



Code of Ethics

1. The Feldenkrais-method

The Feldenkrais-method is a specialised approach to develop processes of learning. Clients are taught to perceive sequences of movement attentively. Changes and developments can be sensed through sensory impressions and traced through mental awareness. Such processes of learning can be experienced with immediacy. By raising one's own actions into consciousness, new physical, mental and emotional movability emerges. The Feldenkrais-method is suitable for all ages and medical conditions.

The Feldenkrais-method is a method of learning, not a medical procedure, treatment or therapy.

2. Coverage

The „FELDENKRAIS® Verband Österreich“ (FVÖ) is the representation of FELDENKRAIS® practitioners/teachers in Austria. It promotes and increases visibility of the Feldenkrais-method and takes part in the international process of establishing and complying with directives for trainings (European Training Accreditation Board – Euro-TAB). It is a member of the International FELDENKRAIS® Federation (IFF).

Members of the FVÖ can become FELDENKRAIS® practitioners/teachers, provided they have completed a TAB-accredited training or a recognized course in accordance with FVÖ statutes (full members), or are currently enrolled in such a course (student members). Other natural persons or legal entities can become sponsoring members.

The FVÖ's Code of Ethics is binding for all members. The FVÖ enforces compliance to the code of ethics.

All practicing members are to seek to constantly improve and develop the quality of their work through continued education, supervision and/or collegial exchange with other members. If evidence of substantial education and experience is provided the FVÖ also awards the predicate of distinction „FVÖ zertifizierte/r Feldenkrais-LehrerIn®“.

3. The Functions of the Directives

The present Code of Ethics contains fundamental attitudes towards which the professional behaviour of all FVÖ members must be oriented.

It regulates the relation between

- a. FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners and clients,
- b. FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners and colleagues,
- c. FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners and the FVÖ,
- d. FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners and the public,
- e. FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners and other experts,
- f. People in FELDENKRAIS® trainings.

Its purpose is the protection of all the persons described above from unethical behaviour on behalf of the members of the FVÖ, be it in the course of practicing or presenting the Feldenkrais-method.

It sets high internal standards and institutes appropriate processes for the engagement with conflicts.

It shall, in the appropriate form, be brought to the attention of all above mentioned persons.

The Code of Ethics is subject to regular amendments and development.

The Code of Ethics is decided by the general assembly and is binding for all members.

Irrespective of the directives in the Code of Ethics, Austrian federal law must be observed in its most recent form.

4. On the Professional Relationship

All professional relationships of FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners are to be based on mutual respect, tolerance, integrity, independence, impartiality, the law and be in keeping with human dignity. FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners do not discriminate based on gender, race, nationality, class, age, mental or physical health, sexual orientation, religious or ideological convictions. They respect their client's right to self-determination and self-responsibility. They act in accordance with the fundamental values of being-human.

FELDENKRAIS[®] Verband Österreich (FVÖ) Version 23.01.2016, English

a. The relation between FELDENKRAIS[®] teachers/practitioners and clients:

Before starting the joint work FELDENKRAIS[®] teachers/practitioners are to give information on the Feldenkrais-method, its capabilities and limitations. Promises or prognoses of learning-developments are to be avoided.

They make clear that the practice of FELDENKRAIS[®] is free from any kind of diagnoses.

They disclose their professional qualifications, consider their own capabilities and limitations, and communicate them. If necessary, they refer clients to colleagues or other experts.

While FELDENKRAIS[®] teachers/practitioners work with the Feldenkrais-method, they are to have professional liability insurance, verification of which can be presented upon request.

Agreements concerning remuneration, payment method, duration, cancellation or omissions are to be arranged before beginning regular teaching.

In their teaching-offers they draw attention to the following points:

- Course participation is at the clients' risk, corresponding to the capabilities of each client.
- Courses serve the purpose of self-development.
- Participation in a course does not authorise the passing on of the Feldenkrais-method (exempt are the FELDENKRAIS[®] trainings, which are recognised by the FVÖ)

FELDENKRAIS[®] teachers/practitioners are to suggest the termination of professional relationships when they are of the opinion that clients can no longer benefit from their FELDENKRAIS[®] teaching. Equally they respect the clients' intentions of terminating the joint-work.

They have the right to refuse FELDENKRAIS[®] teaching, but are to communicate this appropriately and politely.

FELDENKRAIS[®] teachers, who are also educated in other fields, must inform their clients of that fact, specifically they should seek a client's approval when they intend to apply something other than the Feldenkrais-method. It is not allowed to bill FELDENKRAIS[®] work under a different title.

For using the FELDENKRAIS[®] method in working with minors, we suggest the written informed consent of a legal guardian, and to invite them to be present during the work. For persons affected by the Austrian "Sachwaltergesetz", FELDENKRAIS[®] teachers/practitioners are responsible for keeping in line with existing legislation.

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FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners have the duty of confidentiality concerning their clients' personal information and data. If necessary, they can be exonerated from professional secrecy at the discretion of the board of the FVÖ or the "Ombudsstelle" to protect the wellbeing of a person or the general public, or when a legal order is presented.

Photos, audio and video recordings of clients are only to be made with their explicit consent. The publication and use (e.g. for research purposes) of this material, texts or data are also at the discretion of the clients involved.

Physical interaction and verbal communication in the context of FELDENKRAIS® work are exclusively oriented towards the wellbeing of the client. To accomplish this, they should be clear, unambiguous and neither invasive nor corrective. FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners do not work in positions or through interactions that are uncomfortable to the client. Clients and FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners are to remain dressed during their work at all times. FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners do not see themselves as imposing instructors. They look, together with their clients, for ways of learning and development.

FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners never abuse their professional relationships to exploit clients or other persons in financial, emotional, physical or sexual respects.

b. The relationship between FELDENKRAIS® teachers and colleagues:

FELDENKRAIS® colleagues are all teachers/practitioners, trainers, assistant trainers and students of the Feldenkrais-method, regardless of their membership to the FVÖ.

FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners solve professional conflicts and disagreements amongst each other and with their colleagues, in a factual, respectful manner. FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners agree to refrain from mutually enticing away clients. When advertising their services they are to respect a fair treatment of colleagues and compliance with FVÖ directives.

Holding positions in the FVÖ or in other national or international FELDENKRAIS® organisations is not to be abused to gain an unfair advantage over colleagues. FELDENKRAIS® colleagues are to not impede each other in personal or professional learning processes and growth.

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- c. The relationship between FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners organised in the FVÖ and the "FELDENKRAIS® Verband Österreich" itself:

FVÖ and FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners are mutually loyal.

The FVÖ serves as primary contact point for teachers organised within it regarding all questions and doubts concerning their professional practice.

If criminal proceedings are instituted against a FELDENKRAIS® teacher/practitioner in a trial regarding their occupation, or if compensation claims are filed, the FVÖ is to be informed of these matters immediately.

- d. The relationship between FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners and the public:

Concerning public statements regarding the Feldenkrais-method, such as through advertising brochures, adverts, articles, talks, lectures or the like, FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners are to consider that they are not only presenting their own work, but the whole profession to the public. Correspondingly, they are asked to act responsibly. Colleagues or the FVÖ are not to be affected negatively by content, names or visual appearance of public presentations.

In all publications it must be indicated that the International FELDENKRAIS® logo and the terms FELDENKRAIS® and "FVÖ zertifizierte/r Feldenkrais-LehrerIn®" are legally protected. Hence, the trademark ® is to be used as extension of all designations by all members.

Irrespective of this, the FVÖ recommends the following notation for the strengthening and use of registered trademarks:

FELDENKRAIS® Teacher/Practitioner

FELDENKRAIS® Awareness through Movement

FELDENKRAIS® Functional Integration

etc. – without hyphen!

Only exception: Feldenkrais-method (without capitals, without ®, but with hyphen).

Concerning all publications that exceed advertising personal services, the FVÖ should be informed. If possible, publications are to be produced in cooperation with the FVÖ.

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- e. The relationship between FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners and other experts:

FELDENKRAIS® teachers/practitioners practice their activity in the course of their professional competence. If required, they will seek professional cooperation and exchange with other experts.

- f. The relations within FELDENKRAIS® trainings:

FELDENKRAIS® students are to be considered especially worthy of protection in their learning-process. All FELDENKRAIS® colleagues (trainers, assistant trainers, FELDENKRAIS® teachers and all members of the training-organisation) must be respectful to that. Persons involved in the training are not to exploit positions of power in regards to students.

If a romantic or sexual relationship between a student and a member of the education or organisational team emerges in the course of a training, the separation of the professional relationship and the private relationship, for the reasons given above, is expected.

5. Procedure in case of conflicts

Regardless of an eventual judicial act, violations against the present Code of Ethics and its directives will be investigated in the first instance by the "Ombudsstelle" of the FVÖ. Violations can lead to the expulsion of a member from the FVÖ. In case of complaints the procedures for complaints regarding the professional conduct of FVÖ members comes into place. (Durchführungsbestimmungen)