

Reducing Stress and Creating Better Health

What is stress?

Stress is a term used to describe the wear and tear the body experiences in reaction to everyday tensions and pressures. Change, illness, injury or career and lifestyle changes, are common causes of stress. However, it's the emotional pressure and tension we feel in response to the little everyday hassles—rush hour traffic, waiting in line and too many emails—that do the most damage.



How does stress affect health?

Stress affects people physically, mentally and emotionally. According to the American Institute of Stress, up to 90% of all health problems are related to stress. Too much stress can contribute to and agitate many health problems including heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, depression and sleep disorders.

What can I do about it?

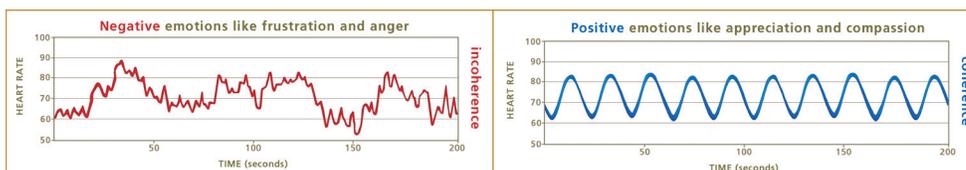
The first step is to understand how stress works. It's not the events or situations that do the harm, it's how you respond to those events. More precisely, it's how you feel about them that determine whether you are stressed or not.

Emotions, or feelings, have a powerful impact on the human body. Positive emotions like appreciation, care and love not only feel good, they are good for you. They help your body's systems synchronize and work better, like a well-tuned car.

HeartMath's research has shown when you intentionally shift to a positive emotion, heart rhythm immediately changes. This shift in heart rhythms creates a favorable cascade of neural, hormonal and biochemical events that benefit the entire body. The effects are both immediate and long lasting.

How does it work?

When you're stressed, your body is out of sync. Typical negative emotions we feel when stressed—like anger, frustration, anxiety and worry—lead to increased disorder in the heart's rhythms and in the nervous system. In contrast, positive emotions like joy, appreciation, care and kindness create synchronization in the heart's rhythms and the nervous system. Other bodily systems sync up to this rhythm creating a state which scientists call coherence. Because coherence leads to more mental clarity, creativity and better problem-solving abilities, it's easier to find solutions and better ways of handling the stressful situation.



How can I create and practice coherence?

The HeartMath approach to stress management introduces tools to help you increase physiological coherence: Use the Quick Coherence® Technique in daily life to reduce the effects of stress and the HeartMath® technology products to accelerate learning and enhance your practice.

Quick Coherence® Technique

The Quick Coherence Technique is a simple, easy way to interrupt the stress response and quickly bring your system into coherence. Practice this technique 4 - 5 times a day, every day for a minimum of 3 weeks. Use it prior to or during events or situations that provide emotional challenges - a quick stress manager. Good times to practice are first thing in the morning, before going to sleep at night, break time in the middle of the day, whenever a stressful event occurs or anytime you want to rebalance or get an energy boost. It is suggested you read through the steps first before practicing them.

The Steps of the Quick Coherence Technique

1. Heart Focus
2. Heart Focused Breathing
3. Heart Feeling

Step 1 - Heart-Focus

Focus your attention on the area around your heart.

Step 2 – Heart Focused Breathing

Maintain your heart focus and, while breathing, imagine that your breath is flowing in and out through the heart area. Breathe casually, just a little deeper than normal.

Step 3 - Heart Feeling

Recall a positive feeling and make a sincere attempt to relive that feeling. You can recall a time when you felt appreciation or care for someone or something and attempt to re-experience that feeling. Once you have found a positive feeling—sustain this feeling by continuing with the Quick Coherence steps: heart focus, heart focused breathing, heart feeling.

Once you have completed the steps, ask yourself, “How could I handle this in a better way?” With practice, you’ll find you have more intuitive choices or options for what you might do next—even in the middle of a challenging or high-pressure situation.

HeartMath’s Inner Balance™ app and sensor maintains the same scientifically validated technology with training, education and self-monitoring as the emWave® products with a new friendly and colorful interface and iOS adapter for your Apple devices.

The Inner Balance Sensor for iOS attaches to an iPhone®, iPad® or iPod Touch®. Then, the ear sensor is attached to an earlobe to measure and monitor the user’s heart rhythms (HRV). The real time app shows users how to respond differently to stress and create inner balance.



The emWave2 is a portable and convenient way to reduce stress, balance emotions, and increase performance. Used just a few minutes a day, this simple-to-use technology helps you transform feelings of anger, anxiety or frustration into more peace, ease and clarity.

emWave2®



Works on either Mac or PC systems

emWave Pro helps you achieve coherence through simple-to-learn exercises and games. Using a pulse sensor plugged into your USB port, emWave Pro collects and translates HRV (heart rate variability) data into user-friendly graphics. Through coherence techniques, interactive exercises and playing games, emWave Pro helps you create a coherent state, build resilience, increase energy and promote focus, mental clarity and emotional balance.

emWavePro®



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