



INSTITUTE OF HEARTMATH®

Connecting Hearts and Minds

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Stress experts offer parents, children free resources during holidays

Institute of HeartMath® responds to nation's stress

BOULDER CREEK, Calif. – December 2, 2010 – The American Psychological Association's (APA) findings in a [recent survey](#) that American families acknowledge unhealthful stress levels, but lack willpower or time to make appropriate changes has prompted the Institute of HeartMath to step up efforts to help this holiday season.

"We don't have to let stress deteriorate the quality of our lives when there are very quick and effective ways to manage it," said behavioral psychologist, Deborah Rozman, Ph.D., who serves on IHM's Scientific Advisory Board and is the author of *Transforming Stress*. "Taking a few minutes to learn one effective stress-reduction technique is a small investment of your time that can be invaluable for the countless moments ahead where stress will challenge us."

APA's Stress in America survey, released in early November, noted: "More than two-thirds (69%) of parents of teens and tweens say that their stress has slight or no impact on their children. Yet only 14% of children report that their parents' stress does not bother them."

APA and IHM say there is cause for national concern.

"America is at a critical crossroads when it comes to stress and our health," APA Chief Executive Officer, Executive Vice President and psychologist Norman B. Anderson said in APA's online press release about the survey. "Year after year nearly three-quarters of Americans say they experience stress at levels that exceed what they define as healthy, putting themselves at risk for developing chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes and depression."

The [Institute of HeartMath](#), a world leader in researching stress and the physiology of emotions for nearly 20 years, has developed many resources for reducing stress and building resilience for future challenges. During the holidays – one of the most stressful times of year for millions of American families – the institute is offering several free resources, including a guided emotion-regulation technique and a popular e-book.

The stress experts at IHM recommend adults use their Inner-Ease™ technique when they experience feelings of overwhelm and anxiety and need to reset to a calmer, more balanced emotional state. A more detailed version and guide for this technique are available in the free e-book, "The State of Ease," by IHM founder Doc Childre. It is available for download in several languages at <http://bit.ly/StateofEase>.

HeartMath stress experts say their technique can help people shift from negative feelings to a positive emotional state – one of peace and ease. You can practice *Inner-Ease* with the following adaptation of this technique:

1. If you are stressed, acknowledge your feelings as soon as you sense that you are out of sync or engaged in common stressors such as financial worries, being stuck in holiday checkout lines, etc. Take a short timeout to do *heart-focused breathing*: Breathe a little slower than usual, and imagine you are breathing through your heart or chest area.
2. During heart-focused breathing, imagine with each breath that you are drawing in a feeling of inner ease and infusing your mental and emotional nature with balance and self-care from your heart.

3. When your stressful feelings have eased, affirm with a heartfelt commitment that you want to anchor and maintain a state of ease as you re-engage in your projects, challenges and daily interactions.

Research at IHM has demonstrated that emotion-restructuring techniques such as *Inner-Ease* can create significant changes in mood and people can sustain positive emotions.

The institute also is providing the following resources to help people synchronize body and mind.

IHM offers age-specific narrated techniques available at <http://bit.ly/IHM-Free>. Audio files of several narrated emotion self-regulation techniques can be downloaded at <http://bit.ly/MP3sFree>.

The institute also provides free tips and tools for parents and those who work with children on its *HeartMath My Kids!* Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/HeartMathMyKids>. IHM provides a variety of free services in keeping with its mission to inspire people to connect with the intelligence and guidance of their hearts. Learn more about the Institute of HeartMath, its products, initiatives and scientifically validated stress solutions on their website.

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About the Institute of HeartMath:

The Institute of HeartMath, www.heartmath.org, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit research and education organization dedicated to teaching the principles of heart-based living around the world and promoting global coherence by inspiring people to connect with the intelligence and guidance of their hearts. IHM has been conducting scientific research on the physiology of emotions and the science of the heart for nearly two decades. IHM, a world leader in stress reduction and emotion-management research, was founded in 1991 by Doc Childre. Through its research and education divisions, the institute has developed practical tools, education programs and services – collectively known as the HeartMath System – for the mental, emotional and physical benefit of children through seniors without regard to their social, economic or cultural status. IHM's research has been published in numerous peer-reviewed journals, including *American Journal of Cardiology*, *Stress Medicine*, *Preventive Cardiology*, *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, *Integrative Physiological and Behavioral Science* and *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*. For more information about IHM's education and professional development programs, visit www.heartmath.org/education. You can learn more about IHM's latest available resources by joining its social networking pages on [FaceBook](#) and [Twitter](#) and its [YouTube](#) channel. IHM's [HeartMath My Kids!](#) resource page is dedicated to providing all caretakers of children with practical information.