



FOR SHARING AND LIVELY DISCUSSION!!

INTERVIEWS WITH 13 *FELDENKRAIS*® TRAINERS:

- THE ESSENCE OF THE *FELDENKRAIS METHOD*
- TRAINING PROGRAMS, AND HOW THEY NEED TO EVOLVE
- THE FUTURE OF THE *FELDENKRAIS METHOD*

A PROJECT OF THE FELDENKRAIS LEGACY FORUM'S
"TRANSFORMATION OF TRAININGS" SPRINGBOARD GROUP

SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

TAPPING INTO THE LEGACY OF THEIR EXPERIENCE

- It is no secret that the most experienced Trainers, many of whom studied with Moshé Feldenkrais, are nearing retirement age.
- To capture some of their accumulated experience and wisdom, this past year the Transformation of Trainings (ToT) springboard group of the Feldenkrais Legacy Forum (FLF) interviewed some of the most experienced *Feldenkrais*® Trainers/ Educational Directors within the North American Guild.



TODAY'S PRESENTATION (ABOUT 90 MINUTES)

- Introduction (Violet)
 - The four questions
- Interviewing the Trainers (Jaclyn)
- The Interview Transcriptions (Katarina and Tracy)
 - How transcripts were created
 - Themes for each question
 - A look-see at the word documents
- What is available to you on the Legacy Forum website: (Tracy)
<https://feldenkraislegacyforum.org/transformation-of-trainings/>
- Questions, and Discussion (Violet)
- Some intriguing questions for *You* ...



THIRTEEN TRAINERS WERE INTERVIEWED. WE ASKED EACH TO REFLECT ON FOUR QUESTIONS:

1. What are the essential qualities and characteristics of the *Feldenkrais*® work – without which it would not be *Feldenkrais* work?
2. What do you think is essential to consider and do, to achieve the right balance in a *Feldenkrais* training program between
 - providing a personal experience of the *Feldenkrais* work, and
 - developing professional competence to begin to work as a *Feldenkrais* Practitioner?
3. Where do you see the *Feldenkrais* work going?
4. How do training programs need to evolve?

PLEASE PUT IN THE CHAT:

Hmmm... I wonder if [this idea] was discussed by multiple trainers?

... And, during the presentation, **please put comments or questions in the CHAT.** We will have open discussion at the end. Thanks!

TRAINERS WERE REFLECTING:

Each brought their perspective as it had evolved and was still evolving in their own journey.

Their perspectives were varied on the same idea:

They were reflecting, not endeavoring to impose their truths on the community.

They gave a gift to the community and to each individual to use further in their own journey and their own reflections.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TRAINERS WE INTERVIEWED:

We invited Trainers who have worked in North America to participate.

Thirteen Trainers agreed to be interviewed:

- 6 – graduated from the San Francisco Training

- 5 – graduated from the Amherst Training

- 2 – graduated from other trainings

- 9 – Men

- 4 – Women

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

- Interviews were scheduled and conducted
- Everyone responded to the same four questions.
- Our focus is on the *ideas* – transcripts do not identify interviewees by name.
- Interviewees had the opportunity to review their transcript. Several made corrections.
- The interviews were intriguing!!

NEXT, WE WILL:

- Describe how transcripts and themes documents were created
- Show you the themes for each question, and some quotes from Trainers
- Give a look-see at one of the documents

HOW THE TRANSCRIPTS WERE CREATED

- Zoom interviews were recorded.
- Prepared Verbatim transcripts of each interview.
- Deleted name identifiers (no other editing was done.)
- Compiled a single doc for each question for all 13 Trainers (each was 40+ typed pages).

THE THEMES WERE CREATED TO HELP WITH ACCESS

- Identified ideas addressed by multiple trainers, which we called “themes.”
- consolidated 3 to 5 themes, with quotes, for each question
- Some themes included additional subcategories
- In the full document for each question, we have added the themes at start of interview transcripts

AN EXAMPLE WITH QUESTION 2: BALANCE BETWEEN PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The themes that emerged:

- Personal experience and developing professional competence are inseparable.
- Personal experience is essential as a foundation.
- Developing professional competence
 - within training programs
 - between segments
 - after graduation - Lifelong learning

UNDER EACH THEME ARE A FEW QUOTES

Example: Theme - Personal experience is essential as a foundation.

Quotes (some examples):

- So the training is a personal learning journey for each of us -meaning that it's not, as you know, it's not about applying the method to other people, but it's firstly, about applying the method to yourself
- We need personal experience. You cannot deduce from facts the experience the lessons offer you.
- Moshe said clearly- if it's not personal, it's not worth anything. So that personal part is essential. And yet I've been party to this too. I think I've gone too much in the direction of making it too personal.
- I think a missed opportunity in many trainings is that it tends to be kept as a personal process.
- I would say a training is not just the training and being a practitioner, but it's a training in being a reflective practitioner.

DOCUMENT AVAILABLE FOR QUESTION 2:

- Shows the full question posed to each Trainer
- Lists the themes identified for that question
- Shows each theme with a sampling of quotes from Trainers to give a sense
- Has the transcript for each trainer in turn, separated so you see where each begins.

THE THEMES THAT EMERGED:

QUESTION 1 – ESSENCE OF THE *FELDENKRAIS*® WORK

- Integrating the whole self:
 - Integrating
 - Exploring functional movement
- Learning:
 - Questions
 - Approach to Learning
 - Correction and learning
 - One's own experience, self inquiry

THE THEMES THAT EMERGED:
QUESTION 1 – ESSENCE OF THE *FELDENKRAIS*® WORK
(CONTINUED)

- Movement:
 - The doorway to learning.
 - Interaction
 - The Skeleton
- Self image:
 - The Importance of self image
- Sensory Awareness:
 - Sensory awareness
 - Listening

EXAMPLES OF SOME QUOTES FROM QUESTION 1

Theme - Integrating

- It is a systemic approach, never focusing on one part.
- So I would stack these together as nobody has all of these. *[emphasis on awareness; focus on function; deep listening; learning through experience that gives authority to the student]*

Theme- Questions

- The art of being a Feldenkrais practitioner is the art of being able to ask questions.

Theme- Approach to leaning

- **it's very clear that this was a method of inquiry- not a method in a series, or not a series of techniques of doing.**
-
- Feldenkrais is very fond of saying, -nobody remembers how they learn to talk, because the processes were not conscious. It was not a study. It was what he also called an organic process. Organic learning. We need to be able to engage with people at that level of their learning.

MORE EXAMPLES OF SOME QUOTES FROM QUESTION 1

Theme: Self Image

- his idea of self-image helps us stand apart
- Unless we understand completely and fully that we are dealing with the way a person has acquired their self-image and help a person refine that self-image into a way that they can manifest and bring forward their own life - not the life they acquired but their own life - then in some sense it is not the work.

Theme: **Movement as the doorway to learning.**

- (Moshe) lists, I think, nine conditions (ATM book pg. 33) why movement would be a better way to approach self-education than other kinds of methodologies.
- The Feldenkrais method is concrete. It's not abstract. It's something that's felt in the moment, through movement.

THE THEMES THAT EMERGED:

QUESTION 3 - WHERE DO YOU SEE THE *FELDENKRAIS*® WORK GOING?

- Expand Feldenkrais into other somatic domains
- Success is not becoming well known.
- Balancing respect for Moshe's foundational ideas with evolving the work.
- Formulas. Techniques, and exploring

EXAMPLES OF SOME QUOTES FOR QUESTION 3

Expand Feldenkrais into other [somatic] domains

- I see the work having tremendous possibilities in many, many different domains, and it would be foolish of me to predict in what area the work might catch on most enthusiastically.
- And that's why Moshe thought the whole world will benefit from this work. It'll be a different world as the result of it. And I still think that's true.

Success is not becoming well known

- I think that to stay true to the Feldenkrais Method, you have to be willing to stay small. What I mean is, in my view, the only way the method becomes really popular is if you compromise it.
- So Success is not getting well-known. Success within the Feldenkrais Method is staying true to that method.

THE THEMES THAT EMERGED:

QUESTION 4 - HOW DO TRAINING PROGRAMS NEED TO EVOLVE?

- Zoom:
 - Use of Zoom * FI/personal sessions on Zoom
- Models and topics:
 - ATM-only training
 - Other models of Training
 - Training in Europe versus the USA
 - Process for Trainer Certification
 - Evaluating Training Programs
 - Financial

THE THEMES THAT EMERGED:

QUESTION 4 - HOW DO TRAINING PROGRAMS NEED TO EVOLVE? (CONTINUED)

- Trainings
 - Improving graduate's confidence and capabilities
 - Models for Practicums
 - Apprenticeship
 - Ongoing Learning

EXAMPLES OF SOME QUOTES FOR QUESTION 4

- **Improving graduates' confidence and capabilities**

- About the future of the trainings, in my experience, the people who make the easiest transition into teaching are by and large people with performing arts backgrounds. People in the performing arts have stood up in front of people and offered their wares and already have a discipline. They have a very high level of success.
- We have to look at how we are going to help people understand their competence as they go through a training program

- **Zoom**

- My experience so far, as a not super-techie kind of person, is I have been really impressed with the value of zoom for teaching.
- I think there is a real difference between a program that would be fully on zoom or supplemented by zoom. I am still old school in the sense that I think being in the room, breathing the same air, hugging, and face to face meetings give something that cannot be done on screen.
- Well, if Moshe's dream was to broadcast Awareness Through Movement lessons on international satellite television, I think this is an improvement over that dream.

EXAMPLES OF SOME QUOTES FOR QUESTION 4 (CONTINUED)

• Other models of Training

- We can talk about it together but each director has to puzzle it out.
- And the other piece is that we need way more supervision, which is very tricky because of finding the funding to pay teachers to do it a lot of the time.
- *Apprenticeship*: That is why I think an apprenticeship is very necessary. The person you apprentice with will give you constant feedback, and if it is a good relationship, you will become confident -or will find out that it really is not your talent.

• Ongoing Learning

- In this last training program we had eleven or twelve practitioners go through the training again with us and have the experience of looking at another approximation of their learning cycle and experience. I think that ongoing training is essential to this work.
- I mean the body of work and knowledge Feldenkrais left is so vast, it's enough for a lifetime. More than a lifetime, and that's always been.
- So in asking people to self-evaluate. I say of course that it is going to be lifetime learning.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE TO YOU:

On the Legacy Forum website (scroll to bottom of page):

<https://feldenkraislegacyforum.org/transformation-of-trainings/>

- Executive Summary
- A document *for each question* that includes:
 - The question
 - Themes with headings, along with a sample of quotes from multiple Trainers
 - Transcript of compiled verbatim responses from all 13 Trainers for that question
- PowerPoint presented to the Canadian Region on Sept 24, 2023

QUESTIONS? 😊

Any questions for us?

Questions from us:

- What are ways to let people know this is available.
- How might it be available
- How might this information be used

QUESTIONS... *FOR YOU* 😊

These are not just questions for Trainers...

We invite and encourage LOTS of lively discussions among *Feldenkrais*® colleagues about the following questions!



- What, *in your own words*, are the essential qualities and characteristics of the *Feldenkrais*® work?
- How do YOU continue to have the personal experience of the work, along with continuing your professional development?

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This project was created by the following members of
the *Transformation of Trainings* Springboard Group of
the *Feldenkrais*® Legacy Forum:

Jaclyn Boone
Katarina Halm
Bonnie Humiston
Tracy Mulligan
Violet van Hees



THANK YOU!



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