



A topic for discussion at the IFF assembly (without a vote):

Alternative Pathway for becoming a Trainer

Introduction

The Guidelines (criteria for trainer candidacy, tag 2, part b) say:

“Alternative Ways - the TABs are open to alternate ways for becoming a trainer, that provide support, supervision, and demonstration of competencies. The TAB may require more detailed information, and other criteria, deemed relevant to the candidates competency to be a trainer”.

This provision suggests that the policy-makers, at that time, recognized that not all talented and accomplished practitioners would be able or willing to proceed towards trainer level through the ‘default path’ (of first ‘assistant trainer’, then ‘trainer candidate’). Over the years this provision has not been realized, maybe because the community is not aware of this alternative path or because it lacks the belief that, stepping out of the given path would be considered seriously, by the TABs.

The EuroTAB feels committed to design such an alternative pathway for becoming a trainer, because it is convinced that this would serve the community and the future practitioners.

Rationale

1. Establishing an alternative pathway [abbreviated: AP] may be attractive for outstanding practitioners who have devoted their talents to establishing the Feldenkrais Method (FM) in society and to the development of the Feldenkrais community, without having spent time in the pedagogical system as experienced practitioners or assistant trainers [AT]s. Such practitioners are, in fact, a valuable inspiration for students at the start of their journey with the FM, and should be able, if they wish, to contribute to Feldenkrais Professional Training Programmes.

2. It is rather likely that that practitioners within the community, who have grown in understanding and experience over the span of a rich career, at some point may wish to join the educational system, but would be disinclined to start as an AT, before becoming a trainer candidate, and so on. We think of practitioners who have developed and established the FM within an existing, incumbent recognized discipline, such as higher education institutions, health, or alternative health organizations, arts, etc.

Or simply a practitioner who has contributed significantly to the advancement of certified practitioners and enjoys the recognition of the community for these contributions.

3. Another consideration is that in some cases there are circumstantial limitations that may prohibit talented teachers in the community to undertake the current established pathway. Here too it would be in the interest of the FM to find possible ways that enable them to become trainers.

4. Developing an AP will offer opportunities for those in the community who by nature do not fit the present ‘mould’, yet exhibit undeniable leadership qualities in areas of the FM.

5. Establishing an alternative way for becoming a trainer will boost the creativity amongst Feldenkrais practitioners. It will recognize that a high level of practice and implementation of the FM is not exclusively attainable by learning from ATs and Trainers but can be attained by creative individual growth within the method.

Further considerations

6. With the advancement of technology and video filming, ways can be found for applicants to exhibit their work for evaluation, without the mentorship structure, as it is currently practiced for ATs. Mentorship is a powerful and valuable way for an applicant to grow in awareness, and to become a skillful trainer, but there is no reason for stating that it is the only possible way, as it is in the current situation.

7. Once the community recognizes the concept of an alternative pathway, the same rationale can be applied for developing alternative ways for recognition of competences of practitioners outside of the pedagogical system. Skilled practitioners 'teach' Feldenkrais under different titles; it would be valuable to develop 'titles' that recognize such excelling and leading practitioners.

8. This alternative pathway will be based on assessing competences [see the text of the Guidelines, quoted at the beginning], rather than counting training and teaching days. This pathway will contribute to a more competency- and portfolio-based approach of assessment, which will create the conceptual space for opening up the structure and content of the Feldenkrais trainings (FPTPs).

In conclusion

If the need for an alternative way is recognized by the Feldenkrais community, the TABs will develop and agree upon the criteria for the evaluation and assessment of the applications.

Author:

EuroTAB, February 2014