

FELDENKRAIS QUEST WORKSHOP, SAN FRANCISCO 1981 FRI EVENING TAPE 1

Lie on your left side. A little bit on your left side.

Bend your left knee, a little bit.

Bend your right knee and put your right foot on the floor standing, easily, behind the left leg.

Tilt a little bit your right knee right and left. Gently, right and left. This will teach you how to take care of yourself.

While you are doing that, pay attention which part(s) are moving beside(s) the knee. Small movement, but there is (also) a small movement somewhere else. That's enough.

Now. Put the right foot (still bent at the knee) a little bit more to the right. Bend your right knee towards your left knee (which is lying, gently, on the floor). That's enough.

Now. Slowly, now, move the R knee a little bit back and again to this position (forward towards the L knee), and see why on earth doesn't it go lower without effort. Something stops it from going down.

People that are handicapped are just a little bit more handicapped than the rest of us. But, in the end it will go down (more) with all of you.

Move that right foot even more to the right, and reorganize the Left (?) knee (MF must have meant the Right Knee?) to make it come down more, without greater effort. We will do that.

So you needn't force yourself. Slowly. Gently. Why doesn't it come down? Stop it. Stay like that. Don't do anything rash.

Move that right leg so that it lies halfway on the left leg, in the middle of the tibia. The R Knee is over the left leg, at the middle of the right tibia, between the R knee and the R foot. R knee is still bent as before. The left leg is as before, neither bent nor straight. Find somewhere which is comfortable.

Now, gently, try to rock that right leg over the left leg, so that the R heel lifts a little bit and the R knee goes down, and then vs versa, the R knee goes up and the R heel goes down, (etc).

The R leg is balanced on the L leg (like a seesaw). (Neither R Heel nor R Knee

should touch the floor.)

Very difficult to understand. Thing like that you need at least a University degree...and then you are sure to do it wrong.

Find a way of doing it. If you can't find a way it doesn't matter, because if you can't find a way, either way, you will still learn it whether you want to or not.

Slowly, tilt the R leg so that neither R knee nor R foot touch the floor during the (seesaw) gentle movement. You will find that you have to do something with the pelvis to do that. We have to tilt our pelvis right and left to do that. Just rock, do not lift, bend, or stretch. Just rock.

Now, will you put your right foot again standing on the floor, as before, behind the left knee. Now rock (tilt) again the right leg and knee (to left and to right) and see what it feels like. Whether it moves a little bit better than before. Easy. Now, there must still be something interfering with the leg moving freely and nicely.

Put your right hand on your stomach somewhere beneath your sternum. Move the right hand around in a tiny movement as if you were caressing your stomach. A tiny little movement. But you will find that you cannot do this movement without your elbow doing something. The right elbow ...move it a little bit more to the ceiling, gently, and then back again (as you perform the right hand caressing the stomach movement). Then you will find that the elbow moves even lighter than the hand. Very slowly.

If you keep on making that little circle with the hand, you will find that the elbow does something very funny. Then you find that the elbow goes up and down. It goes a little right and then goes a little bit towards the ceiling. With your R hand on the stomach, continue the caressing movement on your stomach, as you stay aware of the R elbow movement. Make the smallest, the easiest, the lightest, movement you can. If you do that you will find that your elbow moves lighter than the hand. (To a student: "you are doing something with your wrist which doesn't make it light.") Just do simple. Don't try to do it well. Make it idiotic! Simple.

Ugly. Slow. But, easy. Comfortable to do. Slowly. Can you feel it lightly with the elbow? Move the R elbow right and left, and then a little bit nearer to your head - but in small movements - and then you see something very funny: Move your elbow nearer - you must move your hand too (simultaneously). Leave your hand free and your elbow free, and let them do the smallest, most comfortable movements that you ever done before in your life.

Gently. Slowly. Now, once you get that movement - gently please, right and left and up and down - it will go a little bit higher to the ceiling and nearer to yourself - the hand will move a little bit nearer to your head. Keep on moving your hand -

your elbow in the air. Until... don't have it horizontal (the elbow should tend to go towards the ceiling) - because if you lie on your left side the elbow goes up. Move the hand even more gently, with smaller movements. Now you will see that when you have the elbow like that - very gently and slowly - your right hand will tend to stop touching your stomach. Therefore, while you are moving your hand, see if you can flex your fingers - as if to make a fist - but with the smallest movement you can - and then let them (the fingers) open again.

And you see, finally enough, this makes the hand and the elbow (movements) even lighter. Easier, simpler, lighter. No, don't close it into a fist. Flex your fingers in the smallest movement, to close and open. Close and open.

Very slowly now, move your R elbow from the back to the front just a tiny little bit, while you flex your fingers, gently. Let your elbow go a little more forward, to the front of you, and then back, and see slowly if you can make the elbow go a little bit more to the ceiling - lightly - and you will see something extraordinary. Once you get used to feeling something light, the real lightness, then our entire motor cortex, that part of the brain which controls all the muscles of the body, gets that feeling of lightness and lets go of some of those vicissitudes (?) which we keep a lifetime without knowing it. Go slowly and you will see. Go slowly and you will learn it for yourself. Keep on moving the elbow. Don't think about the hand. Just make the elbow light, with the smallest movement you can make, back and forth. I am doing that because...when we do we understand. Without doing you can't understand. You must involve your entire being into something (anything) to understand it. If you don't, it doesn't work.

Continue the small movement and you will see a funny sort of thing: If you put your right foot on the floor with your R knee in the air, as before. Keep moving the elbow and the hand. Move the elbow and the knee together, forward and back, slowly.

The right foot on the FLOOR! (MF makes several shouts). Slowly move your R knee and your R elbow, and you will find that you move easier. Slowly. Small movements. Stop.

Keep on moving your elbow and your hand, flexing your fingers lightly, until you get real lightness and then you will find that it is possible to move your right foot, on the floor, gently, to the right and to the left. Not the R knee but the R foot. Tiny bit to the right and then a tiny bit to the left. You will find that with some people it is quite easy, but with others it is not so easy. The tiniest movement possible, while keeping on moving your elbows and your fingers. Lightly, with the most important care being for the lightness of the elbow and the hand. The foot movement is secondary.

Now lift the R foot a tiny bit off the floor...and now move the R knee outward and the foot inwards. Gently, slowly. Oscillate the raised R foot as if it were a pendulum. WHILE moving the arm and the R elbow. If you stop moving the arm and the elbow, it will not work properly. Gently. Induce lightness into your brain.

Watch. Slowly. Keep leg hanging and oscillating. Rest on your left side.

Put your right knee behind the left knee on the floor, in front of your chest.

Put your right palm on the floor and do the following:

Move your fingers a little bit forward (not upward), slowly, a small movements with your R hand forward and backwards, fingers pointed away from your chest. Gently. Don't rub the floor. Just make a very simple movement, very gently and very lightly.

Your R knee is behind the Left knee on the floor. Try doing the same movement with your right knee, a tiny little bit forward, and a tiny little bit backwards. Not more than the R hand.

Watch that you are breathing freely. The R heel should be near to the buttock. The elbow should be more or less up in the air.

Move the hand forward, not upward, with fingers pointing away from you.

Forward with the R hand. Forward with the R knee.

Stop. Do a funny thing. Move your hand forward and your knee backwards, i.e., in opposite directions to each other. Slowly, small movements. This is not difficult. Then switch back to moving them in the same direction. It will now be easier. The body begins to be a little bit suppler and begins to roll a little bit backwards and forwards. This is the learning we want to get. The entire self becomes light, reorganized and suddenly you are able to do things which till now were unthinkable.

Just as we were moving the hand forward and the knee backward, we are now going to move both the knee upwards and the hand upwards.

On the FLOOR! (Shout from MF). The direction of the fingers remains forward. The R Knee a small movement (not the foot) up and down, with the R Hand.

You will find that the whole body will rock, down and up, the whole spine. Do a light and small movement.

Now move the hand upwards and the R knee downwards, ...and vs versa, some will be confused and will do the same thing they have done up till now. Gently.

Move your R hand nearer to you, otherwise it is your shoulder that moves, not the elbow. Can you feel that the whole spine goes through the chest like a skewer through meat, as you perform the movement. Stop. Stay as you are (on the left side, etc)

Make a little circle with the Right ankle. Smallest circle you can make. In which

direction did you make the circle? Make the circle in the direction you have chosen (clockwise or counter clockwise), but slowly move your hand, on the floor, in a circle in the same direction you have chosen for the foot.

If you imagine a clock with 12 o'clock in the direction of your head, and three o'clock directly in front of you, you will find that many of you do the circle clockwise, the great majority.

However, some people do it in the other way, counter-clockwise. Continue the movement of the hand and the ankle. To move the ankle you must also move the entire leg. Slowly.

Now change the direction of the hand or the foot. The other will try to follow the other, but try to keep the ankle and the foot moving in opposite directions. (Not very easy. It takes coordination.) Many of you just kid themselves that they are doing them in opposite directions. They don't!

Bend you R knee and put it on the floor (behind the L knee).

Continue trying the opposite direction of hand and ankle. (Still on left side.) Now return to the same direction. Change the direction of the foot. The hand remains as it was. Take your time. Gently. Are you sure that you are doing the foot in the opposite direction to the hand. Return to the same direction. Slowly.

Stop all that. Put your Right foot on the floor. Just feel what sort of movement it is now. Put your right hand on your chest, below the sternum. Now move the R hand around a little bit on your stomach, and now feel your elbow. Is it lighter than before? (It will be)

Now, move the elbow a little bit to the right and a little bit to the left. And a little bit upwards and a little bit downwards, i.e., make a little circle with the elbow. Now you can flex your fingers a little bit, gently.

Change the direction of the movement of the elbow. Now move your Right Knee (which is up, with the R foot on the floor) a little bit to the right and a little bit to the left.

Just watch. Whether this is different from before, with a freedom in the hip which wasn't there in all your life. Now, slowly, move you knee right and left. A big improvement! Stop that.

Move your right foot, on the floor, right and left.
See how simple the movement has become. Don't forget the elbow.

Very slowly...lift the Right leg, a little bit, off the floor and see if you can oscillate, as before, as a pendulum. Much easier.

Now. Move your elbow together with the knee. Back and forth. Now reverse the direction of the elbow and the raised foot. Difficult. Take your time.

Slowly, lie on your back. Which leg feels longer. Scan your body.

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