by others as well as myself and that one, some, or all of us may uncover knowledge that will help mankind to access its deep loving heart, transform, and become all that we can be.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Impetus for the Study

The impetus for the present study arose from a counselling theories course in the fall of 1984 at the University of Victoria. During a discussion of existential counselling, reference was made to something called a "felt sense." Upon inquiry as to the meaning of "felt sense," it was stated that it was a feeling in the body of a particular concern that a person was examining using a procedure called focusing. This statement immediately piqued the researcher's interest in that this felt sense was reminiscent of a useful way learned in personal therapy to better understand herself.

The researcher was referred to Gendlin's (1978) book *Focusing*, and realized that she wanted to further investigate focusing. Intuitively, the researcher knew that focusing had much more therapeutic potential than was being actualized at this point. It seemed that if she could uncover information that could aid in understanding how focusing was experienced by different people, the efficacy of the focusing procedure might increase.

Statement of the Problem

Gendlin stated that "the level of experiencing in psychotherapy was highly correlated with positive therapeutic outcome" (Gendlin, Beebe, Cassens, Klein, & Oberlander, 1968, p. 224). Gendlin developed focusing to teach people to experience their concerns and thus themselves in the present.

From her personal experience with focusing, the researcher knew it to be a powerful procedure. A number of clients, however, had difficulty with focusing even when they and the researcher made their best effort. A study that might increase awareness of focusing and how focusers using the strategy might apply it, and the difficulties encountered might be useful.

The researcher thought that some of the reactions and difficulties encountered with individuals attempting to focus might have something to do with the personality of the focuser as well as the focusing method itself. The Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) provides a logical, comprehensive framework for differences in personality functioning while allowing a person to be studied in their wholeness, not just in their parts. An investigation of participants' subjective experience of focusing in light of psychological type might yield information that could increase counsellors' understanding of the focusing process

and perhaps use it more effectively with clients.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to discover the way in which particular psychological types—herein, three introverts who prefer sensing and three who prefer intuitive perception—personally experience Gendlin's focusing technique.

In light of the purpose of the study, the researcher generated the following questions:

- (1) Are there aspects of a person's subjective experience of focusing that are consistent with their preference on the Sensing-Intuition scale of the MBTI? If so, how might these consistencies relate to the learning and subjective personal experience of focusing?
- (2) What does a person's subjective experience of focusing consist of?
 - (a) What are the specific thoughts, feelings, and images that occur during the stages of focusing?
 - (b) Are there any difficulties that occur during any of the stages of focusing?

Definition of Terms

Myers Briggs Type Indicator refers to the psychological test first published by Isabel Briggs Myers in 1962.

Focusing refers to the psychotherapeutic subprocess first defined by Eugene Gendlin in 1968. The following

definition of focusing is excerpted from Petersen (1981):

In every encounter with the environment, a person will have a reaction which involves both the mind and the body, although only one will be at the level of awareness. For example, when solving a problem, one's thoughts are more likely to be in the foreground, whereas in an extreme situation, one may be most aware of the bodily reaction, for example, an immobility in response to panic. In the focusing procedure one pays attention to the directly felt bodily experience of a situation, or "felt sense" (Gendlin, 1978). It is called "felt" because it is actually experienced as a feeling in the body. It is called "sense" because it is at first a perception of something unclear and vague (Hinterkopf, 1980). It is not just getting in touch with feelings, but with how the body carries what isn't yet clear about a problem or situation. The felt sense may be recognized by a tightness in certain parts of the body, as in the chest [or stomach] area or as a vague feeling such as people experience when they know they have forgotten something, but don't know what. By gently asking what this felt sense is about, one lets words or images follow which match the felt sense and bring new information and clarity to the concern. The result is a physical easing of the bodily tension. It is the kind of release one might feel when struggling to explain something confusing to someone, and he finally shows that he understands. (pp. 6-7)

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator:
Development and Relevant Research

According to Myers (1980), there is an "orderly reason" for the differences seen in the range of human personalities. These differences, according to her, and based on Jungian typology, state that "much seemingly chance variation in human behavior is not due to chance; it is in fact the result of a few basic observable differences in mental functioning" (1980, p. 1).

She states further that these differences have to do with the way people prefer to use their minds; specifically, the way they perceive their world and the way they make judgements. Perceiving is defined to include the processes of becoming aware of objects, people, occurrences and ideas. Judging includes the processes of coming to conclusions about what has been perceived. Perception, by definition, determines what people observe in a situation and judgement determines that they do with that observation. It seems logical then that "differences in perception and judgement should result in corresponding differences in behavior" (Myers, 1980, p. 2).

As Jung (1971) says, man has two ways, very different, of perceiving: one is through sensing, through which we become aware of things directly by the use of our five senses; the other, intuition, takes sensed information and adds unconscious bits or ideas to the sensed material. Jungian typological theory holds that from infancy on, people enjoy one mode more than the other and tend to use it more often. Thus, it becomes a preferred mode of perception. Type theory also holds that as soon as an infant exercises preferences between the two ways of perceiving, a differential development process begins. A child will use the preferred mode to process his/her information and fashion their world from what that process reveals. They will still

have the other mode of perception, but it will not be as developed. To quote Myers (1980, p. 3), "their enjoyment extends from the process itself to activities requiring that process."

According to Jung (1971), another basic difference in people is the use of their judgement. This difference arises from the existence of two distinct and very different ways of coming to conclusions. One way is by the use of thinking, that is, "by a logical process, aimed at an impersonal finding" (Myers, 1980, p. 3). The other is by feeling, that is, "by appreciation . . . bestowing on things a personal, subjective value" (Myers, 1980, p. 3). Whichever judging process a child prefers, he/she will use more often, trust more, and be much more ready to follow. The opposing kind of judgement will be a sort of "minority opinion, half-heard and often wholly disregarded" (Myers, 1980, p. 3).

Jung (1971) also discussed two very different attitudes or orientations to the world in his type theory. These orientations are introversion and extroversion. The introvert's main interests are in the world of concepts and ideas, while the extrovert's preferred world is that of people and things. The extrovert has the capacity to deal with ideas, and the introvert can function in the outside world, but their best work is done in the world of their preference.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was developed by Isabel Briggs Myers in the 1940's and 1950's and was first published in 1962. It is based on the Jungian theory of psychological types and 20 years of personal observations and study of Jung's work. Myers' idea was to put Jung's theory into practical use in order to help people understand each other. The MBTI consists of a number of forced choice items that examine people's attitudes, feelings, and behaviors. On each item a person is asked to respond according to their preferred mode of expression. Scores are obtained on four scales of preference. These four scales are: the Extroversion-Introversion (E-I), the Sensing-Intuition (S-N), the Thinking-Feeling (T-F), and the Judgment-Perception (J-P). The J-P scale is Myers' own addition and did not exist in Jung's original treatise on psychological types. Myers felt the addition of the J-P scale added to and accounted for her observed differences in people's attitudes and behaviors in the outside world. It also points to the dominant or auxilliary function in conjunction with the E-I scale (Myers & McCaulley, 1985). A brief discussion of the scales follows.

The E-I scale examines how a person is oriented to the world. An extroverted person in this definition is oriented to the outer world of people and things, whereas the introvert is oriented more inwardly to ideas. The S-N scale is

a measure of how a person perceives the world. As previously noted, the sensing person uses the faculties of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch to gain information about the environment. The intuitive person perceives the information given through the filter or adjunct of the unconscious. In this way, thoughts or ideas may be added to perceptions before they reach the conscious mind. Examples of intuition include hunches, "ahas" or flashes of insight and works of many art forms. The T-F scale refers to a person's preferred mode of making decisions. Thinking types use logical step-by-step processes. Persons who base their judgements on feelings use their own feelings and values and the feelings of others when they come to a conclusion. The fourth scale is the J-P scale. This refers to a person's preferred attitude to the world--judgement or perception. According to Myers (1980), people who come to make decisions generally already knowing the basis on which to decide, are judging types. Those people who remain open to further information are usually perceptive types. The higher of the two scores obtained on each scale determine the preferred mode. The preferences combine for a possibility of 16 types, each with its own strengths and weaknesses.

A great deal of research has been done using the MBTI. So much so, in fact, that CAPT (Centre for Application of Psychological Type) has been

formed in Florida. The researcher herself examined a bibliography produced by CAPT that contained approximately 1000 references to research using the Indicator. Only a few general references to type research are cited here to give an indication of its scope. Specific references applicable to the area of typology examined in this study are cited in Chapter 4 under the profiles of sensing and intuitive types.

The MBTI is used in career counselling and education, as well as personal counselling (Myers & McCaulley, 1985). Much MBTI research centres on the relations between psychological type, occupation and the effects that might have. Mackinnon (1961) found that many creative people, including architects, research scientists, writers and mathematicians are almost entirely intuitives. Mackinnon also states that in his samples of counselling students, 76% were intuitive feeling (NF) types. McCaulley, in her longitudinal study (1977), found that more introverts, intuitives and feeling types (and to a lesser extent) perceptives were found among medical students than could be found in a general college bound group of students in the 1950's.

Using phenomenological methodology, Perelman (1977) examined the subjective experiences of the counselling practice of eight students in a master's degree counselling

program in relation to their preference on the T-F scale of the MBTI. He found that in general the counsellors' experience of their practice was consistent with the subjects' preference for thinking or feeling as a dominant function.

As a final point of interest in this area, Myers (1962) noted these predictions for type occurrence in the general population which have been borne out (Myers & McCaulley, 1985, p. 45): about 75% of the population of the United States prefers E (extroversion), about 75% of the population in the United States prefers S (sensing); about 60% of males in the United States prefer T (thinking); about 65% of females in the United States prefer F (feeling); about 55% to 60% of the population in the United States prefers J (judgement).

Focusing: Development and Relevant Research

Focusing refers to a psychotherapeutic subprocess wherein a person attends to their inner bodily sense or "felt sense" (Gendlin, 1969) of a problem as a whole. According to Gendlin (1978, 1979), focusing accesses unconscious or, as he prefers to call it, subliminal knowledge that is held in the body and brings it into conscious awareness. During the process the focuser asks the felt sense questions and waits for a release or change in the felt sense that Gendlin terms an "experiential shift." This

shift results in a "carrying forward" or further living of the situation in the present moment, which allows into the focuser's conscious mind previously unknown aspects of the problem (see Figure 1). Focusing is an internal, experiential process which can and, according to Gendlin (1969, p. 225), should be used in therapy.

Gendlin's development of focusing is based, in part, on his original treatise, *Experiencing the creation of meaning* (1962). This work is partly a result of research and study with Carl Rogers, and his own rationale and evidence how humans translate subjective experience into personal significance. Gendlin was also interested in therapeutic outcomes. In much research over a period of several years, Gendlin and his colleagues (Gendlin et al., 1968) analyzed a number of taped therapeutic interviews. They discovered that they could predict with amazing accuracy success or failure of the therapy based on the first two sessions a therapist had with a client. They found that what made a difference between success and failure was not what theory or technique was used, but the kind of experiencing that was going on in the interview. According to Gendlin et al. the client must understand and feel in the present, the significance of a concern to herself and be able to carry that understanding forward in time to greater understanding and towards a possible solution of the problem.

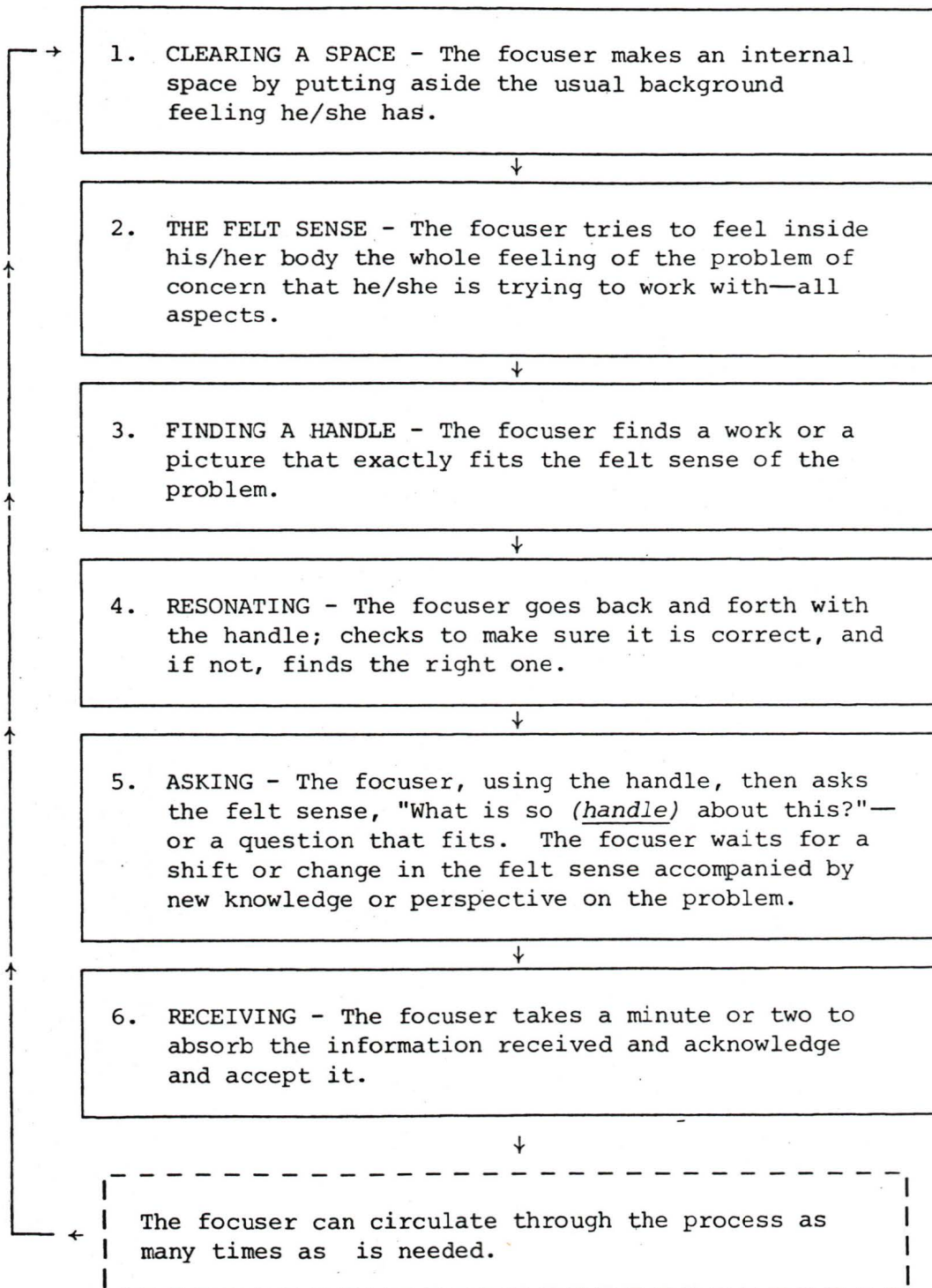


Figure 1. The six movements of focusing (adapted from Gendlin, 1978).

It seemed to Gendlin that clients either had this ability at the beginning of therapy or they did not. It did not seem to be something that was learned in the process of therapy. Though somewhat discouraged by this finding, Gendlin persevered. He and his associates conducted a number of interviews with clients (50) who had been deemed successful in therapy to try to find out just what this difference in experiencing ability was. The difference was that those patients who had positive therapeutic outcomes had "a certain mode of in-therapy behavior, namely that mode characterized by high levels of experiential attention and involvement" (Gendlin et al., 1968, p. 225).

Gendlin termed this "Highly experiential behavior" (Gendlin et al., 1968, p. 226) focusing. The overall implication of the study of the interviews was that "the experiential type of behavior is not developed as a result of therapy" (p. 225). The researchers also state that "focusing ability doesn't define adjustment, but is necessary to move from maladjustment to adjustment" (p. 226). As a result of this work, and a strong belief that this experiential behavior should be taught to clients if possible, the focusing technique was developed.

Many studies have been carried out since Gendlin's early work, some of which investigated correlates of focusing ability. In the previously mentioned 1968 study,

Gendlin and his colleagues found that focusing ability was "highly correlated with creativity," or at least with the ability to "let go of given constructs" (p. 240). Gendlin et al. also linked some aspects of personality with high focusing ability such as being introspective, silent, intelligent, self-disciplined, persistent, not distractible, and relaxed. Gendlin and Olsen (1970) noted that the use of imagery in focusing can be very useful for individuals who image easily. It can function as an intermediate step before the felt sense, or as a felt sense itself. Summers (1980, p. 78) thinks "Focusing may be viewed as both a therapeutic skill and a measure of congruence, or lack of defensiveness, without any inconsistency." Zimring and Balcombe (1974) found focusing negatively correlated ($\rho = -.20, p < .05$) with the ability to integrate and develop a theme, but positively correlated ($\rho = .58, p < .01$) with the cognitive ability to concentrate. An additional finding of the Kantor and Zimring (1976) study, described in the next paragraph, showed women to be better focusers than men. Petersen (1981) examined the effects of focusing on personal journal writing: she found that focusing increased the significance of the subjects' journal writings in that it helped them become more aware of their feelings around a subject.

In terms of the effects of focusing, Kantor and Zimring (1976) investigated the effects of focusing on a problem. An equal number of male and female undergraduate students,

focusers and non-focusers, described in writing two specific situations involving a common general problem. Each group wrote a story describing the thoughts, feelings and behavior of the story characters in one of the situations. The experimental group focused on the problem before they wrote and the control group went through an unrelated exercise. The stories were rated for the number of emotional referents and the subjects also answered a questionnaire about whether their perception of the problem had changed. Results showed that there was no difference in the experiential quality of the central problem, but a greater number of subjects in the control group reported a change in their perception of the problem. There was an increase, however, in the number of feelings written about in the stories of the focusing subjects in the experimental group. The researchers concluded that focusing enriches the emotional context of the problem and thus provides more alternatives for exploration and development that might lead the subject to reformulate the problem in some way that could be helpful.

Greenberg and Higgins (1980) compared the Gestalt two-chair method with focusing as a way to deepen the experiencing level in relation to conflict resolution. The results showed that although the two-chair method resulted in deeper experiencing levels, both methods led equally to significantly greater reported progress by the subjects than the

controls in resolving their conflicts.

Gendlin's latest work is a further application of focusing: *Let your body interpret your dreams* is to be published in 1986. Instead of trying to get a felt sense of a personal concern in their daily life, the focuser focuses on an aspect of a dream that tries to get a felt sense of that. The emphasis here is on using focusing to aid in personal growth by deepening the understanding of the significance of dreams in our lives.

Rationale for the Study

Research evidence indicates that focusing is a potentially powerful tool in psychotherapy and personal growth. According to Myers and McCaulley (1985), who cite a number of studies, the MBTI is a valid, reliable personality assessment device. A review of the literature, however, revealed no studies that detailed the experience of persons while focusing or linked focusing with the MBTI. In the opinion of the researcher, this leaves a gap in the information available to counsellors that this study attempts to address. Research linking these two tools in a concrete, observable way could possibly increase the efficacy of focusing and the validity of the MBTI and thus enhance the delivery of counselling services.

As a result of her focusing and journal writing study, Petersen (1981) recommends research in focusing that describes the "words, images, feelings or sensations [that] present themselves to the focuser at each step of the process and how they are experienced" (p. 63). In regard to the MBTI, Perelman (1977) suggests that "studying the lived experience of people within the context of their own preferred mode of behaving could add significantly to our store of human experience, unburdened by the qualitatively judgement-laden trait designation of previous psychologies" (p. 158). Further along, he suggests future research using the MBTI that investigates "the experience of type with regard to other areas besides counselling to help answer questions concerning the stability of type preference across situations and to help us understand the ways in which certain types are most suited to particular activities" (p. 158). This researcher intends to combine these two suggestions in this study.

The present study is intended as a first step in what is potentially a long line of research. The specific theoretical rationale for examining focusing in relation to the MBTI is:

- (1) Myers (1980, p. 4) states that the scales of the MBTI are independent; Carlson (1973) states that a researcher should select for study only "those components of the

type pattern which are intrinsically relevant to the problem at hand" (p. 563).

- (2) Focusing is an internal process, an "inward directing of the attention" (Gendlin, 1978), and it taps subliminal or "unconscious" knowledge (Gendlin, 1978).
- (3) In choosing which scales of the MBTI to study the researcher noted the following: since focusing is an internal process, she felt the most appropriate place to begin research would be with a group of subjects who might be more familiar with an internal orientation (i.e. introverts).
- (4) The researcher felt that the other scale of the MBTI that might be involved in the learning of focusing would be the S-N scale. As previously noted, this scale deals with the way a person perceives and processes information. Research (Myers & McCaulley, 1985) shows that the S-N dimension is also very involved in learning.
- (5) Also in regard to the S-N scale and information processing, the S type uses the senses, the facts and detail, and the N type uses the senses information plus an intuitive unconscious component. Note that the term unconscious is used in both focusing and the MBTI. The researcher wondered if there was a connection there. It seemed to her that the way a person processed their

information might have a connection to their experience of focusing. Was this a possibility?

- (6) Hence, the researcher decided to begin study in this area by examining the subjective experience of focusing of six introverted types; three who prefer sensing and three who prefer intuition as their mode of perception.

Contributions of the Study

It is expected that this study will contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of counselling in the following ways:

- (1) a detailed, scholarly examination of a particular aspect of counselling that is unresearched at present;
- (2) concrete preliminary work that will provide data on the subjective experience of focusing and the experience of persons who prefer Sensation or Intuition on the MBTI that may point to a direction for future research in this area as well as practical suggestions for counsellors who use focusing.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Phenomenological Methodology

There are several reasons for choosing phenomenological methodology for this study. In relation to the purpose of the study, since the subjective or "life-world" of the individual is the basis for phenomenological study (Giorgi, 1975), and since descriptions of lived experience tend to show typical attitudes and behaviors associated with type preference on the MBTI (Carlson, 1980; Perelman, 1977), a phenomenologically based investigation seemed appropriate to discover how persons preferring Sensation or Intuition on the MBTI might experience focusing. Second, one of the researcher's aims was to elucidate information in regard to the participants' subjective experience of focusing in a detailed way. The detail would include thoughts, feelings and images experienced at each stage of the focusing process. This, too, is one of the goals of phenomenological research (Samson, 1984). Third, Shapiro and Alexander (1975) suggest that investigating the experience of

introversion calls for a phenomenological approach because phenomenology can "locate the target phenomenon in experience . . . and describe it with an eye to what it requires to be this and no other phenomenon" (p. 82). Fourth and last, Perelman (1977) suggests the use of phenomenological methodology in conjunction with Jungian typology as a productive research procedure. (The specific excerpt from Perelman is presented in Chapter 4.)

In light of the above stated reasons for choosing this methodology, the researcher then considered the following underlying precepts of phenomenology before conducting the study. First, as Giorgi (1971) discusses when explaining the characteristics of the phenomenological approach to investigating human experience:

The approach of phenomenology is characterized by the attitude of openness for whatever is significant for the proper understanding of the phenomenon. The subject is required to concentrate on the experience of the phenomenon exactly as it is given to him, and not to prejudge it nor to see it through any specific perspective simply because of previous knowledge about the phenomenon. (p. 9)

Lastly, the researcher considered these words of Giorgi (1971):

by adopting a strictly descriptive approach, we can let the phenomena speak for themselves, and when we do, we can discover that whatever appears suggests in its very appearance something more which does not appear, which is concealed. (p. 151)

With these thoughts in mind, the researcher undertook this study using the phenomenological method.

Instrumentation

The Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

The researcher chose this instrument for several reasons. First, the MBTI is a widely used instrument in personal and vocational counselling and in the opinion of the researcher provides the most logical, comprehensive and flexible framework for conceptualizing and delineating the variations that the researcher noticed in the personality functioning of people whom she has known, both personally and professionally. Second, its outcomes are of a non-judgmental nature. Third, the researcher wished to study and learn about Jungian thought as presented in the Indicator.

Intercorrelation and reliability of the MBTI have been studied by Stricker and Ross (1963, pp. 287-293) who found that items which discriminate between Extroversion/Introversion and Sensation/Intuition are independent of each other. In terms of validity, the manual, *A guide to the*

development and use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1985) lists a number of positive correlations between the MBTI and other tests of interest (pp. 177-223).

In regard to the relationship to Jungian type theory, Isabel Myers, in discussing her indicator and the Gray-Wheelwright Type Indicator, states:

It would therefore appear that the Indicator and the Gray-Wheelwright (as far as it goes, lacking JP) are reflecting the same things. The degree of agreement seems inexplicable in only two ways, one reasonable and the other not. The reasonable explanation is that both tests reflect the same basic realities, that is, the Jungian opposites which both were designed to reflect. If not, it must be assumed that not only did the authors of the Indicator miss their objective but so also did the Jungian analysts Gray and Wheelwright in exactly the same ways, a coincidence which seems unlikely. (1962, p. 93)

The Focusing Manual

The Focusing Manual is a set of instructions for the focusing procedure. Two sets of instructions were used for this study. The first set, Focusing Manual 1 (Appendix C), is adapted from Gendlin (1979). The researcher felt a long and detailed set of instructions at the initial training sessions would be most appropriate to familiarize the subjects with the procedure. The second, abbreviated set, Focusing Manual 2 (Appendix C), was used during the second training session and just prior to the audiotaped interview. This second set of instructions is from Gendlin (1978).

The Post Focusing Questionnaire (PFQ)

The PFQ, devised by Gendlin (1969), consists of nine open-ended questions designed to discover whether the subjects actually underwent the focusing process.

The PFQ Scoring Manual (Corey, 1980) was used in the training of the two counselling graduate student raters. They independently scored each PFQ on a 1-5 point scale:

- 1 = did not focus. Dissociated, random thought sequences dominated;
- 2 = did not focus, but stayed thinking about the concern;
- 3 = focused on a bodily felt meaning which intensified or diminished, but did not change;
- 4 = focused on a bodily felt meaning whose outcome was neither chosen nor predicted;
- 5 = focused with a resulting distinct change in the meaning of the concern.

The critical distinction between focusing and not focusing is between 2 and 3. At 3, there is an abrupt change from talking and thinking to the felt sense of the concern. Any person with a score of 3 or more had learned the skill and is a focuser (Gendlin, 1969).

As the main focus of this study is the participants' subjective experience of focusing and not their actual rated level according to the scoring manual, the data section states only whether the subject did (score 3 or greater) or

did not (score 2 or 1) focus.

Overview of the Method

The specifics of a phenomenological approach to research must be individualized to suit the aims and purposes of the particular study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Colaizzi, 1978). Bearing this in mind, the researcher drew from and adapted to her purposes, methods used by several previous phenomenologists (Colaizzi, 1978; Giorgi, 1975; Perelman, 1977; Samson, 1984). For ease of perusal, a simplified overview of the method is presented in Figure 2. Details of the methodology follow under appropriate headings.

The Pilot Study

The decision to conduct a pilot study was based in part on information obtained from a book by Jahoda, Deutsch and Cook (1956). These authors are authorities on research methods used in the social field. They stress the importance of a pilot study which tests whether the specific intent of each question is understood as intended and discovers any other difficulties encountered in answering the questions. Even though their discussion was in regard to the use of questionnaires, it seemed to the researcher that their concerns could well apply to interviews.

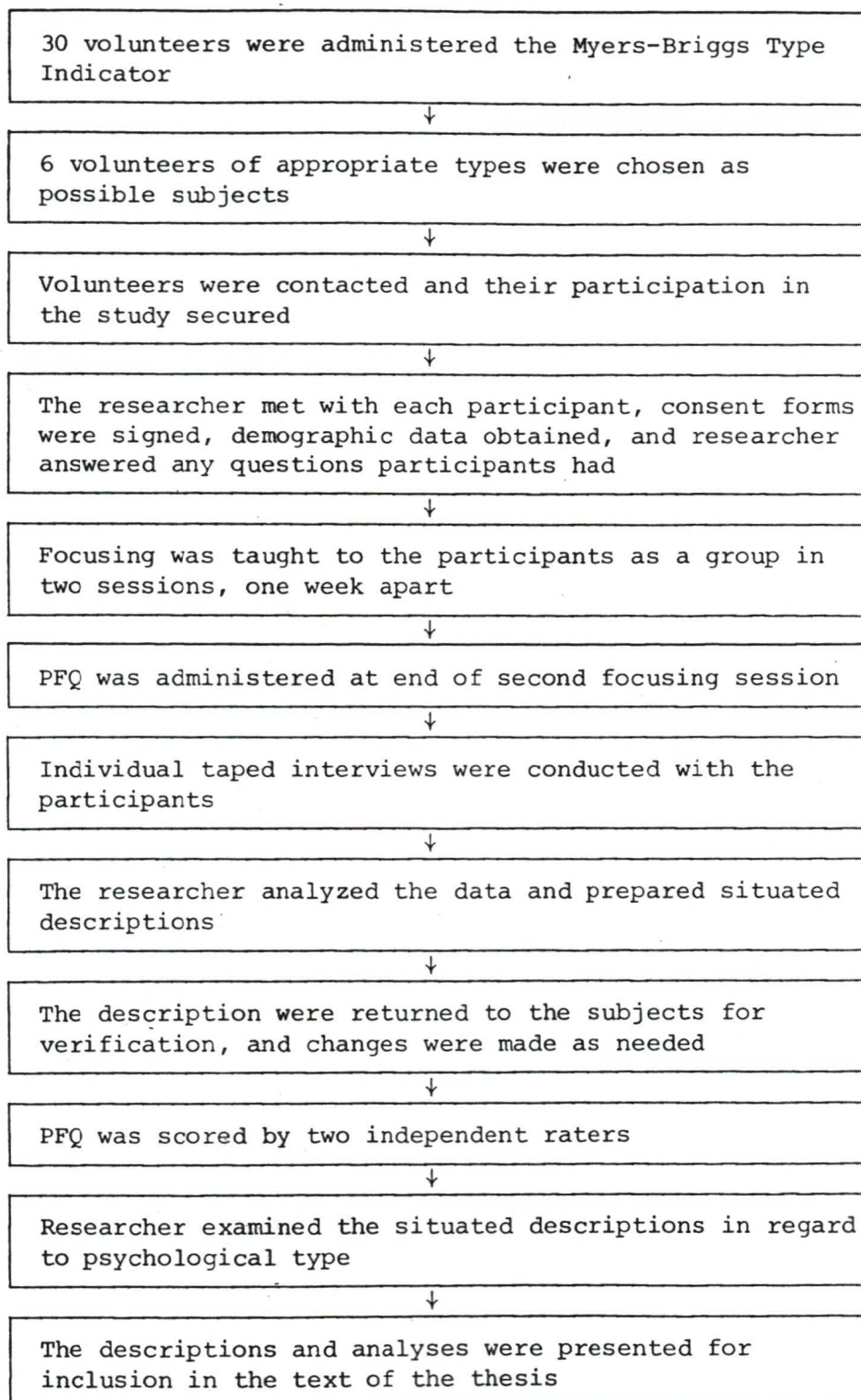


Figure 2. A flow chart overview of methodology.

Two subjects took part in and completed the pilot study. During this pretrial, changes in the wording of the focusing instructions and the addition of several interview questions as well as the rewording of several others took place.

Selection of Participants

An invitation to participate in the study (Appendix A) was sent to approximately 40 graduate students in the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria. In addition, the researcher was contacted by a number of people who were interested in the content of the study and perhaps volunteering to take part in it. The MBTI was administered by the researcher to 30 people. The participants were instructed to place only an identifying code on their answer sheet in order that the researcher not be able to identify them. Identifying information such as name, address and phone number were written on a piece of paper and sealed inside an envelope with only the participant's code written on the outside. A master list of possible subjects and their personal information was maintained by a research assistant until the conclusion of the data analysis.

Criteria for selection as a subject included interest in focusing but lack of personal experience with it, and scores on the MBTI showing a preference (+15) for Introver-

sion over Extroversion and Sensation over Intuition. One subject, Morgan, had a preference score of +13 on Sensation. Due to time limitations and unavailability of other subjects scoring +15 or more on sensation and the fact that her score was very close to the cutoff point, the researcher decided to include Morgan in the study. Subjects were chosen based on their preference for sensation or intuition without regard for dominant or auxillary function. According to Carlson (1980, p. 809), the selection of subjects in this manner is acceptable when there is a "limited range of types to be found in small samples available for intensive study." The researcher felt her study fit this description.

The subjects then consisted of six introverted types, three whose preferred mode of perception was sensation and three whose preference was intuition. One subject dropped out a few minutes prior to the first focusing session and thus the actual number of participants in the study was five. Of these five subjects, four were female and one was male, all were university educated, and ranged in age from 20 to 50 years. The researcher was not informed of the subjects' typical preferences until the descriptions of their subjective experience of focusing were completed and had been examined by the researcher in reference to psychological type.

Specific Research Procedure

Initially, the subjects were contacted by telephone by a research assistant who secured their participation in the study at that time. The researcher then contacted the subjects and set up a time for an initial meeting. At this time the researcher explained the details of the study, answered any questions the subjects had, and obtained informed consents. Again by telephone, the researcher arranged a mutually agreeable time for the focusing training sessions. The five participants met together as a group on two occasions, one week apart, to learn the focusing procedure as described in the Focusing Manuals. The procedure in Focusing Manual 1 was used in the first training session. Manual 2 was used in subsequent procedures. The administration of the manual was preceded by an introductory explanation of the focusing process as described by Gendlin (1978). The researcher described and gave examples of what one might expect to experience at each stage of the process. At the conclusion of the first session, the participants discussed their experiences, including the problems they encountered, and suggestions were made by the researcher on how to overcome the difficulties. The second session was followed by the administration of the PFQ and another clarifying discussion.

At the end of the second focusing training session, the researcher made appointments with the participants for the individual interviews.

Audiotaped interviews were conducted individually with each of the subjects. These interviews were conducted at the home of the participant, at the home of the researcher, or in a comfortable office at the University of Victoria, whichever was most comfortable for the subject. Prior to the beginning of each interview the researcher went through the focusing procedure using Focusing Manual 2, in order that the subject might have an immediate focusing experience to refer to during the ensuing discussion. Questions asked during the interview are included in Appendix F. The researcher used empathic listening skills such as reflection of meaning and probing during the interview to encourage the subject to elaborate on any point that was felt to be important.

Analysis of the Data

For ease of perusal, a simplified overview of the data analysis is presented in Figure 3. A more detailed discussion of the individual steps of the analysis follows.

Individual Accounts

Each tape was transcribed verbatim by a research assistant. Before beginning the data analysis, the researcher

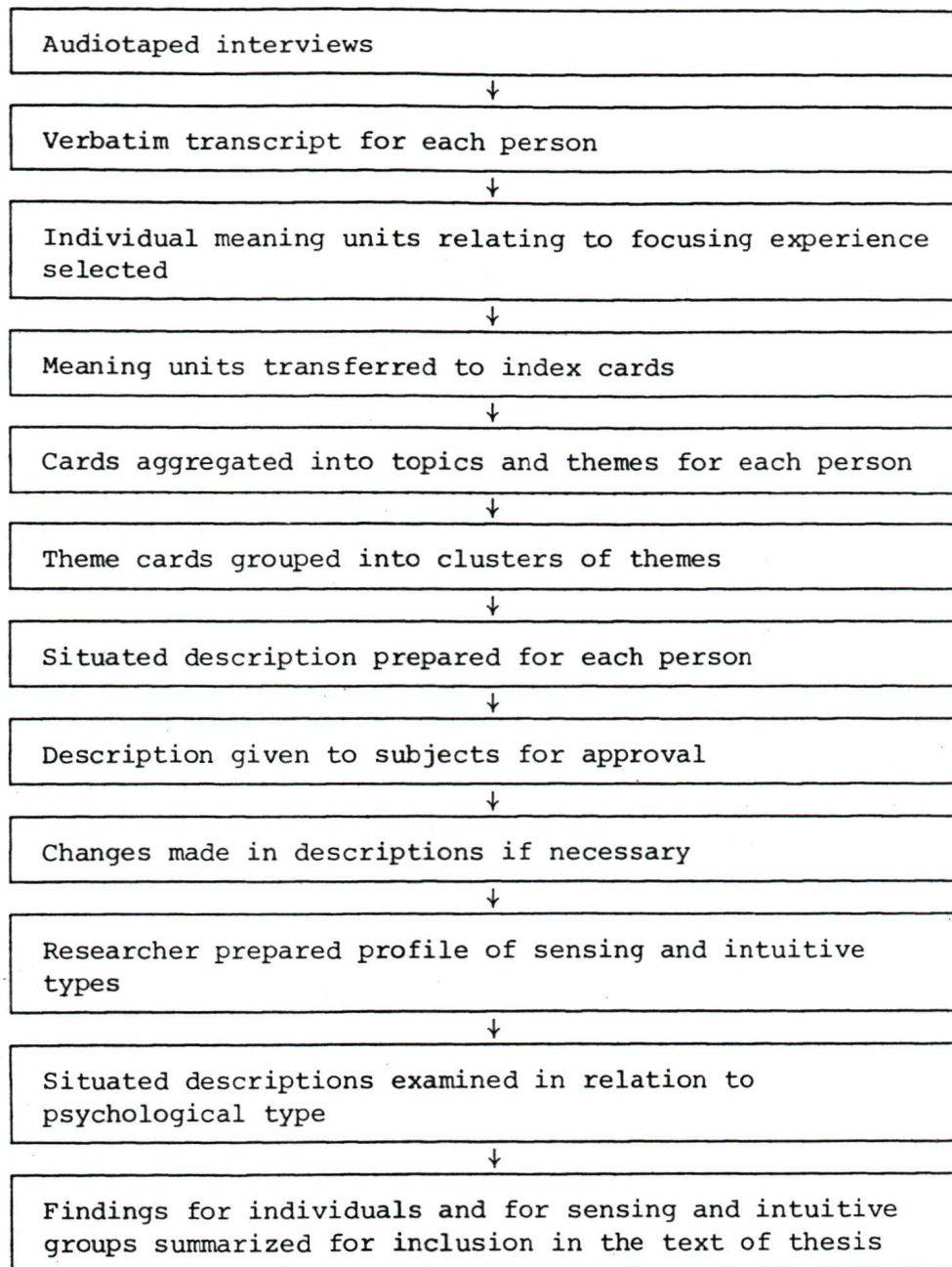


Figure 3. A flow chart of the data analysis.

listened to each tape in order to get a feel for the whole interview. In the researcher's opinion, with the exception of Sam's denial of being scared, the participants' verbal accounts of their experiences during focusing were congruent with their observed behaviors. Significant statements were underlined as the tape was being played a second time. The statements were summarized, checked with the transcript for accuracy, and the meaning units transferred onto individual index cards. These cards were sorted into topic categories, then into theme categories, and finally into clusters of themes.

Every attempt was made to allow the data to speak for themselves, a basic principle of phenomenological analysis (Colaizzi, 1978). This meant allowing the organizational categories and themes to emerge as much as possible from the data rather than imposing any preset framework. While sorting the cards, two main categories of themes about the focusing experience emerged. "The Subjective Experience of Focusing" includes the thoughts, feelings and images experienced at each step of the focusing procedure by the participants, and "Focusing in the Context of the Subject's Life" delineates the value or meaning that the participant attributes to focusing.

After the sorting and organizing was completed, a descriptive account of the focusing experience was written

for each person. In producing the situated descriptions, it is the aim of the researcher to provide a shorter, more concise and coherent account of the participant's experience of focusing than a verbatim transcript would allow, while retaining as accurately as possible the meanings intended by the subjects. The descriptions are presented in prose form in order to be more readable and also that they might help both the reader and subject to understand the qualities of the focusing process. After the descriptions were finished and typed the researcher gave them, along with an explanatory note (see Appendix E) to the subjects to review. The participants were contacted after several days and their reactions to the protocols elicited in a second interview. Minor changes in the accounts, rewordings and some elaborations were made. These changes were incorporated into the final descriptions presented in the text of the thesis.

It is important to note here that although the situated descriptions are twice removed from experience, the researcher had a definite advantage in being present during the focusing procedures. As stated previously, the researcher took the participants through the focusing procedure just prior to conducting the interview. While reading the focusing instructions to the participants, the researcher re-experienced to a degree the steps of the process and watched the participant's reactions while focusing. Being present at

the time focusing was being experienced allowed the researcher more ready access to the life-world of the individuals involved. The researcher was then able to link her written account of the interview with her observed and intuitive account of the participant's actions.

From the Perspective of Psychological Type

In the second phase of the data analysis, the researcher examined the writings of Carl Jung, writers interested in Jungian thought, the Myers and McCaulley (1985) manual for the use of the MBTI and Myers' (1980) *Introduction to type*. A profile of persons who prefer sensation and those who prefer intuition as their mode of perception was prepared. The researcher then examined the situated descriptions in light of these profiles. The results of this examination and questions it raised are presented in Chapter 4.

Personal Assumptions of the Researcher

In accordance with the principles of phenomenological research, described by Giorgi (1975), prior to beginning the interviews, the researcher thought about and then wrote down the ideas or expectations she had about the outcome of the study in order to uncover her assumptions about the subjective experiences of focusing in relation to psychological type. The reader may consider the results of the research in light of these suppositions.

The researcher herself is an intuitive type (ENFP); she consciously used this mode to gather and process information. The following statements are her "intuitions" as to some reasons for the possible existence of differences between sensing and intuitive types' experience of focusing. They are included here in order that the reader may be made aware of the mind set the researcher was operating under. These statements are in no way meant to suggest a priori, that a relationship between subjects' personal experience of focusing and her preference on the Sensing-Intuition scale of the MBTI does in fact exist.

The researcher thought there might possibly be differences in the way that focusing was experienced by sensing and intuitive types. From her understanding of the attributes of each type, the researcher thought that intuitives might have an innate or intuitive understanding of focusing because it taps unconscious information that the researcher thought they might be familiar in working with. The researcher thought it might be easier for intuitives to learn to focus because of this inherent understanding she thought might exist. Also, the researcher thought that it might be easier for intuitives to learn to focus as she felt they might be more familiar with self-actualizing types of procedures than sensing types would be.

In regard to sensing types, the researcher thought that they might have more difficulty learning to focus due to a lack of familiarity with the kind of self-examination process focusing represents. It also occurred to the researcher that because sensing types are acutely aware of the present moment, the images they might have during the focusing procedure might be more vivid and concrete than those that intuitives might have.

Also, the researcher thought that she would be able to ascertain quite quickly who was an intuitive type and who was a sensing type. In this regard, the researcher thought it important, as soon as she found herself speculating as to the type of the participant to say to herself, "Consider the possibility, you may be wrong."

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited first by the ability of the researcher to maintain an unbiased and observational approach to the subjects; second by the extent to which the verbal reports of the subjects accurately represent their internal experiences; third by the skill of the researcher at interviewing in order that the subjects will feel relaxed and willing to share their experiences with her; fourth by the researcher's ability to accurately extract the pertinent information from the data; fifth, by the researcher's

understanding of the MBTI and ability to interpret its results correctly, and lastly by limitations inherent in phenomenological research.

There is a limitation to the phenomenological approach which seeks to understand the in-depth experience of a limited number of subjects. Piepgrass (cited in Perelman, 1977) states:

[I]t is not possible to authoritatively generalize from a small sample to a much larger population as one can with a random sampling procedure. Rather, a large number of small samples must be polled phenomenologically before such generalizations can be made. (p. 30)

CHAPTER 3

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

This chapter includes an explication of the data as an individual account of the subjective experience of focusing for each participant in the study.

Introduction to the Individual Accounts

The individual accounts or situated descriptions of subjective experience that follow are based, as mentioned previously, on a systematic analysis of audiotaped interview transcripts. Participant statements were summarized and organized into "meaning units" or themes. These themes were then organized into narrative prose descriptions that follow the subjects' statements of experience as closely as possible while allowing for a natural sequential flow of events to emerge. Each subject's experience of focusing is presented under two headings, "The subjective (inner) experience of focusing" and "Focusing in the context of the subject's life." In the section of the descriptions depicting the subject's inner experience of focusing, each step in the focusing procedure (e.g. clearing a space) is underlined, as in the example, for easy reference by the reader to the discussion of focusing in Chapter 1.

Kris

The subjective (inner) experience of focusing. Kris found that she really enjoyed the process of learning focusing, "Interesting, I liked it;" although sometimes she had some difficulties. One of the difficulties that Kris had initially was with the pacing of the focusing instructions given by the researcher, "Trying to follow a sequence when I wasn't sure if I was in the same place that you were." "I was wondering if I was behind or ahead." Kris later said: "I don't think it [instruction pace] really interfered the first time, it's just that I thought it did." Another problem that Kris encountered was with the clearing a space step; she found it hard to put her background feeling aside, "I am not that conscious of putting something aside into a space so much as focusing on a different space where I get my felt sense."

At the next step, choosing a problem, Kris discovered that the problem chose her: "I get this sensation, this mural moving . . . you know, like in the movies when the jet comes flying out of the screen . . . the main issue starts to come flying out of the screen . . . the rest of the screen is going just flicking by you, like you were turning it and flipping through . . . it's not exactly going left to right, and it is not exactly going around, it is just there" "They [problems] seemed to have a little fight. I wasn't

sure which was going to come to the foreground."

In the focusing section just prior to the interview, the concern that Kris examined was a pressing one: "It was a very immediate kind of thing." "I think it is really the proximity [of the issue]." She did not feel this would be the normal kind of concern she would deal with in focusing, ". . . usually I don't think that would be what would come up. The last two times it didn't and I think usually it is kind of ongoing things that are inclined to come." In the first two sessions of focusing, Kris worked with questions about an "ongoing relationship." Kris thinks that the kinds of areas she deals with in focusing are different. "Things come up that don't come up otherwise, that wouldn't come up if I just sat there."

As Kris was trying to get a felt sense, she had a sensation in her throat that was different and surprising for her. "All of a sudden I noticed that my throat was really tight, I haven't had anything like this before in focusing." Kris thinks the throat sensation may have represented some resistance to letting herself go in the focusing process. "It was just like a block, you know like when you are trying not to cry or something, sort of like I'm in control, like I don't want to let down."

The felt sense is the aspect of focusing that stands out the most for Kris. According to Kris, her felt sense "is

different every time." The kind of felt sense she has varies: "When I first start to concentrate on my body, I am very aware of a felt sense in the chest. And then it seems to be about in my upper stomach. The first day we were there, it was in my upper stomach, but it was in a wider area . . . it was a more open, moving felt sense again in my stomach, sort of below my solar plexus . . . it would have been the size of a softball or baseball." Kris has very distinct images and feelings with her felt sense: "Cutting sense . . . like someone was taking a knife. But not like a sharp pain . . . the image of the cut fits the feeling."

In the third session of focusing, Kris' handle was "threatening." I asked her where she got her handle word from. She noted with humour her dismay at being unable to find a word that fit the felt sense perfectly. "Roget's Thesaurus. I look up [in fantasy] and see what's there. As much as this sounds ridiculous, there is this sense of using this method to try to get a handle because my vocabulary seems so limited." Kris did not directly mention the resonating stage of focusing, although she did say she felt "threatening" was as near as she could get: "It is never quite on . . . there could always be a better word; you could invent one."

At the asking stage, where the focuser asks the felt sense questions, Kris seemed to be extremely aware of what was happening: "I was really conscious of the idea of asking

what was threatening." The last step of focusing is receiving. It seems that for Kris, the felt shift and the receiving of information came almost at the same time: "The only thing that changed was that this thing popped into my throat all of a sudden, like this time this little place in my stomach, I could hear it saying sentences to me." She also had the feeling of being prodded by her sense to take a look at this information: "Like the felt sense was saying, 'Here look.' Pointing it out, if you take the image of the screen again . . . or a camera zooming in . . . it [information] kept zooming out, into the foreground of the screen."

Kris feels focusing has helped her to clarify and become more aware of information that she had been only peripherally aware of before. "It really clarified a couple of reasons why I feel threatened" and "It is not anything that you figure you shouldn't have known or been aware of any way. [Focusing] just kind of pops it out there." She finds the process of focusing to be "gentle," "and not really dramatic." Overall, Kris has a bodily sensation of focusing that seems to relate to a psychological change as well: "A positive sense of being, a kind of opening up."

Focusing in the context of the subject's life. In reflecting on the learning and experience of focusing, Kris made several connections to things that occur in her daily life. For example, Kris was not previously aware, on a conscious

level, that she attended to sensations inside her body. "I wouldn't have said particularly that I did . . . I guess I do." As she talks about these bodily feelings, Kris becomes aware that she does indeed have these inner sensations and sometimes she can't stop them from making themselves known. "You can't ignore them, if they get to the point of, you know, you might even call it pain-like" and then she attends to them, for whatever they might represent.

As an analogy to focusing, Kris related that she sub-vocalizes to songs and in that way gets in touch with concerns that are important to her. "I was at a journal-writing workshop, someone was talking about it." Kris found she sub-vocalized and wasn't aware that she did it, nor how meaningful it was for her. "I started to realize that all the time when I'm doing it how it is always significant."

"Sub-vocalizing" is very effective for Kris and reminds her of focusing in that it is a way to "tap into" a whole kind of knowledge that she is not normally aware of. "You're not always conscious of it at times." This "tapping into the source" of this information is "really important." The information makes sense to her as it comes to the surface: "Like I react by saying, 'Oh yea, I guess I should have known that, I was sort of aware of it before.'" Other kinds of "tapping into" methods for Kris include "journal writing, Jungian dream analysis and meditation," although Kris has not

yet tried meditation herself.

"Tapping into" this information is really important to her: "That whole area of going with my, I don't know if you would call it intuition . . . but going with that and trusting that. I think that it is important for me to tap into that more because so often it seems that once I get the evidence I find that I was right." Kris has "feelings about people" which she terms "vibes" that "almost always turn out to be right." She really likes these feelings and wants to cultivate them. "I like to spend a lot of time and effort to trust myself with that." These items are relevant to her in her personal growth and in relating to people in general. "I have this sense that it's happening [a "vibe" about someone] and then three or four months later I find out I was right. It was happening." Kris is aware of a reluctance in her, a "tentativeness" to use these feelings in counselling clients, "not going until I am sure of what is going on. I am afraid to go with it . . . because you can't justify it in rational terms." In fact, Kris sees herself as being generally somewhat tentative: "I'm unlikely to say "absolutely" about anything." Rarely this "vibe" isn't correct. Kris would like to learn how to discriminate between the times "when it's right and when it's wrong." If she could tell the difference all the time she would be more willing to go with her feelings.

Kris' "vibes" about people come from that internal place

she calls the "source." She knows they arise from this place because "they feel as if they do," and here she trusts her feelings. According to Kris, the "source," her feelings and focusing fit together in a way that is clear but not entirely tangible:

I can't come up with a concrete thing. You know how first you start to think some kind of sense is forming, so it has to be right because I have too strong a sense of that. I don't know why. It is just that it is a different kind of source than something that seems to belong in the world of, I can't say language, because language fits in there, but in the world of left brain . . . it doesn't belong in the world of being rational and systematic . . . having evidence to back everything up. Focusing does that too.

Marion

The subjective (inner) experience of focusing. Marion's overall experience of focusing was very positive and meaningful: "It is exciting and powerful, and I can always look forward to learning something, I love doing it."

Marion had some initial difficulties learning focusing. One problem may have been with anxiety. "The first time I focused . . . I think I went too fast for the process. It was like my fear was more in charge then . . . all over the place . . . really fast." Another aspect of Marion's anxiety was with the novelty of the learning situation: "The first time in a new group, the first time doing the whole thing." According to Marion, the most difficult part of focusing for

her was clearing a space. In the first session, she seemed somewhat puzzled and reluctant to continue at that point: "I still found something about it confusing. When you said to put the first sensation where I usually have my feelings aside, I didn't want to let it go." Marion's background feeling is a good one: "a real strong warmth over my heart." Marion decided to put her background feeling aside, to clear a space, and in so doing went on with the process feeling a shade hesitant, but watchful, to ensure that she wouldn't lose that good feeling about herself. She said: "I was able to put it beside me. I had a feeling of peripherally keeping an eye on it . . . I put it outside of me and had it sitting right beside me again." A vivid description of this "warmth" ensued: "It was kind of like a big, red, pulsating thing of warmth with a yellow glow around it."

Marion felt she really learned to focus in the third session because she knew the steps and the timing of the instructions was right. "It was really clear. I liked the pace you went at and it all really worked for me. The steps and what the words all mean and how they fit in me, in my body, have become clearer and clearer." After clearing a space, focusing was easy for Marion: "The rest of it went quickly for me."

At the next step, choosing a problem, Marion picked a very basic issue about herself that was deep inside her. "My

feeling is, oh, finally I'm here . . . finally I'm working at my core level now, so whatever needs to happen there, I'm doing it." She examined the same problem in all three sessions, with each succeeding session adding more depth, "each time it becomes clearer and clearer, finally this time I got it."

In getting a felt sense, Marion had a very interesting experience. Part of her felt sense was a feeling that she could have left her body but chose not to do so: "I thought it should have been down here in my stomach, but I definitely felt this movement from my heart up into my head; and wanting to almost move out of my body and panic. My thoughts became really scattered and fast moving and in my body I felt my forehead was tight." This sense of concern was not a happy one for her: "I wanted to frown . . . like there was a band around the top of my head, and it wasn't very pleasant. I wanted to fly off." That feeling of the problem made a lot of sense to Marion in relation to other incidents in her life: "Maybe that's what I did whenever something happened that I didn't really like and that was a way of getting away from it."

Marion's handle for that sensation in her body of "being lifted and spinning away" was "whirlwind." Resonating came quickly and there was not change in the handle: "I didn't have to do much. I did check it out again, but it just really fit in even stronger." Marion experienced her "warmth" and "whirlwind" parts as being counterpoints to each other in this

kinesthetic
or
nonverbal

session of focusing: "Whirling scattered sensation, and it is like the warmth in my heart and that are in total opposition to each other." She felt a distant shift or change in that sense from antagonism to mutual aid when receiving occurred: "That made this warmth just smile at that part and say okay. It is like they are both wanting to work with each other." At receiving, these two parts of Marion had a dialogue going that ended in resolution of that internal conflict: "The warmth part of me was smiling and saying 'it's okay' and I felt really solid in that. And that other part of me was kind of wanting to take off with me and do all the crazy things that I can get into that don't help, and then getting into a place of saying, it's kind of silly isn't it . . . in just a really high, little voice . . . and then they laughed together." This completion of a piece of work was very significant to Marion. "It was an incredible experience. It's wonderful, it needs to be celebrated." She felt a tremendous sense of relief and understanding: "It's like I've come home, to my center." As a result of focusing, Marion's background feeling has changed somewhat: "I think that that real solid feeling of warmth in my heart is different—my heart being as if it is open much more deeply . . . than it has been for a long, long time. There's a nice warm fire going inside."

When I asked Marion what she had gotten from focusing, she said: "A hell of a lot. More than I ever thought possible."

I've made friends with a part of me that I almost hated before . . . I couldn't ask for more."

Focusing in the context of the subject's life. Marion had a fantasy about my research and how it might affect the lives of the participants. "We will all be at different places with ourselves, of course, and the focusing will work for us all in different ways." Focusing affected Marion in a very profound way:

I sensed that I needed some clarity in this area. I kind of thought that focusing would help me with that. And that is what happened. I wasn't able to put it in words before. It was the right thing in the right place at the right time. I've come home, the big heart inside is smiling now.

Marion thinks she will continue to use focusing in the future because it has "made connections and opened many doors" for her, but would like to have some instructions to assist her. "I think I could do it on my own. It would be neat though to have that [manual] in front of me to guide me."

Marion's personal development is crucial to her and focusing has helped her conclude a critical part of that growth.

Process is so important to me, because it's like what I've been working towards over the years, finally realizing that that's what I've been afraid of, and that's really crazy . . . but that has been kind of hard for me to get to . . . and that's what got completed when I was focusing tonight.

Spiritual expansion is also an ongoing part of Marion's life. Her grandfather is an integral aspect of that. Marion's

relationship with him was very special to her.

Whirlwind part missed my grandfather . . . he was symbolic of this warm, nurturing part, stable. And when he died, I lost that . . . it is like I'm getting it back now . . . I'm in touch with my inner guides and he's one of them.

Focusing helped Marion to re-establish that connection. "When I discovered him in that way, it was a real productive moment." Marion is now ready to move on from there. "I don't know whether inner guides ever change, but I have a sense that my guides will be changing soon."

Marion is very aware of and connected to bodily sensations. "It is easy for me to tune into what is happening in my body." Focusing reminds her of other ways that she uses to tune into her inner impressions: "It fits so well with bio-energetics and it's a lot like a lot of the other forms that I find helpful to me." Marion ties these things together by labelling herself "kinesthetic" and "intuitive." Her inner "senses" and "feelings" are very important to Marion and she places a lot of stock in what they say. "It [focusing] feels really accurate . . . I can trust it. Somehow I have really learned to trust my inner sense." To Marion, focusing accesses data that she is not normally aware of. "It's like opening up a funnel to all that other information I don't usually have."

For Marion, the most salient aspect of focusing was clearing a space. "It's about the structure . . . clearing

a space, actually putting that feeling aside, allowed me to go deeper in the duality direction of whirlwind awareness with a grounded heart, deeper than I would have before." The thing that is different about focusing is that it gave Marion a "concrete sequential framework" within which to guide her self-exploration. "The thing that is new is the steps, the way it's done."

Marion feels focusing has

helped me, encouraged me to just trust and risk and go on further. And now another realm has opened up, letting the whirlwind take off and see what is there. It has opened up doors and connected them. I will continue to use it.

After reading my description of her experience, Marion had these comments about her personal journey, which she wished to have included here:

With regard to the felt sense and moving out of my body part of it. It seems to be what I am exploring right now is my psychic abilities—not just imagination and fantasy, but a very powerful knowing that I discriminate should not be shared with everyone. [I am learning] to be able to trust my discrimination . . . and that I'm not crazy and that [knowing] will decrease my panic.

In reference to my guides:

[At practicum] last week I had an experience of my usual guides changing—they moved into the background and a third guide who has always been there but is fuzzy and unidentifiable moved into the foreground. I was scared and hugged a pillow. Scared of the responsibility of that—but able to handle him/her. I couldn't believe it when I read the quote I gave you about that!

After the experience I had with receiving I feel I have unconsciously been working on these two parts of me [warmth and whirlwind] working together, i.e. a gestalt experience in class one day—head takes off and my body tightens the band around my forehead to make me come back into my body. This only frustrates my head—then some resolution occurred re. this, not unlike the resolution I described before, but with the feeling of crying and loss of one another along with the respect and laughing together.

For Marion, focusing has allowed her to access deep unknown parts of herself and abilities that she has. The process begun by focusing now continues of its own accord. Marion believes that focusing "can still help me to explore even more!"

Bets

The subjective (inner) experience of focusing. Overall, Bets found focusing to be a very positive experience. "This was fascinating . . . I really liked that" even though when she came in she thought she wouldn't get anywhere with it: "I really thought I would sit there and nothing would happen." At the start, Bets had some trouble actually getting herself to try out the process:

I had resistance at the beginning because I didn't want to go with that ugly feeling . . . and then I really resisted and thought about other problems, you know, because I needed something else to do because I didn't want to do this. And then I thought, "Well, no, if it's here let's see where it takes me."

As the sessions progressed, Bets felt more willing to "go

with it" and get into the process. "The second time I expected it to be easier and this time I didn't feel any resistance at all." After conquering her fear, Bets discovered the remainder of focusing followed quickly. "I was surprised how easily this came to me." Despite her skepticism, "I have a hard time being convinced even if I want to be." Bets felt she learned to focus and that shocked her. "That it worked was a real revelation to me."

When she continued with focusing, Bets became aware of her background feeling of "tension" which she was able to put aside in order to clear a space. "I just pulled that out of my chest and put it in my hand and held it." The problem that Bets worked with was a longstanding one: "anxiety, fear." "I have been getting it for about ten years." This problem looms large and is extremely significant to her. "It went really deep in my life." Bets adds further emphasis to the problem and to focusing when she says: "It's not the kind of thing I would come up with consciously, if I were just thinking about things."

Bets vividly and succinctly describes her last session of focusing this way:

I went with the feeling that came up [the problem as previously stated]. And so I felt "that's fine, I'll see where that goes." And I began to experience it and I could feel it moving around, sort of with pictures to it [felt sense]. And the images came into my mind "broken mirror," "broken

glass," "ice." And so I began to think of these words, you know, "jagged." And then I moved back to "broken," "sharp," "foggy," all those, but "jagged" [handle] seemed to be the one that was just right [resonating]. And so I stayed with that and I kept seeing this broken mirror and feeling jagged and then when I just settled down and kept looking at the mirror—it seemed to melt—the pieces seemed to melt—and at the same time the feeling that was inside me became less, not painful, the sensations became less; they became calmer, more soothing, like ice moving [felt shift]. And at the same time I realized my anxiety was caused by brokenness, broken dreams, broken life, broken heart, that it had been a breaking of my desires [receiving]. So when it began to be right and melt together I could go with that and I became calm.

Bets further describes her felt sense as being a pervasive one: "Under my heart, under my breastbone, the idea of a chestnut. It reached out around my back . . . into my brain . . . my whole body was involved in this."

Clearly, Bets' experience of focusing is filled with "images and symbols" because as she says, she likes to work with them. Symbols and images are familiar to Bets and help her to integrate the focusing process. "I use symbols when I meditate and so I used them here." Bets did, however, think that the pictures that she envisioned were related to the kind of weather conditions present at the time of the interview. "I suppose we are talking about melting and ice because it's snowing outside. I think that imagery came up for that reason."

The most outstanding part of focusing for Bets was the

information that she received from it. "All three times it was honest. The reactions were right and I got insights." Bets knew the knowledge she got was "right" because of her emotional reaction to it. "I touch tears when I have really reached the heart of the matter. I got really good insights. I've never connected my anxiety with the trauma that I had . . . I never saw any connection." It is important to her to understand "why" she feels a certain way. "I don't like having a feeling that's not tied to something. It's not rational." Focusing seems to have helped her to tie feelings and intellectual understanding together.

I can see now why it is because I lived through a very very insecure time. I can see why I would be afraid. I had every reason to be afraid. It seems that anything that came along would trigger it . . . maybe it won't do it so often now. My body hasn't forgotten . . . it is still reacting and it doesn't have to be like that anymore.

Focusing in the context of the subject's life. Bets tried to focus by herself a couple of times between the second and third sessions. It didn't work. "I couldn't calm myself down enough to do it." She would like to have an aid to help her continue with focusing: "A tape" or "someone to guide me through the process." Bets feels her inability to "concentrate" and carry through with the focusing steps may be due to an aspect of herself that crops up often.

Sort of the facts get in the way and I begin to think about what to get for dinner, or how stupid

it is to be sitting here when you could be doing the ironing . . . I tend to distract myself like that.

She thinks that having a tape or a guide would help "keep her on track."

Bets notes that she is very much in touch with what's going on inside her body. "I've always been aware of my body sensations. It's not hard for me to get in touch with them." In Bets' opinion it would be hard for anyone to learn focusing who was not able to understand what happens in their body.

I think it would be extremely difficult to if anybody were not in touch with their feelings, with their body, and if you weren't used to decoding symbols. It would be hard to learn it . . . it's much easier to focus on your own body because it is there and your feelings are there . . . and you're not dealing with some arbitrary thing . . . you're there in the whole process and your whole body is involved.

Bets adds further to this in regard to the kind of information you get from focusing and how that is grounded in the body.

You get your answers not just from your mind, but you get them from your bodily sensations. You get them from symbols. You get a certain amount from your cognitive processes but not very much . . . it is only afterwards that it comes in the mind.

In reflection, Bets is pleased that she has "something to do with it now and it will be wonderful" for a problem that has long plagued her. Usually, Bets has little difficulty dealing with her concerns.

I have no trouble dealing with my problems. I'm very decisive, I get all the facts and then I deal

with them and that's fine. But I don't like the fact that I have had this feeling because that is something that I can't deal with . . . that I can't fit to a reason . . . that's stupid.

According to Bets, focusing has given her a new way to examine her concerns, a way that is quantitatively different than anything she has done before.

I've always just endured it . . . you've nothing to be afraid of, so just shut up . . . you can reach self-knowledge intellectually and even in meditation you can come out with a symbol and then you can work with it intellectually. But in focusing it seems to speed the whole process up, very much so. The end product seems to change you internally without all the soul-searching and work that you have to do.

To Bets, focusing is like a type of "shorthand" that she can now use to learn new things about herself and her questions.

Sam

The subjective (inner) experience of focusing. Sam's experience of focusing was fraught with difficulty from beginning to end. It had, as he says, "little meaning" for him.

Sam does not believe he learned to focus. "I didn't get any real feeling sense out of the whole of the sessions. I don't believe in it."

In terms of the steps of the focusing process, Sam's problems began with clearing a space: it didn't make any real sense to him.

It was hard to conceptualize the whole idea of putting something aside by having a certain space. Those things just don't have much meaning. So I

tried to somehow visualize what you were talking about, but that is the extent of it.

The main puzzle for Sam with trying to make a space was that he didn't seem to be able to do something he didn't believe in.

I couldn't see putting things in boxes or compartments and putting them aside . . . I don't believe there's a particular space in my body . . . that I can just empty out because right now there isn't anything in there.

Although unable to do that, Sam persevered and attempted to continue focusing.

In choosing a problem, Sam came to the sessions with a particular issue and worked on it all three times. "There was something I was looking at all the time." In trying to get a felt sense, Sam concentrated intellectually on the concern he was dealing with.

I tried to think of the particular thing that I've been looking at through all the sessions and I didn't get a real body sense of that part of the process . . . I tried to get a sense of it by thinking about situations where that [problem] occurred.

It seems to Sam that he came nearest to understanding and doing focusing at this stage. "I probably came closer here than at any other part as far as making some sort of sense out of it."

As Sam was trying to get a sense of the problem he experienced a subjective sense of the process stopping and he was unable to continue to try to focus after that. "It was a

difficulty thinking about the issue itself. It was almost an intentional block. I was very aware the blocking was happening but I couldn't get beyond it."

Same experienced the blocking "intellectually" in his head. In his body, Sam encountered a sense of vacantness. "In my body . . . I felt a kind of nothingness . . . a sensation in my stomach . . . a sense of emptiness."

Sam found a handle for his sense, but admitted that he had probably come into the session knowing what his term was. "I think I was kind of biased going in there as far as the word because it so clearly describes the situation." Sam noted that the word "fit both the intellectual part and the sense in his stomach." Sam may have actually had a felt sense at that point.

Resonating did not occur for Sam due to his becoming aware of the blocking again. "Every time I tried to think about the situation, it came to a stop." Sam's sense of the blocking is both mental and physical. "It's very connected to the intellectual sense of blocking in that it's almost a lack of feeling. It's like a point where I just barely feel a sensation in my body." It seems at this point that Sam is almost totally out of touch with his body. Eventually, even his mind was shutting down. "It was almost like the whole thinking process was cut off."

Although Sam did not have any visualizations of what was

happening at that time, he said that if he had one it would have been like "running into a wall" that was my imagined description of his experience. His comment was, "Yes, exactly." Sam thinks that it would have been helpful to him if he had been able to create a picture of the blocking in his mind. "If I had had that sort of sense of it, I think it may have made it a little easier to at least appreciate exactly where I was at."

As I asked Sam to continue with the asking and receiving steps of focusing, he became aware of a feeling of stuckness and discouragement at what was happening, "a sense of futility, like there's no point in even trying because I can't get beyond here." The focusing process was totally stopped for Sam by this time. He went no further.

Focusing in the context of the subject's life. Sam was attracted to my study out of "curiosity" and a desire to "find out what focusing was about." Although he did learn about focusing, he discovered that, as already stated, focusing has "little meaning" for him as he "doesn't believe in it." He did, however, comment on several aspects of focusing and his personal beliefs in relation to them.

Sam is familiar with some of the parts of focusing from other techniques that he has tried.

I've done a lot of visualizations in different kinds of exercises. The idea of getting a sense of feelings

is familiar in that a lot of groups that I have participated in do that. I think I have a certain level of appreciation of feelings.

Sam feels he can understand focusing intellectually.

I'm certainly not discarding the whole focusing idea because I don't know much about it. But if I was having a particular feeling, say I was in therapy, and I started feeling a certain way . . . then I think that I could see getting something from it or maybe have a better appreciation of the focusing idea.

Focusing felt superficial to Sam in that it was "like trying to force myself to do something that doesn't really fit with my way of thinking." Sam believes that he must have some stimulus either internal or external to generate feelings.

To grab onto a feeling or to somehow imagine or somehow feel something without some sort of, I don't know if it's so much an outside force, or something just doesn't fit. It's not like something has to happen to me. I can be talking about something that happened in my life or a certain area of my life that saddens or affects me in some way and that feeling can occur. It's not like somebody has to die.

Sam goes on to discuss his idea of how feelings operate.

I certainly believe the feelings happen and I certainly believe there is a physical response to them . . . but I don't see feelings as being something concrete or so identifiable . . . the very idea of feelings is very complex, abstract.

In summary, Sam describes feelings as having a concrete explicable beginning tapering off into a nebulous end; a process over which he has little conscious regulation.

Something either has to happen out there or I have to be talking about something or somehow something has to motivate that feeling. I don't have that

much control that I can say, "Okay, I'm going to feel" Not so much as I'm going to feel mad or sad—just like ticking it off.

Even as we were conducting the interview, Sam did not see himself as having feelings in his body.

I guess I don't have any feelings, even right now there are no feelings that I can identify. The feelings that I do have, I have to have to a certain degree . . . just talking to somebody in a normal conversation or just sitting here, I don't have any feelings.

According to Sam, in asking him to go inside his body and examine the feelings he was carrying at the time was meaningless, "to do things with something that you don't see yourself as having in the first place." Ultimately, as Sam stated many times, his difficulties with focusing were philosophical. "I just don't believe in it."

Morgan

The subjective (inner) experience of focusing. Morgan's experience of focusing was very pleasant. "I really enjoyed doing it, actually." She is not totally sure why that is, though. It may have been due to the fact that I was guiding her. "I don't know if it was just having someone there to tell me, 'do this, do that.'" Her overall impression of focusing is that of "a nice relaxing way to look inside—not threatening." Morgan was astounded that she really focused.

I'm quite amazed actually because not that I didn't think it would work, but I didn't really believe

I would get a felt sense or anything like that and I did.

In the first session, Morgan had some difficulties learning how to focus. She felt tense, uneasy, and that she might not be able to meet her own imagined or others' expectations.

The first time I did it I was really a bit nervous with everyone else there in Psychology and I thought, "Oh, no, they are all going to be able to do this and I'm not."

Morgan felt her "nervousness" was due to "not really concentrating on what I was doing but more on what I am supposed to be doing . . . thinking instead of feeling." She also had some difficulties with pacing in that she wasn't "in the same place I was" in the instructions and thus became "confused." After her initial problems, focusing went quite smoothly for Morgan: "After the first time it seemed fairly easy."

In describing her experience of the third session, Morgan's background feeling was a nice one, "kind of happy and glad." In clearing a space for herself, Morgan made psychological room that had a physical counterpart of observing herself.

I felt like I was physically removed . . . it was like I jumped backwards in my chair . . . like I left me and the feelings I felt here [in the chair] and I went back with nothing, although I could feel myself still physically sitting in the chair.

Morgan was not afraid, but enjoyed the new somewhat buoyant perspective. "It was a neat feeling. I haven't felt like that before. It felt light."

Morgan chose a problem that was of concern to her, but not a "big one." "Whether to go into pro year next year, work, or travel."

Images were an important part of Morgan's experience, although new to her. "I've never thought in terms of pictures before." The images and feelings of the felt sense stand out most for Morgan in focusing. "That's what I remember the best—it really sticks out." She describes her felt sense as beginning "on the left hand side around where my belly button is" and then moving and spreading out. According to Morgan, it felt "like a big knot . . . like you know the sun . . . rays spread out . . . it felt like it was going off to different spots."

In trying to find a handle, Morgan had a little difficulty. "It takes a little while." The first image she had was one of "someone throwing a rock to me and I'd throw it . . . like a great big huge rock." As she kept watching the scene, the image changed.

Crawling through a tunnel or something and there was a whole bunch of gravel in front and I had to dig through it . . . then we crawled through it some more and then there was some more gravel and I would never be content just to sit there. I'll just dig through it.

The core part of the scene was "crawling through a tunnel," the handle. At resonating, Morgan felt the image and the picture "fit well." At the asking stage, Morgan found it

"difficult to ask a question of a picture," but she ended up asking it "What is so confusing, sort of anxiety-provoking about this?" Those words don't quite fit what Morgan asked her felt sense but "she knew what she meant." At the same time, she had a sense of the problem shifting a little to something she hadn't previously considered. "And then this other thing kind of came, like, 'why do I always have to have something to do, do, do?'"

At the felt shift, Morgan's felt sense began to move.

It felt like it was coming up into my throat. Not choking me, but it felt . . . like sometimes when you get something stuck in your throat and you have to keep swallowing to get it down.

Eventually the feeling moved from her stomach, "through her chest," into her throat and "up into my head." To Morgan, it felt like "there was something I wanted to push down . . . it came from there [stomach] . . . like little rays . . . like little mice with feelers." As the feeling moved upwards the "other sense in my stomach was gone."

Morgan again had an image just prior to the shift.

I was going through in my mind, through each of the little pieces of gravel, thinking about what they were, the things I've done or the things I might do and getting through them and why do I want that.

And then at receiving, she surveyed the scene and noted what had happened for future use. "I didn't really come up with a solution to that [problem] . . . but I wanted to go back and think of each of the things I thought of . . . the pieces

of gravel."

For Morgan, what had really changed in focusing, the new information that she got, was her perspective of her concern, "the way I look at the problem has changed . . . I have a different view of it." Having a "different view" of the problem is also the way that Morgan knows that she learned to focus.

Some of the problems I thought about, in the end, the way I think about them has changed. So I feel like I focused because I have a new view of them . . . a new feeling instead of a thinking.

Focusing in the context of the subject's life. Morgan mentioned several things after reflecting on her experience of focusing. Many of the things she said refer to how she works with problems in her daily life.

Morgan does not like to think about problems. "I tend to get uptight" and will wait until they get quite large before she does anything about them. Even then she's still trying to avoid them. "I usually let them build up . . . and then I don't get to them . . . when I do get to them, I try to push them away." When she does think about her concerns, she tends to catastrophize and bring in all sorts of extra information into her considerations. "I think, 'oh no, it's not going to work' or 'what about this or what about that?'" The thing that is different for Morgan with focusing is that it helps her to concentrate. "It sort of focuses me more on specific areas" and is a more comfortable and "relaxing way to do it."

The whole idea of working with a problem in this way was new for Morgan. She had always thought that she had to work with problems in a concrete way. "I didn't see how you could solve, not really solve, but think about a problem without really talking about it or writing things down." Using focusing, Morgan found she could do something "real and genuine" with a problem in a way that "made sense" to her. For Morgan, not only had she not worked with problems without "writing them down," but the idea of working inside her body was new. "I didn't know you could do that and have it make sense."

Several weeks after the interview, I saw Morgan and she mentioned to me that she had been having "problems with her roommate and moving" and was "thinking about calling me to go over focusing again" because "she was really uptight" and thought that focusing might help her to "relax and see the problem clearer."

CHAPTER 4

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE
AND THE FOCUSING EXPERIENCE

This chapter first presents an introduction and short reviews of the method and the subjects involved in the study. This is followed by a discussion of the concept of psychological types and how Jung perceived them, as well as profiles of sensing and intuitive types. An examination of the participant's situated descriptions from the perspective of psychological type is also presented. The chapter ends with a presentation and discussion of the researcher's conclusions about the possible relationship between the subjective experience of focusing and psychological type as defined by the MBTI.

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the participant's subjective experience of Gendlin's focusing technique. The researcher approached this investigation in two phases. First, she studied the participants' own description of their experience of focusing. For this part of the study she used phenomenological methodology. Second, she investigated the relationship between the participant's subjective experience of focusing and his or her psychological type according to the psychology of C. G. Jung as measured by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

Initially, six subjects were chosen by the researcher for this study, all introverts, three whose preference was Sensation and three whose preference was Intuition on the S-N Scale of the MBTI. The actual preference scores remained unknown to the researcher until the conclusion of the phenomenological and typological investigations. Five subjects participated in the study, one having withdrawn minutes prior to the first focusing session. All subjects were university-educated adults, four females and one male, ranging in age from 20 to 50 years. No subject knew anything about or had attempted to learn to focus prior to participation in this study. According to the results of the Post Focusing Questionnaire, all subjects except Sam learned to focus.

As already mentioned, the first phase of this study was to analyze interview material and prepare individual-situated descriptions according to phenomenological methods outlined in Chapter 2. These descriptions remain within the context of the subject's personally-lived experience of focusing.

During the second phase of this study, the researcher investigated the relationship of psychological type, according to the psychology of C. G. Jung, to the participant's subjective experience of Gendlin's focusing technique. The first part of this phase of the study was to gather relevant literature that might shed light on the nature of the experience of Sensation and Intuition. The researcher first investigated

the writings of C. G. Jung on this subject. Secondly, the researcher utilized materials from researchers who have written on the subject of psychological type to help understand or clarify and to expand on them. The researcher has also heavily relied upon the descriptions of types and supportive evidence given in the *Manual: A guide to the development and use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (Myers, McCaulley, 1985) and *Introduction to type by Isabel Briggs Myers* (1980).

After finishing this investigation of the literature, the researcher examined the situated descriptions of each of her participant's subjective experiences of focusing with regard to this theoretical knowledge. The determination that it would be appropriate to use the situated descriptions in dialogue with Jungian typology is partly based on the following excerpt from Perelman (1977):

First, Jung based his theory of type to a large degree on many years of practical work as a clinician, studying the everyday lived experience of his patients (1971, p. xii). In addition, James Hillman suggests an investigation of type calls for specific instances of an individual's experience which may be seen as exemplars of his typical style of behaviour, not abstract explanations and theoretical descriptions (1977). The situated description of the . . . personal experience . . . remains on the level of direct experience and allows for discussions of specific instances of the . . . experience on the everyday level. (p. 109)

When the investigation of the possible relationship between the participant's subjective experience of focusing and psychological

type was completed the researcher set forth her general conclusions based on this examination of the data.

The Concept of Types

Carl Jung was interested in understanding many areas of human functioning. Apparently, he was drawn to study individual differences among people from trying to understand the variations in theoretical orientation between himself, Alfred Adler and Sigmund Freud (Jung, 1961). After thorough investigation Jung concluded that each position was reasonable and had "scientific merit" but they were incompatible with each other (Jung, 1953, pp. 40, 43). Further, Jung, in speaking of his practice as a therapist he was "obliged to take account of the peculiarities of individuals" in everyday behaviour and experience (Jung, 1971, p. 532).

Jung's studies in this area included an exploration and analysis of the subjective orientations of psychologists, examination of examples of literature to determine the subjective view of the author and many detailed observations of his own and other psychologists' clients. Jung published the results of his enquiries in 1923 in a major work entitled *Psychological types*. This book was an attempt to

deal with the relationship of the individual to the world, to people and things . . . aspects of consciousness and various attitudes that consciousness might take toward the world.
(1961, p. 207)

In *Psychological types* Jung also discusses his conception of the various types and their attitudes and behaviours. Jung sees typology as a way to "sort out and organize the welter of empirical material, but not to in any sense stick labels on people at first sight." Thus typology is "dynamic and complex" (Perelman, 1977, p. 111).

Also, according to Perelman (1977, p. 111), "The implication is that in order to investigate typology one needs to begin with empirical material." Thus, this researcher has chosen to examine the subjective experience of Gendlin's focusing technique by contrasting the experiences of five subjects, two sensing and three intuitive types.

The Nature of Sensation

Jung defines sensation as "perception through the senses" (1971, p. 489). The senses include seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. When sensation is experienced by Introverts it also includes a subjective factor according to Jung (in Campbell, 1941).

True sense-perception certainly exists, but it always looks as though the object did not penetrate into the subject in its own right . . . he does not stop at the purely objective influence, but concerns himself with the subjective expression excited by the objective stimulus. (p. 253)

This suggests that sensation might be experienced in "more depth" by Introverts rather than "the momentary existence of

things open to the light of day" experienced by Extroverts (Jung, in Campbell, 1971, p. 254).

Myers and McCaulley (1985, p. 12) state that

persons oriented to sensing perception tend to focus on the immediate experience and often develop characteristics associated with this awareness such as enjoying the present moment, realism, acute powers of observation, memory for details and practicality.

In their 1985 manual Myers and McCaulley note several other characteristics of sensing types: "they like to deal with what is real and factual in a careful, unhurried way" (p. 37), they are "more likely to see their view of a situation as permanent or given" (p. 68); in regard to learning: "TV and audiovisual aids are appreciated by [sensing types] and that they may benefit from having them [learning experiences] repeated" (p. 131).

In *Introduction to type* (1980) Isabel Myers suggests that sensing types:

Dislike new problems unless there are standard ways to solve them, like an established way of doing things, enjoy using skills already learned more than learning new ones. Work more steadily, with a realistic idea of how long it will take. Usually reach a conclusion step by step, are patient with routine details, are impatient when the details get complicated. Are not often inspired, and rarely trust the inspiration when they are. Seldom make errors of fact and tend to be good at precise work. (p. 18)

Brooks and Johnson (1979) found that sensing types, when choosing descriptors from the Adjective Check List (Gough & Heilbrun, 1983), referred to themselves as "quiet, deliberate,

shy and formal."

Overall, then, the picture of the sensing person is one who is oriented to the present moment in all its facets, likes facts and detail, but can be impatient if they get too complicated and enjoys the concrete everyday world.

The Nature of Intuition

To Jung, intuition is perception "by way of the unconscious" (1971, p. 523), or, information from the senses is added to in some way by the unconscious. In further describing the role of intuition in the introvert, Jung (in Campbell, 1971) states:

. . . introverted intuition perceives all the background processes of consciousness with almost the same distinctness as extraverted sensation registers external objects. For intuition, therefore, unconscious images acquire the dignity of things. But, because intuition excludes the co-operation of sensation, it obtains little or no knowledge of the disturbances of innervation or of the physical effects produced by the unconscious images. (p. 259)

It seems therefore, that to those persons who prefer intuition as a perceptive function, mediation by the unconscious of information has a large effect on what the person perceives in his or her inner world.

Lest the reader find this discussion somewhat abstract, several writers have concretized the outcomes that intuitive perception might provide. Myers and McCaulley (1985) give this introductory description of intuition:

Intuition refers to perception of possibilities, meanings, and relationships by way of insight Intuitions may come to the surface of consciousness suddenly, as a "hunch," the sudden perception of a pattern in seemingly unrelated events or a creative discovery. For example, when the sensing function is used to perceive an apple, a person will use terms to describe it like "juicy," "crisp," "red," or "white with black seeds." When the intuitive function is used to perceive the same apple, a person may report "William Tell," "how to keep the doctor away," "roast pig," or "my grandmother's famous pie." Intuition permits perception beyond what is visible to the senses, including possible future events. Thus, persons oriented to intuitive perception may become so intent on pursuing possibilities that they may overlook actualities. They may develop the characteristics that can follow from emphasis on intuition and become imaginative, theoretical, future-oriented or creative. (p. 12)

Further along in the manual, Myers and McCaulley list a number of attributes of introverted intuitives, "introspective and scholarly, interested in knowledge for its own sake as well as ideas, theory and depth of understanding" (p. 37). On page 207 Myers and McCaulley note that intuitives are "artistic, sensitive, self-actualizing and like to use mind synergy capacity for status and feeling reactivity." Fantasy and imagery appear to be of more interest to intuitives (Edmunds, 1982; Ireland & Kernan-Schloss, 1983).

In regard to learning, experiential or interpersonal types of situations appeal to intuitives (Kilmann & Taylor, 1974) where flexibility, and understanding of nuance of behavior is needed as well as conditions where their own

initiative is called into play and they can work at their own pace (Carlson & Levy, 1973).

Also, according to Myers and McCaulley (1985), intuitive types:

like solving new problems, dislike doing the same thing repeatedly, work in bursts of energy powered by enthusiasm, with slack periods in between. They are also impatient with routine details, but are patient with complicated situations. They also follow their inspirations, good or bad. (p. 18)

A simplified overall picture of an intuitive might then be of a person who is always looking for the possibilities and meanings in people, things, situations and relationships. They may tend, if not grounded somehow, to let their capacity for expansive thinking lead them away from the concrete world to possible futures that may well only exist in their minds.

Examination of the Subject's Situated
Descriptions From the Perspective
of Psychological Type

Procedure for the Investigation and
Presentation

After studying the literature, the researcher examined the situated descriptions of the participants' subjective experience of Gendlin's focusing technique in order to determine whether there was a relationship to the theory of psychological type and the nature of the focusing experience. Below is a summary of that investigation.

The researcher examined the situated descriptions of the subjects separately and presented them as separate discussions in order to preserve a sense of the individuality of the participant's experience of focusing and their individual ways of relating to the theory of psychological type. The researcher will not include here a discussion of the actual type preferences for each participant in order to stay with the subjective experience of each person. However, after the presentation of the researcher's investigations the question of the participant's actual type preferences will be discussed together with some interesting questions that have been raised by the empirical data of the participants' situated descriptions.

The Experience of Kris with Regard to Psychological Type

It seems quite clear that Kris is an intuitive type. She labels herself thus and the development and use of that function is prominent in her thinking:

That whole area of going with my, I don't know if you would call it intuition . . . but going with that and trusting that, I think that it is important for me to tap into that more because so often it seems that once I get the evidence I find that I was right.

In terms of her inner experience of the focusing process, the fact that Kris enjoyed learning focusing even though she had some difficulties, "Interesting, I liked it," is indicative of an intuitive's pleasure in learning. Also, the content of two out of three of the focusing sessions, an "ongoing

relationship" is typical of an intuitive process in that it involves relationship in two senses, between persons and content over time, i.e. "ongoing."

The part of her experience where it is most obvious that Kris prefers her intuitive function is with regard to focusing in the context of her life. This section of the description delineates the meaning or use that the participant gives to focusing. Kris describes focusing as being analagous to a "sub-vocalizing" method that she uses to get in touch with information inside herself that is "significant" and "important" to her. The search for self-understanding, "personal growth" and meaning is an outstanding one to intuitive types. Note that Kris pursues other methods in her search for understanding: Jungian analysis and meditation.

Kris characterizes focusing as "tapping into" the "source" of information of which she is "only peripherally aware." Kris is not totally sure what the "source" is but believes that "it doesn't belong in the world of being rational and systematic . . . having evidence to back everything up." This is a clear description of intuiting in the Jungian sense.

Finally, Kris mentions the word "vibes" several times. "Vibes" is an often-used colloquium for hunches and flashes of insight that come from the unconscious mind. Again, for Kris, the fact that she is using and developing her capacity to work with "vibes" is a strong indicator of a well-developed

intuitive function.

In summary then, it can be clearly seen that Kris is a person who relies increasingly on her intuitive side in understanding both herself and other people. She is working to develop more confidence in using that preference even more accurately.

The Experience of Marion with Regard to Psychological Type

Both Marion and the researcher agree that she is "intuitive" as she labels herself, and thus she chooses intuition as her preferred perceptive mode.

Marion's overall comments about focusing, "meaningful," "exciting and powerful," "I can always look forward to learning something" are illustrative of an intuitive type's quest for knowledge and self-understanding. The content of Marion's focusing sessions also show her interest in working on her own growth and "process," as she terms it. She works with an issue that she "sensed" (intuited?) that she needed to get some "clarity on," an ongoing issue for her. It is interesting to note that the content of that issue revolves around relationship—with parts of herself and herself in relation to others—her "inner guides." This emphasis on inter-relationships is common among those who prefer intuition as their perceptive modality.

Marion's fantasy about the research and the participants

("We will all be at different places with ourselves of course, and the focusing will work for us in different ways") is exemplary of the intuitive's ability to project into the future and imagine the possibilities.

In her life, focusing reminds Marion of other ways that she uses to "tune in to her inner impressions." It also "opens up a funnel to all that information I don't usually have." Two aspects of these comments are interesting; first, the "tuning in" and "opens up" sound very much like accessing the unconscious and the use of "other ways" suggests that Marion is well acquainted with working inside herself in this self-exploring kind of way: something that would appeal to an intuitive.

Marion's "inner senses" or hunches are important to her, again an aspect of intuitive functioning. The fact that she has practiced them over time and now has "somehow really learned to trust [them]."

In summary then, Marion appears to be a person who believes in and relies heavily on her intuitive function. Her continued growth and understanding of herself is of paramount interest to her. The kinds of issues that she dealt with were herself in relation to self and others. She likes to fantasize about the possibilities and what may happen and further understanding; all these are hallmarks of a highly-developed intuitive preference.

The Experience of Bets with Regard to Psychological Type

Bets' clear, vivid, sequential recollection of her inner experience of focusing was the first thing she related at the beginning of the interview (having gone through the focusing procedure with her immediately prior to starting the tape recorder). Her depiction of her experience is quoted verbatim in her situated description. The detailed accuracy and concrete images of that experience is characteristic of a person who prefers the sensing mode of perception. Bets was surprised that she learned to focus, the fact "that it worked was a revelation to me." Her view, as is often that of sensing types, is resistant to change; they tend to see their perception as permanent or given.

The problem that Bets worked on was an unresolved situation that had plagued her life for many years, and was always a nagging part of her daily existence. In that she chose to work on this everyday problem is also an indicator of a sensor's style. When Bets discussed the images that she was having during the focusing process, she related them to the weather, "I suppose we are talking about melting and ice because it's snowing outside. I think that imagery came for that reason." This kind of thinking—relating internal events to immediate outside stimuli—is characteristic of a sensing type and their preoccupation with the here and now.

In a typical sensing way, Bets likes to work with facts.

On dealing with problems she "gets all the facts and then I deal with them and that's fine." Sometimes however, things go awry and she gets impatient and frustrated,

. . . sort of the facts get in the way and I begin to think about what to get for dinner, or how stupid it is to be sitting here when you could be doing the ironing.

This statement also shows Bets' absorption in her concrete, daily world.

Bets feels that focusing is easy to learn because you "focus on your own body because it is there and your feelings are there—you aren't dealing with the arbitrary." The body is a fact, in the present, right there for getting information from. This perspective would occur to someone whose preference would be to get information direct—a sensing type.

The most outstanding thing about focusing for Bets is again something that is an example of sensing perception; it gives her a "shorthand" way to deal with problems and concerns without having to "do all that soul-searching and work."

Bets has not worked inside herself in this way before. Even though she is familiar with working things out "intellectually" and in "meditation," it did not occur to her to access knowledge in this way, something that may well not occur to a sensing type due to their preoccupation with concrete kinds of things.

In summary then, Bets has some clear, outstanding features

of a sensing type. She likes to deal with her everyday immediate world. She gets the facts and then makes decisions. She does not like to have any loose ends lying around. She likes focusing because it will give her a quick, easy way to deal with problems, internal and external, that she does not have to think too much about.

The Experience of Sam with Regard to Psychological Type

It was very difficult for the researcher to decide whether Sam preferred sensing or intuition as his mode of perception. There is supporting evidence on both sides.

On the one hand because Sam is familiar with working with visualizations, sees feelings as being "abstract" and not really explainable, and was curious about the study in that he might find out something new (possibilities), the researcher supported the idea that he is an intuitive type. On the other hand, because he believes there are "outside stimulus" precedents for emotions, and that although he felt he had an "appreciation for feelings" and visualizations he seemed to have little knowledge of or familiarity with his internal "territory." The researcher would support the supposition that Sam is a sensing type.

In the final analysis, based on Sam's strong belief system that he mentions many times ("I don't believe in what we are doing") and that despite that, he persevered with the study to try to learn something, the researcher decided to

go with Sam's preference as being for intuition.

In summary, Sam seems to present a somewhat confusing picture of perceptive typological preference. However, due to the one overriding theme of perseverance in the pursuit of possible future gains, Sam appears to be an intuitive type.

The Experience of Morgan with Regard to Psychological Type

Morgan gives many indications throughout her situated description that sensation is her preferred mode of perception. Morgan was "really amazed" that she was actually able to focus; she had a present or "given" idea that it wouldn't work, a characteristic of sensing types. The content of Morgan's focusing sessions was practical, and related to everyday life, "whether to go into pro year next year, work or travel."

Morgan states that she had "never thought in terms of pictures" before, something that according to Edmunds (1982) and Ireland and Kernan-Schloss (1983) may be an attribute of sensing types. What is characteristic of a sensing type is the imagery that Morgan has. Her images are very concrete and descriptive of the scene she is discussing, e.g. "mice with feelers," "like the sun, rays spread out."

In placing focusing in the context of her life Morgan discussed how she works with problems. Many things about her discussion of the way she approaches her difficulties is typical of a person who prefers their sensing function. When

Morgan says, "what about this or what about that" in reference to ideas it appears that too many facts or details can get in the way for her and distract her, and thus lessen her ability to concentrate. She also says that she thought that she "always had to work with problems in a concrete way." Again, concreteness as in "talking or writing things down" is a hallmark of sensing perception. Morgan also plans to use focusing to work concretely with problems in the future.

A final note is that Morgan is unused to working inside her body in this kind of way. As she mentioned to me in passing one day, it "would have never occurred" to her to do that. It may well not occur to persons whose reliance on what their perceptions of the outside world gives them is paramount.

In summary then, it can be seen that Morgan is a person who relies heavily on her sensing function to work on problems in her everyday life. Focusing will allow her to find solutions in an "easy, relaxing, non-threatening" way.

Summary of Findings: General Conclusions

The detailed analysis of the five situated descriptions of these participants' subjective experience of focusing in light of Jung's theory of psychological types as used in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator leads the researcher to the following observation. First, there is value in examining

one's experience of focusing in terms of its uniqueness and in terms of ways in which it is typical of a particular group of people. Each of the participants' experience was highly individual and in that sense it was different from the experience of the other participants and thus unique. However, the majority of participants showed certain attitudes and behaviors which may be typical of their psychological type.

Kris and Marion clearly grouped themselves together as preferring the mode of intuitive perception. The most obvious point is that they label themselves as being "intuitive." Their experiences both include a discussion of the importance of self-actualization, the resemblance of focusing to other kinds of strategies that they use to access the unconscious information that they "aren't normally aware of," the importance of using and trusting of "vibes" and "knowings" about people and things, and the actual content of focusing, facets of relationship to self and others.

It is of interest to note here that the intuitive mode is easily visible and would appear to be quite developed in both these participants. Intuition is Kris' dominant function and it is the auxillary for Marion. According to Jungian theory, the auxillary is usually the less well-developed function. It would appear in Marion's case that her intuitive mode is well matured. Inspection of her scores shows this to be so. Neither Kris nor Marion show much evidence of their

opposing function of sensation. The thing that may perhaps fit into this category is awareness of bodily sensations. Kris was not previously aware that she attended to sensations in her body. On the other hand Marion was very aware that she "tuned in" to what her body was saying.

In terms of preference for sensing perception, Bets and Morgan group themselves together. The themes that Bets and Morgan have in common include the ability to give clear, detailed descriptions of their inner experiences with concrete imagery (e.g. Bets: "melting ice," Morgan: "mice with feelers"), a frustration with the idea that "facts can get in the way" even though they are very useful, and the use of focusing to attempt to solve an immediate problem that is situational rather than relational in nature. Neither Morgan nor Bets has worked inside herself in this way before, and both remarked on their surprise that focusing worked when they thought it wouldn't. They were both quite happy to find a quick, easy way to work with their concerns. Sensing is Bets' dominant function, and it is technically Morgan's auxiliary function. This point is debatable however, because Morgan's scores for judging and perception are very close. In actual practice she may or may not be a perceptive type. A detailed personal interpretation would be needed to decide this point. The researcher does not feel that she can draw any conclusions here on the basis of dominant and auxiliary functions.

The sensory preference seems to be fairly well developed in both these participants, although they present different aspects of the function as well as several attitudes and behaviors in common. For example, Bets is extremely aware of the here and now part of sensation, i.e. the idea that the imagery she had, "melting ice," must have been due to the fact that it was snowing outside at the time of the interview. Morgan is extremely aware of the possible usefulness of using focusing to solve problems. Bets exhibits some evidence of the use of her opposing function of intuition in several ways. First, she is used to working with symbols and imagery that is common for intuitives and she is somewhat interested in self-understanding. Morgan did not show any real evidence of use of intuitive functioning in the opinion of the researcher.

Purposely, the discussion of the experience of Sam is left to the last. Sam's experience of focusing has been a source of great interest and some consternation to the researcher. As noted previously, it was very difficult for the researcher to decide whether she felt Sam's preferred way of perceiving was sensation or intuition. Although my judgment was correct (though based on little information), in my opinion he displayed neither mode clearly in this particular situation. The inspection of his scores show that intuition is his auxiliary and sensing is thus its opposing function. His scores on the S-N scale would indicate that intuition is

somewhat developed for him even though it functions as an auxillary to his dominant feeling mode. A detailed personal interpretation might shed some light on this situation. It is the researcher's opinion, supported by Sam's own statements, that he consciously stopped himself from focusing. It appears that he shut down the process as soon as he started to focus.

It was a difficulty thinking about the issue itself. It was almost an intentional block. I was very aware the blocking was happening and I couldn't get beyond it.

Sam was unable to give a reason as to why the blocking occurred. The researcher's inquiry as to whether the process might be scary for him was met with a vehement "no." Despite several discussions and attempts to get past the blocking, Sam was unable to focus. It is the researcher's opinion, an "intuition" that Sam was indeed scared, his affect and behavior were not congruent.

At this point the researcher would like to include some observations regarding the participants as a group. Several interesting points emerged. In general, all the subjects, with the apparent exception of Sam, had the greatest ease and success in using their preferred mode of perception. Most exhibit the use of their opposing function to some degree.

In terms of imagery, several comments can be made. Although all participants except Sam reported the presence of images during focusing, the kind of imagery and the style in which

it was presented varied. Bets and Morgan, the sensing types, reported imagery in a very concrete way that is literally descriptive of the scene they discussed. This is consistent with the predictions made by Myers and McCaulley (1985, p. 12). Marion's imagery was representational of an intuitive type according to Myers and McCaulley because of its inferred aspects—two parts of her talking to each other, etc. Kris' imagery might be said to be a mixture of both sensing and intuitive types—concrete (like a movie screen) and inferential ("felt sense was saying sentences to me"). Also, both Marion and Kris' imagery contained high auditory, kinesthetic and somesthetic aspects which according to Edmunds (1982) is more likely to happen with intuitive types. Even Sam states that he is familiar with "visualizations." The differences in imagery ability and kinds of imagery cannot clearly be accounted for here by the attributes of sensing or intuitive types. Further research might shed some light in this area.

Another area of interest here is the difference between the types and their familiarity with internal exploration. Both Kris and Marion are familiar with self-actualizing kinds of activities. As previously noted, this might well be expected for intuitive types. The idea of working inside her body this way was totally foreign to Morgan. Bets, on the other hand, had meditated and done some of what she refers to as "soul searching." However, it was a very new idea to Bets

to examine herself in the particular way that focusing does. It would seem then that a clear difference between sensing and intuitive types may be the familiarity—or lack of it—in looking for information or problem solutions inside one's self. The researcher believes this is a very important point and worthy of future research.

Another point that was made by several of the participants is in regard to the structure of focusing. Marion, Bets and Morgan all say that there is something about the structure that helps focusing to work. Marion felt the structure of focusing gave her a "concrete sequential framework" that could help her guide her self-exploration. It may be that focusing has things to offer both sensing and intuitive types to develop their opposite function. Focusing may be able to give intuitives a concrete, sensing-type way to structure their self-actualization process and give sensing types a way to access their intuitive side.

Jolande Jacobi, a student of Jungian thought, in her book *The psychology of C. J. Jung* (1968), states:

If all four functions could be raised to consciousness, the whole circle [all of the psyche] would be in the light and we should be able to speak of a "round," that is to say, a complete man. (p. 16)

Perhaps focusing is one way to help this happen.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH

This chapter discusses the results in relation to the purpose of the study, how well the assumptions and expectations in Chapter 2 were met, the relationship of the findings to previous research, the significance of this study for counsellors and implications for future research.

Summary of the Findings in Relation
to the Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate, from a phenomenological perspective, the subjective experience of focusing and relationship to psychological type as defined by Jung and exemplified in the Myers Briggs Type Indicator. In order to easily relay the findings, the research questions will be answered here.

Question #1. Are there aspects of a person's subjective experience of focusing that are consistent with their preference on the Sensing-Intuition scale of the MBTI? How might these consistencies relate to the learning and personal experience of focusing?

It is the opinion of this researcher that the participants did experience focusing differently and that there was sufficient evidence to state that the difference in their

experiences are due, at least in part, to their particular type preference. Specifically, sensing types tend to experience and give different meanings to focusing than do intuitive types.

Kris and Marion, who prefer intuition as their perceptive mode, label themselves as "intuitive" (i.e. recognize that mode of perception as being important to them and feel self-actualizing kinds of activities, especially those that access the unconscious, are important to them). They stress the importance of using and trusting their hunches and used focusing to examine aspects of relationships during the sessions.

Bets and Morgan, the subjects who prefer sensing as their mode of perception, gave detailed descriptions of their experience of focusing using concrete imagery. They both expressed frustration with their tendency to let facts "get in the way" and used focusing to seek solutions to problems that were immediate and related to a situation they were presently involved in.

The researcher also found that the participants experienced focusing differently even though they had the same preferred mode of perception. Possible reasons for this are also discussed in Chapter 4.

Question #2. What does a person's subjective experience of focusing consist of?

(a) What are the specific thoughts, feelings and images that occur during the stages of focusing?

(b) Are there any difficulties that occur during any of the stages of focusing?

(a) The situated descriptions of the participants outlining the thoughts, feelings, images and sensations that occurred to them during focusing are detailed in Chapter 3. Suffice it to say that the subjective experience of focusing is quite individual for each participant, regardless of their psychological types.

(b) All participants related at least some difficulties in learning to focus. Both Bets and Sam resisted trying the focusing procedure, although it happened only initially for Bets. Sam seemed to resist learning to focus throughout the whole of the study. Marion and Morgan reported some anxiety in regard to a new learning situation, although Morgan later felt her nervousness prevented her from concentrating on what she was supposed to be doing: "thinking, instead of feeling." Kris, Marion and Sam all had difficulties at clearing a space. It took them at least one session to become sure as to exactly what clearing a space meant. Gendlin (1979, p. 1) felt making a space was the most difficult part of focusing and if a participant could get past that step, it was likely she could learn to focus. Kris, Marion and Morgan reported difficulties with the pacing of the focusing instructions.

As Kris says, "I was wondering whether I was behind or ahead." After the first clarifying discussion though, there were no more problems.

The participants who learned to focus all thought they would like to have either someone to lead them or a copy of the focusing manual to follow until they were completely familiar with the procedure.

Findings Related to Assumptions and Expectations

The research findings support some of the assumptions the researcher made, although not necessarily for the reasons she thought. The findings indicate that intuitives (except for Sam) seem to quickly understand focusing and relate to it very easily. Focusing reminded them of other methods that they use to "tap into the source" or the unconscious. The evidence does not support the assumption that it is easier for intuitives to learn to focus because after initial difficulties in the first session, the sensing types learned to focus with little difficulty.

Intuitives were indeed more familiar with internal methods of self-examination than sensing types, as assumed. This seemed, however, to have little, if any, effect on the sensing types' ability to learn to focus.

In regard to imagery, sensing types did have concrete imagery detailing their experience of focusing, as foreseen

by Myers and McCaulley (1985), as well as the researcher.

After the interviews, it seemed clear that Kris and Marion were intuitives as they had both labelled themselves thus; Bets and Morgan seemed to group themselves together. The researcher felt they might be sensing types because of their unfamiliarity with the process and because they wanted to use it in a practical way. As discussed in Chapter 4, the researcher had a very difficult time deciding whether Sam was a sensing or intuitive type. Her initial thought was that he was a sensing type because of his lack of familiarity with any internalized form of self-discovery; however, after his subjective description of focusing, the researcher decided to go with the choice of intuition as his preferred mode of perception.

The researcher continually questioned her assumptions throughout the interviewing process and the data analysis in order to keep an open mind and let subjects and the data speak for themselves.

Relationship of the Findings to Previous Research

In relation to Jungian typology, with the exception of the Perelman (1977) study which used qualitative methodology, all the studies cited in Chapters 1 and 4 are experimental in nature. The discussion of the findings in Chapter 4 in relation to these studies using Jungian typology should be

considered as tentative at most. The relation of the findings of this study in reference to relevant focusing research are discussed here.

The Kantor and Zimring (1976) study reported in Chapter 1 examined the effects of focusing on a problem. Their findings showed that more of their subjects than controls reported changes in their perceptions of the problems. With the exception of Sam, all the participants in the present study reported at least a change in their perception of the problem. As Morgan says, "The way I look at the problem has changed. . . . I have a different view of it." For Kris, focusing "really clarified a couple of reasons why I feel threatened." These findings support Gendlin's (1978) research as well as the Kantor and Zimring findings. Marion and Bets reported going further and gaining insights from focusing.

Petersen (1981), in her study on the effects of focusing as applied to journal writing, discussed several difficulties that can arise in learning the focusing process. She states that difficulties in concentration can occur and that a focuser can become so involved in the process, that when an intense feeling comes up they may not be able to get past it and complete the rest of the procedure. Morgan had difficulty concentrating in the first session, but this was easily remedied. Bets stated her inability to concentrate sometimes

might interfere with focusing on her own, and thus she wished to have at least the manual, or, preferably, a tape to help her stay on track with the procedure. Perhaps Petersen's suggestion that a focuser can become overinvolved in the process and not be able to continue, may be part of the reason Sam was unable to complete the focusing process. As previously stated, he was aware that he was blocking and that it "was almost an intentional block." In the opinion of the researcher, Sam may have become very scared at an early point in the process, denied that in conscious awareness, or at least denied it to the researcher, and was thus unable to continue. Gendlin (1978, p. 56) recommends that an attitude of "openness and readiness" for change is most conducive to learning to focus. It is possible that Sam came into the study with a fairly closed attitude as evidenced by his comments about not "believing in it" and this in combination with the blocking may have led to his feeling of "futility" at the end result.

Significance and Implications of the Results for Counsellors

As Samson (1984) states:

The purpose of a phenomenological approach to research is not to replicate, validate, or show cause and effect relationships among quantified variables extricated from the context in which they are experienced. It is rather to illuminate and describe in qualitative terms, individual experiences of a particular phenomenon so as to sensitize others to its lived meaning. (p. 113)

In light of this goal described by Samson, the present study may have several implications for counsellors.

First, reading the situated descriptions of the participants in this study may sensitize counsellors to the kinds of issues that may be addressed using focusing. Counsellors may note that the experience of focusing is truly individual in the thoughts, feelings, sensations and images manifested, as is the depth of the concern and the depth the client is willing and able to work at. The counsellor may thus be able to gauge more effectively with whom and when to use focusing.

In relation to Jungian typology, practitioners used to working with the MBTI may be inclined to use focusing, if appropriate, to help an individual make more use of either either sensing or intuitive function. Focusing might also be used to bring the opposite into play, i.e. sensing types could learn a method of internal self-examination and intuitives could learn to provide a structure for their self-explorational tendencies. Counsellors may also use their knowledge of sensing or intuitive types to teach focusing to individuals in the way most appropriate for them. Knowing that focusing may not appeal to a sensing type, a counsellor could use their knowledge of typology to make focusing more attractive to them. If sensing types knew that focusing could be used practically to solve, or at

least to find out more about problems, they might use it. The results of this study indicate that if the sensing types try focusing, they learn it with relative ease. As noted above, the counsellor's difficulty may lie in getting them to use it.

According to Jungian theory, intuition is a valid way of knowing. Everyone has the ability to intuit but sensing types may tend to disregard intuitions when they have them. They might have been the originators of "seeing is believing." The results of this study indicate that sensing types can learn to focus if they wish to. Initially, at least, they may well use focusing to examine daily concerns. The potential value of focusing for them is high. Focusing, by definition, accesses subliminal or unconscious knowledge. Simply by focusing, sensing types may well be accessing their intuitive abilities and, through practice, increasing their acceptance and understanding of their intuitive side.

Focusing may thus be able to serve as an access or entry point to the unconscious for all types and a method by which intuitives can access other aspects of their unconscious, such as psychic abilities. Please note the experience of Marion in this regard. She felt focusing allowed her deeper access to parts of herself, including psychic abilities and that focusing structure aided her in that process.

In terms of therapeutic efficacy, focusing, if represented to and taught to a sensing type in a way suited to them, may well increase their level of experiencing in therapy and thus increase their chances for a successful therapeutic outcome (Gendlin et al., 1968). Myers and McCaulley (1985) call for counsellors to match their methods to the psychological types of clients involved, rather than assuming that something that is helpful or preferred by them will be useful to their clients.

Implications for Future Research

This study has tried to show that a systematic investigation of the subjective experience of Gendlin's focusing technique can provide insight into two aspects of counselling research. First, the study details the subjective experience of focusing of five participants. The thoughts, feelings, sensations and images experienced at each step of a focusing procedure are included. The second part of the study, an area unresearched at this time, examines these descriptions in light of Jungian typology. A phenomenological method similar to this, that examines the subjective experience of focusing using extroverts rather than the introverts who participated in this study, might have more far-reaching implications. This may be due to the fact that there are three times as many extroverts as introverts in the general

population of the United States.

Suggestions for future research that build on the ground broken by this study are listed below:

1. The idea that focusing provides a framework for accessing unconscious or subliminal information is a point that is mentioned or alluded to by several of the participants in this study. Research that examines, perhaps from a phenomenological perspective with experienced focusers, how that structure aids the process could be both interesting and potentially useful.

2. A phenomenological investigation of the subjective experiences of participants using focusing to enhance spiritual growth may well be of interest to counsellors.

3. A systematic detailed examination of the imagery of focusers, and of sensing and intuitive types using phenomenological methodology could provide a great deal more useful information for the users of the MBTI.

4. A study or studies that examine more closely the idea that sensing types may not be familiar with internal self-examination may provide useful information for counselors wishing to increase therapeutic efficacy.

5. More quantitative studies which attempt to confirm or deny the existence of statistically significant relationships between focusing and type characteristics on the MBTI. Examples might include focusing ability and preference for

intuitive perception, preference for sensing perception and affinity with internal processing, or using focusing to examine immediate situation-related problems and preference for sensing perception.

Concluding Comments

This study investigated the subjective experiences of focusing of five participants in relation to certain constructs of Jungian typology. The findings indicated that the experience of four of the five participants is consistent with certain attitudes and attributes of their typological preference of sensation or intuitive perceptive function on the MBTI. The fifth person's experience of focusing did not fit clearly into either preference of the Sensing-Intuition dimension of the MBTI.

Although two sensing and two intuitive types could be grouped together as being similar typologically, the unique richness of individuality is clearly evident for all subjects.

The phenomenological methodology used in this study allowed for the exploration and detailed critical examination of a phenomenon while preserving the integrity of the human experience.

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APPENDIX A

CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING THE STUDY

Sept. 24, 1985

To: Graduate Students
From: Trudy Norman, M.A. Candidate, Counselling
Re: Thesis Research

I am looking for volunteers as subjects in my thesis study. My thesis is entitled "The Relation Between Focusing and Psychological Function."

Participation in my study would involve taking the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, learning Gendlin's Focusing technique, filling out a questionnaire and participating in a phenomenological interview about your subjective experience of Focusing.

The time involved would be approximately eight to ten hours during the month of October, 1985.

If you are interested, please contact me in Mac 429, leave a message in my box in the Education General Office on the second floor, or call me at home at 385-6974.

Thank you for your attention,

Trudy Norman

To Participants:

Thank you very much for your interest in my study. Please fill out the MBTI using the instructions given on the first page of the test booklet. Do not, however, put any information on the answer sheet other than your identifying code.

Please follow the coding instructions exactly, as this step is very important to assure confidentiality for you.

I would appreciate it if you could fill out the MBTI and return your completed package to me within three days.

If you are a possible subject for the bulk of the study, you will be contacted by a peer cohort of mine. The cohort will ask you if you are willing to participate in the rest of the study. If you agree to participate, I will then contact you with further details of the study.

Any participant who fills out and returns the MBTI to me is entitled to attend a group interpretation of the MBTI that will be supervised by Dr. Vance Peavy. A day and time for the group interpretation will be announced at a later date.

After you have filled out and returned the MBTI, you are under no obligation whatsoever to participate any further in the study. If you decide to participate further, you may withdraw from the study at any time with no recriminations.

If you have any questions, concerns, or would like more details about the study, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Yours truly,

Trudy Norman
Mac 429
Phone: 385-6974

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM

I, _____, consent to being part of this study, which explores the relation between focusing and psychological function.

I am aware that I will be taught Gendlin's focusing technique and that I will be asked certain questions about my subjective experience of focusing during an in-depth audio-taped interview with the researcher.

I understand that my involvement in this study will be kept in strictest confidence. In order to ensure this, resulting transcripts will not include any information that will reveal my identity such as my name, my address, or description of my physical characteristics, etc.

I understand that I will be given a full description of the purpose of the study as well as opportunities to discuss any questions or concerns I have with the researcher.

I am aware that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without any unfavourable consequence.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C

FOCUSING MANUALS

FOCUSING MANUAL 1

1. Clearing a space: Relax, find a comfortable position. Put your attention inside your body, in the middle of your body, in the chest and stomach where you usually feel your feelings, and see how you feel in there if you say to yourself: "My life is going fine these days. I feel okay about it all" . . . and just see what comes in there if you say that to yourself. Whatever comes in there, don't work on it, just say, "Hello, yes, that's there and I might come back to it later." And make a space for it to be next to you, where it can wait. A nice friendly space.

Then say, "Except for this, would I be okay? If this were somehow all right, how would I feel inside?" and wait and see how you feel inside. Notice what comes and put that aside into a friendly space as well.

Often there is a background feeling, how you always feel, happy, sad, rushing, trying hard. Whatever your always feeling is, take that out, lay that aside as well into a friendly space.

- - - pause - - -

Now consider all the things that came; just take a look at them; often one will become prominent, more important than the others; take that one and hold onto it; just look at it, don't go into it.

Now take all the other things that came and put them in a box or a suitcase and put them aside into that friendly space.

2. Felt sense: Now, still don't go inside the problem. Leave it out there. Now, here in your body, see if you can feel all fine when you think of that problem out there. Probably not, but just see if maybe you can feel fine about the whole thing.

- - - pause - - -

Notice how your body feels inside right now; notice that feeling of trying to feel fine about the problem; that is the felt sense of the problem or concern.

Or: How does the whole problem make you feel in your

chest and stomach? Consider all the things, people, places, scenario.

3. Handle: Now see if you can find a word or a phrase, or an image, that just exactly fits your sense of the problem, maybe a quality word like heavy or jumpy or sticky, but something that fits your sense exactly.
4. Resonating (lots of time): You may have done this already, but please say the word or phrase to yourself, and then wait and see if you get a signal in your body, that it's right. If not, what would be right to say? Check this several times and make sure.

Your signal may be very slight, a stirring; watch and attend inside very carefully for it.

Now take a little break inside. Once you have a handle you cannot lose the whole thing anymore.

5. Asking: Now, gently, say the handle to yourself, and see if you can sense anything coming in response. Then, when it's there again, just stay next to it and see more of what it is, what is in it. Just wait and watch.

- - - pause - - -

You don't have to have something come right away; just touch it and look at it over and over. If you can do that, you're focusing.

Questions: Ask yourself: What's really so X (the handle) about this whole thing? or, What would feel fresh or new like fresh air about this?

- - - pause - - -

Wait and sense a change or a response in your body, a shifting or difference in how the felt sense feels in your body.

6. Receiving: Now, I would like you to take a minute and be with whatever has come. Gently receive it and let it be beside you and with you. And when you're ready, open your eyes and come into the room.

FOCUSING MANUAL 2

Explain that this manual consists of a set of instructions in thinking which has been found to be helpful to people. It isn't meant to be a test, and no one will ask you what you have thought about. You will be asked whether you have found this method of thinking helpful.

- - - - -
After a pause, try to break in gently with
the next instruction.
- - - - -

This is going to be just to yourself. What I will ask you to do will be silent, just to yourself. Take a moment just to relax . . . (5 seconds). All right—now, just to yourself, inside you, I would like you to pay attention to a very special part of you Pay attention to *that part where you usually feel sad, glad, or scared* . . . (5 seconds). Pay attention to that area in you and see how you are now.

See what comes to you when you ask yourself, "How am I now?" "How do I feel?" "What is the main thing for me right now?"

Let it come, in whatever way it comes to you, and see how it is.

- - - - -
30 seconds or less
- - - - -

If, among the things that you have just thought of, there was a major personal problem which felt important, continue with it. Otherwise, select a meaningful personal problem to think about. Make sure you have chosen some personal problems of real importance in your life. Choose the thing which seems most meaningful to you . . . (10 seconds).

Of course, there are many parts to that one thing you are thinking about—too many to *think* of each one alone. But, you can *feel* all of these things together. Pay attention there where you usually feel things, and in there you can get a sense of what *all of the problem* feels like. Let yourself feel *all of that*.

- - - - -
30 seconds or less
- - - - -

As you pay attention to the whole feeling of it, you may find that one special feeling comes up. Let yourself pay attention to that one feeling.

- - - - -
1 minute
- - - - -

Keep following one feeling. Don't let it be *just* words or pictures—wait and let words or pictures come from the feeling.

- - - - -
1 minute
- - - - -

If this one feeling changes, or moves, let it do that. Whatever it does, follow the feeling and pay attention to it.

- - - - -
1 minute
- - - - -

Now, take what is fresh, or new, in the feel of it *now* . . . and go very easy. Just as you feel it, try to find some new words or pictures to capture what your present feeling is all about. There doesn't have to be anything that you didn't know before. New words are best, but old words might fit just as well. As long as you now find words or pictures to say what is fresh to you now.

- - - - -
1 minute
- - - - -

If the words or pictures that you now have make some fresh difference, see what that is. Let the words or pictures change until they feel just right in capturing your feeling.

- - - - -
1 minute
- - - - -

Now I will give you a little while to use in any way you want to, and then we will stop.

APPENDIX D

POST FOCUSING QUESTIONNAIRE

POST FOCUSING QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Without saying what you thought about, describe in two or three sentences what was happening for you during this time.
2. How is this different from what you normally did?
3. What about this, was the best the best thing for you?
4. What was the worst thing about it?
5. What surprised you most about doing this?
6. Did the feeling change or move?
7. Describe what happened for you when I said: "Try to get a sense of what all that feels like. Let yourself feel all of that."
8. What happened for you when I said: "As you pay attention to the whole feeling you may find that one special feeling comes up."
9. Describe what happened when I said: "Wait and let words or pictures come from the feeling."

APPENDIX E

EXPLANATORY NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS

EXPLANATORY NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS*

One purpose of my research is to describe your personal experience of focusing. After my interview with you, I organized your statements into units of meaning which related to your experience of focusing. Upon reflection, I distinguished two separate, but interrelated aspects of focusing. One aspect seemed to involve your subjective experience of focusing as we went through the steps of the process. The other seemed to involve the context or meaning that you have to focusing in your daily life. These two categories are being used to facilitate my understanding of your experience of focusing accurately. Consequently, I have written, based on the units of meaning derived from the interview, two descriptions of your experience of focusing. The first is your subjective experience of focusing, and the second is focusing in the context of your life.

My purpose here is to check back with you for your reactions regarding the movement I have made from interview to description. Does the description accurately represent your experience of focusing? Are there any parts of the description that seem most accurate? Are there parts of the description that you want to clarify more fully? Please write a comment describing your reactions and we will meet to discuss them.

I will be calling you within three days to set up a time for us to get together and discuss your comments.

Thank you very much for your time and effort.

*Adapted from Perelman (1977).

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What was your overall impression of the experience of focusing?
2. Do you think you learned to focus? Why?
3. What was learning focusing like for you?
What did you like?
What didn't you like?
What was easy? Less easy? In what way?
4. Go through process of focusing from beginning to end.

What thoughts, feelings, images, sensations, changes in your body, how it felt, did you have at each step?
5. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experience that you haven't mentioned?

APPENDIX G

SCORES ACHIEVED BY SUBJECTS
ON MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR

SCORES ACHIEVED BY SUBJECTS
ON MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR

	<u>Points</u>		<u>Points</u>		<u>Scores</u>	
<u>Kris</u>	E	5	I	21	I	33
	S	3	N	19	N	33 - dominant
	T	0	F	18	F	37 - auxillary
	J	17	P	11	J	11
<u>Marion</u>	E	11	I	20	I	19
	S	4	N	21	N	35 - auxillary
	T	5	F	13	F	17 - dominant
	J	3	P	25	P	45
<u>Bets</u>	E	9	I	22	I	27
	S	29	N	3	S	51 - dominant
	T	6	F	13	F	15 - auxillary
	J	26	P	2	J	47
<u>Sam</u>	E	6	I	23	I	35
	S	1	N	20	N	39 - auxillary
	T	4	F	13	F	19 - dominant
	J	8	P	19	P	23
<u>Morgan</u>	E	4	I	23	I	39
	S	13	N	6	S	13 - auxillary
	T	2	F	19	F	35 - dominant
	J	14	P	15	P	3

E = Extroversion

T = Thinking

I = Introversion

F = Feeling

S = Sensation

J = Judgment

N = Intuition

P = Perception

VITA

Surname: NORMAN Given Names: GERTRUDE LAURA GRACE

Place of Birth: TORONTO, ONT. Date of Birth: JULY 21, 1953

Educational Institutions Attended,
with Dates of Entering and Leaving:

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Title of Thesis

FOCUSING AND TWO PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE PREFERENCES



Signature

GERTRUDE LAURA GRACE NORMAN

July 17/80

Date