

Summary Minutes from The Focusing Institute Board Meeting 28 April 2011

The Focusing Institute Board met via a telephone conference call on 28 April 2011 from 9:00 to 11:00 AM Eastern Daylight Time (USA). Those present were: Reva Bernstein, Melinda Darer, Elena Frezza, Mary Hendricks, Akira Ikemi, Joan Klagsbrun, Pat Omidian, Harbert Rice, and Rosa Zubizarreta. After a round of checking-in, we worked through the following agenda items.

1. Coordinators and Growth. We will be scheduling another phone meeting before the upcoming Board retreat to begin the conversation about the issue of adding new Coordinators. Melinda Darer will be send out a Doodle to help us find a time when most of us are able to meet by phone. In the meantime, the Board suggested that Melinda and Mary Hendricks convey to those who raised this concern that we plan to address this issue face-to-face at our upcoming Board retreat. The Board feels that it is important to address this issue well. The relationship of Coordinators to the Institute is critical to the Institute's success, and it is important that we involve and get input from the Coordinator's Functional Whole in this process.

2. Folio. The Board was delighted to unanimously accept Akira Ikemi's offer to serve as Board Liaison to the newly-forming Folio Functional Whole. In the process, we had some productive conversations clarifying the role of the liaison, as well as the relationship between the Functional Wholes and the TFI Board. (More below.)

Folio Functional Committee. We clarified that a liaison role is not a "sole decision-making" role. Rather the decisions that the Board needs to make still come before and from the Board as a whole. We take the view that it will be important to clarify decisions as the work evolves, which decisions are the Functional Whole's (FW) to make, and which remain the Board's responsibility. While it may not be possible to decide this ahead of time, it is something that needs to be attended to in an ongoing way. In many situations, the FW will be doing preparatory work and making recommendations, which the Board will then decide upon. The work of the liaison is to help maintain good communication between the two (FW and Board) so that ideally when issues come to the Board they are not "surprises". Finally, other Board members are also welcome to join a FW, in addition to whoever is volunteering for the formal role of "liaison".

Mary Hendricks will write an email to invite participation in the Folio Functional Whole from a diversity of perspectives, including people who hold concerns about having a peer-reviewed journal. The purpose is to include a diversity of perspectives in the process of coming up with creative ways to move forward.

Folio as a Benefit of Membership. The issue of a member's benefit needs more conversation as part of the board's membership group discussions, and the Folio Functional Whole. Here are some of the major considerations expressed to date.

On the one hand: There is a need to have clear "benefits of membership" that is often expressed by members and by potential members. In a historical context, the Folio used to be a "benefit of membership," which has been "taken away" now that we no longer mail the Folio out to members. In a larger context, we do make large amounts of information freely available, which would include past issues of the Folio even if we were to restrict current

issues to members. Even though we currently offer monetary discounts for workshops as a benefit of membership, this benefit is not so useful for our international members.

On the other hand: There is the value of having all information free always. There often are negative feelings that people get when they do a search for something and find that they need to purchase information in order to access it. There is the difficulty of having people in economically marginalized countries using credit cards to purchase information if we were to sell electronic version of current articles or current issues. Finally, there are the possibilities of having other benefits of membership that don't include differential (free) access to current issues of the Folio and newsletter.

3. Financial Report. Melinda Darer reported that our financial performance this year is similar to last year. Our workshop income is up due primarily to the upcoming Focusing Oriented Therapy Conference (FOT), but our donations are down. She will release a spring fund raising letter this week.

Upcoming Seminar from Ann Weiser Cornell and Gene Gendlin. The Board considered an offer from Ann Weiser Cornell to share 10% of the gross revenues from the upcoming seminar with Gene Gendlin in exchange for a one-time use of TFI's mailing list and announcing the seminar on TFI's website. The Board agreed to accept Ann's offer if she is willing to include the following modifications:

- a) In the seminar announcements, Ann list Focusing Resources as the "sponsor" and TFI as a "supporter" of the seminar, and specify that as a supporter TFI will receive 10% of the proceeds as a donation.
- b) And that Ann announce the upcoming FOT conference during the phone seminar with Gene, and also on her website.

The Board agreed that the above arrangement is specific to this situation, as generally we only announce events that TFI sponsors, or major international events such as the Focusing International Conference.

4. Strategic Planning Process. With regards to our upcoming Board retreat, Rosa Zubizarreta offered to act as a facilitator in our discussions with Barbara Dickinson about her results in the Strategic Planning Process. We want to make sure that there is a way for other perspectives to be heard, including room for questioning assumptions about the planning process itself.

Invite to Coordinators to Participate in the Planning Process. Rosa also will draft a note to send to the Board and to Barbara Dickinson for their review and comments about informing Coordinators with regards to TFI's Strategic Planning Process, and inviting Coordinators to talk with Barbara to provide their input into the planning process. Once finalized this note will be posted to the Coordinator's list. Barbara will be at the International and can meet with Coordinators during the International. There has been no conversation to date on Coordinator's list about the Coordinator's meeting at International and how that will take place. We want to honor and be sensitive to Coordinating Committee's role in this, as they are the hosts. We simply want to make an offer to have Barbara Dickinson available to meet and talk with Coordinators to gain their views and input in our strategic planning efforts.

5. Agenda Items Carried Over to Our April Meeting. Given time constraints, we were not able to attend to the following items, or the information was not available to complete the item.

- A. Creation of Financial Outcomes Chart.
- B. Next Steps Regarding the Partnership Pool.
- C. Updating By-Laws.
- D. Policy for Health Insurance for Staff.

6. Next Board Meeting. The next Board meeting will be the board retreat in New York on 28 and 29 May 2011.

Respectfully,

Harbert Rice