

CREATIVITY: A JOY RIDE DRAFT
by Angel Di Benedetto

I was most fortunate as a child to express myself creatively. As a toddler, my father, a painting contractor, often took me along on his jobs. Sometimes, he'd let me draw on his customers' walls before applying paint or wallpaper. Having the permission to express myself freely was a strong foundation in my artistic development, one that I later discovered could easily give way under pressure.

When I entered a school system where teachers had no particular interest in encouraging any originality, I began feeling shy, defeated and afraid to take risks. This took a toll on my inner artistic life. By the time I reached my teens, I found myself plummeting into a creative void.

As I reflect back, in spite of these trials and tribulations, this period of my life was a key incentive that would catapult me into a very exciting, satisfying discipline, the Feldenkrais Method®. Adopting the work of Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais was the catalyst needed to gain back the self-confidence I held as a youth, painting spontaneously on blank walls. What were the factors in my *Feldenkrais* experience that would eventually lead me back to my creativity?

I believe that the *Feldenkrais Method* enhances ingenuity because it motivates us to orient more towards our process than our goals. We learn to make distinctions based on current feelings and sensations, rather than accessing interpretations accumulated from past experiences. We don't necessarily know where the process will go-which takes us into newer experiences and we thence feel more alive.

Creativity comes from within. It is not something we shop for, go to school for, and it certainly doesn't land on the doorstep of only the lucky! Furthermore, creativity doesn't go away, we don't lose it as if misplacing a set of keys. We can however lose sight of it, clouds cover over things.

For my own clarity over a decade ago, I began exploring the parallels

between art expression and the creative process as a metaphor to the comprehension of the *Feldenkrais Method*. I created workshops throughout the world where participants would shift back and forth from the *Feldenkrais Method* to painting, starting with tiny drawings on small pieces of paper, leading to broader strokes on life-sized canvasses.

Participants soon began to recognize similar issues and behaviors in both practices, i.e., with Feldenkrais, we learn to continually choose better options through movement. If we push, force, or ignore our own pace, we are leaving parts of ourselves behind which solicits various forms of frustration. If we listen, perceive, imagine, breathe, etc., we evoke a more global use of ourselves which elicits new patterns of action.

This can solicit various forms of frustration. If we listen, perceive, imagine, breathe, etc., we evoke a more global use of ourselves which elicits new patterns of action. The same holds true in painting, playing an instrument, gardening or anything else we truly engage in.

From being a part of his training program, my sense is that Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais never set out in the world with the intention of people copying his work, for the path he chose was his own creative process. He often said, "Don't DO me, DO you. Reinvent the work for yourselves, develop your own handwriting."

I truly believe that Moshe's wish was for all mankind to utilize the *Feldenkrais Method* as a means to discover ones hopes and dreams...and become more functional in manifesting them.