

THE FELDENKRAIS METHOD

A UNIQUE SYSTEM OF SELF-EDUCATION

- Is your back or neck often sore?
- Would you like to reduce tension?
- Would you like to be more flexible?
- Would you like to be more energetic?
- Would you like to be better coordinated?
- Would you like to find a way to slow down?
- Would you like to be healthier and feel better?
- Would you like to improve a physical skill?
- Would you like to be more creative?

If this is your first look into the Feldenkrais Method, welcome. You must be an adventurous soul if the uncommon name **Feldenkrais** does not scare you away. You will find your sense of adventure and curiosity appreciated here. This booklet is intended to entice you further into the Feldenkrais Method, and answer some commonly asked questions, such as: What is the Feldenkrais Method? Who founded it? Who can benefit from it? How does it work? What results can I expect?

The *Feldenkrais Method of Somatic Education* is a unique system of self-education. This method gives you the ability to recover from an injury, alleviate a recurring or nagging pain, or lessen the effects of a disease. It also gives you the capacity to improve a physical, athletic, or artistic skill. Many who seek Feldenkrais treatments have no gross dysfunction, but merely want to move with more freedom and flexibility. This method is also beneficial for people with learning difficulties, people with chronic pain or stress, or children who are hyperactive or are neurologically injured.

If you study this method, you will learn how your nervous system, muscles, skeleton, and self-image interact while you are moving. You will learn to move in ways that are efficient, effective, and eloquent. In the process, you will discover what you are doing that is causing you difficulty, and alternatives that will allow you to do what you want with more pleasure and less physical wear and tear. You will become more flexible, better coordinated, and feel more relaxed. In addition, your overall sense of vitality and health will be enhanced.

The Feldenkrais Method is designed to assist people in becoming more aware of the way they move, so they can be more effective in their actions, more creative in their mental activities, and more comfortable within themselves emotionally.

MOVING NATURALLY: AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT & FUNCTIONAL INTEGRATION

There are two modalities in the Feldenkrais Method: “Awareness Through Movement” (ATM) classes, and private “Functional Integration” (FI) lessons. *“Awareness Through Movement” (ATM) classes* are generally conducted with the student lying or sitting on the floor. In these classes, you differentiate small movements from one another, and explore the subtleties and components of an action. Through this process, you become aware of easier, more pleasurable ways to move. You slow down the pace you are moving in order to discover what is essential in an action, and how to discard what is not. You reduce the effort while moving in order to learn to use only the force necessary to produce unencumbered integrated movement. *The most surprising result is the sense of calm alertness that is a product of awareness.*

In private hands-on *“Functional Integration” (FI) lessons*, the fully clothed student lies or sits on a padded table. The process of differentiation and integration is the same as in Awareness Through Movement classes. However, in an *FI* lesson a skilled practitioner uses a listening touch to guide a student, gently and slowly, through a series of movements. The intent of this non-verbal process is to suggest more pleasurable alternatives that are inherent in an action. Because of this individualized attention, the FI lessons fit the individual student’s needs more precisely; and, just like ATM classes, produces unconstrained natural movement.

Regardless of your reason for studying the Feldenkrais Method, you will discover it is an easy and effective way to slow down the pace of life and reduce stress in order to find more enjoyment and gratification in whatever you do.

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All these improvements are possible from studying the way you move.

AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT, FUNCTIONAL INTEGRATION, THE FELDENKRAIS METHOD OF SOMATIC EDUCATION, and THE FELDENKRAIS METHOD are trademarks of the Feldenkrais Guild.