

## **Summary Minutes from The Focusing Institute Board Meeting October 15, 2009**

The Focusing Institute Board met via a telephone conference call on October 15, 2009 from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM Eastern Standard Time (USA).

**1. Decision to Publish Board Minutes.** The Board unanimously decided to publish a summary version of its meeting minutes on The Focusing Institute's website. This step reflects the Board's intent to make its actions and activities more transparent to the Focusing community; share its discussions and reports on ongoing issues that have come before the Board; and solicit input from members of the community on those issues. The Board agreed to publish this version of its minutes on a trial basis for six months, then review the effort.

**2. Agreement to Hire Part-Time Director.** The Board reached an agreement in principle to hire a part-time Director to work with Melinda Darer, the Institute's Managing Director, to help develop the Institute's International Programs, and to develop funding sources for the Institute's programs. This agreement is part of a larger effort to help create greater clarity around decision-making and internal operations so that we can more effectively raise funds for the Institute. The Board's next steps in this regard are to develop and review the responsibilities for this part-time position, and to secure funding in the range of 12,000 USD per year for the position.

**3. Financial Report.** Melinda Darer reported that the Institute's financial position improved in the just-ended (September) quarter due to a successful summer school and the successful registration of over 100 persons (from 15 countries) for the November Conference on Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapies. She projected a favorable final quarter provided the Institute releases its year-end fund raising letter in October/November, and donations at least equal last year's donations of 25,000 USD in December.

**4. Reports.** The Board received or discussed the following reports on ongoing projects.

**A. Palestine Focusing Project.** Harbert Rice reported on steps in developing a project to bring Focusing to Gaza-Palestine. In the UK, Jerry Conway is teaching Focusing to Dr. Mohamed Altawil, a Palestinian psychologist at the University of Hertfordshire. They are working out a plan for teaching Focusing in Gaza-Palestine with and through the Palestine Trauma Centre-UK, a newly formed UK-based NGO. This plan includes Jerry teaching and mentoring Mohamed in teaching Focusing, then mentoring Mohamed while he teaches others in Arabic in the UK. Included in that process is assembling and translating Focusing materials into Arabic. Jerry will put together and send on a small funding request to the Institute to carry this work forward. In Ireland, Mary Jennings has organized a workshop on November 28-29 in Dublin to have Rene Veugelers give a workshop on Focusing with Children. This workshop will act as a fund-raiser for the Gaza-Palestine project.

**B. Website Redesign Project.** Melinda Darer reported on the progress on the redesign. A

few highlights are: a new design for the inside pages has been created; a final design for the home page is being selected; new top and left side site navigation categories have been created; and a visual site map describing the new site architecture and showing the main sections of the site has been created and reviewed. Bill Silverman and Josiah Hincks are now evaluating various systems to manage the content in the new design.

Astrid Schillings reported on her evaluation and suggestions for presenting the trainers/coordinators in the website redesign. While the current listing of coordinators and trainers has worked well, Astrid recommended that all trainers and coordinators have their own web presence in their native language with an option to have an English version. An English-only listing is of limited use to someone searching for information on Focusing in his or her native (non-English) language.

**C. Wikipedia Project.** Rob Parker gave an update on the project to submit a revised article for the Focusing listing on Wikipedia, which will only provide links in the article to national or regional Focusing websites, and not to websites offering personal services. Rob will provide a copy of the posted article.

**D. Fund Raising.** Reva Bernstein reported on her exploration of online auctions as a possible additional way for the Institute to raise funds.

**5. Ongoing Projects.** The following is a partial listing of other ongoing projects or issues before the Board.

- A. Regional Organizations. Survey regional organizations and coordinators to better understand relationships and to move TFI towards a more global view in its activities.
- B. Overview Document. Lay out TFI's vision and activities in one document.
- C. Fund Raising. Improve and expand our donor funding.
- D. Website Redesign Donation Page. Gather information necessary for the design of a new easy-to-use donation page.
- E. Certification Project. Clarify and improve certification processes.
- F. Weeklong Training. Review the Institute's weeklong training and certification offering to increase participation.
- G. Partnerships. Improve and expand Focusing partnerships.

**6. Next Board Meeting.** The next Board meeting will be held on December 3 from 11:00 to 1:00 PM EST (USA).

Respectfully,

Harbert Rice