Seven years ago, I was recovering from a serious injury and struggling to get back to 100% function. I stretched functionally, but it didn’t increase my mobility; I did the best corrective exercises given to me by the best there was, but I was still weak and lopsided; I sought out hands-on therapies by quality therapists, but kept going back for more. Something was drastically missing in my regime – but what was it? My incredibly sound training in kinesiology and fitness training was not cutting it. In 2002, I serendipitously came across the work of Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais (1904-1984), the founder of the Feldenkrais Method®, and it not only facilitated my recovery and truly transformed my entire well-being, but now six years later, I am trained as a Feldenkrais® practitioner and am able to work with people in capacities I would never have dreamt of.

What exactly is the Feldenkrais Method?

Dr. Feldenkrais was a physicist, mechanical engineer and martial arts expert who developed his unique style of working with humans after teaching himself how to walk again after a disabling knee injury. The intricacies of this Method and its uses for improving human function are endless, and are similar to the complex nature of how the human brain and body work. Perhaps this parallel is why its use is of greater interest than the movement environment and within a movement pattern specific to the person. Functional Integration® is a service mark of Feldenkrais® Educational Foundation of North America.

Contact us at:
FEFNA
5436 N. Albina Ave.
Portland, OR 97217  USA
1.866.333.6248
(1.866.FEFNA4U)
503-221-6612 (local PDX)

This quote from the man himself demonstrates the need for “awareness through movement” for improvement, not just brute strength and mindless repetition. Feldenkrais lessons are structured around the brain’s capacity to learn, refine its action and function in its environment.

His teachings tap into biological functions unique to humans - attentive use of senses, thoughts, feelings and intention-based movements. How a person explores movement is of greater interest than the movement itself. Such principles facilitate an optimal environment for human learning and holistic functional refinement, similar to the natural and spontaneous processes infants and children experience when the nervous system first develops.

How is it taught?

The Method is taught in either group lessons called Awareness Through Movement®, or one-on-one called Functional Integration®. In an Awareness Through Movement class, individuals heighten and refine their awareness of themselves through their own movement. In Functional Integration, the practitioner guides the student through movements using non-invasive and non-coercive touch. The intent of both forms is to integrate the muscular, skeletal and neurological systems all with the environment and within a movement pattern specific to the person.

Feldenkrais created thousands of lessons while organized to move with minimum effort and maximum efficiency, not through muscular strength but increased consciousness of how it works.”

A newsletter of applications of the Feldenkrais Method* of somatic education written by Guild Certified Feldenkrais Practitioners™

Issue # 43
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A personal tale: changing focus and learning more
–by Irene Gutteridge, BSc, GCFP

SENSEABILITY
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**The Feldenkrais Method® in the University**
An Interview with Staffan Elgelid, GCFP, PhD, PT

Staffan Elgelid, GCFP, PhD, PT is on the Faculty at Arkansas State University, where he teaches Physical Therapy. SenseAbility asked him recently about using the Feldenkrais Method in an academic situation.

SenseAbility: (Sense)
Staffan Elgelid: (SE)

Sense:
How did you get involved with teaching the Feldenkrais Method at a university?

SE:
I was teaching part time and working on my Master's Thesis in the Physical Therapy Department at the University of Central Arkansas. I did my thesis on Feldenkrais® and Self-Image and used students as subjects, so I would give Awareness Through Movement® lessons to the students that were part of my study. Some students got interested in Feldenkrais and as I continued teaching we had discussions about Feldenkrais every now and then, but nothing organized. As I moved on to other universities I got involved with the music and drama departments and taught Feldenkrais and worked with students in those departments. At one school, I was always part of the rehearsals for the plays. I would sit in the back and watch the rehearsals and then give the actors short Functional Integration® lessons to help them be aware of how they portrayed emotions, etc. I would help them express with their bodies what the script told them to say. I have also taught weekend workshops on the Feldenkrais Method at the different schools I have been.

Sense:
How do you include the Feldenkrais Method in your physical therapy courses?

SE:
I do use the Feldenkrais Method all the time. When we observe how people move, we talk about the organization of the person, how they are using themselves and how that limits their actions in their world. We do discuss this from a purely anatomical standpoint, but also from other standpoints. We also discuss how we could give the person options and what the person might do with these options. Pure speculation, since we don’t know exactly what the person would do with the options.

So a lot of the way we use the Feldenkrais Method is on how to observe, think about giving the person options, and how they are using themselves. I also use the ideas from the Feldenkrais Method when we discuss how we must develop ourselves and find out how we are “doing” and using ourselves.

For me, it is more effective to have the ideas of the Feldenkrais Method as a piece of the framework in the class that I am teaching instead of having a separate class in the Feldenkrais Method. I have talked with students that had that and they found it to be boring and had a hard time finding the relevance of the Feldenkrais Method to what they were studying. By using the Feldenkrais Method in how we observe and in our discussions, the students don’t feel like the Feldenkrais Method is forced upon them and I therefore think there is a bigger chance that something will “stick.”

Sense:
How do you deal with resistance – either from students or administration?

SE:
Since I do it as part of the classes I teach, I don’t run into any resistance. I also believe in my academic freedom and if someone gets in the way, I tell them to move out of the way! (Laughter)

Sense:
Do you see ways that the Feldenkrais Method could be integrated into university education?

SE:
I think it would be great if every faculty member at the universities understood the Feldenkrais Method and were certified, and demonstrated a “Feldenkraisan” way of thinking and looking at the world to the students.

I can envision a day when the Feldenkrais Method is accepted as a way of being and thinking in universities. I think the idea of options and using the best option based on the context is very appealing and a concept that can influence people’s thinking and behaviors. Students could start out by discussing a concept from multiple angles, without being too attached to one way being “the one and only way,” and then doing Awareness Through Movement lessons to get the sense of that in the body or vice versa. The thing is that the students will feel in their bodies what they just discussed/debated from a theoretical aspect.

I can also see students using the Feldenkrais Method as a way to learn about themselves, and become more sensitive to themselves and the relationships they form with others. I believe this could be an offering in the health and wellness department, similar to the way yoga is offered from Health and Wellness. I believe religion departments could offer Awareness Through Movement lessons, just like they offer meditation.

Of course, Awareness Through Movement lessons could also be offered in conjunction with anatomy, kinesiology, etc. as a way to give the students the “lived” experience of what they study. Music, athletics, theater, all those departments could benefit from using the Feldenkrais Method by giving the students a way to improve their performance.

(continued on page 4)
The Northern California/Northern Nevada Region of the Feldenkrais Guild® of North America [FGNA] stretches from the Oregon Border to San Luis Obispo, from the Pacific coast to beyond the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The Feldenkrais Method® is as rich and varied here as the terrain. Over 240 practitioners live and work here, many in the San Francisco Bay Area, and a growing number reaching out into smaller towns and communities bringing our work with them.

In many ways, the Feldenkrais Method took root here. One of Moshe’s first visits to America took him to Esalen in Big Sur and he personally taught practitioners in the first American training in San Francisco. Practitioner Judy Windt, who works with seniors a lot, recently said she enjoys that her students bring a sense of history to the Feldenkrais Method because many of them took lessons years ago with some of the individuals Moshe taught, or even with Moshe himself.

Another aspect of practicing here, according to Windt, is that even the seniors who are new to the Feldenkrais Method are open to change. She believes their attitude may be particular to this area since, as she wonderfully observes, “seniors here tend to seek out new stuff, tend to think of themselves as still active, not doomed to decline!”

Similarly, practitioner Jean Elvin, who also teaches dance, loves practicing here because “generally speaking, we have a sophisticated audience in this region, who tend to be well informed. Those who try [the] Feldenkrais [Method] often grasp the concepts and develop a working understanding of it quickly.”

We are fortunate the tradition continues to find fertile ground here. We have numerous practitioner training programs in Northern California. Typically, at least three a year are in process. These trainings take place over four years and are an opportunity for students to learn more in-depth about the Method and themselves. After the training, the graduates are eligible for certification by FGNA, so they can teach public classes. If you see the initials GCFP after a teacher’s name, you’ll know that person is certified by FGNA.

There are also a plethora of workshops for the general public on any given weekend. As Holly Bonasera, MPT, GCFP notes, “the Bay Area is luxuriant in Feldenkrais® opportunities.” There are classes at rec centers, yoga studios and Y’s, through wellness centers at local hospitals, and even at a local pharmacy. Private lessons are available at more and more physical therapy and chiropractic offices or integrative medicine centers. Berkeley is the home of Feldenkrais Resources and San Francisco has the Feldenkrais Center of Movement Education.

There are several low-fee clinics in our region, including one for Spanish speaking people. Also, we’re launching a pilot research project for women recovering from breast cancer as a community service project. Anyone interested in participating should contact Paulette Dolin at: ezmovement@yahoo.com

As the Regional Representative, one of my goals is to include people interested in our work more into our community through fun events that mix socializing with learning. We are planning some dance parties and other events in connection with Feldenkrais classes so that the lessons come to life and there is more interaction between practitioners and students. If you like moving around on the floor for an hour in Awareness Through Movement® classes or experiencing Functional Integration®, you’ll love being a part of our community. I’m also working on improving our regional website so that it will have up-to-date information on local activities. If you’d like to know more about what’s happening, contact your local practitioner, or feel free to contact me at ezmovement@yahoo.com.

There’s a great sense of camaraderie and cooperation in this region-- just one more reason this is a great place to practice and learn.

Paulette Dolin, GCFP

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- develop educational materials
- promote public awareness

www.feldenkrais.com/senseability

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he was alive. Done in an array of orientations (supine, prone, sitting, standing, side-lying) as well as in a moving context (from supine to sit, prone to kneeling, standing to supine), the level of complexity in these lessons is limitless.

And beyond.....

Currently small pockets of national level (downhill skiing, kayaking, fencing) and recreational (runners, triathletes, weightlifters) athletes have incorporated Feldenkrais' unique principles into their training regime with much success, and the rehabilitative sciences are beginning to learn about this unique form of sensorimotor learning that has aided people with stroke, spinal cord injury and cerebral palsy. Even business executives and schoolteachers benefit by learning how to sit and think with greater ease and clarity. The incredibly biologically intelligent nature of the Feldenkrais Method has the potential to impact how we look at and treat the human being in the 21st century.

What a few people have to say about the Feldenkrais Method:

“As a top level athlete, I always need to be feeling at my best, both in body and mind - being better connected with what my body is doing and how it's feeling. The day after I had a private lesson, we had an on-snow training session and I noticed right away that my skiing was effortless. I had better feel and connection on my skis and in my boots. Also, my energy wasn’t depleted at the end of the day. It was just amazing!” - Britt Janyk

“I’ve had wonderful success with the Feldenkrais Method, both as a hands-on treatment and as a set of awareness movements that have got me back in touch with pain-free activity. After trying all sorts of different modalities (physiotherapy, chiropractic care, Pilates, weight training, and massage) I went to [the] Feldenkrais Method as a last resort. I wish I had gone as a first resort! After a number of lessons, I was able to move freely. My back pain abated and I was able to resume running, biking and swimming - which as a triathlete makes up most of my training. With consistent practice I was able to take 30 minutes off of my Half Ironman bike split, leading to a personal best. I also achieved a personal best marathon time - relatively pain free!” - Brandi Higgins, Whistler Swim Club Coach and Triathlete

“In modern and Western society we tend to reach higher levels of performance by using more effort. In the Feldenkrais Method, we learn a different approach which is based on completely the opposite idea: by reducing effort and with a clearer goal-oriented motivation, we work on the quality of action.” Kurt Kothbauer – Head Conditioning Coach, Canadian Alpine Ski Team, Feldenkrais practitioner

Irene is a Guild Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner™ and practices in Whistler and Vancouver, Canada. She offers a variety of services in the Feldenkrais Method focused towards elite sports teams, fitness trainers, rehabilitative specialists and the general public in the form of group workshops or personalized lessons. www.scientuitive.com

...The Feldenkrais Method in the University continued...

(continued from page 2)

Sense:
Do you have any advice for Feldenkrais teachers who wish to work in a university setting?

SE:
I think the key to anyone coming in to a university setting is to give the students a clear idea how the Feldenkrais Method is beneficial to them, and expose the students to the Feldenkrais Method in many different departments. The biggest mistake that I see people in the university make is to introduce the Feldenkrais Method to the students, but not make sure the experience is relevant to the student. The practitioner must speak the student’s specific language and preferably within the first session show the student how this is beneficial to them. I think sometimes we have a problem with explicitly showing, or getting the student to sense and feel how what just happened was beneficial in their field of study, or performance. University students (at least the ones I am privileged to work with) are VERY goal oriented, and VERY short on time. Unless there is an immediate benefit, they don’t have time for it. We, as Feldenkrais practitioners, must make an immediate impact and sometimes we have to point out the impact!

To contact Staffan, email him at: staffan@learnandperform.com

SenseAbility Winter 2008
Martial Arts Roots of the Feldenkrais Method®
Moti Nativ
3 DAY WORKSHOP: July 25th- 27th

In this workshop, we will look at Moshe Feldenkrais’ ideas that are linked with his practical martial-arts work in Judo and self-defense, and discuss the basic influences that the martial arts had on the development of the Feldenkrais Method. From there, we will experience and analyze self-defense techniques as they arise from Awareness Through Movement lessons, helping us to understand the effectiveness of the Feldenkrais Method from the point of view of survival.

Bio:
Moti Nativ (1994) served four years as Israel’s Feldenkrais Guild president. Shihan (master teacher of martial arts), head of the Israeli Bujinkan Dojo. He has been teaching martial arts since 1979, is proficient in Budo-taijutsu (Japanese ancient fighting arts), Judo, and Krav Maga (military combat system.)

For more information about Moti Nativ visit: www.weizmann.ac.il/home/tsafiri/bujinkan/cv/moti.html

Gravity 101 for Skiers and Snowboarders
Margaret McIntyre
2 DAY WORKSHOP: July 26 & 27th

Gravity is, paradoxically, our biggest ally in sports that involve speed and the control of speed. Only when we have control can we really “let go” and feel the freedom of movement in harmony with nature. In this workshop, we will use Awareness Through Movement lessons and discussion to explore this paradox, with an emphasis on the direct application of the Feldenkrais Method to sports, in particular my specialties of skiing and snowboarding. The specific role the eyes play in performance enhancement will also be incorporated in the lessons.

Bio:
Margaret McIntyre (1986) is an assistant trainer and fully qualified PSIA ski instructor/trainer in the Vail Ski School, where she founded her “Signature” Integrated Skiing and Snowboarding programs and presents her programs each winter. She has also developed corporate wellness programs. Now based in Maui, she also surfs and windsurfs.

For more information about Margaret McIntyre visit: www.integratedmovementmaui.com

Want to know more? Go to: www.feldenkrais.com/events/conference/2008/

Photo taken at the 2007 Conference. Photo by Celeste River
## Upcoming Events

**Cultivating Awareness.... Realizing its value**  
Taught by Diana Razumny  
March 1-2, Boulder, CO  
Call Efrem at 877/533-6933 for info & registration

**Shoulder Rehab the Feldenkrais® Way**  
Taught by Kate Heald, GCFP  
March 8th from 12:00-2:30 PM, Columbia, SC  
Contact: (803) 782-6171 to register  
(803) 920-7731 for more information  
Our shoulders can lose their incredible range of motion through injury, but also through muscle imbalance or even sitting at our desks too long. This workshop will use gentle movements to help you rediscover ease and range of motion in your shoulders.

**Victoria II Feldenkrais Professional Teacher Training (2008-2012) Pre-Training Workshop**  
Educational Director: Jeff Haller  
Whistler, BC Canada, April 4-6  
Location: Tantalus Lodge, Whistler, BC. (Main Village)  
Pre-Training Workshop - Friday April 4th, 7-9 PM  
Store Fee - Saturday April 5th, 10-4 PM and Sunday April 6, 10-3 PM  
$180 before April 3rd, $210 after April 4th  
To Pre-Register, please contact Irene Gutteridge:  
604-932-1224, 604-932-8815 or irenegutteridge@telus.net  
For more information regarding specific details of the Victoria II Training, contact Alice Friedman: Victoriatraining@aol.com  
250-653-4332

**Spinal Awareness for Ease and Power**  
Taught by Kate Heald, GCFP  
April 5 from 12:00-2:30 PM, Columbia, SC  
Contact: (803) 782-6171 to register  
(803) 920-7731 for more information  
Many of us spend time stretching or strengthening our backs, but what if we also cultivated knowledge and skill? This workshop will expand your awareness of both range and precision of movements available in the spine.

**Powerful Back & Pelvis, Comfortable Legs: A Feldenkrais Awareness Through Movement® Workshop**  
Taught by: Mary Susan Chen PT & GCFP  
April 5th 1-4 PM, Oak Park, IL  
To register: 708-848-7050 or www.oakparkparks.com/programs  
For more info: 708-771-7945  
Find the power and freedom in your back, so you can give your legs a rest!

**Take A Walk**  
Taught by Lavinia Plonka  
April 19, 9:30 AM–1 PM, Asheville, NC  
www.ashevillemovementcenter.com  
828-258-7220  
What does your walk say about you?  Learn how your walk can take you where you want to go.

**Elegant Flexibility Through Feldenkrais**  
Taught by Kate Heald, GCFP  
May 3 from 12:00-2:30 PM, Columbia, SC  
Contact: (803) 782-6171 to register  
(803) 920-7731 for more information  
Perhaps you think that your flexibility is set by your genes, or that you can become more flexible only through persistent and sometimes boring stretching?  *Feldenkrais* takes the approach that flexibility is a skill which can be cultivated through interesting and enjoyable movement.

**Bridging Worlds 2008 Feldenkrais Method® Annual Conference**  
July 25- August 1  
University Memorial Center (UMC), Boulder, Colorado  
Wide variety of workshop topics  
20 workshops open to the public  
Keynote Speaker: Joan Borysenko, PhD  
Sunday, July 27, 2008 UMC at 7 PM  
For more information:  
www.feldenkrais.com/events/conference/2008/  
or call 1-800-775-2118

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### Interested in Upcoming Events in Your Region?  
Visit the Online Version of *SenseAbility* and Click on “Upcoming Events in North America”  
www.feldenkrais.com/resources/senseability/