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1994

Annual Reports

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - 1994

1 May 1994

The end of the second year of IFF's existence will be marked by a special event: the arrival in Tel Aviv in May of 1994 of the representatives of twenty guilds and professional groups from different countries, acting for over 2,300 practitioners of our Method, and the occurrence of our Annual Conference in this city where Moshe Feldenkrais lived, taught, developed most of his work, and trained his first assistants. Meeting in Tel Aviv is the wish of his nephew, Michel Silice. This wish was met with a unanimous response from our members at the IFF Annual General Meeting in Paris in May of 1993.

For me it is indeed an event, a vital time, because it will celebrate, ten years after Moshe Feldenkrais' death, not his departure but his influence; not the end of an era and journey but the thrust and drive of the community that he created through his thinking, his work, his personality, his charisma. It also confirms the development of this Method that represents his life's work that is, through us all, through all the practitioners we represent at whatever level, transmitted and spread worldwide, whether in large metropolises or tiny villages in the country; from children to the elderly; from artists to sports people to creative thinkers, in increasingly varied fields of activities depending on the centers of interest, desires, and dreams of each practitioner.

It is a vital time also because we are gathered together in Tel Aviv, within the same Federation, in other words, the practitioners who are all trained by all the assistants of Moshe Feldenkrais without distinction (even if the status with the Federation is not the same for all, but everyone is here!), after a long and sometimes difficult process (not yet concluded), ten years of questions, and almost clashing, rejection, and coming together to arrive at this dialogue today, which could only exist because each one of us felt able to accept the presence of the others. It is a bridge between the intensive period that followed Moshe Feldenkrais' death, when his personality still hung over us, where everyone stood with reference to him, when many attached great and justified importance to the personal relationship they had had or had not had with him — and the period to come: a future both recognizing the inspiration of his sources, the founding of his heritage and affirming his attachment to certain principles and beliefs; a period that is resolutely turned to the future, and that envisages evolution, the inexorable path of every living being that does not wish to disintegrate by imploding.

“Nothing in our patterns is permanent
except for our belief that they are.”

This is a special time also: whilst Michel Silice is welcoming us in Tel Aviv he is assuring us with great sincerity and generosity that he wishes to place at the disposal of practitioners throughout the world all the material recorded or written by Moshe. His only and justified requirement being that the material should be accessible to all without discrimination of any kind, without personal profit, nor conflict of interest. Today already a project dear to many of us is seeing the light: the translation into English from Hebrew and the publication of what many consider to be the bases of his teaching — the lessons he gave between 1950 and 1974 at his studio “Alexander Yanai.” Six-hundred lessons; a gold mine and reference for us all and the future generations of practitioners.

Other projects concerning the archives left by Moshe Feldenkrais are being drawn up with the IFF but also with those who for years have been giving their time and energy for the material to be available. I am thinking in particular of *Feldenkrais Resources*.

This is an exciting and exacting time when you think that ten years ago what we call the *Feldenkrais* community totaled 300 persons (including 220 students being trained at Amherst) while today it groups and federates about 2,300 members plus all those who often for personal reasons do not join the guilds or associations.

It is exciting because growth is a sign of health and vitality; exacting because if it is not to run wild and disintegrate, our growth must remain fundamentally authentic, based on the essence of what makes our specificity and on the understanding of the functional principles stated by Moshe Feldenkrais: not giving way to urgency, personal interest of money or power, or the aim of growing for the sake of growing, expanding for the sake of it.

It is a unique time to be savoured, happy and proud of where we have got to without regret but also without impatience — just aware and present.

“Look at the light and admire its beauty.
What you first saw is no longer;
What you next see is not yet.”
Leonardo da Vinci

It is a unique time that we have to snap in the fullness of its significance and requirements. Since as the Chinese say, “You can never catch the same train twice.”

The IFF second year was well filled. The secretary “rep” (Jean Conran) will provide the details of our actions, research, and questions.

Nevertheless, let us remember that the human skeleton took millions of years to obtain its extraordinary and functional structure— that of the IFF could not develop in a few days. Every step we make must rest on solid and sound bases so that it can act as a reference and springboard for the next step to achieve our real intentions.

I have only one real regret: I was not sufficiently aware and close to you all, your guilds, and your members during the year, nor was the Board of Directors and the IFF as a Federation.

We must evolve on this front. We shall do so because these are human relations that we are building...the blood and nerves of this body, what makes its heart beat.

François Combeau
IFF President 1994

SECRETARY'S REPORT - 1994

Last year, I commented on the productivity of your Board of Directors in producing fine babies; this year my contribution to this field has been in assisting my labrador to produce and rear a fine litter of puppies. I found it highly instructive to observe the delicate interplay of instinct and learning in their rapid acquisition of mobility and to marvel at the early appearance of idiosyncratic differences in each individual. A *Feldenkrais* training provides a powerful tool for observation and for learning. The *Feldenkrais* Method, like every human endeavour, has the potential to activate and to use creatively the capacity of human beings to cooperate in developing the common good and in providing support for those in need of help. It also activates basic human needs for identity and self-regard. It is appropriate that the IFF should provide a forum for these sometimes conflicting realities, and also that it provides us with opportunities for choice. We can choose the security of looking inwards towards identification with small, safe groupings of ideas and people, with perspectives as identical as possible to our own. Or we can choose the more dangerous option of looking outwards towards less familiar ideas and larger groupings, in this case the forever growing and increasingly diverse international *Feldenkrais* community.

As a biologist, I see strength and rich evolutionary potential in diversity and the IFF as a forum for natural selection, through proposing, listening, experimenting, adapting, sometimes changing, sometimes rejecting, but, most importantly making a success of what we have now. We have to live successfully today, in order to have a future. So we would really like to hear from those who feel they have something positive and beneficial to offer the *Feldenkrais* community, in addition to hearing from those who feel the IFF should be paying more attention to their particular problems. After all, who is the IFF? It is not an anonymous someone "out there", with infinite resources of time, money and miracle-making equipment. It is just the members, which includes us and you and me and YOU.

We owe a great deal to the excellence of our

President, whose idealism and service to the IFF is unstinting and will, I hope, become increasingly apparent to you as time goes by. He is, for example, patiently negotiating for resources to be made available to the whole community, and we have to demonstrate that the IFF is mature and stable enough to be entrusted with such valuable materials. He is often cast into the role of mediator, an exacting and responsible position. People look to him for leadership in matters large and small. It is understandable that, in our second year of existence, you may sometimes feel disappointed that not all of your high hopes and expectations have yet been fulfilled. The harmonization of twenty-one constituent member groups, responsible for an estimated 2,250 individual members, from at least sixteen nations, could be expected to take a little time. Like an iceberg, the IFF may be showing a fairly small visible structure, but there are strong forces at work within the large mass below the surface.

There has been a great increase this year in the flow of communication through fax and phone. All of the directors and all but one of the constituent member groups of the IFF are now linked into the fax network; eleven individual representatives can still be contacted only through the post. Computer linkage is not feasible until more members have regular computer access. But nothing yet replaces the advantages in understanding and in productivity of face-to-face exchanges so, despite the cost to our small budget, we held an intensive three-day Board of Directors meeting in Paris in December and the President and Secretary met in London in February. A report will be made at the Assembly on issues discussed.

Board meetings were supplemented by many other contacts at all levels of our organization during the year. Just a few examples will demonstrate ways in which our network can function in addition to the telecommunications links. Two directors met at the North American Conference in New York. Representatives of several European member groups met together in Switzerland. An Australian representative met with members of the U.K. Guild at the EuroTAB representative's training in

SECRETARY'S REPORT - 1994

England. Practitioners from Guilds and from non-TAB trainings have worked harmoniously together during advanced trainings in several countries. The IFF secretary, at such a training, was able to discuss issues of unification with Ruthy Alon, a member of the Unification of Membership Committee, and with practitioners from different trainings. The German Guild and the German members of the Mia Segal Network have held joint meetings to discuss ways in which they can work together and avoid some of the difficulties which have arisen in other countries. The President of the North American Guild was able to draw on his Guild's experience of the law to produce a rapid response to a concern of the Israeli Guild. A U.K. representative living in London was able to provide accommodation for the IFF President during his visit there. These are just examples of which I happen to know; there must, of course, be many others.

We are not yet clear as to the full role of the IFF; it is an embryonic organization whose members have still to participate in its development. It should be a forum for the identification and initial discussion of any issues of concern to *Feldenkrais* practitioners. Without making judgments as to whether or not they can be resolved within the IFF, the following are some of the issues which have been identified to me, as secretary:

A wish for more flexible models of training and training accreditation; a need for support and supervision in the early years of practice; both a wish for, and concern about, unification of membership; problems caused by one country having more than one professional organization for *Feldenkrais* practitioners; a desire for more active involvement of trainers in the work of Guilds and in the work of the country in which they are conducting their trainings, clarification of the respective roles of the TAB's, Guilds, trainers and training organizers in deciding where and when new trainings shall be started; question of parentage and accountability of Training Accreditation Boards (present and future); desire for an available and comprehensive educational plan or curriculum for each training; concern about

the courses of new trainers who have not followed recognized professional pathways; qualification for membership in the IFF (for example, the individual members of the TAB's and the Forum are already represented through their Guilds); caucusing of constituent member groups within the IFF; problems caused by professionals trained in other disciplines (e.g. in physiotherapy) claiming to be *Feldenkrais* practitioners after short, non-training courses, and benefiting from medical insurance schemes; need for agreed IFF guidelines in dealing with other professions and organizations and with the general public (e.g. advertising policy, legal issues, relationships with mainstream medical services, medical insurance); difficulties in protecting service marks; shortage of volunteers to undertake the work of the IFF; lack of a central IFF office with a paid secretary; lack of an internal IFF newsletter to maintain communication between the annual Assemblies; need for an annually revised brochure providing information about the *Feldenkrais* Method and the IFF together with details of constituent member groups and new trainings.

We shall have opportunities of addressing these issues and of building upon our foundation at our approaching 1994 Annual Assembly in Israel. Inevitably, any list of issues tends to focus on our deficits on what we feel is missing. Do not forget the progress we have actually made in two years and such invaluable assets as the enthusiasm, warmth, and goodwill which the representatives of the constituent member groups bring to our gatherings. I look forward to this special gathering in Israel, just ten years after the death of Moshe and made possible through the generosity of Michel Silice and the *Feldenkrais* Institute of Tel Aviv. To honour the occasion this second issue of the IFF Journal contains people's personal memories on the man who started it all - Moshe Feldenkrais. Best wishes to you all and success in your careers, which are the *raison d'être* of the IFF.

R. Jean Conran
IFF Secretary
31 March 1994

TREASURER'S REPORT - 1994

As I sit here looking over pages of memos and numbers from Australia, Europe, and the United States, I can only feel that as I juggle these numbers that these financial numbers are very much like all of us and the issues confronting the IFF.

There are so many currencies, so many needs, so many special requests, so many bits of numbers or information I think I am missing, so much work to be done and so little time to do it in, and so many friends with whom I get the pleasure to talk or send faxes. This is my "job" of my being the Treasurer for the IFF as I attempt to maintain the IFF's financial solvency so that the IFF may have the financial resources to do what the IFF intends. This is also very much like the issues with which we are dealing as an organization as we decide and set course on the direction we shall take. I feel both lucky and clever with the numbers so that things will work out financially. I feel the same with the issues the IFF has before it also.

More now to the specifics of being Treasurer. At the general meeting I will distribute the financial balance sheet for the year 1993 which will also include data from 1992. Please remember that we collected dues for 1992 and 1993 as one year and, thus, I have allowed the balance sheet to reflect that as well. I may distribute a year-to-date balance sheet for 1994. I will be distributing a budget for 1994 which may

be revised at our board meeting or during the general meeting. I realize that there was a request for this information to be mailed out earlier, but collecting the necessary information has been a difficult task. Hopefully, the finance committee we may create at the annual general meeting will assist in these decisions being more easily accomplished.

Just as we are a new organization, we are new at implementing financial recording and distributing it to the appropriate parties. Also, we needed time as an organization to get a "feel" for where and how we would need monies and how we would go about spending our monies. We will need to learn to be more responsible as a group in making payment of our membership dues and doing so in a timely manner. The budget will facilitate officers, board members, and committees in knowing what monies they have available to them and thus how they may go about the tasks before them.

I can guarantee that the IFF has big plans which will benefit the FELDENKRAIS Method. To do these things means we must have the revenues we have agreed to pay as members paid in a timely manner so that the budget will serve its purpose and we may do the work the IFF has set out to accomplish without financial worry.

Nancy Schumacher
IFF Treasurer May 1994

The German *Feldenkrais* Gilde

In October 1993 a new BOD was elected. Claus Bühler and Christiane Raettig left the BOD and four new people joined the three remaining ones. This seems to be a good mixture between change and continuity.

The new BOD has two major projects for its two year turn: - Creation of a "Berufsbild" (description of the professional status of the method). - Establishment of a licensing policy.

We started a dialogue with the health-insurances (together with the Mia-network) to make sure that they only work together with qualified practitioners. Our office moved into bigger rooms. Please notice the new address in the directory! Our financial situation recovered from different problems of the last years so that we have now a solid foundation to work on.

We are in good cooperation with the trainings in Germany and neighbour countries - a situation we appreciate very much since that was not always the case in the past. (Thanks again to all the people contributing to a "happy end" with the Hamburg Training!!)

We are in juridical trouble with Bill Callison who runs a "training" in Germany. Since this is still going on nothing definite can be said about it. The value of being part of the international community proved to be very high during that conflict. We got good and quick support from different guilds, groups and individuals. Thank you very much! Last not least we want to draw your attention to the International *Feldenkrais* conference in Heidelberg, Germany, June 1st - 5th. The theme of the conference is: "The *Feldenkrais* Method is an Educational Process".

In this context the German *Feldenkrais* Guild invites the IFF to have the 1995 General- Meeting

(around May 27th/28th) in Heidelberg. We are excited from the idea to combine improvement on the political field of the method with deepening our own learning and knowledge on the conference. On top of that we are convinced that it is beneficial for the IFF representatives to experience each other in different environments. ■

Norsk Forbund For Autoriserte *Feldenkrais*pedagoger

Norwegian Association of Authorized *Feldenkrais* Practitioners

The Norwegian Association has had an active year, board meetings every month and also regular general meetings. Most of our students have now only three segments left. They are practising ATM. Several of them meet one night a week in Oslo to do ATM together, some of them travelling as much as three hours to go there. Then they meet again one Saturday a month to do FI's on each other.

After trying for five years we finally succeeded last year to legally protect the service mark *Awareness Through Movement* ; one year earlier we had the *Feldenkrais* Method protected. In the fall of 1992 we wanted to protect the Swiss logo which we had bought. Because Norway is not a member of the Madrid Treaty this was an expensive process. To our disappointment the patenting authorities refused to protect the logo, due to a misunderstanding we believe. We have applied again, backed up by very nice letters of support from both the North American Guild and the Swiss Guild, so we are hoping for a better result this time.

The Physical Therapist Organisation in our country is now working on an advanced training project where the *Feldenkrais* Method is included. NFAFP has contacted them about their plans. ■

Australian *Feldenkrais* Guild

The members of the Australian *Feldenkrais* Guild send felicitations and best wishes to participants in the Third Annual General Assembly of the International *Feldenkrais* Federation. We acknowledge the work and generosity of Michel Silice-Feldenkrais in supplying delegates with accommodation and the IFF in organizing and planning the Assembly. Our delegates this year are Glenise Hall and Lesley Balinsky we look forward to hearing from them of people, events, policies, politics and parties at the Assembly.

Australia have had a successful year in 1993 and from that base we went on to plan for 1994. Highest in our priorities is the establishment of a certification system by which *Feldenkrais* Practitioners in Australia will be registered under Trade Mark legislation as having acquired previously agreed credentials - thus moving towards protecting the integrity of the *Feldenkrais* Method.

In tandem with this priority is the intention to form an Australian Training Accreditation Board. We do this as our Trademarking legislation requires the AFG to show it has responsibility for the accreditation of trainings in Australia. It is an expectation that we would be guided by and work closely with the NATAB and EuroTAB. To this end we have approached the NATAB with an outline of our intentions and a request for assistance.

The next item on our plan for 1994 is the development of a practitioner data-base in Australia which will act as a reference point for AFG members, the general community and external organizations.

We continue to offer continuing education at frequent time intervals, a national newsletter three times a year, library resources, brochures and fee schedules.

As per usual, our vision of what could be is tempered by our physical resources, but we continue to move forward and broaden the base of the Method in Australia. Finally, we pay homage to Moshe Feldenkrais on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his death. His presence, his thinking and his legacy have changed our lives.

Chris Lambert,
President

The Belgian *Feldenkrais* Guild

Since 1987, the "Gilde *Feldenkrais* Belge" and "Belgische *Feldenkrais* Gilde" is right now with five practitioners, soon twelve. Belgium is a country speaking three languages: German, Dutch-Flemish and French.

We organized a public weekend, and the theme was: The movements, a Pleasure. As soon as September, we expect to produce a notebook which presents a summary of the *Feldenkrais* Method, the work schedule of each other, and specific articles.

The aim of the association is to distribute a positive and clear picture of the method. We also want to produce a document for distributing to the public, and create a relationship with the media. An advanced training is expected for November, 1995. We would like to communicate the method with the application "somatic education" or how to know your body from the inside-out.

Renée van Galen.

The FELDENKRAIS GUILD® (North America)

The FELDENKRAIS GUILD in North America accomplished a great deal this year and at the same time continues to face some difficult challenges. New licensing efforts for massage in many states almost always has created problems for *Feldenkrais* practitioners, because some people who are promoting these laws believe that all forms of hands-on work is massage. The Guild is fighting hard in several states right now to prevent new laws from describing *Feldenkrais* as massage and forcing practitioners to take a massage test or training.

We have also continued to give a lot of attention to our service marks, because they are one way of maintaining a clear standing for our profession. This effort is in keeping with our other attempts to make sure that *Feldenkrais* will continue to develop as an accepted profession despite strong legal and political pressures around us.

The FELDENKRAIS GUILD® (continued) (North America)

Maintaining our service marks includes two areas: First there are those who say they practice *Feldenkrais, Awareness Through Movement and Functional Integration*, but who do not qualify by the standards for training and/or practice established in North America. If we are notified of this situation, the office in Oregon will send out a friendly letter explaining the requirements for use of these terms and asking gently but clearly for those not qualified to stop use of these terms. If there are repeated violations, a letter from our attorney goes out.

The second area is proper marking of the terms in print by anyone who so uses them. This is a somewhat complicated area where even those who sincerely try to do a good job sometimes make errors. The office is happy to help those who need advice on how to do it correctly. We do this for anyone who sends a sample flyer or advertisement, etc. to the office.

I am also pleased to report that we recently had our first "Crossover" graduate, Michel Ofir, whom it is a pleasure to welcome as a member of The FELDENKRAIS GUILD! Though there are only a few graduates of Mia's trainings in North America, we already have at least two others that I know of on the Crossover track.

This has certainly been a big year for concerns of a legal nature. Another area with large legal implications, as well as important personal and practical impact, is Ethics. Any profession that deals with people as intimately as we do needs to treat Ethics quite seriously, and we have discovered this year that Ethics problems are NOT hypothetical. We are now in process of reviewing our Grievance Procedure and other aspects of our Ethics policies for upgrading.

In addition, we have begun our first review of the Certification policy which we put in place nearly five years ago. Now we must ask ourselves the question, what sort of Certification procedure will best serve the needs of this profession as we become more recognized by other professions and the world at large, and as we move towards the year 2000?

Fortunately, not all of what we must deal with as an organization are legal matters. We are very involved in promotion. This year we further expanded our advertising in national magazines. We now have a toll-free phone number available from the U.S. and Canada, and we get lots of inquiries for practitioners in different locales, and for *Feldenkrais* materials. In fact, business in our office has just about doubled in the past year. We are also working right now on developing a video to help practitioners promote their practices; and we hope soon to have a computer disk available which will have various graphic images (including the service marks) which will help practitioners with their own promotion. (Some of this will also be available in hard copy.)

We expect to be finding many more ways to promote and support the method over the next few years, because we will soon be accepting a new category of membership from the public and soliciting donations and grants for research and special projects. (In fact, we have already given our first allocation from general funds to the Research Committee to be used for pilot projects.) We have long talked about having a *Feldenkrais* newsletter for the public, and now maybe this can become a reality. Of course, we are very proud of The *Feldenkrais* Journal which we continue to produce each year for practitioners.

In addition, we are preparing for our annual conference in Berkeley, Sept. 27 -- Oct. 2, which is once again being organized by David Zemach-Bersin and Elizabeth Beringer and which we expect to be the biggest and best ever!

The FELDENKRAIS GUILD in North America has done more than ever before and taken on some very tough issues in the past year or so, ones that perhaps it would have been easier to ignore. Difficult as they are, we feel they are issues that we need to deal with if we are to become a mature profession and make this work available to the large number of people who can benefit from it.

Michael Purcell, President

The *Feldenkrais* Guild U.K. (United Kingdom)

This is a year of continuing development & change. At our A.G.M. (Annual General Meeting) in June we elected a new Chairperson & Treasurer as Jean Conran & Shelagh O'Neill had completed 3 years valuable service to our Guild. They have contributed so much to guiding us through the formative years & establishing the Guild on firm foundations. Illana Nevill, having created our excellent **Journal**, has put its editing into the very capable hands of Robin Rudwick. We would like to thank them for all their energy & time. We are a still small group, with twenty full members & three student teacher members who we were pleased to welcome from the Lewes Training this year. We have non voting student, associate, & overseas members & friends. This summer, when the Lewes training finishes there will be an increase in the number of Practitioners in the U.K. We are looking forward to them joining us as full members of the Guild.

To improve mutual support & communication as the Guild grows we have started an internal **Newsletter**. I hope this will give everyone a greater feeling of belonging. We are also exploring the setting up of **regular meetings** to exchange FI's and ATM's ideas & support. '*Feldenkrais*' is as yet not well known & appreciated in most of the U.K., especially outside the Southeast & London. We already have a professional **Directory** each year. To further **promote** the method to the general public, we are developing a **Leaflet** to generate interest & stimulate people's curiosity to take lessons. This will be ready by the summer. We are looking into other ways of bringing '*Feldenkrais*' to more general notice, but are limited by our resources. Russell Delman has very generously given a day to the Guild for us to explore together other possibilities. This will take place at the end of August. We would also like to hear how other Guilds are approaching this. One of our main aims is to organize **continuing training** for our members.

We were delighted to welcome Ruthy Alon again to teach at an Advanced Training last October. Practitioners & students from the U.K. along with Practitioners from other countries easily integrated

together for a very fruitful & enjoyable workshop. We will be running a second Advanced Training this year at the end of August. Russell Delman will be teaching the workshop. It is open to all Practitioners & final year students from all countries. We look forward to welcoming our colleagues from abroad to experience Russell's very special way of teaching while he is in Europe. Our members are also invited to visit the U.K. *Feldenkrais* Professional Training Programme in Lewes each segment. This a valuable resource for us, where we can meet up with our old & new colleagues, sharing our experiences & learning.

One of our priorities has been the transfer of the ownership of the 'The *Feldenkrais* Method' trademark from the *Feldenkrais* Professional Training Programme to the Guild. This is finally well under way. We hope it will be completed in the near future. We have arranged a **group insurance** policy for our members as we realize the importance of indemnity cover if we are to practice in a professional way.

Whilst forming ourselves into the recognized professional organization which represents The *Feldenkrais* Method in the U.K., we are mindful that it needs to embody the *Feldenkrais* spirit, remaining essentially personal & human. We see the International *Feldenkrais* Foundation as a very positive way forward to establish a professional body on an international level in which Guilds can meet & cooperate on larger issues. As we all mature in our own unique ways, the IFF along with the member Guilds, will be greatly enriched. We are very pleased to be part of this & give it our wholehearted support. We feel privileged that Jean Conran, our former chairperson, is serving as its first secretary, bringing to its creation her immense energy, drive & organizing skills. There will be 2 people representing us at the Annual Assembly in Tel Aviv in May: Nicholas Conran, an active member of our original community, and Robin Rudwick, a newer colleague, who is a student in the 4th year of the Lewes Training. We wish the meeting every success & look forward to hearing all about it.

Leila Malcolm, Chairperson

The Dutch Foundation For Qualified *Feldenkrais* Practitioners And Education

Our organization was founded in May 1993 by graduated *Feldenkrais* Practitioners from an accredited Training Program (F.P.T.P.). This group consisted of a few practitioners from the Malmo training and one from the Amherst training. The establishment of this organization became necessary because the Netherlands did not have a certified membership in the IFF.

The goal of our organization is to promote and to protect the originality of Moshe Feldenkrais' work and to bring *Feldenkrais* practitioners together in a productive way. We intend to share our ideas about Moshe's work and to develop our skills together as *Feldenkrais* practitioners.

Besides our organization, which represents officially accredited practitioners in the Netherlands and abroad, another organization exists consisting of about 46 non-accredited practitioners from the Mia training program and a few accredited practitioners. For this group of non-accredited practitioners crossover programs have been proposed. The policy with regard to these programs is a subject for approval at the Israel IFF meeting 1994.

Until 1993 the situation was in a frozen state of development, which effected the whole *Feldenkrais* community. Creation of our organization, followed by a full certified membership in the IFF, gives us the opportunity to contribute more effectively in the solution of existing problems in the Netherlands. This will bring, as we hope and as we expect, the difficult situation in our country in a more open and also more moving direction. Our contribution to the unification process will be, as we strongly believe, another step forward in this moving direction which is part of "our" fast moving *Feldenkrais* world.

The steps to take will not be easy, but as Moshe said: "Growing is painful !"

Nancy van Eck,
President

Swedish *Feldenkrais* Guild

What makes a training, a *Feldenkrais* training (and how can we stop trainings that don't live up to our standards)?

In Sweden the first accredited *Feldenkrais* training finished in November 1992, the second will be finished in June 1995, and in the Fall of 1995, the third training will start. The Swedish Guild now has about 60 members. We also have another organization called Svenska *Feldenkraisforeningen* who's members are trained by Yochanan Rywerant. Since 1989 there have been three non-accredited trainings in Sweden and a new one is starting in 1995. The non-accredited trainings all have had Yochanan Rywerant as trainer. Their duration is 18 weeks. Yochanan is the only trainer, and there are no assistant trainers in the training. Now there are 56 persons with this background who have received a diploma as "*Feldenkrais* practitioners" from Svenska *Feldenkraisforeningen*, the organization that now has an application for associate membership of the IFF). Furthermore, there will be a "teachers' training" with Yochanan Rywerant starting this May - for his students only. And who knows, maybe in a couple of years Yochanan's trainers will design a training where you can become a practitioner in 6 or 8 weeks. There have during the last years been many positive contacts between the two different *Feldenkrais* organizations in our country. And if Yochanan could change his trainings there wouldn't be any problems. I wonder if this is something that the International *Feldenkrais* world is aware of, and I also wonder what IFF will do about it. For us in Sweden this is a big problem, and we need help to solve it. The key of the problem is Yochanan, and we need all your help to make him change his trainings or maybe he can call his pupils "Rywerant practitioners".

Goran Morkeberg,
Board Member

ASSOCIATION FRANCAISE DES PRACTICIENS DE LA MÉTHODE *FELDENKRAIS*

(FRENCH ASSOCIATION OF PRACTITIONERS OF THE *FELDENKRAIS* METHOD)

L'APMF se donne comme objectifs prioritaires:

- d'offrir un matériel pédagogique pour assurer la continuité du processus d'apprentissage engagé pendant la formation: cassettes audio, photocopies pour les praticiens et étudiants.

- d'offrir d'autre part, bulletins spéciaux et répertoires à l'intention du public ou de groupes professionnels spécifiques pour aider nos adhérents à donner une image cohérente et de qualité, de la méthode *Feldenkrais*.

- de garantir la qualité et la crédibilité de la formation sur son territoire. Nous serons vigilants à ce que les critères des bureaux d'accréditation (EuroTab et NATab) soient respectés dans les formations futures. Nous souhaitons également mieux informer les étudiants sur la nature des formations qu'ils entreprennent.

- Par l'intermédiaire du bulletin de liaison nous avons le souci d'apporter une information la plus claire possible, auprès des membres de notre Association, sur nos objectifs (cités plus haut) notre fonctionnement au conseil d'administration et le fonctionnement et les objectifs des instances internationales.

C'est pourquoi:

L'APMF demande à l'IFF d'améliorer la communication au niveau international par:

- un échange de bulletins. - la possibilité d'avoir la traduction des compte-rendus et en général de toutes les informations importantes.

Actuellement nous sommes peu nombreux à l'APMF à maîtriser suffisamment l'anglais. La traduction par un professionnel engage des frais très importants. La formation linguistique des membres du bureau pose les mêmes problèmes. Nous demandons qu'une partie au moins de la redevance que nous versons à l'IFF puisse servir à prendre en charge cette traduction, garante d'une meilleure communication.

L'APMF demande également à l'IFF de l'aider à réaliser ses objectifs: diffusion du matériel pédagogique et qualité des formations, par tous les moyens à la disposition de cette instance. ■

The APMF has as high priority objectives:

-To offer teaching material that will give continuity to the learning process initiated by the trainings: audio-cassettes and transcripts for the students and the practitioners.

-To offer promotional flyers and directories for the general public and specific professional groups so as to allow our members to present a consistent and quality image of the *Feldenkrais* Method.

-To guarantee the quality and credibility of the trainings offered under its jurisdiction. We will ensure that the requirements of the EuroTAB and NATAB are respected in future trainings. We wish also to arrange that students be better informed as to the nature of the trainings they undertake.

-A newsletter keeps our membership informed as to our objectives and the administration and functioning of our organization and that of the international organizations.

To this end:

The APMF requests that the IFF improve international communication through:

-Exchange of newsletters and other important information.

-Translation into French of all relevant publications.

The issue of language is important as few of our members are fluent in English. Translation services are costly and training of our staff in English is out of the question. We request that a portion of our IFF fees be directed towards translation services in order to allow better communication.

The APMF, to reach its objectives, requests the support of the IFF and any means at its disposal: distribution of the teaching material and control of the quality of the trainings. ■

ITALIAN ASSOCIAZIONE INSEGNANTI DEL METODO *FELDENKRAIS* (ITALIAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF THE *FELDENKRAIS* METHOD)

The new Board of Directors has now completed its first year of office; we are now more aware of the problems and objectives of the Association, as well as of the remarkable load of work to be done on a voluntary basis. We feel that we are still at a pioneering and "emergency" stage, and we are looking forward to the time when new graduates will be able to join us with full involvement and sharing of responsibilities.

We have finally registered all the *Feldenkrais* trade-marks in Italy, which will allow us to protect our profession.

We have held two post-graduate courses, one with Yochanan Rywerant (who will be with us again this year in April) and one with Basil Glazer. They were both very important events for meeting, sharing experiences, and learning.

The Italian Association has given its approval to a new professional training to be started in Rome in December 1994, with Jerry Karzen as Director, and to a proposal for a training to be held in Northern Italy from 1995, under the direction of Ruthy Alon; the latter is now being examined by the EuroTAB.

We participated in a convention on self-knowledge, organized by somebody else, which was a chance for our Association to meet the public and make us more visible.

We applied to be included in the data bank of our National Council CNEL (Consiglio Nazionale per l'Economia e il Lavoro), so that we are now on the list of the "New Professions". This is a first step towards official recognition though we will have a long way to go before our wish can become true.

We translated the EuroTAB regulations into Italian, so that members and students of the Italian Guild can now be aware of rights and rules which help us protect and foster our profession.

We published our **Bollettino N 6/7**, which has been sent to all the other national Guilds.

Our Director Maria Raffaella Dalla Valle has been elected again to be member of EuroTAB.

The second part of Ruthy Alon's book Mindful Spontaneity came out in Italian under the title: Vincere il Mal di Schiena con il Metodo *Feldenkrais* and is being very favourably received by the public. Meanwhile, her first book, Guida Pratica al Metodo *Feldenkrais* has been awarded a national prize for natural medicine. We congratulate her on this achievement and are very happy to have this precious working tool available to all Italian *Feldenkrais* Practitioners.

Yochanan Rywerant's book: The *Feldenkrais* Method - Teaching by Handling also came out in Italian, under the title Integrazione Funzionale Teoria e Pratica del Metodo *Feldenkrais*. It was translated by two of our members, Elisabetta Lovino and Bruna Zonta, who have the gratitude of all their Italian *Feldenkrais* colleagues for the help the book can provide to those who want to better understand the scientific grounding of the method as well as its very fine and subtle technical details.

In the future we plan to look into the problem of insurance for our practitioners, and into the theme of an ethical code of professional conduct. For these issues, we will draw inspiration from work already done or in the course of being done by other Guilds, which we warmly thank.

We are very happy to be part of an international body such as the IFF, and thus be in touch with so many different countries, which gives us a chance to discuss and share objectives, plans, concerns, to become acquainted with different perspectives and experiences, and to broaden our own. We hope it will be possible to strengthen ties and relationships, within each country's own autonomy, so that we can share Moshe's inheritance for the good of our profession.

Francis LOSI RECLA,
President

1992-1993 Euro TAB Activities Report

prepared by Raffaella dalla Valle and Patrice Auquier

Contents -

1. Meetings
2. Relationships with the NA TAB (North American TAB)
3. Training accreditations
4. Assistant trainers and trainers applications
5. Training accreditation Policy -Assistant trainer and trainer certification policy
6. Compliance form
7. Changing the Guidelines Policy
8. TAB Ethics
9. EuroTAB membership
10. EuroTAB functioning
11. EuroTAB report

1. Meetings

The EuroTAB has had 17 meetings. Four of them were “live” meetings (2 or three days).

2. Relationships with the NATAB (North American TAB)

Since the creation of the EuroTAB, it has been agreed that the TABs develop and use common Guidelines about training accreditation, assistant trainer and trainer applications and possible future guidelines / policies. (No basic difference may appear.) The EuroTAB and NATAB send each other their meeting reports. Each TAB has a representative who is a full member in the other. Paul Rubin for the NATAB and Patrice Auquier for the EuroTAB. We have decided to ask the NATAB for further consultation if different attitudes raise about topics implying the two TABs (March 1993).

3. Training accreditations

Accredited by EuroTAB in 1992: Firenze (Italy), Tel Aviv 3 (Israel), Strasbourg (France), Neuss 5 (Germany), Hamburg (Germany) and Jerusalem 2 (Israel).

Accredited by EuroTAB in 1993: St Johan im Pongau (Austria), Heidelberg (Germany), Roma 2 (Italy), Freiburg-Freiamt (Germany), Paris 5 (France).

Tel-Aviv 4 (Israel) has been accredited by EuroTAB with the support of the NATAB.

4. Assistant trainers and trainers applications

Until summer 1992, only the NATAB was involved in receiving and discussing applications and making decisions. From summer 1992 to summer 1993, the EuroTAB was consulted about the assistant applications and sent its considerations to the NATAB who made the final decision. Since summer 1993, the EuroTAB is considering and deciding about the assistant trainer applications from Europeans (incl Israelis). NATAB communicates its considerations. Since December 1993, the EuroTAB will review the trainers applications (all) and communicate its considerations to the NATAB.

Have been **certified as assistant trainers**:

1992: Livia Calice, Paul Newton, Jeremy Krauss

1993: Sigrid Dahm

Has been **certified as trainer** (1993) Beatriz Walterspiel.

During the same years, 5 applicants from Europe have been refused the certification.

5. Training accreditation Policy - Assistant trainer and Trainer certification policy

The EuroTAB and NATAB are constantly considering and discussing Guidelines modifications (frequently submitted from different people or groups in the *Feldenkrais* community).

Twelve FI lessons to each trainee in its training (Feb 1992)

The EuroTAB has decided that from the twelve FI lessons to be given in training programs, at least two-thirds are to be given by assistant trainers or trainers, and that up to one-third could be given by experienced practitioners chosen according to the discretion of the training Educational Director. Those practitioners need to be a part of the training as well.

Assistant Trainer Policy

It has been proposed that the applicants have participated in parts of one or several training(s) after the diploma. Up to now, 20 days is the minimum (mentioned in the Policy from April 1993). A modification concerning the application fee for assistant trainers applications has been proposed by EuroTAB and accepted by the NATAB end of 1993. The application will not be partly reimbursed in case of a refusal (as it was previously done) but a new application will be accompanied with a reduced fee (50%) in place of a full one. The application fee for an assistant trainer application from a European (incl. Israelis) has to be sent to EuroTAB. Other proposals have been discussed (no consensus between the TABs) without decision.

The following has been approved by both TABs (Euro TAB May 1992, and NATAB July 1992):

-Every training organizer and/or Educational Director is to send to both TABs a complete address list of all the names of students immediately after the beginning of the training.

- Every training organizer and/or Educational Director is to send a complete address list of all students who are living in one specific country to the *Feldenkrais* Professional organization of that specific country.

- When a student gets permission to teach ATM, the training organizer and/or the Educational Director sends his/her name to his/her *Feldenkrais* Professional organization and to the TABs.

- When a student gets a diploma, his/her *Feldenkrais* Professional organization is to be informed about it immediately.

- When a student is asked to leave a training, the TABs are to be informed about it immediately, giving the reasons. The appropriate *Feldenkrais* Professional organization will be informed as well.

- When a student leaves a training without a leave of absence and had permission to teach ATM, his/her *Feldenkrais* Professional organization will also be informed of it. Until the student signs a new contract with another training program, he/she is not allowed to teach ATM in public.

- When a student joins a training in progress, the TABs are to

1992-1993 EuroTAB Activities Report (continued)

be informed by the training organizer and/or the Educational Director of that student's name and of the FPTP he/she has previously attended.

Those guidelines have been communicated to all the training organizers (Summer 1992). Some of the communications described above are modified by the compliance form (see underneath), but the information to the Guilds is of great need and not modified.

IFF Diplomas/Certificates of the *Feldenkrais* practitioner

(This is not a EuroTAB business, but it relates to trainings)

The IFF Board of Directors has decided to create an IFF Diploma that will be signed by the Educational Director and the IFF President. The diploma will be given to all the practitioners from the accredited trainings. Up to now, deliverance is on demand from the training organizers to Bonnie Humiston, who is the IFF Director in charge of it. Delay: about three months. This certificate does NOT replace possible other ones given by the organizer or a Guild, like The FELDENKRAIS GUILD North America, for example.

Guild fee splitting

- The training organizers have to pay each year an accreditation fee to the TAB and a Guild fee. A new way of splitting this one is adopted (specific European splitting - Nov 1992):

- One part goes to the Guild of the training country. This part corresponds to the proportion of the training country citizens to the total of trainees. (20 ECU/trainee.)

- One part similarly calculated for the country Guild from which the most citizens outside the local country are following the training.

- One part to a special IFF fund (not yet created - Jan 1994) representing the part not yet attributed.

Contract between training organizers and applicant/future trainees

- The contract is a must from a long time (Accreditation Guidelines). Some precisions to mention have been discussed and approved.

- By signing the contract, the trainee authorizes the use of his/her name, address, date of birth and birthplace, communication networks coordinates (phone, FAX, computer access codes/CompuServe or others) and the formal level in the *Feldenkrais* community in a *Feldenkrais* data base (May 1993).

- Following sentence (or translation): "The training is organized under laws of an international accreditation Board".

- Completion of the training within seven years

- Information on how to call oneself (and the translation where needed), with the precision that the use of other words is not authorized.

- Information that they agree not to publicize at all during the first two years of their training. Meanwhile the EuroTAB is aware that the focus has to be kept on education (Nov. 93).

ATM teacher definition

* Each trainee needs to be clearly informed (contract, other documents)

* EuroTAB guideline is that trainees are not authorized to advertise anything during the first two years of their training. They are called "trainees in a *Feldenkrais* Professional Training Program". They can use the terms "student-teacher" and/or "student-practitioner" after the end of the second year. (Please remember that the authorization to teach ATM is not automatically given after the second year. It only CAN be given from then on by the Educational Director).

* It depends on each country Guild/association to supervise the use of the terms (frequently protected) and to inform the people in training about the appropriate translations of the above to use in the country (November 1993).

Policy on credentials

-The EuroTAB approved the NATAB document about "Policy for Documentation of Credentials for Trainers and Assistant Trainers" (Nov 1993). This consists for the Assistant Trainers and Trainers (present and future) to prove (copies of diplomas,...) what they claim to be in applications (Ph D, MD, ...). Past ones also concerned.

Crossover policy

- The EuroTAB has approved the last draft of the "Crossover policy for the students of Mia Segal and Yochanan Rywerant," already adopted by the NATAB (September 1993).

Additions:

- extension to Yochanan Rywerant students

- Up to 90 days of training with Mia Segal or Yochanan Rywerant can be considered for the cross-over.

- Other additions not yet accepted by both TABs (acceptance of 8 FI in place of 12: half of the missing days to follow in an accredited training).

Conflicts between roles in the training

- The EuroTAB has proposed the following: "So as to clarify roles for the trainee, it is proposed that each training make some provision in the training proposal so that during the training segments the trainees have different people to address concerning administrative and educational topics. (Nov 1993). No consensus with the NATAB. Not applicable up to now.

When to teach ATM? What to do/not to do after the second year?

-The EuroTAB has discussed and explored possible future modifications to the Guide-lines concerning the possible activities of trainees about to teach ATM.

NO DECISION HAS YET REACHED A LEVEL PERMITTING A MENTION IN THE GUIDELINES.

- To teach ATM after the third year: not enough consensus.

- To teach week-ends or long courses just after the second

1992-1993 Euro TAB Activities Report (continued)

year: too soon as considered by all the members

- Public conferences or presentations as a spokesperson for the *Feldenkrais* Method just after the second year: too soon (unanimous)

- To charge fees for ATM during its training (especially during third year): the guidelines have been interpreted differently by different people. Questionable. No attitude.

6. Compliance form

The TABs need to supervise and keep track of information, new educational approaches to quality or difficulties, changes from the proposal,... from the trainings that are accredited. A document has been prepared for the training organizers to complete twice a training year about it. Already in use (Autumn 93) but still to complete / correct.

7. Changing the Guidelines policy

The TABs agree that, concerning basic modifications to bring to the Guidelines and policies, the feedback from the community is of essential use. Those modifications have to correspond to a need or a usefulness largely shared. Therefore a policy has been developed about how to get information from the community and the steps that can drive to the best conclusion (by the TABs, legalized by the appropriate legal body/bodies. In function but still to reword/clarify slightly (December 1993). A first topic using this new policy is "Make-up segments".

8. TAB Ethics

Discussions and internal policies have clarified among others:

- The possible conflicts of interest (no presence for meeting parts, nor participation to the decisions when there is a conflict of interest)

- The confidentiality of some information (respect of private life), of discussions/reasons for decisions, and the need to be able to express frankly one's opinions/feelings, goes with some confidentiality, which is not to be felt as compulsive secrecy.

9. EuroTAB membership

The EuroTAB has functioned in 1992 and 1993 with

- Chava Shelhav-Silberbush and Myriam Pfeffer, trainers
- Gareth Newell and Sabine Pfeffer, assistant trainers
- Raffaella dalla Valle, Marianne Eriksson and Christiane Raettig, practitioners
- Paul Rubin, trainers rep from the NA TAB
- Patrice Auquier, practitioner, rep to the NATAB, secretary

In 1994, the members are:

- Chava Shelhav-Silberbush and Ruthy Alon, trainers
- Gareth Newell and Sabine Pfeffer, assistant trainers
- Raffaella dalla Valle, Marianne Eriksson and Delia Golomb, practitioners

- Paul Rubin: trainer, rep from the NATAB

- Patrice Auquier: practitioner, rep. to the NATAB, & secretary.

10. EuroTAB functioning

- Quorum: There needs to be at least five members including at least two from trainers and assistant trainers and two from the practitioners.

- Representativity: As precised when elected, the member is NOT a representative from its country or whatever. He/she is elected by the community for his/her personal qualifications and qualities.

- Finances: The EuroTAB has to function with its own budget (IN: accreditation and application fees). A computer has been bought in 1993. This has been made obligatory by the need (expressed by the community at the IFF) to have an European *Feldenkrais* data base to connect with the American and Australian ones within the IFF. This recent expense and time spending activity, added to the costs of the necessary phone conferences and live meetings, explains the financially uneasy situation of the EuroTAB.

- Parentship: The NATAB is supervised by, and in fact, is a part of The FELDENKRAIS GUILD, North America, from which the Board of Directors never interferes with the educational proposals/decisions that are taken by the NATAB but that legalizes the needed modifications to the Guidelines and policies. The EuroTAB has been created by the FEM (*Feldenkrais* European Meetings: meeting of the representatives from willing European Guilds) but from Jan 1992 has had to function without a parent to legalize decisions. This means that the legalization of the common guidelines/policies is made by The FELDENKRAIS GUILD BOD, very positively, in fact. There is a project from the FEM to incorporate and assume the legal parentship of the EuroTAB.

- Finances (bis) practical

The EuroTAB takes in charge at least a part of the travel costs (as much as possible, though possibly not immediately). The members have been reminded that their candidacy supposed the possibility for them to support - at least partially - the cost of their participation. Documents proving expenses are to be kept (March 1992).

It has been decided that each EuroTAB member gets a per diem for the TAB live meetings (May 1993).

11. EuroTAB report

- A report will be sent to the IFF, FEM (or future name), and European (incl. Israel) Guilds twice a year (Winter, Summer).



North American Training Accreditation Board Report

The most important trends that we have to report from the NATAB have to do with increasing our responsibility and accountability to the profession at large. Among the events which demonstrate this are:

Monitoring Trainings for compliance with Training Policy: The NATAB initiated the idea to have all training programs report to their accrediting TAB on a regular basis how they have complied with Training Policy section by section. This was intended both to monitor compliance and to provide training organizers with a convenient check list to remind them of what policy actually is.

Establishing a Protocol for Changing Training Policy. The NATAB initiated the idea to create a formal procedure — known to all members of the profession world wide — into which all suggestions for major changes to Training Policy can be channelled. By design, all suggestions will be circulated to all newsletters, and especially to all segments of the profession who are likely to have had real experience with dealing with any issues raised.

The process provides these advantages:

- every responsible segment of the profession - Practitioners, Assistants and Trainers, Training Organizers, and National Associations - can be sure that they will be heard, and that public evaluation of all major ideas can be carried out;

- we can carefully tap into the nearly 20 years of experience which now exists of trainings using most features of the current basic model;

- we can minimize reactivity — whether aggression or defensiveness — by having all parts of the profession contribute, and all parts of the process observed.

The process is not perfect. It is somewhat cumbersome and needs to be adjusted. Suggestions — in writing please — would be appreciated!

Membership change reduces influence of trainers. The composition of the NATAB has

changed. We have expanded the size of the Board to seven members, to include another elected member and one appointed jointly by the TAB and the Board of Directors. The appointed person at the moment is the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee. The number of elected Trainers remains at two.

The NATAB and EuroTAB continue to refine their relationship. The commitment to keep policies uniform throughout the world for Accredited Trainings keeps us in constant communication. The TAB's each have a member on the other TAB assisting in communication and continuity.

The Australian Feldenkrais Guild, as the recognized national organization for the continent of Australia, has entered into a process of gradual separation of function from the NATAB. This is a co-operative effort between the established TAB's and the emerging one. It is a good example of co-operation and sharing of responsibility world wide regarding maintenance of standards and the building of the profession.

Training activity has increased in North America as everywhere else in the world. Applications for Assistant Trainer and Trainer are on the increase as well. In order to deal with the increase in demand for the TAB's time, we changed our communication procedures for meetings and sub-committee structure and have successfully eliminated the back-log we had a year ago. Our extensive use of electronic mail between meetings keeps our tele-phone costs down and our communication current.

The members of the NATAB recognize that the profession is in a period of rapid expansion and, therefore, change. We are committed to being responsible yet accessible and flexible as we embrace the future.

Paul Rubin, Chair
North American Training
Accreditation Board

Feldenkrais in New Zealand

In New Zealand (also sometimes known by its indigenous Maori name of Aotearoa) the first professional training program is into its third year and has completed its 5th segment. There are close to 30 Trainees in the program. In addition, there are five *Feldenkrais* Practitioners in New Zealand - trained in Australia, Hawaii and Germany.

New Zealand students (Trainees) and Practitioners are currently setting up the New Zealand *Feldenkrais* Practitioners and Students Association - with at least 15 people signed up. It is ready to apply for incorporation under New Zealand laws. It was necessary to establish a legal body in New Zealand in order have a separate identity and to work on protection of the Method. However, the New Zealanders are looking at how they can co-operate with other Guilds and the international *Feldenkrais* community to develop their organizations and the Method in their country.

The particular issues for the New Zealand community are:

- * promotion of the Method - now that there are trainees qualified to teach ATM
- * peer support for Trainees - such as study groups, etc.
- * how to use the knowledge of the practitioners to assist the development of the skills and confidence of trainees
- * development of the skills and confidence of Trainees
- * access to resources for the study and promotion of *Feldenkrais*
- * how to assist upcoming practitioners that don't have an allied-health or private practice background to be able to move successfully into our profession

The New Zealand *Feldenkrais* Practitioners and Students Association has requested that other Guilds and bodies send any articles, promotional material, etc. that would help them get *Feldenkrais* moving in their country. Their address is C/- *Feldenkrais* Professional Training Program Trust, PO Box 90091, Auckland Mail Centre, Auckland, New Zealand. The contact person is Alan Blacktop, phone: 64.9.630.4646. Fax: 64.9.623.2770 - 'Attention Alan Blacktop - *Feldenkrais*'. Put them on your mailing list!

Cliff Smyth,
Member
Board of Directors, IFF

A Report from

SWEDISH *FELDENKRAIS* ASSOCIATION

(Applicant for Associate Membership in the IFF)

A report of the Association's business for 1992 and until the Annual Assembly 1993. The board has worked continuously with the following questions.

(1) The question of The American *FELDENKRAIS* GUILD and their application to register the patent of the words *Feldenkrais* Method, *Awareness Through Movement* (ATM) *Functional Integration* (FI) at Swedish Patents Registry Office.

(2) Our own application to register The Swedish *Feldenkrais* Association and trademark.

(3) S.F.A.F Swedish Guild for authorised *Feldenkrais* practitioners and their application to register their association with accompanying trademark which includes the words, the *Feldenkrais* Method.

(4) A common information packet with S.F.A.F to the State Health Insurance Office about the *Feldenkrais* Method and the difference between educated and uneducated people who proclaim to work with the *Feldenkrais* Method.

(5) To produce a brochure which has not manifested to date.

(6) To produce a document containing the names of those practising *Feldenkrais* who are educated by Yochanan Rywerant which decision was allowed to rest until the completion of the third training, so that those who wished could be included. Eva Lasa has offered to take responsibility for this item.

(7) We have contacted the IFF, International *Feldenkrais* Federation, a newly built international network which meets once a year in Paris, with representatives from the different Guild Trainings. Yochanan Rywerant has kindly overseen our interests at these meetings in 1992/93. Representatives of S.F.A.F. have also participated. The proposal that *Feldenkrais* Practitioners who have trained with Yochanan Rywerant can seek membership if they so choose has been presented to IFF.

(8) In the past few years we have been maintaining contact with *Feldenkrais* practitioners educated by Mia Segal mainly through interested groups in Germany, Switzerland, Holland. Her trainings are not recognized by The American *Feldenkrais* Guild. There now exists a European *Feldenkrais* Association counter-group to The

American *Feldenkrais* Guild, and other guilds. It is of course important to maintain a high educational quality but neither Mia Segal's or Yochanan Rywerant's competence as a teacher can be questioned. This ongoing power struggle is thus a fact and it seems at this moment difficult to resolve.

(9) The information Sheet has come out, under the editorship of first Ingmarie Borg, and then Bettan Bloom who together with Yvonne Ruther has taken care of the distribution.

(10) Yochanan's 70 birthday was remembered by a floral tribute.

(11) Gunne Iverus has compiled a list of the names of practitioners who have completed their training, and has sent it both to Institutions and the general public.

(12) Yvonne Ruther has had responsibility for the association's economy and taxes.

(13) Gunilla Saste and Margareta Rasmusson have been the auditors.

(14) Bettan Bloom and Kerstin Oreholm have been the election officers.

(15) Some information meetings for members were organized at the home at Joel Orell, by Joel, Kerstin Oreholm, Louise von Arnold.

(16) Discussions have been held with representatives of S.F.A.F., who have requested that we allow them to trademark register their association and to include the *Feldenkrais* Method in the form of the trademark. If we do this, they assume control over the words *Feldenkrais* Method and consequently of the Swedish *Feldenkrais* Method. Our application was received prior to theirs and thus prevents recognition of their application.

During a visit to the Patents Registry Office, made by Gunnel Iverus and Anders Fastborg, legal advisor, it became apparent that the best course of action for us in SFF, is to let the matter rest until the larger question of whether it is actually possible to register the *Feldenkrais* method at all, has been resolved by the officer concerned. This may take some time.

(17) All practitioners and students of Yochanan are members of the SFF, with one exception, also with the exception of foreign citizens who are resident abroad. ■

The IFF Alexander Yanai Project

The International *Feldenkrais* Federation (IFF) announces the publication of the Alexander Yanai *Awareness Through Movement*® lessons in English.

From the middle of the 1950s to the middle of the 1970s, Moshe Feldenkrais taught a weekly public ATM class in Tel Aviv. The street where these classes took place was named after Alexander Yanai and this collection of lessons has taken on the same name.

Moshe taught in Hebrew and his lessons were recorded. Altogether there are roughly 600 lessons from this period. The lessons are special for a variety of reasons which have earned them the reputation of being treasures, in particular:

- These lessons document the thinking and teaching of Moshe Feldenkrais over a long period of time. This should be especially useful for those who are interested in how the Method developed.
- As these lessons were made for teaching in a public setting they are less complex and demanding than those normally found in trainings.
- All of the ATM's were taught within a one hour framework, and are therefore an ideal resource for *Feldenkrais* practitioners planning public classes and workshops.

For years the tapes of these lessons lay in the archives of the *Feldenkrais* Institute in Tel Aviv. The lessons have to some extent, found their way into *Feldenkrais* trainings from the notes of those students—later to become trainers—who were students of Moshe during those years.

Although the rights to publication of the Alexander Yanai lessons have been much sought after for years, Michel Silice, Moshe's nephew and director of the *Feldenkrais* Institute has only recently given his approval to their publication. He has chosen the IFF for this task to insure that these unique documents will be available worldwide to all practitioners at a reasonable cost.

With Anat Baniel as translator for this series the IFF has found an experienced trainer and close associate of Moshe to guarantee not only accurate translation but the benefits of Anat's own lively sense of language as well.

The printed format of the lessons is designed to enable the reader to distinguish easily between basic movements, their variation and elaboration, and comments. This gives the practitioner an opportunity to scan the lessons quickly and obtain an overview of their content.

The Alexander Yanai ATM's will be published in English and will appear in 12 volumes each with 50 lessons. The volumes will be spiral bound for durability and ease of use.

The first volume of the lessons will be in two parts, each 25 lessons, the first being available in June 1994 with the subsequent volumes following at roughly quarterly intervals. The cost of the volumes is being kept low; any surplus cash at the end of the Project will be used to finance other IFF resources or research projects, as decided by a general meeting of the IFF.

Christoph Görtz
IFF Resources Committee

Memories and Recollections

Moshe Feldenkrais
1904 - 1984

Michel's Memories

I remember my meeting with Moshe at lunch time. He sat at the head of the table at Baruch's apartment and read the newspaper. It was quite impossible to disturb him from this ritual. But sometimes we spoke about the world, Israel, the Jewish people. All his stories from his youth in Poland were so juicy. He and Baruch spoke about the town where he was born. I knew everyone without being there. I can see in my memory the two brothers laughing from this one or the other one. What a pity; they should have been actors, the two brothers. Their flow of creativity was endless.

After a hard day of work, I used to check Moshe's home and stay with him very late at night. What an experience!! We spoke about everything. Oh, ya, I remember now. Once I asked him something about a linguistic problem. And his answer was so genius that after 17 years I still remember it.

"Look," he said, "Take the book on the third shelf, the fourth chapter, page 215. There is the answer to your question."

I asked him, "Moshe, when did you read this book?"

"Oh, perhaps ten or twelve years ago," he answered.

It was amazing.

This kind of event was already daily habitual between us. At this time I was busy with my private life and didn't have enough time, or more exactly, I didn't have enough willingness to learn more deeply...but these moments spent with him are forever in my mind.

I am sure that a lot of people told you that they knew Moshe. Of course there are a few who knew him quite well in different periods of his life. But as close as they were, I had with him a relationship of blood and I knew him quite more time than others, and a little bit better than all other fellows.

This is ten years that Moshe left us, but for me he is still here with me. I see him every day on video tapes, hear him on audio tapes, and very often I dream of him also. I just want to thank him in the deep of my heart to have changed all my life. I am delighted that it happened once. This is a privilege, I think.

This week I met an old man who was taking part of the ATM lessons of Alexander Yanai. He said to me, "I remember you. You are Michel Feldenkrais — nephew. You know, I have two goals in my life: God and Feldenkrais. Till now 20 years later I am still doing exercises. Feldenkrais changed my life."

It is nice to hear such words, isn't it?

Yours with love,
Michel Silice-Feldenkrais

Jerusalem, 28 August 1958

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

My friend, Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais, has undertaken an important task which will be of great benefit to the new generation growing up in our country, and perhaps to all of humanity. He is about to establish an institute for the promotion of physical and mental efficiency. The work of this Institute will be run according to the new somatopsychic method of treatment so successfully introduced by Dr. Feldenkrais.

I had the good fortune of availing myself of Dr. Feldenkrais' treatment for about two years, and from my own experience and that of some of my friends, most of whom are eminent physicians and scientists, I know the remarkable results achieved thereby.

Dr. Feldenkrais' new approach to the physical and mental well-being of man holds in store vast possibilities for the elevation of the education given to our new generation, and the Institute which Dr. Feldenkrais plans is likely to be of great benefit to our country and may serve as a model for other countries.

The Institute will be under the supervision of some outstanding physicians and scientists in Israel, and I trust that Dr. Feldenkrais' method of treatment will, in the course of time, become part and parcel of the medical course of study and training in Israel - and, perhaps, not only in Israel. Any investment in this Institute will, I believe, not only bear fruit to the investors, but will help raise a new generation in Israel, sturdy in body and healthy in spirit.

The Government of Israel will extend to this Institute all the facilities granted other educational and scientific institutions in Israel, and all friends of Israel who will lend a hand to the founding of this Institute will be giving newly-restored Israel a service of a special nature.

Respectfully yours,

D. Ben-Gurion

SOUVENIRS, SOUVENIRS

by Myriam Pfeffer

->Myriam, how did you meet Moshe Feldenkrais?

After WW II, barbaric, cruel, as an adolescent, ill, betrayed by the future, I had to build my house, on ruins so to speak. A house that would be fit to live in for myself and the others.

I wanted to understand, to see through the fog and the darkness, to put order and clarity into reality, to perceive the rules we live by. So I studied Yoga, learned how to breathe, what and how to eat, the proper posture, the right attitude and so on. Then, one day, in 1956, in Paris, rue de la Convention, I bumped into a friend whom I had lost track of and whom I knew from Yoga classes. Because of back problems, she had stopped Yoga, and despite all sorts of cures and therapies, her condition had gotten worse. She had just returned from Israel, where, for three weeks she had lessons with Moshe. She said he had saved her back, and that now she was able to live once again. She was surprised that I had never heard of him as he was known to be a world famous "bone healer".

Was it chance or survival, the meeting was pivotal. I felt that in my way of dealing with life and health, something essential was missing. Something in my head was already directing me towards Moshe.

Some time later, in a newspaper, I saw a picture of David Ben Gurion, the Prime Minister of Israel, standing on his head on a beach. The caption read: "Moshe put Ben Gurion on his head, Ben Gurion put Moshe on his feet". Since then, people came from the world over to be "treated" by him.

When I arrived in Israel, in 1956, I immediately phoned Moshe to ask him how I could become a student of his. He told me to come to a class so that we could talk. I went: it was in a small street in a residential part of Tel Aviv, Alexander Yanai street. Down a few steps, there was a large room covering some, 2 000 square feet, with a platform at one end. It was used for conferences and during the religious holidays it became a synagogue.

On the stage, a tape recorder was playing the current lesson. The floor was covered with straw tatami mats, and 40 odd people were lying there, following the lesson. Moshe was sitting in a chair, next to the stage, watching the people move and, from time to time, making a comment. I went up to him and introduced myself. He asked me what I did and I told him that I taught Yoga. I added that I had learned the correct way to breathe, how to relax, the right foods to eat, my proper new hygiene. Moshe listened, observed, nodded and mumbled a few syllables. And when I asked him what he taught, he answered: "Nothing of

-> Myriam, comment avez-vous rencontré Moshe Feldenkrais?

Après la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, après cette barbarie et cette cruauté, adolescente, malade, sur un avenir trahi, sur des "sortes de ruines", il me fallait entreprendre la construction de ma maison. Une maison qui serait habitable pour moi-même et pour les autres.

J'ai voulu comprendre, dissiper les brouillards et les obscurités, mettre de l'ordre et de la clarté dans la réalité, révéler les lois qui nous gouvernent. Pour ce faire, j'ai commencé à apprendre le yoga, comment respirer, quoi et comment manger, comment se tenir debout, quelle attitude adopter, etc. En 1956, dans la rue de la Convention dans le 15^e arrondissement à Paris, j'ai rencontré une collègue qui, dans le temps, avait pratiqué le yoga avec moi, et que j'avais perdue de vue. Souffrant de grandes douleurs dans le dos, elle avait arrêté le yoga et malgré maintes et maintes cures de toutes sortes de thérapie, son état continuait à s'aggraver. Elle rentrait d'Israël où, pendant très semaines, elle avait pris des leçons chez Moshe. Elle me dit qu'il avait "sauvé son dos" et qu'elle recommençait à vivre. Elle était très étonnée que je ne sois pas au courant de son existence, puisqu'il était un "rebouteur" mondialement connu.

Cette rencontre, due au hasard ou à la nécessité, fut pour moi décisive. En effet, je sentais que dans ma façon d'aborder la santé, et la vie, dans ma responsabilité face à cela, quelque chose d'essentiel était érudé. Je commençais alors dans ma tête à me diriger vers Moshe.

Quelque temps plus tard, j'ai vu dans les journaux la photo de M. Ben Gourion, alors Premier ministre israélien, debout sur la tête. La boutade disait: "Moshe a mis M. Ben Gourion sur la tête et M. Ben Gourion a mis Moshe sur les pieds." Depuis lors, des personnages du monde entier venaient se faire "soigner" chez lui.

Une fois en Israël, en 1959, les valises à peine défaits, j'ai téléphoné à Moshe pour lui demander comment je pourrais devenir son élève. Il ma dit de venir au cours de groupe afin que nous puissions parler. C'est dans une petite ruelle d'un quartier résidentiel de Tel Aviv, rue Alexander Janai, que je me suis rendue pour le rencontrer. Il fallait descendre quelques marches avant d'arriver dans une entrée qui donnait sur une grande pièce d'environ 200 m², et au bout de laquelle se trouvait une estrade. On se servait de cet endroit pour des conférences, et pendant les fêtes religieuses, il se transformait en synagogue. Sur l'estrade se trouvait un magnétophone qui diffusait la leçon de Moshe. Les Leçons étaient enregistrées sur des bandes magnétiques. Sur chaque bande, il y avait seize leçons de 45 min à peu près. Sur le sol couvert de tatami en paille, une quarantaine de personnes suivaient la leçon. Moshe était assis sur une chaise, à côté de l'estrade, observant les gens se mouvoir et faisant de temps en temps des remarques. Je me suis approchée de lui et me suis présentée. Il m'a demandé ce que je faisais, et je lui ai alors raconté que j'enseignais le yoga, que j'avais appris comment respirer, la relaxation, ce qu'il fallait manger: la diététique, la nouvelle hygiène..., et que je le passais à mon tour à mes élèves.

what you have learned". And that, to understand, I should join the class.

The following day I arrived for a class with a friend of mine who was also a Yoga teacher. For the whole class we had to tilt the head from left to right. The tape recorder played on while Moshe read a newspaper. From time to time he would look up and say a few words. When it was over, my friend and I were completely confused, our necks were sore, and above all we did not understand anything. My friend declared that she would never set foot in the place again because it was dirty, because Moshe paid no attention to her, and because that to spend 45 minutes tilting one's head back and forth was absurd. I decided to continue. I understood that the lesson did not correspond to anything I knew, nor to my way of thinking, of acting, nor to my attitudes, and that I was not prepared to understand.

I was mesmerized; I went to two or three classes a week, and I often stayed on for several classes in a row.

->What was the difference between what you had learned before meeting Moshe, and what he allowed you to learn?

I cannot describe the vast area of functioning and understanding that I discovered with Moshe. But I would like to highlight several points that, I believe, were essential to my development.

When I met Moshe, I had a bag full of recipes, answers and solutions. A veritable cookbook. I did the "right things", ate the foods I was told to eat, stood up straight, had a positive outlook, all by imitation or identification. I observed models that led me to copy passively, without questioning, ways laid out by others. I was on the verge of getting caught in the trap, the same comfortable trap that so many continue to fall into.

I was living in the stereotype of the habitual, the predictable, where one knows where one is going, in the security of the familiar. Moshe had neither recipes nor solutions. He considered movement as a means, the playground, the springboard for awakening awareness and self-knowledge. That was the end of conformity, routine and inertia!

I became my own field of exploration. the marble and the sculptor. This meant that I had to renounce the security of dependence and assume the insecurity of a journey. The path that leads to a fixed destination has lost its hold on awareness of here and now, whereas that of greater independence leads towards greater autonomy, towards being oneself. What Moshe

Moshe m'écoutait, m'observait, hochait la tête en murmurant quelques syllabes. Et quand je lui ai demandé ce que lui il enseignait, sa réponse fut: "Rien de tout ce que tu as appris." Et que pour comprendre, il me fallait me joindre au groupe.

Le lendemain, je suis arrivée pour participer à la leçon, avec une amie professeur de yoga. Pendant toute la leçon, il fallait incliner la tête de gauche à droite -leçon à paraître dans le prochain bulletin-. Le magnétophone tournait, Moshe lisait un journal et de temps en temps, levait les yeux et disait quelque chose. Après la leçon, mon amie et moi-même étions très déroutées et ressentions une gêne dans la nuque et, surtout, nous ne comprenions rien. Mon amie a tout de suite décrété que plus jamais elle ne remettrait les pieds là-bas, parce que la salle n'était pas assez propre et que Moshe ne s'intéressait pas à elle, et que travailler pendant 45 minutes seulement sur l'inclinaison de la tête était aberrant. Moi j'ai décidé de continuer. J'ai compris que cette leçon n'entraînait pas dans le cadre de tout ce que j'avais déjà appris, ni dans la manière de penser, ni dans la manière d'agir, ni dans mon attitude, et que je n'étais pas préparée pour comprendre. J'étais comme aimantée, et j'allais au cours deux à trois fois par semaine et souvent je participais à deux ou trois séances de suite.

Quelle était la différence entre ce que vous aviez appris avant de venir chez Moshe et ce qu'il vous a permis d'apprendre?

Je ne peux décrire ici tout le grand champ de fonctionnement et de la compréhension que j'ai découvert avec Moshe. Mais je voudrais insister sur quelques points que je crois essentiels dans mon cheminement. Quand je suis arrivée chez Moshe, j'avais un sac plein de recettes de réponses et de solutions. On pourrait presque dire un manuel de cuisine. Je faisais ce qu'il "fallait" faire, je mangeais ce qu'on me disait de manger, je me tenais "droite", j'avais une attitude positive etc., et tout cela par imitation ou par identification. Je suivais des modèles qui me contraignaient à refaire passivement des chemins tracés par autrui, sans poser de questions, sans y mettre ici et là des points d'interrogation. Le piège me guettait, ce piège dans lequel on tombe si facilement et dans lequel, hélas, beaucoup de personnes continuent à tomber.

Je vivais dans le refuge du stéréotype "connu et prévu" dans lequel on sait où l'on va, dans la sécurité du "déjà fait". Or Moshe n'avait ni recettes, ni solutions. Il considérait le mouvement comme moyen, le terrain à une initiation ludique, le ressort d'étonnement de l'éveil, de prise de conscience et de connaissance de soi. Fini le conformisme, la routine et l'inertie !

Je suis devenue mon propre champ d'exploration, le marbre et le sculpteur. Ce qui voulait dire: renoncer aux dépendances sécurisantes et assumer l'insécurité du cheminement. Le chemin qui mène à un but n'a plus d'intérêt, mais la conscience de l'ici et maintenant, les routes vers plus d'indépendance, vers plus d'autonomie, vers être plus soi-même. Ce dont Moshe a voulu nous doter, c'est des moyens d'utiliser plus efficacement notre potentiel en accordant mieux sa structure à celle des faits. →

wanted to give us was ways of making better use of our potential through a finer tuning of our structure to our surroundings.

After a few months of the ATM classes, a new landscape unfolded within me. I dared get closer to Moshe, ask questions, invite him to my home. Moshe sensing my interest and my increasing enthusiasm, answered my questions readily, and I would get explanations, often more than I bargained for. It was difficult for me to follow at the beginning. My brain was not yet ready for that way of thinking, of absorbing, of doing. Moshe had to be patient and tolerant, and repeat and explain the same thing several times in different ways. He was transposing into daily life the attitude of the scholar in a laboratory who is trying to explain the results of his research with the only language at his disposal: formulas and equations. He was at the fore front of the new ways of thinking: systems theory, information theory, cybernetics, and also mechanics, physics, matter, time-space, causality and so on.

Moshe absorbed all of these contemporary ways of thinking - let us not forget the martial arts - to create something new. His genius was his ability to make the most abstract ideas understandable, concrete, tangible and to put them into practice. That is how he developed his method.

-> **What do you think of the method?**

To explain it would take volumes. Even then it would only be a theoretical presentation because the method is a concentrate of life itself.

I am reminded of the story of the young intellectual who believed he could learn everything from books.

He read many books about stars and became an astronomer.

He read many books about history and became a historian.

He read many books about swimming and drowned.....

Some things you can only learn through direct experience, by rolling in the ocean and being tossed in the waves.

The richness of the method only becomes apparent after a long process. Enlightenment appears after much consideration of our structure, our way of functioning and the relationship between the two. Our thought processes also emerge from linear, reductionist, fragmented, partitioned ways of thinking. ATM and FI bring about a fundamental shift in attitude towards ourselves, our fellow beings and the environment. It helps us solve our daily problems when they do not solve themselves. A new refined, sensitive, dynamic world emerges.

Déjà, après quelques mois de participation aux séances de P.C.M., un autre paysage s'ouvrait en moi. J'osais m'approcher de plus en plus de Moshe, je commençais à lui poser des questions, à l'inviter à la maison. Moshe, sentant mon intérêt et enthousiasme grandissant, s'offrait volontiers à répondre à mes questions et à me donner des explications plus d'ailleurs que je ne m'y attendais. Au début, j'avais beaucoup de mal à le suivre. Le réceptacle, la matrice de cette manière de penser et de faire, n'était pas encore formé chez moi. Moshe devait s'armer de patience et de compréhension et m'expliquer plusieurs fois la même chose, différemment. Il a voulu transposer dans la vie courante l'attitude qui est celle du savant dans son laboratoire, lorsqu'il étudie certains faits et cherche à en rendre compte à l'aide des formules, des équations dont il peut disposer. De plus, il était déjà à l'avant-garde de la pensée complexe, qui commençait à émerger: les théories systémique, informatique, cybernétique, l'auto-organisation, toute la "scienza nuova" et bien sûr, la mécanique, la physique et ses corollaires d'espace, de temps, de matière, la causalité du déterminisme, etc.

Moshe a intériorisé tous ces courants - et n'oublions pas aussi sa connaissance des arts martiaux - et a créé quelque chose de nouveau. Son génie était sa grande capacité à concrétiser les idées les plus abstraites et de les mettre en pratique, de mettre la main à la pâte. Ainsi, il a élaboré sa méthode.

->**Que pensez-vous de la méthode?**

Pour l'expliquer, il faudrait écrire plusieurs volumes alors, comprenez qui pourra! Et cette explication ne serait qu'un étalage théorique, or la méthode est un concentré de vie.

Cela me rappelle une histoire à propos d'un jeune intellectuel qui a cru qu'il pouvait tout apprendre par les livres.

Il a lu beaucoup de livres concernant les étoiles et il est devenu astronome.

Il a lu beaucoup de livres d'histoire, et il est devenu historien.

Il a lu beaucoup de livres sur la natation et il s'est noyé...

Certaines choses ne peuvent être apprises que par l'expérience directe de l'océan et des vagues qui enroulent le corps.

La richesse de la démarche ne s'impose que progressivement, au cours d'un plus ou moins long cheminement. Les lueurs apparaîtront après une interrogation sur notre structure, sur notre mode de fonctionnement et leur mécanisme interrelationnel. En même temps, s'accomplit une transformation complète de la pensée réductrice, unidimensionnelle, parcellaire et cloisonnée. Les prises de conscience par le mouvement et l'intégration fonctionnelle vont permettre un véritable changement de l'attitude envers soi-même, envers nos semblables et l'environnement. Elles vont nous aider à résoudre nos problèmes au quotidien, s'ils ne tombent pas d'eux-mêmes en cours de route. Un monde nuancé, sensible, dynamique, s'éveille.

-> What was Moshe's basic concern?

When the philosopher Wittgenstein was asked "why philosophy?" he answered: "To teach the fly how to escape from the fly trap". That was Moshe's concern: how to escape from ways of thinking and behaviours that are blind, barbaric, mutilating and destructive. He was particularly concerned with the survival of the human race. He was really interested to find out if human beings could bring about changes in themselves despite living in a violent, corrupt society with strife and conflict.

The chance for dignified survival on this planet hinges around acquiring an education that is congruent with our nervous system.

Moshe developed an educational system in the real sense of the word, capable of leading any child or adult along the path of self direction in life, a means of living fully and letting life run through you.

-> Could you elaborate on some aspects of this teaching?

Moshe's theme was: "If you don't know what you are doing, you can't know what you want". So you must know what you are doing. Learn to listen, to feel, to see reality, as it is, fresh, alive, here and now. To be present, as we are, in the moment, with our organs, all our senses, from head to toe, with heart. The poet Rilke said: "To write a single line of verse, one must have visited many cities, met many men, seen many things, one must know animals, feel how a bird flies, and know how a flower moves as it opens its petals in the morning sun.

In Awareness Through Movement, the object of our focus is not of such consequence as the high quality of that focusing. The quality of the awareness that is brought to the moment. The key to the learning is sensitivity, a refined sense of touch and a feel for quality of movement. By learning how to feel subtle and finer differences, the student will know what he is doing. Movement is the tool of this teaching. Depth of awareness determines the learning and the integration - a small key to open a large door- quality and precision determine the level of refinement.

Moshe understood that, however ingenious the modification of a certain behaviour, it would be useless if the door remained shut, if the senses were defective, stuck, polluted, if the person did not feel the kinesthetic messages. The rich contact between the felt and life can only occur on a non-verbal level. I cannot explain here the deep mechanisms Moshe brought into play in a real functional integration.

->Quelle était la préoccupation essentielle de Moshe ?

On a demandé au philosophe Wittgenstein: "Pourquoi la philosophie?" Et sa réponse fut: "Pour montrer à la mouche comment sortir de la bouteille à mouche." C'était aussi la préoccupation de Moshe: comment sortir de la pensée et des agissements aveuglants, mutilants, barbares et destructeurs. Il pensait avant tout à la survie de l'espèce humaine. Son réel centre d'intérêt était de savoir si des êtres humains tels que nous sommes maintenant, vivant dans cette société violente et corrompue avec ses querelles et ses conflits, peuvent engendrer en eux-mêmes une transformation.

Par conséquent, la chance de survie avec dignité sur notre planète pivote autour d'une acquisition d'éducation congrue avec notre système nerveux.

Moshe a mis en oeuvre une méthode d'éducation au sens exact du mot, capable d'indiquer à chacun, enfant ou adulte, le chemin pour se diriger dans la vie. Vivre pleinement en se laissant traverser par l'existence.

->Pouvez-vous nous expliquer certains aspects de sa pédagogie ?

Un des leitmotiv de Moshe était: "Si vous ne savez pas ce que vous faites, vous ne pouvez pas faire ce que vous voulez." Donc il s'agit de savoir ce qu'on fait. Apprendre à entendre, à sentir, à voir la réalité, ce qui "est", le vécu frais et vivant, ici et maintenant. D'être présent tel qu'on est, à l'instant même, avec tout ce qu'on possède d'organes, de facultés d'acquisition et ce, des pieds à la tête en passant par le cœur. Rilke ne dit-il pas: "Pour écrire un seul vers, il faut avoir vu beaucoup de villes, d'hommes et de choses, il faut connaître les animaux, sentir comment volent les oiseaux et savoir quel mouvement font les petites fleurs en s'ouvrant le matin."

La prise de conscience par le mouvement, la grande porte ouverte est l'Ecoute, et une clé de cet apprentissage consiste à assurer à l'élève une sensibilité de grande qualité par l'affinement du sens tactilo-kinesthésique. Ainsi l'élève pourra-t-il discerner, sentir des différences de plus en plus fines; il saura ce qu'il fait. Le mouvement est l'outil de cette pédagogie. De la profondeur de la prise de conscience dépendra l'apprentissage et l'intégration -la petite clé qui ouvre la grande porte -, et de sa qualité de précision, que dépendra son ajustement.

Moshe a compris que toute ingéniosité mise au service de la modification de certains comportements ne servirait à rien si la porte d'entrée reste fermée, si les capteurs sensitifs sont défectueux, figés, pollués. La personne reste insensible aux messages kinesthésiques. De plus, la richesse de contact avec le perçu et le vécu ne peut se faire qu'au niveau non verbal. Je ne peux ici expliquer tous les mécanismes profonds que Moshe prend en compte pour une vraie intégration fonctionnelle.



-> When did you start to learn Functional Integration?

I would often go and watch Moshe give lessons. His office was in a basement, 51 Nachmani street, and the waiting room was next door in the dining room of his mother's apartment, 49 Nachmani street. His mother, a small, bright eyed woman, would sit at the dining-room table covered with an oil-cloth. She would talk with the clients while they waited for Moshe. We called her grandma Moses as she had started painting at 70. The whole apartment was covered with her paintings, as was Moshe's office.

I asked Moshe to teach me F.I. It was not until 1968 that he called me one day to say: "Myriam, we are starting". From that time on and for three years, we would meet in his office to learn. There were thirteen of us from all walks of life. Moshe would demonstrate on one of us or on someone else, would explain what he was thinking, tell stories, and after we would work with each other. Often Moshe himself would be the guinea pig. He never criticized us, but sometimes, the next day, he would complain that we had worked too hard.

It was an intense and rich time, and it would take many articles to tell all. One evening, at a Chinese restaurant, with Moshe in Paris, he confided in me, saying that he could have married, had a family and raised children. I asked him if he had any regrets. "No," he answered. "To help people become more human is the most important thing one can do on this earth."

And that is what he did. His work continues and will continue to develop. He taught us ways to make better, more efficient, and more intelligent use of what we have by adjusting our structure to our way of functioning, by fine tuning our nervous system to our environment, our muscles, our skeleton. The method inspires man to grow by becoming lighter, to move forward and onward. It induces a creative dynamism. Moshe has a place among the greatest spirits to honour mankind, with those who have showed us the way....

Thank you, Moshe! Ten years have gone by. Let us unite in silence, non verbally. ■

-> Quand avez-vous commencé à apprendre l'I.F. ?

J'allais souvent regarder Moshe donner des leçons d'I.F. Cela se déroulait dans un sous-sol, au 51, rue Nachmani, et la salle d'attente était à côté dans l'appartement de sa mère, au 49, rue Nachmani. C'est la salle à manger qui servait de salle d'attente. Sa mère, une petite femme menue à l'oeil vif, était toujours assise devant la grande table de la salle à manger qui était recouverte d'une toile cirée. Très volubile, elle entretenait la conversation avec les clients jusqu'à ce que Moshe se libère. On l'appelait mother Mozes, parce qu'à soixante-dix ans, elle a commencé à peindre. Tout l'appartement, ainsi que le studio de Moshe, était tapissé de ses tableaux.

Je demandais à Moshe de commencer à m'enseigner l'I.F. C'est seulement en 1968 qu'il m'a téléphoné pour me dire: "Myriam, nous commençons." Depuis ce moment-là, et pendant trois ans, nous nous réunissions dans son studio pour apprendre l'I.F. Nous étions treize personnes, venues de toutes sortes d'endroits, de toutes sortes de professions, de toutes sortes de milieux. Moshe faisait des démonstrations sur nous ou sur des personnes venues de l'extérieur, nous expliquant sa pensée, parsemée d'histoires, et après nous travaillions les uns avec les autres; mais Moshe nous servait aussi très souvent de cobaye. Il ne nous a jamais critiqués, mais parfois le lendemain, il se plaignait que nous travaillions beaucoup trop.

Cette période était très riche, très intense, et il me faudrait encore plusieurs articles pour la raconter. Un soir, en dînant avec Moshe dans un restaurant chinois à Paris, dans un moment de confiance, Moshe m'a dit qu'il aurait pu se marier, avoir des enfants, créer une famille. Je lui ai demandé s'il le regrettait. "Non, me répondit-il. Permettre aux individus de devenir plus humains est la chose la plus importante qu'on puisse faire ici sur terre."

Et il l'a fait, et son œuvre continue et continuera à se développer. Il nous a dotés de moyens de nous utiliser plus efficacement, plus intelligemment, en accordant mieux notre structure à notre fonctionnement, à orchestrer le système nerveux avec l'environnement, la musculature, le squelette. Sa méthode invite l'homme à s'alléger pour s'élever, à se projeter à l'avant de soi-même. Elle insuffle un dynamisme novateur.

Moshe prend place parmi les plus grands de ceux qui ont honoré notre espèce humaine, au milieu de ceux qui ont tracé un sillage sur le flot de la vie.

Merci Moshe! Dix ans sont passés depuis qu'il nous a quittés. Communions dans le silence, dans le non-verbal. ■

MY EXPERIENCE WITH *FELDENKRAIS*

by Dora Flam

Thank you for asking me to tell about my experience with Moshe Feldenkrais. In 1971 when joint replacements were in their infancy, I went to see Dr. Turner who was then in Boston at the Boston Medical Center. I'd been suffering all my life from congenital dislocations of both hips. Different procedures had been tried among them body casts, pins and bone grafts.

By the time I was 15 years old I had undergone five major surgeries with long drawn out recoveries after each one. By the age of 16 my hips began to react to all that abuse in the form of osteoarthritis. I was then fed very strong and poisonous arthritis medication. Hip replacements were very new just then and one for my particular condition had not been invented yet. Little information was known of the effects on the body over a long period of time. At that time they were known to last approximately 7 years. Since I was so young I was told to search out some "alternative" to medicine and try to keep what I had for as long as possible, meanwhile giving medical technology a chance to evolve.

I went back to Israel on my crutches and went about my life as best I could, building my home and raising my children. One day a friend of mine mentioned Moshe Feldenkrais, that he'd helped David Ben-Gurion and I should go see him. I came to Moshe on crutches and when he looked at my x-rays he said: "You will have to replace these hips. Come back to me after that and I'll work with you." I told him I was not having surgery and asked if he could please work with me anyway. He agreed. Within a month I was off the crutches and joined his *Awareness Through Movement* class in Tel Aviv.

Not long after that Moshe was scheduled to conduct his first Professional Training Program in the United States. I was unable to join at that time, having spent all of my money on doctor bills and travel expenses. Besides I had nowhere to leave my two very young sons. Luckily D'vora Hisdai stayed home as well; so I went to her for *Functional Integration* for the time being.

Those severely deformed hips ended up serving me beyond my highest expectations. I think Moshe surprised himself with the outcome. I used them well for 21 years longer than expected. I even danced at my older son's wedding.

In 1988 I became a *Feldenkrais* teacher myself; having completed the professional training in Tel Aviv. Last September I finally worked up the courage to get my hips replaced. I got one new hip for my birthday and the other for a Hanukkah present. Medical technology has advanced to the point that these hips could last for the rest of my life. This time again, the *Feldenkrais* Method stood by me in the form of Sheryl Field. Her wonderful *Functional Integration* lessons got me onto my feet as she patiently familiarized me with the new me. Sheryl actually saved me from having to meet my doctor's colleague who specializes in spinal surgery.

Now four months after my second operation; (which included a pelvic reconstruction and a trochanteric osteotomy), I glide along in true *Feldenkrais* fashion. This week I was warmly welcomed back to the community center where I've been teaching *Awareness Through Movement* four times a week for the last five years. By this coming September I hope to be on a full time schedule doing *Functional Integration* and *Awareness through Movement* work.

Wherever your soul may be now, Moshe Feldenkrais, Bless You!

April 9, 1994

AN INTRODUCTION TO A WORKSHOP WITH MOSHE FELDENKRAIS - NEW YORK, 1980

transcribed and edited by Allison Rapp

[Ed. Note: In the Spring of 1980, shortly before the Amherst training began, Moshe gave a workshop in New York. It was held in the ballroom of the Statler Hotel, a grand old hotel in downtown Manhattan; the room was the one Tommy Dorsey's band had played in for years, and the hotel's "soundman" couldn't understand why Roger Miller (Moshe's soundman) went out and rented a complete sound system for the workshop — after all, in the 1940's Tommy Dorsey had been completely satisfied with the one that was currently available for Moshe's use! That evening, the room was full, the people were eager, and Moshe was in a wonderful mood as he began talking.]

This transcript begins a few minutes into his introduction. It has been minimally edited; for clarity, I've removed about 20 words, added perhaps 10, and rearranged 2 phrases. My hope is that from knowing him personally or on video tape, you will hear him as I did that night, speaking his words in his own voice.]

Now we are beginning the real talking. And that is, that some time ago, I have learned a Chinese proverb, and the Chinese, as you know, is a very old culture, and very wise people, and the wisdom of their thinking is really worth having. And, what I read was, "I hear and forget, I see and remember, and I do to understand."

Now, this is a kind of thing that it took me about...25 years to get to realize, that unless you can do a thing, you don't understand it. What people think they understand without having done it, they don't. What a person understands of playing the piano, and what a pianist does when he plays the piano, has nothing to do what the people who understand. Only the person who plays the piano understands what piano playing means. Only a painter can tell you what it is to paint. A painter who painted Gioconda [Mona Lisa, ed.] can tell you what it means "painting." Or Van Gogh, or anybody like that but anybody who doesn't know how to do - if you don't know how to do, you don't know the thing, really. You can talk about it, you can describe it, you can write articles about it, but damn it if you know anything about that; you don't. Nobody. If you don't to do the thing, you don't know it; and we will go and see that that is so. You will see on yourself that many things you can think and say, you really don't know. And if you knew them, you would be much better off than you are. And, as we are going to do that, you will — OH! that's talking tall — you will feel a change that is worth having by the end of the workshop here. Now, there is one important thing: how come people come and they don't know actually what they are going to do, and they don't know what Functional Integration is, they don't know what Awareness Through Movement is? So, why do they come? I think, actually that because they come, they prove that they are some of the best people on this earth [laughter]. Not because — don't think that I need your money, I can't do anything with it: I'm too old to consume it, look, and I'm not dressed, I don't spend it either. It's not that. I believe that we are going to feel (like) human beings that depend on each other in a funny sort of way. Not only because we belong to the same nation or something, but the human species as human beings, have something in common which is important to all of us.

And people who come to learn a thing — to learn? I don't know you came to learn; most of you, everyone who came, and that's why you are important to me, is because if you look properly into yourself, you will find that you have a good reason for coming, though you don't know what is being taught. The good reason is that everyone of us knows that he has not fulfilled his dreams, and therefore, he has not succeeded in making his life as pleasant and comfortable as he would wish. He may have got a lot of money, he may have got love, but not both and even at that, he has not realized that kind of thing that he always wanted to be. You may be a doctor and you wanted to be a pianist, or an actor. Or you always wanted to be a Don Juan, and instead of that, you are just a married man to somebody who you don't really like [laughter]. In fact, most people — or, the women, the same thing, of course; in fact, I think women are marvelous. I find that most men, I couldn't live with them [laughter], and every women finds somebody she can't live without, so — marvelous women. [laughter] Yeah, sure, if you think somebody can't live without you, or without me, what sort of ... I don't know, they are marvelous.

So ... I will tell you what I mean. I mean, some of you feel their posture is not good. Some feel their breathing is not good. Some feel their creativity is not good. Some feel their love is not good. Some feel something like that inwardly that is not good, and, they believe, someplace they heard that something is coming, maybe it's worth going. Now, I believe that people who care for themselves and try to do like that, go and do the thing that they never avowed to anybody that they feel inwardly. Maybe they said, "My posture is bad, my breathing is bad" something ... "my voice is bad" — but they did not really do anything about it, and I am sure the great majority come here for some reason of that sort. And therefore, people who care for their own wellbeing, and are ready to spend the time to do that learning, even if they don't really know what's going to be done, I think they are extraordinary people. They have curiosity, and therefore, they can learn and you will see that learning, in the sense in which we do it — it doesn't mean learning mathematics or architecture, medicine, or anything — there is something, a more fundamental learning than that, and that is the learning



through which the person grows to become a self-reliant, confident human being in a human society. It's very difficult; very few of us have reached that. You know, even presidents have failed. You see? So, there we are.

Now, with these preliminaries, we are not going to talk anymore, but only a little bit more. [laughter] Ah, ha ha, yes. By the way, you will have to do that all the time; as soon as you get really serious, you are unable to learn [laughter]. If you learn, you can learn academic things that means you can learn 10 years and you can remain the same idiot, but you will have a big diploma with a professorship; but you won't change much; people who know you will say, "He's the same, he hasn't changed much, he's still a _____" — same thing.

And that, of course, is the thing for which you come here: for that change that — not I am going to change you — the change you will find yourself. You will find that change which you always didn't know how to get there, to be your own master with dignity, and that's an extraordinarily difficult thing to do, and the most important thing to do. In fact, ever since any culture of humanity became developed like (the) Chinese, (in the) last 12,000 years, all the great men of this world, that we consider to be great men — philosophers, Confucius, Lao Tse, Plato, Jewish rabbis of the old time, — everybody knew that "Know Thyself" is the most important thing a man can do.

Now, every one of us thinks he knows himself. What do you mean, I don't know myself? Of course I know myself. You will see that we don't. We don't know ourselves. In fact, we know ourselves in such a way that you will realize within a few minutes that you really have no real power over yourself; that your legs dictate your action, your back dictates your action. Not you act, but your pains, your aches, your inability, your ancient learning which you don't know what it is, it's these things that dictate our action.

Now, when you come to think of action, action is the most important thing we can do, because it's concerned with movement, and we will see later that movement is the essence of life. Have you noticed that anybody who stops moving altogether, they bury him? [laughter] Ah, but it's true. And that's true with every animal. If you see a rat lying there a day without moving, you may be sure that it stinks, and you may be sure that it's dead. And that holds for a cat or a lion; everything that doesn't move is dead. Now, therefore, action — movement — is the essence of life. And from here we go straight into doing it.

What that action is (is) so important, yet you will see that most people know very little about it and have never really thought about it. Those who are familiar with Gurdjieff's teaching—is there anybody here who is in a Gurdjieff group, or was in a Gurdjieff group? Those know that Gurdjieff, one

of the big messages that he said, (was) that people can't do, they are being done. That means the circumstances, the other people, fate, does to them something; but they don't do anything themselves, they can't act. And I believe he was right. Most people don't act. They are just being carried away by circumstances, like a cork on a sea — it goes up and down, but it's not the cork who does it, it's the turmoil of the water that does it. And with us, it's the turmoil of life that moves us around, but we don't act — very little.

Now, we will see that when we talk about action, there is primitive action and highly intentional human action. The difference is enormous between the two. Primitive action, whether it is a contraction of a fiber of a muscle, or whether it is doing anything else in a primitive way, it's all or nothing. That's a primitive act. I can talk ... [silence, laughter] ... and shut up — and that means you can do and not do. That's the most primitive act you can have, the most primitive thing. You can speak and not speak, you can sleep and not sleep, you can lift or not lift — whatever we do, yes and no, those are the most primitive things we can do. And the yes and no is always concerned with an achievement — either I lift this or I don't, either I drink this or I don't, I do a thing or I don't and that is the most primitive action common to all the living species of this world, whether it's an ant, or a bee, or a dog or anything else.

But it's not good enough for anything that concerns us as human beings. Because you can paint and not paint, you can write or not write, you can sing or not sing, we can all do that, yes and no. But what sort of painting is it if I paint and I don't paint? That is not important. Is it important whether I paint now or not? Or I sing now or not? Or that I run now or not? They are primitive acts: primitive, human brain waves, very primitive, the simplest, common to every animal, you don't have to be a human being for that. Every animal has the same sort of thing.

To human beings, it's not important whether you paint or you don't, but how you paint. How we paint, that's important. It's not important whether we live or die, all animals live and die, and we live and die. The question is, how do we live? If our life is not of a quality that we approve of it, the fact of yes and no is a very primitive, elementary action. It's not important whether I play the piano or I don't, the question is HOW I play the piano. It's not a question of whether I have a wife or I don't, it's a question of what sort of life we live together. The HOW is more important than WHAT.

Now, you will see that in primitive actions, in our normal primitive (everyday life), we will see that that is true, and you will see it not because I will tell you, but because you will feel it yourself, on yourself ... that most of our acts are primitive. Except that everyone of us has one little domain which is usually his profession where he was trained,

(continued on page 33)



Man or Monster? - The Videotape Image of Moshe

Question

By Stan Nevin, former Editor of The FELDENKRAIS GUILD's IN TOUCH newsletter, takes a look at the image of Moshe projected via videotape to students who never knew him.

It is lunchtime at Gaby Yaron's Chicago training. Moshe Feldenkrais, preserved in electronic miniature, is yelling at a young woman at the Amherst training for doing the movement so badly. We've seen this sort of thing before, of course. In our three years at the training we've watched many videos of Moshe's ATM classes, and there don't seem to be a lot of them where he is in a happy and forgiving mood. Even now this comes as a bit of a shock to most of us, and the shock is visible on the faces of the students around me, many of whom eat as they watch. They seem to be asking themselves, "Did Gaby Yaron, the most warm, nurturing and constructive teacher any of us has ever met, really learn from THIS man?"

Of course maybe it's not fair for me, cake-eating suburbanite that I am, to judge the manners of a man who survived persecution and hardship, who lived most of his life in countries that were fighting a war or bracing for the next one, who helped revolutionize the way we all think about the body and the mind. But how can I not judge him? He is stepping down off the podium now, castigating as he goes, to stand over the poor woman and shout instructions. Finally, beyond himself with impatience, he grabs her by the clothing and starts swinging her through the movement. She has a wide-eyed and grudgingly accepting look on her face, like a puppy tangled up in its leash, as that past class, along with this present one, sits and watches helplessly. Says the woman next to me, "I would be in tears."

So who was this guy? Since we are not a cult, this isn't a vital question - but it certainly is an interesting one. Many of us never did meet him personally. I didn't hear of his work until after his death. Nevertheless I, like most of the people reading this newsletter, have spent a great deal of time and money in order to get initiated into the legacy of Moshe Feldenkrais. I don't regret a single second. I don't begrudge a single penny. His work has what I consider to be the main quality of true genius: No one had thought of it before he did, and yet once understood, the approach seems almost obvious. He gathered an amazing number of intelligent, fascinating and tireless people around him. Through his life's work he has improved the lives of thousands - eventually, we hope, millions - of people in a profound and lasting way. And I have been assured by many teachers for whom I have deep respect that he was likable, that he was wise, that the depth of his compassion was obvious when he worked with children.

Maybe. But my only personal experience of the man is through those videotapes.

Response

Franz Wurm, a long-time friend and colleague of Moshe's responds:

It's a relief that you should have come up with the question "Man or Monster?" A few facts may help to answer it.

Let me present my credentials first: Moshe and I became room-neighbours in London in late 1947 or early 1948. He was then writing BODY AND MATURE BEHAVIOUR and soon to start his first group (of some 4 or 5 people, including me), but was already having "hopeless cases" sent to him by some few medical friends. We remained in close contact after he had moved to Tel Aviv and I to Switzerland, seeing each other at least once a year (he would usually come to stay with us for his holiday), and I had something of a hand in the writing of most of his books, from the night of our first meeting onwards. Until about 1978 I was the only "Feldenkrais-man" in Europe, except of course for himself. The breakthrough began when, in '68/'69. I broadcast over Swiss Radio two Feldenkrais courses which we had worked out and recorded together (I was, and still am, terribly proud of his letting me do, and include, three of the lessons). The courses were broadcast over two years, then made available on LP, later on cassettes which are still obtainable and in demand.

Now to the Monster. He could be offensively rude and vulgar during courses, occasionally too much so for some of his Tel Aviv groupers, especially elderly ladies;

Man or Monster? - The Videotape Image of Moshe

(Franz Wurm's response continued)

but more often than not he was deliberately so, trying to wake people up, or to provoke them into countering, instead of meekly submitting to insult (to vent their aggression instead of repressing it, if you like), or to make them realise that they were hampering themselves by absurd taboos.

A change started as the years changed him. He had abandoned what had promised to be a steep climb to fame in London, by moving to Tel Aviv. In Israel, the medical professionals remained his enemies practically until he died. When, about 1968, Ben Gurion and I independently proposed him for the Nobel Prize in Medicine, he was not even considered, the reason given being that he was not a medical doctor and had to-date not published anything in a professional journal (he couldn't have done: the journals were closed to non-medicals). Ben Gurion told him, and Moshe was both flattered and upset. And, also in 1968, he suffered a traffic accident in London (a van throwing him onto another car), from which however he seemed to have escaped unscathed.

He did suffer trouble with his teeth, and had to have a set. One eye after the other got cataract and had to be operated. Moshe, who, as far as I know, never caught infections, nor even a cold, and who used to brag humorously that he would live to be three hundred ("Well, two hundred at least."), resented any such physical sign of age as a personal insult. He would take out his teeth, fling them on the table and exclaim, "How is one supposed to eat with THAT?" His hearing began to fail him, and so did his half-conviction that he could, by his work, "turn any idiot into a genius." We used to discuss and argue about his Training courses. "They'll pick up a bag of tricks," he would say, "that's all; and that's not what my work is about. But," he would add, "they'll make a living by what they've learnt, and that's something, too - for them, anyway." Or again: "Perhaps in fifty years' time somebody will pick up the threads, and grasp them, and make something better of them." True such despondency came out rarely, and in public would not go beyond humorous resignation. But impatience came along with it, though only towards the end of

his time would it get the better of him. He had found no successor, and he knew what this meant and what it would lead to. And he realised that his days were counted, but his work not done. His tantrums and outbursts however were to turn out to have another cause yet. Listening to recordings of Amherst and of the last workshops he gave in the States, listening to them after his death, I was amazed by the subtlety he had achieved, and I was surprised and dismayed by his losses of temper; but by then I knew.

When he landed here on a morning at the end of Sept. '81, he looked a washout as I'd never seen him except once when a very close friend had fallen foul of him. For the first time, he said, he hadn't slept a wink during the flight. He was not to be persuaded to go to bed, but went to town instead, and came back after a couple of hours utterly bewildered and half amused: people had been helping him to cross streets, he felt himself tottering. The next morning he didn't wake up, nor was he to be woken by any means. A doctor brought him to and urged him to go to hospital; he wouldn't hear of it. The next morning the doctor failed to bring him round, and we had him taken to hospital unconscious. For five days he lay there resting and undergoing examinations with no result. We finally unearthed the "big shot" in neurology ("officially" still in Japan). He soon found Moshe to have a subdural hematoma on each side of his skull. (I later gathered from him that these could in no small way contribute to depressions and fits of temper.) This raised the question of how it had come about. By the doctor's, Prof. Yashargil's say, it could have been caused only by a violent blow on the head. Neither Moshe nor any of us remembered any such thing. Eventually Moshe - or perhaps it was his brother - recalled that traffic accident in London 13 years previously. That, it seems, was it, incredible though it sounds. And utter exhaustion had played its part: for the last six or seven months, in the States, Moshe had been overwork-ing beyond excess - "in a stupid panic," he told me in hospital, "of not being able to finish my work. It finished me instead - perhaps," he added with a twinkle. →

Man or Monster? - The Videotape Image of Moshe (Franz Wurm's response continued)

Whether he had been driven by apprehension, I don't know."

Exhaustion, apprehension - despondency, impatience, temper: am I being wise after the event? His situation and his condition seem to provide clues to his behavior, and may have made the Man act "monstrously" at times (and childishly at others). And because I found it a sad thought that people should get their picture of him from instances of the recordings - video and audio - made of him during his final years, it was a relief to me that you should have raised your question about whether the Man was a Monster, too.

He wasn't. He was a man of genius, and his failings may have been to the measure of his abilities and gifts; and a man who never forgave himself when he chanced to fall short of exceedingly exacting moral standards - which he never presumed to apply to others, and an awe-inspiring natural sense of responsibility showed in his actions. He got more than his fill of ingratitude, but it never left a grudge. When he helped people, apart from his work, you would have been hard put to find him out. He boasted of his successes; but his own decency he may never even have noticed, and would merely have liked to be able to expect it from others. But then I think there must be plenty of people around to bear out his kindness, not only to children. Stupidity could bring him to the boil in a desperate attempt to open someone's mind and his senses; but while still in full possession of himself, he would never boil over, at least not without a clear purpose. Let others tell the stories, my concern here was with the point you had raised.

As for the videos and the various problems connected with them, this is hardly the place to go into the matter. Moshe had his own opinion of their quality and the value of their use. Some perhaps, like the ones you mention, would not necessarily need to be shown, unless there is something important to be learnt from them. To what other end would one want to show them anyway? Surely not in order to disparage Moshe.

1980 WORKSHOP (Continued from page 30)

learned, there he is a little bit better. There he is better than just primitive. But all round, except in his profession, he is as primitive as they can make it. And that means we are all very primitive, and without doing something about it, without allowing ourselves to grow, although we may be very old now — I still contend that the human brain is such a marvelous contraption that you can learn with one foot in the grave; you can still learn, provided you consider — as we will see later — that learning, is not a question of acquiring knowledge for passing examinations, or saying, "I know this better than you" — that's not learning.

Learning is what children do in the first two years of their life; they come out of a sperm and an ovum, and in two years' time you can see a child who has a mind of his own, has habits of his own, has inclinations of his own, has a way of responding to (his) father and mother in his own way; and so, in the two years, he has grown more than many people have grown from the age of 17 to 50, or to 90.

Now, that being so, let's now start with some sort of action, in order to see what we are capable of learning in a very short while; we will see that actually our brain is so clever, and that's why I told you, I believe that you will all be shown that you're cleverer — even I will be shown that I am cleverer than I think of myself now — and don't think that I think of myself that I am superior to anybody. But everyone of us here will feel a better man, a better woman — oh, I should be lib — better woman, better man; no, better man, better woman — nobody is offended, I hope. Maybe we'll say, "better we, better us."

So, you will see that every one of us is better than he thinks of himself; not what other people think. That the people are better than what they think of themselves; and this is to me much more important — it's not important to me what you think about me, but if I think of myself that I am no good, if I think of myself that I am unworthy, that's a thing I carry with me for life. And therefore, it's more important than just that you tell me that I am unworthy. I can say "You don't understand, I am so clever you can't understand; I think I'm worthy, that's good enough." You see? It is the question of our own inner self-respect, our own dignity; and that, you can't learn from anybody else but through yourself. And what we have learned to now has destroyed the self-confidence and the dignity of the great majority of people. The great majority of people think, "I don't breathe well, my posture is bad, I am not creative, I can't, I must do that, I must do this, I must learn this, I must learn that. I am no good." We will see that that is absolutely wrong. And wrong in that most of us here are capable of such quick learning that is it astonishing, that you will be surprised how quickly you will learn, after an acquaintance with the way we do it, because we do it in a way which fits our structure and the function of our brain.

Now, you think it's enough for an introduction? I think long overdue. So, would you please lie on your back ... ♥

Life with Moshe by Frank Wildman

At lunch one day, I asked Moshe what he felt was the first thing he did that led to the Feldenkrais method. He looked at me with an impish expression and said, "When you are told to stay in bed for several months, you have plenty of time to play with yourself." A little embarrassed, I replied, "Gee, I never thought of developing anything so significant by playing with myself." He laughed and then explained how, having been told that he could neither stand on nor bend his leg for several months, he had experimented by pulling on his fingers and playing with his feet, developing a new way of understanding how the body functions - a systems application to the body. This was possibly the first time that anyone had thought of the body in this way. His were experiments in handling himself - touching his own hands, touching his own feet, manipulating himself in many different ways to discover how he was "wired together," as he put it. He had anatomy books and physiology books around but none of them explained what he was discovering. (None of them knew a bloody thing I wanted to know," he said.)

He demonstrated, in the restaurant, how he did some of this auto-manipulation. I found it incredible that he had operated with the same firm resolve from the beginning of his experiments, and at the end of his "presentation" I felt that I had a much better understanding of the *Feldenkrais* Method, particularly after he explained how he applied the same ideas to other people. The most striking thing about his story was his description of how he attempted to play with the foot and toes on his injured leg. Because his hamstring was too tight for him to reach his foot - or so he thought - he began to think about releasing his shoulders, his chest, and involving his whole body in the movement so that the parts that could be more flexible could learn to operate better. Rather than let his thinking stop at the hamstring and the idea of stretching it as a mechanical piece, he realized that he had to involve all of himself, and that the only parts he could involve were the parts that already worked well. He demonstrated how he would involve his ribs and shoulders and so on in the action of touching his foot, so that the tightness in the hamstring no longer made that much difference to the operation of the whole system. ♣

Moshe the Gentle Judoka by Carl Ginsburg

Mark Reese told me a couple of years ago that when Moshe stayed at his house one evening, he watched Moshe do an ATM on the floor of the bedroom. "You wouldn't believe how soft and delicate he was with himself. It was elegant. We haven't even begun to approach his gracefulness," Mark said. I was reminded of this one morning as I became aware that I so often work too hard with myself. This despite the fact that I am, as a teacher, enjoining others to be slow and delicate. I have an image of Feldenkrais, the old Judoka, as this heavy set thick, taurus of a man with a round face, beaming eyes. He could walk without a sound despite two injured knees. When he touched his pupils with his quick but deft fingers, flesh melted. Yet he looked so at ease it often appeared as if he did nothing in his touch. He spoke of gentleness as a kind of respect for oneself, a respect that also extended to the roots of humanity. Nonetheless, he had the ability to throw you across the room without a moment's hesitation (see Dennis Leri's interview with Moshe on the martial arts, *Feldenkrais Journal* #3). The first time Moshe Feldenkrais touched me with one of his "lessons," I knew his hands were incomparable. He had me lie across a low table with my knees on the floor and my ass in the air. Moshe pushed gently at my hips. They were frozen in space. That indeed was the essence of my trouble. I had had back pain and stiffness for years before this. Moshe's gentle and deeply probing fingers were next at the base of my skull. Then he was moving my shoulders and ribs so lightly that I felt no resistance. When he moved his hands back to my pelvis I was not aware of change. He took both hands and pressed lightly down on my pelvis so that my spine lengthened. I felt compelled to take a deep breath. He slapped my backside with a light pressure. My pelvis swung right and left in space with a freedom I had never experienced before. What a difference when I stood up and walked about. My back, shoulders, hips, and legs felt oiled, easy, incredibly moveable. I felt erect and solid on the earth, as if I had a power I had never been previously aware of having. That night I dreamed I was driving a little Volkswagen automobile, one of those little bugs. A huge semi truck was bearing down on my tail. It was an expression of his power; Moshe was the big truck. But that power came from a different source than one would expect. It was a direct consequence of his delicacy.

Memories of Moshe Feldenkrais by Jerry Karzen

We want to humanize those individuals whom we esteem, who have a special talent or position in society. Somehow we need to diminish the charisma, the mystique that surrounds them. To know that, after all, they are like us, or we like them. Yet, we also wish to maintain that aura of specialness — to idealize the characteristics in someone that will elevate our spirit, help us become our unspoken dreams.

As I stood in the hall, I could hear Moshe coming to the door of his Tel Aviv apartment. Then, each of the four locks being unbolted. He stood before me apologizing, as he had on the telephone, for not picking me up at the airport. After the few usual formalities — “Are you tired? Hungry?” — he showed me the room that was to be my bedroom for the next three months, and we watched the popular American “cops and robbers” TV series, *Starsky and Hutch*.

Moshe had lived in this apartment in central Tel Aviv for over 30 years. It was, as Jeff Haller best describes it, “a library with a bed in it.” The “library” contained volumes on mechanics, physics, psychology, judo, physiology, anatomy, dictionaries, the latest in “new age” literature, and many more — published in French, English, Russian, Hebrew and German.

Once during an argument he told me to go to a certain bookshelf: “It’s a green, small book, about the fifth one in on the fourth shelf. The second chapter will answer your question.” It did. I asked him when he last read that book. “About 30 years ago.”

Moshe liked food, and was very cosmopolitan in his tastes. Coffee with lots of cream, at least two teaspoons of sugar. Sometimes SPAM sliced in 1/4-inch pieces and fried in hot oil: “From the days when the British brought it to us during the man-date.” Next followed two or three eggs, also in the now boiling oil. His sister would bring wonderful cheeses from France, chocolates, too. “The best are from Belgium.” We’d devour half a box at a sitting.

He liked to cook Chinese food. His cupboard had all the necessary ingredients to do so. Late at night he’d sometimes wake up for a snack, and the cockroaches in the kitchen would scurry back to their hidden crevices. He hated Mexican food: “All that damn melted cheese.” Who had the hottest food? Was it Korean, Szechwan or Hunan?

Who could eat the weirdest food? Moshe won when he saw me squirm while he ate a cold fish head — eyes and all. Milk was bad: “Do you know any mammal past its infancy that drinks its mother’s milk?” Sometimes just a bowl of rice or buttered noodles would suffice for dinner: “Who needs all these sauces all the time, they make you sick!”

At a meal he’d eat off your plate without asking, if the food looked appealing. After the meal he’d have a cigarette. Any would do. But Dunhill, blue box, extra mild — ah, that was best. Then “a coffee” before going to sleep. But, once his head hit the pillow, he’d be sound asleep and snoring in seconds.

Moshe had six pairs of colored pants, three black and three midnight blue. All had double sewn deep pockets, and

were made by “the best English tailors” available. When traveling or at home, he’d wash them in the evening and the next morning they’d be fresh and still “maintain their crease.” He always smelled clean, even his breath, but he would not necessarily bathe every day because he said, “My skin is delicate and soap dries out the skin depleting its natural oils, and overuse actually causes you to sweat more.”

His coat of many pockets was famous for its weight. Among some of its contents it contained a battery tester, at least two miniature tape recorders with extra batteries, large amounts of cash — usually 5 - 10,000 dollars in each of the following currencies: Swiss francs, U.S. dollars and German d-marks, all sorts of pens, three kinds of scissors for cutting skin or nails, two kinds of nail clippers, nail files, extra wheels for the bottom of his luggage, and all kinds of needles and thread. I once broke a large needle while sewing his small black leather bag in an airport, and he promptly replaced it with another: “For idiots like you!!” He also carried all sorts of antibiotics, band-aids, and an Israeli and a British passport, etc., etc., etc., Moshe was always prepared for any eventuality.

He never seemed to suffer from jet-lag. He thought crystal “healing” was nonsense, but he let people try it on him. He took Tibetan medicine: “Turd pills.” He had an excellent acupuncture library and occasionally practiced the art of it.

At the end of a long workday in the late 1970s he would struggle to stay awake during an FI lesson. Sometimes he gave from eight to twelve FI lessons in a day, each succeeding one more incredible in quality than the last one. He would frequently wake up in the middle of the night and, as he called it, “roll around” for a few hours exploring the old and new ATM patterns. Sometimes he’d “roll around” for an hour in bed in the morning before starting the day. He was a night owl — late to bed, late to rise.

Shopping with Moshe was an experience akin to being with my 3-year-old son. He had the most inquisitive mind and was the most curious adult I’ve ever met. Everything was opened, examined, turned around, and its function inquired about. His apartment in Tel Aviv was full of gadgets: half-taken-apart pieces of lighters, tape recorders, magnets, condensers, half-used batteries, etc., etc. Everything was saved. Invited into your home and left alone, he’d inspect your books, closets, drawers, cupboards. He was like a voracious, curious animal sniffing out and exploring his surroundings.

Moshe died in his sleep ten years ago. The title for his last book was to be **YOUR SKELETON WILL OUTLIVE YOUR SOUL**. Now, the remains of his material body lie in a simple non-descript grave next to his mother and brother, in a cemetery just outside Tel Aviv. He lived life fully — vigorously, passionately, in all its extremes. We honor his spirit, and our own, when we live our lives to the limit, as he did.



Recollections of Moshe

by Jeff Haller

The Paradoxical Nature of Learning with Moshe

I was with Moshe at his home in Israel. Moshe sat in his wheelchair; he had just completed a session with a physical therapist (all the *Feldenkrais* trainers were in Amherst at the time) which I had been allowed to watch. After a time, he looked at me and said, "So what do you think about that?" Embarrassed, I answered, "To be honest, Moshe, I think I can give a better lesson." I was a student at the time. He looked at me, "It doesn't matter what you think." Embarrassed silence. "It only matters what you do," he followed, his way of inviting me to give him lessons. The next day, I again sat at his bedside. His nurse entered the room. Moshe looked at me, "She never thinks, only acts." You can imagine my confusion. This incident has a lot to do with my understanding that thinking and action are really one.

Thoroughly Moshe

My favorite Moshe story has to be the time I went to pick up Moshe to watch Julius Erving play basketball at Amherst. I drove Julius' car, a Saab. After helping Moshe into the car, I put the key in the ignition. Before I could turn the key, Moshe made me stop. He would not let me start the car until he knew how the seat belt worked, how the door handle, the key, the radio, etc. operated, until he knew he was safe and how to get in and out of the car without hesitation.

What Makes a Good Lesson?

I sat at Moshe's bedside, having just given him a lesson. "Moshe," I asked, "what makes for a good lesson?" He looked at me, "Simplicity," he said, then he rolled over and went to sleep. There I sat with a genius who spent forty years on this work expecting him to give a nice talk on what makes a lesson, and he's asleep. Two weeks later I asked again, "Moshe, what makes a nice lesson?" He looked at me as if to say he had already answered that question and why was I bothering him. Another of those embarrassing silences. After about five minutes, he looked at me and said, "friendly hands." So that is the koan I am left with - simplicity and friendly hands.

Moshe the Mime

I watched Moshe as he gave a lesson to Julius Erving. I watched as he said to Julius, "This was your posture when you came in." And Moshe just came from the ground and it was like he, like every pore took on the posture. Here he was, 5' 5", looking like Julius Erving. You couldn't tell them apart, really—IN QUALITY. That's what a mime does. And then Moshe said, "Now you're like - - -" and he took on that quality. It was like watching a shape-shifter right there in front of my eyes. I was going, wow, this guy, this is intense.



Try a Little Tenderness

by Dennis Leri

It was late afternoon and we were returning to Tel Aviv from Herzilia. Soon there would be three stars in the sky signalling the end of Shabbaz and Tel Aviv would be very alive. We had spent Saturday with Mia Segal and her family. Michel, Moshe's nephew, was driving and Baruch, Moshe's brother, was in the back seat with me, and Moshe up front. Moshe began to question me. "Dennis, are you a religious person?"

"What do you mean by religious?"

"Don't be flip, are you or aren't you?"

"No, I suppose not. Why?"

"Because its about your president, Jimmy Carter."

"What about "my" president Jimmy Carter?"

"He and Khomeini are the same."

"How so?"

"They are both religious bigots. Carter wants to force everyone to accept his Christian values and his notions of civil liberties. Khomeini wants to force his fundamentalist values on the world.

Religious fanatics feel that this is a perfect world, a world created by God, and that they speak for him. Only they have a big problem, all the sinners and heretics that don't fit in. Bigots feel justified in doing God's will and eliminating anything and anyone that isn't perfect. They can justify all manner of inhumanity to purge the world of infidels. And it is just like rolfing."

"How so?"

"Because they feel justified in causing pain to bring order and perfection to the body. They punish you for your sins, for your misuse and your pain is your penance. To make things perfect anything is allowed."

Moshe put his faith into a human being's ability to learn. Individuals decide what they will change. He said that if laws and moralities make it impos-sible for people to live their lives, then it's the laws and moralities that should be changed. We stand in our work as advocates for the individual. ❧

A MOMENT WITH MOSHE

by Angele Di Benedetto

In the last year of our Amherst Training Program, our class of 230 students split into two locations. Because Moshe was very ill, 150 of us chose to end our final year in Tel Aviv, Israel, while, regrettably, the rest of our colleagues preferred to stay in Amherst, Massachusetts.

I wanted to be as close to Moshe as I could, even though I knew he would never see us off as we ventured into our new found world of becoming *Feldenkrais* Practitioners. However, something felt unfinished and I had to somehow see his town, his home and his people.

Our 4th year program began in June of 1983, we had many good teachers, and it was marvelous to be in Israel. One day, Jerry Karzen came up to me and said, "Angele, do you want to visit Moshe? Come on, hurry." He grabbed me by the hand and dragged me out of the training room, walked me down the main street of Tel Aviv, and led me down that well known front walk of Moshe's house. It all seems like a blur to me now, the room, his books, his small kitchen, the smells of old and musty things inside. I can't say that I recollected anything clearly until I observed his frail body lying dormant in his bed.

Moshe Feldenkrais, that enigma of a man that was so powerful in my eyes; when he would yell in Amherst, the hairs on the back of my neck would rise, and shortly after, a nervous giggle would well up in my throat. The strength of his presence remained the key focus of my memory, and stayed with me that very moment when I initially saw him lying there. I came into his presence with the old image of him, which still was embedded in my mind, was this the same person? Wait...how could he have become so thin, so pale, so fragile and so...quiet? Just as I began to accept his new condition, I reached out to touch his hand. He stared straight into my face, and a fierce flame in his eyes ignited. I saw his expression waver from meek to mighty in a split second, as if he had thousands of faces, erupting and flashing before me like a slide show. I thought to myself, "Moshe, who are you now? You're scaring me, are you young, are you old, you are brilliant, afraid, excited, angry, disappointed, I see you are exhausted, and ready to take a long sleep, now you are infantile, now a genius." I found myself swimming in his face, it was constantly transforming, I was captured by his presence, and

became lost in a trance..... "Ouch! He's squeezing my hand, he'll break my bones if I pull away, just stay there Angele, his mood will quickly shift." And it did, he became immediately docile. Then he slept. Then he snored.

Shortly after, I began to visit Moshe almost every day. I was hooked on him. I would lean over his bed and say, "Hello Moshe, do you remember me, my name is Angele." His response was unaffected, I somehow felt that a mere name or a handshake was unimportant. My time was running out, how could I connect with my teacher, when we rarely had any exchange of words even when he was in Amherst.

One August morning, as I was approaching his front door I noticed a lovely bush that had exceptionally fragrant yellow flowers; I recall seeing them in Hawaii. The flowers smelt like a sun tan lotion called, "Coppertone." I picked a flower, and continued to pursue my daily visit. Moshe appeared to be growing less interested in visitors as time went on, his concerns were mainly what day it was, receiving *FI*s and spending a lot of time doing pieces of *ATMs* at his own slow pace. With much concern that he might greatly reject me, I decided to take a risk and appeal to his senses. I cautiously approached his bed, leaned down towards him, and placed the flower onto his nostrils, giving him no option but to take in this delicate yet potent aroma. With that I said, "Hello Moshe, it's Angele here to see you again." He smiled mischievously.

I continued this routine daily. Our training was coming to a close, and on the last day before leaving Israel I picked my final, last fresh flower, and placed it on his nose. Much to my surprise, he said, "ahhhh it's Angele isn't it?, sit down, I want to tell you a dream I have..." Thereafter, I departed his home on a cloud. Moshe shared a dream with ME. He said that his wish was to have the whole world doing the same *ATM*, all at the same time, via satellite. Could I help him achieve this?

By the way, I found out years later that he shared this dream with many people that visited him during and before those times. It was a bit of a blow, but I am still grateful for having my personal moment with him.

I will cherish and keep this particular flower pressed in my signed Awareness Through Movement book. The fragrance is long gone, but the memory of Moshe Feldenkrais will last forever. ♡

Moshe and Narciso

by Jack Heggie

During the Amherst training, Moshe told a story about Narciso Yepes, the famous classical guitarist. Through advancing age, Yepes was losing his ability to play, and was considering retirement.

However, Yepes met Moshe while both were in Europe, and Yepes got several FI lessons. He was so improved by the lessons that he followed Moshe around Europe for several months, receiving more lessons, and he was able to continue his career.

After graduating from the Amherst training and working as a practitioner for a few years in Dallas, Texas, I learned that Yepes would be giving a concert with the symphony there. I made reservations to attend the concert and a reception afterwards. At the reception I introduced myself to Yepes and told him that I was a Feldenkrais Practitioner. After some small talk, he told me the following story.

“I was speaking with Moshe in his room, and he began to talk about the musicians of today. Most of them, even the famous ones, were not very good, he said. They used too much force, they did not have a delicate enough touch, and so on. He continued for several minutes, complaining about the generally poor quality of today’s musicians, and how they could really be much better.

“Finally I had to interrupt. ‘Moshe,’ I said, ‘you are a very clever man and I respect your work immensely, but what do you know of music? You don’t even play an instrument. How can you criticize something you know so little about?’

“Moshe admitted tht he was not a musician, but insisted that he was right. He then offered to prove his point.

“He asked me to get out my guitar and play a short piece. I did this and he listened attentively. He then stood behind me, and asked that I play the piece again. As I played, he used his hands to do something to the muscles of my back. Finally, he asked that I play the piece a third time.

“When I had finished the third rendition, Moshe went over to a drawer and removed a tape recorder which had been running the whole time, and I realized tht he had set up the entire encounter beforehand.

“Moshe rewound the tape and played it. The first rendition of the piece sounded as I usually played. The second, where he had been working with the muscles of my back, had several mistakes, as I was distracted from my playing by whatever he was doing back there. The third rendition, however, was clearly superior to the first. It was much better than I usually played.

“After listening to the tape I said to him, ‘Moshe, you are correct. We could all be much better.’”



THE PURSUIT OF POISE

by David Hall

A practitioner of Feldenkrais and Alexander explores how he uses each method to re-educate a person's coordination.

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It's past midnight. I'm lying on a large, soft rug in my lounge room. Everyone else is asleep. Silence ... I roll my head slowly to the right, sensing the space inside my skull, neck and torso. It's new ... I haven't felt it like this before. I stop, feel my contact with the floor ... my ribs move softly ... I breathe, notice my toes. Yes! I sense a possibility of movement. My head to the side maintaining this connection. I go to move ... stop ... let go in my neck and thoracic spine ... I move again, stop. Where can I move? How can I ... Yes! Roll my leg too.

Ahh ... Now my neck keeps free, stop ... move mmmmm, soft, strong ...yes, settling as I move... Rest. My body long and wide on the floor.

I was doing something that gives me more awareness and control over my body. It's something that works with the whole of me and uses the reflexive nature of my posture. It's re-educational as opposed to therapeutic and gives me an actual experience of a new way of using myself. It enables me to discover unconscious patterns of mis-use and grow beyond them. It enables me to discover new directions and repertoires of movement. Sounds familiar doesn't it. I'm talking about the *Feldenkrais* Method.

There are many similarities between the *Feldenkrais* method and the Alexander Technique, philosophically, in application, and in the benefits that can be derived from working with them. However, the thinking and strategies employed by practitioners of each method fundamentally differ in many ways. This diversity serves as a rich resource that can be gleaned to gain new perspectives on what we do. I am a practitioner of both methods and this

article is designed to give insight into the differences I have encountered between the two.

While I can be quite clear about the distinctions between each method from my own perspective, I cannot speak objectively. There is too much scope for individual expression within either discipline. For every difference I describe there will be someone who will surely say, "But I do that." I can only speak from and for my own experience.

I use *Feldenkrais* in three ways:

1. To supplement what I am doing in Alexander lessons;
2. To explore and discover new possibilities in action;
3. To develop full movement in all directions.

Regardless of either method I'm still really doing the same thing: teaching people how to sense, giving them more awareness and control over their body. Enabling them to discover new possibilities in movement and perception and to adapt themselves to their lifestyle in the most efficient manner.

PROFESSIONAL CHAUVINISM

But what are the differences between the two techniques? Practitioners of each discipline certainly look different. The funny thing is that if someone really does put the ideas of *Feldenkrais* or Alexander into practice they would be able to achieve the psycho-physical possibilities the other offers; but I haven't seen it. I've never met an Alexander teacher who was able to exercise conscious control over their whole being in a constructive manner or a *Feldenkrais* practitioner who was a fully mature, self-actualising adult free from

compulsive thought or action. That in itself is telling. Both men created an almost Nietzschean ideal for humanity that they or those that have followed so far have not been able to fulfil. Certainly to approximate this level of learning or development a person needs to do a lot of work, far more than the average member of the public is really prepared to do. Consider how long it took before you felt you had really incorporated the practice of Alexander's ideas into your life.

It seems to me that there are usually several key issues that form the foundation of a person's unconscious or automatic perception and behaviour. It is very difficult for lessons in either technique to enable a person to resolve them. Certainly the techniques move people along the way, frequently to the point where their lives can really change, but in their books, Alexander and *Feldenkrais* promise more. Who hasn't started their teacher training course thinking at some stage, that at the end of it, all their problems will be solved? I cannot take professional chauvinism for either method seriously. As far as I am concerned both methods are incomplete. Conscious control of the self! How can we gain conscious control over something we know so little about? Your dog probably thinks he has control of your car. Are we any different? However, don't get me wrong, I'm very optimistic. I do feel it must be possible to achieve what is promised. However, a lot more needs to be discovered before we can take the next great step.

I am experimenting with both methods. Most mornings I get up at dawn, and spend the first two hours of the day working on myself. It's very exciting. I can sense something is available.

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IS 'HOW' THE ONLY WAY

But back to those differences. . . In Alexander work we organize a person to be able to move in any direction at any given time from a 'stationary' balance. The focus is on the 'how' of movement. In *Feldenkrais* work we usually organize a person to be able to move in a specific direction, (reaching, rolling, standing, twisting, etc.). We teach them to do it such a way that the movement is reversible and that the person is able to move in any direction at any point. The focus could be on the how, what, when, where or why of movement. We help the person to discover the most efficient way to use themselves to carry out that function given their current structure and environment. For instance, a pupil who habitually stands on one leg will be organized onto both legs during an Alexander lesson. The same may happen during a *Feldenkrais* lesson but the teacher may be just as likely to re-organize the person's body so it was easier to stand predominantly on the other leg, reversing all the twists in the person's body. This is a very interesting experience to have, a rather odd feeling, very familiar but totally different. It could be described as a type of sensory inhibition: one that affords the pupil an experience of sensing their whole body in an instant, juxtaposed against the memory of their habitual organizations. The main thing is that the pupil is given a new experience that is incorporated into their perceptual model of themselves and the world. The person is then able to discover new ways of organizing themselves as a result of the new information.

Feldenkrais said his only principle was that there are no principles. There are many, many educational strategies employed by Feldenkrais practitioners to improve a person's use. Sometimes a practitioner could just reinforce or support the patterns that are present. It is possible to move a person's body in a

way that is identical to how they move it themselves. For the pupil it is rather like seeing yourself in a mirror for the first time, it generates a very close attention. As one moves through the whole of the body the pupil discovers parts of themselves they have not been aware of. If those areas are poorly organized they will become reorganized and incorporated into the new perception. The type of touch involved is unique to the *Feldenkrais* Method. It's rather like a tactile conversation, very personal. Its possible to speak to different levels of the person. There may be movements that a person is not aware of as they are overshadowed by other movements or habits of being; for instant a very shy person who covers their fear with gregarious behaviour. If the practitioner recreates the movements that relate to that shyness, it can be a very powerful experience. This work can help put people in touch with aspects of themselves they rarely experience.

Feldenkrais devotes chapters in his books to the importance of the balance of the head to the rest of the body (and reading his work on the subject does give an interesting perspective for Alexander teachers) but he doesn't have the same emphasis on primary control that Alexander teachers do. You can clearly see this in many *Feldenkrais* teachers' use. This is something we have to offer *Feldenkrais* practitioners and their students.

Nevertheless, this in no way diminishes the ability that *Feldenkrais* work has to change the whole basis of how a person moves.

The important thing I have experienced is that a person's manner of use can be changed from anywhere in the body. However, a particular area's involvement in the local pattern must be perfectly recreated. In this way the rest the pattern is reflexively stimulated. If you can then get that part to move differently, still maintaining

the contact, the whole pattern will follow. It's not easy. It requires a type of listening on the part of the practitioner that is very patient, focused and open. For instance, I had trouble singing. I was trained as an actor and could express myself with words easily. I had been an Alexander teacher for three years but still when I sang I was always flat and would tighten in my throat in this subtle way that meant I just stuck to the guitar, It was a pity. I used to love singing as a boy soprano and can clearly remember the time I decided, just before the onset of puberty, when given the opportunity to sing with the church choir at Christmas in front of my new found friend, that it wasn't manly to sing. I'd been aware that the singing problem was one of use and listening, and tried for awhile, but gradually forgot and left it alone.

During the last year of my *Feldenkrais* training I had two Functional Integration (F.I.) lessons that dramatically changed my manner of use and left me able to sing in tune without getting caught in my throat.

The first F.I. was designed to give me the ability to use my entire abdomen. The practitioner noted a relationship between hardness at the base of my throat and the top of my abdomen and sponginess at its base above and to the sides of my pubic bone. When I used my abdomen in movement, invariably it would tighten at the top. Once I learned to use my whole abdomen whilst keeping my throat soft, the tone of my voice changed. When I stood up I noticed the absence of a holding pattern in my rib cage, which felt like slumping but when checked in the mirror was aligned. After that I noticed I could keep a tune.

The second F.I. worked on the same area but in a new context and manner. I lay on my back on the knee-high table that *Feldenkrais* practitioners use, with my feet on the floor over the end of the table and my head raised on towels. The practitioner lifted one leg at a time,

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accessing the whole front of my body by moving my legs and head. It was a remarkable experience.

At the end of the session he pushed me off the end of the table in such a way that I went from having a fully extended spine to a fully flexed spine. I was deeply in a trance and remember feeling, while squatting at the end of the table, like an ancient Egyptian buried in a jar. The remarkable thing was that thirty hours later while driving in the county my hard palate began to let go. It was like the bones of my nose were dropping into my mouth and my hard palate was widening. Suddenly I could breathe through both nostrils. It was fantastic! One of the major reasons I had trouble singing was respiratory: one nostril was always blocked. From that time I've been able to breathe through both nostrils. It has come and gone but I've been able to continue incorporating the change of structure into my use and now have the ability to sing. I once again sing with a choir.

This delayed reaction to new kinesthetic information is a result of the nervous system working with the disturbance to the perception of myself. It happened after I did a weekend workshop in Awareness Through Movement (ATM). We did eight lessons in two days and two days later when, walking to catch a ferry at Circular Quay, I smelt something so compellingly familiar that I just had to find out what it was. I traced the smell to a milk bar. It was lime milkshake flavouring. There was a shop assistant making a lime milkshake that could have been for me had it been 1963. The smell conjured not just the memory of the milkshake but the whole experience of being a seven year old boy.

This awareness could be accessed the next time I lay on the floor to do ATM. It was an experience of softness, openness and flexibility. This sort of experience can destabilize the foundations of compulsive or habitual behaviour.

DEVELOPMENTAL LEARNING

An important thing is that lessons allow competence to develop in specific spheres. The pupil has the experience of positive growth and development. As ability develops, so does self esteem. As this develops it becomes easier to learn.

But how does this ability develop? Consider the first seven years of life. It is here that the capacity for ability develops. It is here that the basis of our mask is forged, that the seeds of misuse are scattered. It is here that Feldenkrais gathered some of his most useful insights and that one finds one of the most fundamental differences between the two methods.

In Alexander technique we, for the most part, are working with the finished product of the developmental process: standing and walking. In *Feldenkrais* we, for the most part, work with aspects of the developmental process. Of course standing and walking are aspects of the developmental process, but the way Alexander teachers can sense direction and work on balance and poise in a stationary balance is, in my opinion, much more sophisticated.

In practice it is a fundamental difference; in their philosophies it is a difference in focus.

Alexander saw habitual behaviour and human beings cowed into unconsciousness by instinct, as yet unaware of their inheritance of conscious control. Feldenkrais saw compulsive behaviour and humans as immature beings, enslaved by the interplay between the physiological response to the unconditioned reflex fear of falling and the conditioned reflex anxieties, arising from life within a society that supports facade. Rather than a level to be reached as in conscious control, Feldenkrais wrote of growth and

development leading to full creative expression. His definition of health is very interesting and worth quoting:

“Living fully your vowed and unavowed dreams free from compulsive habit and coercion.”

The process of maturity could be described as a journey from total dependence on another being to complete independence with full “self” expression. Feldenkrais could see that very few people complete this journey. They stay stuck at various stages of dependence. Very often a predisposition to the level reached will be wired into our nervous system at a very early age. We will develop certain abilities but stop short of others; from this largely unconscious process we form the basis of our perception of ourselves and the world. Most people never risk experience outside of what their early wiring allows. In giving a person more experience of developmental movement it allows them to tamper with their wiring. It creates the possibility for new perception.

In teaching a person to be able to use themselves well, as we do in the Alexander technique, incompletions in a person's developmental learning may be completed. It is not, however, the same as working with those stages.

The process is just as valuable as the end product and forms a foundation for the structure, shape, flexibility and predisposition of the person. Consider crawling and the development of manual dexterity. Before a child crawls it grasps things using the fingers in a very undifferentiated manner. As it crawls, placing the hand on the floor and then moving forward, a pressure is placed on the palms and fingers. The child learns to absorb this pressure through the whole body and then push against it to assist propulsion. As this happens the child looks to the next hand or object to be touched. The reorganization of the body weight on, and then off, the palm and fingers is

THE PURSUIT OF POISE

coordinated with the movement of the eyes away. This is easily reversed to create the ability to move the fingers in a wide variety of directions relative to a particular focus. The more directions of movement, the greater the range of pressures and exertions experienced, the greater the dexterity.

EXPLORING NEW DIRECTIONS OF MOVEMENT

I have found that, exploring a wide range of movements, and applying Alexander's principles to how I do it, has given me an enormous amount of freedom. Awareness Through Movement (ATM) is a tremendous resource Alexander teachers and students can draw on. It is a way of systematically exploring all directions of movement.

Inhibited anti-gravity reflexes and unnecessarily contracted flexors, particularly at either end of the rib cage and around the genitals, are a norm within our society. We can learn to let go of a lot of it using the Alexander technique, but this usually comes with hardness in the rib cage and restriction of movement in the pelvis (from the standpoint of what is anatomically possible) unless one does a lot of work. Working through the developmental sequence, learning to come up and down from the floor in all possible directions and exploring the range of movements we did as infants, can produce the softness and flexibility I am speaking about. It is very important to do this again as the proportional relationships of body parts of an adult to child are reversed.

A toddler's head is much bigger relative to its body than an adult's and an adult's limbs are much bigger relative to its torso than a child's. The anti-gravity problems the child solves are different from the ones encountered by the adult.

It is my view that to really free

ourselves from the fear of falling, to be truly poised, we have to learn to get up and down from the floor in any direction without any falling or loss of control; we need to be able to lift our own body weight using our arms and to be able to fall without interfering with our primary control. *Feldenkrais* devised thousands of different ATM lessons that utilized the learning strategies employed during our developmental years. There is a wealth of movements Alexander teachers can work with to improve a person's use. I could never understand why sitting, standing or walking are any different an activity from rolling onto our side or coming to sit from lying on the floor or any other movements. As long as the end itself is of secondary importance to the means. Working with Alexander's principles in new (for the students) contexts produces new possibilities of movement as well as the benefits of improved use.

PHOEBE'S STORY

Alexander technique and *Feldenkrais* Method combine very well and some people need to work with both in order to solve their difficulties. I had a student of 63 years who had broken a hip and had a history of bronchiectasis. She had had about two years of Alexander lessons and had done very well. She kept long and wide and was able to relieve many of her symptoms. However, with the passage of time her pain increased and she became very restricted in what she could do. Car travel, walks, most household jobs became too painful. Her family watched in sadness as over the next couple of years she deteriorated and her spirits began to sink.

She decided to have Alexander lessons again and came to me. In working with her I could sense that she had learnt well. She lengthened and this once again relieved her symptoms, but I could also see that this wasn't going to be enough for her to be able to look

after her own use, and restore her previous level of functioning. She was very frail, fragile and frightened to move because the pain lasted for so long afterwards.

I could see how rigid her spine, chest and hips were. She had learnt to breathe well and to soften her torso as a unit. But it was virtually impossible for her to bend because the fear of the pain prevented her. So, by taking her through a developmental sequence giving her experiences of rotation that didn't cause much movement in her hip, she was able to gain confidence and experiment a bit. There were many movements she had forgotten about and her body had become rigid in their absence.

Very often pain is associated not with areas of the body but movement patterns. This knowledge is used all the time in the *Feldenkrais* method.

When I worked on Phoebe's legs on the table it caused a great deal of pain. However, she could go from standing to sitting without pain, so I was suspicious. I decided to teach her to be able to get up and down from the floor. (Imagine how difficult housework is without being able to do this.)

I used chairs and cushions to change the height of the floor so we could get down there in stages. She was able to do this in a few sessions and even though the movement in her hips was far greater than when I worked with her on the table, it wasn't associated with a painful movement pattern, and so didn't cause pain. Later, showing her what she'd done enabled me to be able to recreate the hip movements on the table without pain. ■