

## **The Israeli Feldenkrais Guild (IFG)**

A few years ago the *Israeli Feldenkrais Guild* formulated its vision in a two-fold way: the **vision outwards** and the **vision inwards**. The vision outwards dealt with our efforts to make the *Feldenkrais Method* available and accessible to everyone in the country, preferably through the educational and public health systems as well as through actively advertising the method and its benefits to the public at large. The vision inwards had to do with our own practitioners' community, its welfare, its professional development and its interpersonal relations.

Having established this VISION has made our choice of activities easier and clearer, as they are practically derived from the said *vision*. Alas, the Guild's activities are quite limited due to the relatively small budget available.

Moshe Feldenkrais completed his first training in 1969 in Tel Aviv, with 13 graduates. Some of them further assisted him in San Francisco and Amherst. The first training was in 1986, after Moshe's death in 1984 and the Israeli Guild was established in 1990. So far we've had some 30 training courses. Currently, we count 1,200 graduates, out of which 700 work as practitioners and 300 are members of the Israeli Guild. This means one teacher per 10,000 Israeli citizens.

Practitioners in Israel work in a self-employed capacity in private studios, hospitals, recreation centers, schools, community centers, etc. Our website is well known to the general public and people use it for the monthly lessons, for finding a practitioner and joining the practitioner's forum.

### **Following is a brief summary of our recent activities:**

#### One to five day workshops

These workshops are generally given by trainers from Israel and from abroad. The workshops are open to FM practitioners as well as to final year students. We usually plan on 7 such workshops a year in different locations so that practitioners from all over the country can easily attend.

#### Monthly Get-togethers

These are 4-6 hour meetings, which usually take place on Fridays. We encourage our members to come for a get-together followed by a lecture on a related subject and an ATM given by trainer or an assistant. The meetings are held once a month alternating between Tel Aviv and Haifa. Lectures on related subjects, like the one on *Breathing and Motion* were attended by many practitioners as well as students.

#### Annual Conference

This is open to all practitioners, both members and non-members, as well as to students, spouses and other interested professionals. We normally define the main axis around which the conference is designed. The conference is planned for a long weekend. The most recent conference was held in a Kibbutz hotel located on the Sea of Galilee last January, with an attendance of some 250 people.

#### Competency Profile

Workshops continue to be held in order to make the concept more widely known among practitioners.

#### Regional Study Groups

One of the outcomes of the Competency Project has been the formation of regional study groups. These groups were formed with the support of the facilitators who had been trained in Germany and are running now on their own, meeting once a month in a different location within that particular region. Participants alternate in conducting the meetings which include an ATM, lesson analysis and anatomical understanding.

## Books

The IFG has undertaken the task of reprinting Moshe's books. The old books are scanned and digitally printed. The newly printed books are made available to practitioners, students and bookshops.

We also offer CD sales and distribution of the Alexander Yanai materials.

## The Annual IFF Assembly

This year's IFF Assembly was held in Israel. The Israeli Guild hosted the conference in Kibbutz Tzuba on the Jerusalem mountain ridge, with 33 delegates from throughout the world.

The theme of this gathering was looking at the timeline of the *Feldenkrais Method* and Moshe's life. This was presented in a day trip by participants to the places where he lived, worked and died. At every stop people who knew him personally shared stories of his life. The whole gathering was to some extent a spiritual experience (aside from being held in Jerusalem), and we all felt as if Moshe was sharing the journey, helping us raise some important issues for further discussion.

The IFG also presented a systems analysis of the *Feldenkrais Method* and its educational system to benefit the future of the practice (see below).

## Present and future tasks

We are currently looking into setting guidelines to a complete educational program starting from the Basic training and continuing with an advanced Masters training. This Masters training will add knowledge and depth needed in order for practitioners to become assistants, trainers, stage program coaches, research specialists and advanced professional supervisors. This unique training will probably be the starting point for all higher ranks of the practice.

We hope that such a complete educational program will grant us easier access to the public higher education system and will promote qualitative and quantitative research through thesis works at the different levels of the educational program.

We are continuing with articles, social media, TV, radio, etc. in order to be more present in the public image regarding all of the different benefits of the practice.

## Israeli Guild Board Members

Ramona Dekel - Chair

Ilan Katz – Vice Chair

Gili Perry - Workshops and annual gathering

Khen Hershkovitz - Strategies and international activities

Daphna Graber - Treasurer

Grasiela Rosenfeld (participating non-member) - Website, books and seminars

Etti Lilti - Guild Secretary