

International Feldenkrais Federation



Competency Profile

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Normal development in general is harmonious. In development the parts grow, improve and strengthen in such a way that the whole can continue towards its general destination. And just as new functions appear in the course of a child's harmonious development and growth, so do new powers appear in any harmonious development.

(Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais, Awareness Through Movement, p51)

Directing Your Progress

Where are you professionally?

Are you where you want to be?

How can you know if you are a competent Feldenkrais practitioner?

In pondering the need to answer questions like these, a treasure was discovered – the knowledge and experience of Feldenkrais practitioners all over the world. Our community includes people from all walks of life, many of them experts in other professions – singers, scientists, teachers, truckers, therapists, craftsmen and artists who have one thing in common: they practice the Feldenkrais Method. We are thousands of committed people, with unique backgrounds, working on similar themes, having accumulated a vast body of knowledge and experience in the 40 years since the first Feldenkrais training.

In the largest project ever in the history of the Feldenkrais profession, more than 400 practitioners took part in the development of this document. They shared their experiences, described important moments in their development and reflected on new insights. The result is this competency profile. The process began with questions:

Why do so many Feldenkrais practitioners stop practicing?

It's sobering but true. Only a fraction of Feldenkrais training program graduates are still practicing members of their guild five years later.

What happens during those five years?

Presumably, graduates complete the training process with a common set of skills. They are shepherded through the training and then sanctioned by the Educational Director to begin acting as a practitioner. But the process of developing from a new graduate into a seasoned and confident practitioner seems to be a vague and mysterious one. Practitioners are suddenly on their own. Rather than becoming more confident, many graduates become dissatisfied and feel incompetent.

How does one transition into self-directed learning?

This Competency Profile serves as **a guide** and **a map** for those interested in the process of becoming more deeply and comprehensively competent. This is not a test, nor is it a list of minimal acceptable proficiencies, and it is not a description of the Feldenkrais Method. Rather, this is an extremely comprehensive description of what a Feldenkrais practitioner actually does. It was developed by practitioners for practitioners in a social research project that spanned eight years.

Process and History

From the beginning of the IFF, member guilds expressed concern about the real problems for practitioners of getting started and practicing the Feldenkrais Method. The first response was to initiate the IFF Training Survey. Four hundred and twenty two practitioners participated in this survey. One surprising discovery was that a large majority of practitioners favored structured post-graduate education or supervision as part of the training process.

The next phase of research was to discover how practitioners define success and become successful. First, in 1996, the FGNA interviewed 55 randomly selected practitioners and later, in 1997, the IFF guild representatives interviewed 70 “successful” practitioners about success. There was a separate survey of 18 trainers as well. Practitioners in these surveys acknowledged the difficulty of setting up practice, and many of them attributed their success to learning from their ongoing practice and studying with their peers as well as studying other relevant topics such as anatomy, business, and communication skills. Significantly, 100% of successful practitioners felt that they had been successful in a previous occupation. This raised questions about what other factors, in addition to the Method itself, might be important in developing successful practitioners. As a consequence, a decision was made to deal with the issues of quality and competency. The IFF Academy was founded and a competency team established.

More intensive research began. The competency team reviewed the literature on competency and gathered relevant material from other professional fields. These included music, health care, massage, psychology, and meditation. The Feldenkrais literature as well as documents such as the Standards of Practice and the Berufsbild were referenced. A great debate began about what a competency profile should look like and how it should be developed. Despite the ongoing debate, the team kept the project moving forward. They found an external expert to guide the research and development process.

Armed with a new understanding of the complex issues surrounding competency, the team went back to the internal experts, the Feldenkrais practitioners themselves. Practitioners wrote stories about important professional moments and others analyzed them. Practitioners “practiced” with their peers as clients and observers and everyone wrote about the experience. Practitioners identified what kinds of preparation, knowledge, and abilities were needed to act successfully in a given situation. The Competency team collected and sorted this information from 160 practitioners and created a working draft of the Competency Profile.

This working draft was repeatedly brought back to its source, experienced Feldenkrais practitioners, for feedback and validation. In the final phase, in 2007, hundreds of practitioners in ten countries worked with the profile and gave feedback to the team about content, language and organization. Even in this unfinished stage the profile proved to be helpful and useful. Enthusiastic participants reported that they gained more insight and self confidence, found a tool to enhance their learning and discovered new ways of communicating in a professional way.

Possible Uses

In this final phase, practitioners generated many ideas about the possible uses for the profile. They included:

- Providing a means for each practitioner to discover strengths, skills and possible directions and sources of growth
- Promoting a richer exchange of experiences among practitioners
- Serving as guide for mentoring
- Providing a mechanism for quality assurance
- Creating a deeper sense of self reliance in the community
- Raising awareness for community collaboration
- Inspiring practitioners to be involved in the community
- Introducing it in trainings as a way to direct students toward self-directed learning
- Providing a wellspring of ideas for a competency-based certification
- Providing a reference for those involved in offering basic and continuing education in the Feldenkrais Method
- Providing a reference for regulatory purposes which may be used by practitioners and guilds/ associations

Some of the most surprising and significant feedback was about the workshops themselves. Practitioners in ten different countries agreed that the workshop was essential to introducing the profile and that working with partners and small groups was the most powerful way to bring the material to life.

Organization and Structure

The widely varied backgrounds, experiences and activities of practitioners around the world are reflected in this profile. Practitioners “do” Feldenkrais as a profession in private practices, clinics, schools and businesses. They teach classes, give Functional Integration lessons, run businesses and more. Practitioners serve the method and themselves in the professional organization, in marketing and in research efforts. Practitioners also embody the Method in their life choices and personal development. It is out of this rich substance that the Competency Profile evolved.

Due to the complexity of a practitioner’s life, there are many different situations in which one may want to act successfully. This is reflected in the structure of the profile which includes inter - related categories and sub-categories (for an illustration, please refer to page 11).

As this profile was developed, five general **Areas of Activity** were identified. They include Feldenkrais Learning Applications, Personal Dimension, Business Organization, Professional Organization, and Quality, Research and Training. Not every one of those will be relevant to every practitioner. It is likely that each practitioner will be drawn to certain categories and become most proficient in these areas. Yet, if one's interests expand, this profile, with its exhaustive descriptions of what Feldenkrais practitioners may do, can be a powerful catalyst for personal and professional growth.

Within each Area of Activity there are more specific descriptions of activities, and these are called the Competencies.

Competencies don't come out of the blue. In order to act competently, one needs **Resources**. Resources consist of everything one has experienced, knows and can do. Naturally, practitioners start out with widely varied resources. Each student enters a Feldenkrais training program with a different personal and professional background, offering expertise in a wide variety of fields. A training program might include scientists, artists, health care workers and retirees. There may be extroverts and introverts, and people who are good at building human relationships as well as those who prefer to work things out on their own. But regardless of their background, each person begins his or her training with a deep well of **knowledge, abilities**, and experience or **situational memories**.

While in training, students add to their reservoir of resources. New material is experienced and filtered through the treasury of knowledge and wisdom that the student has brought to the program. And although during a training program every student receives the same materials and is taught the identical curriculum, each practitioner graduates with a unique set of resources.

As practitioners, each new situation presents an opportunity to integrate old and new resources. **Competency is the ability to mobilize and focus the resources necessary to act successfully in a given situation.**

In any given situation, working with an individual, for example, a practitioner must be able to draw upon certain kinds of knowledge, particular abilities, and some experience or situational memories. The practitioner must do more than just mobilize resources, however. One must simultaneously grasp the client's needs and expectations, as well as consider one's own professional and personal expectations in the situation. This ability to rapidly synthesize multiple levels of sensing, feeling, and thinking, and then act with clear intention takes time to develop. Once a practitioner has these skills, though, they may be applied in any given situation. Therefore, in this Competency Profile they are in a special category called **Integrated Competencies**.

As this profile developed, two kinds of Integrated Competencies became obvious. The first one is called **Dealing with Complexity**. The complexity of the Feldenkrais Method itself is compounded, of course, by the complexity of each client. Feldenkrais practitioners interact with movement in connection with the clients' neuro-anatomical system, development of movement, learning and life history, and his or her self-image. With professional experience, the complexity of a situation is grasped more quickly and with greater confidence. This rapid synthesis may be described as an intuitive understanding.

The second of the Integrated Competencies, **Dealing with Goals**, is more controversial among Feldenkrais practitioners. Typically they do not set goals or work toward a specific predictable outcome in a lesson. Rather, practitioners use intention to guide the process of a lesson. Feldenkrais clients, however, frequently do have goals and plans to work toward specific outcomes. Clients come for Feldenkrais lessons so they will feel better or be able to do something better. In fact, Feldenkrais practitioners often inquire about the client's desired outcome in order to develop a clear intention and make the lesson deeply meaningful for the client. At the same time, practitioners often have personal, financial, and professional goals. Experienced practitioners learn to master this tension between pure process and desired outcomes, staying true to the Feldenkrais Method while satisfying one's own and one's clients' expectations.

Attitudes and Values

In addition to competencies, there are **Attitudes and Values** that are fundamental to Feldenkrais practitioners everywhere. In fact, regardless of the depth, breadth, or unique nature of a practitioner's resources, in order to act successfully, practitioners all over the world agree that competent Feldenkrais practitioners strive to...

- Respect the individuality of human beings
- Maintain the highest ethical and professional standards as stated in the national codes of conduct
- Transfer responsibility to their clients for their own learning processes
- Offer the opportunity to explore actions (movement) in order to become self-determined
- Embrace experimental learning
- Initiate self exploration via movement
- Communicate clearly
- Expand their perceptions, while exploring situations, actions and relationships
- Avoid judgment
- Engage in ongoing self-reflection
- Continuously acquire knowledge and improve their ability
- Support the potential for creativity, authenticity, flexibility, curiosity, openness

These Attitudes and Values infuse every aspect of a Feldenkrais practitioner's professional life.

Competency, like the Feldenkrais Method, is a process. It is the intentional act of gathering and synthesizing meaningful information, formulating a plan based on that information, taking action according to the plan, reflecting on the outcome and then making another plan. This process may happen a dozen times before a lesson begins, a hundred times during a lesson, and millions of times during a Feldenkrais practitioner's career. In this profile the process is called **Competence in Action**.

Cultivating Competency

“Please lie on your back and feel your contact with the floor.”

Most Feldenkrais practitioners hear those familiar words and enter into a state of inquisitive contentment. When a practitioner feels the places that contact the floor and the places that have no contact, it is without judgments. There is no expectation that a competent practitioner will achieve and maintain full floor contact. Although even just the “scan” has the potential to create change, the real power is in the process of the lesson. Every practitioner has a deep enthusiasm for these processes that have such potential to change their experience of themselves.

The process of cultivating competency can be as comfortable as the process of an Awareness Through Movement lesson. Cultivating competency is deeply consistent with Feldenkrais Attitudes and Values. Practitioners can use this profile to discover where they have contact with the competency material, and where they have no familiarity or comfort. According to the Attitudes and Values, this should be without judgments. At first, this process, like one’s first ATM lesson, is most satisfying when guided by a competent teacher. Competency workshops facilitate the integration of this material with ease and grace. In the workshops, practitioners are taught how to use the stories of their best and worst experiences to rediscover their own resources. They are taught how to listen to each other, to ask questions that direct each other to self-discovery, and to reflect on the experiences together.

Afterward, practitioners may continue to use the skills of **Self Assessment** and **Peer Assessment** acquired in the workshop. They can continue to write about and reflect upon experiences that required or expressed certain competencies. Also, they can work in pairs or small groups to continue using the Peer Assessment skills to listen, to reflect, and to help guide each other to self-discovery. The feedback from previous workshops indicates that practitioners prefer Peer Assessment as their favorite way of working with the Competency Profile.

Most often, Feldenkrais practitioners feel their contact with the floor in preparation for the adventure of the lesson. They are ready to experiment with habits and change. They don’t just get up from the floor, feeling proud or disgusted with their contact, and then go on, informed but unchanged. Similarly, once practitioners have sensed the proportions of their competencies, they will begin to experiment with change. Perhaps one practitioner will choose to deepen competency in one category, and celebrate a carefree disinterest in several others. Another practitioner may become aware of a deep interest in a new Area of Activity. That practitioner may create a **Learning Plan** that will provide the necessary resources for competency.

This profile is meant to be a guidebook for tracking and planning professional growth. It is not meant for a single use, but rather to help one evolve over time. Some may choose to use the process daily. Some may enjoy a re-mapping once a year or every couple of years. Some may choose to keep the process private and journal their way through their development. Some may choose to create partnerships or groups for support and discussion.

This Competency Profile is a compilation of knowledge and experience of hundreds of Feldenkrais Practitioners from many countries and innumerable backgrounds. It can be used right now to inform each and every practitioner about where they are professionally, where they want to be, and how they can continue to become more competent.

“To be of any practical use, the mode of doing must not be ideal but expedient – one that can be normally used in our present-day society. It is useless to aspire to an ideal of being better than everybody else. The main object is to form an attitude and a new set of responses that permit an even and poised application of oneself to the business of living and not to create new terrain for conflict. Moreover, the new mode of action must perforce be adjusted to the present environment – even though everybody agrees that our social structure and our education need radical improvement if they are to become suitable for a society of creative, evolving, mature adults.”

(Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais *The Potent Self*, p. 107)

Competency Diagram

Integrated Competencies		Areas of Activity	Competencies including Competence in Action	Resources		
				Knowledge	Abilities	Situational memories
Dealing with goals	Dealing with complexity	1. Feldenkrais Learning Applications	1.1 ... with individuals			
			1.2 ... with groups			
			1.3 ... in workplace environments			
			1.4 ... in other professions			
		2. Personal Dimension	2.1 Professional development			
			2.2 Personal development			
			2.3 Maintaining one's own balance			
		3. Business Organization	3.1 Practice management			
			3.2 Marketing			
			3.3 Interdisciplinary collaboration			
		4. Professional Association	4.1 Work in the professional association			
			4.2 Public relations work			
		5. Quality, Research and Training	5.1 Quality assurance and quality improvement			
			5.2 Research			
			5.3 Training initiatives			
Attitudes and Values						

The Diagram represents these relationships:

A "Competence" is the ability to apply "Resources" in a given professional situation (the Area of Activity)

Resources fall into three categories: "Knowledge", "Abilities", and "Situational Memories"

"Attitudes and Values" infuse every aspect. Therefore, they are shown at the bottom of the diagram.

"Integrated Competencies" affect all aspects of the Method and therefore stretch across the entire diagram.

Area of Activity 1: Feldenkrais Learning Applications

Competency 1.1: Working with individuals

When working with individuals, Feldenkrais practitioners facilitate specific kinds of learning. The learning process is guided verbally (ATM) and/or non-verbally through touch (FI). By conversing with the client, the practitioner elicits, clarifies and contextualizes the client's needs and wants. The practitioner takes into account the client's changing self-image. This all stimulates a new awareness on the part of the client for his/her own actions and functioning. This experience potentiates new ways of acting which, ideally, can be integrated into daily activities in an organic manner.

Competence in Action

- Observe movements and explore them through touch. Perceive from these movements the client's embodied intentions and self-image. Gather impressions and ideas concerning the client's potential for learning and development.
- Form and modify working hypotheses. Explore movement options creatively. Prepare the learning environment to suite the chosen theme, for example through choice of position, placement of props, etc
- Create and accompany learning situations by offering supportive, unfamiliar and provocative movement options. Help the client to experience himself/herself, through sense of touch and movement, through non-verbal, and verbal communication and through continuous feedback between action and response. Perceive, together with the client, breathing, expression, and movement, while periodically changing focus (e.g., narrow vs. broad, differentiated vs. undifferentiated)
- Evaluate working hypotheses on an ongoing basis. Observe rhythm and timing structures of the lesson. Through observation and dialogue, gauge changes in the client's kinesthetic awareness and self-image. If useful, reflect on the process together with the client.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ⊙ Are familiar with the original Feldenkrais materials including those from M. Feldenkrais' first assistants and others as well as the relevant literature, transcripts, audio tapes, and the Amherst videos.
- ⊙ Know the principles of biomechanics (e.g. leverage, axis of rotation, center of gravity)
- ⊙ Use the skeleton as a primary reference
- ⊙ Use functional and surface anatomy
- ⊙ Incorporate their knowledge of human, child and movement development

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- ⦿ Are aware of the various theories of perceptual learning styles (e.g. visual, auditory, kinesthetic)
- ⦿ Are cognizant of the dynamics of client/practitioner relationships (e.g. transference, projection, role models)
- ⦿ Are familiar with the principles of perception (e.g. the Weber-Fechner law)
- ⦿ Know about the various perspectives on learning processes, (e.g. from neurophysiology, study of consciousness, philosophy, phenomenology, pedagogy, neurogenesis, evolution, neuromotor function, perception, etc.)
- ⦿ Use language skillfully and carefully, knowing the consequences of word choice, imagery, tone of voice.

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ⦿ Create a learning environment that provides for a sense of safety and an appropriate level of challenge
- ⦿ Interview a client to discover his/her intentions and viewpoint
- ⦿ Organize the quality, intensity, and focus of one's own attention to refine perception
- ⦿ Employ action to initiate, focus, and appreciate learning
- ⦿ Investigate and confirm action patterns. Distinguish qualities and changes in patterns such as flow, direction, pressure, force, muscular effort, magnitude. Follow patterns and vary those qualities. Facilitate the client's awareness of changes during and due to the process
- ⦿ Apply specific techniques and methodological knowledge of Functional Integration (e.g. refer to standards of practice, training manuals, etc.)
- ⦿ Select strategies such as a series of FIs or ATMs, varying sessions of FI and ATM, or using them together (e.g. hands on guided ATM)
- ⦿ Maintain awareness of one's own organization and change it appropriately while working (e.g. patterns of thinking, posture/acture, breathing, gaze)
- ⦿ Collect and reflect on one's own thoughts during and after the lesson
- ⦿ Help the client process the ATM/FI experience and relate it to daily activities
- ⦿ Educate the client about Feldenkrais concepts and models as the concepts become relevant in lessons/learning (e.g. organic learning, self image, function, differentiation and integration of movement)
- ⦿ Maintain awareness of the potential for transference and preserve appropriate boundaries
- ⦿ Use props and positioning aids effectively
- ⦿ Evaluate experiences after a series of sessions with a client and adapt future sessions accordingly

Competency 1.2: Working with groups

When working with groups, Feldenkrais practitioners use verbal instructions to provide a structured series of experiences involving moving, thinking, sensing and feeling. Within a thematic framework, they guide participants to continually explore and differentiate movement options and support them to integrate these new experiences/options into their daily lives. In doing so, they direct the group's attention to those dimensions of the learning process which transcend the aspect of mere movement.

Competence in Action

- Clarify the expectations, needs, and goals of participants. Assess the composition of the group in terms of experience, professions, age, abilities, limitations, etc.
- Select and/or create Awareness Through Movement lessons appropriate to the theme, the composition of the group, the goals of the participants, and the time frame (e.g. weekly lessons, one day workshops, weekend seminars)
- Shape the learning process: concentrate on topic, rhythm, time, and language.
- Ask participants to perceive changes during and after the lesson(s). Observe changes. Provide opportunity for participants to share their experiences. Lead group discussions. Reflect on the teaching/learning experience and outcomes. Adjust teaching plan and style accordingly.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ☉ Are familiar with the original Feldenkrais materials (Alexander Yanai lessons, video and audio recordings of M. Feldenkrais)
- ☉ Are familiar with other sources of ATM recordings, videos, transcripts (class, workshop, training curricula, San Francisco and Amherst training transcripts)
- ☉ Know various ways to structure ATM lessons
- ☉ Understand the effects of language, e.g., consequences of word choice, imagery, and tone of voice.
- ☉ Know about group processes
- ☉ See movement as an expression of the self image
- ☉ Are familiar with the effects of trauma

*See also Resources for Competency 1.1

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ☉ Focus primarily on the process, rather than a particular goal, outcome, movement, or action
- ☉ Integrate one's own ATM experiences into ATM teaching
- ☉ Teach ATM in a variety of ways (timing, rhythm, and learning strategies such as variation, limitation, change of perspective)
- ☉ Observe and analyze clients' actions, recognize potential for improvement, and adapt teaching to maximize potential
- ☉ Convey lesson content with clarity
- ☉ Use voice (enunciation, volume, intonation) and language (vocabulary, tempo) as a tool to enhance the clients' capacity for self perception
- ☉ Lead a group and facilitate group processes
- ☉ Use narrative to illustrate and/or promote the learning process
- ☉ Use Feldenkrais concepts, models, as well as scientific, artistic, and cultural ideas to promote the learning process
- ☉ Convert ATM concepts or ATM lessons into FI themes
- ☉ React appropriately in cases of emotional and somatic urgencies

Competency 1.3: Workplace environments

Feldenkrais practitioners interview and observe individuals and/or groups at work (e.g. in the household, factories, offices, sports, arts, trades, teaching professions) Using Feldenkrais principles and techniques (e.g. FI, ATM, self perception) within the work environment, they teach clients how to perform with more efficiency, pleasure, and expression.

Competence in Action

- Clarify clients' interests, issues, goals and resources. Observe and analyze work activities. Recognize and articulate possibilities for optimization (e.g. movements, ergonomics, and self-care).
- Generate strategies for facilitating changes in the workplace and/or the workers. Plan workplace appropriate activities (lecture, ATM, FI, self perception practices).
- Amplify the clients' awareness of habitual movement/action patterns at work. Provide experiential alternatives using verbal and/or non verbal means.
- Interview and observe clients in the workplace after intervention. Reflect and adjust plan accordingly.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ☉ Know about the structure and function of organizations and workplaces
- ☉ Are familiar with basic elements of work psychology
- ☉ Are aware of forms of interactions and collaborations within and between occupations

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ☉ Incorporate oneself respectfully into existing work environments and organizations
- ☉ Acknowledge the environmental and work process factors that cannot be changed
- ☉ Deal effectively with the multiple issues surrounding demands for high performance (e.g. athletes, artists, high level executives)
- ☉ Differentiate the demands of a work environment or task from the workers' habitual responses
- ☉ Adapt teaching strategies to the work environment (e.g. short ATM or FI at the workplace, use appropriate language)
- ☉ Effectively communicate the potential benefits of Feldenkrais in a workplace (to workers, managers, decision makers)

Competency 1.4: Working in other professions

Feldenkrais practitioners may work predominantly in other fields (e.g. schools, management, music, dance, sports, and work with animals). Within those fields they use the Method to improve the emotional, intellectual, artistic, and physical abilities of their clients. They may also use the Method to improve the function and/or development of an organization.

Within other fields, Feldenkrais practitioners use Feldenkrais ways of thinking, principles, and techniques to inform and enhance professional abilities.

Competence in Action

- Recognize situations in which a Feldenkrais approach could be beneficial.
- Create a plan for integrating Feldenkrais elements, approaches and ideas into this professional field. Identify and allocate the necessary resources.
- Incorporate the plan into the primary profession. Maintain the integrity of Feldenkrais ideas while respecting the boundaries of the professional role.
- Observe and reflect on the personal, professional and organizational outcomes of the plan. Adjust as indicated.

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Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners who work in other professions:

- ☉ Are aware of aspects of one's own profession which may be enhanced by Feldenkrais principles/approaches
- ☉ Understand profession-appropriate behavior (relationships, communication, ethics)
- ☉ Know profession-appropriate language, and its potential for integrating Feldenkrais Method
- ☉ Are familiar with literature which can support/explain the potential benefits of the Method within a specific professional field
- ☉ Know about other relevant methods (e.g. Alexander, Eutony, Rolfing, Ideokinesis, somatic psychology, physiotherapy)
- ☉ Are familiar with profession-specific equipment, materials and procedures

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners who work in other professions are able to:

- ☉ Integrate knowledge and experience from both professions
- ☉ Relate one's professional activities and literature to the Feldenkrais Method
- ☉ Adapt Feldenkrais principles, elements and techniques to one's professional field
- ☉ Utilize the fundamental principles of the Feldenkrais Method
- ☉ Effectively communicate Feldenkrais ideas to members of one's professional field
- ☉ Create a network of Feldenkrais practitioners working in similar professional situations, communicate and collaborate.

Area of Activity 2: Personal Dimension

Competency 2.1: Professional development

Feldenkrais practitioners continuously expand and refine their professional knowledge, abilities, and attitudes.

Competence in Action

- Note areas of expertise and underdevelopment within one's Feldenkrais practice. Research upcoming learning opportunities (e.g. advanced trainings, workshops, study groups, supervision, mentoring)
- Shape a learning plan. Identify and allocate the required resources (e.g. time, money, teachers)
- Apply oneself to the learning plan. Integrate new knowledge into one's Feldenkrais practice and share one's experiences with colleagues.
- Assess changes in professional development. Adjust learning plan appropriately and identify more training and learning opportunities.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ☉ Know about advanced training opportunities and sources (association/guild, trainers, assistant trainers, colleagues, advanced training programs, IFF Academy, supervision)
- ☉ Are familiar with professional educational resources (e.g. journals, internet, books/publications, Feldenkrais trainers, IFF)
- ☉ Are familiar with various Methods of somatic education
- ☉ Have knowledge of research studies and outcomes which relate to the Feldenkrais method
- ☉ Are familiar with cultural discourses (e.g. linguistic, philosophical, artistic, societal, psychological) which may impact one's development within the Feldenkrais Method

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ☉ Initiate professional learning processes
- ☉ Develop an individual style of Feldenkrais practice
- ☉ Use movement experience and skeletal awareness to stimulate learning and integrate new knowledge into practice
- ☉ Accept accountability for one's work with individuals and groups
- ☉ Shape interactions responsibly
- ☉ Reflect on one's own work style

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Competency 2.2: Personal development

Feldenkrais practitioners pursue perpetual learning and maturation. They cultivate their curiosity and direct their continuous self development.

Professional crises and developmental plateaus are appreciated as necessary and unavoidable stages of a successful developmental process.

Competence in Action

- Appreciate the current stage of personal/professional development. Refine awareness of one's own cultural, intellectual, emotional, and professional roots. Note feelings of weakness and/or strength.
- Recognize one's own potential and identify areas for improvement and growth.
- Use Feldenkrais lessons/principles to expand self image and develop emotionally/physically/cognitively. Explore other means to integrate and support growth.
- Assess and appreciate developmental changes and advances. Alter plan to further develop potential.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ☉ Know of various means for reflecting on one's own actions (e.g. supervision, counseling, self assessment)
- ☉ Are familiar with cultural discourses (e.g. linguistic, philosophical, artistic, societal, psychological, etc.) which may impact one's development
- ☉ Are cognizant of personal strengths and weaknesses

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ☉ Use ATM for self exploration and development
- ☉ Create a vision for one's future
- ☉ Engage in introspection regarding thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and ideas
- ☉ Open oneself to new learning experiences (e.g., accept being a beginner)
- ☉ Cope with uncertainty
- ☉ Search for new self perspectives and question courses of action.

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Competency 2.3: Maintaining one's own balance

Feldenkrais practitioners are aware that life is a process. They employ their knowledge and abilities to maintain or regain life balance.

Competence in Action

- Scan for physical, emotional and cognitive indicators of balance. Reflect on responses and feedback from peers about the state of one's own balance. Consider the internal and external factors which may be influencing balance. Explore the various possibilities for improving balance.
- Establish a realistic plan for maintaining or regaining balance.
- Take measures for improving or maintaining balance which are appropriate to the situation (e.g. set limits, allow time for relaxation, do ATM regularly, accept offers of professional support, engage in sports, change eating habits)
- Sense, feel, observe, and reflect on the effects of the measures. Adjust as needed.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ☉ Understand concepts of balance within a complex environment
- ☉ Are familiar with sources of professional assistance (supervision, counseling)
- ☉ Know methods and strategies for influencing one's own balance, physical and emotional health.
- ☉ Know time management skills

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ☉ Develop and maintain awareness of one's own self image
- ☉ Attend to one's own sensations, emotions, and thoughts
- ☉ Respectfully respond to one's own physical, emotional and intellectual needs
- ☉ Engage in self observation and redirection during work (energy expenditure, breathing, posture/acture)
- ☉ Use the Feldenkrais Method and its ideas to promote one's own well being
- ☉ Tap sources of joy and relaxation (e.g. laughter, love, relationships)
- ☉ Reframe "setbacks" as opportunities for learning
- ☉ Utilize assistance such as supervision and counseling

back

Area of Activity 3: Business Organization

Competency 3.1: Practice management

Feldenkrais practitioners manage a practice of their own as a professional business.

Competence in Action

- Monitor governmental regulations and the standards of practice/ethical guidelines of the professional association/guild.
- Define business goals (e.g. professional vision, budget planning, and prioritization of tasks). Plan systems and allocate resources to run business efficiently (e.g. appointment scheduling, purchasing materials, and housekeeping).
- Respond to correspondence and phone calls. Schedule and keep appointments. Execute administrative tasks. Purchase materials. Generate invoices, process payments, meet financial obligations.
- Review business status relative to goals. Adjust goals and business practices accordingly.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ⊙ Know governmental regulations and the standards of practice/ethical guidelines of the professional association/guild
- ⊙ Are familiar with resources for professional assistance with practice management
- ⊙ Know fundamentals of small business financial management (cash flow, tax reporting, projections)

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ⊙ Take entrepreneurial actions
- ⊙ Assert oneself in negotiations
- ⊙ Organize and schedule one's own daily work
- ⊙ Use information technology to one's own advantage
- ⊙ Assess business decisions (e.g: bills, offers, complaints, opportunities)
- ⊙ Acknowledge difficult business situations. Resolve them effectively.
- ⊙ Conduct basic business processes (correspondence, telephone contacts)
- ⊙ Express oneself effectively both verbally and in writing

back

Competency 3.2: Marketing

Feldenkrais practitioners create public curiosity, interest and respect for their services. They employ a variety of techniques and modalities to promote their work and the Method.

Competence in Action

- Research and analyze the market. Identify business opportunities. Learn about resources for marketing assistance from local, regional, and professional associations/guilds.
- Determine the target markets; establish the marketing goals and the services to be offered. Create a time line and budget. Plan advertising. Prepare for lectures, discussions, and negotiations.
- Implement marketing plan, advertising measures and conduct events (e.g. advertising campaigns, lectures, demonstrations, public workshops, create and maintain a web site, produce/distribute fliers and/or brochures, conduct negotiations).
- Review outcomes of marketing plan. Reorient plan appropriately.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ⊙ Are familiar with relevant communities, target markets, and networking opportunities
- ⊙ Know small business marketing principles and strategies
- ⊙ Are familiar with local and professional association/guild resources for marketing assistance (e.g. marketing kits, web designers, workshops)
- ⊙ Know about creating and using a client database

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ⊙ Analyze the local and regional market for similar services
- ⊙ Identify target groups and garner interest with effective communication
- ⊙ Direct the design and production of one's own advertising material
- ⊙ Give appealing public lectures
- ⊙ Give effective public FI and ATM demonstrations
- ⊙ Collaborate with colleagues on regional marketing projects
- ⊙ Use anecdotal evidence to promote understanding and respect for the Feldenkrais Method
- ⊙ Make one's own premises and practice attractive for clients

back

Competency 3.3: Interdisciplinary collaboration

Feldenkrais practitioners collaborate with professionals in other fields to develop ideas, projects, and establish new goals.

Competence in Action

- Pursue knowledge about other professional fields. Identify commonalities and/or potential areas for mutual benefit.
- Plan projects which highlight the commonalities and/or mutual benefits for all professions involved. Clarify responsibilities and goals.
- Collaborate with project partners to execute the project. Integrate the Feldenkrais Method according to plan.
- Evaluate the outcomes, reflect, and adjust the collaborative project appropriately.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ⊕ Are familiar with relevant professional and/or scientific fields and methods
- ⊕ Know strategies for incorporating Feldenkrais principles into other fields and projects and vice versa
- ⊕ Are familiar with conferences and symposia where one can attend and/or present Feldenkrais principles and propose collaborations

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ⊕ Establish effective interdisciplinary networks
- ⊕ Demonstrate the benefits of collaboration between Feldenkrais practitioners and other professionals
- ⊕ Articulate interdisciplinary commonalities, the potential for mutual benefit, and propose projects
- ⊕ Maintain flexibility and integrity within a joint project framework

back

Area of Activity 4: Professional Organization

Competency 4.1: Work in the professional association

Feldenkrais practitioners stay informed about issues confronting the regional, national, and international associations and governing bodies. They contribute information and opinions to help shape the goals of these associations. They work to achieve these goals by participating in working groups, projects, and/or assuming active roles on boards and committees.

Competence in Action

- Orient oneself to the structure, function and goals of the association/guild. Determine the needs and expectations of the membership. Initiate discussion about development within the association as well as in the society at large. Identify areas of insufficiency. Ascertain the qualifications and resources necessary to fill available roles in the association.
- Reflect on the potential for making a personal contribution to the association/guild. Allocate the time and resources necessary to fill the role.
- Make a commitment to the task or role. Participate accordingly.
- Reflect on the outcomes of the work, from both personal and organizational perspectives. Alter activities/roles accordingly.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ☉ Are familiar with the structure, function, and processes of the association/guild
- ☉ Know relevant laws, statutes, regulations and guidelines which apply to those who work in the association/guild
- ☉ Are familiar with the educational, health care, and other pertinent regulatory/social systems in one's own country
- ☉ Are cognizant of opportunities for training in organizational work (e.g. staff, resource and financial management, conflict resolution, communications and governance)

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ☉ Recognize and articulate the needs of the organization's membership
- ☉ Communicate within one's own association/guild and with other associations/guilds
- ☉ Cultivate professional relationships based on shared values and mutual goals
- ☉ Collaborate respectfully in teams
- ☉ Resolve conflicts. Invite assistance from outside the association when appropriate

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- ☉ Effectively assume executive roles (board/working group membership, discussion moderator, project leadership)
- ☉ Pursue education/training to improve one's effectiveness within the association
- ☉ Communicate in more than one language
- ☉ Understand and articulate the relationships between the goals of the association/guild and its ongoing projects

Competency 4.2: Public relations work

As members of the professional association, Feldenkrais practitioners create and improve public awareness and recognition of the Feldenkrais Method. To this end, they create verbal and visual images of the Feldenkrais Method and convey them to target audiences via activities and/or media (e.g. interviews, lectures, articles).

Competence in Action

- Inform oneself about cultural, economic, scientific, and political trends in order to find points of contact for public relations activities
- Conceive and develop public relations activities (e.g. information events, public forums, Feldenkrais events, articles, lectures, work demonstrations, radio, TV, video productions, networking, etc.). Identify and ascertain the availability of the required resources for each activity.
- Organize and execute public relations activities on local, regional, national and international levels. Meet with representatives of relevant organizations. Report to colleagues on the outcomes of meetings and activities.
- Evaluate the responses to each medium and activity.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ☉ Understand the fundamental demands of public relations work
- ☉ Know about the organization and efficacy of different types of media and how to access them
- ☉ Are familiar with past efforts, ongoing projects and future plans for public relations activities by the professional organization/guild

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ☉ Offer one's skills in marketing, interdisciplinary collaboration, and public relations to the professional association/guild
- ☉ Define potential target groups for public relations work
- ☉ Assume responsibility for short, medium, and long term planning
- ☉ Set and prioritize public relations goals
- ☉ Engage in public and private dialogues with colleagues, media personnel, and public figures

back

Area of Activity 5: Quality, Research and Training

Competency 5.1: Quality assurance and quality improvement

Feldenkrais practitioners engage in a continuous process of assessing whether their skills and services are consistent with the standards of practice and ethical guidelines of their professional associations and guilds. This process may involve the practitioner alone or in association with other professional colleagues.

Competence in Action

- Learn the quality standards/standards of practice and ethical guidelines of the professional associations/guilds. Become familiar with general methods of quality assessment.
- Utilize systematic processes to assess the quality of one's work and plan quality improvement measures.
- Discuss/review quality assurance and quality improvement with clients and colleagues. Make standards of practice and ethical guidelines available to clients.
- Reflect on the results of one's quality assurance/improvement processes and improve them as necessary. This may involve the practitioner alone or in association with other colleagues.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ⊙ Know the standards of practice and ethical guidelines of the professional association/guild
- ⊙ Are familiar with general methods of quality assessment (e.g. observation and reflection, surveys, interviews)
- ⊙ Know about methods of quality assurance specific to the professional field

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ⊙ Alternate attention between work experience and reflection about the results.
- ⊙ Articulate the relationship between experience and the results
- ⊙ Discuss quality assurance and improvement with colleagues and professionals from other disciplines. Maintain a respectful focus on possible solutions to quality assurance issues
- ⊙ Use a variety of methods for quality assessment such as consultation with colleagues, observation and feedback, self and peer assessment
- ⊙ Prioritize quality assurance issues and quality improvement tasks
- ⊙ Take action on quality improvement tasks
- ⊙ Process client's complaints according to professional association/guild guidelines

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Competency 5.2: Research

Feldenkrais practitioners help develop the Method by using accepted scientific procedures to investigate the work. They may organize and administer their own research projects or participate in the projects of others. They communicate their research questions, results, methods, and Feldenkrais principles to professional researchers and associations.

Competence in Action

- Select a topic and conduct a comprehensive review of the relevant literature.
- Formulate a research question, a hypothesis, and select research and data analysis methods.
- Proceed with the data collection according to the plan. Record quantitative and/or qualitative data, analyze results, and make details of the study available to the appropriate individuals and groups.
- Reflect on research results and their possible applications. Make recommendations for further research studies.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ☉ Know research methods which are applicable to Feldenkrais work
- ☉ Know previous and ongoing Feldenkrais research
- ☉ Know previous and ongoing research in relevant fields
- ☉ Are cognizant of diverse scientific concepts including those to which Dr. M. Feldenkrais made reference in his work
- ☉ Are familiar with opportunities for publication and the potential benefits of each opportunity

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ☉ Review and summarize the research literature related to a topic
- ☉ Formulate, describe, and investigate hypotheses
- ☉ Collect and analyze qualitative and/or quantitative data
- ☉ Document and present research and results in a meaningful way
- ☉ Conduct research in the context of one's own Feldenkrais practice
- ☉ Establish professional dialogue with other researchers around common research interests and goals

back

Competency 5.3: Training tasks

Feldenkrais practitioners instruct, support, observe and provide feedback to Feldenkrais students and colleagues. They do this in basic training programs, advanced training programs, workshops, classes, practica, mentoring, and supervision. Feldenkrais practitioners conceptualize and organize individual and group activities in order to enrich, expand, and improve the practice of the Feldenkrais Method.

Competence in Action:

- Refine awareness of one's own teaching skills and areas of expertise. Analyze the interests and needs of the Feldenkrais community.
- Originate a program and plan. Identify and access the necessary resources.
- Teach, supervise, and mentor using a variety of teaching methods.
- Evaluate the responses of students and colleagues both during and after the program. Reflect on the responses and improve future programs accordingly.

Resources

Knowledge

Feldenkrais practitioners:

- ☉ Know national and international training regulations
- ☉ Know the structure of training programs and the current discussion on basic training programs and advanced trainings
- ☉ Are familiar with various theories on self-reflection in the learning process and the transfer of learning.
- ☉ Are cognizant of concepts, research findings and approaches used in similar professions
- ☉ Know about stages of learning

Abilities

Feldenkrais practitioners are able to:

- ☉ Synthesize multiple forms of information and feedback while teaching
- ☉ Recognize and respond appropriately to the needs of students. Continuously adapt teaching activities and methods to these needs
- ☉ Use original Feldenkrais material effectively
- ☉ Create learning opportunities for shifting between practical experience and theoretical reflection
- ☉ Facilitate smooth transitions between oneself and other teachers
- ☉ Create opportunities for students to transition into self directed learning
- ☉ Discuss training experiences, both from the teaching and learning perspectives with colleagues
- ☉ Describe and reflect on experiences in writing

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Glossary of Basic Terms

Ability

Sensory-motor aptitude. One of the three kinds of resources. [back](#)

Areas of Activity

The circumstances in which Feldenkrais practitioners act. They include: Feldenkrais Learning Applications, Personal Dimension, Business Organization, Professional Association and Quality, Research and Training. [back](#)

Attitudes and Values

The ways in which our profession assigns worth and importance to attributes and ideas. They provide the context for the interpretation and use of competencies and resources. [back](#)

Competence in Action

The act of sorting, choosing and applying resources in a given situation, evaluating the response, and planning the next action. In this document each competency includes a description that reflects such a process. [back](#)

Competency

The ability to mobilize and focus the resources necessary to act successfully in a given situation. [back](#)

Integrated Competencies

A specific synthesis of knowledge and experience. They cannot be attributed to a single competency only, rather, Integrated Competencies may be applied in every situation. In the development of this profile these were distilled into two essential competencies: "Dealing with complexity" and "Dealing with goals". [back](#)

Knowledge

Facts, truth, principles, concepts, guidelines and definitions which can be interconnected in many diverse ways. One of the three kinds of resources. [back](#)

Learning Plan

A written strategy which reflects ones desires for professional development based on the discoveries one makes during self and peer assessment. [back](#)

Peer Assessment

A discovery process which requires a partner. The partner listens attentively and asks careful questions in order to fill in details and/or shift focus as the practitioner reflects on a competency and the related self assessment. If the practitioner requests, the partner may provide specific kinds of feedback. [back](#)

Resources

The culmination of what one has learned, experienced, and used to date. Resources include knowledge, abilities and situational memories. Although a resource can be applied in many different areas of activity, in this document each resource is listed only once for simplicity. [back](#)

Self Assessment

A discovery process. One reflects on a competency or group of competencies and the related resources and then writes about a professional situation which illustrates or demonstrates the use of this resource. This may include rating one's level of comfort and experience with it. [back](#)

Situational Memories

The inner treasury of stories and memories, which may influence one's actions. Spontaneous reference to this store of memories is often called "intuitive" action. [back](#)

Historical Overview of Project

This Competency Profile is the result of a qualitative social research process which involved Feldenkrais practitioners in all stages of its development. This included exploring different possible research methodologies, the gathering of stories (phenomenological descriptions), the incorporation of processes used in workshops, and reviewing the literature, both theoretical and that pertaining to Feldenkrais. This process occurred over the course of many years.

- 1992** IFF Assembly, Paris
- 1993** IFF Assembly, Paris
- 1994** IFF Assembly, Tel Aviv: working group on training outcomes
- 1995** IFF Assembly, Heidelberg: working group on training outcomes
- 1996** IFF Assembly, Basel
FGNA Survey, A Snapshot of our Practice

- 1997** IFF Assembly, Basel: IFF Survey: Success and the Feldenkrais Method, practitioners and trainers surveyed

- 1998** May, IFF Assembly, Soesterberg: "Community scan" shifted IFF focus away from trainings and onto practitioners and the professional field. A process agenda on competence was proposed.

- 1999** May, IFF Assembly, Baltimore: Appreciative Inquiry process led to two issues: enhancing quality of the work done by practitioners and focusing on competencies. Proposals were passed to pursue research in quality and competency and to identify core competencies in the Method. A quality and competency committee was formed.

- 2000** May, IFF Assembly, Neuburg: workshops on Quality and Competency

- 2001** May, IFF Assembly, Kassel: trials of various processes, including interviews, ATM and FI activities attempt to identify competencies. IFF Academy idea adopted

- 2002** May, IFF Assembly, Skotteveig: Budget approved for competency pilot project. Pilot questionnaire is used at Assembly. Dr. W. Goetze, industrial organizational psychologist, is hired as a consultant.

- 2003** May, IFF Assembly, Soesterberg: 3 year budget adopted including the competency project.

- 2004** Pilot-Workshop in Stuttgart, workshop in Hamburg. A comprehensive report was written based on the findings of the pilot workshops. Advisory committee is formed.

- 2005** Workshop in San Francisco
IFF Assembly, Berlin: Project report presented, European Feldenkrais Congress. Berlin: Workshop held.
May-June 2005, Zurich: Competency Team (3 persons) writes a draft Profile
October 2005, New York, draft revision and English translation. Draft profile sent to Advisory Committee.
- 2006** 33 experts in the Feldenkrais professional community provide feedback on draft profile. In March, 15 experienced Feldenkrais practitioners provide written comments about draft profile. April 2006, workshop in Stuttgart, validation of Profile by self and peer assessment
IFF Assembly, Soesterberg: Assembly votes to continue project for 2 more years until completion of Profile.
- 2007** January, Soesterberg: Competency workshop facilitator training. Transition team meets, fresh competency team appointed. Translation of working draft into seven IFF-member-languages. February – September: 13 Competency Profile Feedback workshops held in 10 different countries: USA, Netherlands, Israel, France, Austria, Italy, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland.
October: Competency team incorporates feedback from every workshop and begins writing final draft.
- 2008** January: Competency team completes final draft.
May, IFF Assembly, Soesterberg, Competency Profile is presented

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