



THE WELLNESS SALON

Musings on wellness from Donna Simmons, Feldenkrais® practitioner

No. 4 May 21, 2014

A Session

I am often asked what actually happens in a Feldenkrais session. While I am a certified practitioner of the Feldenkrais Method®, I also integrate other modalities, depending on your needs. In fact my sessions are usually tailored to the requirements of the individual at the moment in time that they present themselves in my office, regardless of what we had been working on in a previous session, what my session notes may indicate, etc. A “typical” session does not exist. Nevertheless, what follows is a representative description of how my practice works for new clients.

Usually phone or email is the first point of contact and I generally begin, whether by phone or return email, by asking a few questions to ascertain whether my skills and knowledge base are appropriate for the problem(s) presented. I am generally trying to rule out something that may require a medical diagnosis or that is clearly not within my scope. I refer to this as checking to see whether we are a good fit.

From the moment you present yourself at my office reception, I am observing how you carry yourself (this does not lend itself to simple description) and of course your general presentation. I’ll often begin by asking you a lot of questions, some logistical and some more directed to find out how you live your life, including what types of physical activities you like to engage in, what position you generally assume for sleep (“all” is a common answer), and of course I ask you to tell me why you have come to see me. This history, or intake, provides the basis for our ongoing work. I always ask if you have any questions for me (if I do not, please remind me); usually you’ll want to know exactly what you are in for, which is reasonable. At this juncture I will provide a brief description of the Feldenkrais Method®, of how I might integrate other modalities in our work, and I generally include a gentle reminder that no one knows more about you than you do and that you are always in charge when it comes to the actual hands-on table work.

Next I will lead you through a body scan; a way for you to become aware of how you are organized (again, not something I can easily explain here) so that you can make a comparison at the end of the session. Time on my table should not be stressful. Your position on the table, the manner in which I support you with bolsters and pillows, should and generally does produce a sensation of relaxation. Through my hands, I “listen” to the activity or work of the muscles and the associated soft tissue as well as look for movement patterns. Using gentle and targeted manipulations, I can both “hear” and see what is going on as well as introduce new information. We may talk during this part of the session; generally it’s best if you are focused on the work, however. At the end of table work (typically about 45 minutes or so) I review any movement explorations that I would like you to continue with on your own. Once you come to standing I invite you to make a comparison of your pre- and post-session organization. I answer any questions, we make a game plan for future sessions as required, and I generally follow up by email with a session recap.

So that’s a typical beginning. Curious? Wondering whether this could work for you? Call or email me. Taking that first step is the best way to find out.

Namaste, Donna