

NATAB REPORT ON PILOT PROJECT ATM® TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS: WHAT WE LEARNED

April 16, 2024

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

There has been international discussion and debate in the Feldenkrais community related to offering “ATM-only” teacher training programs, for over a decade. (See Appendix A for more details and context.)

The North American Training Accreditation Board (NATAB), and the Feldenkrais Guild of North America Board of Directors (FGNA BoD) as NATAB’s governing body, decided it was important to gain some practical experience to help inform further discussions on this topic.

To gain this experience, the following steps were taken:

- The [Pilot Project Awareness Through Movement Teacher Training Program Policy](#) was developed by NATAB and approved by the FGNA BoD, to guide the pilot projects. Preparing this policy included a great deal of work and discussion with the FGNA educational community.
- The pilot project policy was approved by the FGNA BoD in 2020.
- Two pilot project applications were received, and these were approved by NATAB.

The two ATM Teacher training program pilot projects took place from 2021 to mid-2023, in the United States, with eighty (80) participants in total. The two pilot projects were different in structure (e.g., one had the traditional Educational Director (ED) model, and the other had an educational direction team comprised of an Educational Director in the role of the Program Director plus two Assistant Trainers), and also different in their educational plans and design of the learning process.

Given the experimental nature of the training programs, the policy required the Program Director for a pilot project to have substantial previous experience as an ED of “regular” Feldenkrais training programs. This was required so that the Program Directors could draw from their previous experience to 1) design their pilot projects and 2) assess the skills and progress of these trainees compared with those in “regular” four-year programs. The Program Directors of the two pilot project training programs each had many years of experience. They were Arlyn Zones for the program in San Diego, and Elizabeth Beringer for the program in New England.

Throughout the pilot projects, the training programs regularly provided information to NATAB about what they were learning, how things were going, and what adjustments they were making (including the need for a few exceptions to the policy which were requested of NATAB and approved).

Once concluded, the pilot projects provided NATAB with final reports, and NATAB also did a survey of the participants.

This report is a summary from NATAB of “what was learned” from the pilot projects

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The programs were required to offer 425 hours of training over at least 18 months, with two practicums.

Each trainee was required to teach 25 ATM lessons to the public after authorization to be a trainee ATM teacher and before graduation. That public teaching experience was reported to be invaluable, although future training programs may want to reconsider the number and timing of these teaching sessions. The Program Directors suggested that an individual’s demonstrated readiness to teach, rather than an arbitrary basis of time elapsed in training, should determine when they ought to be authorized to start practice-teaching as Trainee ATM Teachers.

The training programs were required to include for each trainee 3 Functional Integration® lessons, and 3 individual ATM lessons. In the survey that was done after the training program was over, these lessons were noted by participants as an important element in their learning experience.

Given that the COVID pandemic was then underway, in-person instruction had to be augmented with online teaching. The Program Directors had to use their judgment and creativity to optimize the learning and promote the group cohesion that normally develops in a training. The online component offered both advantages and disadvantages. The pandemic also made it difficult for some students to find enough people and opportunities to practice teaching ATM lessons.

For future training programs, the ratio of online to in-person instruction warrants reconsideration even in the absence of a pandemic. The training programs found that some activities worked very well online, while other activities worked better in person. Online training reduced the cost and travel time for the participants, and both Program Directors said their pedagogy using Zoom improved over the course of the training.

ONLINE VS. IN-PERSON TRAINING

The survey of trainees identified some advantages of the online experience (Question #8):

- Convenience and reduced travel time
- Reduced cost
- Clarity of visual materials
- Review sessions held between segments
- Good modeling of how to teach ATM online

In their own words:

- “Receiving ATM online was a breeze. I could control my environment, the audio was (with a few exceptions) clear. This dramatically reduced disruption to my life and reduced costs, making the training more feasible.”

- “Online sessions were very important to keep the work alive between the segments. It’s hard to imagine doing the program without these inter-segment meetings.”
- “... when something visual was shared, video or document or pictures, it was clearer to see than from a whiteboard.”

On the other hand, trainees commented that some aspects of learning, particularly from one another, worked better in person (Question #7):

- Discussions
- Observing movement in others
- Understanding and brainstorming ATM approaches

In their own words:

- “Discussions flow more easily in person.”
- “Being able to observe movement much better.”
- “Brainstorming ATM alternatives (what would you do if someone was in pain in this position?).”
- “Understanding the mechanisms, mannerisms, and approaches of how best to teach - which are harder to absorb online.”
- “The community working together and been able to watch and observe the other to learn.”

OUTCOMES FOR TRAINEES

Each training program was required to include, in their training accreditation application, an outline of the “expected outcomes” for the trainees of that training program, in terms of knowledge and skills. NATAB required this in part to learn more about how different people saw and worded such outcomes, and also to learn more about how the programs used such outcomes as “landmarks” to guide the training process.

Both programs were deemed successful based on the following indicators:

- The educational staff of the two training programs all said they thought the pilot projects were successful. They noted such things as:
 - By the end of the training program, the trainees demonstrated they could teach ATM classes at least as well as trainees from regular training programs.
 - Trainees demonstrated the competence to begin teaching ATM.
 - Trainees demonstrated a knowledge of the principles of “Learning to Learn” and what distinguishes ATM from other movement modalities. They were able to adapt their teaching to different public contexts.
- Trainees reported they felt confident and ready to teach ATM.
 - When asked in the Trainee Survey “How do you feel about your teaching?”, all graduates said they felt they were ready to start teaching. A strong majority (85%) expressed “I feel very confident and competent” or “I feel I have a good base and can do a reasonable job.”
- Almost all participants reported they were actively teaching ATM classes, after the training ended.

The training was seen as a motivator for people to continue on to become full Feldenkrais Practitioners. For example, a NATAB-accredited “Stage Two” training program that, together with the ATM pilot project training program will allow participants to complete all the requirements of a full Feldenkrais practitioner training program, is now underway with almost 20 participants.

KEY ELEMENTS OF “WHAT WAS LEARNED” AND FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Several findings emerged as being significant learnings from the pilot projects. We note these below, along with matters that warrant further consideration when looking at whether to embark on future ATM Teacher training programs.

- The “expected outcomes” for trainees, as identified by the Program Directors in the training accreditation proposals that were approved by NATAB, served as useful guideposts but not rigid constraints. Educational staff in both training programs noted that they did refer to these “expected outcomes” during the program and that they were helpful to steer and focus the training process. The New England program’s Assistant Trainers who were part of that program’s “educational direction team” said they would have relied on them even more had Elizabeth not been guiding them.
- The 425 hours of training time required by the pilot project policy was questioned by both Program Directors: Arlyn opined that 450-500 hours would have been helpful; Elizabeth said 400 would suffice.
- Both programs in their different ways provided feedback to trainees in advance of their first practicum to ready the trainees for their practicum and make the challenge less daunting. The Program Directors noted that this extra time spent in preparation led to excellent outcomes in the practicums. For future training programs, however, the additional investment of teaching time would likely entail extra expense regardless of whether it was provided by the Program Director or Assistant Trainers.
- Even though the two training programs were different in structure and design, the responses to the survey question “How well prepared did you feel to start your practice at the end of the training program” was the same for both programs: 85% of respondents from each training program said they were “well prepared” or “adequately prepared,” and none said they were “not at all prepared.”
- Being required to teach a specified number of ATM lessons before graduation as part of the graduation requirements, was viewed as valuable by both the trainees and the educational staff. In the survey of participants, 87% rated this experience as being “extremely or very helpful” for their learning.
- One objective of the pilot project process, stated in the pilot project policy, was to “Open the opportunity for a Trainer to become the ‘Program Director’ and allow for more flexibility in how and by whom the teaching in the training program can be done.”

If in the future ATM Teacher training programs are approved and once training protocols for these programs are set, the question arises of whether an ED ought to be required or whether an experienced Trainer could lead an ATM Teacher training program as a “Program Director.” Considerations when looking at this include:

- If the ATM Teacher training program is intended to become a stand-alone program that could also be “Part 1” of a two-part training process that would allow participants to become full Feldenkrais Practitioners, the overall training process (of Parts 1 and 2 combined) should conform to international TAGs. More work is needed to look at how best to accomplish that.
 - It was important, and useful, for experienced EDs to lead these two pilot projects. The experimental/developmental nature of the pilot projects required people who could take what they knew about teaching *Feldenkrais* training programs and adapt it to the new constraints of teaching an ATM Teacher program. It also allowed them to compare what they were seeing in the development of the trainees in the pilot project, to what they had seen in other regular training programs. This level of prior experience to draw from may not be needed in the future, but the Program Directors noted that they did not think it would be less complex or demanding to run an ATM Teacher training program than a full Feldenkrais Training program.
- Trainees received three FI lessons (and three individual ATM lessons) as part of the training program. The exposure to Functional Integration through these lessons was considered to be useful and important by both the trainees and the educational staff, with 86% of respondents to the trainee survey rating their experience of receiving FI lessons “extremely or very helpful.”
 - The pilot project policy required that:
“The training program will ensure that trainees understand, for when they teach ATM to the public, the opportunities and limitations for creating comfort (e.g. place pads, help a person find a comfortable position) and appropriately guiding movement and/or bringing awareness to a particular area in the context of an ATM lesson, and understand how this is distinct and different from providing FI lessons.”

The educational staff agreed that it is very important to teach in an ATM Teacher training program the scope and limits of what can be done with body contact in ATM lessons, and how that is distinct and different from what can be done in FI lessons.

The educational staff also noted that contact ought to be able to be used as a learning tool within a training program (for example, for learning functional anatomy by having one trainee follow another trainee’s movement with their hand).

- According to their Program Directors, these trainees demonstrated ATM-teaching skills beyond those typical of people after two years in four-year programs. In the survey of Trainees, a total of 85% judged themselves “well” or “adequately” prepared and confident to teach ATM, and none reported feeling “not at all” prepared.
- Some positive aspects of these training programs may have been specific to them and not necessarily replicable, for example, the diversity of the student body and the personal attention received in a smaller group. As the trainees reported:
 - “[I]n regards to promoting equity, this model was excellent. The flexibility of the training made it more accessible to me ... I saw more folks of color than I've seen in other Feldenkrais events - in large part because of the greater inclusivity that this 2.5 year/hybrid training allowed vs. the traditional 4 year trainings. I can safely say that if it were not for the format of this training I would NOT have continued with Feldenkrais because the resources of money and time would've proved too high of a barrier.”
 - “Because of its smaller size I had much more contact with the trainers and visiting instructors, much more hands-on instruction and really got to know all of my peers. I appreciated the openness of all the instructors and all that each brought to the program from their interests and experience of teaching ATM. I felt extremely well prepared and cared for.”

A report containing this information has been submitted to the FGNA Board of Directors.

NEXT STEPS

- NATAB has submitted an agenda item for the 2024 IFF General Assembly, to give a presentation about what was learned from the ATM teacher training program pilot projects.
- What has been learned from these pilot project training programs can help inform future discussions about whether to develop policy for ATM Teacher Training Programs, and if so how.

APPENDIX A: Overview Paper – ATM Teacher Training (March 2023); prepared by InterTAB members for the International Feldenkrais Community

Memorandum

Topic: Overview paper – ATM Teacher Training

From: InterTAB members – AusTAB (Susan Hillier); NATAB (Violet van Hees); EuroTAB (Ohad Nachmani); D-TAB (Patrick Gruner).

To: International Feldenkrais Community

Date: March 7th 2023.

Introduction:

There has been international discussion and debate in the Feldenkrais community related to offering “ATM-only” training programs, for over a decade. This format was proposed from the beginning as a solution to real problems encountered in the current model of four years Training Program. In many countries, training programs have been reporting lower student numbers and fewer financially viable programs. Furthermore, the students are often older and closer to retirement age than early career and young practitioners are difficult to attract. The reasons for these developments are multiple. One is that the market-place for training programs in other somatic modalities features shorter (and therefore cheaper) programs – for example Pilates, Yoga, Alexander etc. In addition, higher educational institutions globally have moved towards flexible-delivery, modular ways of offering teaching and learning. Students have also expressed multiple reasons for undertaking an FPTP – they may only be interested in the group work of Awareness Through Movement, or both ATM and Functional Integration - or neither and attending for personal development only. In fact, in the current model students are authorised to teach ATM half way through the FPTP, in the condition they complete their Training and graduate. Separating the ATM training from the F.I. training fully or partially is aimed at creating more flexible Training modalities and is anticipated to spread and grow the Feldenkrais Method more broadly in our communities and across the world.

The work on the development of the ATM-Only program has started in North America already in 2012. The initial proposal needed further work to add in more pedagogical and practical details, before becoming a formal proposal. It was forwarded to the international community as a policy change proposal and was debated. Over 170 comments were received, including a wide range of viewpoints and considerations both in favour of and opposed to the proposal. Of those opposed some were against the idea in general and others thought this specific proposal wasn't ready for consideration yet because it lacked pedagogical rationale and needed a clearer description of what it might look like and how it might work. The end result was that the TABs decided not to adopt this proposal.

However, a strong interest remained among many to look at this further, and discussions and work continued especially in North America where NATAB took the route of developing pilot projects, to first learn from experience before deciding whether and what to propose as policy changes. When preparing the ATM Teacher pilot project policy, NATAB stated the intent and objectives as follows:

The intent is to PILOT test providing trainings for people who only want to teach ATM lessons (and not Functional Integration® lessons), so that we can learn about how, and how well, that can work.

Our interest is to explore how to have high quality ATM-specific training programs that result in more people teaching quality ATM classes, and thus expand the reach of this remarkable work.

In parallel, other TABs also held local discussions about the possibility of ATM Teacher-only programs. Models have been proposed that are similar in nature – approximately 2 years of training in a mode similar to current FPTPs followed by variations of work-integrated learning such as internships and mentoring. Pathways for articulation with FI training have also been proposed.

Local Guilds have discussed the proposals with varying responses. Most Guilds would have to create a new category of membership for ATM Teachers. The exception is the

Feldenkrais Guild of North America which already have a category for ATM-only teachers. This was initially as an artefact of the ATM-only training conducted in Esalen by Moshe Feldenkrais in 1972, and is now available for FGNA members who have graduated from an accredited Feldenkrais training program but who only want to teach ATM.

Current status (*in March 2023*)

NATAB, in conjunction with the FGNA, have authorised a pilot trial of two ATM-only Teacher trainings – on the east and west coasts of the USA commencing 2021 and ending in 2023.

Evaluation of these programs will be available shortly. (Please see Appendix 1 for more details about the consultations done and steps taken.)

D-TAB, in conjunction with the German Guild, put a proposal to their membership in 2022 and have now approved a pathway towards ATM-only Teacher training programs with a $\frac{3}{4}$ -majority during the necessary votes in the general assembly 2022. The first ATM-only teacher training has started in February 2023. There is still a debate in the community about these programs: some are still strictly against these kind of trainings, others suggest implementing different means of quality measurement, which are worked on by the BOD.

AusTAB, in conjunction with the Australian Feldenkrais Guild Inc, have put a (second) proposal to the membership at a recent meeting (2022) and received in principle agreement to pursue a pathway. Other Guilds in the AusTAB jurisdiction will be approached for their plans.

EuroTAB, the information about the situation of the ATM only program was forwarded to the guilds in September 2022. Each guild has maintained a debate and their posture on the theme was presented in the ETC. The fact the German Guild has decided to carry forward a change of policy without recurring to international agreement has been one of

the major themes discussed. The tab has refrained from recommending in favour or against and is waiting for a discussion.

Recommendation:

1. Guilds and other organisations note the above.
2. As necessary, Guilds and other organisations discuss locally their plans for future options in trainings.
3. In relation to possible international changes to policy:
 - As there are steps underway in three out of four TABs moving towards accreditation of ATM-only training programs, we anticipate that these steps will lead to proposed international changes of training policies after the first initial training programs have been conducted and reviewed by the community.
 - From an international point of view, the InterTAB suggests to follow and support current steps benevolently and start to discuss about an international change of policies within the governing bodies.

The InterTAB members can provide further information or clarification on request.

Appendix 1: NATAB's work related to developing ATM Teacher training programs

NATAB Pilot Projects:

In 2015, NATAB and the FGNA Board of Directors, as NATAB's governing body, developed an *FGNA pilot project policy for full (800 hour) Feldenkrais training programs*, to make room to learn about what changes could be useful to consider. The intent was to experience and learn from some different ways of doing things, before deciding what to propose as changes to international policy. NATAB had a lot of discussion with the educational community in North America as that pilot project policy was developed. In the end, one pilot project training program was developed and offered.

*After that was underway, NATAB and the FGNA Board next started work on what would be an **FGNA pilot project policy to test out ATM “only” Teacher training programs**, because there continued to be strong interest among some North American Trainers and EDs to develop such an option.*

NATAB’s interest is to learn from the ATM pilot projects, and then use that experience to look at whether/what to bring forward for consideration as a change to international policy.

A great deal of work and discussion was done by NATAB to prepare the ground for the ATM Teacher training programs pilot project policy, including:

- NATAB held several series of Zoom calls within the FGNA educational community, both to:
 - discuss what should be developed, and then to
 - get input and feedback on the draft pilot project policy.
- NATAB also conducted a substantive survey (click [here](#)) of current Feldenkrais Practitioners (followed by focus group discussions) to find out what they found was most useful in their training programs to prepare them to be ATM teachers, and also, what could have strengthened their readiness to be ATM teachers.

After this extensive work by NATAB, in 2020 the FGNA Board approved the ATM Teacher Training Program pilot project policy. The pilot project policy, among other things:

- Requires each pilot project program to identify the expected outcomes for the trainees (what they will know, and what they will be able to do), and how those outcomes will be used to guide the program;
- Requires that the training program shall take place for a minimum of 425 hours, over a minimum of 18 months;
- Requires the involvement of an experienced ED; and

- Requires each program to build in a reporting structure and various criteria to capture and assess what is being learned and how well the program worked, so that this can help inform future decisions.

Two ATM Teacher pilot project training programs were approved by NATAB, involving two very experienced EDs: Elizabeth Beringer and Arlyn Zones.

The two pilot programs running in the U.S.A., one in Vermont <https://www.feldenkraistrainingne.com/> and one in San Diego, started in the spring and summer of 2021. They will finish in 2023, and are not identical in curriculum or structure. The regular reports from the pilot projects indicate that so far, both projects are going well and many useful things are being learned.

Some of the ATM pilot project trainees have now expressed that they would like to continue to become full Practitioners. Trainees can do this under existing policy by joining another training program, with the approval of the ED. (The ED determines whether these trainees need to complete additional requirements.) In addition, NATAB is looking at whether (and if so, how) to develop a “second half” of a full training program, designed for graduates from an ATM Teacher training program to continue through to become full Practitioners.

Of note, even prior to these pilot projects, the FGNA had already created a membership category for “Certified Feldenkrais ATM Teacher”. This membership is available for graduates of regular Feldenkrais training programs who only want to teach ATM, and it will be available to graduates of the FGNA’s ATM Teacher pilot project training programs as well.

APPENDIX B: Report on the Survey of Participants in the pilot project ATM Teacher training programs

Pilot Project ATM[®] Teacher Training Programs: Survey of Trainees

March 11, 2024

The North American Training Accreditation Board (NATAB), and the Feldenkrais Guild of North America (FGNA) as NATAB's governing body, supported two pilot project ATM Teacher Training Programs.

The purpose of the pilot projects was to gain some practical experience to help inform further discussions about whether to include and authorize ATM Teacher Training Programs in the international Feldenkrais training program policies.

NATAB accredited one such training program in San Diego and one in New England. They were different in design and structure, and thus offered lots to learn about.

Both began in early 2021, and ended in mid 2023.

At the end of the pilot projects, NATAB undertook a survey of the trainees who had participated, with questions based on prior surveys (e.g. FTA pilot project participants) as well as topics specific to the ATM training guidelines.

The survey was sent to all participants (51 from the New England program, and 29 from the San Diego program) on December 14, 2023. Those who had not completed the survey were sent reminders on December 16 and 20.

In addition, those who left the program before graduating received another reminder on December 22, 2023. Only four responded—a response rate deemed insignificant—and their data do not appear in these results.

Response Rate:
41%

Overall, the survey went to 80 participants and 33 responded (excluding the four dropouts), for a response rate of 41%. This is a good response rate and we feel that the data fairly reflects the responses of the trainees.

In this document, the title for each question shows the actual question that was asked, followed by a tabulation of the responses, and sometimes some commentary from NATAB about the responses.

Which ATM® Teacher Training program were you enrolled in?

There were 51 trainees in the New England program and 29 in the San Diego training.

Of the 33 respondents, ten (30%) were in the San Diego program and 23 (70%) were in the New England program.

What were your primary reason(s) for enrolling in the training program?

Many respondents chose more than one of the options.

The most commonly selected option (79%) was “Learn this work for your own well-being.”

A great majority (76%) chose the program in order to “Become a Feldenkrais® Awareness Through Movement® Teacher.”

The 24% that did not take the program to become an ATM teacher were evenly split between “Add this skill to another profession in which you are already engaged” and “Learn this work for your own well-being.”

ANSWER CHOICES	%	Count
Become a Feldenkrais® Awareness Through Movement® Teacher	76%	25
Add this skill to another profession in which you are already engaged	52%	17
Learn this work for your own well-being	79%	26
Repeat the Feldenkrais training to improve your skills	6%	2
TOTAL		73

How helpful were each of the following elements for you in your development as an ATM teacher?

NATAB and the Board of Directors required that the ATM programs have particular elements in their programs. For the survey, we were interested in the participants' experience of these elements for their development as an ATM teacher.

Program Element	Required by NATAB	Percent "Extremely Helpful" or "Very Helpful"
Teaching 25 ATM lessons to the public	yes	87%
2 ATM practicums	yes	83%
Receiving individual ATM lessons	yes	74%
Receiving individual FI® lessons	yes	86%
Reading books by Dr. Feldenkrais	no	77%
Watching videos of Dr. Feldenkrais teaching	no	68%

Please rate the degree to which you Agree or Disagree with the following statements.

	% "Strongly Agreed" or "Agreed"
The Learning Process	
I had enough space and freedom to allow my own organic (or natural) learning to emerge.	97%
The training program was well-organized.	94%
I received sufficient instruction and experience in learning to teach ATM® lessons.	90%
I have a sufficient understanding of the theoretical foundations of the Feldenkrais Method®.	100%
I was satisfied with the balance of online and face-to-face learning.	97%
The requirement to teach and document 25 ATM lessons to the public supported my learning.	100%

Have you graduated from the training program?

At the time of this survey, most (84%) reported they graduated from their training.

ANSWER CHOICES	Count	%
Yes, I graduated.	26	84%
No, I haven't graduated.	5	16%

Responses by graduates

See below for responses by non-graduates.

How well prepared did you feel to start your practice at the end of the training program?

Graduates felt they were well prepared: 85% reported they were “Well Prepared” or “Adequately Prepared”. NATAB notes that **no respondent** reported that they were “Not at all” prepared to start their practice.

How Well Prepared...	Count	%
Well prepared	15	58%
Adequately prepared	7	27%
Somewhat prepared	4	15%
Not at all prepared	0	0%

Are you currently offering ATM classes or individual

ATM lessons to the public?

Of the responding graduates, 21 (81%) were offering ATM lessons to the public on a weekly basis.

Of these, about half (11 of 21) were offering a single class, two were offering two classes, and one graduate was offering three classes per week.

Graduates were also offering individual ATM sessions. Six graduates were offering two sessions, and three were offering three ATM sessions per week.

How do you feel about your teaching?

All felt they were ready to start teaching. A strong majority (85%) expressed “*I feel very confident and competent*” or “*I feel I have a good base and can do a reasonable job...*”

	Count	%
I feel very confident and competent	7	33%
I feel I have a good base and can do a reasonable job, and I will improve with experience	11	52%
I feel a bit shaky, but good enough to start	1	5%
Other (please specify)	2	10%

Graduates who are not (yet) teaching

Four graduates who responded were not teaching at the time of the survey. When asked about their plans for teaching, all replied that they had plans to start, perhaps soon. (NATAB notes that the survey was done in December of the year they graduated.)

Responses by non-graduates working to finish graduation requirements at the time of the survey

Five respondents reported that they had not yet graduated but were working towards graduation.

Which of the following are your reason(s) for not completing the program (on time)?

All five replied that they needed more time to complete requirements. Three also reported they had personal circumstances that were limiting their completion, and one reported that “scheduling” was a reason.

No one selected the option that COVID was a reason for not completing the training on time.

Are you offering ATM lessons to the public?

Four of the five responding non-graduates were offering ATM lessons to the public as trainee ATM teachers.

The one who was not teaching reported no plans as yet for teaching to the public.

How do you feel about how you are teaching your lessons?

The four responding non-graduates who are offering classes report that they feel, “... I have a good base and can do a reasonable job and I will improve with experience”

Comments Provided in the Survey:

There were a number of questions that were open-ended, allowing for respondents to write comments. Below is a sampling of the comments received, to show the spectrum of ideas that came forward.

What parts of the training program were most powerful and helpful for you?

One trainee commented on the diversity of the student body, and also noted that the shorter training program made it more accessible:

“[I]n regards to promoting equity, this model was excellent. The flexibility of the training made it more accessible to me ... I saw more folks of color than I've seen in other Feldenkrais events - in large part because of the greater inclusivity that

this 2.5 year/hybrid training allowed vs. the traditional 4 year trainings. I can safely say that if were not for the format of this training I would NOT have continued with Feldenkrais because the resources of money and time would've proved too high of a barrier."

This trainee appreciated smaller size, and the contact with the training staff that was possible in the training program:

"Because of its smaller size I had much more contact with the trainers and visiting instructors, much more hands on instruction and really got to know all of my peers. I appreciated the openness of all the instructors and all that each brought to the program from their interests and experience of teaching ATM. I felt extremely well prepared and cared for."

And a couple of general comments:

"The number of teaching opportunities within the program to practice in a safe environment."

"So much ATM and diverse types of lessons allowed me to really dive deeper in my understanding."

What parts of the training program were most challenging for you?

More than one student found the practicums challenging but useful:

"Working up to the practicums was the most challenging, but doing them was the thing that made everything cohere. The practicums were the thing that empowered me to break through to a fuller understanding and appreciation of the method."

Some found the teaching requirements onerous and would have liked more guidance and feedback:

"Finding time and feeling confident to go teach 25 public classes. Having some direction on how to prepare or structure a lesson (like with some notes or a basic outline) would have been nice as opposed to being so open ended."

"Doing lesson after lesson without debriefing them and discussing the concepts etc."

What worked better when taught in person?

Several students found the discussions more dynamic in-person:

“Discussions flow more easily in person. “

And some found seeing movement easier in person:

“Being able to observe movement much better.”

Some found the process of learning to teach easier in person:

“Brainstorming ATM alternatives (what would you do if someone was in pain in this position?).”

“Understanding the mechanisms, mannerisms, and approaches of how best to teach - which are harder to absorb online.”

What worked better when taught online?

Several trainees commented on the ease and convenience of on-line sessions:

“Receiving ATM online was a breeze. I could control my environment, the audio was (with a few exceptions) clear. This dramatically reduced disruption to my life and reduced costs, making the training more feasible.”

“Online sessions were very important to keep the work alive between the segments. It's hard to imagine doing the program without these inter-segment meetings.”

“I was able to participate more and also teach a lot more.”

One student mentioned visual aids:

“Also when something visual was shared, video or document or pictures, it was clearer to see than from a whiteboard.”

And a couple spoke about being taught to teach on-line:

“Being taught how to teach online. It was modeled well.”

What changes do you suggest, if any, for the structure and requirements for future ATM Teacher training programs?

Several trainees appreciated the on-line segments:

“I think the online component was a great success and for the equity of access to the training, an important contribution. Travel and accommodation is (sic) a big barrier for many.”

Some trainees wished for more and earlier teaching prep:

“The only thing I could suggest would be to get people comfortable with teaching prep a little sooner, and to do that by having them teach short sections of a lesson in small groups. We did this, but we could have maybe started it sooner.”

“More guidance upfront on tips to structure a lesson and teach it rather than just saying “go teach”.

“I wish we had started the process of discussing and debriefing atms much earlier in the training. It seemed like support for teaching this didn't come till over half way through. By then all the lessons were a jumble.”

And several complained about lack of organization:

“I would suggest more organization in the structure of the training. The lessons we were taught were sometimes unclear, or the theme of the segment.

How are you utilizing what you learned in the training?

This question was posed to the respondents who were not yet graduated at the time of the survey.

“I utilize short snippets of the lessons multiple times per day.”

“At the moment, just personally, but I think many of the tenets of the methods offer a window into complex systems, and that stands at the forefront of many types of research. Having an embodied sense of how minor movements can cause unexpected emergent effects elsewhere can make such concepts more tangible, and something I hope to someday merge with my work.”

“Teaching occasional ATMs to the public and deepening my learning as I look to the FI continuation.”

“Primary is my own nervous system regulation while dealing with fairly debilitating health issues that arose during the program. Also, making life changes and feeling more confident in myself and breaking out of habitual patterns.”

Any additional comments?

All were asked: Is there anything that you would like to add about the training program and/or your experience in implementing your learning?

Comments on ATM training:

"I think the ATM only training is an innovative approach, and innovation is much needed in keeping the method alive and well. For a profession dedicated to change, creativity, and not being worried about making mistakes, I welcome it and I encourage further training program innovations to see what sticks."

"I fully support ATM trainings to help bring more accessibility to this work. It made it possible for me and I think it will help make it more possible for many others. The hybrid model WORKS!"

"Not having to commit to four years was a key to my being able to become an ATM teacher. Though I love the FI work, I knew I was not going to practice it at this stage of my life."

"Please make this program accredited by the IFF. It is important for people not living in USA or Canada. I am not able to use the service marks in my country because local guild just recognize (sic) programs accredited by the IFF."

Comments on On-line Training:

"I am thankful for the partially online structure as it provided a way for me to continue my 9-5 job and start this training which has been on my wish list for years."

General Comments and Praise:

"NEAT was life changing for me, elevated my professional journey, my health journey, my creative and artistic journey, and I would recommend it without hesitation to ANYONE."

"Such a shifting experience unlearning and relearning many aspects of my learnings, teachings, creativity. It's made a dynamic shift beyond just learning to teach a practice. It has taught me how to learn, teach, be resourceful, stay curious."

"I feel that the training was balanced in an organic and meaningful way. The mix of in-person and virtual allowed for varied kinds of learning and supported individualized/unsupervised contemplation that I think will support and facilitate continued learning and engagement well after the formal "end" of the program."