



THE INTERNATIONAL FOCUSING INSTITUTE

Building on the work of Eugene T. Gendlin since 1979

Board of Trustees

MINUTES
October 8, 2021
Online

Documents sent via email prior to meeting

From Nelle:

- Agenda
- Template for Board Minutes
- ED Evaluation Process
- Paula's Comments on ED Evaluation Process
- Policy on Gendlin Center
- Policy on Whistleblowers

From Catherine:

- Suggested edits for the minutes
- Regular board report
- Regular website report
- Mid-year performance review
- Goodwill calls suggested script
- Board policy on Gendlin Center (this is the one we worked with in the meeting)

PRESENT: Nelle Moffett, Florentina Sassoli, Darryl Commings, Evelyn Fendler-Lee, Peter Afford, Paula Nowick, Catherine Torpey

I. ATTUNEMENT Nelle

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Minutes from previous meeting were approved.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S EVALUATION PROCESS

Peter Afford reviewed the long and short versions of the draft ED Evaluation Process. The Board approved the short version with Paula's suggestions included.

IV. DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Board concurred with Evelyn's recommendation that the two diversity statements (one on the Diversity of Teaching Approaches to Focusing and the other on Diversity of People/Membership), require several more months of consultation before being presented publicly. It is important to work on both statements simultaneously in order to coordinate their messages and post them simultaneously.

V. BOARD'S REVIEW OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S PROGRESS REPORT

The Board reviewed Catherine's detailed report on progress to date on the Board's list of priorities. The Board asked clarifying questions and commented favorably on the format of this first mid-year progress report. One suggestion was to include past year's comparisons on the monthly Dashboard. The Board was also very pleased to have a mid-year progress report so that there is time to make any clarifications and/or course corrections.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT

The Board voted to approve.

VII. GENDLIN CENTER POLICY

DECISION: The Board approved the policy with the amendment that the phrase, "head of the committee" be removed from the draft. The approved policy:

GENDLIN RESEARCH CENTER FORMATION IN MEMORY OF GENE

Gene Gendlin, the founder of The International Focusing Institute, died on May 1, 2017. In its meeting of May 10, 2017, the Board of Directors of The International Focusing Institute passed the following resolution:

The board wishes to honor Gene Gendlin's memory. Consistent with the priorities articulated in the Strategic Plan, the board believes that to move his legacy forward, rigorous academic research in his thought is of the utmost importance. The board has therefore decided to create a research center in Gene's name (the Eugene T. Gendlin Center for Research in Experiential Philosophy and Psychology), and asked [Executive Director Catherine Torpey] to convene a group of academics versed in Gene's thought to move the idea forward.

The Eugene T. Gendlin Center for Research in Experiential Philosophy and Psychology (the Gendlin Research Center) is a vitally important arm of The International Focusing Institute (TIFI). It is a committee which is organized and funded as part of the regular operations of TIFI, in order to ensure that the Institute is actively promoting academic research of the highest caliber.

MEMBERSHIP ON THE COMMITTEE

Because of the Gendlin Research Center's special status as a committee formed by the Board in memory of Gene Gendlin, and because it can only perform its function well if the members of it are "academics versed in Gene's thought," the Board will approve all members of the Gendlin Research Center Committee. Members of the Committee should, with very rare exceptions, hold a doctoral level degree and serve as faculty of an academic institution. The Board will not add a member to the Gendlin Research Center Committee without seeking the approval of the existing members of the Committee; the Committee itself is welcome to propose new members for Board approval at any time.

BOARD LIAISON

The Board will assign one of its members as liaison to the Committee. The liaison does not have to meet the same criteria of academic status as regular members, but should be well-versed in Gendlin's thought. This might not always be possible, but the Board should make every effort to have such a person on the Board who can take on the role of liaison.

VIII. WHISTLEBLOWER'S POLICY

DECISION: The Board approved the policy as submitted:

The Form 990 instructions state that a whistleblower policy should serve three purposes: (1) it should encourage staff and volunteers to come forward with credible information regarding illegal practices or violations of adopted policies of the organization; (2) the policy should explicitly state that the organization will protect the individual from retaliation for coming forward with the information; and (3) it should identify those staff, board members or outside parties to whom such information can be reported. Thus, a corporation must adopt a policy that meets at least these three purposes in order to answer "yes" to Part VI, Section B, Line 13 of the Form 990.

I. General

The International Focusing Institute ("TIFI") requires its board or ILC (International Leadership Council) members, officers and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of TIFI, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

II. Reporting Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all board or ILC members, officers and employees to report ethics violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

III. No Retaliation

No board or ILC member, officer or employee, who in good faith reports an ethics violation, shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequences. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable the employees, officers and board or ILC members, and others to raise serious concerns within TIFI prior to seeking resolution outside of TIFI.

IV. Reporting Violations

TIFI has an open door policy and suggests that its employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, the Executive Director of TIFI is in the best position to address an area of concern. However, if you are not comfortable speaking with the Executive Director of TIFI or you are not satisfied with the Executive Director's response, you are encouraged to speak with someone on the Board of Directors or International Leadership Council of TIFI whom you are comfortable in approaching.

V. Acting in Good Faith

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

VI. Confidentiality

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

VII. Handling of Reported Violations

The Executive Director or member of the Board of Directors or ILC who was approached will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five business days. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation. The way in which complaints are handled will be guided by the Policy for Addressing Concerns Regarding Individuals, while at all times being in conformity with applicable responsibility under the law.

IX. ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR A QUICKBOOKS CONSULTANT

The \$3,000 originally approved for a Quickbooks consultant fell far short of the going price for the level of sophistication TIFI needs. An additional \$4,500 was approved by the Board.

X. 2022 BUDGET

Darryl recommended that the Board be presented with the coming year's budget at the January meeting.

XI. DROPBOX

For the convenience of those members who would like to have all TIFI documents in one centralized place, Catherine will send a link to her TIFI Dropbox folder in which she keeps the documents sent for each board meeting.

MEETING CLOSED

The next Board Meeting will be Friday, November 12 at 12noon (U.S. Eastern time)