

Repetitive Strain Tips

By **Cliff Smyth**

One of the focuses of the *Feldenkrais Method*® is on how we move and what that can tell us about how we use ourselves in our lives. Simply paying attention can be the first step to improvements in our daily life activities.

Here is a list of some things to notice about your movement, prepared by practitioner Cliff Smyth of San Francisco, CA, for people with repetitive strain injuries - but they could apply to everyone.

How much effort do you use to do something? Do you find yourself holding onto things as hard as you can? Do you find yourself sighing after you have made some movements? Sometimes we use more effort than we really need to achieve something.

What do you do when you start a movement? Do you use all the force you could? Do you find yourself holding your breath, squeezing your eyes, tightening your jaw? Sometimes we have an image of effort that is disproportionate to the task.

What do you do when you are resting? For example, do you find yourself clenching your fists or your shoulders raised, for example, when you are resting? Sometimes our sense of effort is generalized, even at rest.

When you make a movement, how far do you go? Do you always go as far as you can - to the end of your range? Sometimes we go further than we need to, especially if we are just exploring or learning a movement.

Cliff Smyth is a *Feldenkrais*® Practitioner in San Francisco. He specializes in working with people with repetitive strain injuries, including teaching special *Awareness Through Movement*® classes.

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