MOSHE FELDENKRAIS

The Founder

The Feldenkrais Method is named after the man who developed it, Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais (1904-1984). Moshe was intensely curious, and had a way of awakening in others an enthusiasm and passion for learning. He was a physicist, engineer, author, judo master, avid soccer player, and educator. As a scientist and explorer of the human condition, Moshe studied many things, including anatomy, biology, language, hypnosis, and judo. He synthesized a coherent system of beliefs about health, which he taught by pragmatic and experiential methods.

Due to a sport-related injury to his knees, Moshe began looking for an alternative to surgery to improve his ability to walk painlessly and to alleviate his difficulties. In his personal exploration, he discovered that we all have an innate ability to overcome our challenges and live healthy lives by paying attention to, or becoming aware of, the way we move. Thus, the name for one of the modalities of the Feldenkrais Method is “Awareness Through Movement”.

As with many great discoveries, necessity was the motivating force that pushed Feldenkrais to invent a profound process. Chance, effort, and attention guided Feldenkrais through the door of invention and on a path to discover a process of healing through learning. He was an expert at creating conditions that allowed learning to happen organically--as a natural consequence of the students’ own actions. That way, the students discovered something for themselves. They were not taught: they learned.

Feldenkrais deciphered the language of movement and touch, thereby creating a new and precise way to dialogue in a native tongue common to all of nature. He vigorously developed his personal teaching style of movement lessons, imbedded in stories of human achievement and failure, art and science, biological development, and evolutionary progress. **Moshe believed his greatest achievement was turning abstract ideas like balance, integrity, and beauty into concrete actions:** actions that could be sensed, and would be instrumental in helping us realize our full potential.

He believed that through a dialogue of movement and touch, a person could discover and integrate a new and better physiological, psychological and emotional balance. As a social artist and inventor of a new human technology, he witnessed the emergence of a newly transformed human, not just a newly transformed body. Even beyond that, he envisioned a newly structured society because of his influence.