"Not exercise, not drama, not games, but the natural movement teachers often attempt to inhibit in their students can be channelled into productive movement-based activities to teach problem-solving and critical thinking. Learning movement and using movement for learning needn’t be restricted to early childhood, but can be applied to students of all ages. However, the sophistication and challenges of the movement needs to increase as the student matures. Through simple, effortless FELDENKRAIS® movement lessons, participants will discover both physical and mental benefits of what Howard Gardner calls "bodily kinesthetic intelligence." (from Milwaukee Public Schools Staff Development Opportunities Catalogue)

Learning to Move, Moving to Learn, a staff development course offered by the Milwaukee Public Schools was created and taught for the past five years by FELDENKRAIS practitioner Thomas Hanley who is also principal of Golda Mier School for the Gifted and Talented. Participants have included elementary and secondary teachers, as well as a number of the school system’s physical and occupational therapists.

This class evolved out of the courses Tom taught as an adjunct faculty member of the University of WI. Tom provided classes in the fine arts and theatre and the physical and occupational therapy departments. Subsequently, Tom wrote his Masters in Education thesis on Applying FELDENKRAIS METHOD Principles of Movement Learning to Academic Learning.

In his book, Frames of Mind, Harvard Educational Psychologist Howard Gardner speaks of how our education system has mistakenly made the "physical" somehow divorced from the "mental," making it somehow less privileged, less special, than those problem solving routines carried out chiefly through the use of language, logic or some other relatively abstract symbolic system. Psychologists in recent years have discerned and stressed a close link between the use of the body and the deployment of other cognitive powers. Learning to Move, Moving to Learn utilizes this close link.

Participants attending the six-week course experience first-hand what Howard Gardner calls bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence.

“I am becoming more aware of my need for movement… This has made me more Continued…"
Participants learn how to identify the principles common to both ‘physical’ and ‘mental’ learning. “I tried the same exercises and movements with my husband like we did in class and it was so strange how different we moved. I also tried it with my 3-year-old son and his flexibility just overwhelmed me.” -- Nicole P

Participants also learn general strategies that use movement or movement-based principles to involve students more actively and allow abstract concepts to be learned more easily. Lois M discovered “the difference between doing movement and learning movement. It also made a lot of sense to me when it was said ‘It’s not enough to just do these things. You need to call attention to them.’”

Further, they have the opportunity to develop specific movement or movement-based strategies/activities for actively teaching concepts specific to their discipline or grade level. By the end of the course they have developed and taught a movement-based lesson in their content area or grade level.

Teachers find that they look forward to their class. “I am excited for this week’s call to do more in-class movement activities,” reported Nicole P. They also have an opportunity to think about larger issues in education. “The last class got me thinking about society and the pressures we put on one another regarding the proper way to stand and how to move. My parents always told me to ‘stand up straight’ -- which was and still is uncomfortable for me!”

The benefits extend beyond the teacher’s professional lives, as well. “I have always taken my body for granted. I wish that what I am learning now was available to me 25 years ago,” says Toni Wagner. “I have made it a point to pass on this information to my students and colleagues whenever possible.”

The participants’ evaluation of the course have been so favorable that advanced courses are being planned.

RESOURCES: The following resources are available from the FGNA (800) 775-2118.

FELDENKRAIS in the Classroom by Debbie Ashton. One-hour audiocassettes containing four 15-minute AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT “Alertness Breaks” for the classroom plus a teacher’s guide.

Healthy Back by Jack Heggie. Four 15-minute AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT lessons on two cassette tapes are ideal for high school and adult students. These sitting lessons are ideal for students with attention difficulties, back problems or who need to develop better posture.

About the FELDENKRAIS METHOD of Somatic Education

The FELDENKRAIS METHOD is an educational system that develops a functional awareness of the self in the environment. Moshe Feldenkrais D.Sc. (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 and movement 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 FGNA.

The FGNA is an international organization of practitioners which maintains the professional standards of practitioners and provides a range of informative materials for the public.

For more information, please contact your Guild Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner or The FELDENKRAIS GUILD® of North America 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.
Enhancing Children’s Self-Awareness

For the past several years, FELDENKRAIS Practitioner Donna Ray-Reese (<DRayReese@aol.com>) has had the good fortune of teaching AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT (ATM) lessons to preschoolers through fifth graders on a regular basis. In addition to teaching 15 to 30 children at a time in their classrooms, Donna has taught small groups at the Reese Movement Institute where she maintains her private practice.

Donna has found that children of all ages enjoy and benefit from participating in the FELDENKRAIS METHOD. After teaching a lesson that coordinates the flexor and extensor muscles, a four year old little girl said, “I have grown, I feel as tall as a teenager.” In Donna’s private classes a nine year old boy drew a picture for her after a gentle rocking lesson. His picture had a rectangle (with numerous small rectangles within it), a yellow circle with spokes and a small car with fire coming out of the back end. He said, “I feel as tall as a high rise building, as bright as the sun, and I feel like I can run as fast as a race car.” These children’s comments seem to tell it all.

Along with creating a positive body/self image, the children learn better how to embody spatial concepts through their ATM experience. Learning movement concepts such as up, down, inside, outside, right and left seem to instill confidence and security in anyone participating. This type of learning helps to eliminate the self doubt that is felt when we don’t know where we are in space, when we don’t know right from left and when we do not realize our capabilities.

The way ATM is designed and taught allows children time to process instructions and integrate the directions with their physical sensations. This allows complex sequences of verbal directions to be coupled with physical sensations and spatial orientation. ATM therefore creates an effective training ground for enhanced listening, improved thought processes, more efficient movement and successful learning.

Teaching AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT to children in the class room has been a rewarding experience for Donna. She enjoys teaching children to search for what feels good and to experiment with movement variations that improve what they are doing and how they are doing it. She likes teaching children to trust their judgments and to become their own experts. And Donna believes that creating an environment where children can learn to make distinctions, evaluate courses of action and make creative discoveries is essential to the health and future of our children.

FELDENKRAIS in Adult Literacy

Rob Black, a FELDENKRAIS practitioner in Canada (<rdblack@telusplanet.net>) teaches AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT classes to students in a college offering adult literacy classes. The students in these classes have weak English skills and some students also have physical disabilities from occupational accidents.

“I sit down with the teachers each semester to plan what fits with their teaching plan,” he says. One year he used the ATMs to demonstrate some aspects of learning so the students could realize their own learning styles and develop their own study strategies. The next year the teachers were preparing the students to give oral reports and the students were anxious about speaking in front of their classmates. For that class, Rob provided a series of ATM lessons on reducing anxiety, increasing voice production and developing effective presentation posture.

Students are delighted with the classes. After his first class, one student wrote in his journal, “Rob came to our class this morning and taught us about the brain... I like these exercises. They make me feel bright and relaxed.”

There are immediate benefits in the classroom. Students feel more alert, more ready to learn. There are also specific literacy-related results as well. For example, one student reported that after doing a lesson on improving the movement of the eyes, she found her reading improved significantly.

More general benefits include reducing or alleviating pain and discomfort that develops with sitting. A student with back and shoulder problems said he developed increased flexibility and was able to sit more comfortably for the day-long classes.

The benefits go beyond the classroom. Several students find the classes so interesting that they show them to their families and friends.

Friends of Feldenkrais®

Friends of Feldenkrais is a way for the public to become more connected with the FELDENKRAIS METHOD.

Individual Memberships:

- **$25** • Basic benefits, Quarterly Newsletter - SenseAbility, 10% discount off books and tapes, article "The FELDENKRAIS METHOD" by Moshe Feldenkrais, and discounts on Annual Conference workshops

- **$50** • Basic benefits, plus FELDENKRAIS Logo T-Shirt

- **$75** • Basic Benefits, plus ATM Audio tape by Moshe Feldenkrais, and Friends of Feldenkrais® polo T-Shirt

To join, call the FELDENKRAIS GUILD® of North America at (800) 775-2118 or email: membership@feldenkrais.com
How do you write?

An AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT lesson at your desk.

Here’s a simple way to introduce movement into your classroom without disrupting the room. It’s written for grades 1 - 4, but the idea can be adapted to older grades as well.

Read each numbered step to your class, then pause to allow them time to experience and absorb the effect.

1. Take some paper and a pencil, and write a sentence. (If it’s a young child, a word, or even letters will do.)

2. Now write the sentence again, but write it really large, take up the whole page. Notice how it feels.

3. Now write it really small. Does your hand feel different?

4. Now write again, but this time, only use your fingers to move the pencil.

5. Try again, but this time hold the pencil in your fist and use your whole arm to write. This doesn’t have to be neat.

6. Which was more fun? How does it look?

7. While you write, move your heels up and down, don’t let them stop, do you know anyone who’s always moving their feet? How does it feel when you try to write and do something else at the same time?

8. Can you write with your eyes closed?

9. Hold your breath and write.

10. Write really fast. Write really slow.

11. Now slouch. Really slump down in your chair. And write like that.

12. Now grow tall. And write again.

13. Can you think of different ways to write?

14. Now just write the sentence in your normal way. How did it feel to write it this time? Did anything feel different? Look at the first sentence you wrote. Has your handwriting changed?

The students will have discovered so much themselves by doing this! You may notice the changes even several days later as a student experiments with variations to improve his or her writing.