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Article

Psycho-Corporal Recovery As The Essence Of Environmental Values Training

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Abstract

This article presents the results of descriptive qualitative studies from a participatory action research perspective, focused on the impacts that have resulted from the incorporation of Awareness Through Movement (Awareness Through Movement) lessons from the Feldenkrais Method (FM).

In education and training on environmental health, the inclusion of the human body as part of the natural environment is not common. Similarly, human health is generally studied separate and apart from environmental health. The act of rediscovery and re-incorporation of awareness (mind-body) in the human being, in order that he recognize his internal bio-psycho-social environment and that he identify himself as an element in constant interaction with an external environment (natural, constructed, social), has not been considered relevant for the training of the individual and for environmental training in general.

An interprofessional group of women was formed and undertook Participatory Action Research. A longitudinal study consisted of an analysis of the discourse of the logbooks of groups of 75 work sessions during the years 2000 and 2001.

We must learn to read the micro phenomena to better understand the realities of our society.
Zimmerman, 1998

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PSYCHO-CORPORAL RECOVERY AS THE ESSENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES TRAINING

One has to learn to perceive the micro-phenomena in order to better understand the realities of our society. (Zimmermann)

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1) INTRODUCTION

1.1) The mind-body relationship or environmental psycho-corporal recovery.

In education and training on environmental health, the inclusion of the human body as part of the natural environment is not common. Similarly, human health is generally studied separate and apart from environmental health. The act of rediscovery and re-incorporation of awareness (mind-body) in the human being, in order that he recognize his internal bio-psycho-social environment and that he identify himself as an element in constant interaction with an external environment (natural, constructed, social), has not been considered relevant for the training of the individual and for environmental training in general.

Since Descartes, the human being has been divided into two regions: mind and body. This division has determined, for the most part, that intellectual work be overvalued and perceived as being separate from the body of the thinking individual. Nowadays, and revisiting some of Montford's (1987) ideas, we observe that intellectual work, as an priority-taking activity in augmenting productivity and sparking technological innovation, "has lost all vision of the entirety of the social activities in which it

is involved, and that it cannot be but an alienated work; the alienation of intellectual work" that does not necessarily signify a better quality of life for society.

Some of the many consequences of this alienation that imply the absence of a perception of united self (mind-body) and its connections with the external environment, are clearly evidenced within the human psycho–social–corporal scope. In the Mexican newspaper, La Jornada (DPA 2002), the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that they would dedicate the entire year of 2002 to the promotion of movement, and on 7th April 2002, World Health Day, that organization inaugurated their pro-movement campaign with the motto "Get moving for your health's sake!" They noted that moving oneself reduces the risk of developing a heart condition, diabetes, cancer of the colon and lower back pains; that it lowers levels of stress, anxiety and depression and, moreover, that it promotes social interaction and integration.

1.2 The Feldenkrais Method (FM) in face of intellectual alienation.

In face of this intellectual alienation, the Feldenkrais Method (1972), by way of its "awareness through movement" characteristic, facilitates the processes of auto-exploration that permit the development of attention, imagination and the internal perception of self, via guided movement. The method's creator, Moshé Feldenkrais, drew on his background as an engineer and physicist, as well as his studies in neuroscience, theories of learning and the oriental martial arts, in order to develop a unique system of self-education that improves and augments human functioning via mind-body experience. In addition, he was in favor of the recognition of the importance of external space and environment and of going beyond the frequently centered vision of an "I" bounded by the skin's surface. This method deals with the mind-body relationship and "environmental embodiment" as the bases of perception and development of awareness, as well as the platform for action. It grants a central position to socialization, self-regulation and learning, in order to assist the person to take charge of himself and his action in different environments.

1.3 The relationship between environment and the Feldenkrais Method

In the Feldenkrais Method, awareness is considered a characteristic of the person, forming part of the auto-regulatory mechanisms of living beings. According to Canter (1988), the environment is an expression that, etymologically speaking, refers to the "sheath" that encapsulates the subject. Not only is it the container of the individual's action, it is, moreover, the place-for-the-action of the individual. The somatic (soma = mind + body) focus of the FM, far from being reductionistic or materialistic, is more than anything an integrator of the living person "incorporated". It is the embodiment of life as the

Anglo-Saxons termed it. When to this notion of soma is added one of education a position and methodology are affirmed; in this case the use of the FM for somatic development in one's internal and external environments.

Similarly, Joly (1995) considers that the image of the body in particular, and the sensation experienced in the body, do not emerge in a vacuum or capsule but as a continuum within the immediate environmental surroundings. We consider that the lessons (formal or informal) and the consequent acquisition of values constitute part of the life story of the individuals and mold the development of individual and collective environmental awareness. The psycho-corporal strategy used to **improve internal and external environmental perception and action** (whose "limits" are the skin and the membranes of the external organs), is innovative in that it uses the Feldenkrais Method as a mediator in order to identify the difficulties and achievements of incorporating values in self. In this research, it was not sought to center the training in order to learn the techniques of the FM in its two aspects, but to attempt to bring about formative integral processes in health and environmental education.

We recognize the existence of pedagogical proposals and alternatives, by diverse authors, that enter into deep ecology [e.g. Cohen (1989) and Zimmermann (2001)], in order to awaken, comprehend or improve the awareness of human–environmental interaction, via the senses. However, the Feldenkrais Method centers upon the development of the perceptions of self as part of the environment, associating, as a result, the analysis of personal action in face of the external environment, via the analysis of body movements made by the person in training.

Four major points determine the focus of this training method (Joly 1995):

a) Movement (and not posture or structure).
b) The consciousness of the living, sensitive body (not the objective body learned from the exterior).
c) Learning (and not therapy).
d) Space or environment (and not the isolation of the self).

1.4 The somatic consciousness and the types of social consciousness.

In relation to the experiences and scope of interaction of the individuals with themselves and with their surroundings, we adapt the progression of levels of consciousness that the human being can acquire on his educational journey, proposed by Colette (1975), to the environmental training of the Feldenkrais Method (FM) and Participative Action Research (PAR) used in this research.

As such, we have a primary level of **consciousness** (awareness) that is termed **subdued or naïve consciousness** and is described as ingenuous, induced; it is "the culture of silence" that does not perceive the dialectic relationship between nature and history, and the human being. Example: Protect the trees! Without providing further information.

In the **pre-critical consciousness**, the consciousness is alert, emerging, on occasion, as a rebel consciousness of an environmental situation, but accepting the determinants indicated by an established system. Example: Why must I protect the trees? What business is that of mine? Why should I do it?

In the **critical integrator consciousness**, the way to the analysis of the "perceived' is given, with individual will to determine personal future and external environment relying on its own forces and potentialities in order to take an action stance in face of a given environmental situation or crisis. Example: "Ah! I understand that the trees are important to the existence of the animals and may be their source of food and shelter. They provide me with shade, play a part in the regulation of temperature and humidity, prevent erosion, reduce noise and contamination and make up part of a pleasing landscape that symbolizes life. I live from their fruits and trunks. I understand the reasoning behind the alarming messages regarding the consequences of their diminution or disappearance".

The **liberating critical consciousness** invites a cultural mobilization where there exists a clarification of the personal position regarding people and the environment, with an individual and collective civic obligation or responsibility that manifests itself in attitudes and concrete actions in face of a definite environmental situation. Example: "Now that I have researched which trees are suited to my community and how to plant and care for them in accordance with the seasons, I will set aside part of my time, thought and physical energy to commit myself to action; planting or cultivating the trees in my community".

1.5 The conflicts involved in taking responsibilities for, and making commitments to, my person and my proximal surroundings.

We now associate this 'liberating critical consciousness' with the three levels that Kohlberg (1992) proposed, so that the development of the personality can reach a reasoning or advanced moral commitment in face of environmental problems or crises. We consider that the responsibility or commitment in face of these environmental risks implies, in agreement with Kohlberg, passing through the following three stages:

The **Pre-conventional or Pre-moral**, where "It's all mine!" (Of the subject).

The **Conventional**, where the "I" is located in the expectations of another, "I'm okay if I do what I'm told".

The **Post-conventional**, where there are no concrete norms, only principles of justice, reciprocity, equality and respect for the human rights of individuals.

In a recent revision study, Flores and Pérez (1991) explain that previous authors (Kuhn, Braun y Beribeau, Diaz-Aguado y Medrano) enriched Kohlberg's vision of moral development, adding that it is convenient to take into account the preexisting sociocultural processes in addition to the real conflicts and specific situations in which moral decisions are made.

That is, in order for the individual to voluntarily undertake pro-environmental actions, he would have to pass through the aforementioned processes, so that, in accordance with the context of his action, he would be able to identify both what it signified as regards **quality of life** for himself and his community, and the means of achieving or improving it. Re-examining some elements proposed by Elizalde et al. (1997), we may define **quality of life** as the dynamic and personal process of finding a delicate balance between the existential necessities that are being, having and doing, and the concrete values associated with them, such as, subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, leisure, creation, identity and freedom; within the context suggested by the International Declaration of Human Rights, at both individual and collective levels.

1.6 Awareness through Movement in Environmental Values Training

Becoming aware of these existential necessities of being, having and doing, in the search for quality of life, is related to the processes realized in the FM. The lessons of Awareness through Movement (ATM) are based in listening to verbal directions in order to make micro or expansive movements. They are movement sequences that serve to re-educate the self-image of the participant and attempt to encourage improvements in the quality of functional abilities, coordination, posture, self-image and, finally, performance in everyday life. Sooner or later, these lessons engender questioning with regard to existential necessities and values. The lessons propose a coming and going between the following phases: the solicited movement, the sensations felt throughout the course of executing the action and the feelings and thoughts that are awakened, both whilst performing the action and after execution has taken place. The lessons are generally performed on the floor with the eyes shut. In essence, they involve imagining the action and carrying it out in an honest way. Not imitating, but progressively discovering one's own way of doing it; identifying and respecting, in turn, the limits that mark tension or pain in your "being" while avoiding entering into competition with either yourself or others. In this self-education, recognizing error (going beyond the point producing tension or pain), on a personal basis, is central to learning. The movements range from simple operations to highly sophisticated and complex activities, and have two modalities.

In Functional Integration (FI), the instructor suggests to the pupil, via a light but precise touch, the possibility of examining bodily structures and their movements, liberating tension or discovering simple and manageable movements that, on his own, he had considered difficult to do.

2) Antecedents and Universe of Study:

Desiring to sketch an outline of the context of the investigation, we provide a summary of the origin and characteristics of our group as an universe of self-study. In December 1999, a meeting of academics of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), Iztacala campus, was held, regarding the strike that was then taking place at the university. At that meeting, a group of female colleagues (biologists, psychologists, doctors, nurses and teachers), who worked on and researched environmental health education and training, were reunited. Given our impotence in face of the strike, we came up with the idea of getting together and conducting lessons in Awareness through Movement (as had formerly one member of the group), while also using that time to discuss the situation of the labor strike that our institution was experiencing.

Initially, we met in a carpeted room; 6 to 8 women, once a week. After completing an ATM lesson (45 to 60 mins) and analyzing the strike situation, it was proposed that we should hold seminars in Participative Action Research (PAR) to analyze, at a professional level, the achievements and difficulties experienced in our activities and personal research projects into health and environment. Little by little, norms arose regarding use of our time; the discussions, the ATM lessons, the presentation and subsequent discussion of our personal projects and the analysis of base articles. Out of this came the **Environmental Technical and Values Training Project: analysis of processes in an interdisciplinary and intercultural group.** This allowed the formalization of the analysis of our own interdisciplinary and intercultural processes, using **the session logs** for recording the group processes that were experienced. Participants took turns

3) The base hypothesis of this work is the consideration that, while not personally experiencing the same difficulties and achievements in the organization and individual will to carry out consistent actions that favor the environment and the health of the trainer, within his everyday milieu, it would be difficult to reach an understanding of the individual or collective processes that result in the difficulties and achievements related to his actions as regards environmental and health education.

Associated with the practice of Awareness through Movement (ATM) lessons, the Participative Action Research (PAR) was incorporated as a dynamic methodology of the seminar. This was understood, as by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), as a form of **collective** introspective research by the

participants, in social situations, with the object of improving the rationality of their social or educational practices, as well as their comprehension of those practices and the situations in which they took place.

The application of the Participative Action Research (PAR) and the ATM lessons (*Personal Action Research*) as pedagogical strategies in action to promote environmental values training, permit, in the "here and now", the essential sensitizing (to make conscious) of the "self" or the "I", in action toward himself and in his interaction with the external environment; social, constructed and natural. Action is required in order to understand the difficulties that arise whilst searching for personal quality of life and, as such, to better understand what we desire to awaken in the "otherness" (the other, the others and other things) in order to improve the collective quality of life. An everyday example: Several campaigns promote energy-saving, requesting that unnecessary lights be switched off. However, this obviously worthwhile action appears not to be so obviously worthwhile to many people, both at home and at work, since it implies "moving oneself".

4) In light of the above, we consider **environmental values training** to be the process of interiorization and biopsychosocial development in the subject, immersed in his differing fields of action, for the perception, identification and testing of strategies in close and concrete action, for the management of environmental problems, under an integrated perspective, in individual and collective areas.

5) OBJECT

We present the results of a longitudinal and transversal, qualitative descriptive study that investigates the impact of the incorporation of the Awareness through Movement modality of the Feldenkrais Method (FM) and an interdisciplinary group of women who work on environmental and health education projects; in regard to the construction and reconstruction of their selves and their surroundings.

6) METHODOLOGY

Longitudinal and transversal qualitative descriptive studies were undertaken that investigated the impact of the incorporation of the Awareness through Movement modality of the Feldenkrais Method (FM) and an interdisciplinary group of female lecturers and investigators in environmental and health education and training.

7) LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH: analysis of the discourse of 75 group session logs.

The technique of discourse analysis (Boutin, G. 1997) was applied to 75 group logs, produced by the participants during the period 2000/2001, that describe the processes experienced in the 5-hour weekly seminars. Five major thematic categories were identified:

a) Research projects, b) Logs, c) The Feldenkrais Method, d) Group processes, e) Treated themes. In this study we will only report and comment upon the results relative to: c) The Feldenkrais Method.

Universe of study. The characteristics of the group under study and, at the same time, studying itself, while producing and analyzing the logs on a rotating basis, were the following: Ages varied (during 2000 and 2001) between 28 and 63, with an average age of 47 years. About two thirds of the group (10 of 14) were trained or were being trained in the area of biological and health sciences, while the other third (5 of 14) were trained, or were in training, in the fields related to pedagogy and the educational sciences. One person had training in all of the above areas and was counted as an individual in each group.

7.1 RESULTS of the longitudinal study.

The thematic sub-categories identified during the collective analysis of the discourse to detect the presence or absence of relationships between the FM and becoming environmentally aware, in 75 session logs produced between January 2000 (38) and October 2001 (37), were:

1) The frequency of the ATM lessons
2) Those who directed the lessons
3) The record of type and composition of the lessons
4) The possibility of identifying the name of lesson
5) Whether or not feedback was offered regarding resonances
6) Analysis of the kinds of resonances experienced by the participants.

Findings:

7.1.1) Failure to initially record impacts (resonances)

Paradoxically, although ATM lessons were conducted in most of the sessions of 2000, in the majority of those (25 of 37), the logs for those sessions reflected no thoughts regarding the impacts or resonances experienced by the participants. This situation came as a surprise to the group that deduced some possible explanations for the phenomenon:

a) The instructor asked the students to reflect upon the lessons on three occasions: immediately upon having completed the lesson, at the rest period (coffee), and/or at the beginning of the intellectual phase of the work. In addition, thoughts would surface in meetings that had nothing to do with the seminar.

b) No person had been assigned to record the reflections regarding the ATM lessons for the first 12 sessions due to the study not having been formalized at that point.

c) Due to the fact that the methodology of the investigation seminars was taken from the Participative Action Research (PAR), in each session a log of edited group developments was produced, sometimes voluntarily or hastily. The resistance to produce these logs was put down to the fact that it was difficult to simultaneously participate, observe, write down the relevant details of group processes and later edit the log, solely or in pairs, to be read and confirmed or modified by the group in the next session. This also involved the use of an average of 2 to 3 hours of personal time away from the seminar.

d) Among the sensations and feelings awakened by the ATM lessons, we initially did not find that connections were made between psycho-corporeality and environmental training, but that the latter was considered to be primarily an intellectual exercise. Initially, there appeared to be a difficulty in linking experiences in training with everyday actions in the external environment. This last fact was corroborated when it was found that the first 5 sessions did not include an ATM class, a lack that was attributed to the unconscious granting of priority to purely intellectual work, in order to comply with report rendering and other institutional activities. That is, in the procurement of values, the link between the personal perception of our biology, of our emotions and feelings and of intellectual work processes, is rarely formed. All of this inside an institution of higher learning and as part of an investigation project.

7.1.2) Processes or stages experienced

Upon effecting the analysis of the discourse of the logs we were able to identify four stages in the practice of the ATM lessons:

In the **first** stage, reports were made detailing feelings of astonishment upon identifying in the body (or soma), in contact with a sense of gravity on the floor, an asymmetry (left or right side short, long, heavy, contracted, hard, etc.) that over the course of the lesson tended to balance out. Also described were feelings of relaxation, pleasure and reduction in tension, together with the awareness of everyday movements that had not been noticed before. Subjects mentioned difficulties in coordinating movement with breathing, coordinating the movement of legs – arms, a feeling of heaviness in the

extremities and wrists, and difficulty in following instructions due to fatigue and stress, and in establishing rhythm.

During the **second** stage, feelings of pleasure continued and comments were made lamenting the loss incurred by some members who had missed out on the ATM by arriving late.

In the **third** stage, changes took place in the guidance structure of the classes due to the absence of the qualified instructor for several sessions. Faced with these absences (4 to 8 sessions), the group decided to continue under the guidance of a volunteer who had prior experience as a participant in the activity. Each session generally facilitated relaxation, but there were reports of failure in realizing that state when the rhythm or speed of the lessons was less than optimal or when there was a lack of warning regarding possible over-extension or injury. Other failures were attributed to a lack of voice modulation on the part of the substitute instructor or to that person only dictating the exercise (the focus was on routinely completing the task); not having carried out prior self-experimentation and psycho-corporal learning of the lesson.

During this stage, we observed the development and movement of a baby boy, the son of one of the participants. During six consecutive sessions we were able to observe, discuss and practise some of his movements, made between the ages of four and ten months, encountering in the process some associations with previous ATM lessons or discovering new movement options for all parts of the body.

In the **fourth** stage, we met with a situation where participants were under pressure to complete academic reports and other institutional obligations. At the same time, the group began to question the instructor about the pace of the work and the relevance of continuing it within an institutional assistance program that demanded that the majority of the time be spent in “honoring” the intellectual work. At the same time, a series of discussions were held: proposing new group work options (the elimination of logs, a realignment of the work pace to be established by the group), and ignoring the institutional pressure placed upon us to justify the economic assistance we were receiving. Nevertheless, the number of Feldenkrais lessons undertaken during this stage diminished, deliberation over them was discontinued, and intellectual work predominated. That is, a paradox emerged: sometimes we would proceed with the research, taking the necessary time and free of self-imposed pressures and at other times we would work at a pace set to comply solely with external pressures. From that point on, the group continuously sought a balance between the internal aspirations and external commitments that pulled them in several directions at once and that vied for their limited resources.

7.1.3. Conclusions of the longitudinal study

Scant reflection was made regarding the impacts of the FM during the year 2000, however, in 2001, the frequency of reflection increased and a link between the FM and performance was made, both at a personal and professional level.

We recognized the difficulty of carrying out the seminar activities in face of institutional pressures (schedules, problems of qualitative investigation recognition, report production, integration of disciplines and professions). There arose questions with regard to whether environmental training had anything to do with corporeality or interdisciplinary work, both by some of the participants and in the various academic departments to which some of them belonged. This evidenced the institutional view (both inside and outside the group) that the environmental question was solely an intellectual or biotechnological work but not an inter-scientific one. This became patently obvious during the second year, when some participants left the group, in some cases explaining that, in their individual academic areas, the authorities did not consider that such an activity should be evaluated institutionally (no points would be awarded), and in other cases because their immediate superiors did not accept that this activity had a relationship to environmental health. They insisted that this kind of work should be restricted to departmental projects. The remaining participants, realizing the value of the ATM and the seminars, decided to continue; restructuring the intellectual portion of the work now that they considered the practice of the FM to be relevant. This period saw the introduction of the transversal study questionnaire, which is described next.

8) Transversal Research. Analysis of the dialogue of 7 participants who responded anonymously to a survey.

In August of 2001, the ATM instructor proposed to the remaining group of seven participants that they anonymously respond to a survey of open and closed questions, in order to study directly which personal impacts had surfaced during the practice of the Feldenkrais Method, within the scope of their processes of research and environmental training. The main points of the survey studied were: a) Whether the use of the Feldenkrais Method in environmental training was pertinent, b) Whether there existed a relationship between the FM and environmental education, and c) What echoes or personal impacts were taken from the lessons.

8.1 RESULTS with respect to the main points analyzed in the horizontal study

The reflections that surfaced comprised a “here and now” segment of the results found in an analysis of the logs. In synthesis, the FM contributed to clarifying the perception of the personal

internal and external microenvironment via movement (1.2, 1.3 and III.1), it permitted the person to identify himself as being part of the environment and the processes of change necessary to carrying out pro-environmental action (I.1, II.1, II.2, II.3). It was used as an alternative method of reducing everyday tensions (III.2), and it enhanced the practice of values such as tolerance, acceptance of personal limits and the application of various alternatives in problem-solving (III.3).

Next, we present fragments of the responses found in the surveys, grouped in relevant subcategories.

I.1 ANALOGIES TO THE RESOLUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS. (P) 2 individuals

P1 Over the course of the sessions, relationships between this method and topics of group interest were shown to exist, principally in the analysis of the process for internal and external problem-solving.

P6 I consider that the method is not only pertinent but very important. With the Feldenkrais Method we have realized that, just as there are many different ways to perform the same movement, we must also seek alternative options in resolving environmental problems.

I.2 THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE "SELF" OR EXPERIENCED SOMA (3 individuals)

P2 We enter inside ourselves.

P3 (Because it has helped me) to be in contact with my body and my thought. It has given me time to work with my body and my surroundings. It has helped me a great deal to relax.

P4 The Feldenkrais sessions give us the possibility of a greater perception, as much with respect to what surrounds us as to our own bodies, to our microenvironment. It is incredible to feel that some very subtle movements bring about a total body effect.

I.3 THE CONSCIOUS MIND BODY LINK (2 individuals)

P7 It is pertinent to me due to the fact that it deals with the body in its entirety and not just the head (intellectual thought), with this one may raise awareness starting with oneself.

P4 (The Feldenkrais sessions made it possible for us) to make the amazing discovery of these feelings, which, although not entirely new, we had never been quite aware of before.

I.4 THE PERCEPTION OF INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP PROCESSES (4 individuals)

P2 It made possible a wider and enhanced understanding of the diverse processes that have been experienced.

P3 They are a form of introduction to a work where the relationship with others must be cordial, respectful, comprehending, tolerant and "objective".

P4 It has lent cohesion to the group.

P5 It has been pertinent and necessary because after every session one re-embarks with renewed desire and a more open mind. There exists the uneasiness of sharing personal experiences with the others.

II.1 PERMITS SELF-IDENTIFICATION AS PART OF THE ENVIRONMENT (4 individuals)

P2 Everything is part of the environment.

P3 Because the way in which I perceive my body is the way in which I may perceive my surroundings. The organic system (my being) is a part of greater systems; family, work, social, etc., and all together they constitute the environment.

P5 We make up part of the environment.

P7 The body forms part of the environment; it interacts with the environment. On many occasions (the body) is the external reflection of where we are, or we are part of the environmental story that we are exposed to.

II.2 IT IS A WAY OF KNOWING BODY AND MOVEMENT LINKED TO ENVIRONMENT (3 individuals)

P3 Therefore, environmental education would comprise every action that allowed us to know, identify, modify, protect and prevent harm to, the environment and all the elements that make up that environment.

P5 The act of knowing our bodies, our movements and feelings, helps us, in a way, to get to know our environment from our own point of view.

P7 Therefore, the activity of personal understanding of the ATM really has a lot to do with environmental education.

II. 3 IT RELATES TO THE PROCESSES OR OPTIONS FOR CHANGE (4 individuals)

P1 It is indirect. If it influences decision-making due to the process of the movements it supports a philosophy that may be applied to environmental questions.

P3 If I desire to change my surroundings, I have to begin with an analysis of my being.

P4 (If we could not comprehend) our own bodies, we would not be able to comprehend what surrounds us either, if we do not learn to have respect for our own bodies, we will not respect the environment either. We have to have a relationship with the environment, knowing that as we degrade it, we degrade ourselves.

P6 I consider that the method is not only pertinent but very important, given that, with the Feldenkrais Method we have realized that just as there are many different ways to perform the same movement, we must also seek alternative options in resolving environmental problems.

III.1 RECOGNITION OF THE LIVING SOMA (3 individuals)

P1 It has helped me to recognize my body.

P2 Greater sensitivity. I learned to pay more attention to the movements I make.

P5 To be able to know my body, my mind, my breathing.

III.2 PRACTISE TOLERANCE, ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES, ACCEPTING LIMITS (5 individuals)

P1 (It has helped me) to be take thought for my movements before making them and, because of that, to avoid hurting myself or expending unnecessary energy.

P2 (I learned) to be more tolerant. (I learned) not to demand more from myself than I can give.

P3 (I learned) to analyze every decision that has to be made.

P5 It has made me more able to control myself, to be more tolerant.

P6 To be tolerant. To change my way of thinking and acting. It has been useful to me in my personal life, my family life and in my life in general. I have accepted the fact that I have limits.

III.3 I CAN RELAX (3 individuals)

P1 (It has helped me) to relax.

P5 I am able to relax whenever I feel pressure.

P6 To relax myself.

9) DISCUSSION

Of the two studies undertaken to investigate the resonances of the Feldenkrais Method in Environmental Values and Techniques Training, by way of the technique of analysis of the dialogue in the 57 group logs (longitudinal study) and the answers to the survey questions given by 7 people (transversal study based on personal statements made in the "here and now"), two types of conclusions were drawn: some in a methodological sense and others in regard to personal resonances.

In the methodological sense, although an analysis of the logs provided important details and although correlations were found between the longitudinal and transversal studies, we considered that, during the weekly seminars, the compilation of the resonances due to taking the ATM lessons would have to be more rigorous.

Various possibilities arose in this regard: a) Record the remarks that were made by participants directly upon ending the lesson, at the same time that opinions were requested. b) Invite the participants to note or remember the comments that were made at the end of the lesson, in order that they could share them and have them recorded or noted when the group met again. c) Every four lessons, encourage a moment of reflection, inviting the participants to respond, verbally or in writing, to open questions in regard to whether the ATM or IF lessons had an impact in their professional and/or everyday lives. d) If possible, and if the individual permitted, to have each person providing a verbal or written commentary, identify herself at the time of the collection of the dialogues. At the time of reporting results, for ethical reasons, the name of the person would not appear, instead that name would be substituted by a code number in order to be able to identify, within the study, the characteristics of the person regarding age, occupation, background or other factor considered relevant.

In the qualitative sense the principal impacts were the following:

During the analysis of the logs, we observed an initial difficulty in associating the intellectual exercise within the body movement and the mind-body (soma) as part of the environment. Another doubt that arose was the possible reach of the ATM lessons to achieve the desired liberating awareness (in the sense of Colette, 1975), or post-conventional stage (in the sense of Kohlberg, 1992), in personal pro-environmental action and in face of the external environment. This was achieved, thanks to the linking of the FM with the Environmental Values Training from the Participative Action Research Method. That is, that the group analysis of our planning – action – reflection upon our own activities, the analysis of our conflicts, and individual, group and professional processes, allowed us a vision, at once collective and personal, of the complexity that a change of habits and/or environmental and health values would mean.

Our investigative group, like any other, had goals, doubts, conflicts and advances, but was different than others in the sense of its central concern. This was not just completing the task but, in a parallel sense, permitting each person to become self-aware and to feel part of the group itself, that was comprised of people who needed each other and who "embarked" on a common task; environmental values and technique training. For this group, recognition of their microenvironment or soma, and the diversity of their value, attitudinal and behavioral links in face of the microenvironment (social, constructed and natural) during the seminars, was central.

The relevance of the ATM and the implicit value philosophy, permeated the participants by way of their life stories, individual experiences within the different limits of interaction of the subjects, the confrontation and analysis of conflicts, the fathoming and analysis of concepts, the pertinence of language use and multidisciplinary approach to individual projects of research into health and environment. It promoted the perception of self and of individual action towards the environment in order to understand the difficulty of assuming a voluntary commitment and facilitating change, seeking to improve the quality of individual and collective life.

Contemplating human action from a macro level "the neo-liberal policies are capitalizing nature and man himself, reducing life values to a market quote. Quality of life in a community implies a process of reappropriation and self-management of the population's own standards, via its needs and subjective values. An extrapolation to the subject implies a process of self-knowledge, constant construction and reconstruction in answer to society's needs and values, as well as the use of resources, both biological and psychological, to resolve them. The sustainability of the quality of life implies having a life of quality to pass on to future generations and leaving them with resources that will allow them to adapt to new conditions" (Leff E., 2000). We cannot immediately modify the conditions of our external environment, but through the ATM we have been able to rediscover the needs of our own bodies and the value of this as a biopsychosocial entity.

As a written example of the difficulty of perceiving the obvious (the oneness of mind-body-environment) we look again at a proof given by Cohen (1995). At this moment, the reader may perceive the words being read but, in general, has no awareness of the white spaces that separate and surround them, even though the one could not exist without the other. Both represent reality. This phenomenon occurs because we have learned to focus on what society has told us is important. Due to the fact that the words are what are important, we ignore the space that exists between and around them, although they are just as real as the words.

For this reason we have included the practice of Somatic Education via the Feldenkrais Method as an innovative element. Joly (1995) defines somatic education as an "emerging disciplinary field that

deals with the movement of the body within its environment, strictly speaking, in corporal awareness, and in the capacity of that living body to educate himself in everything that he is somatically living through. Therefore, we include in environmental training, the entire body of the person being trained, with the experience it possesses, in systematic continuity with its environment.

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