

# Stress Less

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Last Updated: 2008-05-28

With stress being a major contributing factor in our health today it is helpful to know some ways to keep it in check. Activities such as yoga, working out and meditation are good stress relievers but sometimes their benefits are short lived and are not always an available option. The book "The HeartMath Solution" provides a simple, effective, technique that can be utilized anytime anywhere.

The HeartMath Institute's research has shown that the heart has its own neural network and sends messages to the brain and the rest of the body. By tuning into and using our heart center, we can assist the brain and the heart's communication with one another and greatly improve the body's circuitry and rhythm.

Certain patterns within the normal heart rhythm correspond to particular emotional states. Feelings of compassion, gratitude, joy, care, and appreciation produce a smoothly rolling or coherent heart rhythm and our anti-aging hormone DHEA elevates. While feelings of anger, frustration, fear, and danger elicit a jagged and incoherent image and our stress hormone cortisol is elevated. Consciously shifting our attention to a positive emotion, like appreciation or gratitude for someone or something in your life, will immediately change the heart rhythm. Examples that might move someone into coherence could be animals or a special pet, a place in nature or someone you feel appreciation and gratitude for like a child or a mentor.

Steps to Quick Coherence:

Step 1: Heart Focus

Focus on your heart, the area in the center of your chest.

Step 2: Heart Breathing

Imagine your breath is flowing in and out through the area of the heart.

Step 3: Heart Feeling

While maintaining heart focus and heart breathing, try to activate a positive feeling. This could be a feeling of care you have for someone or something, a feeling of appreciation for the good things in your life, or an uplifting feeling you had at a special time or place. Without trying too hard, just ease into a positive feeling while maintaining heart focus and heart breathing.

<<http://www.heartmath.com>>

Doc Childre, Howard Martin, and Donna Beech, The HeartMath Solution. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999.