

FOCCUS Fourth Edition FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

- 1. If I am a current FOCCUS facilitator, do I need to attend training prior to using the Fourth Edition?** No. FOCCUS Fourth Edition follows the same format for the Inventory, the Couple Report and guidelines for facilitating. The Facilitator Manual is purposely comprehensive and if read fully prior to facilitating, an experienced FOCCUS facilitator can self-educate on the changes incorporated into FOCCUS Fourth Edition. Online refresher training will be offered at no cost through the FOCCUS website and your particular organization may also offer in person refresher trainings. Contact your Organizational Administrator regarding your training options.
- 2. What are the changes?** While the Fourth Edition of the Inventory looks like previous editions, it has undergone a thorough review based on current research and a comprehensive study involving FOCCUS users around the world.
 - **Redesign of manual** - The FOCCUS Fourth Edition Facilitator's Manual was developed to reflect updates to the Inventory. Easy reference tabs are included for every Content Category and the English Manual includes an Alternate Section listing all Alternate Edition statements according to category. (Also see #3 regarding manual.)
 - **Statements** – Every statement was reviewed and input was received on existing statements along with suggestions for additional topics important to couples preparing for marriage. 85% of the statements were affected by rewording or deleting existing statements, and adding new statements to address pets, pornography, prayer, and technology.
 - **New special issue section** - Couples with Children encourages discussion by couples when one or both are bringing children to the marriage whether it is a first or subsequent marriage and/or the couple is preparing for a valid marriage in the church. Statements in the current edition related to bringing children to the marriage have been moved into this new section along with new statements.
 - **Alternate edition/new alternate section** – Written at a third grade reading level, the Alternate Edition of the FOCCUS Fourth Edition Pre-Marriage Inventory may be used with individuals who have intellectual or developmental disabilities or those for whom English is a secondary language. The English Manual includes an Alternate Section listing all Alternate Edition statements according to category. The Alternate Edition and the related facilitator training and web resources were prepared in consultation with the National Catholic Partnership on Disability. Organizations and facilitators using FOCCUS may contact the FOCCUS staff for further information on facilitating FOCCUS with individuals who have intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD).
 - ***b'tween*: Conversations to Last a Lifetime** – *b'tween* resources reinforce the communication that takes place during facilitation and encourage it to continue throughout marriage. Available as free downloads in the FOCCUS facilitator's account, *b'tween* resources currently include a Reflection and Discussion Guide for Use in Between FOCCUS Facilitation Sessions, FOCCUS for the Future, and a Couple Certificate. They are to be given to every couple by their facilitator.
- 3. Why do I need to purchase a new manual?** The FOCCUS Fourth Edition Manual includes new Facilitator Aids for each statement. A PRIMER is included as a quick review when preparing to meet with couples along with a Quick Guide for registering as an Organization and/or facilitator, administering the FOCCUS Inventory and printing results and resources from the FOCCUS website. Each FOCCUS Fourth Edition Facilitator Manual is printed with a Manual Certification Number. This number must be entered into a facilitator's online FOCCUS account upon receipt of the manual. The manual becomes the property of that facilitator and may not be passed on to another facilitator at any time. (Also see #2 regarding changes.)

4. **Do we order new Answer Sheets?** No. Answer sheets are available as a free download in English and Spanish under My Recent Activity and Quick Links on the FOCCUS website.
5. **How is FOCCUS Fourth Edition scored?** All FOCCUS Pre-Marriage Inventories are scored through the secure FOCCUS website. After a session is set up for a couple by a FOCCUS organizational administrator or FOCCUS facilitator, scoring happens in one of two ways; 1) couples complete the Inventory online which then generates their individualized Couple Report OR 2) couples complete the Inventory by entering their responses in pencil on the QuickScore Answer Sheet. Their responses are then entered into the QuickScore portal on the website by their FOCCUS facilitator or other designated person and their individualized Couple Report is generated by the website. (Arrangements can be made for QuickScore Answer Sheets to be sent to the FOCCUS, Inc. USA office for scoring at a nominal fee.)
6. **What is the PC Scoring Program and why can't I use it with FOCCUS Fourth Edition?** The PC Scoring Program has been obsolete for a number of years and use of it is illegal. Just as technology becomes outdated, the PC Scoring Program could no longer support the updates to the FOCCUS Inventory and couples could not receive the most up to date version of the Inventory and benefit from other resources available on the website. Organizations partnering with FOCCUS, Inc. USA are expected to be fully compliant in use of the FOCCUS website thus offering couples the most current resources.
7. **What does a Session Credit pay for?** When a Session Credit is purchased, access is then given by the facilitator to the couple to complete the FOCCUS Pre-Marriage Inventory. If they do this online, immediately upon completion the facilitator can access their individualized Couple Report and *b'tween* resources through the facilitator's FOCCUS account. (Also see #2 regarding *b'tween* resources.) If a couple completes the Inventory in pencil using QuickScore Answer Sheets, their responses must be entered into the QuickScore Portal on the FOCCUS website and their individualized Couple Report and *b'tween* resources may then be accessed through the facilitator's FOCCUS account. A mail-in option is available for scoring of QuickScore Answer Sheets by FOCCUS, Inc. USA for a nominal fee. (See also #4 regarding scoring.)
8. **When will the Refresher training be available?** A mid-December 2013 date is anticipated for Trainers to receive online access to FOCCUS Fourth Edition training materials. New facilitator and refresher training for FOCCUS Fourth Edition are anticipated to be available online beginning January 6, 2014.
9. **Do I need to be registered to order FOCCUS Fourth Edition?** Yes. All active FOCCUS organizations and facilitators must register on the FOCCUS, Inc. USA website. There is no fee to register on the FOCCUS website.
10. **How is FOCCUS, Inc. USA website security handled?** The FOCCUS.com website is hosted in a PCI DSS compliant environment (audited by Qualys) and monitored 24 hours a day 7 days a week with technicians available onsite. It is verified to be in compliance with PCI DSS requirements to help safeguard online transactions and employs an EV SSL certificate to encrypt sensitive content and confirm ownership of the domain name.
11. **How was research conducted for FOCCUS Fourth Edition?** Building on the long standing research base which is a hallmark of FOCCUS, Inc. USA, reliability for FOCCUS Fourth Edition was tested through triangulation which included research on Inventory items, review of current Inventory items and review of revised Inventory items. Face validity for item development was obtained using the current Inventory, and content validity was obtained using the revised Inventory. To further validate the revised Inventory, a pilot study was conducted and its database was utilized to determine the Cronbach Alpha. Using the SPSS, the reliability of the Inventory was tested resulting in a Cronbach Alpha of .921 which is significantly high. An item discrimination analysis was completed for frequency of responses and each statement was examined in light of these findings.

- 12. Have studies been conducted on whether couples believe that their participation in the FOCCUS process is effective?** Yes. The most current study was conducted with couples who completed FOCCUS since 2010. More than 9 out of 10 couples say they would recommend the FOCCUS process to other engaged couples.
- 13. Why is the topic of pets important?** Current research indicates couples are marrying at older ages and have established independent lifestyles which may include a pet that has served as a significant companion. When couples marry, the issue of pets becomes important on many levels including financial i.e. how much will be spent on the pet, boundaries i.e. who will discipline the pet and what freedoms are allowed in the home, and marital intimacy i.e. where will the pet sleep? Facilitators increasingly report that couples benefit from talking about the purpose, value and role of pets before entering into marriage.
- 14. What languages will be available?** The January 2014 launch of FOCCUS Fourth Edition Facilitator Manual will be offered in English and Spanish. The Inventory will be available in English, Spanish and Traditional Chinese. Additional languages will be offered in the future based on need and available resources.
- 15. How were the translations developed?** A professional translation service was used for the development of FOCCUS Fourth Edition. This included multiple rounds of translation and review by native speakers and professional translators.
- 16. What Editions will be available?** Catholic, Christian, General and Orthodox Christian
- 17. What is the most important aspect of serving as a FOCCUS facilitator?** Recognizing that couples usually benefit from intentional time together to discuss topics important to preparation for life long marriage and committing to the FOCCUS process which includes 1) Providing couples with the opportunity to consider their own responses to statements related to readiness for marriage, 2) Offering couples a comfortable, facilitated setting in which to discuss their responses to those statements with each other, and 3) Providing couples with additional resources to continue healthy communication beyond their FOCCUS sessions.
- 18. What are the guidelines for a facilitator meeting with a couple and what FOCCUS materials should a couple receive from their facilitator?** While facilitators should typically plan to meet with couples for four one hour sessions, upon registering on the FOCCUS website a certified FOCCUS facilitator agrees to meet for at least two one hour sessions and no more than six sessions with each engaged couple. Every couple should receive all *b'tween* resources which currently include A Reflection and Discussion Guide for Use Between Sessions, FOCCUS for the Future and a Couple Certificate.
- 19. What are the costs associated with becoming a FOCCUS facilitator and offering FOCCUS to couples?** Each approved organization determines their facilitator training fee which typically includes your FOCCUS facilitator manual. The cost to offer FOCCUS to couples is also determined by each approved organization. This cost typically includes the session credit which gives the couple access to complete the Inventory and the facilitator access to download their Couple Report and related *b'tween* resources from the FOCCUS website. Depending on the organization and facilitator preference, additional costs include Inventory Booklets or mail-in scoring of QuickScore Answer Sheets by FOCCUS, Inc. USA.
- 20. If I am not currently a FOCCUS facilitator and would like to offer FOCCUS to couples, what do I need to do?** Contact FOCCUS, Inc. USA. All FOCCUS facilitators must be part of an approved organization which then makes training and FOCCUS support available. All FOCCUS facilitators are required to attend FOCCUS facilitator training with a certified FOCCUS trainer, receive certification, and register on the FOCCUS website.