

AN INNER-DIRECTED LIFE AWAKENS!

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I was reluctant to accept this invitation to share that moment in life that was vitally important to my transformation. I had mixed feelings as I recalled these moments because I felt they were private between me and my own sense of spirituality and my connection to something more than me. I also did not want to imply that these moments of transformation only happened because I Focused. I didn't want my experience to have to fit some kind of Focusing modality.

Those were the thoughts that came first, and I know myself well enough to know that saying NO is my first reaction to any invitation. But if I stay with the felt sense of all of it, long enough, more comes, and more did come. What kept coming back to me was a Focusing moment that happened October 5, 1989, which I named at that time "The Turning Point of My Life Experienced".

I keep a very detailed journal. I began to journal in May, 1974 when I made a major shift in my life at that time. I changed careers from one that offered great wealth to one that offers no wealth at all! I wanted to take full responsibility for my apparent insanity in case something happened to me, and I didn't want my family to feel blame for what I had chosen as a new path in my life. So, of course I wrote down my experience of October 5, 1989! Here it is, word for word, copied from the original document without editing.

PERSONAL FOCUS October 5, 1989

THE TURNING POINT OF MY LIFE EXPERIENCED.

As I went down into myself in a loving way, it came to me once again to let go of Gendlin's Focusing steps for now and just be with my own knowing of how to be with myself.

I asked myself...

"Where is the life within me right now?"

And when I was able to sense something stirring and coming more alive within me, it came to me to say...

"BEHOLD, THIS IS MY LOVER."

I realized all at once that the life force as experienced within me in this way, now coming more alive because of the attention I am giving it, is my lover!

At that moment I sensed my life had changed for all time. It is a paradigm shift. My whole life has been changed thereby.

“Behold my lover; the life I feel inside me is my lover! The life I feel inside me is me, and also more than me as it has a life and purpose and direction all its own. It is there to direct me, to guide me and above all to love me.”

I also sense that this is what the Christ is all about. The lover is now within and he is God! My job is to become aware of His presence inside of me and honour that presence.

And then I connected with what Ruth was going through yesterday, the unveiling of her own Child within. The Child within is Ruth but more than Ruth, a Child infused with Ancient Light. And Catharine, just wanting to be with and savour that which is a sense of herself within right now.

THIS IS THE TURNING POINT as Vince termed it yesterday.

And, as I realized this my heart swelled up in gratitude for being given this wonderful gift of Life. The sense of the gift of life comes first, the insight next. The insight to;

BEHOLD THIS LIFE; THIS IS THE LOVER I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED!

I realized this came out of my feelings for Kim, first in the night focus, then the telephone and then the choice to focus now out of my love and care for him.

I sense this INSIGHT: “BEHOLD THE LIFE HE IS MY LOVER, is now the essence of all RELATIONSHIP for me RELATIONSHIP WITH MYSELF, MY FRIENDSHIP WITH OTHERS AND MY WORK ITSELF.

Today, this is October 14, 2012, just over 23 years later! When I look back to my journal at that time, I included Journal writings from September 29, 1989 through October 14, 1989 to give a context for this Turning Point in my life. I was amazed to see the connections between what was happening around and in me and what came to me in this Focusing session. It was there already and I didn’t know it! Obviously, this session touched me deeply and the operative word was ‘touched’. I had no idea of how powerfully such a Focusing session would affect my life.

All I can say is that the insight and the bodily experience that came to me that October 5, 1989 created a pathway, a direction that would transform my life over an extended period in very specific directions that were in keeping with this original experience. Because I keep a Journal, I could document the many “strings or facets” that evolved out of this original experience. It is hard to put this into words; I seemed to become more and more the person I was meant to be in so many different ways, ways I could never have imagined at the time. This process is still going on, and will probably continue until the day I die.

It is as if I came to know myself in a whole new way when I accepted the bodily experience of these words, “**BEHOLD THIS LIFE; THIS IS THE LOVER I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED!**” This is the power of Focusing. This is the power of allowing a ‘felt sense’ of what is happening in me to move my life forward way beyond what I could possibly have imagined. I have the documentation testifying over many years to the power of this kind of experiencing, intention and consent. I want to emphasize the words ‘giving consent’ because consent is essential to transformation itself. I call this form of engagement ‘participatory

spirituality'. Finally, I realize the difference between what is wanted and what I think I want, something I always struggle with.

Today, the nature of my work, the nature of my desire to connect with others, comes from this new experience of self, the self that feels loved from something inside me. I am not always in awareness of this. I so easily forget this inner wisdom when triggered in my woundedness. However, when I consciously connect with another person, this sense of the loved self seems to come through me and connect with others. Suddenly I realize the meaning behind the paradox, "It is in giving that you receive." Something in me, the life in me, seems to connect with the life in others in a way that often allows the other person to feel grounded and supported in the whole situation between us. When they can feel this grounded support, and also feel safe with me, they seem to come alive inside with a new experience of who they are and their possibilities. They often feel as though they can stand on their own two feet and able to be with life's challenges with renewed confidence. Then it seems like the life awakened in them touches the life in me and reminds me that I too am alive, that I too, am loved. What a wonderful gift to each other when we can connect in this way.

I want to say it has been a gradual and challenging process. It has been a process that has had many bumps along the way as those wounded parts in me needed to come out and be seen for what they are and how they have served my life honourably. This is part of a journey, to make room for those parts of me that I would prefer were not there, and to realize they too have a place in me, as part of me, and to love them too. This acceptance of self the way I am rather than the way I would want myself to be, has enabled me to accept the same in others. This is a rocky road, hard work at times, and yet I want to grow further in this direction, to accept myself the way I am, and accept you the way you are. I love this quote from the philosopher Teilhard de Chardin, "A person grows as a person in connection with another person and in no other way."

My way of Focusing has changed so dramatically since that turning point moment back in October 1989. So much happened in that year. I became a Focusing Trainer. I attended the first International Focusing Conference in Chicago; I met the person that I would fall in love with. I didn't know love until I felt this embodied experience from inside, "*BEHOLD, THIS IS MY LOVER.*" It simply was not there in me. The way I Focus continues to change, with emphasis expanding to include more and more. First, the emphasis was on whole body grounded presence, to give me a strong sense of "me here," supported by the environment. From this grounded place, I began to have the space inside me to make room for you, just the way you are. I like to call this piece 'heartfelt connection', leading to heartfelt conversation or simply, communication. I also realize this healing journey is mine, a gift to me, because I need it the most, and then from me to you if you so desire.

More and more I realize that whatever is going on in me is met outside of me, in the world, to challenge, support and strengthen this very thing that is happening inside me and now from outside. It seems like the inner world and the outer world come together towards a healthier, more whole way of being me in the world. I welcome all of that. This is what it is to live an inner-directed life and I welcome that. The turning point that began all those years ago continues to turn. Amen.