



THE INTERNATIONAL  
FOCUSING INSTITUTE

*carrying life and thought forward*

# STRATEGIC PLAN

June 2017

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*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 bodily-felt knowing that leads to mutual respect, authenticity, and compassion. In this way, Focusing fosters peace and harmony in the world.*

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*Focusing is a therapeutic and personal growth process developed by University of Chicago philosopher and psychologist, Eugene Gendlin. Focusing is set apart from other methods of inner awareness by a quality of engaged accepting attention, oriented toward accessing one's "felt senses"—preverbal, bodily-experienced meanings. It involves holding a kind of open, non-judging attention to an internal knowing which is directly experienced but is not yet in words. Focusing can be used for personal and professional problem solving. It can, among other things, be used to become clear on what one feels or wants, to obtain new insights when options seem limited, and to stimulate creative change in any situation.*



# MISSION STATEMENT

*(This Mission Statement is the result of conversations among the Executive Director, Board of Trustees and the International Leadership Council. An earlier version was sent out to the worldwide Focusing community in spring of 2015, and feedback from the community was incorporated into this final 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 International Focusing Institute is an international, cross-cultural organization dedicated to supporting individuals and groups world-wide who are teaching, developing and practicing Focusing and its underlying philosophy.

## **What We Do**

The International 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 International Focusing Institute is committed to sharing and advancing the work of its founder, Eugene Gendlin, and those who have built on his legacy.





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## The goals

This plan is based on these four goals, as articulated by the Board of Trustees and the International Leadership Council:

1. Build an organization that has the capacity to keep Focusing alive and available to everyone
2. Preserve the Integrity of Focusing and foster its development
3. Catalyze the development and expand the world-wide availability of programs and applications that are vital, responsive and contextually relevant
4. Raise the visibility of The International Focusing Institute and effectively communicate the benefits of bodily felt-sensing as a way for people to carry life forward

## The plan

The plan presented in this document represents high aspirations for The International Focusing Institute. Our four goals articulate our dream for the Institute to live into its full potential as a continuing force for the promulgation of Focusing in the world. We seek to integrate Focusing and its underlying philosophy into the many ways that people live and work because we have observed the extraordinary power that it has to bring greater wisdom and compassion into the world.

The Institute has strong human assets. There are over 2400 members in over 50 countries. Of those, about 1,300 are certified by the Institute and almost 600 are in training toward certification. There are 207 Coordinators (also referred to as Certifying Coordinators or CCs) and 50 Coordinators-in-Training (CNTs). Coordinators have the power to recommend individuals for certification; what other role or roles they play in the Institute is an area for clarification going forward (see Strategy 2A). One of the great strengths of the Institute is that the Coordinators as well as other members are very invested in Focusing and the Institute and many seek to play an active role in shaping it. Focusers worldwide are promoting Focusing through training, personal development, organizing projects, donating money or other resources.

The small size of the staff in relation to the activities, hopes and expectations of Focusers worldwide is one of the Institute's central challenges. There are only two full-time employees and several part-time or contract workers. Finding a way to ensure an increase in the number of Focusers who become members of the International Focusing Institute and annually maintain their membership could ensure that the Institute will have the resources it needs going forward to serve its members and its



mission. There are many more Focusers in the world than are members of the Institute. A key to the long-term success of the Institute will be in being in relationship with those Focusers who are not yet members.

## Finances

Thanks to the excellent management of the Institute's resources over the years, financial resources were available to help the Institute through the last three years, in which the economics of the Institute have changed. In the transition from being Founder-led to developing a more professional, sustainable leadership model, staff needs have increased while income from annual events such as the Focusing Institute Summer School have decreased. Donations to the Institute have also diminished. Happily, membership numbers and income are increasing, and new online programming has been explored and offers potential new streams of income. The Institute seeks to explore with its members how to bring the interests of those teaching Focusing and the Institute into better alignment, so that when the Institute does well, so do its teachers, and when the teachers do well, the Institute benefits. The redesign of the website is a key to realizing this goal, as a major goal of the redesign is to make the offerings of our members the central offerings of the Institute, and to end any sense of competition for students between the Institute and its members. Other new, mutually-beneficial models may emerge as the role of Coordinators in relation to the Institute is explored, and as we find models for right relationship with the many emerging Focusing interest groups and national or regional bodies.

## Recent History<sup>i</sup>

Transition from Founder-led organization to a new era

*Note: Just prior to publication of this document, our Founder, Eugene T. Gendlin passed away. More information is available at [www.eugenegendlin.com](http://www.eugenegendlin.com).*

The Focusing Institute was founded in Chicago in 1979<sup>ii</sup> and currently has its offices in Nyack, New York. As of the beginning of 2017, there are over 2,400 members in the Institute.

In December 2013, The Focusing Institute went through a major shift when its Founder, Eugene Gendlin, resigned as the President of the Board of Directors. At the same time, his wife, Mary Hendricks-Gendlin, who was his long-time collaborator and long-time Director of the Institute as well as its Vice President, also resigned. The Managing Director, Melinda Darer, and Kye Nelson, who was co-Executive Director with Mary Hendricks-Gendlin, also resigned at that time.



A temporary Board was put in place by Gene and Mary to manage the transition<sup>iii</sup>. During the first half of 2014, the temporary Board hired an Executive Director (Catherine Torpey) and appointed a new Board<sup>iv</sup> who were chosen by seeking input from the worldwide Focusing community. The temporary board also created a new body, the International Leadership Council<sup>v</sup>, in order to institutionalize an international component within the leadership structure. The Executive Director, Board<sup>vi</sup> and International Leadership Council<sup>vii</sup> were all in place by the summer of 2014, and a new era had begun.

From the summer of 2014 until the summer of 2015, the Board set its attention to urgent issues, including the need for the Institute to find a new "right relationship" with Gene and Mary Gendlin. The primary goal for the International Leadership Council (ILC) was to begin discerning its identity and role in relation to the Board, the

community and the Coordinators. The new Executive Director worked closely with the Board and ILC, and she reached out to the worldwide Focusing community to cultivate relationships with Focusers of all stripes, worldwide. A first priority was to rebound from the economic hit that the Institute underwent in the transition.

## About Our Planning Process



In order to take stock of the current state of affairs and to plan for the future, the leadership formed a Strategic Planning Committee, comprising the Executive Director, two members of the Board and two members of the ILC. Its charge was to advise the Board on a planning process; it recommended that a strategic planning consultant be hired. It vetted candidates; by April 2015, the Board had engaged Joe Colletti<sup>viii</sup> to lead the Institute in a planning process.

Joe met with the Board, ILC and Executive Director via videoconference during which a mission statement was developed (see next section to read the mission statement). Joe then led the two bodies in two intensive days of strategic planning in Seattle, Washington in July, 2015 where several goals of the Institute took shape. This meeting took place just prior to the International Focusing Conference. The work that the Board and ILC had done was then presented to conference attendees for their reaction and input. There was a great deal of participation from attendees at open sessions. Their feedback was collected and sorted.

Upon returning from Seattle, the Board and the Executive Director invited Rosa Zubizarreta to lead the Board, ILC and Executive Director in some “strategic conversations” in early 2016. The work in Seattle had been productive, but the short time period had not allowed for enough time to “felt sense” into issues. Rosa spoke to members of the Board and ILC individually, and spoke frequently with the Executive Director. Through April 2016, she also led a number of joint online meetings with the Board, ILC and Executive Director.

### Coming to consensus

After the guidance of Joe Colletti and then Rosa Zubizarreta, enough conversation had taken place so that it was now possible for the work that had begun in Seattle could be brought to completion. Small groups of members of the Board and ILC, along with the Executive Director, had concurrently been refining the goals and strategies as originally defined in Seattle, and incorporating the feedback from the community as gathered in person and online. Once a month for four months, the Executive Director led the Board and ILC in joint meetings to go over the revised document. The Strategic Plan presented here incorporates all of the wisdom and “felt sensing” of those many conversations.



## How the Plan is Organized

Below is the plan, organized under the four over-arching GOALS. Under each goal are a number of STRATEGIES intended to reach that goal, and under each strategy are a number of ACTIONS to implement. The actions are organized by how quickly we anticipate they can reasonably be accomplished. Each action is either "TARGET 2017/2018," "TARGET 2020" or "TARGET 2022." These are defined as follows:

*TARGET 2017/2018: These items are most urgent to accomplish, or are already in process, or are easily accomplished, or are important to do now so that other priorities can happen in future years. The intention is that by the end of 2018, we can say that these items have been successfully accomplished.*

*TARGET 2020 ACTIONS: We might begin work on these actions soon, but our realistic deadline is to have them accomplished by the year 2020. Depending on the item, two or more years are needed to accomplish it, either because certain steps must happen before it can be accomplished, or because limits on Institute resources require us to concentrate first on more urgent priorities. The intention is that by the end of 2020, we can say that these items have been successfully accomplished.*

*TARGET 2022 ACTIONS: We might begin work on these actions soon, but our realistic deadline is to have them accomplished by the year 2022. Depending on the item, several years might be required before it can reasonably be expected to happen, either because something else (which itself will take significant time) must happen before it can be accomplished, or because limits on Institute resources require us to concentrate first on other priorities. The intention is that by the end of 2022, we can say that these items have been successfully accomplished.*

## Priorities in 2017- 2018

The Board of Trustees, considering the totality of the aspirations set forth in this Strategic Plan, has defined the priorities for 2017-2018, in light of the resources currently at our disposal.

1. Redesign of the website (Found in Strategy 1A and Strategy 3A)
2. Update the method of appointing Coordinators to ensure quality and accountability for the future (Found in Strategy 2A). *Note that this process is underway and is being led by the International Leadership Council. Information can be found at [www.focusing.org/ilc](http://www.focusing.org/ilc).*
3. Initiate Legacy project to document our history and plan for appropriately honoring Gene Gendlin (Found in Strategy 4A)



# THE STRATEGIC PLAN

## Priorities in 2017

1. Redesign of the website (Found in Strategy 1A and Strategy 3A)
2. Update the method of appointing Coordinators to ensure quality and accountability for the future (Found in Strategy 2A) *Note that this process is underway and is being led by the International Leadership Council. Information can be found at [www.focusing.org/ilc](http://www.focusing.org/ilc).*
3. Initiate Legacy project to document our history and plan for appropriately honoring Gene Gendlin (Found in Strategy 4A)

## GOAL 1: Build an organization that has the capacity to keep Focusing alive and available to everyone

*STRATEGY 1A: Become the hub that connects and supports world-wide regional organizations and builds a sense of shared values and identity*

ACTIONS	<u>TARGET 2017/2018 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 1A</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ <b>Develop an interactive, multi-lingual website (equivalent action found in Strategy 3A)</b></li></ul>
	<u>TARGET 2020 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 1A</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ <b>Create a mechanism for resolving complaints or conflicts within the Focusing community</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ <i>See also Strategy 2B ("Create a system to allow concerns about the suitability of a teacher, practice or program to be heard and addressed.")</i></li></ul></li><li>◆ <b>Pursue mutually beneficial relationships with national, regional or special interest Focusing organizations (such as the British Focusing Association and the Biospiritual Institute). Develop a model or models by which such bodies to have a clearly defined relationship with the Institute.</b></li></ul>
	<u>TARGET 2022 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 1A</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ <b>Explore the question of whether having a separate US Focusing organization would strengthen the Institute and help it better fulfill its mission.</b></li></ul>



## **STRATEGY 1B: Ensure that individual membership is meaningful and attractive**

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>TARGET 2017/2018 IN STRATEGY 1B</b>
	<b>◆ Solicit meaningful input and engagement from membership frequently and in multiple ways</b>
	◦ Seek a broad range of members from a wide variety of cultures, languages and Focusing styles on committees, International Leadership Council and Board of Trustees. Seek input from the widest possible range of members on nominations and other decisions which affect the membership
	<b>◆ Establish a Membership Committee for the purpose of serving and engaging members</b>
	◦ Define benefits and responsibilities of membership for professional (certified) members and those seeking certification and promulgate those
	◦ Define benefits for engagement of those not seeking certification and promulgate those
◦ Act as a conduit of information from the Institute to its members as well as conveying opportunities for engagement with it	
◦ Engage non-English speakers in articulating how the benefits and responsibilities of membership might be adapted in their cultural context	
◦ Offer opportunities for members to connect with one another for mutual support and learning	
<b>◆ Offer continuous professional development (continuing education) opportunities (and credits, as appropriate) to help members gain or refresh Focusing and TAE skills.</b>	
◦ Seek credentialing to be able to offer Continuing Education Units (Continuing Professional Development)	
<b>◆ Develop means for members to connect with one another in their own languages (ex: Focusing Highlights International series of classes)</b>	
<b>◆ Offer opportunities for certified teachers to teach</b>	
◦ Short, one-time workshops (in person or online) which allow them to raise their profile (ex: Focusing Highlights series of classes)	
◦ Opportunities to teach as part of a larger course or conference (ex: being teachers in the 2-year FOT course or at the Weeklong)	

**STRATEGY 1C: Ensure that the Board and International Leadership Council (ILC) have clear roles and responsibilities and work well together, within the understanding that the Board of Trustees' role is to ensure the overall health and long-term sustainability of the organization, while the ILC's role<sup>x</sup> is to ensure that the organization is responsive to the expressed needs and desires of the international membership.**

TARGET 2017/2018 IN STRATEGY 1C

ACTIONS

- ◆ **Practice ongoing assessment of the roles of the ILC and the Board through periodic reviews.** [See footnote for the ILC’s elaboration of its roles and functions, with the Board’s response.]<sup>1</sup>
  - *The Board and ILC will meet jointly at least three times a year.*
  - *They will make every effort to meet in person at least twice a year (normally in conjunction with an international conference)*
  - *During the first quarter of each calendar year, in a joint meeting, the Board and ILC will engage in a substantive, felt-sensing conversation regarding the status of relations between the Board and ILC and whether their respective roles in the Institute need clarification or change*
- ◆ **Create portfolios for individual Board members in areas such as fundraising, program development, personnel.** Consider adding portfolios for ILC members as well.
- ◆ **Create a standing Nominating Committee which will continue to seek community input of the worldwide membership in the selection of Board and ILC members**
- ◆ **Use Felt Sensing at every stage of decision-making, seeking consensus between the Board and ILC as much as possible.**

**STRATEGY 1D: Ensure that there are adequate resources (staffing and finances) to carry out the activities set forth in this plan**

TARGET 2017/2018 IN STRATEGY 1D

ACTIONS

- ◆ **Make reasonable income projections for the coming 3 to 5 years, including new possible sources of income**
  - *Consider whether the website offers ways to generate a reasonable and fair income for the Institute*
  - *Weigh the value of which activities generate the most income and to what degree they further our mission*
- ◆ **Create a Board liaison on personnel, to work with the Executive Director on staffing decisions**
- ◆ **Create a study group to do “benchmarking”**
  - *Explore similar organizations to analyze their financial models as possible models for the Institute*
- ◆ **Create a projection over the coming 3 years of anticipated staffing needs and projected costs**
  - *Designate adequate time for the Executive Director and staff to be involved in fundraising. Assess value of hiring a fundraiser or fundraising consultant.*

TARGET 2020 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 1D

- ◆ **Consider Membership fee structure, including possible level for Coordinators in Training**

## GOAL 2: Preserve the Integrity of Focusing and foster its development

### STRATEGY 2A Clarify the roles and responsibilities of Coordinators

ACTIONS	<p><u>TARGET 2017/2018 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 2A</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Update the method of appointing Coordinators to ensure quality and accountability for the future.</b> NOTE: The ILC's proposal for a new method of naming Coordinators is available at <a href="http://www.focusing.org/ilc">www.focusing.org/ilc</a></li> </ul> <p><u>TARGET 2020 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 2A</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Engage in worldwide conversation about current understandings of Coordinators' roles and responsibilities.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Determine whether the roles of training and certifying teachers should be separated out from other roles</li> <li>◦ Develop a mutually beneficial financial relationship, so that when the Institute does well, it is because the Coordinators (as well as other Certified Focusing Professionals, and any Focusing bodies organized by them) are doing well; and that when the Institute does well, they benefit</li> <li>◦ Clarify whether or not any Coordinator or group of Coordinators has a geographical "territory"</li> <li>◦ Clarify ways in which Coordinators can and should give input in the direction of the Institute</li> <li>◦ Consider whether the title of "Coordinator" is the most appropriate one; whether it best describes the role, responsibility and function</li> <li>◦ Consider by what means the Institute determines when there is a vacancy or a need for another Coordinator and whether there is any limit to how many Coordinators are wanted or needed</li> <li>◦ Other topics that emerge from Coordinators and others</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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### STRATEGY 2B Ensure that certification through the Institute is meaningful by ensuring the quality and ongoing development of Focusing teachers

ACTIONS	<p><u>TARGET 2017/2018 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 2B</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Offer educational resources and opportunities for professional development of all Certified Focusing Professionals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Collect and disseminate diverse models of teaching Focusing (curricula) that can act as a resource for teachers to use, and to help teachers develop their own curricula</li> <li>◦ Offer resources to teachers to help them attract students and clients to the services they offer, and maximize their potential to earn income from teaching Focusing</li> <li>◦ Encourage continuous mutual learning of certified Trainers, Coordinators and other Focusing professionals, including best practices in pedagogy and curriculum development</li> <li>◦ Provide and/or coordinate online supervision sessions of Coordinators in Training by various Coordinators [Note that this reflects the intention of the ILC's proposal on the naming of Coordinators]</li> <li>◦ Offer web-based workshops and/or in-person workshops covering the qualities necessary for a Coordinator as outlined in the ILC's document on the naming of Coordinators</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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TARGET 2020 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 2B

- ◆ **Ensure that the system of certification by the Institute is rigorous, fair and transparent.**
  - Engage Coordinators and Certified Focusing Practitioners (“Trainers”) in a thorough, world-wide study to document existing practices in training and certification in a wide range of cultures and styles
  - Use information gained about existing practice to create guidelines which will ensure that certification is rigorous, fair, transparent and honors diverse ways of teaching Focusing
- ◆ **Clarify how certified teachers remain in good standing with the Institute**
  - Examples include maintaining the spirit and ethos of Focusing; adhering to a high standard of teaching; paying their membership dues; continuing professional development
- ◆ **Clarify (and simplify as possible) the types of certification offered through the Institute and ensure that titles given conform with requirements in the countries in which they are given. (For example, the meaning of “Therapist” or “Counselor” has specific meanings which differ from country to country.)**
- ◆ **Create a system to allow concerns about the suitability of a teacher, practice or program to be heard and addressed.**
  - Determine if this can be incorporated into the conflict resolution process (under Strategy 1A) or must be separate



## GOAL 3:

**Catalyze the development and expand the world-wide availability of programs and applications that are vital, responsive and contextually relevant**

*STRATEGY 3A Promote offerings from worldwide members of The International Focusing Institute (including Coordinators, Trainers and other individuals or regional bodies)*

ACTIONS

### TARGET 2017/2018 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 3A

- **Re-design website to make it simple to upload offerings (Equivalent to Strategy 1A)**
  - Actively solicit members to upload their offerings to the redesigned website

*STRATEGY 3B Ensure that Institute-sponsored programs meet the needs of the worldwide community*

ACTIONS

### TARGET 2017/2018 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 3B

- **Review existing and potential programs sponsored or supported by the Institute**
  - Determine viability of programs based on analysis of financial, social and other factors
  - Determine best way to offer support for programs not sponsored by the Institute
  - Define clear objectives for existing and potential programs
  - Identify whether there are unmet needs that could best be met by new Institute sponsored programs
- **Arrange courses so that they meet requirements for Continuing Education Units (CEU's)/ Continuing Professional Development credit (CPD).**

### TARGET 2020 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 3B

**Expand fundraising for scholarship funds, cultivating corporate sponsorship as appropriate to ensure that people from all over the world and from all economic levels can attend Institute programs.**

## **GOAL 4: Raise the visibility of The International Focusing Institute and effectively communicate the benefits of bodily felt-sensing as a way for people to carry life forward**

*STRATEGY 4A Promote and support specific applications of Focusing and TAE in education at all levels: psychology, behavioral health, social work, social action, the arts, conflict resolution and other promising fields*

### TARGET 2017/2018 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 4A

#### **◆ Initiate a "Legacy Project"**

- *Generate videos and articles about the Pioneers of Focusing and Focusing's early history*
- *Plan for honoring Gene Gendlin appropriately upon his passing*
- *Create a Gendlin prize to encourage doctoral theses which make substantial use of Gendlin's work*
- *Raise funds to support these endeavors*

### TARGET 2020 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 4A

#### **◆ Create a committee for institutional outreach which:**

- *Identifies Focusers who can make a bridge between Focusing and other disciplines*
- *Articulates what we have to offer to other groups, and what their needs might be (Examples of such groups are Non-Violent Communication, Alexander Technique Teachers, Mindfulness organizations like Mind and Life, and process studies institutes)*
- *Initiate conversations with identified groups to explore prototyping activities in areas of mutual interest*

#### **◆ Assign an individual or committee to identify publications of various fields where articles on Focusing or the Philosophy of the Implicit/TAE could be published.**

#### **◆ Thoughtfully consider the future role of the Folio through the creation of a committee which will determine its place in publishing articles regarding Focusing.**

#### **◆ Convene those who are experts in the Philosophy of the Implicit to strengthen their mutual intellectual and academic work, and to plan for how to disseminate POI in academic circles through journals, symposia and other means.**

ACTIONS

**STRATEGY 4B Foster research that validates the effectiveness and relevance of Focusing, Thinking at the Edge (TAE) and Gendlin's philosophy**

ACTIONS	<p><u>TARGET 2020 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 4B</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Create an interdisciplinary scientific committee</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Set parameters for which research projects will be fostered or, if completed, will be uploaded to the Institute's website</li> <li>◦ Review items to be posted (based on those parameters) in a research corner on the Institute's website</li> <li>◦ Compile the research that is already done or being done and organize it to make it easily findable through the Institute's website</li> <li>◦ Determine whether there is a charge for access to the research information through the Institute's site</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Create and support forums for academic researchers to identify key research topics and facilitate rigorous research studies including publication of findings</b></li> <li>• <b>Investigate sources of funding for research into Focusing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Assist researchers to obtain grants and donations to fund their work</li> <li>◦ Obtain funding to award fellowships to graduate level researchers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Offer or encourage online forums with instructions about how to do good research, to encourage or mentor people to do research, or to participate in ongoing research projects as needed.</b></li> </ul>
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**STRATEGY 4C Develop 3 or 4 tactical campaigns with the aim of creating greater awareness and understanding of Focusing and TAE through multiple channels such as websites, mainstream media and social media**

ACTIONS	<p><u>TARGET 2017/2018 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 4C</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Continue to publish newsletter every other month with articles and information about Focusing and the Institute</b></li> </ul>
	<p><u>TARGET 2020 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 4C</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Find and use accessible language to eliminate barriers to understanding Focusing/Felt Sensing and its benefits, including describing how it is different from more familiar terms like meditation</b></li> </ul>
	<p><u>TARGET 2022 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 4C</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Create and disseminate a set of resources including short videos featuring demonstrations, interviews, success stories and brief writings to give the general public a sense of what Focusing and Gendlin's philosophy are</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Have a group of Coordinators and a group of philosophers and a group of trainers work together to agree on some language</li> <li>◦ Interview people to find vignettes and lived examples of how Focusing has changed their lives (testimonials) -- collect many voices from all over the world</li> <li>◦ Ask Focusers to submit vignettes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

*STRATEGY 4D Highlight innovative work worldwide that expands the relevance of Focusing and Felt Sensing in all areas of life*

ACTIONS	<u>TARGET 2020 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 4D</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ <b>Collect and translate the work of existing teachers which demonstrates a solid theoretical foundation in Focusing, translating the work in several languages and making it widely available</b></li></ul>
	<u>TARGET 2022 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 4D</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ <b>Feature innovative work on our website and in our newsletters and social media</b></li><li>◆ <b>Support organizers of Focusing conferences to highlight areas of innovation</b></li><li>◆ <b>Seek out opportunities (such as non-Focusing events and conferences) for promoting Focusing and other Felt Sensing applications</b></li></ul>

*STRATEGY 4E Develop the Pause for Peace program to bring Focusing to people not served by fee-for-service programs*

ACTIONS	<u>TARGET 2017/2018 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 4E</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ <b>Act as fiscal sponsor of the Nuevos Rumbos Focusing program in El Salvador</b></li><li>◆ <b>Work with Palestine Trauma Centre in the United Kingdom and Gaza to expand Focusing to Arabic-speaking people</b></li></ul>
	<u>TARGET 2020 ACTIONS IN STRATEGY 4E</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ <b>Develop a committee of people to oversee the Pause for Peace program as a way to honor Mary Hendricks-Gendlin's legacy and make Focusing available to all.</b></li><li>◆ <b>Leverage the work of successful projects to promote principles of Focusing, such as The Pause and Clearing a Space</b></li></ul>



## PLANS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

A Strategic Plan Implementation Committee shall be formed, which will meet monthly. The Executive Director, one member of the International Leadership Council and one member of the Board of Trustees will be on the committee, as well as other members of the Focusing community. This committee will report quarterly to the Board of Trustees on progress.

Its first task shall be to operationalize the immediate goals with clear deadlines and metrics.



## CONCLUSION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan is the result of a great effort on the part of a large number of people from throughout the Focusing community. The Institute is grateful for the patient and wise leadership of Joe Colletti and Rosa Zubizarreta, and for all those who contributed to this process by participating during the International Focusing Conferences in Seattle and Cambridge, or who responded online to requests for input. The process has been key to helping the Board of Trustees and the International Leadership Council come to a common vision which also honors differences in perspectives and hopes for the future.

The aspirations outlined in this document are rooted in the profound sense of meaning that those who practice Focusing have derived from the practice. Many of us harbor deep gratitude to the Founder of the Institute, Eugene T. (Gene) Gendlin, for having made it his life's work to elaborate and teach a philosophy which has



profoundly affected so many lives. In the words of one member of the International Leadership Council, "Gene hasn't just offered a new system, but went *beyond* the system. Through his philosophy we can face complexity in ways which are utterly new.<sup>x</sup> We hold him in the deepest affection and love. We are also grateful for the many dedicated years of service that his wife and collaborator, Mary Hendricks-Gendlin, gave to the Institute and to Focusing. She remains a true inspiration, and we miss her

deeply. Melinda Darer, as Managing Director for many years, left the Institute in outstanding financial health and her tremendous work for many years is deeply appreciated. Kye Nelson's service as co-Director with Mary toward the end of Mary's tenure at the Institute was invaluable, as is her continuing close work with Gene as a trusted advisor and friend. In "the Chicago days" (in the 1980's and early 1990's), the Institute would not have come to be without the early leadership of Doralee Grindler-Katonah. And of course, Mary McGuire, in her role as Director throughout those years, put in place the basic structure of the Institute and its certification process. All of the dreams we have for the future are based on the legacy of these fine people. Many more names could be added to the list, including those who have served on previous boards or taught in our flagship program, the Advanced and Certification Weeklong.



This plan will be revisited over time, as we learn through implementing it, and as external circumstances may alter what we sense is possible and desirable.

*"Experience is a myriad richness. We think more than we can say. We feel more than we can think. We live more than we can feel. And there is much more still." (Eugene T. Gendlin)*

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>i</sup> For a timeline of the Institute's history, please visit this page of our website: <http://www.focusing.org/timeline.asp>
- <sup>ii</sup> A previous version of this document used the date 1985 – the year of legal incorporation in the state of Illinois -- as the year of our founding. We have revised this document to honor the reality that the Institute began several years prior to its legal incorporation. At times, the date 1986 has been used, reflecting the fact that the 1985 legal incorporation was realized only a couple of weeks prior to the beginning of the new year.
- <sup>iii</sup> The temporary Board was: Robert Lee (USA), Jerry Conway (UK), Nina Joy Lawrence (USA) and Rob Foxcroft (UK). Jerry resigned at the end of December, citing personal reasons, and was replaced by Cynthia Callsen (USA). In March 2014, Jane Quayle was brought on informally, not as a member of the Board, but as a facilitator. Nina Joy Lawrence resigned in April, also citing personal reasons. She was not replaced.
- <sup>iv</sup> The Board appointed in summer 2014 was: David Rome (USA), Mary Jennings (Ireland), Kevin Krycka (USA), Jim Iberg (USA), Jane Quayle (Australia) and Susan Lennox (USA)
- <sup>v</sup> The first International Leadership Council, appointed in summer 2014, was: Sergio Lara (Chile), Akira Ikemi (Japan), Hejo Feuerstein (Germany), Marine de Fremenville (Canada), Ruth Hirsch (Israel) and Barbara McGavin (UK)
- <sup>vi</sup> The Board's webpage can be found at [www.focusing.org/board](http://www.focusing.org/board)
- <sup>vii</sup> The International Leadership Council's webpage can be found at [www.focusing.org/ilc](http://www.focusing.org/ilc)
- <sup>viii</sup> Joe Colletti is a member of the board of the Biospiritual Institute and an experienced strategic planner. This is a YouTube video of Joe, talking about his methodology <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14mRSLWawRs>
- <sup>ix</sup> Over several months in 2016, the International Leadership Council worked with the Board and Executive Director, as well as on its own, to develop the document “Roles and Functions of the International Leadership Council,” reproduced here in full. This simple statement represents many thoughtful, felt-sensing conversations as the ILC sought to discover its place in the leadership of The International Focusing Institute. The document went through several iterations. On September 5, 2016, the Board gave its official response to the ILC’s document (shown below the ILC’s statement), stating that although there remained issues of governance to clarify, “*we feel good about moving forward on the basis of the document you have crafted.*”

## ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

### **The International Leadership Council (ILC)**

**The ILC is an official body of The Focusing Institute. It operates within the overall strategic and budgetary framework set by the Board in consultation with the ILC. It generates its own roles and functions as well as visions of the governance of TFI, as it engages in a continuing process of attending to the voices of the worldwide Focusing community. In consultation with the Board of Trustees and the Executive Director, the ILC can form committees to carry out the functions and policies it generates.**

### **Current Issues of the ILC**

**One of the roles that the ILC has generated for itself is examining the certification process.**

**Another issue that the ILC is engaged with is examining its own identity, starting with how its members are selected, how many there need be, and for how long the terms should be.**

*Approved with this response from board September 5, 2016:*

*Dear members of the International Leadership Council:*

*We, the Board, have discussed your proposal on the Roles and Responsibilities of the International Leadership Council (ILC) at board meetings as well as at joint meetings with you. We have appreciated the chance to discuss this with you and to recognize where we are in agreement and where there are differences in visions for the Institute. There remain questions of governance to be clarified; nevertheless we feel good about moving forward on the basis of the document you have crafted. We look forward to a dynamic, collaborative relationship as we thoughtfully move forward, shaping each step to further our transformative mission to make Focusing available to the world.*

- <sup>x</sup> For a biography of Eugene Gendlin, see [http://www.focusing.org/bios/gendlin\\_bio.html](http://www.focusing.org/bios/gendlin_bio.html). Note: since this document was written, Gene Gendlin passed away and a website with his obituary and other remembrances was created at [www.eugenegendlin.com](http://www.eugenegendlin.com).