



Feldenkrais
M e t h o d

Media backgrounder

What is Feldenkrais?

The Feldenkrais Method® approach combines movement, breathing and body alignment in a context of mindfulness. It offers a unique and practical way to realise physical and mental potential more fully. It is an educational method, focusing on movement and breathing, which can bring about improved ease, body alignment and enhanced functioning.

Or to put it another way: *The Feldenkrais Method® is not just pushing muscles around, but changing things in the brain itself so that the patient can gradually adjust his whole muscular dysfunction to what we call a normal image... The Feldenkrais Method® transmits the image and you organise your brain to meet it.* Professor Karl Pribram, Neuroscientist, Stanford University

It is named after its originator, Moshe Feldenkrais (1904-1984), an engineer and physicist as well as a pioneer judo expert, one of the first in west. He developed his work when in the UK during World War II and the violinist, Yehudi Menuhin was The Feldenkrais Guild UK's first Patron.

How is it taught?

There are two main ways to learn about The Feldenkrais Method® and to explore its benefits:

The first is in lessons, which Feldenkrais named **Awareness Through Movement** sessions. A qualified teacher takes a small group through a sequence of movements, some of them unusual or unaccustomed, so that participants can explore a movement journey and then use their increased awareness to release chronic patterns of tension and to create new movement possibilities.

As an alternative or addition, individual one-to-one **Functional Integration** sessions involve a teacher working with an individual to explore new ways of moving, addressing particular habits and increasing self-awareness.

What are the benefits?

Feldenkrais Method® lessons are responsive to individual needs and can improve the quality of life for people with a range of mental and physical health conditions.

- Relief from tension and muscular pain
- Easier and fuller breathing
- Greater relaxation and well-being
- Improved performance in sport, dance, music and drama
- Greater ease in everyday activities
- Increased vitality and mindfulness

Lessons can also be simply for fun as a way of enjoying movement and learning about how mind and body work together.

Can the Feldenkrais Method® help with medical problems?

Feldenkrais Method® classes are responsive to individual needs and can improve the quality of life for people with a range of mental and physical health conditions. Medical and healthcare professionals can find out more from local practitioners.

The Feldenkrais Method® can help with chronic back problems, repetitive strain injury (RSI), tension and stress. There is also evidence of it helping with neurological conditions such as multiple sclerosis, the symptoms of a stroke and cerebral palsy.

Where can I try it for myself?

There are over 120 Feldenkrais Method® practitioners across the UK who are all members of The Feldenkrais Guild UK. The International Feldenkrais Federation (IFF) is a federation of seventeen Feldenkrais guilds and associations around the world and **its member organisations represent about 5,000 teachers and practitioners.**

For Feldenkrais Awareness Week 2014 (Tuesday 6 May to Wednesday 14 May 2014), many teachers and practitioners are organising special events and several will be at The Yoga Show in Manchester that week too, running sample **Awareness Through Movement** lessons and offering **Functional Integration** sessions with individuals from the Stand.

Full details are available from local practitioners who are listed in the online directory at www.feldenkrais.co.uk/teach.php

Are there any famous enthusiasts for Feldenkrais in the UK?

From early days in the UK, some well-known people have appreciated the benefits of The Feldenkrais Method®.

- The violinist and educator, Yehudi Menuhin was the UK Guild's first Patron
- Jenni Murray, Woman's Hour presenter and journalist practices The Feldenkrais Method®

What is the Guild?

The Feldenkrais Guild UK is the non-profit professional organisation of practitioners and teachers of the Feldenkrais Method® in the UK. Members are graduates of internationally-recognised training programmes, are fully insured, and are accountable to the Guild's Code of Ethics.

Further information about Feldenkrais Awareness Week 2014 and The Feldenkrais Guild UK is online at www.feldenkrais.co.uk . There are also sample **Awareness Through Movement** audio lessons to download and details of regular classes across the UK.

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