

The HeartMath® Solution

Revolutionary research shows how "the brain in the heart" can make us healthier and more intelligent

The heart -- for centuries poets and philosophers have sensed that the heart is the very center of our lives. Throughout the ages, the heart has been referred to as a source not only of virtue but also of intelligence. Even today we use phrases like, "I know in my heart it's true," indicating that we know the heart is more than merely a pump. Even our gestures indicate the importance of the heart. When people point to themselves they generally point to the area of the heart.

Looking at the heart biologically, it's an amazing phenomenon. It can beat on its own without any connection to the brain, and beats 100,000 times a day and approximately 40 million times a year. It starts to form in the fetus before there is a brain. Scientists still don't know exactly what triggers this self-initiated heartbeat.

The Intelligent Heart

Currently some of the most revolutionary research on the heart is coming out of the Institute of HeartMath® (IHM) in Boulder Creek, California. In the new book, *The HeartMath Solution* (HarperSanFrancisco 1999,) co-author and Institute of HeartMath founder, Doc Childre takes a provocative, in-depth look at the heart and it's alliance with the mind and body. Doc and co-author Howard Martin, depict fascinating information on how every beat of our heart carries intricate messages that affect our emotions, our physical health and the quality of life we experience.

In recent years, neuroscientist Dr. Armour made the exciting discovery that the heart has its own intrinsic brain and nervous system. This helped to explain what physiologists at the Fels Research Institute found in the 1970's -- the brain (in the head) was dutifully obeying messages being sent from "the brain in the heart." Doc Childre and colleagues at the Institute of HeartMath take these discoveries even further. HeartMath researchers have established the heart's capacity to "think for itself." Their aim was to determine how the heart formulates logic and influences behavior. HeartMath researchers believe that the heart communicates with the brain and the rest of the body through four biological communication systems. Through these systems, the heart has a significant influence on the function of our brains and all our bodily systems. IHM's extensive research led to a number of [published studies in medical journals](#) such as *The American Journal of Cardiology*, *Stress Medicine* and *Integrative Physiological and Behavioral Science*.

The Emotions and the Heart

IHM studies found a critical link between the heart and emotions. The studies explain how the heart responds to emotional and mental reactions. As we experience emotional reactions like anger, frustration, anxiety and insecurity, heart rhythms become incoherent or more jagged ([see graphic below](#)), which interfere with the communication between the heart and brain. These emotions create a chain reaction in the body -- blood vessels constrict, blood pressure rises, and the immune system is weakened. This kind of a consistent imbalance can put a strain on the heart and other organs, and eventually lead to serious health problems.

When we experience heart-felt emotions like love, care, appreciation and compassion the heart produces coherent or smooth rhythms ([see graphic below](#)), that enhance communication between the heart and brain. Positive heart qualities produce harmonious rhythms that are considered to be indicators of cardiovascular efficiency and nervous system balance. They've also been shown to produce beneficial effects that include enhanced immunity and hormonal balance.

The brain's (in the head) ability to process information and make clear decisions is affected by how we emotionally react to any given situation. According to co-authors Childre and Martin, as we learn to become more heart intelligent and increase the emotional balance and heart/brain coherence in ourselves, we may well be surprised by new enhanced levels of mental clarity, productivity, physical energy, overall attitude and quality of life.

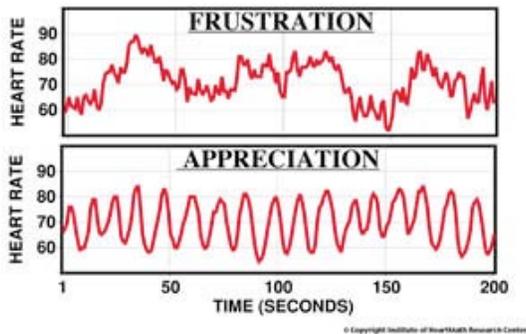
Solutions at Work

Based on these findings Doc and his colleagues developed [The HeartMath Solution](#), a systematic approach to maintain coherence and emotional balance, and develop the heart's intelligence. It may sound complicated, but the Institute of HeartMath has successfully created a very user-friendly approach that considers today's challenges and time restrictions. Howard comments, "We recognize that one of the biggest stressors in people's lives today is the lack of time. We knew the solutions would have to be so simple you could learn them during your commute to work listening to a tape in the car. The solutions would have to be easy to remember and not interfere with people's lifestyle or schedule. I really feel we've done this."

Numerous HeartMath case studies help illustrate the effectiveness of heart intelligence at work. One study with Motorola showed tension, anxiety, nervousness and physical stress symptoms significantly decreased. In the study 25% of the participants had high blood pressure, but after only six months of using HeartMath techniques their blood pressure had normalized, and no conventional medical interventions were used. Another study at Hewlett-Packard said HeartMath techniques made an amazing difference to team morale. Before the program 46% said they often felt exhausted. After the training, this figure fell to 9%. Organizations like Hewlett-Packard, Motorola, Royal Dutch Shell (UK), Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, and Cathay Pacific Airways (Hong Kong) are repeat clients, as well as many state and federal government agencies throughout North America. HeartMath Solutions are presented to more than 20,000 people a year.

Based on HeartMath's breakthrough discoveries, we now know that the heart is the control tower of our body and connects us deeper with our life experience. In The HeartMath Solution not only do we discover the vital importance of the heart's influence on our health, we also learn simple, user-friendly techniques to restore balance in our lives during these rapidly changing times.

Changing Heart Rhythms



Changing Heart Rhythms

The graphic shows actual changing heart rhythms. Frustration produces an incoherent rhythm and appreciation produces a coherent rhythm. HeartMath's Freeze-Frame[®] technique was used to create the shift in this person's heart rhythm.

The HeartMath Solution
by Doc Childre and Howard Martin
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IHM is dedicated to conducting research and providing programs for schools and families to facilitate heart-based living.

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