

Manifesto: Us Too

Us Too - The #metoo Movement & Mature Behavior: A Call for Transparency, Action and Accountability in The Feldenkrais World

We, the Undersigned, have experienced, witnessed or have been informed of harassment and abusive behavior in Feldenkrais® Training Programs and Advanced Trainings by both teaching and administrative staff members and visiting practitioners (EDs, Trainers, Assistant Trainers, Practitioner Assistants and/or experienced Practitioners), which has negatively impacted students and staff members on many levels. Some events are recent, others date back more than 35 years. Abusive behavior has been tolerated, dismissed, minimized, ignored, negated, covered up, and its seriousness disregarded by the leaders of the Feldenkrais Community for decades. This behavior and complicity is unacceptable.

These incidents have had a destructive impact on many: on their physical and mental health, their self-image, their career and finances, their sexuality, their personal and family relationships and their compassion for and sense of pride and trust in The Feldenkrais Method and its leaders.

To the victims of abusive behavior in Feldenkrais Training Programs: You are not alone. Find the courage to speak. Don't allow fear or shame to prevent you from speaking up and speaking out now. Your story is important. What happened to you matters. Your voice can become part of our collective healing, as well as your own.

To those who have witnessed abusive behavior in Feldenkrais Training Programs: You are not alone. Don't allow fear to prevent you from speaking now. Overcome your shame, fear or embarrassment about not speaking up in the past. Stand with the victim. Please articulate what you have witnessed.

To those who have or are currently covering other's abusive behavior: Don't be complicit any longer. Do not continue to fear consequences of being honest as limiting your career opportunities. Stand with the victims. Say what you know. Be part of the solution to this systemic problem, rather than a collaborator and an accomplice. It's never too late to do the right thing.

To the perpetrators who have abused their power, whether sexually, emotionally, psychologically, physically, or otherwise: It is time to be accountable and to accept the consequences of your behavior. Take this seriously. Listen. Face what you and others have done, and become aware of the impacts your actions have had on each individual victim's life and career. It is never too late to apologize, and to make sincere efforts to amend past behaviors.

Let us truly honor the truth of our Method, not its misuse.

"What I'm after is to restore each person to their human dignity." Moshe Feldenkrais

SIGNATORIES: Please insert your name in alphabetical order, add your credentials and country.

Signed:

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 Stephen Cheslett-Davey, BSc Physiotherapy, GCFP, United Kingdom
 Melinda Glenister, GCFP, United Kingdom
 Cheryl Hertzog, GCFP, U.S.A.
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 Suzanne Kronisch, LCFP, GCAT, U.S.A.
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Kim Wise, BSc., Dip Phys., MIT, GCFP, Australia

Additional pages of signatures to be appended

CREDENTIAL KEY

BSc = Bachelor of Science
CFT = Certified Feldenkrais Trainer
Dip Phys = Diploma of Physiotherapy
ED = Educational Director
FPTP = Feldenkrais Professional Training Program
GCAT = Guild Certified Assistant Trainer
GCFP = Guild Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner
JKA = Jeremy Krauss Approach
LCFP = Lifetime Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner
MBSP = Mind Body Studies Practitioner
MIT = Movement Intelligence Trainer
ND = Naturopathic Doctor

To the International Feldenkrais Federation Assembly May 2018

To the elected representatives of the Feldenkrais Community: We ask that you do everything in your power to adopt and implement an effective 'Zero Tolerance' policy on abusive behavior in Feldenkrais Training Programs and in practicing the Feldenkrais Method.

We propose the inclusion of new language in current Standards of Practice and Code of Professional Conduct; comprehensive training on Workplace Harassment in its various forms as it affects students and training staff; clearly communicated pathways to file grievances; close monitoring and censure of known abusers; clearly delineated legal, financial and professional consequences for those found to be in violation of said policy, including, when necessary, their decertification and removal from power, and an absolute commitment on the part of the organizational bodies to uphold the true meaning of a Guild:

- . *"An organization of persons with related interests, goals, etc., especially one formed for mutual aid or protection... organized to maintain standards and to protect the interests of its members..."*

Please accept the accompanying manifesto and its signatories as evidence that members of the Feldenkrais community are determined that abuse of power no longer be tolerated.

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How NATAB Has Been Responding to Complaints – see the following letter and the links for FGNA policies regarding standards, code of conduct, complaints and grievances. (If links in letter do not work on your computer, scroll down and copy/paste links at end of document.)

March 6, 2018

The North American Training Accreditation Board (NATAB) wants to bring you up to date about how we respond to complaints and issues.

As fellow *Feldenkrais*® practitioners, we share a deep commitment to the integrity and respect that is a foundation of the *Feldenkrais* work. NATAB's job within that is to help ensure good quality educational programs and processes in *Feldenkrais* Professional Training Programs.

Having strong and effective ways to bring forward and deal with complaints is a key part of our profession. NATAB's role within that is to receive and address complaints related to the behavior of educational staff, the learning environment and the educational process. FGNA also has an ethics and grievance process in place to deal with ethics complaints.

NATAB appreciates that our inability to communicate about the status of complaints can be challenging and frustrating for those who want to know more. However, this is "the nature of the beast" in order to respect the legal constraints and required confidentiality in our work.

As an update, NATAB has followed up on every official complaint that it has received. The NATAB process respects the complainant and the person against whom the complaint has been made, which is an important hallmark of fair and due process in our society.

We have been actively involved in taking care of issues as they have arisen, and this continues to this day.

NATAB and the FGNA Board of Directors (Board) are in the process of reviewing and updating their policies. Here is a short summary of recent work to ensure our policies and standards are up to date.

Two steps have been taken recently to improve and clarify how complaints will be received and addressed:

- In December 2017, the Board approved the **Process for Reviewing Complaints to NATAB**. This formalizes the process for how NATAB receives and addresses complaints related to training accreditation, including complaints related to the educational environment and educational program in accredited *Feldenkrais* trainings.
- In January 2018 the Board approved an updated **Grievance Protocol** to deal with ethics complaints related to the FGNA Code of Professional Conduct and Standards of Practice. NATAB works with decisions from the grievance process. As stated in the Grievance Protocol, "FGNA has no tolerance for practices and behaviors which are deemed unacceptable."

Here are some other key policies that inform NATAB's work, that you may want to look at:

- The FGNA **Code of Professional Conduct** is clear that discrimination, harassment (including but not limited to sexual harassment), and other unacceptable behaviors are not tolerated within the *Feldenkrais* profession. In 2016 NATAB recommended changes which are now in place, so that it is clear that the Code applies to all teaching and administrative staff of accredited *Feldenkrais* training programs as well as to all *Feldenkrais* practitioners.
- All *Guild Certified Feldenkrais Practitioners*(cm) also agree, as part of their FGNA certification, to follow the *Feldenkrais Method*® of Somatic Education **Standards of Practice**.
- The expected knowledge and abilities of Trainers in accredited *Feldenkrais* training programs are outlined in the Trainer competencies that are found in the FGNA **Guidelines for Certification as a Feldenkrais Trainer**.

All of these elements are intended to work together to help support an environment and experience that is safe and professional for all of us.

Thank you.



Bonnie Humiston, NATAB Chair

NATAB members:

Bonnie Humiston (Chair)
Elizabeth Beringer
Olena Nitefor
Anna Johnson-Chase
Donna Simmons
Violet van Hees
David Zemach-Bersin

LINKS

Process for Reviewing Complaints to NATAB:

<http://www.feldenkraisguild.com/Files/natab-complaint-process-20171226.pdf>

Grievance Protocol:

https://www.feldenkraisguild.com/Files/E2.3.3.3_Grievance_Protocol_01-27-2018.pdf

Code of Professional Conduct:

<https://www.feldenkraisguild.com/Files/code-of-conduct-20170418.pdf>

FGNA *Feldenkrais Method* Standards of Practice:

<https://www.feldenkraisguild.com/Files/download/resources/CO5SOP2007.pdf>

Guidelines for Certification as a *Feldenkrais* Trainer:

<https://www.feldenkraisguild.com/Files/trainer-cert-streamlined-20150713.pdf>

Feldenkrais Guild® of North America
E2.2.1.16 Process for Reviewing Complaints to NATAB

1. Complaints related to training accreditation shall be directed to natab@feldenkraisguild.com
2. The NATAB representative shall respond, requesting permission to share the complaint with those within FGNA who will process the complaint, with Ethics Committee (if applicable), and with the respondent.
3. The NATAB representative shall forward complaints with ethics allegations to the Ethics Committee, if permission has been granted by complainant.
4. NATAB members and staff shall review complaints regarding behavior of educational staff, learning environment and educational process.
5. NATAB shall forward the complaint to the respondent if permission has been granted, and shall offer the respondent an opportunity to respond to the complaint.
6. NATAB members and staff shall prepare a report with following information:
 - a. Date reported
 - b. Complainant name
 - c. Complaint type
 - i. Ethics (referred to Ethics Committee)
 - ii. Training accreditation policy
 - iii. Trainer competency (no longer functioning at Trainer level)
 - iv. Other
 - d. Date of incidence
 - e. Requesting Confidentiality?
 - f. Overview (factual information only)
 - g. Complainant requested action
 - h. Respondent response, if applicable
7. NATAB members and staff shall discuss the report and prepare recommendation for NATAB and/or Board of Directors (Board) action (for any decisions that NATAB thinks ought to be made but does not have the specific authority):
 - a. Recommended action for issues related to performance of educational staff.
 - b. Recommended action for issues related to the continuity of the training process and location, so that trainees may complete training on schedule, without change in city.
8. Report and recommendation shall be shared with FGNA attorney.
9. Attorney will review recommendation and provide feedback to NATAB, Board and Ethics Committee, if applicable.
10. NATAB shall revise recommendation per attorney advice, if applicable.
11. NATAB shall provide recommendation to the respondent. If the respondent accepts the recommendation, the matter shall be closed.
12. If the respondent does not accept the recommendation, NATAB shall forward the recommendation to the Board.
13. The Board shall review the recommendation.
14. The Board shall provide the respondent an opportunity to participate in a hearing.
15. The Board shall hold a hearing, if requested by the respondent.

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E2.2.1.16 Process for Reviewing Complaints to NATAB

16. The Board shall decide what action to take on the NATAB recommendation.
17. The Board of Directors reserves the right to adjust the process as necessary to protect the interests of some or all of the parties involved.
18. The Board of Directors reserves the right to impose an immediate temporary suspension of accreditation or trainer/asst certification, or Educational Director status, if harm to trainees, public, or the good name or good will of FGNA is endangered.

Date adopted: December 26, 2017 by FGNA Board of Directors

Policy E2.3.3.3 - Grievance Protocol

The Feldenkrais Guild of North America (**FGNA**) is strongly committed to preserving the ethical standards, professional practices, and behaviors of its Practitioners, Teachers, Trainers, Assistant Trainers, Training Staff, and Membership (hereafter referred to as **Members**). The FGNA Board of Directors (**Board**) has the fiduciary responsibility of upholding these statutes .

These statutes are specifically defined in but not limited to two (2) FGNA Policies (**Policies**):

- E2.3.2.1 - **The Feldenkrais Method of Somatic Education Standards of Practice**
- E2.3.3.2 - **Code of Professional Conduct**

A. GENERAL STATEMENTS:

1. This Protocol sets forth the grievance process which will be adhered to when an unacceptable ethical impropriety of the Policies may have occurred.
2. FGNA has no tolerance for practices and behaviors which are deemed unacceptable.
3. When practical, individuals are encouraged to first speak directly to those with whom they have ethical concerns to facilitate a resolution without recourse.
4. In this Protocol the term 'days' are defined as 'calendar days'.

B. COMPLAINT INITIATION:

1. A complaint can be filed by any person (hereafter identified as the **Complainant**) against any Member (hereafter identified as the **Respondent**).
2. A complaint must be made in writing.
3. A complaint must be factual and refer to a specific practice or behavior as outlined in the Policies, must not be comprised of gossip, and must contain contact information for the Complainant and Respondent.
4. A complaint must be sent via U.S. Mail, Certified with a return receipt requested, to the following address:
Ethics Committee
Feldenkrais Guild of North America
401 Edgewater Place, Suite 600
Wakefield, MA 01880
5. Any follow-up correspondence from the Complainant should be sent via U.S. Mail, Certified with a return receipt requested.

C. COMPLAINT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

1. A receipt will be generated and sent by FGNA Headquarters to the Complainant and a copy of this Protocol will be included.
2. The Complainant will be asked for permission to share the complaint with the Respondent. When a response is received from the Complainant, the complaint and the response will be forwarded to the Ethics Committee Chair.
3. If the Complainant does not grant permission to share a copy of the complaint with the Respondent, FGNA will be limited in its ability to take action and will not be able to follow this Protocol. The Ethics Committee Chair may take action as directed by the Board.

D. ETHICS COMMITTEE DUE DILIGENCE:

1. **Following receipt of a complaint:**

Policy E2.3.3.3 - Grievance Protocol

- 1.1. The Ethics Committee Chair will send a copy of the complaint to the Respondent, if the Complainant has given such permission. The Respondent will be given fifteen (15) days from the date of the notification to submit a response in writing to the Ethics Committee Chair.
 - 1.2. The Ethics Committee Chair will forward the complaint and response to the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee will convene to discuss the complaint and the response.
 - 1.3. If circumstances or additional information are identified which warrants an immediate temporary suspension of the Respondent, the Ethics Committee Chair will recommend this action to the Board.
 - 1.4. If the Ethics Committee has reason to believe a complaint requires legal advice prior to proceeding, the Ethics Committee Chair will make the request to the Board Chair.
 - 1.5. If a Respondent's FGNA membership or certification renewal date is within thirty (30) days of a written complaint, the Ethics Committee can recommend an immediate temporary suspension of the renewal to the Board.
 - 1.6. A complaint may be completely withdrawn for any reason when requested in writing by the Complainant.
 - 1.7. If the Ethics Committee determines there has been no material violation to the Policies, the Complainant and Respondent will be informed.
 - 1.8. If the Ethics Committee determines the complaint, if true, would constitute a violation to the Policies:
 - 1.8.1. The Ethics Committee Chair will notify the Respondent of the Policy section which may have been violated and his opportunity to request a Hearing..
 - 1.8.2. If the Respondent requests a Hearing, a date will be established by the Ethics Committee Chair. The Respondent will be notified of the date of the Hearing by the Ethics Committee Chair.
2. **If a Hearing is requested:**
- 2.1. The Ethics Committee will conduct the proceedings.
 - 2.2. The Hearing will be conducted via telephone.
 - 2.3. The Respondent may choose to participate, be afforded up to 30 minutes to address the complaint, and may be represented by legal counsel.
 - 2.4. Complaints involving the same or similar conduct may be combined into one (1) Hearing.
3. **Ethics Committee determination:**
- 3.1. Following the Hearing, the Ethics Committee will determine the appropriate Disciplinary Action which may include any of the following conclusions:
 - 3.1.1. **REPRIMAND:** The Respondent will immediately be placed on probation for a defined period of time, of not more than one (1) year. This action will allow the Respondent to initiate a course correction. During this time period, the Respondent may continue to possess the full benefits of being FGNA certified. The Ethics Committee will convene at the end of the probation to determine if probation should be ended.
 - 3.1.2. **SUSPENSION:** Respondent will immediately be suspended for a defined

Policy E2.3.3.3 - Grievance Protocol

period of time, of not less than one (1) year, and must comply with specific corrective actions before the suspended rights are restored. The Ethics Committee will convene at the end of the suspension to determine if suspension should be ended. During the suspension period, the Respondent may not:

- 3.1.2.1. advertise using their FGNA membership I.D. number, certification or logo,
- 3.1.2.2. use their FGNA membership I.D. number or certification in any other way to promote themselves,
- 3.1.2.3. in any way identify themselves as being an FGNA member or FGNA certified.

3.1.3. **INDEFINITE SUSPENSION:** The Respondent will immediately be suspended for an undefined period of time. The Ethics Committee will convene at the end of the suspension to determine if suspension should be ended. During the suspension period, the Respondent may not:

- 3.1.3.1. advertise using their FGNA membership I.D. number, certification or logo,
- 3.1.3.2. use their FGNA membership I.D. number or certification in any other way to promote themselves,
- 3.1.3.3. in any way identify themselves as being an FGNA member or FGNA certified.

3.1.4. **EXPULSION and REVOCATION:** The Respondent's membership I.D. number along with any and all certifications will be completely revoked.

- 3.2. If the proposed action is expulsion or removal of certification, it must be confirmed by the Board before the Respondent is notified.
- 3.3. The Ethics Committee Chair will notify the Board of Directors Chair of the Ethics Committee's finding.
- 3.4. The Ethics Committee Chair will notify the Respondent of the Ethics Committee's finding, in writing via U.S. Mail, Certified with a return receipt requested.
- 3.5. The Respondent will be afforded fifteen (15) days from the date of the notification letter to appeal the Ethics Committee's finding. The Respondent's appeal must be made in writing and addressed to the Board of Directors Chair, sent via U.S. Mail, Certified with a return receipt requested.

4. Appeal to the Board of Directors:

- 4.1. If a timely appeal is received by the Board of Directors Chair, the Board of Directors will determine, based on written material provided by the Complaint and Respondent to the Ethics Committee, whether to affirm or amend the decision of the Ethics Committee. The Board may also consider input from the Chair of the Ethics Committee. The Respondent will be notified by the Board of Directors Chair of the decision of the Board.

5. Public notification:

- 5.1. The Disciplinary Actions of suspension and expulsion will be published on the FGNA websites citing the Member's first and last name, FGNA I.D. Number, City and State of Member, and date of the action.

Policy E2.3.3.3 Revised January 27, 2018. Adopted by the Executive Committee January 29, 2018

FELDENKRAIS GUILD® of North America

E2.3.3.2 CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

This Code of Professional Conduct describes how we, as *Feldenkrais*® Practitioners/Teachers, and Trainers, Assistant Trainers and Training staff, relate to our clientele and students, and trainees over the course of a *Feldenkrais* Training Program, our peers, and other professional people. We agree to:

1. Keep the welfare and needs of the client/student foremost in our minds in our professional practice.
2. Create a safe environment:
 - a. do no injury or harm to any individual.
 - b. do not create an unreasonable risk of any individual being harmed.
3. Protect confidentiality of any conversation between us and the client/student.
4. Do no physical insult or sexual misuse of any person who may be considered as under our professional influence including any sexual relationship with a student/client or trainee over the course of their *Feldenkrais* Training Program:
 - a. neither *Functional Integration*® nor *Awareness Through Movement*® involves the client/student's disrobing.
 - b. The practitioner guides the individual's awareness through hands-on movement, touching the head, neck, shoulder girdle, rib cage, pelvis, legs, arms, hands, and feet, in the context of the professional relationship in the lesson.
5. Respect the legal and civil rights of any person.
6. Refer clients/students to physicians and other professionals as needed and/or indicated.
7. Represent ourselves clearly, objectively, and honestly with regard to training and experience:
 - a. inform clients/students as to fees and conditions of work, expected duration, and results.
 - b. describe ourselves as teachers of movement and awareness using the *Feldenkrais Method*® and clearly state when we are teaching by this Method and when we are not.
8. Be honest in all dealings, professional and otherwise.
9. Do no fraud or misrepresentation in any business or professional activity.
10. Do no practice under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance.
11. Cooperate fully in the event of any grievance, whether or not we are directly involved:
 - a. reasonably respond to inquiries, furnishing papers and explanations as requested.
 - b. follow the result of a grievance procedure, as agreed.
 - c. Do not interfere with investigation of any grievance proceeding by misrepresenting facts or by threatening or harassing anyone involved.
12. Establish cooperative professional relationships with other practitioners and other professions.

E2.3.3.2 CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

FELDENKRAIS GUILD® of North America**E2.3.3.2 CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT****Additional Requirements for all Teaching and Administrative Staff of Accredited *Feldenkrais* Training Programs**

It is the expectation of FGNA that the entire staff, contract workers and volunteers of accredited Feldenkrais training programs will uphold the highest standards of ethical and professional behavior.

1. All teaching and administrative staff in Feldenkrais Training Programs accredited by FGNA shall respect and maintain confidentiality and privacy of information for all trainees and staff of the training program. Within this context, information may be shared among staff members on a professional “need to know” basis.
2. All teaching and administrative staff shall refrain from:
 - a. Behavior that is disrespectful of others.
 - b. Unprofessional behavior that interferes with the working and learning environment.
 - c. Behavior that creates an uncomfortable learning environment for any individual based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, physical appearance, disability or sexual orientation.
 - d. Engaging in a sexual relationship with a trainee while the staff person is in an on-going teaching role in the Feldenkrais Training Program or for up to eighteen months afterwards.
 - e. Unwanted physical contact with others or threats of such contact.
 - f. Sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that tends to create a hostile or offensive work environment.

**Date last revised: April 18, 2017 by FGNA Board of Directors
(Revised formatting only, January 17, 2017)**

Date adopted: October 1997 by FGNA Board of Directors

Preface

1. Any attempt to write a definition of the *Feldenkrais Method* might be seen as producing a somewhat static description of a highly fluid and dynamic method. *Feldenkrais*[®] practitioners/teachers continually evolve their understanding and practice of the Method and in offering definitive statements about the work we must not lose our perspective of dynamism and evolution. This document should be interpreted in this light.
2. Innovation and growth in this field are valued, especially when based on a solid foundation of understanding, sensitivity and skill embodied in the Method's present form. As valid innovations become accepted in the *Feldenkrais* community, these standards will be changed accordingly.
3. This document will be updated at regular intervals by a committee to be reappointed by the board of directors for the purpose of reviewing and making revisions to the Standards of Practice.

Introduction

1. The *Feldenkrais Method* assumes that human beings have transformational potential and that all people, regardless of their age or condition, have the ability to learn.
2. Moshe Feldenkrais wrote in Higher Judo, "In a perfectly matured body which has grown without great emotional disturbances, movements tend gradually to conform to the mechanical requirements of the surrounding world. The nervous system has evolved under the influence of these laws and is fitted to them. However, in our society we do, by the promise of great reward or intense punishment, so distort the even development of the system, that many acts become excluded or restricted. The result is that we have to provide special conditions for furthering adult maturation of many arrested functions. The majority of people have to be taught not only the special movements of our repertoire, but also to reform patterns of motions and attitudes that should never have been excluded or neglected."

Section 1 - What the *Feldenkrais Method* is and what it does.

1. The *Feldenkrais Method* is an educational system that develops a functional awareness of the self in the environment. The Method utilizes the fact that the body is the primary vehicle for learning.
2. The *Feldenkrais Method* is an approach to working with people which expands their repertoire of movements, enhances awareness, improves function and enables people to express themselves more fully.
3. The *Feldenkrais Method* directly addresses the question of how to facilitate the learning that is necessary for organizing the whole self and recovering excluded and unconsidered movement patterns or actions.
4. This is done by expanding the self-image through movement sequences that bring attention to the parts of the self that are out of awareness and uninvolved in functional actions. Better function is evoked by establishing an improved dynamic relationship between the individual, gravity, and society. Feldenkrais, himself, defined function as the interaction of the person with the outside world or the self with the environment.
5. The Method enables people to include, in their functioning, movements and parts of the body unconsidered, forgotten or excluded from their habitual actions or images of actions. By allowing persons to learn how their whole body cooperates in any movement, the