



The London Focusing Institute

2-YEAR CERTIFICATION COURSE IN FOCUSING-ORIENTED THERAPIES (FOT)

The London Focusing Institute is a community of teachers, students and fellow Focusers who are eager to make the practice and philosophy of Focusing available to professionals and the general public. Every 3 years or so we have a new intake into our Certification Programme. We are pleased to announce that LFI will once again offer the **2-year Post-Graduate Focusing Oriented Therapy (FOT) Course** in London, beginning in January 2020.

Overview of the course

The course will run over 6 weekends per year starting in January 2020.

Successful completion of this programme (12 weekend workshops plus reading, regular Focusing practice, 12 supervision sessions, and a final group project) qualifies the student to become certified with The International Focusing Institute as a 'Focusing Professional' (non-therapists) or a 'Focusing Oriented Therapist' (registered therapists).

This post-graduate specialisation in Focusing Oriented Therapy (FOT) is taught within the spirit of valuing the diversity of forms of FOT and emphasises a phenomenological attention to experience and the 'being' qualities of the therapist.

The award of **Focusing Oriented *Therapist*** requires prior completion of a recognised therapy/counselling training, and professional registration as a therapist/counsellor/psychologist by the end of the course. Otherwise the award of **Certified Focusing *Professional/Trainer*** is awarded to non-therapists. The course is open to practitioners who want to integrate Focusing into their work with others, including body

* Students wishing to gain the FOT or Focusing Professional certificate can apply for that to The International Focusing Institute (NY) on the basis of successful completion of the course. TIFI charges a fee for certification and an annual membership fee. Students do not have to apply for certification or join TIFI; it is voluntary.

workers, coaches, psychotherapists and counsellors of all kinds and the general public. However the course is geared towards counsellors and psychotherapists and so we do integrate 'supervision sessions' primarily for this kind of client work.

The learning format includes: six two-day workshops in each year; peer reading discussions; monthly supervision in year two via skype; and regular focusing partnerships. Although the teaching style has a certain format, we intend to remain responsive to interests in the group and group process. To that extent the curriculum is not formally set but evolves as we proceed through the course.

The first year offers students an in-depth experience of learning Focusing for themselves to gain familiarity with their own process. We explore various ways of listening deeply to another and guiding another to attune to their own experiential process. Some client supervision and discussion of therapy papers will also take place.

The second year builds on the intricacy of each student's personal awareness and growing ability to deeply accompany another person in their implicit experiencing. It also concentrates on integrating Focusing into therapeutic practice. In the second year, students will work in groups to present a Focusing workshop to colleagues, friends or the general community as a final year project.

Due to the experiential nature of the training, **places are strictly limited** and are allocated on a first-come first-served basis.

The fee for the programme does not include required supervision sessions (the supervision panel for the course have agreed to offer sessions at a reduced fee during the course) or the final certification fee from The Focusing Institute.

Year one

The programme emphasises Focusing as a way of being with self and other. It is not a technique and it is not something that we do *to* others. Therefore, the first year offers students an in-depth experience of learning Focusing for themselves in order to gain familiarity with their own experiencing process. The first year also, alongside learning about one's own process, teaches various ways of listening deeply to another and the importance of the presence of another person to our experience of ourselves. In the first year, students will also be introduced to forms of guiding another to attune to their own experiential awareness. Much of this teaching will arise from practice sessions with others in the cohort. Both years will offer opportunities for students to practice so that they will graduate with an ability to integrate Focusing into their client work. Practice sessions will be supported by a growing understanding of the broader philosophical basis of this experiential practice and its place within the existential tradition. Students will be encouraged to form a personal integration of their understanding of the practice and philosophy consistent with their own experience of living.



Year two

The second year builds upon the intricacy of each student's personal awareness as well as their growing ability to deeply accompany another person while that person explores their implicit experiencing. Year two also concentrates on ways of integrating Focusing into therapeutic practice. Each student will be encouraged to develop their own experiential integration into whatever tradition and orientation informs their therapeutic practice. The course emphasises an existential-phenomenological understanding of Focusing and therapeutic practice but students are encouraged to bring in their own ideas and knowledge. We will also explore Focusing with particular populations and in particular settings, depending upon the specific interests and current work contexts of the cohort.

In order to apply for the course, prospective students will be strongly encouraged to complete the *equivalent* of a Level I Focusing Workshop (2 days) sometime before starting the training and preferably before applying for the programme. Otherwise students will not have an adequate grounding in Focusing to know that they are ready to commit to the two-year programme. The LFI Introductory weekend workshops held in London would fulfil this requirement and give students an opportunity to meet some of our team.

All students must have completed a full therapeutic training and be registered with a professional body with a code of ethics and practice in order to graduate with the Focusing Institute's Focusing Oriented Therapy certificate. *Also, students must register as 'professionals-in-training' with the Focusing Institute from the beginning of the programme and remain registered during the full training if they want to gain the Focusing Oriented Therapy certificate from the Focusing Institute.* LFI will offer a certificate of attendance at the end of the two years for anyone needing this.

Supervision sessions for Focusing practice (either face-to-or using skype/telephone) begin in year two. The format of the training will be flexible and under constant review in order to ensure the most effective and satisfying training experience for each cohort.



FORMAT OF LEARNING

1. Six two-day workshops in each year (12 workshops in total over 2 years)

Two-day workshops will take place approximately every 2 months throughout the 2-year training. Each workshop should be held over a Saturday (10-5pm) and Sunday (10-3pm). Each workshop is approximately 10 hours (one-hour lunch break, half hour on Sunday). Each weekend follows the following format: attunement, feedback, demonstration, practice, discussion, content input, supervision, questions, with some flexibility for what happens spontaneously on the day.

Although the intention is to provide a flexible and culturally-sensitive training experience, it is expected that students will arrive on time and commit to the full session – late arrivals and early departures can be disruptive to the group, especially if deep experiential work is going on. If a student misses a workshop they will need to make up that workshop by attending the next time it is offered or by similar equivalent arrangement with the Programme Leaders. Each weekend must be paid for even if missed. The group process of the cohort will be attended to as an aspect of the training and as an opportunity to practice experiential listening in a group setting.

A brief self-assessment written piece (a few pages in any format that fits for the student) is requested at the end of year one.

2. Peer Assignments and Reading Discussions

The training is highly experiential but also includes reading of theoretical and practical papers for discussion. There are no academic written requirements but we do ask for a written self-assessment at the end of year one and a write-up of the each group's teaching project at the end of the course.

3. Second Year FOT Supervision

By year two students are expected to begin to integrate their learning into their therapeutic work (psychotherapy, counselling, or coaching). This integration is supported by monthly one-hour supervision sessions with a Focusing supervisor from the LFI panel in person or via skype, 12 sessions in total.

4. Focusing Partnerships

Each student should have an on-going Focusing partnership during the programme. These sessions offer Focusing Listening time, at least 25 minutes each, either face to face or by phone. These partnerships are crucial practice time so that Focusing-Listening is integrated into the student's way of being with self and other and so that the student becomes intimately acquainted with their own experiencing styles and ways of listening to others. Students might switch partners at intervals in order to experience different styles and needs – but this will be guided by the students' felt sense of the importance of staying with the same person or being exposed to more diversity in partnerships.

5. Optional – students who are deemed to be proficient in Focusing-Listening may offer their services to the Focusing Partnership pool through the Focusing Institute in order to offer low-cost Focusing-Listening opportunities to new Focusers over the phone. Otherwise, there may be a way of offering this service to the local general community or specialised populations within the UK.

6. Assistant Teaching – Graduates who are interested in learning the skills to teach Focusing and FOT are invited to return to the workshops as 'assistants' paying half the regular tuition.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

Students will be expected to read selected papers between workshops in order to have continuity in their learning and we will take time to have embodied discussions on each paper as peers in the workshop setting.

In the second year students should deliver, either individually or with a group of fellow students, a project where they organised and delivered a teaching session to anyone in their local community. This could be with fellow professionals, students, in a school or community group etc. It is an attempt to ground Focusing in local cultures, to identify what issues arise when teaching Focusing in this particular population – what works and what doesn't. The project should be written (3000 words max), but students are encouraged to work together, so it is a group project and paper. There will be a self and peer assessment for each student and students who are not ready to graduate the programme can be offered further mentoring and supervision before certification.



TOPICS WE MAY INCLUDE IN THE PRACTICE ISSUES AND CONCEPTUAL GROUNDING SESSIONS:

FIRST YEAR:

The Basics of Focusing as a Way of being rather than a technique
Focusing Steps and an exploration of their usefulness in learning
Some History of Focusing and Basic Concepts – Felt Sense, Edge of Awareness, Carrying Forward/Life-forward
Direction, Felt Shift, Inner Critic
Gendlin's concept of the Body
Basic Listening and Advanced Listening
Different Forms of Focusing (different teachers), and their integration into different spiritual traditions and its different uses (children, theory construction, creative work, conflict resolution, medical settings, addictions, sports, bodywork...)
Difficulties with Focusing
Issues with teaching and teaching specific groups Radical Acceptance and Inner Relational Focusing Changes
Groups and community building
Exposure to different styles and understanding of visiting teachers (likely European teachers due to costs)
The Critic,
Wholebody Focusing,
What is experiential depth?

SECOND YEAR:

Basics of integrating Focusing into therapy. What is a FOT?
Different forms of integration and different therapeutic traditions
Reading various clinical and research papers
Interventions with clients, how to pause, slow down content, invite a felt sense to form, reflect in a way that highlights the implicit
The uses of self-disclosure, where do questions point to, how to use the therapist's felt sense

What do we mean by ‘therapeutic relationship’?

Integration of Focusing into Coaching & Mediation?

Use of language, images, symbolising...

What kind of environment is therapy?

Philosophical concepts: interaction first, basic process model concepts

Student presentations on their workshop projects teaching Focusing – specific settings, populations, therapeutic traditions, brief and long-term therapy

What is an experiential track and experiential depth?

Difficulties in FOT and possible contra-indications? Clients with no bodily sense, trauma, depression, overwhelming experience, when the therapist is dealing with difficulty, addictions, cultural issues...

Critiques of FOT from other approaches and clarification of other approaches from a FOT perspective

Therapist Self-care Focusing-Oriented Supervision



Extra details on our ethos:

1. Our practice emphasises staying with the body, the felt sense, and the physical body over and over again. We prioritise the actually bodily being rather than getting too stuck on symbolising or understandings that can come from the body.
2. We offer a radical ‘deconstruction’ of our certainties about life and about therapy, loosening assumptions and theories, engaging with fresh thinking beyond our models of therapy, of society, of what a person is.... Working actively with the urgency, sense of alienation and crisis of attention at this time in history. Expanding the remit of what it means to be a FOT (beyond the therapy room and beyond conventional understandings).
3. Allowing the expansiveness, loosening of concepts and openness to body, to take us into a more ‘spiritual’ appreciation of what we are opening up to.
4. The course includes practices such as Walking outside and Focusing, Focusing-inspired Discussions, Focusing reading (very slow reading practices that do not prioritise conceptual understanding, ‘deep reading’ practices). Other creative formats and expressions of working with, prioritising, the body and felt sensing. Perhaps inviting ‘touch’ as a way of accompanying and companioning the Focuser/client (to offer this for our learning even if it’s not taken into actual client work, though it might be). Touch used to expand the concept of body and its potentials.
5. We intend to bring an appreciation for the experience of trauma into the training, discovering an FOT way to work with traumatic experiences. Potentially having some input on other specific experiences like depression and anxiety and couples work (in the training or alongside/afterwards as a specific weekend workshop).
6. To emphasise more practice of guiding and integrating experiential sensitivities into therapeutic work so that FOT is not (primarily) understood as trying to get the client to Focus as a technique in the sessions.

Tutors:

The main tutors are Frank Bock and Greg Madison, both Certifying Coordinators of the International Focusing Institute. Most weekends will be hosted by either Frank or Greg and we plan some weekends to be co-teaching, at least once a year. Carol Poole and Cathy McCoy are experienced Focusing teachers who will be with us most weekends, contributing and offering continuity in the training as well as possibly leading practice weekends during the year.

Each weekend the Team may be joined by LFI graduates who assist the teaching and practice. If there is interest, we may potentially invite guest teachers to teach alongside the course or after it. These workshops are not a part of the course but in addition to the training and may be on any application of Focusing, TAE, Trauma, Children, Expressive Arts, Philosophy, Neuroscience, Political/Social Activism, Feminism, Queer theory etc and open to our students and others in the professional world and general public.

YEAR ONE DATES:

Saturdays 10-5pm, Sundays 10-3pm:

2020 25th & 26th January, 4th & 5th April, 30th & 31st May, 11th & 12th July, 19th & 20th September, 21st & 22nd November

YEAR TWO DATES:

2021 23rd & 24th January, 20th & 21st March, 22nd & 23rd May, 10th & 11th July, 2nd & 3rd October, 27th & 28th November.

Fees:

Payments:

(Supervisory fees not included. Approx. £75 per 50-minute hour.)

Fees: £220 x 6 weekends = £1,320 which is due 6 weeks before each year begins. In 2019 this is Saturday 14th December and in 2020 Saturday 12th December. £2,640 in total.

Early Bird discounts are offered. There is an early-bird discount of £140 if the whole amount of £2500 made by 14 December 2019. Do speak to us if these terms cause difficulty and we will see if we can find a way to assist so that you can participate.



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