

Composing Experience

A Feldenkrais Advanced Training with Ralph Strauch

Functional Integration is a conversation between practitioner and client. It is conducted primarily through touch, with supporting verbal interaction. Though sessions vary widely, this conversation is generally about how the client experiences the world and her actions in it, and about how those actions might be improved. If we think of *action* as the *manifestation of intention*, then the FI conversation is about how the client might *manifest her intention as action* more easily and efficiently.

Moshe Feldenkrais spoke of *Functional Integration* as a *merging of nervous systems* of practitioner and client. He didn't spell out what he meant by that, though, or how to achieve it. For many practitioners this concept is just a pleasant platitude or an unreachable ideal, with little operational meaning or impact on the way they practice.

This training will make that concept concrete. You will experience *merging of nervous systems*, both as a practitioner and as a client. You will learn what this involves neurologically and how to apply it in your practice. You will leave the workshop able to apply that knowledge to enhance the sensitivity and effectiveness of your *Functional Integration*.

This training is designed for *Feldenkrais Practitioners* but is also open to other health professionals with a strong *Feldenkrais* grounding and interest. Please contact us for more information.

Passive, Active, and Conjoined Movement

A distinction is sometimes drawn between *passive movement*, where the practitioner physically moves the client, and *active movement*, where the client moves herself under the practitioner's verbal direction. The merging of nervous systems creates a third possibility — *conjoined movement* — where the practitioner induces movement from within the client's nervous system, rather than from outside. This allows the practitioner to interact directly with the client's experience, and allows the client to experience change as emerging from within rather than being imposed from outside.

Accomplishing this as a practitioner requires that you connect with your client at deeper and subtler levels than you otherwise might — shifting your attention from the mechanics of your physical interaction to the sensory/motor flow connecting your client's nervous system with your own. This is a bit like shifting your visual attention from the surface of a stream to things that move beneath the surface.

Bringing your own nervous system into resonance with your client's allows you to explore your client's inner organization, and to guide her exploration in ways that would not be possible from the outside. This may sound strange and esoteric, but it is achievable and can deepen the quality of your work. This workshop will give you concrete experiences with these ideas, and guidance on how to continue deepening those experiences after you leave the workshop.

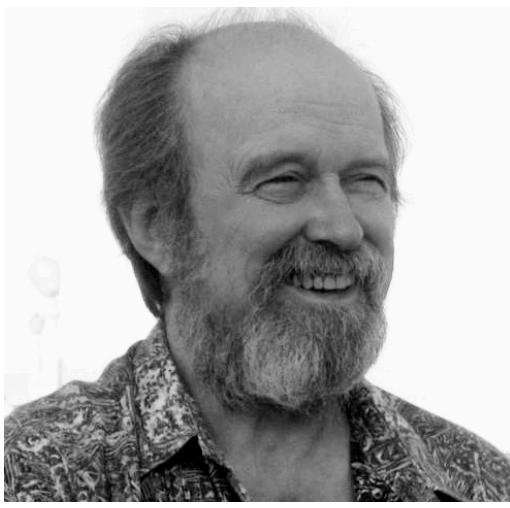
Ralph will be offering individual FI lessons on Tues and Wed, Oct 16 & 17. To schedule a session, contact **Katarina** at 604-263-9123.

Cortical and Subcortical Motor control

Motor control is not concentrated in a single area of the brain, but is dispersed throughout the nervous system. The primary components of most voluntary movement — the movements of your fingers as you type, for example, or of your arm as you swing a tennis racket — are initiated from your motor cortex. Many of the unconscious ancillary activities accompanying those primary components, though — including breathing, balance, and the distribution of tonus and coordination throughout your body — are controlled subcortically from the brainstem and the spinal cord.

This workshop will explore the nature of subcortical control in some detail, experientially as well as intellectually. The resonance that occurs when nervous systems merge takes place primarily at the subcortical level. It evokes a subcortical coordination *between* you and your client that you can use to facilitate greater cortical/subcortical coordination *within* your client.

The overall quality of movement and action depends on coordination between cortical and subcortical control. Poor coordination produces the "parasitic movements" that we encounter in our clients and ourselves. Improving this coordination is perhaps the best way of moving toward Moshe's ideal of *acting with the whole self*. Much of effectiveness of the *Feldenkrais Method* stems from its impact on the quality of cortical/subcortical coordination and the resulting subcortical control. Merging with your client's nervous system is one of the best tools available to you to achieve that ideal.



Ralph Strauch, Ph.D., practices the *Feldenkrais Method* in Pacific Palisades, California. This workshop draws on his wide-ranging background and experience, including his work as a *Feldenkrais Teacher*, his practice of *T'ai Chi* and *Aikido*, his earlier training as a mathematician, his Rand Corporation research on organizational decisionmaking, and his deep personal exploration of perception and mind/body interaction.

310-454-8322
rstrauch@somatic.com

Registration Information

The cost of the workshop will be \$430 US or CDN with a minimum deposit of \$50 until September 15, \$475 thereafter.

You may register online at
www.somatic.com/merging.html

or by sending your check to:

Katarina Halm
Box 71069, 3552 West 41 Avenue
Vancouver B.C., Canada V6N 4J9
(phone: 604-263-9123)

The terms *Feldenkrais* and *Functional Integration* are service marks of the *Feldenkrais Guild of North America*

What past participants have said about training with Ralph:

This training is key to taking my practice of the Feldenkrais Method towards being more elegant and my life more joyful. The simplicity and authenticity of Ralph's teaching encourage confidence in his students.
Janet Willson

Ralph has a gift to allow the expression of diverse viewpoints, quietly hold his initial reactions to those viewpoints, and guide each participant to opening to alternate slices of reality. And then he manages to express those "cracks in the cosmic egg" in the form of ATMs.
Bill Fehlner

The whole training was led in a sensitive, balanced, and encouraging way — highly conducive to learning. The chunks of time allotted for peer work were just right to encourage experimentation. I appreciated the approach, and the whole group felt at ease with itself
Joan Winter

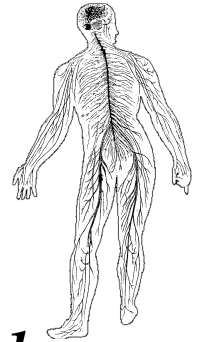
...the forms with touch, connection, and listening (other than "moves"); the sense of centre rather than boundary; the soft, subtle, and powerful place between the least resistance and the first hint of collapse; and the level of non-doing we practiced will all, I suspect, have a very significant impact on how I live as well as on my FI and ATM practice.
Victoria Worsley

I found the training very inspiring, because it confirmed my own way of working and provided me with new ideas which I am going to use in my practice
Silke Fox

I found the open attitude to the Method a relief and liberation. To have these theoretical and experiential viewpoints on the Method clarified things about the Method and have given me the optimism that I could do FI — from my viewpoint — in my way! (having had little confidence about doing FI before this)
Nikhila Ludlow

It was a well designed, facilitated and shared learning experience — a learning space which led participants into to a practical and self-reflective learning work I rarely had come across. Ralph's expertise and organization became an invitation to join him on this continuous adventure of somatic learning, integration and sharing. Ralph's open-listening attitude to students was a special gift in the dancing dialogue.
Erivan Araujo

**Merging
Nervous
Systems
in
Functional
Integration®**



**A Feldenkrais®
Advanced Training
with
Ralph Strauch**

**Vancouver BC
Friday through Monday
October 12-15, 2012
10am—5pm**

Presented by:

Katarina Halm
604-263-9123
studio@happybones.ca