

A Non-Official Report from The International Focusing Institute (TIFI): Some Highlights from the Past 5 Years

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When Gordon suggested offering an overview of things happening in the TIFI world, my first thoughts were – there have been so many changes in the past 5 years, where to start? This brought me to the idea that it might be helpful to start off with a summary overview of some of the main activities and accomplishments of the past 5 years.

After Gene and Mary Gendlin resigned their administrative leadership positions in The Focusing Institute at the end of 2013, Catherine Torpey was named as the new Executive Director. At about this time it was decided that in addition to the Board of Directors there would be an additional leadership structure, the International Leadership Council (ILC).

The ILC was intended to be a body of leaders from the Focusing community who would not have the legal and financial responsibilities of the Board and at the same time bring more awareness to issues relating to the needs of the international Focusing community. It was determined at the outset that although the ILC would report to the Board, it was hoped that members of each body would view the other as colleagues and support one another. Members of the Board and ILC are all selected by a nomination process that can be read about on the ILC webpage, focusing.org/ilc. For more information about the Board, see focusing.org/board.

One of our first responsibilities was the design of a Mission Statement and Strategic Plan for the Institute. This process lasted a few years, with regular meetings of a smaller Strategic Planning group composed of representatives from the Board and ILC, who worked out details that were then brought to the larger groups. We also had a number of in-person and online joint meetings of the Board and ILC to work on various aspects of the Plan. First the Mission Statement, and then the Strategic Plan were also shared with the Coordinators, and then with members of the Institute for comments and input.

The Focusing Institute Mission Statement:

Why 'Focusing' ?

Everyone has the potential to access and live from their unique bodily-felt knowing. Focusing, a process grounded in experiential listening, is a powerful way of interacting with this body-felt knowing that leads to mutual respect, authenticity and compassion. In this way, Focusing fosters peace and harmony in the world.

Who We Are

The Focusing Institute is an international, cross-cultural organization dedicated to supporting individuals and groups world-wide who are practicing, teaching and developing Focusing and its underlying philosophy.

What We Do

The Focusing Institute is committed to the promotion of Focusing and encourages a wide variety of Focusing-based applications and educational methodologies. It also serves as a catalyst for Focusing research, an information hub and custodian of Focusing-related literature, and provides physical and virtual meeting spaces for education, dialogue and interaction. In these and other ways, the Focusing Institute is committed to sharing and advancing the work of its founder, Eugene Gendlin, and those who have built on his legacy.

Perhaps more relevant than the various projects the ILC has worked on is the fact that we are a team devoted as much as possible to 'felt sensing' and taking into account different perspectives of the Focusing community as well as the overall spirit of the community.

Based on the importance of Focusing training to our mission of bringing Focusing to more people world-wide, the ILC recognized a need for looking into issues relating to certification. It was decided that a first step would be to address the process of naming new Certifying Coordinators. Begun in 2016, this project looked at many of the very different ways that Coordinators are now being trained world-wide, and considered what processes might be most helpful to best support Focusing Trainers in taking on the responsibilities of the Certifying Coordinator. A pilot phase began in January, 2018.

Other important milestones for the Focusing Institute included a name change to the International Focusing Institute, the creation of a Membership Committee charged with addressing membership benefits and creating new offerings for members, the creation of a memorial website for Gendlin, eugenegendlin.com, extensive work on a revised updated TIFI website, a Felt Sense conference, the beginning of the Gendlin Center for Research focusing.org/gendlincenter and much much more.

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