

Mind and Body

The body and mind are interconnected and emotions play a big part in determining one's health status. Stress and its negative effect on the immune system remains the major challenge to good health. The immune system with its holistic nature is significantly affected by its close associations with psychology, neurology, endocrinology, nutrition and the environment. Recent studies show 70-80% of all physician visits are stress related; 80% health problems are stress related; 100 million people "out" everyday due to stress; and 40% employee turnover due to stress. Chronic stress depletes the body's resources and ability to adapt. Over a long period coping functions are compromised and illness results.

A comprehensive approach to maintaining good health includes increasing self-responsibility for wellness, healthy lifestyle choices, health-promoting diet and a positive mental attitude. The concept of "Don't Worry. Be Happy," is not new. By the end of the 1970's several studies had shown that negative emotions suppress immune function. The 1979 book, *Anatomy of An Illness*, by Norman Cousins was a personal account of his experience using positive emotional states (humor and laughter) with guided imagery and meditative states to enhance immune system function in the face of serious, life-threatening disease.

That was then, this is now. Research at the Institute of HeartMath (IHM) shows negative emotions of anger, frustration and fear cause disorder in the autonomic nervous system (ANS) and positive emotions of care, appreciation and love create harmony in the ANS, increase the efficiency of the heart and boost the immune system. IHM is situated in the Santa Cruz mountains in Boulder Creek, California. Since 1991, the research and education organization has developed simple user-friendly tools people can use in the moment to relieve stress and break through into greater levels of personal balance, creativity and intuitive insight. The tools and technologies developed at IHM offer hope for new, effective solutions to the many daunting problems that currently face our society, beginning by restoring balance and maximizing the potential within the individual. IHM mission is to put the heart back into the people business and to facilitate a fundamental cultural shift in how organizations view people and how people view each other and themselves.

Today the heart is recognized as a symbol for love and compassion, through the ages it has been known as the "seat of compassion, joy and love". HeartMath researchers believe love is a physical state that we can be taught to create in ourselves; that it is created within this 10 ounce muscle (heart) by changing our heartbeat rhythms; and that simply by focusing in the heart with feelings of love and appreciation, this change in rhythm occurs.

Recent research at IHM has shown that the electricity generated by the heart can be detected and measured in the brain waves of another person when people are near each other or touching. Electrically, the heart generates 40 to 60 times more amplitude than the brain and the electricity it produces can be measured several feet away from the body.

HeartMath research has proven that **WHEN WE LOVE:**

- The stress response in our bodies is reversed within seconds.

- The electromagnetic energy generated by the heart(about 2.5 watts of power) changes from a state of chaos into an ordered, harmonic pattern of waves.
- Many systems in our bodies that were operating independently of each other begin to function together in a state of order and harmony called entrainment.
- The ANS that runs the unconscious functions of the body changes from a state of conflict and imbalance into an ordered, efficient, balanced state.

Source www.wholefitness.com