

## The Difference that Makes a Difference

Sixty-nine-year old Lisa Crandall had back problems for years. Since the late 60's she did yoga off and on. "When I hurt I did it—busy or not—and if I felt good, I didn't. When I really got into trouble it was a trip to the chiropractor."

After nothing seemed to work, her doctor sent her to an orthopedic neurosurgeon. An MRI revealed the L-3 and L-4 degenerative disks were pressing on a nerve. Lisa took epidural, steroid lumbar injections and did the hospital therapy. But her condition deteriorated and she was told that spinal fusion surgery was necessary. As the care giver to both her husband and her mother she felt there was no way to do this. She tried to go back to yoga but it was too hard to do at this point.

At the suggestion of a friend she met *Feldenkrais*® practitioner Charlotte Palumbo. Lisa had a *Functional Integration*® lesson and started weekly *Awareness Through Movement*® classes. She immediately liked the fact that the *Feldenkrais Method*® is available to people of all ages and is never competitive.

"*Awareness Through Movement* classes help us to help ourselves to learn the lesson," Lisa observes. "The teacher's awareness of each student help us to notice what we are doing—not just to do what we are doing—and that is the difference that makes all the difference!"

As a result of a year of weekly classes plus a monthly 4-hour workshop she has managed to avoid surgery. "Now I am much more mindful of myself," says Lisa. "I stop, analyze, adjust. It's where are my hips and feet and where are they going?? The feet come in, the hips square off and for some reason open up—then there is a tilt in the pelvis—now my ribcage is up off of my hip bones—the upper portion of body gets long and straight. The shoulders go down and back—my neck gets long as the head goes back and is centered.

"I'm saying Oh, wow—this feels good!!! It's a shame what we do to ourselves with our poor posture. Because I have now had a year of *Awareness Through Movement* classes, workshops, and several *Functional Integration* lessons, my whole life has changed. As a senior citizen I can say how wonderful it feels to once again have an even gait and a click to the heels."