

Summary Minutes from The Focusing Institute Board Meeting June 24, 2010

The Focusing Institute Board met via a telephone conference call on June 24, 2010 from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time (USA). Those present were: Mary Hendricks, Rosa Zubizarreta, Joan Klagsbrun, Astrid Schillings, Reva Bernstein, Elena Frezza, and Melinda Darer.

1. Financial Report. Melinda Darer reported that we have brought in 18,300 USD as a result of our spring fundraising effort, including 5,000 USD from FECD.¹ This is close to 30% of our larger goal of \$50,000. Based on the funds received, **the Board agreed** to continue to move forward with the plan to “grow from the bottom up” by hiring a new staff person. Also, we support Melinda’s search for a candidate who can speak Spanish.

2. Fundraising Possibilities. Melinda Darer, Mary Hendricks, and Harbert Rice will be meeting with a fundraiser next week to explore other possibilities in raising funds. In the meantime, Melinda invited us to initiate a brainstorming conversation on fundraising. Highlights were: 1) Exploring the possibility of company sponsorship for TFI. In Argentina, this came about because the husband of a teacher worked for a company that was willing to sponsor. We may not know enough about who our own people are connected to, and the possibilities that may be there... 2) Doing an annual fundraising auction. This could be a virtual event. 3) By varying our efforts to raise funds through different methods, including sending an annual request letter, seeking sponsorships, grants, creating online annual auction etc, our appeals could reach different audiences. 4) We have often talked about doing personal calls to people who have donated larger amounts in past. Melinda has compiled a list. We will wait until after the meeting with the fundraiser to figure out next steps on using personal board contacts.

3. Lucinda Gray’s Proposal for Focusing in Schools. **The Board agreed** with Harbert’s recommendation that we write a letter to Lucinda offering our general support and encouraging her to form a team to further develop a pilot project for Focusing in schools. Reva Bernstein offered to work directly with Lucinda as a part of this team, and Rosa Zubizarreta will create an initial draft of a letter to Lucinda. We reviewed the things we have been able to offer Lucinda thus far: featuring her work in our newsletter and on our website, which has already generated interest from others; offering her information and contacts regarding ways to publish her book. We also brainstormed what else we might do: Mary, Melinda, and Joan Klagsbrun all mentioned that they had potential contacts for people working in or with schools. Elena Frezza mentioned that she has contacts with people working with children and teachers in South American schools. As Lucinda is in Costa Rica, she may be interested in Spanish-language opportunities for her materials.

As a Board, we shared our concern regarding a history of coordinators, trainers and others who have felt not heard by TFI or not appreciated sufficiently for their work. We reiterated our intention to support and encourage community members with their creative projects, and our concern that in the past we have not always been able to do so. At the same time, we also reiterated the need to make clear statements about the kinds of

¹ Fidelcomiso Ecuatoriano de Cooperacion para el Desarrollo – FECD.

networking support we can offer, along with the kinds of financial support and staffing that we are not in a position to offer. We need to do this with the Focusing community in general, not just in responding to individual project proposals.

4. New Coordinator-in-Training. Analia Zaccai is a new Coordinator-In-Training. Mary will introduce Analia on the Coordinator's list.

5. Minutes on Web. The Board agreed on the value of sharing information with coordinators and the wider focusing community, and therefore will continue to post the minutes on the web as we have been doing. At the same time, we added the proviso that if something could be legally damaging, we will not include it. We also agreed to explore the possibility of posting a version of the notes in Spanish and Japanese. We will be asking Akira Ikemi and Elena about this at the next Board meeting. (Elena was only able to stay with us for the first half of the meeting.)

6. Crossing Support Group (CSG). The Board clarified and reaffirmed the original intent of the group, which includes offering suggestions and proposals to TFI regarding the weeklong as well as to support the teaching staff of the weeklong. As part of their work, the CSG is welcome to offer suggestions of future teaching staff, which may include some of its own members. And, TFI staff and Board will be making the final teaching selections.

7. FECD Contribution. The Board agreed with the proposal that 50% of this 10,000 USD contribution will be put in savings for future project related expenses, while the other 50% will be applied toward our "growing from the bottom" transition plan. Our intention is to look for a bilingual Spanish-speaking assistant as a new hire. Reva will draft an e-mail thank you note from the Board. We will also send a mail thank you.

8. Brief Update on Fluid Conflict Resolving Team. Astrid Schillings reported the team is growing. The original intention is still present: to help us live our values by offering a place where when we have difficulties within the Focusing community we can address them. At the same time, there is interest in meeting to develop a model for Focusing-Oriented International Conflict Resolution. This could be used both inside AND outside the Focusing community. It may be possible to obtain some grant funding for this. Soon Astrid will send more information out to the wider community to remind them that this group exists. Also, she will work with others in the group to create some protocol to help keep track of how the processes are being used and growing.

9. Distinguishing between National and International Efforts. The idea was raised again of possibly inviting the creation of a "North American Focusing Association," or "U.S. Focusing Association." This would be a way to separate out the national work from the international work, and allow TFI to spend more time on international work. The concern was raised that most of our income and membership comes from U.S., so it would be challenging to figure out how to do this and maintain both organizations. Suggestions were made to a) have this as an agenda item for next Board meeting; and b) to begin having some preliminary conversations about this so that we can bring a more developed proposal to a future Board meeting.

8. Items Carried to Next Meeting:

- A. Managing multiple fundraising efforts -- how to ensure that we are making sufficient distinctions between: a) TFI fundraising and b) Gene Gendlin's and Mary Hendrick's long-term retirement and immediate financial needs.
- B. Report on progress in forming Functional Committees.
- C. Distinguishing between national and international efforts.

9. Next Board Meeting. The next Board meeting will be via phone at 9:00 am Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on July 22, 2010.

Respectfully,

Harbert Rice