

# Seminar Papers by Dr. Janet

**Klein**<sup>1</sup> Edited by Barbara J Dickinson, May 2021

## CONTENTS OF THIS DOCUMENT<sup>2</sup>

**Seminar 2: Empathic Moment and Empathic Response 2** Work Paper 2

**Seminar 4: Interactive Response, Your Own Story 4** Experiential Work Paper 4

**Seminar 6: The Relationship Check, Part 1 6**

**Seminar 7: The Relationship Check, Part 2 10** Work Paper 10

<sup>1</sup> Note from the Editor: Dr. Janet Klein sadly passed away in 2010. Her website, her email address, and any links in this document may be inactive. Questions can be directed to Barbara Dickinson as editor, [barbara.j.dickinson@gmail.com](mailto:barbara.j.dickinson@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Note from the Editor: These are the Seminar Papers left on Dr. Janet Klein's now inactive website. Paper #1 is the separate article entitled "A Brief History of the Interactive" by Dr. Janet Klein. If Paper #3 exists, it was not available on her website at the time of her death. #5 as it appeared in that collection is a duplicate of #4. As a collection, these are transcripts of the "seminars" or "workshops" Dr. Klein offered to teach the Interactive Focusing method.

# Seminar 2: Empathic Moment and Empathic Response

## Work Paper

Object of the Empathy Work Paper – An experiential exercise and lesson

Recently, I sent you Seminar Paper 2 – The Empathic Moment and Empathic Response<sup>1</sup>. It will help if you read that paper before attempting this exercise. I wanted to tell you a story you could listen to empathically. This is the story that freshly came when I checked inside now to see what was sitting there. Please read this out loud to yourself. I invite you to be my listener.

### The Story: As My Mother Baked a Cake

One of the saddest memories of myself as a child was sitting in our cramped kitchen watching my mother bake a cake. It was Sunday, her only day off. Her back was to me. She turned and saw I was crying. When she asked me what was wrong, I could barely respond, “You didn’t ask me to help you.”

I remember it as a moment of complete, abject, abysmal loneliness. It is a feeling that echoes in me not often but from time to time, even when I am not alone. When I try to follow my trail of loneliness, it is this particular story that comes; and that long ago feeling gets reborn in me.

Sometimes I get that feeling now, when I look at my 92-year-old mother. The shattering thought comes, I’m going to miss her. It is a thought I feel powerless to dispel. I wish I had chapters of stories my mother told me, stored up inside to keep me company. I do have chapters of memories I’ve made into stories stored up inside me, hoping they will protect me against the loneliness of losing her.

Remembering all that, a feeling comes inside me, right now. It is in my center. It is empty. It is emptiness. I sense an empty space, nothingness. Silvery, smooth, nothing to touch. Achy. I want to bend over, curl up. An odd thought joins in. How is it that this empty nothingness that I can’t touch can be felt so strongly.

I remember missing my mother so often, even when I was with her. I remember

---

<sup>1</sup> There is some confusion about this sentence, as this paper is labeled “Seminar 2”, but the sentence implies this is a later paper. With apologies from the Editor, this confusion can not be resolved at this time.

promising myself that when I had children, I would never work. But I, too, became a working mother.

### Taking the Empathic Moment

Please take my story in. Let it keep company with your felt sense. See what comes for you. See what gets touched. Let loose your empathic imagination. Can you empathically imagine how I am carrying that story. Take your time here. See what develops.

### Forming the Empathic Response

Now that you have a sense of how I am carrying all of that, please take some time to write out your Empathic Response. What would you say to me to let me know that you really get how that is for me. When you re-read your Empathic Response, try to identify what classification it might fall under such as metaphor, brief story, distillation, mythic icon or image, etc.

Notice what happens inside of you when you take my story in with a caring and compassionate wanting to empathically understand me.

Important Note: Please e-mail me a copy of your empathic response and any thoughts you have about the process. I think that it is through sharing that we will discover much more about empathy, and that is an important thing.

Feedback: I will try to provide individual feedback to each of you who submit an empathic response.

Invitation: I hope you will participate in these seminars. We are planning to hold telephone conference calls during which we will present live Interactions and teach from them. Anyone who has submitted these exercises will be invited to participate in the live conferences.

drjanetklein@yahoo.com  
[www.interactivefocusing.com](http://www.interactivefocusing.com)  
[interactivefocusing.ning.com](http://interactivefocusing.ning.com)

# Seminar 4: Interactive Response, Your Own Story

## Experiential Work Paper

Object of Interactive Response Work Paper – An experiential lesson

I am using the same story I told for the Empathic Moment and Empathic Response. This gives you a chance to move forward from the Empathic Moment and your own Empathic Response to the Interactive Response. Now, as you read my story again, please listen to me with caring and gentle curiosity.

### The Story: As My Mother Baked a Cake

One of the saddest memories of myself as a child was sitting in our cramped kitchen watching my mother bake a cake. It was Sunday, her only day off. Her back was to me. She turned and saw I was crying. When she asked me what was wrong, I could barely choke out, “You didn’t ask me to help you.”

I remember it as a moment of complete, abject, abysmal loneliness. It is a feeling that echoes in me not often but from time to time, even when I am not alone. When I try to follow my trail of loneliness, it is this particular story that comes; and that long ago feeling gets reborn in me.

Sometimes I get that feeling now, when I look at my 92-year-old mother. The shattering thought comes, I’m going to miss her. It is a thought I feel powerless to dispel. I wish I had chapters of stories my mother told me, stored up inside to keep me company. I do have chapters of memories I’ve made into stories stored up inside me, hoping they will protect me against the loneliness of losing her.

Remembering all that, a feeling comes inside me, right now. It is in my center from the base of my throat to the top of my stomach. It is empty. It is emptiness. I sense an empty space, nothingness. Silvery, smooth, nothing to touch. Achy. I want to bend over, curl up. An odd thought joins in. How is it that this empty nothingness that I can’t touch can be felt so strongly.

As a child, I remember missing my mother so often, even when I was with her. I remember promising myself that when I had children, I would never work. But I, too, became a working mother.

Interactive Response and telling your own Story

It is important that you let the Empathic Response form before you proceed to the Interactive Response. That guards against letting your story become a reaction.

NOW see what of your own material gets touched by my story, which you just heard. What story forms inside of you and wants to be listened to. Now you will have the opportunity to tell your own story.

Your participation: Please e-mail me a short summary of your Interactive response and any thoughts you have about the process.

Feedback: I will try to provide individual feedback to each of you who submit an Interactive response.

Invitation: We are planning to hold telephone conference calls during which we will present live Interactions and teach from them. Anyone who has completed these exercises will be invited to participate in the live conferences.

A note about the Deep Human Truth Principle

The Interactive Response relies on the 'deep human truth' principle: When we listen to someone share their deep human truth, each of us gets touched in the place within that is home to our own truths. Welcome your own story forward, and discover your own truth.

drjanetklein@yahoo.com  
[www.interactivefocusing.com](http://www.interactivefocusing.com)  
[interactivefocusing.ning.com](http://interactivefocusing.ning.com)

## Seminar 6: The Relationship Check, Part 1

The Relationship Check came out of my original partnership interviews when I asked Focusing partners to experientially check to see what their partnership meant to themselves and what their partner meant to them. And it comes from a question I ask myself, Why is it so important to know how I am seen and held in a relationship? Where does this great curiosity come from? It seems universal. If it is universal then perhaps we should pay attention to it. It should have some survival value. It should be important to evolution. In this instance, it is important to the survival and evolution of relationship.

From the first seminar paper, “A Brief History and Hallmarks of the Interactive: The Relationship Check”

The relationship check is the forbidden question in all ships carrying relationships: friendships, love-ships, personal and business partnerships. It seems to be tacitly forbidden to overtly question where we are in our relationship right now. How do I feel about you after your telling me all that about yourself? How do you feel about me now that I have revealed all of that to you? And where am I with myself? How do I feel about me inside of myself right now after revealing all of that to you and to myself?

Again, this was from personal wanting. I always wanted to know what other people thought of me but was too timid or too polite or too frightened to risk asking. Now that I was a Focuser, I wanted to know how other people felt about me. One day, during an Interaction I had the courage to ask. It became a full time part of the model from then on. It is very valuable information. It makes the relationship feel much safer when I know how I stand with the other person. I have had great agreement from the people I share Interactive sessions with. We want to know the current shape of the relationship.

### **Honesty leads to Truth**

The Relationship Check is another tile in the mosaic of truth. We are asked, again, to have the courage to reveal ourselves. The entire process to this point has been a challenge to our ability and strength to be honest. It is through these incremental

steps of honest revelation that we arrive at our truths. Discovering our truths may seem like a single, 'aha' moment, but we can usually trace this epiphany back through an accumulation of curiosity and hard work.

In the 1860s, the German chemist Friedrich Kekule is attributed to having a dream that spontaneously revealed the structure of the benzene ring which, until then, had been a problem thought to be without solution. Prior to his dream, however, he had spent years and years investigating this phenomenon.

### **Right now**

Every couples therapist will tell you of cases where one or the other partner didn't have a clue to the status of the relationship. The wife will say, He just didn't come home one day. Or the husband will say, I never knew how she really felt about me. Did she love me?

Ask yourself, How is my relationship right now? My guess is that you will experience some discomfort. If you dare be honest with yourself, you are probably thinking, I really don't know.

This 'unkowing' isn't healthy for ongoing relationships. It falls within the realm of denial and delusion. A relationship must be strong enough for the truth. That is what the relationship check is after. And, in this model, it comes at a critical point, in the wake of honest disclosure. This is a perfect time to check in with one another. You have loosened the constraints of your habitual way of being with each other.

We often have Interactions with someone with whom we are not in an ongoing relationship. Why is self-disclosure about how we are with one another and how we are with ourselves important in these instances. Relationship isn't about quantity; it is about quality. Every relationship, even if for an hour, is a window into our relationship soul. It helps us establish our maturity level because maturity is about expanding beyond our narcissistic selves and taking in the other. It helps us with ongoing relationships. It is unto itself, and it is practice for other relationships. There does appear to be a relationship muscle that is enlarged and strengthened with practice.

Sharing our stories; being empathically heard; these are bonding experiences. Checking on the status of the relationship in the present moment and revealing it to one another is cementing.

It is like the gas gauge in a car. If we don't know how much gas we have we are likely to run out of gas on a lonely, deserted country road. We want to know the current shape of the relationship. We need to know the current shape of the relationship. It keeps us safe. It builds trust.

### The Relationship Check Question

Where we are in our relationship right now? How do I feel about you after your telling me all that about yourself? How do you feel about me now that I have revealed all of that to you? And where am I with myself? How do I feel about me inside of myself right now after revealing all of that to you and to myself?

From Seminar Paper 4: The Interactive Response, an example of the Relationship Check.

### Part five, the Relationship Check

We completed our Interaction by sharing how we felt about one another and about ourselves. I went first. About how I was with Aida now that we had processed together, I told Aida I imagined two women walking arm in arm as they do in Europe. You can tell they have been friends forever or they were meant to be friends. About myself, I was relieved I had the courage to talk about my fears. She gave me the feeling it would be okay to tell her. I trusted her.

Aida felt much the same. There was bonding and trust. She liked that we could reveal meaningful things to each other. She often felt critical of the constant, almost expected, obsessive talk of health as we age. It didn't feel like that to her. It was about our health, but it was much more.

drjanetklein@yahoo.com  
[www.interactivefocusing.com](http://www.interactivefocusing.com)  
[interactivefocusing.ning.com](http://interactivefocusing.ning.com)



## **Seminar 7: The Relationship Check, Part 2**

We have been working together for the last six seminars to walk you through the Interactive Focusing process. I gave you some pointers and descriptions in the form of seminars. After the seminar paper, I presented you with an experiential exercise. First, I asked you to read my short story of the day My Mother Baked a Cake. I asked you to take an Empathic Moment and form an Empathic Response. I then asked you to image and word your own Interactive Response; to see what got touched inside of you when you heard my story.

We move on to the Relationship Check. I find it invaluable. I am asking you to see how you are with me right now after sharing all that about ourselves. Throughout this series, we have been forming a relationship. I have disclosed myself to you. You have responded. Many of you submitted your responses to me in writing, and I have tried to take them in and give you feedback. I appreciate your making yourself visible to me in that way.

The Relationship Check is the capstone. This is the commentary on the relationship or connection we have made. When you have a process comprised of distinct yet inseparable parts, they all become equally important and necessary. The Relationship Check, at first, was seemingly added on. Now, it is apparent to me that it helps define the relationship. It helps us see what the relationship actually is in the now. Using the Relationship Check, we can take a snap shot of the motion picture of the development of our relationships. And, importantly, it gives us the opportunity to check this out with our partner. It allows for the feedback that can help us right our course before it escapes.

### **The Relationship Check Questions**

I invite you to take a few moments to do the Relationship Check with me. If we were sitting across from each other now, in person or on the phone, this is what I would say: Where are we in our relationship right now? How

do we feel about each other? How do I feel about you after your telling me all that about yourself? How do you feel about me now that I have revealed all of that to you? And where am I with myself? How do I feel about me inside of myself right now after revealing all of that to you and to myself?

You are welcome to share this with me. From here, I will offer the opportunity to listen to a live demonstration of an Interaction via teleconference. I hope you will be able to join me. I will let you know the time and date as soon as it is set.