
Training Call #8: Feldenkraisian Learning & Intentional Human Movement

Irene:

All right, everyone. Hello. I will date this. It is May 19. It's the year 2026. We are on Planet Earth. Welcome, Earthlings. I was thinking about some of the prompts I wanted to ask, because I've been doing that a little bit more, as you've noticed, on the training calls, and curious to know what are ... I want to say three things. So think about this before you go to write. And if you have a pen and paper, actually write these down. And as I ask you to do that, are you still breathing? Did anybody catch themselves holding their breath? Be honest. Or did you stay connected to your chair?

Did you keep an ease through your throat? Someone said, yes, I might've held my breath. I'm asking this, because that's going to be a part of our talk today, when we get into the Feldenkrais and learning, and this ability to pay attention to our movements, to our actions. So what are three things? Don't overthink it, but three things, one, two, three, that you are in the midst of practicing, noticing, write this down. Practicing, noticing, working with, challenged by, regarding the neurosensory exercises, and how you are noticing them in life. I promise there will be no grades awarded for how well you do with this. It's self-reflection.

There, I just did mine. I'm always leaning too far forward on my chair. It's like, oh, sit back, and I wonder why my neck is tight at the end of the day. Yeah? This is this awareness, and I'll read some things. Thanks, everyone. Put them in there. Yeah. So three things that you're working on, noticing, working with, practicing, from what you've learned as you move through the neurosensory exercises. So I just gave you mine that I am doing every day, 25 years into this, and I'm still remembering. Oh yeah, don't lean too far forward. Balance the back. Remember balancing the head and the back, some of the lessons in SBSM? Right. I've got this spine. Oh, it's a bit tight.

Orienting. So let me read some. So this is for those of us here live, but of course most listen to the recordings. So let's see so everyone can hear. Potent posture while brushing teeth and walking. Yeah. Potent posture is a really strong, potent one, just like I had mentioned. More healthy aggression. Great. Breathing into my belly instead of shallow breathing, holding intense breath, diaphragm. So noticing the diaphragm, the tension, feet on the ground, orienting while breathing. Coming out of freeze and feeling irritability. Yes. Why does that happen? So another pop quiz. Why do we feel irritability when we come out of freeze?

Why might we snap? So I'll get to the answers in a second here. Sounds, my voice, potent posture, orienting, feeling. Potent posture is winning today. Potent posture, orienting. Lengthening the spine. Healthy aggression, conscious movement, dropping the shoulders. Does anybody notice when their bodies are more tense? Have you found yourself clenching a hand while watching television, or going to sleep, and you're holding your jaw or your belly? Potent posture? Potent posture. Being aware of the tension in my body orienting while working. So yeah, the question that I asked, why do we feel more irritable when we come out of freeze or functional freeze? We're sensing the sympathetic activation. You got it. That has always been there.

Yeah, we've been repressed. Yeah, we got a joke. Got to laugh. Nisia says because people are irritating. That can be true. Everyone's got their story. Dancing and jumping are strong impulses now. Yeah. Jumping. What does that do to us when we get to jump and dance? Helps our bones, right? Puts pressure through our feet. We need to work with our bodies. Chronic bracing patterns when trying to sleep. That's a big one. Having a nice little scan of your body when you lay down on your bed, feel your blanket. The surface scan, move your joints, touch your joints. Bring your hands to your belly.

Often if I'm having trouble falling asleep, I'll just put my hands on my skin on my face. Doesn't mean you've got to do it, but I talk a lot during a day, so it's just making sure that those muscles aren't still active. Diaphragms. Yeah. So again, these spaces that we can touch. Speaking from the belly rather than my throat. Yeah. Ooh, that deep resonance. Kidney

adrenals. Someone said that they're working with the painful and the pleasant. That's shifting from things that are painful to things that are less painful, more pleasant. All of these. Okay. Thanks everyone.

So that was a lot of reading, a lot of thinking, a lot of noticing. So take a second now to actually practice a little bit, just bringing your eyes out into the space around you. Is there a window with light? Is there a corner of your room with color? Notice your breath. Now, one of the things that my Feldenkrais mentor told me, well, not just me, it was our entire class. It was the final day of our training. And you've got to understand this is a four-year training, 800 hours, lots of time, lots of bad Airbnbs before they were Airbnbs, staying in places, but still lots of good connection. And so we're in this Feldenkrais training, and I'm talking about this because we're going to get into the power of Feldenkrais and learning, and how it embeds in everything, all of the neurosensory exercises. And he said, after we've finished four years of moving, and rolling, and doing judo rolls, and simple movements with the hands, has anybody gotten into the bell hand movements?

Yeah, Bonnie knows that one.

He said, "You realize, everyone here, that this work that we're doing has nothing to do with movement." Some of you might know this story. And I went, "What? What are you talking about, Jeff?" And what he meant was, yes, we used movement, and a lot of us in our training, and I hope a lot of you with the various movements of balancing the back and connecting the head and the pelvis, excuse me, will have felt more alignment, more ease of your muscles, more lightness in your maybe head, more softness in the tone of your nervous system.

But the reason it's there, the reason it's there is because you were in that training consciously, higher brain thinking, changing our patterns. Write that down or make a note of it, trying to bring back note taking. You're changing the patterns of how you think so that you can change how your body moves. This is, as we would say in French, the *pièce de résistance*, it's the linchpin, because I could show you the movements as I used to when I taught fitness,

movements, squats, things, sit-ups, but it is your brain and your awareness and your attention to the tensions. Oh, when I start to roll my pelvis and think about this, I immediately stop breathing.

Whenever I roll my pelvis to the left, I feel a bit of fear. Whenever I roll my pelvis to the right, it's like, holy cow, there's a whole world there. This feels really good, but I never want to go that way. When I lie down on the ground, I instantly feel disconnected and dissociated. What's that about? When there's too much of a silence and waiting, I get worried. So the reason I'm sharing this is because there is this very important principle within the Feldenkrais and learning that has to do with the higher brain. And sometimes there's this thinking that the work we're doing here is all bottom up. Have you heard of that concept of bottom up, body? We're working with the body. Yes, we're working with the body. Right now there's a big battle in the online worlds that the body doesn't keep the score.

I don't know for those on social media, you might've seen this, and people are saying the body doesn't keep the score. The brain keeps the score. It's like, well, they both keep the score.

And it's just another thing happening in our silly world where people are trying to take down leaders and such. And it's fine. But the beauty of Feldenkrais again is this - you have to think, you have to be aware, and you have to pay attention to your body, to the movements, to the tensions. And it's that that offers all the other lessons their juice. So for those who have said, maybe worked, with a somatic experience practitioner, again, this is my training, and many of us here, my colleagues in that field of work, there's no practice. It's a work that you do with a person typically. And so what the Feldenkrais work has offered the SE world, at least in the context of SBSM, is a way to experience tracking sensation, a way to go through a lesson of orienting by noticing everything else in the body.

What people mentioned, the painful and the pleasant. That's a fancy word for - how do you pendulate from something that's tight and sore to something that isn't in the body, and that's very Feldenkraisian. Does that make sense? So the anger, the healthy aggression, all of these

things are very much related to - how can we get to know our sensations, our thoughts, our emotions, our movement, our behaviors.

So Feldenkrais would say, "We're learning how to move, think, feel, and sense with greater clarity." All right. Okay. I will ask if we can focus on the training call that we're going through right now. That would be wonderful. We're going to start with this first quote. So this is all, again, what the neurosensory exercises are. And this is not a Feldenkrais quote, but it's from Norman Doidge, who sort of popularized neuroplasticity, not like literally, but he wrote about it. And in his second book, *The Brain's Way of Healing*, he references Moshé Feldenkrais. Well, two chapters, actually. So this is Doidge just saying, "Slowness of movement is the key to awareness and awareness," that is the word. "Awareness is the key to learning."

"Slowness is the key to awareness and awareness is the key to learning." Now the other element here I'm going to add in, which isn't on this handout, Dr. Feldenkrais would talk about other species. I'm sure some of you are in a place where you're seeing little baby ducks being born. Ducklings, I think they're called - geese, goslings. I've been seeing pictures of people posting little baby lambs, right? The sheep are having their babies, the cows are having their babies. Those animals, what do they do when they come out quite quickly? They're walking, right? They're mammals. We're mammals. Why does a baby, a human baby, not come up and just go, "Hey mom, I'm going to walk and get a glass of milk from the refrigerator." It's because of this higher brain of ours. And this is what we're working with here. That's why it is so, so delicate the human system, even if we're premature.

Sorry, even if we're born full term, we're still dependent on a caregiver. Dr. Feldenkrais would say animal species learn through their genetics, through their DNA. That is how they learn. They have it built in them. They know exactly what to do. Of course though they need a mother to feed them. They're not fed food. They won't survive. But humans learn through learning. We learn through culture. We learn through the communication that we're given. It's more than just watching. Oh, that's how you make a sandwich. Oh, that's how you talk. You have to be talked to, right? You have to be given space to explore. So this strict comparison,

and this is why this work is constantly evolving, that strict comparison that we're animals and we have to get our animal nature out through fight, flight, right? Those things, the waking, the tiger, that is true. That is definitely true.

And we have to contend with this other higher brain stuff that has culturalized us to not know how to even feel our bodies, and know that we have feet. Just the other day I was working with my own fascia on my head, and I found an entire spot of my skull that was numb, and I'm a girl that gets a lot of body work. I was like, "Holy cow, I can't believe I didn't know that was numb." So I started working with it, got some little tools to work with the fascia. It wasn't sore, but boy, the next day it was. And the next day I felt this little click, click, click, click that was I think probably just some old fascia that's starting to unpeel.

And yet I'm able to function and see things, even though there's this numb spot here. So that's just a little example of how even 10 years from now, 20 years from now, depending on where we are age-wise, it's possible that all the traumas are still not fully worked with and that's okay. That's okay. Still found that concussion. It's a concussion. I had a concussion there, and that's why it was so frozen. So I share that because there is no endpoint to this work. It keeps going, but it comes down to how you relate to it, how you bring attention, how you get curious one night when you're watching a show, which is what I was doing, and I'm just feeling these parts of my head, and I went, "Oh." So this is where you're curious., and that's why I asked the question at the very beginning, "What are you working with?"

What are you interested in?

Maybe you get some body work, or maybe you do some yoga, or maybe you do some dance, or maybe you learn how to cook something. I say that because Dr. Feldenkrais, I'm going to go back to Dr. Feldenkrais now. He would say that he could teach his method with mathematics. He said, I chose movement because movement is more accessible to humans, because if we don't have movement, we can't live. A baby needs to learn how to move. They have to crawl. They have to roll. That's why you learn rolling in SBSM. We have to move, but the process of

noticing self and the frustrations that comes from engaging with some kind of action, some kind of discipline.

So I really encourage everyone to think, what's one thing that you could do that has nothing to do with quote unquote healing? Think of one thing you do. It could be as simple as doing your laundry, cleaning up your dishes at the end of the day, putting your dishes away, taking out the garbage. How do you feel yourself in relationship to that action? That is essential, because that's how we learn in the context of the world around us. Yeah, cooking. I love to cook. It's sad to me when I learn that someone doesn't know how to cook. It's like, ah, learning how to cook. If you can cook your own food, you've got a big skill there.

The other thing I'll mention before we get to these stages of neuroplastic healing, this is more in relationship to our lovely ventral vagal nervous system. Quick pop quiz. What's that important for? I'm going to take a sip of drink while I wait for the chat. What is the ventral vagal nervous system important for? There's two things. Social engagement. That's the easy one. Not rush digest. That's the dorsal. Something to do with the heart. This is going to make you dig into, yep, it's learning, it's connection, pacemaker. Yeah, it helps slow the heart down or it helps speed it up slowly.

So those are the important ones. Doing this review intentionally because I have a story to share. The ventral vagal portion of the vagus nerve goes to the space, throat, the pharynx, the larynx, everything above the diaphragm, so the lung, tissue, and the heart. And when we have good, better, better regulation, we can modulate our heart rate and heart rate in a more refined way. That's why it's myelinated. And this is all in the biology of stress videos, right? I'm just giving you guys reminders. So it allows a gentle lifting so that the heart can increase slowly. It's different than, boom, adrenaline, go, go, go, go, go. Heart rate goes up. So it helps shift the heart into higher heartbeats but without the fear.

I share this because I heard a great story from an SBSM'er today on social media, one of our senior students, Anna, and she was talking about how she's in the Netherlands, and she talks

about how when you go into elevators these days, she was in this tiny elevator, and nobody talks to each other. You pretend there isn't a human there. You don't even look and smile. If you fly on planes, you probably, maybe, you sit beside someone for nine hours, and you don't make eye contact once, these sorts of things. And she said she remembered being at an airport in 2011, and she was just waiting for her flight, smiling, just walking around, smiling, orienting. This was probably before she knew anything about orienting, but she was doing it. And an older gentleman came up to her and said, "Thank you for smiling at me."

"That made my day because no one really looks at each other anymore." So this is the next thing. This is all in service of your integration. When you're out and about, granted it feels safe to do so, smile at the cashier at the grocery store. I try to always compliment them if they have funky nails. I don't wear nails. I don't wear jewelry on my ears, but if someone has a nice color, someone's got a cool hat, I like that hat, or just smiling, and it can shock people, and it shocks them out of their spell of feeling the need to stay in their little tunnel. Now you don't want to smile at someone, and if they don't smile back at you, okay, because this can also bring up our attachment wounds. I just tried to connect, and they're not connecting to me, and then we get mad at them.

That's where you have to differentiate. That's okay. And this is the higher brain. So I'm going to bring that back to the Feldenkrais, that awareness. Then you say to yourself, "I don't think this person is going to smile back. That's cool." Or if the cashier looks like they don't want to talk, don't talk. Drop into your feet, feel your kidney adrenals. They might sense your presence is so easy, and it might actually give them a little ping of energy that's like, "Oh, this person isn't trying to be belligerent or ask me for something that I don't know." So this is where bringing on that human brain cap of awareness and attention, our ventral vagal, but also keeping a note of survival. I don't think I'm going to smile at that person. They actually don't look very friendly. That's okay. So this is the differentiated piece, and then this is into what we're going to talk about, continue to talk about this ability to differentiate.

When we can differentiate and we can know these things, it helps us stay in a good space survival wise. When we've had early traumas, when we haven't had differentiation, when everything was just all bad, or if everything was all scary, if everybody was bad, we then might see the world as everything is bad. The opposite is everything might have been bad around us, but we disconnect from it, and then we float around getting into trouble, because we don't have that radar of danger. We have to have a radar, that's that neuroception I talked about a few training calls ago. We also need to have a radar for, "Ah, this doesn't feel safe here. Something tells me this isn't right," versus, "Ah, this feels okay." So all of this gets built as we become more differentiated in our movement and how we notice, and how we notice our clenching when we're just sitting there watching a show.

If we're clenched and tense and we wonder why the person we're trying to talk to isn't so interested, it could be our own energy that's putting them off, but we're not aware of it. So this is how layered this is, and this is again, not a thing that happens in a blink of an eye. So speaking of movement, the next quote down there is a much shorter one from Charles Sherrington. He is long past. He was a physiologist, I believe British, based on that last name. And he said, "The motor act is the cradle of the mind." So the motor act is the cradle of the mind. Basically, that means our movement governs our thinking, our brain. Again, if a baby doesn't move, they don't develop. They need to move.

And as humans that are older, that is all of us, I can't encourage enough getting onto the floor, crawling, get onto the floor more than when you're just doing a yoga class, get on the floor more than when you're just doing an audio lesson of mine. Find ways to move your body in bed, use your bed not just as a place to sleep, but to roll around, to stretch, these sorts of things. Yeah. And someone said, "What's up with geniuses who can't move at all?" Well, that's true. There are a lot of people I've met who have not got movement skill, and yet they're lovely human beings. So it's like again, differentiate. Differentiate. And then there's some folks who have incredible movement ability but their social skills, not so great. So again, it comes back to how can we integrate, and what is the differentiated process we need to figure out.

So I'm going to read off five things here. If you go to page two, it continues on to page two. These are the five, what I call the five stages of neuroplastic healing sequencing. If we were to add a word, it would be sequencing. Again, credit to Norman Doidge. These are in his book, *The Brain's Way of Healing*. For those who like to read, I cannot recommend his two big books enough. *The Brain that Changes Itself* is the first one, and then the second one, *The Brain's Way of Healing*. And that's the one where he has two chapters on Dr. Feldenkrais, which is wonderful.

So the first thing here, correction of general functions of the neurons and glia. That's fancy talk - for me, it's basic housekeeping. So corrections of the general functions of, we'll just say the nerve cells. Now this in his book is good food. We don't want toxins. This is something we didn't think about too long ago. By too long ago, I mean 50 or so years ago. But now we know it's not the best to spray our vegetables with DDT and glyphosate. And it's not good to have fluoride in our water, and chlorine, and heavy metals, all these things. So we're getting a bit better as humans knowing what to choose, what to eat, chemicals that we put on our bodies, that we clean our homes with, not the best for us, making sure that our homes have good air, good ventilation, movement. Does anybody remember back in the day, those pregame videos, little short videos at the beginning of the course, that talk about the importance of movement, food, all those things.

Those are sort of in service to this.

But again, it's just a small part of it. But we also know, a lot of people know, that sometimes when they shift things in their diet, when they start moving more, when they're in a healthier environment, there is a general increase in improvement in things. Energy such as energy, how we digest food. And many of you know that you've done that and there's still problems with the dysregulation of the nervous system, and then that's where we go, okay, there's maybe some trauma pieces in here that we have to work with. Hence the next one, neurostimulation. That's the next one. Neurostimulation.

This is everything. So right now you're sitting here, you're listening, you're writing. That's a stimulation. You look into the sun. We don't want to look into the sun, but you look into light and it's bright. Your eyes get thick and strict. Doesn't want all that light in. If you're in a dark room, your pupils get really big to see. That is an adaptation to the environment. You feel a vibration. You might get goosebumps. You visualize your favorite food, you start to salivate. If you visualize your least favorite food, you kind of go, "Ugh, I don't like that." It's not good or bad. It's neutral. This is just stimulation. So everything that we do and we learn is a stimulation. Listening to music stimulates us, or it can stimulate us to calm down. This is what a resource is.

So learning, movement, sound, light, people, spaces, they all act to stimulate us. And then the question is, what do we do with that stimulation? How do we notice it? Page two.

Neuromodulation. So I have this, and these again are more Doidge's words, settling the noisy brain and the nervous system. Again, these are fancy words for the system has dysregulation in it. And we're wanting to find a way to have more modulation of these stress responses, of these activations. So this is, I'm going to use my hand here. Remember that graph you saw in a Biology of Stress video number - on probably a few of them - where you've got that nice sine wave, which is a very common term for not just mathematics, but flow in general in the universe. We want this nice modular up and down, just like the heart pumps. The heart rate goes up a little bit.

We breathe in, the heart rate goes up, we breathe out, the heart rate goes down.

The tubes in our intestines, they need to have this movement of peristalsis. And I want you to see, I'm doing this movement with my hand. What is this again? That's that bell hand lesson. Some of you will have gotten to that. Some of you have not. It's okay. You will eventually get to it. That is a Feldenkrais lesson that is about, believe it or not, fluid dynamics. It's about the dynamics of fluids from an engineering point of view. But our body is the same way. I see some people eating some food, drinking some water. The moment that hits your mouth, the fluid dynamics work, and you don't have to think about it. We all know this when something goes

down the wrong way. We've all probably choked on water or a bit of food. The moment that food or that water hits the airways, there is a visceral reaction to choke, cough it out.

We don't want to choke. So that is a disruption in the fluid dynamics. So this ability to find good modulation, it's in the nervous system, but it's also in these vessels of our body. Everything we're doing in SBSM is in service of finding better modulation, better regulation.

The other interesting thing, if I use that example with food, the more aware we are when we're eating, the less likely we are to choke, to swallow something the wrong way. We're not rushing as much. The tone - I can't show you these tissues, but there's a lot of stuff in here. And when there's tension or too much fluidity, if there's a shutdown, those vessels don't know how to work properly. They're either too constricted or they're too lax. And so again, this is where getting that better modulation regulation through growing our capacity back to the swimming pool and beach balls from training call number one, getting out the traumas that are keeping us stuck or keeping us collapsed. Of course, that is where we might need to do some more dedicated work with a practitioner, a therapist to help us get out a big beach ball from that accident or that attack, but we need to also work at those levels.

So neuromodulation, again, very important, very big. The next one, neuro relaxation. This is the rest digest. This is the rest that repairs. This is the sleep that repairs. This is where that high, sorry, the dorsal, the dorsal branch of the vagus nerve, this is that low tone. Someone mentioned rest digest a little while ago. With the ventral, this is actually the dorsal branch of the parasympathetic nervous system in the vagus nerve going into that gearbox, so to speak. It's a metaphor. The gearbox of rest, digest. At the beginning of our healing, and everyone's different, some might need way more rest. This is especially true for those of you who are recovering from ME, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia. Unfortunately, we're dealing with, still, a lot of long COVID. It's a thing. I've been learning more about it in my own time. This is the system where there is significant energy disruption at the level of the mitochondria.

The system can't produce energy. And this is where you can't just get up and go for a walk and force yourself. You have to really be good at resting and doing the tiniest bits of neurostimulation. This is where those gentle movements that you have access to, the Feldenkrais movements, the awareness movements are adding just enough stimulus to the system to perk up a little bit. You have to practice standing if you've got these troubles with say POTS, which is a blood pressure issue. Again, chronic illness, et cetera, long COVID, you have to practice standing, but in little bits, not standing and doing jumping jacks. It's that little bit of stimulation that tells the system, "Oh, this is what it's like to stand. I'm just going to do it for a tiny bit and then I'm going to lay back down and let my system rest." So this is the neurorelaxation.

It's like a tangent that I just went on there. So you do something that has a little bit of stimulation, and then you want to rest and relax. Not everyone is going to be in that boat, but that is what we want to really be attentive to if we're recovering from some form of chronic illness, viral infection, or if we're working with people who have that stuff.

Neurodifferentiation. So I've been talking about that quite a bit already. This is what is done when we can discern. The tiniest bit would be, "I'm orienting, but I'm also feeling my feet on the ground." Maybe just for the heck of it, we'll take a moment and allow yourself to do that. Sense the pressure under you, but also feel the movement of your head and allow the eyes to focus. In that case, three things, that's this idea of, I would call it multitasking our awareness, not in a stressful way, but we need those skills. You want to be able to feel, sense, move.

That old kind of joke, can you, what is it? Pat your head and your belly at the same time. Rub your belly in a circle and pat your head. The other one is, can you walk and chew gum at the same time? I always thought that was a bit strange, but when something's in your mouth, you typically chew. But that is a differentiated skill whereas a high level skill would be something like juggling, playing the piano. Watch anyone in a kitchen who can work with a chef's knife really well. That is a high differentiated skill. But writing is a highly differentiated skill. When you're little, remember if you've got kids, you know this, they hold the pen with their fists, and

then you get to this ability to have fine tuning. That's differentiation. So we do it naturally. And so the practicing of it at higher levels is what is within the lessons in the later labs, especially at nine and 10, where you're doing more advanced Feldenkraisian movement, along with noticing your kidney adrenals, along with making some sound.

It's in us but we have to practice. Next quote, this is from Moshé. "The delay between thought and action is the basis for awareness." The delay or the pause, the moment, the microsecond, we could say between thought and action is the basis for awareness. This was sort of his linchpin of the difference between humans and animals in the wild is that we have that ability to think and pause. You can train your beautiful canine creature with the best signalings, the best heel commands. You can have all the great treats, but if they see that squirrel or if they see another animal, their imprint to chase goes all out the window. It's not your fault if it doesn't listen. It's because they're not thinking in the same way. Now certain animals have, I think, more intelligence than others. And then if there's a soul creature in those animals, they've got a little bit more of an empathetic hit to them, but the cat is going to hunt.

Felines are hunters. No matter how much we try to keep them in a home, they want to go for that bird. It's just in them. You can't teach your kitty cat, "Don't do that sound when you see that bird." So this very strong statement is in relationship to human learning. Again, Dr. Feldenkrais's work was all about relearning how to learn, but using movement as the way to notice that. I'm kind of repeating this over and over again because it's so important. And that's why, because we're constantly moving all day long, we can keep learning when we're doing the dishes, when we're putting dishes away. One of the lessons I gave our practitioners in training the other year was every time you do something that involves a hand that isn't life-threatening, or could put you into trouble, use the other hand. So you put your dishes away with your right hand - put your dishes away with the left hand.

You always open the door to your bathroom with this hand, open your hand, open with the other. You go up your stairs, always, with that foot. Go up the other foot, but you want to do it in a way where you're listening, and you're creating a change without stress. I'm going to say

that again. You want to listen and create change without stress. Because if you go to put the cup away and then you go, damn it, I was supposed to do the other way, and then you beat yourself up. No, you want to preload the desire, and I'm going to put all my dishes away tonight without rushing with the other hand. I'm going to turn when I sit down on the toilet the other way. That's been my skill the last few months. I always go in one way when I turn to sit on the toilet, I'm trying to go the other way.

I geek out with that stuff, but that changes your patterns. It changes your thinking. It changes every single spinal curve. It changes where your eyes look. It changes how you stabilize your legs as you turn. You see? So these are the little things that will expedite how you heal and how you learn different ways of differentiation, which then influence the modulation, which are forms of neurostimulation. These are the things we want to teach kids. We want to teach them different ways of seeing the world, different ways of doing things, different ways of playing, eating foods that are different, right?

So that's my speech on that statement. These are the things that will make the changes and the wirings shift, in my opinion, faster. It's not about obsessing either. It's about having fun and curiosity with it. I'm seeing some of you sitting on office chairs. When you get up, do you always turn a certain way because the door is to that direction? Probably. That's fine. But what if you went the other way? What if you pushed your chair out in a different way and shifted so you're using a different leg? This is how we also get asymmetries in our spine when we're always turned to one direction. I do say though, don't change your foot on the gas. If you drive, that's not the place to try your other foot. I know that sounds silly, but there's certain places where you don't want to do this.

If I'm on a slippery deck outside, I'm not going to experiment, because I can't be relaxed. But when I'm going onto my toilet in the middle of the night, I'm pretty aware I'm going to try the other way.

Okay. Feldenkrais cheat sheet. So this is basic stuff, but with it, I'm going to give some examples. So I'm going to have a little drink here. Take a second to reconnect to yourself. Hopefully you are connected. Feel if your pelvis needs to shift. Yeah, playing, curiosity is totally important. There's an entire world. I think his name was, I think he's passed, Stuart Brown, I believe. He did a great TED Talk on play, and we think that play should just be for children. And then when we become adults, we only play if we have a sport that we do that's usually structured, or we have game night. That's fun. But playing doesn't have to be a sport or a game. It can just be in these little experiments we do.

I always love it when I see people singing in their cars. It's like, oh, that person's really in it having fun. Yes. The person who drives the manual car, you have to use your left foot, of course, because of the clutch, and then you've got your brake. So yes, there's a time where you are going to use that other foot, and when you rally drive, you have to learn how to use your other foot for the brake. You have the gas and the brake, so you don't have the foot going, you use both. So there's always exceptions. There's always exceptions. So Feldenkrais cheat sheet. So let's get into this. So experience the experience of the movement. I know that sounds kind of silly saying that, but it is experiencing the experience of the movement, because we can do a lot of movement and not be experiencing it.

I worked in gym facilities for over 20 years of my life, and another life, and the people who had no interest in learning about the exercise and learning about their muscles were never the ones who kept coming back and getting fitter. The people who needed the personal trainer to make them go to the gym didn't do so well. I'm saying that from experience. The person who was interested, who asked questions and who tried to figure it out on their own, they're the ones that kept coming back to work out. So I use that example again, this is why I'm really slowing this down. All these ways that you can play with your awareness, not just through doing the neurosensory exercises, of course do those. They're purposeful. They have purpose to them, but then how can you experience your movement in other aspects? I know it's become quite common to listen to podcasts when we work out.

I like doing that too, but every now and again, I try to just feel and listen to myself and breathe. Go for walks without the phone if you can. These sorts of things - just really be in the moment. We used to do that without phones, so we can do it again. Notice how you do first. Do first. Notice how you do first. Again, that's the experience.

There are some instructions in the Feldenkrais lessons where I will say, think about this first, or listen to how your body starts to act as you start to think about moving your pelvis, and then do that, and then notice, and then pause. It isn't - move your pelvis 10 times in one way, right? That would be very exercise related, very ... The word is calisthenic, quick, quick, quick. That has a time and a purpose, but for our purposes with the movement, it's about not getting the movement in. It's noticing the doing, the experience. And then I say, then, and only then, start to self-correct, shift and change, because if we don't know how we do, this is a classic Feldenkrais comment or statement. If we don't know how we do, then we can't change what we do. It's kind of a tongue twister. If we don't know what we do, we can't change what we do.

Then we're just in reactivity and conditioning mode.

Next line down, third one down. It's not just about the movement. I've already said this. I opened up the call with that. It's not just about the movement. It's about the process, that is the word, the process of improving your neural connections with your actions. This has kind of been the whole thesis of this call, right? Not just doing but noticing, noticing the process. Do you breathe? Do you close your eyes? One of the things that is so important when I do teach in person, and I say this on the recordings, you might remember this. Can you really do these movements with your eyes open?

The reason why, again, some of you here will have had the pleasure of raising an infant, having a baby, seeing babies. Do babies close their eyes when they're playing and rolling on the ground? No. When do they close their eyes? When they sleep. So one of the things that titrates us and lets us know if we're doing too much, if we want to keep our eyes open as much as possible when doing the movements of Feldenkrais - doesn't mean you can't experiment

with the eyes closed, but we want to train ourselves in awareness with our eyes open. Otherwise, the moment we go into life, we won't have the skill of awareness with the eyes open. You see?

One of our Feldenkrais trainers screamed at us one day when he saw everybody closing their eyes. Sometimes the old school ways serve a purpose. I'll never forget that. We all stood up to do a lesson, and everybody closed their eyes to feel. He's like, "This is the old world where it was okay to do that." And I'll do that in my own way when I'm teaching people. But it's like, everyone, you got your eyes closed. Life isn't with your eyes closed. Open your eyes. Look around. Look around. Feel your feet while you look around.

Oddly, it was Russell Delman, who, I think Carie knows Russell, our moderator here. He's a meditation teacher, but he's like, "You've got to live with our eyes open. Open your eyes. Feel your feet with your eyes open." So it was a fun one. Okay. Slow. Next one. Slow. Make it slow first, then speed up. There's nothing wrong with speed as long as it's not hurried and rushed. This is really important. Why do you think this is important? We have to be able to do things quickly sometimes. There's nothing wrong with being quick. There's nothing wrong with being fast. The difference is are you being hurried and stressed out to get something done quickly?

So we start slow with these lessons, but then we can make them a bit faster, and more advanced Feldenkrais lessons are doing much bigger movements, crawling on the ground, walking on all fours, moving the legs back and forth, zooming up, zooming back. I don't teach that online, because to me, it's not ethical to teach that in audio lessons where I can't see you, but in in-person workshops, we'll have a bit more fun. We'll move a bit more. We'll do more judo roll kinds of things. And it's because sometimes we have to hurry. We need to catch the bus. We need to do the things. Watch any high level chef or driver, anyone with a high level of skill, and they can do their craft super, super fast. And we love watching it. Why do you think the TV show Drive to Survive that features Formula One has become so popular?

It's not just for the theatrics, it's the skill of these individuals doing something so precise. I think it intrigues a lot of us. So we definitely want to learn how to be faster without stress, faster without stress. The reason why that's important is for some of us, when we start to move our hearts, when we start to move our body, which makes our heart rate go up, that increase in heart rate, and this is something we've talked about many times, it can trigger a sense of fear, because anytime our heart rate raised back in the day, it was because there was a danger. So a lot of people avoid exercise and being a bit more vigorous with their bodies because it is overcoupled with danger back in the day. This is why, again, it's so important to differentiate. I'm not being screamed at right now. I'm going for a hike.

I was with a girlfriend once, and she came from a much bigger trauma environment than me, with a lot of violence and abuse. And I was hiking with her one day, and she had the wherewithal to know, as we were going up this climb, "I just need to stop and feel my heart rate, because I'm starting to get panicky." I'm like, "Sure thing. Let's just stop." And she was so proud of herself because she was able to detach the fear from the exercise, and she was someone who always struggled with her weight, always struggled with movement, because it was scary, right? And so that's a very important thing to understand - the importance of going fast.

Next one, notice the support from the environment. You guys are, I hope, getting masterful at this because I'm always mentioning this, right? The ground, the carpet, the grass. I have intentionally here, the ice, the snow. The way you act will change to accommodate that specific environment. Welcome the change. So some of us live in places that get cold in the winter. I've heard some people are still in cold weather back east here in North America. And if you are not aware of your environment, you step out your door one day and you fall flat on your butt or on your head because you haven't registered that it was frosty the night before. Has anybody stepped out on their deck, if you have a deck, and before you know it, you're trying to catch yourself from falling.

That is a lack of awareness to the environment, and seeing the glistening, the glass, the ice, the snow, the slipperiness of pavement when it rains. So again, that's back to awareness and noticing the environment and orienting to it. You're not going to see that if your eyes are closed, obviously. But this is why training our eyes open is important so that we know how to register what's in front of us when we do go out into the world. Because obviously when you go into the world, your eyes are open. We know that. But you can have your eyes open and be completely unaware of what's happening. Yeah, that's where we dissociate. So again, this is why the lessons are paramount, that you're practicing those lessons with your eyes open. Also, and of course this is if you have the ability to practice, if you have a home that has different rooms, if you have your place that's like your sanctuary where you do all the lessons, try doing them somewhere else.

Do them in a different part of your home. Do them outside on a bench, even if it's just listening and practicing the elements of it, because we can get very ... I'm not getting the word right now. We can pigeonhole ourselves into, "This is my awareness space." And then we get really good at that environment, but then the moment we go into a more stressful environment, it doesn't work so well. I recently heard one of my mentors suggest to someone who is training to be a lawyer to study in noisy coffee shops, or go to a restaurant and study. Why do you think? Is a courtroom a zen place? No. You're going to walk into a court where there's sounds and noises and people in other rooms and security guards, people talking in the audience. And so when you are there working, you have to be able to hear this stuff and filter it out and stay focused on your case, on your trial.

I thought that was brilliant when he said, "Go study your stuff in a busy restaurant and learn how to dissolve that noise and focus." So for those who are maybe studying for the bar, try that out, because you'll need that when you go into court. And that's for anyone who works in a high-paced environment with lots going on. Okay. Notice, sorry, we got to do that. Recalibrate. Recalibrate moment by moment. Pause when needed. That's literal and metaphorical. Some days you've got more energy, other days you don't. Some days you might notice a bit more, sometimes you're going to notice less. So this comes back to listening to

what you need in the moment. Stop when needed, wait, reorient, then move a little bit more, do a little bit more. Again, that lesson, that neurosensory exercise is a training ground for life, which is why I said try doing these in different environments, different places.

Page three. Create different constraints. Meaning do it differently. I've already sort of alluded to this with - a constraint would be that thing I said where when you go to sit on the toilet, go the other way. So you're constraining a movement that is typical, and you're doing something different. So a constraint could be - keep your eyes open. As soon as you feel your eyes close, pause the lesson and come back when you have the alertness to keep your eyes open. For example, now just because I said that doesn't mean you can't do a lesson with your eyes closed. That is your choice. But every now and again, practice, I'm going to do this with my eyes open, and I'm going to actively engage with the environment as I'm listening, as I'm moving, as I'm sensing my kidney adrenals, et cetera.

But if you fall asleep, that's cool too, right? Again, differentiation, context. I say that because sometimes the lessons, and I know this, will slumber you into sleep. Has anybody found that they're doing a lesson and they fall asleep? Yeah. That's okay. That's actually putting you into, probably, granted you're going into sleep with good ease. You're going into a really good low tone dorsal of the parasympathetic. That's a good rest digest. Enhance ... Okay, so I'll finish this one. So again, look in a different direction. Open your eyes. Those are the words. Look in a different direction. Open your eyes, close your eyes. Smile. Frown.

Practice in the morning, at lunch, right before bed. Again, this is that element of breaking up the pattern. And I get it. We have habits. We have habits. But when you can, can you break up the pattern a little bit? This is very good training for life. Life is not always going to go exactly as planned. You plan something, and then plans shift, especially those of us who have kids. You're not always going to get exactly what you had planned that day, and you have to go with that flow, because the strain you feel will be felt in the little one. So, so important. Enhance your skill, that's the word.

Enhance your skill, not your will. This is a very classic Feldenkraisian saying. He was all about skill power, not willpower. Skill means you're bringing in new. So he would say, "Will brings in the old patterns. Skill brings in the future and the present moment. Skill brings in the future and the present moment." There's a time for willpower. If I find myself needing to change a tire on a road, this happens, you get a flat tire. I'm probably not going to be perfect in my Feldenkraisian movement, because I just want to get that thing off. I've got to use extra strength to get the lug knots off, and get the thing, and pop up the car, and I'm not going to be perfect. That's where I am going to bring in some willpower. But when I might be doing something a bit more gentle, a light exercise routine, I'm going to be more present with my skill, and be more aware.

Reduce the effort. That's the word, effort. Distribute the work throughout the body. So practical, if you think about the connecting the head and the pelvis lesson, which is where you roll on your pelvis, and you're moving your head and the spine and the sternum, and all those things with that, that lesson is not just connect the head, and it's not just connect the pelvis, it's connecting the head and the pelvis. By doing that, you're distributing the effort through the entire skeletal structure. If you can recall, you do that with your feet on the ground, and your knees bent. It's like that classic position as if you were to do a sit up. So it's bringing in the whole body. In that lesson, I would bring you to feel your feet, to feel the pressure, to feel your hands, to breathe. The moment we hold our breath, we increase the effort.

So we want to be able to reduce that effort and distribute the work throughout the body. So that's just one example of one of the lessons, the Feldenkraisian lessons that really teaches that. But so does the mini balance your back, where you're moving the knees to the side, you're rolling a little bit, you're feeling everything going in one direction, the other direction, et cetera. All right. Typically, I've got that in brackets. There is typically not a right or a wrong way. What does that mean? That means that some things are meant for pure exploration, that some things are just get the paint and throw it against the canvas and do whatever with it.

Versus, I'm going to use a metaphor, if you're painting your house, granted you're not a live-in artist somewhere, you're probably going to paint a wall with one color, and you're not just going to go crazy with that wall. So there might be a right way to paint a house, a room, and a house, whereas there is no right way if you have a canvas, and you're at an art class, and you're playing with colors. When it comes to the body, there are some things that mechanically are more accurate. And this is where ... I'll give one example. Common thought is that when we do any kind of movement, this is old, old exercise physiology teaching, you want to contract your core. Has anybody heard of that? Contract your core when you do a squat, when you do a back extension, when you're walking, when you're lifting weights.

However, and this is a little bit more outside our SBSM scope, if you were to go to a good Feldenkrais practitioner and work with someone to improve your movement, you don't want to contract your core when you're doing anything that involves the back muscles or the leg muscles in standing, squatting, lunging, running. You actually want the belly to be relaxed. Now, if I were to do a crunch or a sit up, or if I was to be on a stool and jump off that stool and brace myself, then there's going to be a contraction of those core muscles front and back.

But again, I like to always say, we go back to the baby. When a little baby is standing again, if you've had the pleasure of watching a little one get up onto their two feet, what does their belly look like? It's big and round. It's got life to it, and they have this perfect spinal curve, and they're balanced on their feet, and they're not contracting their core. They're contracting what's called the anti-gravity muscles. So right now, as I sit here, I'm on a stool. I don't want my belly to be tight. I don't want my genitals to be tight. I want my back muscles to be just working enough to keep myself from falling flat on my face. But if I were to, and you can play with me, if you were to lean back, if you have a chair where you can lean back, immediately my abdominals contract.

What would happen if I didn't contract? Irene would go ... As my dad would say, "Ass over tea kettle," if you know that old saying, right?

And I'm not going to do that, because my brain won't let me. I can go back far, far, far. It's not going to let me fall, right? My hip flexors are working, my leg muscles are working. Just like if I go too far forward here, I've got a microphone here. I'm not going to slam my head on my desk. The back muscles are going to work. So again, this is that potent posture. I encourage you to review the potent posture lesson, because it really, when you get more awareness, you'll feel that subtlety, where there's this sweet spot, where you don't have to contract your belly, and you don't have to contract your back muscles as much, and you just feel, "Ah, it's almost like you're weightless." Now, of course, if you've got some osteoarthritis in a joint, you got a little pain somewhere, you might feel that pain, but it might actually be a little less, because you're not holding yourself up with tension.

And so often we are told, and have been told, "Contract that core to keep your back protected." And this is my speech on sometimes there is a right way. And if we go back to babies, toddlers, animals in the wild, they are not contracting their belly, unless they have to.

All right, next line. Explore, play, and be curious. We already mentioned this. So this idea of play, it could even be what we just did here, I showed you with moving on my stool. That's just a bit of a play. I'm playing with my different body parts. I'm feeling, oh, there's the contraction. Okay. Okay, there. We know that we're often in that nice space when we can breathe fully. So be curious. Make mistakes in your learning. Why is this important? Make mistakes. Make mistakes in your learning. We are meant to make mistakes to learn. The trouble is most of us ... Yeah, they help you learn. Exactly, Justine. We need to make mistakes, so that we know right from wrong. Oh, I shouldn't do that. Oh, this feels better.

And yeah, without shame, of course. And that's why we want to work with the shame pieces, right? All these things. But most of us, I'm making a generalization. We will have grown up in a school system where if we have a mistake, we get in trouble, we get a bad grade, we're judged based on our mistakes, but any good learning environment allows for mistakes. But eventually, of course, you want to get better at something, but the mistakes should teach us. So for our

context here in SBSM, if, say, we're working on neuromodulation, we're learning how to regulate our system. Maybe a mistake is, "Oh, I did a little bit too much yesterday. I felt, got some good energy." Maybe you're working on healing chronic fatigue, and you thought you could just do that one more thing. Just going to do that one more chore, that one more thing, and then the next day you feel it.

I made a mistake. I did too much. Just make it neutral. Then the next day you don't do as much, or the next time you have those things to do, you learn. You've got to learn from the mistakes we make. And the next word, this comes into what Bonnie said about shame. You won't die. And that is essentially why many of us will not push the envelope a little bit, because in the past when we did make a mistake, first of all, no one here did die, because you're here. I know that's literal, but when you're little, it feels like death.

When you are shamed, when you're punished, when you're sent to go to your room, all these things. When you're ridiculed in front of your classmates, when the teacher calls out your grade, we had a teacher do that in grade seven, six, and five. He would literally tell the whole class what the grade was, and if it was bad. I can't believe I just remembered this. When it was a bad grade, because we were in French, he would say mauvais, for those who know French, you know what I'm about to say? Nouvelles. So he trained us. This is a true story. When it was a bad grade, he would pick up the paper and go, mauvais, and everybody in the class would repeat the word nouvelles. Bad news - was the weirdest experience. This was the '80s. Lots of weird stuff happened. But if it was good, it was fun, good nouvelles.

And it was a very weird time. But I share that because I can almost guarantee you there will have been some kids in that class who still to this day are not okay with mistakes, because they attached to that stupid teacher in his weird ways.

And so I share that because - is there something in your past, and you'll have to maybe dig deep for this, or maybe you know where mistakes were not allowed, and punishment occurred. I see some people nodding, and you've got to really be, like, " Ah, that was back

then. And now I'm here and I'm choosing different paths." And this is where the Feldenkrais, again, this handout is about Feldenkrais and learning and intentional movement. That's why the lessons are so important, the neurosensory exercises. It is a canvas to make a mistake. Mess up. Oops, I did too much. Oh gosh, I held my breath. Isn't that interesting? You hold your breath, big whoop. It doesn't matter. You notice that you held your breath, and then it's not even about being kind to yourself. It's just, "Okay, let's try that again." Just like if you're teaching a child something, "Oops, you did that wrong."

"Let's try again." That's literally the energy you want with it. There's no good job and there's no bad job. It's just neutral. Let's try again. And so that's the mindset we want to work with when we're doing a lot of these lessons. Let's just try again. Let's try it again. All right. final couple of quotes here. These are just from books that I like, and I felt when I read them that they worked really well with the Feldenkraisian learning. So this is from a book called Mastery from a gentleman named George Leonard. So he says in his book, "Actually, the essence of boredom is to be found in the obsessive search for novelty."

"Satisfaction lies in mindful repetition, the discovery of endless richness in subtle variations on familiar themes." I'm just going to read that again, because it feels extra important today. So have a listen. Really listen. The essence of boredom is to be found in the obsessive search for novelty. Satisfaction lies in mindful repetition, the discovery of endless richness in subtle variations on familiar themes. So this is kind of like the "chop wood, carry water" old proverb. This is, to use an 80s reference, wax on, wax off - Karate Kid. Paint the fence, scrub the deck, wax the car. You have to do that over and over again before you get to learn the fancy moves, right? This repetitive mindful discovery of one thing. That's why I repeat this over and over again. Go back to the first lessons, go back to the first orienting lesson, go back to the first biology of stress lessons.

And then the final one here, this is a book, more of a business book, from Ryan Holiday. He's a bit more of a philosopher in some ways. He says, "Deep complex work is built through a relentless, repetitive process of revisitation." So, revisiting familiar themes.

And yeah, novelty is important, but how can we find novelty in the same thing? How can we see? It's kind of a cliché, but stop and smell the roses. Does anybody do that? Why do you still do that? You know what it smells like. Seems silly, but you do because it's nice. It's simple. It's the same reason you might go and watch the sunset. Why bother? You know what it looks like? Why go out and look at the trees and see the wind? Again, it's this repetition of familiar pieces, but how are you in that moment? How are you sensing it? How are you feeling it? All these pieces. Yeah, we never step into the same river twice. There's so many proverbs and examples and stories. So again, this whole call was in service of Feldenkrais and learning.

It is the glue that sticks all the other lessons together. SBSM would not be SBSM if it wasn't for Dr. Feldenkrais's work. And of course that element of how we experience the lessons that are more theoretical but in an experienced way. Learning how to orient by guiding and hearing, learning how to sense the diaphragms, the joints, the layers of the body. That is all directed through the principles of the Feldenkraisian learning methods of paying attention, noticing, slowing down. So I just can't recommend enough to keep thinking about how neuroplasticity is built in a positive way by this repetition, by practice, by doing, by action.

So treat the lessons like a practice, but also treat them, as I mentioned at the beginning, as a way to integrate into other things in life. So your homework is to revisit something that you haven't done in a while. That could be one of our lessons here, or it could be something you haven't done in a while. In your home, it could be an art form. It could be a movement. What's something that you haven't cooked in a long time? We tend to get into habits when we go to the grocery store. Yeah, we get the same thing every single time. Get something different. Go into a different cafe, experience a different environment. As I mentioned, smile to someone that you don't know. Granted, it feels safe to do so. Compliment someone on something that kind of looks interesting. Don't do it because you're being told to do it.

Do it because there's an interest in something. So these are the little sparks of how to start to bring the social engagement, the orienting, the noticing out into the world. So that is your mission between now and forever. But we will do a call next week, and obviously Seth will be

on the Q&A on Thursday. Thanks, Susan, for being here. Thanks, Carie, for the Feldenkrais support. Carie is another Feldenkrais practitioner in our team, and we'll talk to you all later. Next week we'll be talking about integration and application. So, more of today, but more examples on neuroplastic healing sequencing. Bye, everyone.