Session Descriptions

Series 1 | September 8, 2023 (9 AM – 4 PM PT)

Creativity, The Feldenkrais Way! A fundamental aspect to healthy living, aging well and life enjoyment.

Donna Ray (9 AM – 12 PM PT)

Creative engagement of attention furthers learning. Novelty, fresh outlook, and discovery snags the student’s brain, promotes curiosity, and potentiates learning. The organic process of convergence (focal attention) and divergence (open focus attention) helps us understand how to creatively cultivate learning, both personally and professionally.

Combining movement, sensation, feelings, thoughts with self-observation is a creative approach. That’s what we do in The Feldenkrais Method. Now let’s examine how we do what we do and bring greater awareness to our choices, while teaching. Neuroplasticity is leveraged throughout the lifespan while learning in this creative Feldenkrais Way.

Uncovering Possible Gaps in our Students’ Self-Image

Arlyn Zones (1 PM – 4 PM PT)

Over the course of 40 years in my private practice, I have come again and again to discover the brilliance of Dr. Feldenkrais’ decision to introduce and utilize the concept of Self-Image into his work. As we know, it is the first idea presented in the “Awareness Through Movement” book.
It has generated many fruitful lines of inquiry, experiments, and discoveries in my own work with people. Sometimes the question has come as “Why in the world does this person walk this way?” Or “Why when I lift this person’s head, why does it feel so amazingly heavy?” Or “How many ATMs would it take before this person could actually begin to feel their pelvis moving in all directions?” Or “Where or how did this person learn to talk with such a tiny voice?”

In a sense, our self-image relates to all that we have enacted, learned, not-enacted, not learned, in our lives. It also relates to things we once learned or felt or enacted but then somehow dropped out of our image of ourselves. It is dynamic and constantly changing. It is influenced by the fact that we are suggestible creatures. It manifests in areas we are cross motivated and manage not to move forward with our ideas or plans.

The gaps in people’s self-image may relate to gaps in their developmental history, areas that have dropped out after injuries, training modalities that have favored fixed planes of movement or orientation, and many other reasons.

In this workshop, I will share some of the discoveries I have made through the students I have worked with in training programs, as well as the infants, children, and adults I have worked with in my private practice.

There will be lots of stories, some short video clips of some of my youngest students, and an invitation for you to play with imitating all manner of moving through space with various parts of your skeletal image missing… I will lead you through it as a way for you to feel what happens when you limit your options.

We will start with an ATM and at the end of the day we will do some exchanges in small groups so that you have a chance to share some of your own discoveries and some of your favorite lessons for filling in the blank spots.

Series 2 | September 22, 2023 (9 AM – 4 PM PT)
Enhance Your Abilities by Knowing and Loving Yourself
Mary Spire (9 AM – 12 PM PT)
When you know and love yourself, you are available for enhanced high-level openness, presence, abilities, and perspicacity. In addition, you will be able to access the power of your attention, awareness, and your brain's natural plasticity to recognize and change your self-limiting patterns. The outcome will be evolving freedom and choices in your everyday activities and life- with a heightened sense of well-being.

The 3-hour workshop will include ATMs, talks, videos, and discussion time.

**Developing an ATM Workshop with Mind Mapping**

Deborah Bowes (1 PM – 4 PM PT)

Are you trying to plan a series of Awareness Through Movement lessons, or a Feldenkrais workshop? Would you like a tool to increase your creativity, discover new connections and relationships, as well as organize the nitty gritty details to develop the idea into an actual, doable plan? The tool I use is Mind Mapping, a fun, creative way to ‘harvest’ your experiences and thoughts. Mind Mapping and associative thinking are like beans and cornbread! Associative thinking expands the way you think about a topic. Having more ways of looking at a topic can lead to more interesting workshops.

In this 3-hour workshop, you will be guided to develop one workshop idea into a Mind Map. Anyone can do this! It’s easy once you let your mind associate, flow in any direction, **without** self-criticism. Mind Maps are useful for all sorts of projects. Professionally I use it to develop and plan Feldenkrais programs, lectures, and Feldenkrais training curriculum. Personally, I make a Mind Map for any complex task or project. You will choose a topic or theme, then let your mind roam freely. The Mind Map is born from the free associations.

The only supplies you’ll need is plain printer paper or graph paper, a set of 8 colored pencils, a firm surface for writing and drawing. ATM will be used to enhance creative feeling.
Series 3 | October 6, 2023 (9 AM – 4 PM PT)

What I Have Learned in 80 Years and What I Haven’t: The Wisdom of Connection

Donna Blank (9 AM – 12 PM PT)

In the spirit of an ATM, June LaPointe, GCFP, CBFL Trainer, will interview and dialogue with Donna Blank, GCFP/T around potent themes for our method, with musical interludes provided by David Kaetz, to support listeners to rest and reflect along the way.

Themes include:

• The training experience and cultural zeitgeist, then (Amherst) and now
• How does my particular sensibility (“handwriting”) manifest in becoming a practitioner and in ongoing practice?
• The Relational Realm: Embodied Presence and Resonance

We will explore each of these themes in several dimensions:

• Donna’s stories about her own arc of inquiry and development
• How the theme is alive in one’s Feldenkrais practice
• How the theme is alive in the Feldenkrais community

Donna will then facilitate a “grounded presence process” to prepare the attendees to gather in small groups, who will then be invited to express what arises for them personally, as they listen to themselves and each other.

We will then convene the large group for a dialogue sharing of what’s emerged.

Moving From Your Center

Larry Goldfarb (1 PM – 4 PM PT)

Jigoro Kano, the founder of Judo, created a martial art that didn't rely on how big or strong you were. Instead, this gentle way of self-defense depends on physical awareness, coordination, and efficient action. Using his understanding of physics
and engineering, Moshe Feldenkrais developed a functional framework of how we move when we move as well as we can. In this workshop, we use the notion of moving from your center to understand optimal biomechanics and examine its pivotal role in Moshe’s methodology. You will explore the precise coordination of the body’s largest muscles and the accompanying articulation of the hip joints and lower lumbar vertebrae. Then you will have the opportunity to apply what you’ve learned about mobilizing this area, also known as the hara or dandien, to realize your inherent strength and improve your self-use while working hands-on with others.

Series 4 | October 7, 2023 (9 AM – 4 PM PT)

The Feldenkrais Method and the Art of Non-Doing

David Zemach-Bersin (9 AM – 4 PM PT)

Nearly all of us adapt to the demands of development, and life itself, by using more muscular effort than necessary. This unnecessary effort influences our every moment, our emotions, our mood, and our quality of life. Our fears and anxieties are enacted through this unconscious effort. Over time, it causes disorganization and stress, as well as damaging wear and tear on our joints, discomfort, and frequently, pain. 'Non-Doing' is a paradoxical concept with deep roots in Eastern philosophy and martial arts. The closely aligned Chinese concept of 'Wu Wei' literally means 'effortless action'. Moshe Feldenkrais studied the Japanese martial art of Judo for nearly three decades. The word 'judo' translates as 'the gentle way' or, in other words, effective action with the least amount of effort. The process of reducing effort to maximize learning and improvement lies at the heart of the Feldenkrais Method. In this workshop, we will explore how the art of doing through non-doing can enhance the practice of the Feldenkrais Method. Through Awareness Through Movement, mindful movement, and discussion, we will investigate how an attitude of doing through non-doing combined with sensory-kinesthetic attention can lead to deep and fundamental change.

Series 5 | October 20, 2023
The Complexity, Depth and Range of the Feldenkrais Method

Roger Russell & Jeff Haller (9 AM – 4 PM PT)

In this workshop we will expand on themes from our presentations of “The Art of Functional Integration” and “A Good Enough Feldenkrais Theory” in the FGNA online conference in October 2022.

Every Feldenkrais lesson is individual and deeply personal, offering unique qualities of subjective experience; a living, evolving, moment by moment process. Often astonishing, the lessons present us with a challenge: how can we systematically understand and apply the complexity, depth, and range of the Feldenkrais Method to help people find their ability to thrive.

The Complexity of the lessons makes them informative. A person’s ability to be comfortable in their life develops from the inside out. In biology this individual growth is called self-organization, which is sustained by information. We will illuminate how curiosity in Feldenkrais lessons enhances sensory information while moving.

The Depth of the lessons is manifested by taking multiple perspectives for understanding; providing a unified framework that brings the potential of each lesson into clear focus.

The Range of applications of the Feldenkrais Method demonstrates that the lessons capture something universal about how refining movement enriches living.

We will weave together experiencing and understanding, to truly grasp the potential of ATM and FI lessons. Studying a video of Jeff Haller’s Functional Integration lesson from the 2022 conference we will clarify the core of how any FI lesson unfolds. Finally, you can explore how your own self-development manifests in Functional Integration lessons, enabling you to support change for people who seek your help.

Preparation for this workshop:

- Review Roger and Jeff’s 2022 presentations to give all participants a head start.
  - Part 1 Video Link
  - Part 2 Video Link
• Be prepared for exploring Awareness through Movement processes.
• Have a person available in the afternoon to explore Functional Integration.