

FELDENKRAIS GUILD® of North America

POSITION STATEMENT ON REGULATION

WHEREAS:

- 1) The *Feldenkrais Method* of somatic education is a distinct profession based on the principles spelled out in the International *Feldenkrais*® Standards of Practice. This unique system uses movement and attention to bring about increased awareness and improved functioning through learning. *Feldenkrais* practitioners help their students to become aware of existing patterns of action, and guide the discovery of additional possibilities for action. The *Feldenkrais Method* facilitates recovery of movement, improves skills for athletes, dancers and musicians, and enhances the ability to learn.
- 2) The *Feldenkrais Method* is an educational system. It is not medically or therapeutically oriented.
- 3) The *Feldenkrais Method* is not a form of massage nor is it appropriately regulated as massage. *Feldenkrais* training does not include any training in or require any knowledge of massage or bodywork theory or techniques, and it does not qualify *Feldenkrais* practitioners to be Massage Therapists or Bodyworkers--just as massage or bodywork training does not qualify one to be a *Feldenkrais* practitioner. In fact, massage training or testing have little or no relevance to a *Feldenkrais* practitioner. For example, there are no identifiable or recognizable massage techniques used in the *Feldenkrais Method*.
- 4) Many *Feldenkrais* lessons do not involve touch at all. In lessons which do involve touch, the intent of the touch is educational, the student is fully clothed and the touch is gentle, non-invasive, and non-corrective.
- 5) Practitioners of the *Feldenkrais Method* actively use this approach in many working settings, such as education; the arts such as music performance, dance and acting; personal growth and wellness; the helping professions; physical fitness, athletics and martial arts; and independent private practice.
- 6) There is no need to externally regulate the *Feldenkrais Method*, because: a) It is a safe, educational process; and b) FELDENKRAIS GUILD of North America is self-regulating. The FGNA governs *Feldenkrais* Practitioners in the United States and Canada and protects the Registered Service Marks through accrediting *Feldenkrais* Professional Training Programs under strict requirements, including a minimum of 800 class-room hours over a 38 month period; through requiring continuing education and professional development; and through establishing and maintaining Standards of Practice and a Code of Professional Conduct.
- 7) In Oct. 1995, The Federation of Therapeutic Massage, Bodywork and Somatic Practice Organizations, including the American Massage Therapy Association, agreed that the member organizations will not foster actions which interfere with the right to practice of practitioners from other organizations. Promoting external regulation of the *Feldenkrais Method* would violate the spirit of this agreement.

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THEREFORE, the *Feldenkrais Method* of somatic education poses little or no risk to the public.

And THEREFORE, The FELDENKRAIS GUILD of North America:

- 1) --opposes the regulation of the *Feldenkrais Method* under massage, bodywork or similar licensing laws, and also opposes regulation under any other classification which is inappropriate to this system of learning, including psychotherapy, body psychotherapy or physical therapy.
- 2) --opposes the use of training or testing requirements which are not applicable to the practice of the *Feldenkrais Method*.
- 3) --supports specific exemption of the *Feldenkrais Method* where there might otherwise be an improper implication of inclusion.

The FELDENKRAIS GUILD of North America is glad to cooperate with legislators and regulators in any jurisdiction to assure an appropriate regulatory posture for the *Feldenkrais Method*.

Feldenkrais®, *Feldenkrais Method*®, *Functional Integration*®, *Awareness Through Movement*®, and The FELDENKRAIS GUILD® are Registered Marks of The FELDENKRAIS GUILD.

Approved FGNA Board of Directors, 1997

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