

# **Oiling the Tin Man's Armor and Healing His Heart III: Reich's and Feldenkrais's Treatment**

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The Tin Man is waiting alongside Dorothy and the Scarecrow. Toto is racing around beneath their feet and in the nearby forest restless to get on with their journey. These characters of the legend of OZ are patiently waiting for Wilhelm Reich and Moshe Feldenkrais to show up before restarting their trip to Oz. Dorothy, the Scarecrow and the Tin Man have taken a few moments to reflect on the validating of the Good Witch's claim that the Wizard can solve everything. Even though she is a "good" witch, Belinda is inclined like all witches to distort reality and place everyone in the "absolutely good" or "absolutely bad" category.

Our thoughtful colleagues concluded that anyone who is ruling an entire city (especially if it is Emerald in color and perhaps in substance) can't be all good or all bad. Mayors, emperors and other rulers are likely to be a bit dishonest in declaring their capacity to solve all problems. As a resident of Kansas, Dorothy suggests that they call in two experts regarding the matter of armaments and the healing of hearts. She recommends Wilhelm Reich and Moshe Feldenkrais.

Neither Reich nor Feldenkrais are politicians. Rather, both are noted experts on these matters – though each is quite controversial. Dorothy and the Scarecrow convince the Tin Man that it is worth a try. If either Reich or Feldenkrais are successful, then the trip to Oz can focus on the Scarecrow's acquisition of a brain and Dorothy's return to Kansas (possibly bringing Reich and Feldenkrais along with her). With his new mobility and heart, the Tin Man can be of great service to both Dorothy and the Scarecrow. If they can only get Toto to calm down a bit . . .

## **Reich: Healing the Heart**

We can first introduce Wilhelm Reich—though we have already introduced him in the first and second of our essays (Bergquist, 2023a, Bergquist, 2023b) and have listened to his own initial account of armor and the healing of hearts. To begin with, Wilhelm Reich (1972, p. 42) is aligned with Freud in offering a topographical point of view. The technique being used is dependent on the particular element of the psyche being addressed (Id, Ego, Super-Ego). Reich, however, moves beyond Freud in his expansive perspective on the dynamics operating in a psychoanalytic program. He believes that unconscious matter can't become conscious until such time as the resistance of the patient has been addressed. Dr. Reich isn't done. He offers a third point of view that he identifies as economic and structural. It concerns the distinctive strategies to be used with each patient—depending in large part on their character structure.

### **Addressing the Resistance**

Like Feldenkrais, Reich begins by inserting oil into the joints of the armor. The heart can't be healed until the joints have been oiled. However, in Reich's case the joints are psychological in nature and the "oil" is focused on confronting the initial resistance in therapy.

This initial confrontation is critical for Dr. Reich. It must precede any in-depth interpretive work (Reich, 1972, p. 29):

. . . interpretations involving deeper probing have to be avoided as long as the first front of the cardinal resistances has not become manifest and been eliminated, regardless of how abundant, clear, and obviously interpretable the material may be. The more material a patient recollects without having produced corresponding resistances, the more circumspect one must become. Faced with the choice of interpreting unconscious contents or taking up evident resistances, the analyst will choose the latter. Our principle is: No interpretation of meaning when a resistance interpretation is still to come. The reason for this is simple enough. If the analyst offers an interpretation before the dissolution of the germane resistances, the patient will accept the interpretation for reasons related to the transference, in which case he will wholly depreciate its importance at the first sign of a negative bearing, or the resistance will follow afterwards. In either case, the interpretation has forfeited its therapeutic force: it has fizzled out. Such an error is very difficult, if at all possible, to correct. The path which the interpretation must take into the deep unconscious has been blocked off.

Reich (1972, p. 29) goes on to make a telling (and distinctive) point regarding the sequencing of analytic activities:

It is important not to disturb the patient in the unfolding of his "analytic personality" during the first weeks of treatment. Neither should the resistances be interpreted before they have been fully developed and in essence understood by the analyst. Naturally, the moment at which a resistance is interpreted will depend largely upon the analyst's experience.

The key question becomes: how does the analyst identify the source and nature of the resistance. Usually, it involves both the direct observation of the patient's behavior as well as the analyst's interpretation (though not revealing) of underlying psychic dynamics. I first turn to what Reich (1972, p. 30) has to say about the identification of the patient's source of resistance:

. . . [T]o dissolve the resistance, the analyst must know the unconscious material pertaining to and contained in it, yet he has no way of reaching this material because it is shut off by the resistance. Like the dream, every resistance has a historical meaning (an origin) and a contemporary relevance. The impasse can be penetrated by first divining the contemporary meaning and purpose of the resistance from the contemporary situation (the unfolding of which the analyst has observed) and from the form and mechanisms of the resistance, and then working through it with corresponding interpretations in such a way that the germane infantile material is brought to the surface. It is only with the help of the latter that the resistance can be wholly dissolved. There are of course no rules for the ferreting out of the resistances and the divining of their contemporary meaning. To a large extent, this is a matter of intuition--and here we have the beginning of the non-teachable art of analysis. The less blatant, the more concealed the resistances are (i.e., the more the patient deceives), the more certain the analyst will have to be of his intuitions in order to gain control. In other words, the analyst himself must be analyzed and, over and above this, he must have special gifts.

Reich (1972, p. 3) goes on at this point to consider the nature of what he calls "latent resistance":

What is a "latent resistance"? They are attitudes on the part of the patient which are not expressed directly and immediately, i.e., in the form of doubt, distrust, tardiness, silence, obstinacy, apathy, etc., but indirectly in the analytic performance. Exceptional docility or complete absence of manifest resistances is indicative of concealed and, for that reason, much more dangerous passive resistance.

Ironically, these most dangerous forms of resistance are among those that are most readily apparent to the analysts. Like the armor being worn by the Tin Man, the resistance is being worn and is manifest in ways that are immediately apparent. One of these ways is described by Reich as "breaking the basic rules."

*Breaking the Basic Rules:* The resistance is often identified as character resistance as a way to capture its power and pervasive appearance as part of the character armor. It shows up in a variety of different ways early in the therapy program. Often it is a matter of the patient "not following the basic rules." (Reich, 1972, p. 43) The patient shows up late for their therapy session. Or the patient either accepts the therapist's interventions uncritically or rejects them without given the rejection any thought.

There is an important point to be made. The behavioral patterns often suggest that the patient doesn't yet really trust the therapist—often because of the long-standing neurosis, living in a "neurotic milieu" or failure to obtain help from previous therapists. Reich notes that this initial lack of trust is usually based in one's Ego—not in one's more primitive irrational fears.

This failure to follow the basic rules is usually addressed initially as an "instructional" issue—with the therapist pointing out the basic rules and providing information that might help the patient increase their trust in the therapist. Later, the failure to follow the rules is addressed in an interpretive manner, with the therapist exploring deeper issues regarding trust and rules.

Reich (1972, p. 49) offers the following suggestions regarding the approach to be taken at this later stage in identifying and analyzing the character resistance:

In addition to the dreams, associations, slips, and other communications of the patients, the way in which they recount their dreams, commit slips, produce associations, and make their communications, in short their bearing, deserves special attention. Adherence to the basic rule is something rare, and many months of character-analytic work are required to instill in the patient a halfway sufficient measure of candidness. The way the patient speaks, looks at and greets the analyst, lies on the couch, the inflection of the voice, the degree of conventional politeness which is maintained, etc., are valuable cues in assessing the secret resistances with which the patient counters the basic rule. And once they have been understood, they can be eliminated through interpretation. It is not only what the patient says but how he says it that has to be interpreted. Analysts are often heard to complain that the analysis is not progressing, that the patient is not producing any "material." By material, what is usually meant is merely the content of the associations and communications. But the nature of the patient's silence or sterile repetitions is also material which has to be used fully. There is scarcely a situation in which the patient does not produce any material, and we have to lay the blame upon ourselves if we can't make use of the patient's bearing as material.

*Resistance vs. Symptom-Relief:* while patients often come into therapy to reduce specific symptoms (such as anxiety or phobias), the therapist doesn't immediately work on these symptoms. (Reich, 1972,

p. 46) There are several reasons for this lack of initial attention to symptoms. First, the patient usually has a lack of insight regarding the nature of their “illness.” The patient usually doesn’t describe its frequency of occurrence or its full impact on them. Second, the patient has usually built up an extensive and highly resistant rationalization for their symptoms. They try to make these symptoms somehow seem sensible and “normal” (even though it is hurting them in a deep and sustained manner).

*Working on the Resistance:* In focusing on the resistance, Reich finds many ways in which to help his patient identify its source. In one case that Reich’ describes, the patient recognizes that he is afraid the analyst will “deprive him of his ideals.” (Reich, 1972, p. 67) As many analysts observe, successful analysis often involves kicking a patient out of Eden.

Our Tin Man, for instance, would be free to fear the many challenges of the Forest. Ensnared in his armor, the Tin Man need make no decisions; he has lived “happily” in this one spot in the forest (a small patch of grass beside the Yellow Brick Road). Another patient was deeply embedded in a “transferred father resistance.” (Reich, 1972, p. 104) The therapist had become the father and the patient wanted no part of his abusive father.

Reich (1972, p. 35) offers the following description regarding how best to address the transference:

In an analysis that is proceeding correctly, it is not long before the first substantial transference resistance arises. To begin with, we must understand why the first significant resistance against the continuation of the analysis is automatically, and in keeping with the legitimacy of the case's structure, tied in with the relationship to the analyst. . . . At first, the resistance is directed solely against what is repressed, but the patient knows nothing about it, neither that he bears something forbidden in himself nor that he is fending it off. As Freud demonstrated, the resistances themselves are unconscious. But the resistance is an emotional stirring corresponding to an increased expenditure of energy, and for that reason cannot remain buried. Like everything else that is irrationally motivated, this emotional stirring also strives to achieve a rational foundation, i.e., to become anchored in a real relationship. Now what could be closer to hand than to project, and to project upon that person who brought about the whole conflict through his insistence on the disagreeable basic rule?

Reich’s (1972, p. 35) holistic perspective (like that deployed by Feldenkrais) is apparent in his requirement that the resistance (and underlying neurosis) be addressed from all sides:

Using the cardinal resistance as a kind of citadel, as it were, the analyst must undermine the neurosis from all sides, instead of taking up individual peripheral resistances, i.e., attacking many different points which have only an indirect relation to one another. By consistently broaching the resistances and the analytic material from the first transference resistance, the analyst is able to survey the situation as a whole, both past and present.

Thus, we find that interpretation of the resistance serves as a gateway to an engagement with the underlying neurotic symptoms. In keeping with our analogy, as I have already mentioned, the Tin Man’s armor must first be oiled before there is an attempt to heal the heart. Reich (1972, p. 41) sums it up this way: “resistances cannot be taken up soon enough in the analysis, and that, apart from the resistances, the interpretation of the unconscious cannot be held back enough.” The analyst holds back the interpretation until the resistance (armor) has been oiled—then the Tin Man (and patient) is ready for the more intimate exploration of his heart (neurotic symptoms).

Here is an example offered by Reich (1972, p. 80) regarding how the transition takes place from addressing the transference to addressing the underlying neurotic issues.

. . . [A] patient never becomes emotionally involved and remains indifferent, regardless of what material he produces, one is dealing with a dangerous emotional block, the analysis of which must take precedence over everything else if one does not want to run the risk of having all the material and interpretations lost. If this is the case, the patient may acquire a good knowledge of psychoanalytic theory, but he will not be cured. If, confronted with such a block, the analyst elects not to give up the analysis because of the "strong narcissism," he can make an agreement with the patient. The patient will be given the option to terminate the analysis at any time; in turn, he will allow the analyst to dwell upon his emotional lameness until it is eliminated.

For Reich (1972, p.80-81), this is not a short-term process. He would never have subscribed to the present-day emphasis on short-term therapy.

Eventually it usually takes many months (in one case it took a year and a half) the patient begins to buckle under the continual stressing of his emotional lameness and its causes. In the meantime, the analyst will gradually have obtained sufficient clues to undermine the defense against anxiety, which is what an emotional block is. Finally, the patient rebels against the threat of the analysis, rebels against the threat to his protective psychic armor, of being put at the mercy of his drives, particularly his aggressive drives. By rebelling against this "non-sense." However, his aggressiveness is aroused and it is not long before the first emotional outbreak ensues (i.e., a negative transference) in the form of a paroxysm of hate. If the analyst succeeds in getting this far, the contest has been won. When the aggressive impulses have been brought into the open, the emotional block has been penetrated and the patient is capable of analysis. From this point on, the analysis runs its usual course. The difficulty consists in drawing out the aggressiveness.

It would seem that the Armor is not just being oiled—it is also being beaten on by the analyst. The thumping might reveal a wounded heart; it certainly will arouse a reaction from the patient—and this helps to "break the emotional block" (that is the psychic armor).

### **Addressing the Neurotic Symptoms**

How then are the neurotic symptoms confronted? It is often the case that Reich (1972, p. 89) focuses on the patient's anxiety—for this anxiety often is directly associated with the underlying neurosis. Furthermore, the anxiety often impacts in an immediate way on the patient's daily life—thus providing a motive for delving deeply into the conditions that precipitate this anxiety:

The patient's attacks of anxiety were accompanied by palpitations and a paralysis of all volition. Even in the intervals between these attacks he was never wholly free of a feeling of uneasiness. Frequently, the attacks of anxiety occurred quite suddenly, but they were also easily provoked when, for example, he read about mental illnesses or suicide in the newspaper. In the course of the previous year his work capacity had shown marked signs of deteriorating, and he feared that he might lose his job because of his reduced performance.

We find in this brief description of one patient's experience of anxiety a clear example of what Robert Sapolsky (1998) describes in our previous essay as a state of Freeze. When we are frozen in anxiety,

imagining many threatening lions, there is little opportunity to perform our job—or as Reich often suggested—establish satisfactory interpersonal relationships or a gratifying sex life.

We also find a focus in Reich's work on the armor itself. The armor is being oiled and perhaps beat upon. The armor is also being studied by the analyst and patient. Why was the armor worn in the first place and why is it still being worn. Are there imaginary lions against which the armor is supposed to protect. Is there a "good" (though irrational) reason to remain standing in place fully clad—and frozen—in armor? Given the armor and frozen posture, what damage is being done to the heart of the Tin Man and analytic patient.

I turn again to the words offered by Reich (1972, p. 48):

Whereas the symptom corresponds solely to one definite experience or one circumscribed desire, the character, i.e., the person's specific mode of existence, represents an expression of the person's entire past. So a symptom can emerge quite suddenly, while the development of each individual character trait requires many years. We must also bear in mind that the symptom could not have suddenly emerged unless a neurotic reaction basis already existed in the character.

Reich is clearly suggesting that the armor has usually been in place since his patient was a child. Thus, the imaginary lions were first threatening early in life. The lions often appeared as threatening parents or as unsupportive environments in which the powerless child was forced to live. As a psychoanalyst, Reich (1972, p. 48) is also pointing to the powerful role played by libidinal urges—which the child will find to be just as threatening as any external "lions":

In the analysis, the neurotic character traits as a whole prove to be a compact defense mechanism against our therapeutic efforts, and when we trace the origin of this character "armor" analytically, we see that it also has a definite economic function. Such armor serves on the one hand as a defense against external stimuli; on the other hand it proves to be a means of gaining mastery over the libido, which is continuously pushing forward from the id, because libidinal and sadistic energy is used up in the neurotic reaction formations, compensations, etc.

Reich believes that Anxiety is continually being bound by the armor. While Sapolsky would probably suggest that the Anxiety produces a Frozen condition, Reich is more inclined to reverse the order. For Reich, the armor comes first and then the Anxiety. The state of Anxiety is Frozen in place and returns the favor by keeping the armor in place. Reich points to the similar dynamic operating in Freud's initial theory. For Freud, anxiety is bound up in what he calls the "compulsive symptoms."

### **Using the Transference**

Reich (1972, pp. 127-128) notes that Freud has identified three tasks (or stages) associated with work on a patient's transference. There is first the establishment of durable positive transference. Reich agrees with Freud that a patient must establish a trusting and appreciative relationship with their therapist if the therapy is to work. This movement beyond Ego-based building of trust that should be taking place during the first sessions of therapy. The transference now has a less rational side to it. As Freud noted, this second stage of transference is used by the therapist to move beyond the resistance to the therapeutic work on the underlying neurotic symptoms.

The third stage of positive transference is engaged as the therapist seeks to meet the major challenge of extracting repressed elements and to “bring about dramatically complete and affective abreactive eruptions.” (Reich, 1972, p. 128) For both Freud and Reich, these “eruptions” involve strong emotional expressions—often expressions of grief, anger, fear or longing. A dream is interpreted in a manner that produces strong, emotionally laden memories of childhood. A critical interaction with a significant person in the patient’s life produces the content for an insight-filled interpretation by the therapist regarding the emotions accompanying (and often directing) this interaction.

None of this can occur without a strong positive transference. If this transference is not present, then the “repressed elements” become threats and the abreactions become unacceptable for the patient. Later, object relations theorists would suggest that the positive transference provides a “container” for the anxiety induced in the therapy session. Without this container, the anxiety spills out and intensifies. With the container in place, anxiety can be successfully “metabolized” (as I described in the second essay of this series).

What about negative transference? At first, it is engaged by the Ego as defense against the therapeutic engagement itself. (Reich, 1972, p. 130) Breaking the basic rules is a strong expression of the negative transference. Later, the negative transference relates directly to the patients’ character armor. It is fully understandable that a patient might develop a negative relationship with his therapist, if the patient is threatened with the loss of his armor and with suddenly becoming naked in a world that intends to do harm. The Tin Man might want to retain his armor—even if the therapist is trying to heal his heart. Reich (1972, p. 337) even ruminates briefly on the potential existence of Freud’s death instinct. This instinct might push against life (and the elimination of armor and neurotic symptoms) as well as encourage the patient to view his therapist as the “enemy.”

Reich also touches briefly on the issue of counter-transference—the moments in therapy when the analyst’s own psychic dynamics enters into therapeutic interaction. Reich (1972, p.147) offers the following comments:

Without going into the whole complex of questions, we will illustrate the problem of counter-transference with a few typical examples. It is usually possible to recognize by the way the case is proceeding whether and in which area the attitude of the analyst is defective, i.e., disturbed by his own psychological problems. The fact that some cases never produce an affective negative transference is to be ascribed not so much to the patient's block as to that of the analyst. The analyst who has not resolved the repression of his own aggressive tendencies will be incapable of accomplishing this work satisfactorily in his patients and might even develop an affective unwillingness to form an accurate intellectual appraisal of the importance of the analysis of the negative transference. His repressed aggression will cause the analyst to regard as a provocation the patient's aggression which has to be roused. He will either overlook negative impulses in the patient or obstruct their manifestation in some way. He might even reinforce the repression of the aggression by exaggerated friendliness toward the patient. Patients quickly sense such attitudes on the part of the analyst and thoroughly exploit them in warding off drives. An affect block or an excessively solicitous bearing on the part of the analyst is the most telling sign that he is warding off his own aggression.

Is the analyst squirting in the oil with a bit of vehemence? Is he banging on the armor a bit too hard? It is, of course, helpful that there are other people around to ensure that this aggressive act doesn’t go

too far. The Tin Man had Dorothy, the Scarecrow, Toto (and later the Lion) to counter the countertransference. An analyst will hopefully have a supervisor to help him address his own transference.

### **Feldenkrais: Promoting Movement**

I reintroduce Moshe Feldenkrais, a member of our diagnostic team and now our treatment team (Bergquist, 2023a, Bergquist, 2023b). I also return to the Tin Man and recount his fateful story. Plenty of time is available for the retelling of the story—since Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man and Toto are waiting for the arrival of both Reich and Feldenkrais. An accurate rendering of the story might also be important, given that both Reich and Feldenkrais are looking for causes on the way to the prescription of treatments. The story goes something like this: the Tin Man is standing, frozen in place on the grasses knoll by the yellow brick road. A sudden rainstorm left him rusted in place. After hearing a muffled cry and instructions from the rusted Tin Man, Dorothy found a container of oil sitting beside the Tin Man.

Apparently, the Tin Man had previously been faced with the challenge of potential rusting and had an oilcan nearby to prevent getting frozen in place. The Tin Man asked Dorothy (and the Scarecrow) to squirt some oil into his mouth. He could then talk and immediately asked Dorothy and the Scarecrow to squirt oil in his joints so that he could begin to move—and could tell them how he got into this predicament. Apparently, the Tin Man was caught off guard when the rain suddenly poured down. He immediately rusted in place and couldn't grab the oilcan and lubricate his joints.

We might anticipate some of the questions that Reich or Feldenkrais could ask. How did the Tin Man get rusted so fast? We might also notice that no rust was apparent on the shiny armor worn by the Tin Man. What actually kept the Tin Man from moving? While we are pondering this question regarding the real cause, we can follow the Tin Man's narrative. The Tin Man not only told Dorothy and the Scarecrow about how he got frozen in place—he also told them about his very sad condition of having no heart. He confirmed this condition by banging on his own empty chest. Dorothy then convinced the Tin Man that he should join her (along with the Scarecrow and Toto) on their journey to Oz—so that he could get a Heart from the mighty Wizard.

I am sharing this story (and accompanying critique) regarding the Tin Man because it is more aligned with the sequences of treatment focus offered by Feldenkrais than it is with the focus offered by Reich. For Feldenkrais, the treatment always begins with movement and freeing up the physical constraints—just as is the case with the Tin Man. First the musculature around the mouth of the Tin Man is lubricated, so that the Tin Man can not only tell the story about why he was standing there but also offer directions about the oiling of other joints in his armored body so that he can move. Only then can the Tin Man articulate his wish for a Heart. Similarly for Feldenkrais, the mouth is itself a muscle and movement of the mouth is required before there can be any articulation of personal hopes, fears and wounds. It all begins with movement—even verbal articulation. While Reich begins with the Heart, Feldenkrais (like Dorothy) begins with oiling the joints.

There is a second reason why I have offered a more detailed description of the Tin Man's predicament when introducing Feldenkrais' treatment strategy. The first scene in the Tin Man's narrative exemplifies the perspectives and practices offered by Moshe Feldenkrais. We can note that the Tin Man didn't just want assistance with movement; he also wanted to find a heart. Furthermore, the situation calls for a



critical examination of the real reasons for the Tin Man's freeze. It seems that everything is connected. We are provided with a holistic portrayal of the Tin Man's maladies. This same holistic perspective is to be found in the work of Moshe Feldenkrais.

It is also important to note that the Tin Man was not satisfied with gaining mobility. He wanted mobility so that he could do something important to him. And he couldn't do something important without a Heart. Like Feldenkrais, the Tin Man believes that his own self-image and sense of purpose (Heart) is very important. The lack of Heart might actually have contributed to the Tin Man's frozen condition. Heart might be more important than rain. He might simply have had no reason to move given that he had no Heart. Moshe Feldenkrais would no doubt have pointed this out to the Tin Man.

Feldenkrais probably would have taken it a step further. He would have gently suggested that the Tin Man probably didn't even need the oilcan—for he "rusted over" quickly because it wasn't really rust, it was the fear of being mobility. He was frozen in place as a result of his own anxiety about living in a threatening wood and having no clear direction regarding his own life. In "letting go" of his fears, the Tin Man could recover his own mobility even after the threat of a rainstorm. Feldenkrais's physical therapy-based practice builds on this notion of letting go and managing the stress associated with pending threats (real or images).

Together with the Tin Man, Moshe Feldenkrais can provide a comprehensive strategy that integrates Head, Heart—and particularly Muscles and Joints. He would no doubt approve of Dorothy's suggestion that the Tin Man join her on the journey to Oz. Feldenkrais would have approved not because the Wizard would provide the Tin Man with a Heart (Feldenkrais would have known that the Wizard is a fake)—but because the journey itself would provide the Tin Man with a purpose. In this purpose and in the attendant movement, the Tin Man would find that he already has a heart.

With this introduction, we not only wish Dorothy, the Tin Man and their companions a safe journey to Oz, but also turn specifically to the word of Moshe Feldenkrais regarding the major perspectives and practices he has to offer not just the Tin Man but also all of us who are stuck in our own threatening mid-21<sup>st</sup> Century woods.

### **Everything is connected to everything else**

As we have found with Reich, Feldenkrais (2010, p. 19) strongly advocates the Essential Unity of Mind and Body

The central idea behind all we are discussing is the following: The mental and physical components of any action are two different aspects of the same function-.

However, his treatment strategy tends to be opposite to that engaged by Reich. Building on the psychoanalytic focus on internal psychic processes, Wilhelm Reich tends to move from the mind to the body. The opposite is the case for Moshe Feldenkrais. He moves from the body to the mind.

In treating the Tin Man, Feldenkrais would have begun with oiling the Tin Man's immobile joints. If one starts with the heart (as Reich is inclined to do) then the body is still encased. The heart might be "healed"—but the body still can't move. The repaired heart can only yearn for freedom. The Tin Man might even wish that he was still without a heart (and consciousness) so that he wouldn't have to stare out at the forest without the ability to engage this forest in any way.

## *Outcomes*

In commenting on the outcomes that are likely to occur if one engages in Feldenkrais-oriented practices, Alfons Grabher (2010, p. 15) offers this impressive list:

Carriage of the head {where 4 out of 5 senses are located} improves; shorter time needed to fall asleep; better coordination in rock climbing; Strength of grip increases; Appearance of being younger, better skin tonus; fewer concerns about "small" things; Less distress about disturbances; reduction of work related stress; reduction of neck tension; relief from lower back pain; Learning efficiency improves; Ability to concentrate improves; Ability to enjoy movement and life as a whole increases; Find harmony and healing; More flexibility for mind and body; improved balance and motor skills; fluidity and ease of movement; Improvement of motor control and refined movement; Increased flexibility of spine; More energy, less fatigue; Gastrointestinal function normalizes; Having more options in life; Fewer headaches; Ability to relax improves; Better sleep; Eye-hand coordination improves;

Grabher (2010, p. 15) includes psychological as well as physical outcomes:

More positive feelings about self; Improvement in overall health, general well-being and experience of quality of life; Attention improves; fewer angry outbursts; become more aware of your body's posture, alignment and patterns of movement; Well-being increases; less depression and more interest in life; Range of motion increase; decreased moodiness; Mood improves and subjective well-being increases; Habitual tension decreases; Pain decreases; Depth perception improves; Spatial awareness increases; Kinesthetic sense improves; Balance improves; Anxiety and Depression decrease . . .

At this point, Grabher (2010, p. 20) returns to the fundamental purpose for which the Feldenkrais method is being engaged – and it is a purpose that relates directly to the Tin Man's predicament:

Every lesson, besides having a wide range of benefits, leads the student towards gaining enough range of motion to be able to perform daily activities without restraint. The less physical and mental force is applied, the greater the results. The increased range of motion (without stretching) could come as a result of various improvements; better internal body organization ("better organization" is a Feldenkrais concept), a lower muscle resting tonus, yet at the same time being more ready for movement, a more harmonious timing of the opening and closing of various joints, various synergy effects (e. g. relaxing the neck muscles will also relax the hamstring muscles), or maybe other causes altogether? Feldenkrais very obviously works, but there's still a lot of research that needs to be done to be able to understand how it works.

He ends with this cautionary note regarding the need for more research. Unlike the Wizard of Oz who proclaims the capacity to achieve a wide range of outcomes without providing any evidence, Feldenkrais does want to accumulate evidence of success. We are reminded that the Wizard closely resembles a Kansas-based seller of unproven medicines who purports to offer cures that require no work by the person seeking to be healed (other than swallowing the "miracle" drug).

In reviewing the credentials, values and perspectives of Feldenkrais, we are particularly impressed that Feldenkrais (like Reich) is interested in how everything about the physical body and psyche of the people he is treating are interwoven. This integrative perspective might be particularly important in the

treatment of the Tin Man since he is about to embark on a complex and dangerous journey with Dorothy and the Scarecrow. Perhaps Moshe can offer some specific examples of ways in which this integration works.

*Examples of Integration:*

Moshe pauses for a moment and then offers the following example. As is often the case, he turns to the physical body. He quotes from Grabher's (2010, p. 6) book written about his technique:

One thing you will notice is that each time you find a difficult spot to track there will be a simultaneous change in your breathing. At any moment of confusion, stop and wait until your breathing gradually becomes normal again. After a while, you will notice that the more your breathing remains continuous, the more you will find that the flow of spatial images of heel and toe becomes easier. And you will be surprised how quickly the time then begins to pass.

If you now stretch out the right leg, you will notice that it seems longer. You will experience a change in the kinesthetic sensations not only of the muscles and joints of the right foot but also of the entire right side of your body. The right eye will seem more open-and it actually is. All of the right side of the face will actually be longer and the muscles more relaxed.

If you stand up, you will also notice definite changes in the movement of the right foot and the way it feels against the floor. In fact, there will be various changes noticeable in all of the right side of the body.

He continues to quote Grabher (2010, p, 29):

With this lesson I want to show how to let go of habitual tension in the hip joints. How to let go, in a literal sense. This will help with having the legs standing with less effort. It will also lead to a very nice feeling around the hip joints, a sort of relaxation and feeling at ease. We will also attempt to transfer this feeling to the chest, neck and shoulders. There's a twist to it: a twist in the torso occurs when the pelvic girdle is rotated in relation to the shoulder girdle (and vice versa). This lesson will enable you to release habitual tension in your chest, and thus be slightly more upright - experiencing a feeling of being taller, more at ease in standing. After such a lesson some women might experience having a bigger "chest", due to a more upright posture.

*Nervous system, Brain and self image*

Feldenkrais (and Grabher) go even further in showing how everything relates to everything else. Grabher, 2010, p. 48) is quoted again:

The lesson starts in a supine position, lying on the back. To guide students into this lesson, it might be helpful to give a few cues: "feel the floor behind your head. It's just there. Reliably so. Your head is resting on it. Your head is supported by it. No need to hold your head. No need to hold your shoulders. They are carried by the floor. Feel the weight of your head weighing on the pillow. Let go, let your head and shoulders rest."

It is at this point that Feldenkrais (relying on Grabher) brings about the most important connection—at least with regard to the Tin Man's preparation for moving on behalf of Dorothy and the Scarecrow's welfare (Grabher, 2010, pp. 8-9):

In final analysis, the only part of our being that holds a relationship with the external world is the nervous system--the senses and the rest of the body serves only as a means for action and information gathering. It is obvious that the head, bearer of the teleceptive senses, has active participation in all of our relations with external reality. Thus, the way in which the head moves constitutes the essential ingredient in our self-image, and the vertebral column lying below it has an equally important role, because it makes rotation possible in the cervical and lumbar spine.

These considerations show the importance of the skeleton's role in our self-image. The head, resting on the pelvic structure by means of the vertebral column, is involved in every action--passive, active, or orienting--that relates us to the external world.

Yes, a clear and positive self-image is the key to Tin Man's commitment to the welfare of his colleagues and to his upcoming courage and determination in traveling to Oz. It is when the Tin Man is feeling good about himself and his ability to be of assistance to other people that he is mobilized and empowered. There is no need for the deep analysis offered by Wilhelm Reich. A bit of oiling of the armor and addressing other elements of physical movement and balance can do the trick.

### **Self-image at the center of the integration**

A more detailed description of the relationship between physical movement and self-image is offered by Grabher (2010, p. 10)

If one does a detailed examination of persons in this manner and if there are truly gross differences between their self-image and their objective performances, one can be sure that there will be truly gross defects in their control of those sections of their body. For example, people who habitually hold their chest with an exaggerated tightness, as if they had just exhaled, discover that their self-image of the chest is two to three times deeper than the chest actually is. Inversely, people who habitually have an exaggeratedly expanded, inspiratory chest position will underestimate the depth of their chest. A detailed examination of all the body parts yields many such surprises, particularly in the pelvis and the anal-genital region.

Once we come to see that one's degree of self-control directly mirrors one's self-image, we can understand why we find it so difficult to improve our bodily performance by focusing only on the learning of specific actions. Instead, we might well surmise that to improve one's self-image so that it more nearly approximates reality will result in a general improvement in one's bodily actions.

Another perspective on this integrative dynamic is offered (Grabher, 2010, p. 4)

The musculature is following a pattern dictated by one's self-image. This uniquely individual pattern is felt subjectively to be both obvious and inevitable. This is because habitual patterns are imprinted in the nervous system. The nervous system reacts to exterior stimulation with this habitual ready-made pattern, for it has no other available pattern of response. In order to bring about the kind of dynamic change we are suggesting, these compulsive patterns need to be removed from the nervous system, leaving it free to act or react--not according to habit, but according to the given external situation.

A final statement regarding this integration (Grabher, 2010, pp. 12-13):

Inasmuch as feelings and sensations do not tell us what is actually taking place, we have no recourse but to avail ourselves of mental processes, of judgment, understanding and knowledge, if we wish to be certain that what we feel and sense is really what we want to happen. Without such means being called into service, the errors that might occur could very well be fatal.

Our actions are organized according to a self-image that was formed, as it were, by accident. It is a self-image which is made up of feelings and sensations. This being the case, it is elementary to point out that our actions- when based on areas of our self-image that are less than clear-may result in errors, such as doing the opposite of what one thinks one is doing or doing something that has no clear relation with what one feels one is doing.

The key point, according to Grabher, is that these actions will occur without us being aware that they have occurred. The subconscious (and unconscious) continue to reign supreme.

This brings us to the concept of Peremptory Ideation that is offered by George Klein. This concept can serve as a bridge between the work of Feldenkrais and a psychoanalyst such as Wilhelm Reich. Klein (1967) proposed that there is often a stream of images, thoughts and feelings that is coursing through our head and body at any one point in time. This stream resides below the level of consciousness and is labeled “peremptory” by Klein because it can demand attention and infuse our conscious thought with new, compelling content.

We might, for instance, be streaming an image of the traumatizing car accident we were in several years ago. Suddenly, we feel a chill and are afraid to drive to work today. Or we are already driving and have to either turn off the road or slow our car down to a crawl. The peremptory ideation might instead be quite positive. An image of our child at their 10<sup>th</sup> birthday party is playing at the back of our mind along with attending feelings of joy and gratitude. While we are currently attending a meeting at our corporate office, it is hard to pay attention to the person who is speaking--and we are reminded of the “true” priorities in our life. We might be labeled as a “day dreamer” on this occasion. Daydreams are often populated by peremptory ideations.

Peremptory ideation might also be related to (or even be a determinant of) our image of self. Grabher writes of self-images that help to organize our actions (including our posture, tone of voice, facial expressions, etc.). The self-image at any one point in time could very well be a peremptory ideation—or at least a part of or outcome of this ideation. Our sense of self is influenced by and perhaps carried by an image, thought and/or feeling from some occasion in our past life. Feldenkrais meets Reich and other psychoanalysts.

We are embarrassed by some trivial error because this error has triggered a peremptory ideation that picks up instances of past errors and the feelings associated with these errors. Our self-image is temporarily tarnished. This negative self-image is manifest in our hunched-over back, our shallow breathing and our dropping facial muscles. We look “down in the mouth.” Other people notice this and relate to us as if we were bruised and battered. In appearing to be embarrassed and defeated, we actually become that much more embarrassed and feel that much more defeated. A tightly looped, integrative mind-body cycle of negativity is engaged and not easily disrupted or changed.

**Self-Image, self-organization, appreciation/acceptance and letting go**

At this point, we can return to the perspectives offered by Feldenkrais. We can begin to further unite some of the rich concepts offered by Feldenkrais (and conveyed by Alfons Grabher) and connect them to contemporary insights offered by theorists and researchers in other fields. We begin with the sense of appreciation for and acceptance of the natural movement of the human body for some purpose.

*Finding the natural purpose of movement:* Grabher (2010, p. 19) describes the typical Feldenkrais session and emphasizes the non-demanding nature of these sessions:

There are no stretching exercises in Feldenkrais classes, in the sense that muscles are pulled against resistance. In this regard there is no warm-up stretching, no cool-down stretching, no hold-the-posture stretching; no static, dynamic, nonballistic, AIS, not even PNF stretching. Such stretching methods are not part of the Feldenkrais Method.

The purpose of movement is to be appreciated (Grabher, 2010, p. 53):

When a muscle is used for a movement that it's not meant to do normally, or if it's disturbing other muscles' work, in Feldenkrais we call this "parasitic action". We use this strong term because instead of contributing these muscles draw energy from a movement and make it less efficient, maybe even painful in the long run. In other modalities this is called "energy leak".

We find close parallels to this perspective in the work being done in the area of appreciative inquiry-- or what I retitle and expand on as "appreciative perspectives" (Bergquist, 2003, Bergquist and Mura, 2011). From an appreciative perspective, the "natural" work being done within organizations is to be acknowledged, understood and supported. It often contributes to the ongoing stability (and success) of the organization.

The "key" to ongoing, sustained achievement in an organization is often to be found in the "common" narratives of everyday successful operations in an organization. Sometimes described as the "vernacular" work of the soul (Moore, 1994; Brislin, 1996), these daily operations are often taken for granted or it becomes the subject of "planned change" in the organization. As in the case of Feldenkrais' "parasitic action", the artificial patterns of behavior that are inserted into an organization without respect to the organization's sustaining culture can provide counter-productive and even toxic. Stability and appreciation are often of greater value than change and "improvement." Feldenkrais would probably enjoy holding hands with the practitioners of appreciative inquiry and those practitioners, like myself, who seek to find and support the best practices operating at the present time in an organization—it is about creating an "appreciative organization" (Bergquist, 2003).

*Self-Organizing:* Feldenkrais' perspective of appreciation relates to yet another concept that is prevalent in contemporary organizational (and systems) theory. This is the concept of "self-organization" (that is the fundamental building block for the science of chaos. For Feldenkrais (and Grabher) there is an important element of trust that comes with their work in facilitating movement. They trust the ability of their client's body to make appropriate adjustments (self-organization) when any one part of the body is moving during a treatment session. Grabher (2010, p. 54) speaks of this as a gentle way of working with a client—on behalf of the "natural" self-organizing tendencies and capacities of the human body:

In one lesson Moshe Feldenkrais gave the following advice: "Do it more gently at the points where it is difficult. Do not try to push more, but at the points where it is difficult, do it more

easily, a gentler movement, more slowly. Then, slowly it will-organize itself." He does not say, "then, you will be able to organize it" or "then you will know how to do it".

The key phrase here is "then it will organize itself". It is the nervous system that organizes movement. And a healthy nervous system will always try to make the best possible choice, given the information and possibilities available at the time.

Remarkable! If our nervous system is healthy then it will self-organize the entire body in an appropriate manner. As in the case of an appreciative perspective regarding organizational functioning, the adjustment being made are self-reinforcing. The nervous system becomes healthy because the body is moving in a nature way. The body moves more naturally and in a self-organizing manner because the nervous system is healthy.

Similarly, individual behaviors and patterns of behaviors that are appreciated are likely to not only occur more frequently, but also in a more skillful manner. Many years ago, Carl Rogers put it this way. People are least likely to change and improve if they are being asked to change and are most likely to change and improve when they have received positive regard--what I would identify as appreciation.

*Appreciation of Individuality:* The engagement in appreciation extends in yet another direction for Feldenkrais and his followers. There is appreciation for the distinctive way in which each of us moves in our world. We walk and talk (and relate to other people) in a manner that is aligned directly to our distinctive sense of self-identity. Alfons Grabher (2010, p. 22) puts it this way:

In Feldenkrais classes we approve of a person as who this person is, and we try to show variations and choices. We don't blame someone for what others would perceive as not good or wrong (e. g. if one shoulder appears to be higher than the other, if someone holds his/her head in a pecking position, if some muscles are too weak, if someone slouches while sitting, if a posture is not in alignment with a school or technique, or if someone's breathing appears to be too deep or too shallow or in the wrong places, etc). Instead, we enable a person to notice what is possible for her/himself and acknowledge that a person is always trying to move to the best of her/his ability.

This a strong statement about honoring diversity and both accepting and fully appreciating the positive and purposeful leaning of all of us into a distinctive future.

*Going Easy and Letting Go:* We can go one step further in describing the way in which people behave when finding Feldenkrais's methods to be helpful. We can look both at the behavioral side and at the side of neural functioning. We turn first to the behavioral side and rely once more on Alfons Grabher's (2010, p. 87) account of how it is possible to go with easy—even in a world that promotes the triumph over adversity:

Our culture celebrates the idea of pushing the limits. When trying to achieve something, no amount of stress seems to be too much. "Feel the burn", "destroy those legs", "no pain, no gain" are the mantras. Jane Fonda pioneered this philosophy in the 1980s, and while her taped workouts aren't selling any longer, her catch phrases live on.

Pushing yourself to the limits might give you satisfying feelings in sports and working out, but for in the field of somatic learning pushing it won't have the same effect. You might have some short-term success, but as the stress levels drop, so will your gains.

At an even simpler level, Feldenkrais is about less (rather than abundance). Another departure from prevailing contemporary views (Grabher, 2010, p. 87):

For learning and refining movement, less is more. It's just so much more effective. If any move hurts, stop immediately. That is your body telling you to not do that particular movement. However, if you discover that something feels pleasant, linger there for a while; that is your body telling you that you need that movement.

Feldenkrais is about learning to let go, literally (Grabher, 2010, p. 34-35)

Everybody knows how to contract muscles. When someone grabs a cup, gets hold of a chair to move it, or pulls on a door - there is contraction. Everybody is familiar with this feeling and can relate to it - using muscle power to contract, flex, extend and twist, to pull or push or squeeze or hold onto something. Less commonly trained, yet equally important, is that muscles can be released. However, this does not refer to the term "extension", performed by extensor-muscles. Just like contraction, releasing and letting go of muscle contractions involves a certain kind of feeling and intention. For many people it seems quite challenging to develop this skill, to find this feeling; and yes, for some it actually takes a while to find it and get better at it.

Perhaps this is the most important lesson for the Tin Man to learn. He might not have needed the oil or even the assistance of Dorothy and the Scarecrow (though their caring attitude is certainly gratifying). He could move without assistance. His body was not hollow but was instead filled with self-organizing properties that would enable the Tin Man to travel all the way to Oz without difficulty. Perhaps, his "heart" was to be found in this self-organization—and in self-organizing on behalf of some greater purpose (such as assisting his new-found friends in their journey to Oz).

### **Multi-level processing**

While it was the Scarecrow that complained of not having a brain, it was important for the Tin Man (along with Dorothy and later the Cowardly Lion) also to have brains. For Feldenkrais, the brain (central nervous system) must play an important part in the self-organization of behavior—and benefits from this self-organized behavior. The marvelous self-reinforcing pattern that we have repeatedly witnessed with Feldenkrais (and Reich).

*Body and Mind:* In one of the essays included in *Embodied Wisdom*, Moshe Feldenkrais offers the following insights regarding the multi-level processing of the human brain and the tight interplay between mind and body (Feldenkrais, 2010, p. 21)

What is important is that thinking involves a physical function which supports the mental process. No matter how closely we look, it is difficult to find a mental act that can take place without the support of some physical function. Contemporary thinking about the structure of matter indicates that it is only a manifestation of energy--something more attenuated, such as thinking itself.

He offers an analogy in seeking to make sense of the complex, multi-tiered nature of human thought (Feldenkrais, 2010, pp. 21-22):

It is our familiarity with certain phenomena that makes it difficult to appreciate them clearly. For us, speed is a very real thing--tangible and measurable. Even so, we can neither touch nor



measure speed. It is an abstraction. In order to measure speed, we have to take note of changes in certain physical points in space. But we can go further by measuring an abstraction of the already abstract idea of speed: that is, we can measure acceleration and deceleration, provided we always take note of changes in physical points in space. We can even go to a third level of abstraction and trace out a statistical curve of the variations in acceleration. But in what way is this any different from what happens within us when we are thinking?

Holding to this analogy of three levels of abstraction, note its parallel to mental process: For example, I may read a page absentmindedly and then ask myself if I understand it. Whereupon I reread the page, noting whether or not I am comprehending it. Then I read the page a third time, asking myself why I did not understand it the first time.

*Interdependence:* It is at this point that Feldenkrais (2010, p. 21-22) brings the analysis back to the interweaving of mind and body:

. . . , [W]e can see the similarity of these two analogies, and we can appreciate that a change in speed is possible only with an accompanying change in the physical process supporting it. Any change in the latter means a change in the former. Mental process produces a change in its physical substratum, and a change in the physical substratum of thinking manifests itself as a mental change. In both instances, looking for the origin of the change is futile: Neither a change in speed nor a change in thought is possible without a change in its physical substratum.

While Feldenkrais is being quite abstract regarding the interplay between mind and body (as is often the case with his writings), Grabher offers very specific and detailed descriptions. He (2010, p. 77) begins by focusing on the physical movements and reflections on physical movements that are engaged during a Feldenkrais session:

In Feldenkrais classes, students are invited to quite a different way. Instead of trying to tell them how to move correctly, e.g. getting up from sitting to standing correctly, or sitting correctly, standing correctly, walking correctly, to turn correctly (and so forth), students shall develop the feel of what's actually happening when they engage in a movement.

First and foremost this is about bringing attention to specific movements. For example, how a certain joint moves naturally, and how it moves in relation to the rest of the body. This can be as simple as the first (and second and third) joint in your pointer finger on your dominant hand. In which directions does it flex/extend easiest? From anatomy books we know it's a hinge joint. An anatomy book may say: "A hinge joint allows extension and retraction of an appendage [..]" Such definitions are very precise, but also quite abstract - even with a nicely drawn, detailed picture. Some anatomy books go into great detail, with fascinating pictures from carefully chosen angles.

Grabher (2010, p. 77) can now bring in the mind—but only as it operates as a bodily function:

Yet how is this intellectual knowledge transferred into the body? This is quite a significant question - -and the answer cannot be found within the realm of mind and reason. It's not enough to just memorize anatomy books. A quick wiggle of a particular joint won't make a memorable, beneficial experience either. To make the transition from intellect to physical reality, one has to engage in a learning experience that includes the body as well as the mind.

The state of wakeful consciousness is made up of four elements: movements, sensations, feelings, and thoughts. If these four activities are absent, one soon falls asleep. It is taken as a matter of fact that movement and sensation are central nervous system functions; but, beyond this, we are proposing that mental process is the same kind of function.

Both Feldenkrais and Grabher proposed that our bodily functions are contained within our mental system. As a result, our mind is consistently being influenced by the state of our body. Their perspectives seem to be directly aligned with those of Antonio Damasio (2005) who indicates that our mood and sense of self are constantly being adjusted based on the overall tone of our body.

At this point, Grabher brings in the domain of feelings. These, too, according to Feldenkrais, are central elements in a holistic sense of movement. Apparently, our central nervous system embraces not only physical movement and sensations but also feelings. I turn now to this critical issue that is being addressed by both Reich and Feldenkrais—this is the issue of how we all address fear and anxiety. Was the Tin Man frozen in place because the Forest is a terrifying place (not because of the rain). And, as I have posed before in this set of essays, are we likely to be frozen in place when facing the terrifying forest of our own mid-21<sup>st</sup> Century world?

### **The making and oiling of Armor**

I now shift my attention specifically to ways in which Feldenkrais addresses the matter of feelings—and more specifically the matter of anxiety, stress and freeze. Much like Robert Sapolsky (1998) (see our second essay in this series: Bergquist, 2023b), Feldenkrais conceives of anxiety as being locked up in our actions (or inactions). Under conditions of stress and the resulting conditions of anxiety, our body tends to get bound up and locked in place (Sapolsky's state of freeze). If stress is sustained and anxiety becomes a constant state of affairs, then our body becomes permanently locked in place.

*The Red Light Reflex*: Grabher (2010, p. 56-57) provides the following account of what occurs under conditions of stress. Borrowing from Thomas Hanna, he writes about the "red light reflex":

Thomas Hanna identified three reflexive postural tendencies caused by stress and coined one of them "the red light reflex". He explains that this involuntary reflex pattern contracts all the muscles of the front side of the body. It is triggered by negative feelings such as fear, worry, apprehension, and sadness. Signs of this habituated pattern include rounded shoulders, the head extended forward over the body, sore neck and shoulder muscles, contracted abdominal muscles, shallow breathing, depression, digestion problems, constipation, and many more. In this regard, Thomas Hanna writes: "By learning to regain both awareness, sensation, and motor control of muscles - an educational process that can only be achieved through movement - the brain can remember how to relax and move the muscles properly."

Grabher (2010, pp. 56-57) offers an even more detailed description of what Sapolsky would identify as the state of freeze:

The reaction of fear involves a violent contraction of the flexor muscles--especially the abdominals--and breath holding. This is accompanied by a series of vasomotor disturbances: the pulse quickens, perspiration increases, and in extreme cases, trembling and defecation may occur. . . . The strong flexor contraction is accompanied by a simultaneous inhibition of its antagonist, the extensor muscles, causing the knees to bend and making it difficult to stand

upright. The disturbances that are typical of anxiety: vertigo, vomiting, and other symptoms-are the same as those generally seen when the vestibular functions are disturbed.

Grabher (2010, p. 57) goes on to identify the psychological manifestations of this anxiety-induced freeze and offers the Feldenkrais perspective on the interlocking of body and mind:

Thus, we have established what is the underlying pattern in the formation of anxiety complexes ingrained states of fear, indecisiveness, and chronic self-doubt. Additionally, we have pointed out the interdependence of feelings on the one hand and central nervous system functions on the other hand, showing how they affect bodily posture and create typical patterns of muscular tonus.

Grabher has described a condition that is apparent in the lives of many of us who reside in the anxiety-ridden world of the mid-21<sup>st</sup> Century. We are forever clad in armor and stand motionless like the Tin Man in our own threatening forest. The armor is only loosened with therapeutic oil and only removed with the gentle engagement in movement. Grabher (2010, p. 19) offers this technical description:

A general improvement in the way we use our skeleton allows us to enjoy the full range of movements of the joints and intervertebral disks. All too often, the bodily limitations that we believe are due to not being limber are, instead, caused by habitual contraction and shortening of our muscle of which we are not conscious. Unwittingly, our postures become distorted, and the joints of our bodies suffer unequal pressures.

Much as we can challenge the Tin Man's assumption that the rain froze him in place, Grabher (2010, p. 19) joins Feldenkrais in challenging the assumption that we act old and cranky because of our age:

Degeneration of the joint surfaces imposes, in its turn, a further restriction of muscular activity so as to avoid pain and discomfort in movement. Thus, a vicious circle is established, which gradually distorts the skeleton, the spine, and the intervertebral disks, resulting in an elderly body whose range of movements is reduced long before we have become old. Actually, age has little to do with this sad event. On the contrary, it is quite possible to restore the body's ability to perform every movement of which the skeleton is capable.

Grabher (2010, p. 19) offers optimism in suggesting that we can become limber at any age:

Up until sixty years of age, anyone of good health who is not suffering serious illness can attain this optimal ability with little more than an hour of retraining for each year of one's life. It is possible to attain this condition even beyond sixty years--depending on the person's intelligence and will to life.

A specific intervention ("Stop Technique") is introduced by Grabher (2010, p. 17) to illustrate how the Feldenkrais method is applied in unlocking the frozen body:

Certain esoteric disciplines make full use of the following technique for training reversibility: The learner suddenly has to freeze in whatever position he happens to be at the instant the teacher commands him-and to keep holding this position, no matter how strange or uncomfortable it may be. But by deliberately holding still until the command to relax, the learner becomes conscious of all the typically habituated and inefficient ways in which his body's parts are arranged. When movement is resumed, the learner has an enhanced consciousness that is the

first step in learning reversibility. Gurdjieff calls this the “Stop Technique” and uses it extensively.

It is interesting to note that Grabher is turning to a technique introduced by Gurdjieff—another visionary advocate of holistic health.

*Body and Mind:* Finally, I wish to present one other statement made by Grabher (2010, p. 17) regarding the Feldenkrais technique. It concerns the critical connection between bodily functions and self-image:

By a careful use of methods of this kind one can overcome the bodily limitations caused by an arrested development in one's self-image. The improvement of this self-image carries with it an expansion of the range and number of movement patterns at one's disposal. Thus, improving our skill of reversibility goes hand in hand with a general improvement of our conscious temporal and spatial orientation.

Grabher (2010, p. 23) sums it up in this way: “[W]e would like to reiterate how crucial the control of musculature is in the control of self.”

## **General Treatment Strategies**

How do members of our treatment team address the issue of armor – whether their clients have clad themselves in the armor (as apparently is the case with the Tin Man) or the armor has been placed on them by society and their profession or position in the C-Suite? What do members of our team do about their client’s persona? Do they leave it alone, or suggest that their client seeks out a Jungian analyst?

Taking an appreciative approach, do members of the team help their client see the value of and appropriate use of their persona (and perhaps even their armor)? Do they at least help the person they are treating identify the nature of their persona and armor? Do they help their client better understand the dynamic interaction of their persona and armor with their shifting environment?

Most importantly, as both Reich and Feldenkrais have stressed there is an important interdependency and even integration of the mind and body. Even more specifically thoughts and anxiety are interwoven. We are not anxious until we think about (envision) something, and don’t effectively reduce anxiety without doing some important thinking. Furthermore, this thinking must, using Kahneman’s term, be slow thinking. Fast thinking only amplifies anxiety. Slow thinking allows for the metabolism of anxiety (as I have described in the first essay of this series).

Sapolsky’s (1998) imaginary lions come center stage in this strategy of reflection and engagement. We must help our armored client by challenging their assumptions about attacking lion. First, what is the nature of the attacking lions (whether they are real or imagined). Are the lions coming from outside us or from inside us. This inquiry helps us (and our client) identify a potential paranoid stance. The enemy from within becomes the enemy from outside.

We then ask: are there really lions? This helps us (and our client) identify a potential projective stance. The powerful forces operating inside us get projected outside. The “internal lion” is quite scary. It can be a source of internal power—as was the case with projections of internal power to the Wizard of Oz. Internal power is threatening whether it is available for the benefit of the person holding this power or

for this person's determinant. Internal power incurs responsibility and a need for vision and purpose. It requires that we don't just stand there frozen in the forest. We must agree to embark on the journey to Oz.

We are now ready to engage in two helpful roles, based on this requirement that body and mind unite and that thought interplays with anxiety. One of these roles is asking questions; the other role is making suggestions.

### **Asking the Right Questions**

While we are thankful for the many insights and recommendations offered by both Reich and Feldenkrais, we believe there are other perspectives to be taken—many of which bring together the ideas offered by these two men. We would suggest that the team consider approaching their armored/masked client by posing the following questions in a gentle and appreciative manner:

What is the purpose of the armor (persona)? How does it help people with whom you relate in your role:

Their ability to readily identify your role (particularly important under conditions of stress and the need for rapid response),

Their sense of safety in relating to you and asking for your assistance (recognizing your expertise or carefully defined role) and/or

Their assumption that you will act in a predictable manner (no room for surprise under conditions of stress and the need for rapid response).

When can you take off your armor (persona)?

In what setting?

With what people (your family, friends, peers in the same role)?

What are the "secondary gains" associated with this armor/persona

Status

Personal security

Job security

Hide what is "really going on" inside.

### **Offering Some Suggestions**

While it is important to ask our Tin Man some of these tough questions (centering on the matter of getting stuck in place by something other than the rain), we can also offer some suggestions that build on the techniques presented by Feldenkrais. The Tin Man can attend to his posture, his breathing and even his heart rate (for he does have a heart!). Which of his movements seem to not only be natural but also liberating for him. What happens to his body (particularly his armor) when he conceives of himself as a brave warrior who can go to battle for his colleagues (rather than staying frozen in the threatening

forest). Do his movements come more freely as he “prepares to work on behalf of his new-found friends”?

At this moment, we might introduce some of Reich’s analytic techniques—for the Tin Man is frightened of the forest for some reason and holds on to a negative, powerless self-image to serve some purpose. We can help the Tin Man explore his earlier life or at least what goes through his mind and body when something scares him in the forest. We might find that a peremptory ideational stream is triggered that amplifies whatever be the source of the Tin Man’s initial fears.

We might even find that the Tin Man is imagining “lions” in the forest (as Robert Sapolsky suggests)—and we can go further by exploring why the imagined lions might have served an important function earlier in the Tin Man’s life (but are no longer needed). Thus, Reich helps liberate the Tin Man from his negative self-image, while Feldenkrais helps the Tin Man discover that the benefits of a positive self-image out-weigh the challenges he will face.

Yes, the forest might be frightening and, yes, there might be some danger inherent in the journey with his colleagues to the Emerald City. However, the feelings associated with a liberated body are wonderful. The Tin Man will acquire a spatial and temporal perspective that extends far beyond his armored body and confining forest. Most importantly, movement of his body on behalf of serving his new-found friends provides the Tin Man with deep abiding purpose in his life.

### **Moving Beyond the Tin Man’s Movement**

All of this leads us to consider treatment strategies beyond just those engaged with the Tin Man. We can identify many potential clients – not just the Tin Man. The conditions of VUCA-Plus (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, turbulence and contradiction) produces many armored men and women (cf. Bergquist, 2020). One of our potential clients is a high-ranking member of the judicial system in her state. She has to wear a “uniform” while doing her job and is often featured in the local news. As a result, she can’t go out to a local bar to hang out with friends and have a few drinks. She even finds it difficult to take off her “uniform” while going out in public. As a result, our client has purchased a second home in a city far away from her state – where she and her husband can enjoy an evening out “on-the-town”.

This delightful and deeply dedicated public servant loves going out to small nightclubs and dancing the night away: no uniform and no mask (or at least a different mask). Members of her treatment team might encourage her to do more of the same and find ways in which to find this “sanctuary” in her own local community. She might also use envisioning exercises that produce relaxing images (and perhaps even a positive peremptory ideational stream) that provide moments of sanctuary even in the midst of our jurist’s harried day of deliberations and administration.

Let’s move the challenge of treating character armor up a notch. How do we work with an impostor? Perhaps we are more in the role of helping our client identify impostors in their life or their own fears of being an impostor? Does the impostor really want to abandon their role? The secondary gains can be quite compelling. Are they growing tired of being the impostor or have they begun to believe their own lie and can now live comfortably with their false self? Reality and the “truth” can get quite confusing.

Perhaps a “personal SWOT analysis” is appropriate. What really are your impostor-client’s strengths (that can be truthfully acknowledged and engaged) and what are the weaknesses that this client should

acknowledge (as a first step toward moving into a more authentic role). And to whom should the impostor-client first convey this more realistic analysis of strengths and weaknesses?

What about the environment in which the impostor is working? Given that the impostor is often quite narcissistic, it might require quite a bit of “heavy lifting” for us to bring the realistic threats (as well as realistic opportunities) to the attention of our client. The impostor might be quite gifted with regard to opportunities. However, even here we are likely to find both false opportunities and “botched” opportunities – from which one’s client can learn (with our help).

We have one other suggestion—that we have gained from observing our cowardly lion and wizard. Perhaps we can advise our client to engage the “real” world in a manner that makes full use of our impostor’s actual skills and talents. If nothing else, our impostor knows how to “sell” themselves and their ideas. Perhaps our client can become an effective advocate for some important cause.

Alternatively, our client (like the Lion and Wizard of Oz) can actually begin acting on behalf of another person’s welfare. Would some work at a homeless shelter or assistance on a suicide prevention hotline be appropriate? We suspect that in many instances, the impostor fears being found out, thrown out on the street, and waiting in line at a shelter for food and lodging. The impostor might have even contemplated suicide when confronting the prospect of being found out. They might find that their own armor is cast aside when they do battle against a wicked witch in their own community.

## Conclusions

Dorothy and the Scarecrow are waiting alongside the Tin Man. Toto is still racing around beneath their feet and in the nearby forest. He is increasingly restless to get on with their journey. Wilhelm Reich and Moshe Feldenkrais have worked with the Tin Man and our metallic colleague declares that he is ready to join his colleagues on their trip to Oz. He offers a few dance steps and is the first to sing about being “off to see the Wizard—the wonderful Wizard of Oz [though he is fully aware that the Wizard is not needed for his own liberation from tin].” Dorothy, the Scarecrow and the Tin Man can now reflect even more critically on the validating of the Good Witch’s claim that the Wizard can solve everything.

It seems that both Dorothy and the Scarecrow have learned something themselves from Reich and Feldenkrais. They are both now more fully aware of the important role played by a positive, empowering self-image—as well as the need to not just believe everything a “good fairy” is saying to them. They might even be aware that Glinda the Good reminds them of someone in their own past life in Kansas. Perhaps a bit of positive (but uncritical) transference had occurred—especially for Dorothy as she was overcoming the trauma associated with being caught up in a house-lifting tornado.

There is one other important lesson learned by Dorothy (and perhaps also the Scarecrow and Tin Man). The support of other people is needed when we embark on a major journey of discovery and self-renewal. We are truly returning to “home” when that home is filled with people in our life who are appreciative and supportive of our journey in a variety of ways. I turn to the nature of this support in our fourth and final essay in this essay.

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