

## **Summary Minutes from The Focusing Institute Board Meeting      October 20, 2010**

The Focusing Institute Board met via a telephone conference call on 20 October 2010 from 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time (USA). Those present were: Reva Bernstein, Melinda Darer, Elena Frezza, Gene Gendlin, Mary Hendricks, Akira Ikemi, Pat Omidian, Harbert Rice, Astrid Schillings, and Rosa Zubizaretta.

**1. Presentation by Margie Herrick.** Margie Herrick is a VP of Resource Development with ACCION, an international non-profit organization providing micro-financing and micro-lending services. Margie is a professional fundraiser and is responsible for fund raising at ACCION. She has volunteered to help us with our fundraising efforts. ACCION raises most of its funds in the US as does the Focusing Institute.

In her talk to the Board, Margie informed us that the U.S. legal structure for non-profit organizations requires that 30% of an organization's funds be raised from donations. This includes individual donors, foundations, and corporate gifts. TFI is currently running at about 20%. Margie stressed that as Board members part of our fiduciary responsibility is to make sure that TFI has the resources to fulfill its mission.

We then discussed our planned fall donation campaign to ask our large donors to donate to a \$50,000 pool in pledges as a matching grant that we will use to ask for donations from the wider membership. We continued our discussion about the effects of doing extensive fundraising in other countries even though we are indeed an international organization and are working hard to help spread Focusing around the world. Coordinators in other countries, when asked about fundraising for TFI, have expressed concerns about "Where is all the money going?" and "What is TFI really doing?" Much of the work that the TFI staff does is not visible. We do a lot of coordinating... back-up... networking... encouraging, listening and support functions... thinking partnerships for work that others are doing. If we mention others' work without clarifying the kind of support role we are filling, we run the risk of looking like we are attempting to gain credit for others' work. Board members need help to be able to more easily answer these questions about TFI's roles and finances.

**2. Talking Points.** To help Board members answer questions about TFI (above) when they talk to donors, Harbert Rice and Melinda Darer will work on draft of "Talking Points" of "Where does the money come from?" and "Where does it go?" Melinda and Mary Hendricks will work on a draft of "What does TFI do?" that lists the type of coordinating that TFI does as well as its international projects. Akira Ikemi will be going to a gathering of Focusers in Japan in a week. We will try to provide a first draft of both of these items for his talk.

**3. Fund Raising Letter.** Harbert, Melinda, and Mary will work on edits to the current fundraising letter, possibly incorporating some of the above materials. Melinda will contact Board Members with regards to making calls to our large donors to invite their pledges to the "matching grant" part of our fundraising efforts.

**4. Children's Focusing.** We have had a two request from the Children's Focusing (CF) group: (1) A CF certification for "professional competence in Focusing" (below) and (2) a request from CF for TFI to host fund raising materials for the Gaza Project. To follow up on the second request Melinda will be have a conversation with the Children's

Focusing organization to clarify their relationship with TFI, and also to talk about timing the of their fundraising effort. Part of TFI's long-term goal after the current end-of-year fundraising is to identify "funding gaps" where we would look to fund raise for individual areas where TFI has the lead or is partnering with other groups.

**5. Professional Competence in Focusing.** Harbert will send out discussion information from the Community Focusing Lab to Board Members regarding the need for something like a field-specific "Professional Competence in Focusing" certification. This is related to a request that the Children's Focusing organization has made (above) – and also has much broader applications. The CF request is for a certification for training for level one Focusing plus 60 hours of Children's Focusing. There is a broader need than just for CF. There are many professional areas (nurses, teachers, etc...) where it would make sense, to offer a "professional certificate" that would be considerably less than the two-year "Focusing Trainer" (currently known as "Focusing Professional") yet would still be a valuable "certificate" for a professional to hold. Without it they are less likely to invest the time in a 60-hour training. Mary will follow up with Simon Kilner and the CF group to finalize the details of the CF request for certification from TFI.

There was a concern that if we are 'certifying' people after only having worked with them for 60 hours, and these are people working with children that we might incur some liability. However, it was clarified that this 'certificate' would be designed for people who are already certified within their professional area (certified teachers, or certified nurses, etc. etc.) so that means that we would only be taking on responsibility for the Focusing portion of their training

One of the things we have needed to sort out is how we could maintain our tradition of diversity, while at the same time meeting professional bodies' needs for standardization. One possible approach to doing so is to reframe our stance from "there is no standardized way to teach Focusing" to "there is no one standardized way to teach Focusing." This means that there could be many "standardized" ways to teach Focusing wherever those "standards" are necessary, useful or required by organizations with whom we seek to work to train their members.

**6. Next Board Meeting.** Melinda will be checking with everyone on possible dates for the next Board meeting.

**7. Items Carried Over to Our Next Meeting.**

- A. Reports on progress with the Functional Committees.
- B. Update on the progress of the Focusing Partnership Program (FPP) committee.
- C. Update on the plans for the May 2011 Board Retreat before the International.

**8. Next Board Meeting.** The next Board meeting will be via phone at 9:00 am Eastern Standard Time (EST) on a date to be determined for late November.

Respectfully,

Harbert Rice