

**A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL;
A New Approach for Criminal Justice**

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When I began a Feldenkrais Method® Professional Training Program, I was a police officer. Everyone wondered how I would bridge the gap; from quasi-military thinking to the world of multiple options and perspectives. While I began my training because of chronic pain, what I found was a life altering experience that pushed me through a wormhole into another dimension of life; a dimension of living and teaching the experience of *endless possibilities*.

I left a 17-year career in criminal justice and began to use my collective skills to work with children who exhibited atypical behavior; children who did not respond to traditional therapies and appeared to be destined for incarceration or institutionalization. This work has evolved into using the media arts as a learning and teaching tool for children and I now create pro-active video projects. I become the Director *in real life* Awareness Through Movement® lessons. Emotion, thought, intention and behavior are all involved in movement; and it is through movement that I can show challenging students how to reach back and effect a change in their own emotion, thought, intention and behavior.

Last year, I had the opportunity to create a short training video for the Minnesota Department of Education. It was called the Restorative Justice Conferencing Program and it was to visually demonstrate how this restorative process could be used effectively in a school setting. Students who have been involved in incidents of school violence are brought together and all involved parties offer their own perspective of the incident. This is a new, positive and productive way of processing the results of crime and its use is expanding out into schools and communities Internationally. This process creates an environment in which offenders take responsibility for their actions and make amends for the harm they have caused. It allows victims to heal from the effects of crime and move on with their lives. I became intrigued with this process because it also represents a "differentiation" in the way society looks at crime, and a "differentiation" in the way we handle violence.

Two students participated in this video project. Loren, a slight Latin-American young man, was the victim or in Restorative Justice terminology, the individual who was harmed. The perpetrator, or the individual who caused the harm, was Janine. The incident we were going to work through occurred several months before, but had not yet been resolved. Loren began to tease Janine and she became instantly rage filled. She shoved him against a wall and then went after him to attack him again. Literally fearing for his safety, Loren ran away. Nothing was ever resolved between these two.

Janine is very masculine in her appearance, and at 16 years old, she is 5'11 and weighs 225 lbs. She wears black jeans, long oversized black T-shirts and sweatshirts and lumbers when she walks. Janine does not

accept responsibility for her own actions and instead blames peers, staff, family, police, judges, the system and any other target she can find. Nothing is ever "her fault". She has been suspended and expelled from several schools and is on probation. She has been on probation since she was 10 years old and will remain on probation until she is 18.

Staff and students are all afraid of Janine's violent temper. Once she has "lost her temper" she will physically attack the object of her rage; whether student or staff makes little difference. Because of her size and strength, Janine's rage can easily turn into a serious act of violence. She has to be physically pulled off by "time out" staff or restrained by the police. Janine is also known to hold a grudge and will come back to re-attack, even after she is pulled off and removed from the room. Janine's anger and desire for revenge knows neither boundaries, limits, nor time. Once the emotion of anger is set, Janine's actions, movements and intentions are rigid and inflexible. They are also habitual and unconscious.

School personnel describe Janine as being disruptive, off task, not completing work, exhibiting a poor attitude, hyperactive, inconsistent in her performance and having poor peer relationships. She uses profanity and aggression towards others, regardless of whether they are students or teachers. Fellow students admit they are afraid of Janine and physical force is often necessary to restrain her when she becomes aggressive.

Janine's demeanor is usually disinterested, becoming cold and defiant in the face of authority. Her empathy for others is very low and she is visibly angry and unhappy most of the time. She has expressed suicidal ideation and has a past history of drug and alcohol abuse as well as gang participation. Individuals who have worked with her often talk of her "explosive anger, rebellious acts and social non-compliance". Janine's past psychiatric diagnoses include:

Axis I:

296.22 Major Depressive Disorder

312.9 Disruptive Behavior Disorder, Not Otherwise Specified

314.01 Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

305.00 Alcohol Abuse

305.20 Cannabis Abuse

296.5 Bipolar Disorder

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Janine's personality and behavior problems was the fact that "nothing worked". All of the primary interventions of the previous 6 years had done little, if nothing, to change Janine's "explosive anger, rebellious acts, and social non-compliance". Some element was missing, for Janine had remained "fixed" in her defensive posture of explosive anger and violent response.

I first met Janine during my filming of the Restorative Justice video project. I had no one-on-one interaction with her during the classroom lessons or during the actual filming of the conference itself. This particular Restorative Justice conference focused on resolving an

incident between Janine and a young male student. A verbal argument occurred after Loren ridiculed Janine. She finally chased him and physically attacked him. She had to be pulled off by school personnel.

My personal involvement began after the conference was settled. As part of the "amends" process, Janine and Loren agreed to re-enact a version of the original incident. They also agreed to "act-out" alternative endings. In this particular case, it required Janine allowing another student to *re-direct* her when it was obvious that her temper was escalating. It also involved one of Loren's friends stepping in to re-direct him, as well, so he wouldn't escalate a tense situation.

To film a version of the original incident, Janine was to bump into Loren and begin the exchange of angry words. They were to push each other several times before she chased Loren. In the real incident, Janine then went on to attack Loren, however, we were not planning to relive the event, simply to convey the essence of the incident.

For the particular type of filming I do, no dialogue is used. The students/actors use gestures and facial expressions only. Later, narration is added over the visual images. This way of filming has several learning benefits: students exaggerate gestures and facial expressions which increases their awareness of the emotion that was occurring at the time of the original incident; there is no pressure on the students to memorize or worry about lines; and it is cheaper and faster than traditional filming.

During the initial exchange of pushing each other back and forth, Janine and Loren were "acting" their parts well. They pushed, not too rough, merely taking turns. But, within an instant, Janine's whole demeanor changed. It required just "one more push" from Loren and Janine's shoulders went back, but her head came forward...like a bull. Her eyes glazed over as she brought up both hands and shoved Loren with such force that it sent him flying across the hall.

Immediately I said, "Whoa, Janine! Honey, you aren't acting anymore. What happened?" Janine started to laugh, her eyes came back into focus, she became embarrassed, her face flushed red, and...she could not explain what had happened. She didn't know. (All of this happened in a few seconds. It was only later, during the editing process, that I could slow-motion the incident enough to pay close attention to Janine's physical actions and responses, and understand what was happening)

When we finished filming, I met with all the students/actors for a "debriefing." I explained to all of them that we had just learned a very valuable lesson about interacting with Janine. She can't act! Everything for Janine at the moment is real, and she reacts accordingly. What this meant for the students in a very basic way was "Don't Tease" Janine thinking that you are just playing with her. There is no "kidding Janine". To Janine, everything becomes very real, very fast, and she will react according to that perception "in only one way". There is no flexibility or

differentiation in Janine's response. There is either "not being mad" or "being mad" and only a split second between the two.

This incident was the first time Janine had ever become aware of how instantaneous her temper was. It was also the first time her fellow students had ever paid attention to what happens with Janine when they tease her. They all went back into the classroom with Janine blurting out, "Well, I can't act!" From that moment on, the other students limited their teasing of Janine and showed more respect for her. They had a new understanding of Janine.

When I discussed the filming incident with a Probation Officer, she was intrigued. She knew I worked in private practice with children who exhibit atypical behavior. I explained to her that Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais's work was most often found in references to bodywork. Yet, the genius of his work and what it has to offer has a much more far-reaching effect than mere physical movement. He simply used physical movement to teach. Physical movements and body postures describe our deepest beliefs about ourselves. His work offers a way, through movement, to become aware of how we do things and to find alternatives to how we do those things, so that we might have choice. I explained to her that Dr. Feldenkrais used this approach of finding alternatives, through the avenue of movement; as the quickest way to effect change. It's called differentiation. When differentiation is combined with an inner awareness so we recognize what we are doing, we can make a conscious choice to change behavior. These lessons are called "Awareness through Movement" lessons. All this made sense to the Probation Officer. She set the wheels in motion, and Janine and I were allowed to work with one another using *Awareness Through Movement®* and *Functional Integration®* lessons to focus on Janine's response to the emotion of anger.

The environment in which I work with children/adults is an interesting one since I live in a Bed and Breakfast in rural Wisconsin. The grounds consist of 65 acres of gardens, woods and pastures. The land is colorful, beautiful, peaceful and secluded, to the point of being remote. People come here to relax, rejuvenate, meditate and contemplate among wildflowers, birds and nature. There is also a decorated golf cart for rides out into the fields. The environment itself is magical and lends itself to the healing process.

I also have a county license as a Foster Home. When I see children, they usually come for a 24-hour period. During that time, we play together, work together, fix and eat meals together, and go through the rituals of going to bed and getting up. I pay close attention to all of their patterns; their postures, their movements, their words, their gestures and facial expressions, and, their interactions with me in a variety of situations. Since the location is a Bed and Breakfast, the spare bedroom in which they stay is quaint, Victorian, and usually more elaborately decorated than what they are used to. Everything is clean and in its right and proper place.

All of this was a new and rather disquieting experience for Janine. Her first reaction to the countryside was that it "was too quiet", said in a rather desperate voice. While Janine and I had had previous interactions during the process of filming, as director and actor, this was a new environment and a new situation. The connection between us did not cross over and Janine wouldn't talk or engage in any conversation. The doors between us remained closed. Fortunately, I had just finished editing the video-movie Janine had been part of creating. She watched the movie and she started to laugh, and in that moment her whole demeanor changed. She stood taller, she had more color and she began to talk. Then it was fun to take Janine on a tour of the property. She was allowed to drive the golf cart and she was obviously feeling more comfortable and more in personal control.

Two hours later, Janine was pacing around the house, frantically exclaiming, "I can't stand this. I'm going to lose it, man. I just know I'm going to lose it". Country living had lost its charm. Janine hated the silence! There was nothing to do! She paced back and forth like a trapped animal. Her fists were clenched. She was carrying her shoulders higher than before and more rigidly. Her breathing had become shallow and was coming out in "snorts". Her face was becoming flushed. And I, well I got out my table.

As I was setting up the table, I explained to Janine what a *Functional Integration*® lesson was. Her first reaction was a formidable, "Shit, no! I'm not getting on that fucking table!" And so, we began the art of negotiation. Janine's Probation Officer had initially given Janine the option of a 12-week class on Anger Management or working with me for a 24-hour period. She chose to work with me believing it would be far easier to get the whole thing over in 24 hours. Now, she wasn't quite as sure about that, but the circumstances did give me some leverage. I explained to Janine that the lesson itself was not negotiable, but the length of the lesson was. She had complete choice as to how she wanted to lie on the table and Janine could choose what parts of her body I was allowed to touch. I offered her as many options as possible within the boundaries that the lesson itself was not negotiable.

Janine and I eventually agreed on a 20-minute lesson and I was only allowed to touch her left hand and arm. Janine chose to lie on her back, keeping her eyes wide open the entire time. My first reaction was thinking how difficult this constraint, in both time and touch, was going to be. I felt an instant pressure that "I have to do something, but I don't have enough time to do it!" As that feeling subsided, I realized Janine was probably feeling equally uncomfortable. I had read all of her past reports and I knew that Janine did not like being touched at all. Her many incidents of violence at school often followed some physical contact; a push, or a shove or an accidental touch she was not expecting. Even her reputation at school was; "Don't even think of touching Janine."

Ironically, here I was preparing to do just that. So, giving Janine a sense of trust was my first functional goal. Trust is the most primary of developmental levels; the bonding process of one human being to

another. All future lessons and interactions, for the next 24 hours, were going to build on whether or not Janine trusted me. Janine had given me the restriction of not going past her elbow, so I made a conscious decision to stay below her elbow. I touched, primarily, her hand and fingers. My intention, however, was to work through her hand and arm, to connect with her entire skeleton.

Janine's hand was stiff and held in a clenched position. Even while lying down, her shoulders were pulled upward, almost cradling her neck. Her breathing was shallow and she kept her eyes open. I began with slow, gentle circles, moving about like a phantom. Before Janine's resistance could be activated, I was gone. I moved under her level of awareness.

I learned this from Mark Reese's Feldenkrais workshop dealing with those in severe pain. Janine was not in physical pain, yet her protective vigilance was similar to one in chronic pain. As I worked, careful to stay below her elbow, Janine's breathing began to even out. There was no great sign, or large intake of breath, but more of a simple, smoothing out, like the ebb and flow of a gentle tide.

I kept returning to Janine's clenched fist. Instead of trying to lengthen or open her hand, I helped Janine to clench it tighter. I made it even more clenched. Since this was Janine's habitual pattern, her resistance faded and her hand began to open. As it did, I worked her fingers by lining them up so I could apply traction throughout her entire arm. Since I was literally touching her fingers, Janine's attention was there as well, on her hand. My attention, however, was on her shoulder and back, looking for more movement. Since I was under such constraints with Janine on what I could or could not touch, and how she was willing to position herself on the table, I focused on the most basic of movement directions. In my mind, I thought of simply twelve and six, three and nine. I translated my thoughts into movements; applying pressure, I pushed through her fingers; I applied traction and pulled, then I rotated her arm in and out.

When the timer went off 20 minutes later, Janine was immediately vigilant and said, "Time's up." I moved away immediately and asked Janine to slowly come to a sitting, then standing position. Janine "bounded up" instantly. As she stood there, it was visibly evident that her left shoulder was significantly lower than the right. Her left arm hung down her side an inch or more lower than when we began. Most dramatic was her left hand. It was open, flat and had a softness that her right hand did not.

I asked Janine what and how she felt. She shrugged her shoulders, open and closed her hands, and said, "The right side really tightened up." I responded, "No, it didn't. Your left side is now more relaxed. The feeling you have on your right side is how you normally walk around. It's your habitual posture." She replied, "Well, I don't like it." With that she turned and walked outside, complaining as she went how quiet the country was.

When working with atypical behaviors, the area I have found to be the most vital is early childhood development. Dr. Stanley Greenspan is one of the nation's top experts in child development and has developed an extremely comprehensive developmental assessment for clinicians to use. Dr. Greenspan takes into consideration a child's individual uniqueness and his/her genetic make-up. He clearly understands the importance of a child's environment and early childhood experiences. His work focuses most precisely, however, on the fact that as human beings, we all mature through the same developmental process. Each human developmental process demands that an infant reorganize his or her self and adapt a new way of behaving. In essence, it is the developmental process of letting go of infancy. Missing one or more of these developmental stages prevents neural pathways from connecting to one another in the natural flow of development.

When a child, from abuse, neglect, trauma, health issues, or just inattentive parenting, misses one of the four core developmental levels, they do not mature emotionally. Often, they have not learned to self-regulate their own sense of comfort and calm, and this becomes impulsive, unregulated behavior. A child who misses all four developmental levels, can end up physically growing into adulthood, yet lack any sense of personal or interpersonal boundaries, have no impulse control or sense of logical sequencing and become isolated, violent or both.

When one of the developmental levels is missed through the normal process of maturation, then it can and needs to be taught as a skill. Dr. Greenspan's clear and comprehensive assessment for a child's early developmental learning explains what each level is, how it is accomplished, and, if it is missing, what the resulting behaviors may look like. Because of our body-mind connection, and how our responses and postures are so deeply interwoven with our early environmental experiences, The Feldenkrais Method® of Somatic Education offers a way to teach these missing developmental levels. Further, it offers an approach that is often faster than traditional therapy.

The functional goal for that first lesson with Janine was for her to develop a sense of trust to my touch. As I worked to create that "feeling" of trust, I stayed well away within the restrictions Janine had placed on me, and I went with her pattern of response instead of opposing it. I believe I accomplished this when I saw the change in Janine's breathing. I was, however, surprised by Janine's choice of how to lie on the table. She chose to lie face up, refusing to consider any other possibility. This surprised me because that position appeared to me to be totally vulnerable and I knew "vulnerable" was not something Janine would even consider. I went back to study her reports. I was looking for a pattern in her past behavior that would explain her choice of position.

What I found in her reports was a subtle pattern observable in her altercations at school. At some point, Janine would refuse to cooperate with a teacher. This would lead to a verbal argument and an ultimatum from the teacher. Once Janine was given the ultimatum to comply or

security would be called, Janine became defiant. "Make me!" she would scream. Once the *time-out* staff and security were called, Janine would physically back herself into a corner. When she was told she would have to go with them to the *time-out* room or be physically removed, Janine's response was always, "don't you dare touch me." The final result was always the same. Enough people would be summoned as back up, Janine would be taken to the floor, restrained, and physically removed.

As I reviewed these reports, I realized that Janine's pattern was to *physically back herself into a corner*. Thus, she would be protecting her back and be able to see what was coming at her. Her choice in lying on the table, face up, offered her the same feeling of protection; her back was covered and she could see me coming from the front. I decided that the next lesson would be an *Awareness Through Movement*® with the functional goal of showing Janine what her pattern was at school; the pattern that kept getting her exactly what she didn't want, and ending up exactly where she didn't want to be, physically restrained and totally out of control.

We sat at the table and I got out some Play-Doh™ and created the outline of a classroom. I created a figure that represented Janine and other figures representing her teacher, the time-out staff, and security. Moving the figures around, I acted out Janine's habitual scenario: refusing to comply with the teacher's request; security staff arriving; Janine backing herself into a corner while challenging staff; and, finally, Janine being physically restrained and taken into custody.

I used this lesson because I have found that by using Play-Doh™ with younger children, I can create an overview for the child of a particular experience. This overview is important because it gives the child a new perspective; a different way of looking at the event. Because this new perspective in clay is literally an *overview*, it does not carry with it the emotion of the original event. Without emotion attached to it, the event is more objective and the awareness of the event is clearer. Often, real awareness of the event is present for the first time because it is not obscured by intense feelings. In Janine's case, I actually had Janine move the figures so she would gain a new experience, see herself from a different perspective and become more fully aware of her own habitual response. In this way, Janine could see more clearly how her own seemingly unimportant decisions contributed to the reactions of others, and ended up in self-defeating behaviors.

This process of using Play-Doh™, comes from a technique created by Ron Davis through his work with Dyslexia. Born himself with complex learning disabilities, he was diagnosed early in life as Autistic. Letters moved around in his head, and wouldn't hold still. He finally discovered that if he created a letter out of clay, it would solidify in his mind and he was able to remember it. He found that by creating a word, and a three-dimensional clay image or symbol of its meaning, he would remember and really understand a word. He taught himself to read. Today, he uses his technique to teach children how to read, write, focus, how to understand time and the concept of cause and effect.

In my own work, I use a variation of Davis's technique as an *Awareness Through Movement*® lesson. In Janine's case, my next functional goal was to teach her the concept of options, so she would have choice in her habitual behaviors. My goal was to teach Janine an internal sense of choice. If she could understand the concept of alternative ways of doing things, she would have some free choice in her life. As Dr. Feldenkrais so beautifully put it, "...if we have no alternative, we have no choice at all."

Normally, in a movement lesson, I would have taught Janine a lesson called; the "Pelvic Clock". However, Janine was not willing to get back on the table, nor was she willing to lie on the floor and follow verbal directions. She had found during the initial table lesson that she did not like having one side of her body feel different from the other. Janine had a very high need for her body to feel "only one way". It was the only way she felt safe.

Since I had to work with what I had, and Janine was willing to sit at the table and do another lesson of Play-Doh™, I created a clock. I made a three dimensional figure. I showed Janine how her habitual patterns could be compared with always going toward the 12 o'clock position. Every time she moved toward 12 o'clock, it reinforced a pattern that eventually became a habit. I explained that habits can eventually become compulsions and then there is no free choice. I then moved the figure toward 6 o'clock and suggested there was the possibility of another option; even if it was the exact opposite of her usual behavior. I moved the figure to 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock, explaining again about different possibilities, different choices she could make.

Eventually, I asked Janine to move the figure herself around the clock, touching all twelve numbers to understand more thoroughly the concept of different choices. Asking Janine to move the figure from 12 to 1, from 1 to 2, and so on, was the one way Janine could participate in the lesson through movement. By listening, Janine was hearing me and perhaps even intellectually understanding my point, but unless she could literally embody the idea, she would not be able to use it in her own daily life. By looking at the lesson as an overview, she was getting a different perspective. By watching me move the figure around the clock, she was visually seeing the possibilities of different options. But, it was only by actually moving the figure, herself, that she was able to incorporate her own movement with a new awareness of her habitual pattern. From my perspective, this was certainly not the most ideal lesson, but given my constraints, it was a step closer toward the goal. This experience also gave me a newfound appreciation for the subtlety of Dr. Feldenkrais' work. It is the process of movement and awareness, that each individual experiences, that does the actual teaching. I was merely the facilitator. Janine became her own teacher, simply by doing a movement and paying attention to that movement.

As part of the video project Janine participated in, one of the amends she was required to make was simply to say, "I'm sorry." Janine did say it but she was unable to look Loren in the eye and her tone was whisper soft. I asked Janine to roll out ropes of Play-Doh™ and create the word,

"sorry." I also asked her to look me in the eyes and say the word. This was very difficult for Janine and required a few tries before she could focus on my eyes without looking away. As she struggled to do this, she began to flatten out the three-dimensional word "sorry" that she had just created. It now lay flat on the table.

Watching this, I began to understand that Janine's belief system consisted of only two options in life; *my way* or *your way*. It was much more deeply ingrained than I originally thought. This way of thinking; *my way* or *your way* creates a win/lose scenario every time. I pointed out to Janine how she had smashed her letters down onto the table. Her response was, "So?" I then asked Janine to create a three-dimensional block. I showed her how it had height, length and depth; literally, three dimensions. I asked Janine to create another three-dimensional block and then, smash it flat. Now it had only two-dimensions; length and height but no depth. I used this experiment to be able to go back to the previous lesson on options and show Janine how it related to Life.

We talked about the importance of having at least three options to truly have choice. Only one option is compulsive and rigid. Two options create a win/lose scenario; one of us wins and the other one loses. This option is her behavior pattern at school. Janine would back herself into a corner and be left with only two options; walk by herself to the time-out room, or, be forcibly taken. Three options, or more, offer choice, and more importantly, it creates the opportunity *to think*.

The next day we had an opportunity to try out this new learning. I offered Janine several choices for breakfast. She stated she wanted cereal. I told her I didn't have any cereal and again went over the choices I did have. Janine again stated she wanted cereal. "I *always* eat cereal!" Again, I went over the choices I did have on hand. I explained, "The constraint we have to work with here is *I don't have any cereal!* Work with me here, Janine, work with me. We're looking for options." Janine started to laugh. She thought for a minute and then asked if we could go out for breakfast. This was a legitimate option that worked for both of us.

At breakfast, Janine appeared much calmer than she had the day before. She admitted that she had slept very well. She also stated quite emphatically that the "next time" she came, she was going to bring her own food. At the restaurant, Janine looked around the room and said that she had never eaten in a "sit down" restaurant. I observed Janine as she ordered her meal. She did not once look at the waitress. Janine barked out her order and never said "please" or "thank you." This led us into a simple lesson about restaurant manners; acknowledging, with eye contact, that the waitress was another human being, doing a job for our benefit and deserving at least a polite "please" and "thank you." I explained to her that this simple acknowledgement shows another that we see them as a person and not a thing. When breakfast came, Janine was able to respond with a glance and a mumbled, "Thank you."

Once back at the house, I renegotiated with Janine about getting back on the table for another *Functional Integration*® lesson. Her initial response was, "no way!" She said she did not like the way she had felt after the first lesson, somehow "different". I tried to negotiate with her a shorter time on the table and she refused. She did, however, offer the same time period, and she would sit on the couch. I suggested that Janine could sit on the table and we could expand the time period. Janine then responded, "I'm trying to work with you here. I'm trying to think of options." I was amused to hear my own words come back to me and I realized what a major step this was in Janine's belief system. She was trying to think in "options." I agreed to several of Janine's constraints. Janine would sit on the couch for 20 minutes, and all I could touch was her "right hand."

I decided the functional goal for this lesson would be to give Janine the "embodiment" of what 3 seconds felt like. In the past, Janine reacted violently and *instantaneously*. If Janine had just 3 seconds to decide what she really wanted to do, she would have the time to make a choice. If she was sure she wanted to get into a fight, at least she would be making a conscious decision, knowing that the end result would be heading back into the Criminal Justice System once again. With 3 seconds to decide, she could also allow someone to lead her away, or allow the other person time to back away and leave. However, without the physical "feeling" of how 3 seconds felt, she would never have even the short time necessary to make a decision. She would never have the option.

As I worked on Janine's hand this time, she was "ready for me". She was resistant. If I applied traction, she pulled back from me. If I pushed into her, she pushed toward me. I took her fingers and applied pressure to each one. I rolled them left and right. Every movement I did, I did in 3-second intervals. I applied pressure for 3 seconds, then I released for 3 seconds. I rolled her fingers right for 3 seconds, held for 3 seconds and rolled left for 3 seconds. Eventually, she did relax and I was able to move into applying traction and compression. Again, all in 3-second intervals.

I ended the lesson with a verbal discussion. I continued to work on her fingers in 3-second intervals, speaking about the importance of waiting 3 seconds to make a conscious decision about what she wanted to do. I ended the discussion with a sing-song approach. "What...do you want...to do?" Each time I said this, my voice went up and down and I timed what I said to 3-second intervals. I also pulled on a different finger as I said it. I wanted to integrate the "feeling of 3 seconds" with the "sound" of three seconds, and the "understanding" of waiting 3 seconds.

When Janine stood up after the lesson, her left shoulder and arm were once again noticeable relaxed and elongated. Janine was very surprised. She did not understand how the side I had not worked on could possibly have been affected. I began to explain but it was quickly obvious that Janine was not really interested in an explanation. She

might not have understood what happened, but she also didn't really care why.

For the rest of the day, Janine was much more relaxed than on the previous day. She did not pace and could sit quietly and look around. She admitted, again, that she had slept "very well and it's a real comfortable bed". She looked around and noticed all the color in the house for the first time. She stated she did not like color, but at least she noticed it. She spoke again about "the next time I come to visit". This was a long way from the previous day when she was pacing around the house proclaiming, "I can't stand this, I'm going to lose it."

Before leaving to return home, Janine asked to play some video games. She wanted to "gear up to go home." Janine lives in a group home with a lot of noise, chaos and activity. Her daily life was a far cry from life in a remote rural setting and just two of us present. "Gearing up" to go home was an important mindset for her to recapture.

Over the next three months, I heard from Janine's Probation Officer. Janine had been in no physical altercations at school. Occasionally, **she would ask** to go to the "time-out" room so she could calm down. Janine had not been re-arrested for any crime. She had experienced some troubling personal experiences with her living arrangements, but the Probation Officer had followed my lead with the expression, "Work with me here, Janine, I'm trying to think of options". Janine did work with her, assessing different options, until they found one they could both agree on.

Janine went on to present the Restorative Justice video project to her school's elementary, middle and high school class. This was a success and Janine found that she liked presenting and was very good at it. The principal asked her to present the video to the Board of Education. This was also a success and Janine was asked to present it during National Mental Health Week in St. Paul, MN.

I saw Janine again 4 months later. She had lost about 25 pounds. She was still wearing jeans and a t-shirt, but the t-shirt was lavender, not black. She had the sleeves rolled up to her shoulders so it looked gathered and rather feminine. Janine did not approach me, nor did she burst forth with any willing conversation when I approached her, but I was able to get her to laugh in a short amount of time.

Many different professionals have worked with Janine over the years. All of them were consistent with what they were trying to teach her; to think before she acts. All of them wanted to keep Janine out of the Criminal Justice System. All of them also knew they were making no progress with Janine and they were all scared for her and what her future held.

I absolutely believe that it was the ability to finally "embody" the concept of what 3 seconds actually "felt" like that allowed Janine to learn and to wait. That one piece, that one core piece, allowed Janine to accept and to use all of the help she was being offered. I am convinced

that the *only way* she could have learned it was somatically. Dr. Feldenkrais's exquisite and brilliant work allowed me to teach Janine that, even when I was placed under considerable constraints. Janine, herself, took that learning to new heights.

Working with Janine was a wonderful learning experience for me as well. I learned that wonderful changes could occur within rigid constraints. I learned that creativity and flexibility are at the very heart of Somatic Education. There is always a way. The way may be narrow, and the movement may be small, but as Dr. Feldenkrais said, "Movement is Life". Life is not a thing in itself; it is a process. If we can find and use many alternative ways to influence the process, the process improves. As we each find and use the concept of choice, we have within us the ability to improve our own process of Life. What I learned through Janine is that Life will always find a way. The world of Somatic Education continually shows me that way.

Postscript: Since I first put this story down on paper, Janine has continued to make significant personal progress. She was mainstreamed back into traditional high school, she graduated last June, she is off probation, she began College, her story has been on the front page of the St. Paul Pioneer Press, and she has appeared on national television.

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