

My Wishes for the Future of the Feldenkrais Method

What intrigues me most about the Feldenkrais Method is its description as “a method of learning to learn.” When I joined a training program, I wasn’t just learning how to teach ATM and FI—I was also learning to think about and understand learning in ways very different from how I had been taught in music. As someone who tends to learn slowly, it took me many years to integrate what I had learned from the FM into my music-making and teaching.

In one of his Amherst lectures, Dr. Feldenkrais predicted that, 30 years after his passing, others would begin working in ways similar to his method because they, too, would discover how our nervous systems learn. His prediction seems to be coming true. Indeed, others are now uncovering what Dr. Feldenkrais taught us long ago. His radical statement —“You can’t teach anybody anything; you can only create conditions in which they can learn”—is increasingly validated by recent research. Modern learning theories, most notably Ecological Dynamics, reveal that outdated motor-learning models based on rote repetition and drills are less effective than environments that encourage exploration, failure, and self-discovery.

Of course, many excellent teachers in other fields create conditions for learning. But when I returned to the music world as a teacher, I found that much of the instruction still relies on having students mimic and copy rather than fostering opportunities for genuine learning. Students may learn to play an instrument or sing, but they don’t necessarily learn how to learn—or equally important, how they learn.

My hope is that the Feldenkrais Method—with the help of innovative thinkers—will rise up off the floor, move beyond the realm of “slow and gentle movements,” and inspire teachers in other disciplines to create richer learning environments for their students. I hope that, as FM practitioners, we can collaborate with professionals in fields such as education, music, sports, academia, and beyond.

For this to happen, we may need to expand our definitions of what it means to be an FM practitioner. Teachers from diverse disciplines might begin to “teach the FM” not by having students lie on the floor or low table, but by integrating its principles into their own fields—whether in classrooms, driving schools, or martial arts studios. This might also require us to reconsider our insistence on preserving Moshe’s legacy solely through ATM, FI, and traditional FM teacher training programs. I dream of training programs that empower educators to apply Dr. Feldenkrais’ insights in new, creative, and unexpected ways.

And since I’m wishing, I also hope the FM will find its way into how all humans think, feel, sense, and move in relation to others and the environment. By creating conditions for learning, we not only provide better opportunities but also nurture our students’ sense of agency, dignity, empathy, and growth. That, in turn, could be a glimmer of hope in these not-so-hopeful times.

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