

SENSEABILITY

A Quarterly Newsletter of Applications of the FELDENKRAIS METHOD®



Issue #1: General Applications

The applications of the FELDENKRAIS METHOD® are vast and diverse. People have sought the expertise and unique knowledge that a GUILD CERTIFIED FELDENKRAIS PRACTITIONERSM can bring to any aspect of life that contains movement. Feldenkrais said that his goal was “...*To make the impossible possible, the possible easy, and the easy elegant*”

Freedom from Pain

Over half of the people who come to the FELDENKRAIS METHOD® are hoping for relief from pain. Usually they have been in pain for a long period of time and have tried several other methods.

After experiencing AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT® (ATM) classes or the individual FUNCTIONAL INTEGRATION® (FI) lessons, students report reduced pain, greater range of movement and increased vitality. To be able to turn the head without wincing, to reach the top shelf, to walk or even to run freely are all possible. The gentle, pleasurable movements are accessible to everyone, including elder citizens and the disabled.

The FELDENKRAIS METHOD “... *is not just pushing muscles around, but changing things in the brain itself so that the person can gradually adjust... to what we call a normal image of achievement.*” — Karl Pribram, MD, Ph.D. Neuroscientist

SENSEABILITY, A Quarterly Newsletter of the FELDENKRAIS METHOD®, is produced by The FELDENKRAIS GUILD®.

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Improve Performance

Jack Heggie (<JackHeggie@aol.com>) was an electronics engineer and a frustrated skier before he became a GUILD CERTIFIED FELDENKRAIS PRACTITIONERSM. After he used the Method to teach himself to ski at the expert level he wrote *Skiing with the Whole Body*. Patti Blazes took lessons with Jack and her skiing improved dramatically: “*I took off and I knew I was skiing. It was incredible!*”

Rick Acton, five-time Northwest PGA Champion and two-time Teacher of the Year '88 and '89 says that

“...*the FELDENKRAIS METHOD and its unique approach to mind and body has helped me immeasurably, not only in the way I play golf, but also in the way I teach the game.*”

Stress Relief

Stress causes rigid habits. Rigid habits create more stress. FELDENKRAIS lessons provide a relaxing environment for learning how to let go of tension in the body.

Often lying on the floor, sometimes sitting or standing, students discover movement patterns that inhibit freedom. Their breathing becomes fuller, their blood pressure drops and even their digestion improves.

Confidence Building

Pat Lawrence was referred to FELDENKRAIS sessions by her Counselor. As a student in a secretarial training program, constant pain from a 3-year-old neck injury made her worry about her future in the field.

The FELDENKRAIS practitioner led her through gentle,

METHOD®

guided movements. She discovered that her pain came from her posture at the keyboard and she learned how to teach herself to have better posture.

She also noticed a change in her self image. Her increased awareness made her more sure of herself. Pat no longer feels stuck with a "pain in the neck" situation at home. She believes she had a future of her own.

"... Feldenkrais has found a way to free people to be more creative intellectually and more flexible and flowing physically." — William C. Schutz, Ph.D.

Psychologist and author of **JOY**

Many musicians have "done FELDENKRAIS." In their long hours of practicing and performance, they can develop habits which can lead to pain or other limitations. These cause stress and reduction in confidence. Through this work, they find they can make fine music without paying the price of pain.

"The exercises are so ingenious and so simple" — Yehudi Menuhin, Concert Violinist

How Far Can You Turn?

Here is a short **AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT** lesson for you to enjoy. By doing it, you will demonstrate to yourself that your body has a potential far different from what you normally think.

NOTE: This lesson involves turning the head. It is important that you turn slowly and gently, stopping if you get any signals of strain, discomfort or pain. If you have pain in turning, turn only so far that you are pain-free. A very small turn is OK.

To begin, sit comfortably on the edge of a chair with your hands relaxed in your lap.

1. Gently turn your head to the left. Notice a point on the wall that is the furthest point you can comfortably see. Return to the centre. Repeat a few times.

If you had pain in turning, turn only so far that you DO NOT have pain. A very small turn is OK.

Gently turn your head to the right a few times and return to the centre. Each time, notice a point on the wall that is the furthest point you can comfortably see.

Turn gently, only so far as you have no pain.

2. Feel which side you would like to improve. The other side is *the better functioning side*.

3. Cradle your head with the palms of your hands, so that the heel of your hands is at your jaw line, and the fingers may rest around your eyes. Notice that your elbows rest on your chest.

Keeping your elbows glued to your chest and your hands cradling your head, gently turn to *the better functioning side* as far as is comfortable and back to centre. Notice that the whole upper body turns.

4. TEST: drop your hands and turn to the side you wanted to improve. Notice the improvement!

Take a moment to realize how organic learning does not happen mechanically in the muscles, but in some higher faculties of the nervous system. Isn't this more interesting?

About the FELDENKRAIS METHOD®

The FELDENKRAIS METHOD® is an educational system that develops a functional awareness of the self in the environment.

Moshe Feldenkrais Ph.D. (1904-1984), physicist, engineer, martial artist and educator, developed the FELDENKRAIS Method by studying the direct relationship between bodily movement and the ways we think, feel, learn and act in the world.

AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT® is the group lesson form in which students explore movement sequences according to the verbal directions of the teacher.

FUNCTIONAL INTEGRATION® is the private lesson form combining instructive touch with verbal cues.

These lessons help students become aware of old habits

and provide choices for more efficient action.

GUILD CERTIFIED FELDENKRAIS PRACTITIONERS™ must complete 800-1000 hours of in-depth training over a three to four year period in a Professional Training Program regulated by The Feldenkrais Guild.

The FELDENKRAIS GUILD® is an international organization of practitioners which maintains the professional standards of practitioners and provides a range of informative materials to the public.

For more information, please contact your **GUILD CERTIFIED FELDENKRAIS PRACTITIONER** or The FELDENKRAIS GUILD at (800) 775-2118.

Please Note: The FELDENKRAIS METHOD is an educational system. It is not a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. Consult your physician if you have pain or difficulty with movement.