

+♥ HeartMath® Institute
Presents

Citizen Scientist



Global Coherence™
Initiative

PLAYBOOK

For Schools & Youth Groups

Experiments for Schools & Youth Groups

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HeartMath® Institute

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Global Coherence™ Initiative

Experiments Overview

Authentic Inquiry-Based Learning with the Playbook

1 A Student-Centered Approach

Students actively engage with experiments by formulating their own questions, testing ideas, and drawing conclusions. This approach shifts the educator's role to that of a facilitator, supporting student curiosity and critical thinking without dictating the learning path. Inquiry-based learning fosters essential skills such as creativity, collaboration, resilience, and lifelong learning habits while making learning meaningful and relevant.

2 Review and Choose the Experiments with the Students

Guide students to review the different experiments. Choose whether the whole group will try out one experiment or divide the larger group into smaller groups where they each choose their own experiment.

3 Have Students Create Research Questions

Use the Playbook's research questions as a starting point and encourage them to generate related questions tailored to their interests and contexts. Ask them to create a plan and then gather all necessary materials, if any, before they begin the experiment.

4 Begin the Experiments

Guide students through a hands-on experiment if doing one group experiment or if different groups, ask students to follow the Playbook's protocols for their chosen experiment. This includes:

1. Collecting initial observations (using journals or sensors if available).
2. Recording and reflecting on outcomes after each session.
3. Continue with the structured, repeated experiment.

5 Reflect, Review and Document the Results

Facilitate group discussion to analyze observations. Support students in recognizing any changes, drawing conclusions, and proposing new variations or questions beyond the initial experiment. Encourage sharing findings and personal insights, deepening understanding through peer-to-peer reflection and possible contribution to the broader Citizen Scientist community. Document results through graphs, videos, data sharing platforms, posters, articles or peer presentations.

6 Share the Results

Encourage students to share their findings and, if possible, contribute their discoveries to the Global Coherence Initiative community. Share them through the *My Coherence Story* online form. This is a simple way to participate in the larger research effort – and inspire others with what they have explored.



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NOTES:



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Heart Breathing Experiment

This Heart Breathing practice invites you and your classroom to gently connect with your heart, slow your breath, and create greater balance and ease within your emotional, mental, and physical state.

 Watch: 10-Min Video Instruction



Scientific Background

Research from the HeartMath Institute has shown that heart-focused breathing helps support physiological balance, emotional self-regulation, and improved cognitive function by creating a more ordered and harmonious pattern in heart rhythms, which positively influences the brain and nervous system.



Research Question

Can a short, intentional heart-focused breathing practice that increases heart-brain coherence create a noticeable shift in how you and your group feel – emotionally, mentally, or physically?



Material(s) Needed

- Journal or Notebook
- HMI sensor & coherence app for recording observations – *Optional*
(For more information on tools and technologies, go to pages 43-46.)



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Suggested Protocol

Step 1: Prepare for the Exercise

Before you begin, take a few moments to set yourself up for success. Decide when and how often you'll repeat this exercise. To strengthen the reliability of your findings, it is recommended that you repeat the experiment at least five times, using the same research question and observing the same variables each time. You might choose to do the exercise at the same time each day – such as every morning or afternoon – or during specific situations, like after moments of stress or before important activities.

We also recommend preparing a journal or notebook for all students to record their observations after each session. Having a consistent way to record individual reflections will make it much easier to notice patterns and summarize the group findings at the end.

Once you're ready, you can move on to observing your starting point.

Step 2: Collect Initial Data

Take a few moments to observe your starting point. Notice:

- How you're feeling emotionally – are you feeling ease or maybe some stressful emotions such as feeling anxious, frustrated, fearful, unsettled, or overwhelmed?
- What's going on mentally – are you focused, distracted, looping thoughts, or restless?
- How do you feel physically – any tension – if so, where in your body?
How is your energy level – any pain or aches, etc.?

Notice what you're experiencing right now with a sense of curiosity. This is your starting point which you will compare against after the experiment. Encourage students to jot down a few notes – along with the date and time – to track shifts over time.



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Suggested Protocol

This is an individual reflection, so there's no need to share responses out loud unless someone wants to. The goal is simply to increase self-awareness and create a personal reference point for later.

Step 3: Do the Exercise

Invite everyone to follow along with this heart-focused practice:

- Gently bring your attention to your heart or chest area (placing your hand there may help). Breathe a little slower and deeper than usual. Find a smooth, natural rhythm. If your mind wanders, that's okay – just bring it back to your breath flowing in and out of your heart or chest area.

You'll continue this heart-focused breathing for another minute, and you can experiment with longer times. Feel free to pause the video now to practice this exercise before moving on.

With appropriate IT approval, you can deepen this experiment by using the HeartMath app with the new sensor, or the free Global Coherence App that can be used with the phone's camera. HeartMath's apps allow you and your group to measure coherence, join other global sessions, access guided practices, and track changes over time. You can use an Inner Balance® Coherence Plus Sensor for more precise measurements, or simply use your smartphone camera to track your coherence.

Step 4: Collect Post-Exercise Data

Now that you've completed the exercise, take a moment to check in and observe the same variables you assessed before the exercise:

- How are you feeling emotionally?



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Suggested Protocol

- What's going on mentally?
- How do you feel physically?
- Any other specific areas you were observing?

Write down your observations, including the date and time. Remember, you will be repeating this experiment several times to gather a full set of results.

These are your individual results. Even subtle changes in perception or state are valuable insights. Write down your observations of the **group process** including the date and time.

When ready, invite other students to share what surfaced for them – listening from the heart, not just the head. Resist the urge to immediately analyze. Instead, notice what resonates, overlaps, or brings new clarity to the situation.

Step 5: Repeat the Exercise

To strengthen the reliability of individual and group findings, it's important to repeat this experiment at least five times, using the same research question and observing the same variables each time.

You can repeat the exercise at consistent times each day, like in the morning or afternoon, or apply it after moments of stress to observe how it influences your recovery and resilience.

Over time, you may begin to notice patterns – small but meaningful shifts in how you feel, how you respond, or even subtle changes in the environment. These repeated observations will help you better understand how the exercise influences your internal experience, your interactions with others, or the environment around you.



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Suggested Protocol

Step 6: Analyze the Data

Now that you've completed the experiment multiple times, it's time to review your full set of observations. Look across all the pre- and post-exercise notes, not just a single session.

Ask yourself:

- Are there any consistent patterns or themes in how everyone felt before and after the exercise across different days or situations?
- Did any shifts show up repeatedly – emotionally, mentally, physically, or relationally?
- Are there circumstances where the changes were more noticeable – or less?

Summarize your findings and reflect on how they relate to your original research question. Even small, repeated shifts can reveal meaningful insights over time.

Step 7: Report Your Findings

If you'd like to contribute your discoveries to the Global Coherence Initiative community, you can share them through the *My Coherence Story* online form. This is a simple way to participate in the larger research effort – and inspire others with what you've explored.

On the short **My Coherence Story** form, you'll be invited to share three things:

- 1. Your Research Question** – Which, in this case, was *Can a short, intentional heart-focused breathing practice that increases heart-brain coherence create a noticeable shift in how you feel – emotionally, mentally, or physically?*



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Suggested Protocol

2. Your Method – Which, in this case, was the Heart Breathing exercise. Be sure to include any relevant information, including how many days you are repeating this exercise in your experiment.

3. Your Result – What you noticed after analyzing the data.

You're welcome to upload a photo or short video of your experience, if you'd like. For more detailed instructions, check out the short "How to Share Your Coherence Story" video. Every story adds to our collective understanding of how coherence practices can positively impact individuals, groups, and the world around us.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Explore Variations

Once you've completed the experiment, you are welcome to explore variations by asking a new research question. You might apply the same method in a different situation, setting, or with others.

For example, in this case, you may consider:

- What happens when a group does this before a stressful test?
- Does it shift how I respond to tension at home?
- If everyone does this practice every morning for several weeks, do they notice any repeating patterns? A change in their relationship with each other or others?
- Any other specific areas you were observing?

The core steps stay the same – you simply apply them to a new context or research question based on what you're curious to explore. Over time, these variations can lead to deeper insights and a broader understanding of how heart breathing influences different aspects of your performance, self-regulation, balance, and your day-to-day actions.

With appropriate IT approval, you can deepen this experiment by using the HeartMath app, or the free Global Coherence App. HeartMath's apps allow you and your group to measure coherence, join other global sessions, access guided practices, and track changes over time. You can use an Inner Balance® Coherence Plus Sensor for more precise measurements, or simply use your smartphone camera to track your coherence.

To explore other experiments, download the Global Coherence Initiative Citizen Scientist Playbook.

***Thank you for being part of our Global Coherence Initiative
Citizen Scientist community and contributing to our collective research.***



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Coherence Huddle Experiment

 Watch: 13-Min Video Instruction



This Coherence Huddle experiment invites your classroom or group to test whether coming into coherence together can enhance your group's sense of safety, connection, and support.



Scientific Background

Research from the HeartMath Institute shows that when individuals shift into a state of coherence – when we feel more calm and in sync inside ourselves – and where the heart rhythms become smooth and harmonious – it sends powerful signals to the brain and nervous system that enhance clarity, calm, and connection. When we create this state as a classroom, those benefits can ripple across the shared environment.



Research Question

Can coming into coherence together help our classroom or group feel more connected, caring, and in sync?



Material(s) Needed

- Journal or Notebook
- HMI sensor & coherence app for recording observations – *Optional*
(For more information on tools and technologies, go to pages 43-46.)



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Suggested Protocol

Step 1: Prepare for the Exercise

This practice can be done in the classroom or even online with shared intention. It's been used to support teams before meetings, calm tension during stressful moments, or open up greater flow during collaborative decision-making. A Coherence Huddle can take just a few minutes – and it can change the entire feel of a classroom's group interaction.

Before you begin the experiment, take a moment to choose the classroom group you'll practice with. It could be a specific classroom, a student project group, a sports team, or any constellation of people who come together with a shared purpose. Choose a group where you'd like to strengthen connection, increase the feeling of care, and observe how emotional coherence might shape the collective experience. Once your group is chosen and gathered, you're ready to begin.

Together, decide when and how often you'll repeat this exercise. To strengthen the reliability of your observations, we recommend repeating the Coherence Huddle experiment at least five times – using the same research question and observing the same variables each time.

You might choose to do the exercise at a consistent time – such as at the start of each meeting or get-together, before a team huddle, or following a high-stress moment – or you might anchor it to meaningful events, like before a big decision, presentation, or competition. The key is to create a rhythm that fits naturally with your group's purpose and flow.

We also recommend preparing a journal or notebook to record both the educator's and student's observations after each session. Having a consistent way to record these reflections will make it much easier to notice patterns and summarize your findings at the end. Once you're ready, you can move on to your starting point.



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Suggested Protocol

Step 2: Collect Initial Data

Before beginning the exercise, invite each group member to take a quiet moment to observe their personal starting point. Encourage everyone to reflect on the following:

- How am I feeling emotionally?
- What's going on in my mind – am I clear, calm, scattered, or busy?
- What sensations do I notice physically – do I feel tense, grounded, tired, or energized?
- How connected do I feel to this group right now?
- How present or in sync do I feel with the people and space around me?

This is an individual reflection, so there's no need to share responses out loud unless someone wants to. The goal is simply to increase self-awareness and create a personal reference point for later. If appropriate, solicit a few examples from students. Encourage the student to jot down a few more notes. This will become a regular practice for future sessions, along with the date and time to track shifts over time.

Step 3: Do the Exercise

Invite everyone to follow along with this heart-focused practice:

- Focus your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual. Find an easy rhythm that's comfortable.
- Now, activate feelings of kindness, appreciation, genuine connection or an attitude of deep listening. If you can't connect with a heart feeling, try to recall a time when you

Suggested Protocol

felt a kind, deeper connection with someone. If that is challenging, just breathe appreciation for something for a while to help lift up your feeling and to help settle your energies.

Remain in this shared heart-focused state for 1 to 3 minutes, or whatever duration feels right for your setting. Longer is better.

Step 4: Collect Post-Exercise Data

Now that you've completed the exercise, take a moment to check in and respond to the same questions you answered before the exercise:

- How you're feeling emotionally?
- What's going on mentally?
- How you feel physically?
- How connected you feel to the group?
- How present or in sync you feel with the space and people around you?

Write down your observations, including the date and time. Remember, you will be repeating this experiment several times to gather a full set of results.

Step 5: Repeat the Exercise

To strengthen the reliability of your findings, it's important to repeat this experiment at least five times, using the same research question and observing the same variables each time.



Suggested Protocol

Over time, you may begin to notice patterns – small but meaningful shifts in how you feel, how you respond, or even subtle changes in your environment. These repeated observations will help you better understand how the exercise influences your group members’ internal experience and your connection with one another.

Step 6: Analyze the Data

Now that you’ve completed the experiment multiple times, it’s time to review your full set of observations. Begin with the individual reflections. Ask them to write down their answers to the questions below. Pair share with partners to help spark their responses. Afterward, review all your group members’ pre- and post-exercise notes, not just a single session.

Ask yourself:

- Are there any consistent patterns or themes in how we felt, both individually and collectively, before and after the exercise across different days or situations?
- Did any shifts show up repeatedly – emotionally, mentally, physically, or relationally?
- Are there circumstances where the changes were more noticeable
 - or less?

Summarize your findings and reflect on how they relate to your original research question.

Suggested Protocol

Step 7: Report Your Findings

If you'd like to contribute your discoveries to the Global Coherence Initiative community, you can share them through the *My Coherence Story* online form. This is a simple way to participate in the larger research effort – and inspire others with what you've explored.

On the short **My Coherence Story** form, you'll be invited to share three things:

- 1. Your Research Question** – *Can coming into coherence together help our group feel more connected, present, and in sync?*
- 2. Your Method** – Which, in this case, was the Coherence Huddle exercise. Include any other relevant information, such as how many members were in your group, how often or how long you practiced, and so on.
- 3. Your Result** – What you noticed after analyzing the data.

You're welcome to upload a photo or short video of your experience, if you'd like. For more detailed instructions, check out the short "How to Share Your Coherence Story" video. Every story adds to our collective understanding of how coherence practices can positively impact individuals, groups, and the world around us.



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Explore Variations

Once your group has completed the initial experiment, you're invited to explore variations by asking a new research question together. You can apply the same core method in different situations, settings, or areas of focus based on what the group is curious to explore next.

Here are a few possibilities your group might consider:

- What happens when we do this practice before a high-stress meeting, presentation, or competition?
- How does the experience shift if we focus on a different emotion – like joy, compassion, or gratitude?
- Does it affect how we respond to tension, conflict, or emotional pressure within the group or in our external environment?
- Do we notice any physical or emotional benefits, such as reduced stress, more stable energy, better collaboration, or clearer communication?
- If we practice together every day (or every meeting) for a month, do any trends emerge in our group dynamics or outcomes?

The steps of the Coherence Huddle remain the same – you're simply applying them to new questions or contexts. Over time, these variations can lead to deeper insights and a shared understanding of how emotional coherence influences your group's performance, connection, and well-being.

*Thank you for being part of our Global Coherence Initiative
Citizen Scientist community and contributing to our collective research.*



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Care Circle Experiment

 [Watch: 12-Min Video Instruction](#)



This Care Circle experiment invites your group to explore the power of shared, heartfelt intention. When people come into coherence together (when we're in sync) and focus collective energy on one person's well-being, something meaningful often happens – for both the receiver and the senders.



Scientific Background

Research shows that when people are in coherence, they generate a measurable electromagnetic field that can influence emotional tone, physiological balance, and relational dynamics. Within intention groups, students frequently reported unexpected improvements – whether offering intention or receiving it.



Research Question

Can focusing on shared, heart-centered care for one group member create a shift in their well-being – and in the well-being of the group members offering the intention?



Material(s) Needed

- Journal or Notebook
- HMI sensor & coherence app for recording observations – *Optional* (For more information on tools and technologies, go to pages 43-46.)



Global Coherence™ Initiative

Suggested Protocol

Step 1: Prepare for the Exercise

In this experiment, your group will choose one student to receive care energy, then get together in a coherent state, and focus on sending care for the best outcome. You'll then observe and reflect on if there are any shifts, both individually and collectively.

Take a few moments to decide who in your group will be the receiver of the group's caring energy.

Also, consider when and how often you'll repeat the Care Circle exercise. To strengthen the reliability of your observations, we recommend that your group repeat it at least five times – using the same research question but with a different student each time.

We also recommend preparing a journal or notebook to record your observations and the student reports (both the ones sending and receiving care energy) after each session. Having a consistent way to record your reflections will make it much easier to notice patterns and summarize your findings at the end.

Step 2: Collect Initial Data

Before beginning the exercise, invite students in each group – including the receiver of the group intention – to take a quiet moment to observe their personal starting point. They may reflect on the following:

- How am I feeling emotionally?
- What's going on in my mind – am I clear, calm, scattered, or busy?
- What sensations do I notice physically – do I feel tense, grounded, tired, or energized?



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Suggested Protocol

This is an individual reflection, so there's no need to share responses out loud unless someone wants to. The goal is simply to increase self-awareness and create a personal reference point for later. Encourage students to jot down a few notes – along with the date and time – to track shifts over time.

Step 3: Do the Exercise

Invite everyone to join in this heart-centered practice. Decide which students will be the recipient of the care energy.

- Let's begin by gently focusing our attention in the area of the heart. If it feels comfortable, you can place a hand there to help anchor your awareness.
- Now, imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area – breathing a little slower and deeper than usual. Settle into a rhythm that feels natural and easeful.

For the one receiving the care energy, just relax and be open to receiving the care energy. Don't look for anything, just be receptive.

For the senders: As you continue this heart-focused breathing, make a sincere attempt to activate a feeling of care. This can include kindness, appreciation, or warmth. This alone can help elevate your inner state and settle your energy.

- Now, from this more coherent and grounded place, let's all send focused care energy for their highest best outcome to the recipient.

Feel the warmth of that moment. And let your care flow toward them – like a gentle current of support, helping to nourish their spirit.

- Hold this shared intention and coherent field together for up to 3 minutes (less for younger children). If your mind wanders, gently return to your breath, your heart, and the collective intention.

Suggested Protocol

Step 4: Collect Post-Exercise Data

Now that you've completed the exercise, take a moment to check in and have each student observe the same areas they noticed before the practice:

- What changed for you emotionally, physically, or mentally?
- Do you feel any different than you did before the practice?
- Do you feel more hopeful, connected, or energized?

If you're the receiver of the intention, take time to reflect on your experience as well:

- Did you notice any sensations, feelings, or insights during the practice?
- Do you feel more peaceful, supported, or uplifted?
- Were there any changes in your emotional state, level of tension, or clarity?

Have each student jot down their reflections, along with the date and time. These notes will help you track patterns over time as you repeat the exercise and deepen your understanding of its impact.

Step 5: Repeat the Exercise

To build meaningful insight and strengthen the reliability of your findings, it's important to repeat this exercise several times. Each time, keep the same research question, collective intention, and variables you're observing.

As you continue the practice, both the receiver and other group members may begin to notice patterns – subtle but significant shifts in emotions, thoughts, physical sensations, or even external circumstances.



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Suggested Protocol

These repeated experiences can offer valuable insight into how this shared practice influences well-being, connection, and outcomes – for the receiver and for everyone involved.

Step 6: Analyze the Data

Now that you’ve completed the Care Circle exercise multiple times, take a moment to step back and look at the full picture. This is your opportunity to reflect on what unfolded – individually and collectively – across all sessions.

Review your notes, and the individual student reflections before and after each practice. Do this on your own first, and if appropriate, then come together as a group to share insights.

Ask yourself and one another:

- What themes or patterns do we notice in how we felt – emotionally, physically, mentally, or relationally – before and after the practice?
- Did any consistent shifts emerge for the receiver?
- What shifts emerged for those holding the intention?

As you gather your reflections, let the insights arise naturally. Sometimes, the most meaningful data isn’t in dramatic change – but in subtle shifts repeated over time.

Summarize your findings and reflect on how they relate to your original research question.

Suggested Protocol

Step 7: Report Your Findings

If you'd like to contribute your discoveries to the Global Coherence Initiative community, you can share them through the *My Coherence Story* online form. This is a simple way to participate in the larger research effort – and inspire others with what you've explored.

On the short **My Coherence Story** form, you'll be invited to share three things:

- 1. Your Research Question** – *Can focusing on a shared, heart-centered intention for one group member create a shift in their well-being – and in the well-being of the student members offering the intention?*
- 2. Your Method** – Which, in this case, was the Care Circle exercise. Include any other relevant information, such as how many students were in your group, your intention statement, how often or how long you practiced, and so on.
- 3. Your Result** – What you noticed after analyzing the data.

You're welcome to upload a photo or short video of your experience, if you'd like. For more detailed instructions, check out the short "How to Share Your Coherence Story" video. Every story adds to our collective understanding of how coherence practices can positively impact individuals, groups, and the world around us.



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Explore Variations

Once your group has completed the initial experiment, you're invited to repeat the process by choosing a different recipient.

You can also explore variations by asking a new research question. The steps of the Care Circle exercise would remain the same.

Over time, these variations can deepen your understanding of how shared intention and emotional coherence nurture trust, connection, and meaningful transformation – both for the individual and the class as a whole.

With appropriate IT approval, you can deepen this experiment by using the HeartMath app, or the free Global Coherence App. HeartMath's apps allow you and your group to measure coherence, join other global sessions, access guided practices, and track changes over time. You can use an Inner Balance® Coherence Plus Sensor for more precise measurements, or simply use your smartphone camera to track your coherence.

***Thank you for being part of our Global Coherence Initiative
Citizen Scientist community and contributing to our collective research.***



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Plant Connection Experiment

This experiment invites your group to explore what happens when you enter a coherent state together, and direct appreciation and care toward a living system – in this case, a single plant.



Scientific Background



Research from the HeartMath Institute and others suggests that plants may be sensitive to human emotion and intention, especially when those signals are amplified through group coherence. While you may or may not see immediate physical changes in the plant – like new leaves or taller stems – the plant could still be healthier and stronger on the inside such as stronger roots, more vibrant-looking leaves or even fresher-smelling soil. This “inner health” can help it grow better over time, even if it doesn’t look very different at first. The heart of this experiment lies in what you notice both in the plant and within yourselves.



Research Question

Can entering a coherent state together and offering heart-centered emotional energy to a plant influence its vitality – and affect how we feel as a group?



Material(s) Needed

- Plant
- Journal
- HMI sensor & coherence app for recording observations – *Optional*
(For more information on tools and technologies, go to pages 43-46.)



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Suggested Protocol

Step 1: Prepare for the Exercise

Before you begin, choose the group you'll be practicing with. It might be a classroom, a club, a group of friends – any community that's curious to connect more deeply with nature and with one another.

- Select one healthy potted plant in a shared space – indoor or outdoor – that your group can observe over time. If doing it virtually, select a plant at home.
- Then, take a few moments to decide how many days you'd like the experiment to last.

To strengthen the reliability of your observations, we recommend that your group or individuals who are participating in a virtual setting, repeat it at least five times – using the same research question and focusing on the same plant each time.

You might choose to repeat the exercise at a consistent time – such as every morning, evening, at the start of your meetings or get-togethers, and so on.

We also recommend preparing a journal or notebook to record your observations after each session. Having a consistent way to record your reflections will make it much easier to notice patterns and summarize your findings at the end.

Step 2: Collect the Initial Data

Before beginning the practice, take a few quiet moments together to check in – both inwardly and with the plant. Each group member can reflect individually:

- How am I feeling emotionally, mentally, and physically right now?
- How connected do I feel – to the plant, to the group, or to the present moment?



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Suggested Protocol

- What's my level of curiosity, presence, or openness as we begin?

Then gently shift your attention toward the plant:

- What do I notice about its appearance – its color, shape, posture, or energy?
- Is there anything that stands out – anything that feels vibrant, dull, strong, or subtle?

These initial observations will serve as your starting point for the experiment.

Step 3: Do the Exercise

Invite the group to gently bring attention to the area of the heart.

- Begin by imagining the breath flowing in and out of the heart or chest area – breathing a little slower and deeper than usual, and settling into a smooth, comfortable rhythm.

Now, invite a regenerative emotion such as appreciation, care, reverence, or curiosity. You might reflect on:

- Gratitude for the plant's presence and quiet beauty.
- A memory of feeling awe in nature.
- Wonder at the unseen intelligence within all living things.

Let the group rest in this shared state of heart-focused coherence for about 2–3 minutes. Next:

- While continuing the heart-focused breathing, gently shift your collective attention to the plant. Imagine directing your feeling of appreciation, care, or love toward it.



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Suggested Protocol

You might visualize:

- A soft field of light or warmth surrounding the plant.
- A golden thread of connection between your heart and its leaves or roots.
- The plant glowing with vitality – thriving in health, beauty, and balance.

Continue radiating this shared feeling toward the plant for another 2–5 minutes, allowing the group to remain quietly attuned and connected.

Step 4: Collect Post-Exercise Data

After completing the practice, invite each person to pause and check in with their inner experience:

- How am I feeling now – emotionally, mentally, and physically?
- Did I feel a sense of connection with the plant during the practice?
- Were there any intuitive impressions, sensations, or shifts in awareness?

Then come together as a group and reflect on the shared experience:

- Did the emotional tone or group energy shift in any way?
- Do we feel more connected, calm, or in sync as a group?
- Does the plant look or feel any different to us?
- What, if anything, was surprising, moving, or meaningful about the experience?

These are your initial research observations. Just notice what's present – any small shifts, impressions, or feelings that came up. Over time, these reflections may offer insight into your connection with each other and with the plant.



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Suggested Protocol

Step 5: Repeat the Exercise

To strengthen the reliability of your findings, it's important to repeat this experiment at least five times, using the same research question, the same plant, and observing the same variables each time.

With each session, your group may begin to notice subtle shifts – in how you feel individually, how connected you are as a group, and how you relate to the plant. These repeated experiences can reveal meaningful patterns and deepen your understanding of how shared coherence impacts both living systems and collective connection.

Step 6: Analyze the Data

Now that you've completed the experiment multiple times, it's time to review your observations as a group. Look back through your notes, photos, and reflections from each session – both about the plant and your internal experiences.

- Did anything shift in the way we felt – individually or as a group – across the sessions?
- Have we noticed any subtle changes in the plant's appearance, energy, or presence over time?
- Did we feel more connected – to the plant, to each other, or to something larger than ourselves?
- Were there any recurring impressions, sensations, or meaningful moments that stood out?

Summarize your findings and reflect on how they relate to your original research question.



Suggested Protocol

Step 7: Report Your Findings

If you'd like to contribute your discoveries to the Global Coherence Initiative community, you can share them through the *My Coherence Story* online form. This is a simple way to participate in the larger research effort – and inspire others with what you've explored.

On the short **My Coherence Story** form, you'll be invited to share three things:

- 1. Your Research Question** – *Can entering a coherent state together and offering heart-centered emotional energy to a plant influence its vitality – and affect how we feel as a group?*
- 2. Your Method** – Which, in this case, was the Plant Connection exercise. Include any other relevant information, such as how many members were in your group, how often or how long you practiced, and so on.
- 3. Your Result** – What you noticed after analyzing the data.

You're welcome to upload a photo or short video of your experience, if you'd like. For more detailed instructions, check out the short "How to Share Your Coherence Story" video. Every story adds to our collective understanding of how coherence practices can positively impact individuals, groups, and the world around us.



Global Coherence™ Initiative



Explore Variations

Once your group has completed the initial experiment, you're welcome to repeat it with a different plant, in a new environment, or with a new research question.

Over time, these variations can lead to deeper insights and a shared understanding of how heart-based coherence and intention may influence your connection to nature – and to one another.

With appropriate IT approval, you can deepen this experiment by using the HeartMath app, or the free Global Coherence App. HeartMath's apps allow you and your group to measure coherence, join other global sessions, access guided practices, and track changes over time. You can use an Inner Balance® Coherence Plus Sensor for more precise measurements, or simply use your smartphone camera to track your coherence.

***Thank you for being part of our Global Coherence Initiative
Citizen Scientist community and contributing to our collective research.***

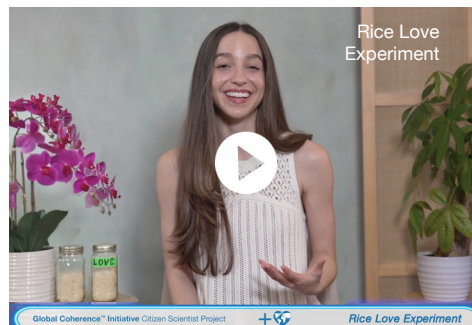


Global Coherence™ Initiative

Rice Love Experiment

This Rice Love practice invites you and your class to explore how heartfelt emotions like appreciation and care may influence the physical environment around you – even something as simple as a jar of rice.

 Watch: 10-Min Video Instruction



Scientific Background

Research from the HeartMath Institute has shown that radiating regenerative positive feelings, such as appreciation and care is known to support physiological balance and emotional self-regulation – and there is evidence showing that physical systems may be sensitive to subtle environmental influences.



Research Question

Can heartfelt emotional energy influence a jar of rice?



Material(s) Needed

- 2 Small jars of cooked white rice – make sure samples are identical
- Journal
- HMI sensor & coherence app for recording observations – *Optional* (For more information on tools and technologies, go to pages 43-46.)



Global Coherence™ Initiative

Suggested Protocol

Step 1: Prepare for the Exercise

For this experiment, you'll need two small jars of cooked white rice, placed side by side in a spot you'll see daily. Make sure the two samples are identical. If this is a virtual experiment, ask someone to house the two samples. Invite the student who is housing the samples to display them using their webcam via Zoom or another video conferencing platform. Ask them to position their camera so everyone can clearly see the rice.



Label them Sample A and Sample B.

- Label the Sample A jar “Love”
- Leave the Sample B jar unlabeled – this is considered “neutral”.

Before you begin the experiment, take a few moments to decide when and how often you will direct positive emotional energy toward your rice sample in the jar labeled, “Love” *Sample A*.

To strengthen the reliability of your observations, it's recommended that you repeat this exercise daily for 2 to 4 weeks. Consistency is important to allow any energetic effects to accumulate over time. You might choose to do the exercise at the same time each day – such as every morning or afternoon.

We also recommend that each student prepare a journal or notebook to record their observations after each session. Having a consistent way to record their reflections will make it much easier to notice patterns and summarize findings at the end.

Once you're ready, you can move on to observing your starting point.

Suggested Protocol

Step 2: Collect Initial Data

Take a moment to observe your starting point. Notice:

- How you're feeling emotionally – are you feeling calm or maybe some stressful emotions such as feeling anxious, frustrated, fearful, unsettled, or overwhelmed?
- What's going on mentally – are you focused, distracted, looping thoughts, or restless?
- How you feel physically – any tension – if so where in your body? How is your energy level, any pain or aches, etc.?

Notice what you're experiencing right now with a sense of curiosity.

Now, take a moment to notice the rice in each jar:

- How does it look right now?
- Any differences in color, texture, or smell?
- Take a quick photo or jot down notes to help track changes over time.

These initial observations will serve as your starting point for the experiment.

Step 3: Do the Exercise

- From classroom seats or if convenient, from a location closer to the rice stand or sit in front of both jars.
- Gently bring your attention to your heart or chest area.
- Breathe a little slower and deeper than usual.
- Find a smooth, natural rhythm.
- If your mind wanders, that's okay – just bring it back to your breath flowing in and out of your heart or chest area.



Global Coherence™ Initiative

Suggested Protocol

While breathing this way, bring up a sincere feeling of appreciation, care, or love, and direct it toward the jar labeled “Love.” You can offer kind thoughts or simply focus on a heartfelt feeling.

Continue this practice for at least a minute. Feel free to pause the video now to practice this exercise before moving on.

Do not interact with the unlabeled jar at all – just let it sit as your neutral reference point.

You can deepen this experiment by tracking your coherence levels in real time using any HeartMath app, such as the free Global Coherence App.

Step 4: Collect Post-Exercise Data

Now that you’ve completed the exercise, take a moment to check in and observe the same variables you assessed before the exercise:

After each daily practice, check in briefly:

- Did anything shift in your internal state – emotionally, mentally, or physically?
- What was your experience sending care to the rice?
- Can you notice any subtle changes or impressions from the rice itself?
- Is there a visible difference between the two jars today?

As the days pass, look closely at:

- Texture or moisture changes
- Color or clarity
- Smell or signs of fermentation
- Overall energy or “presence” of the jars



Global Coherence™ Initiative

Suggested Protocol

Take photos every few days of the rice samples and jot down what is noticed. At the end of the experiment, compare final photos and reflections. Write down any observations, including the date and time. Remember, you will be repeating this experiment several times to gather a full set of results.

Step 5: Analyze the Data

Now that we've completed the experiment, it's time to review your full set of observations. Look across all your pre- and post-exercise notes and photos, not just a single session.

Ask yourself:

- Are there any consistent patterns or themes in how I felt before and after the exercise across different days or situations?
- Did any shifts show up repeatedly – emotionally, mentally, physically, or relationally?
- Was there a consistent difference in the condition of the rice that received appreciation compared to the neutral jar?
- Did any visible changes occur in either jar over time (such as changes in color, moisture, texture, or smell)?

Summarize your findings and reflect on how they relate to your original research question.

Even small, repeated shifts can reveal meaningful insights over time. You are not only building greater self-awareness – you are also contributing to a growing understanding of how heart-based practices can make a difference.



Global Coherence™ Initiative

Suggested Protocol

Step 6: Report Your Findings

If you'd like to contribute your discoveries to the Global Coherence Initiative community, you can share them through the *My Coherence Story* online form. This is a simple way to participate in the larger research effort – and inspire others with what you've explored.

On the short **My Coherence Story** form, you'll be invited to share three things:

- 1. Your Research Question** – Which, in this case, was *Can heartfelt emotional energy influence a jar of rice?*
- 2. Your Method** – You can specify that you practiced directing heartfelt, renewing feelings toward one jar of cooked white rice labeled “Love”. You can also include the number of times a day you practiced, how long you focused each time, how many days you practiced in total (we recommend at least 2 weeks) and any observations or photos you took to track visible changes over time.
- 3. Your Result** – What you noticed after analyzing the data.

You're welcome to upload a photo or short video of your experience, if you'd like. For more detailed instructions, check out the short “How to Share Your Coherence Story” video. Every story adds to our collective understanding of how coherence practices can positively impact individuals, groups, and the world around us.



Global Coherence™ Initiative



Explore Variations

Once you've completed the experiment, you are welcome to explore variations by asking a new research question. You might apply the same method in a different situation, setting, or focus area.

For Example, in this case, you may consider:

- What happens to rice when I send emotions other than love to the rice, such as frustration, impatience, or sadness.
- What happens if multiple people send positive feelings to the same rice sample, compared to only one person? This would allow you to explore whether the collective energy of a group amplifies the effect.
- What happens if I send positive emotional energy to both rice jars but with different emotional qualities, such as love toward one and gratitude toward the other?

The core steps stay the same – you simply apply them to a new context or research question based on what you're curious to explore.

You also have the option to act as a lead citizen scientist by guiding one or more participants through the exercise. If you choose to lead, be sure that each participant repeats the exercise at least five times, just as you would when practicing it yourself.

To explore other experiments, download the Global Coherence Initiative Citizen Scientist Playbook.

*Thank you for being part of our Global Coherence Initiative
Citizen Scientist community and contributing to our collective research.*



Global Coherence™ Initiative

Ripple of Gratitude Experiment

 Watch: 14-Min Video Instruction



Scientific Background

Research from the HeartMath Institute shows that when people enter a state of coherence – where heart rhythms become more harmonious – it supports emotional balance, clearer thinking, and improved communication. When this state is combined with heartfelt gratitude, it can ripple through relationships, reinforcing respect, belonging, and authentic connection.



Research Question

Can combining coherence and verbal appreciation as a group practice elevate trust and emotional safety?



Material(s) Needed

- Journal
- HMI sensor & coherence app for recording observations – *Optional*
(For more information on tools and technologies, go to pages 43-46.)



Global Coherence™ Initiative

Suggested Protocol

Step 1: Prepare for the Exercise

Before you begin, choose the group you'll be practicing with. It might be a team, a classroom, or any small group where trust and connection matter.

As a group, decide when and how often you'll repeat this exercise. To strengthen the reliability of your observations, we recommend repeating the Ripple of Gratitude experiment at least five times – using the same research question and observing the same variables each time.

You might choose to do the exercise at a consistent time – such as at the start of a meeting or group get-together, or before a team huddle. The key is to create a rhythm that fits naturally with your group.

We also recommend preparing a journal or notebook to record your observations after each session. Having a consistent way to record your reflections will make it much easier to notice patterns and summarize your findings at the end.

Step 2: Collect Initial Data

Before beginning the practice, invite each group member to take a quiet moment to check in with themselves. This step is about noticing your internal state and how you're relating to the group environment at the start of the session.

You can reflect on questions like:

- How am I feeling emotionally right now? (e.g., open, tense, neutral, guarded)
- What's going on in my mind? (e.g., calm, scattered, focused, distracted)
- How connected, comfortable, or safe do I feel in this group at the moment?
- What's the overall emotional tone in the space we're sharing together?



Global Coherence™ Initiative

Suggested Protocol

This is a personal reflection – there’s no need to share unless someone feels moved to. The purpose is simply to build self-awareness and create a personal reference point for later.

Encourage everyone to jot down a few brief notes, along with the date and time, to help track any shifts across sessions.

Step 3: Do the Exercise

Invite everyone to begin with a few moments of heart-focused breathing.

- Gently bring attention to the area of the heart, imagining the breath flowing in and out of the chest. Breathe a little slower and deeper than usual, settling into a smooth, natural rhythm. After about 1–2 minutes of shared heart-focused breathing, invite a feeling of appreciation, care, or ease.

Let the group rest in this shared emotional state, creating a balanced and receptive space for meaningful exchange. When the group feels ready, begin the ripple of gratitude.

- One person starts by turning to someone else and offering a sincere, spoken appreciation – something specific and heartfelt. For example: “I appreciate how you cared for a classmate last week” or “Thank you for your humor and fun.”
- The person who receives the appreciation then becomes the next to give, choosing someone else in the group to acknowledge.

Continue until everyone has had the opportunity to both give and receive. With larger groups, the activity will have to be repeated on other days. Make sure all voices are included. Throughout the ripple, invite the group to stay present, grounded, and connected to the feeling of coherence.



Global Coherence™ Initiative

Suggested Protocol

Step 4: Collect Post-Exercise Data

After everyone has participated in the Gratitude Ripple, take a moment to pause and reflect – first individually, then as a group.

Each person can check in quietly and consider:

- How do I feel now – emotionally and mentally?
- Do I feel more open, grounded, or connected?
- How safe, seen, or appreciated do I feel within this group?
- What is the emotional tone in our space right now?

Then, if the group feels comfortable, you might share a few reflections aloud and explore together:

- What shifted in how we feel together?
- Did anyone feel surprised, moved, or especially seen?
- Did coherence deepen the experience or the impact of the gratitude shared?

There's no pressure to share – simply notice what emerged. Over time, these reflections can help reveal how coherence and appreciation influence trust, connection, and emotional safety within your group.

Step 5: Repeat the Exercise

To deepen your insights and strengthen the reliability of your reflections, we recommend repeating the Ripple of Gratitude experiment at least five times – using the same research question and observing the same reflection points each time.

As your group continues the practice, you may begin to notice subtle but meaningful shifts: a greater sense of trust, ease in communication, or increased emotional



Global Coherence™ Initiative

Suggested Protocol

openness. You might also see patterns in how individuals respond to appreciation – or how the overall group energy evolves over time.

Step 6: Analyze the Data

Now that you’ve completed the Ripple of Gratitude experiment multiple times, get together as a group to review your observations.

You might explore questions like:

- Are there consistent shifts in how group members felt before and after the exercise?
- Were there certain sessions where the impact felt especially strong – or more subtle?
- Did repeated participation help foster a greater sense of trust, belonging, or ease in expressing appreciation?

These reflections can help your group understand how shared coherence and gratitude might be influencing how your group feels together – and how that connects back to the research question you’ve been exploring.

Summarize your findings and reflect on how they relate to your original research question.

Step 7: Report Your Findings

If you’d like to contribute your discoveries to the Global Coherence Initiative community, you can share them through the *My Coherence Story* online form. This is a simple way to participate in the larger research effort – and inspire others with what you’ve explored.

Suggested Protocol

On the short **My Coherence Story** form, you'll be invited to share three things:

- 1. Your Research Question** – *Can combining coherence and verbal appreciation as a group practice elevate trust and emotional safety?*
- 2. Your Method** – Which, in this case, was the Ripple of Gratitude exercise. Include any other relevant information, such as how often or how long you practiced, and so on.
- 3. Your Result** – What you noticed after analyzing the data.

You're welcome to upload a photo or short video of your experience, if you'd like. For more detailed instructions, check out the short "How to Share Your Coherence Story" video. Every story adds to our collective understanding of how coherence practices can positively impact individuals, groups, and the world around us.



Explore Variations

Once your group has completed the experiment, you can repeat it with a different research question or in a different way.

For Example:

- You can have each person write a short note of appreciation to someone else in the group.

These can be exchanged privately during or after the group meeting or event, adding a tangible, lasting layer to the experience.

With appropriate IT approval, you can deepen this experiment by using the HeartMath app, or the free Global Coherence App. HeartMath's apps allow you and your group to measure coherence, join other global sessions, access guided practices, and track changes over time. You can use an Inner Balance® Coherence Plus Sensor for more precise measurements, or simply use your smartphone camera to track your coherence.

To explore other experiments, download the Global Coherence Initiative Citizen Scientist Playbook.

***Thank you for being part of our Global Coherence Initiative
Citizen Scientist community and contributing to our collective research.***



Global Coherence™ Initiative

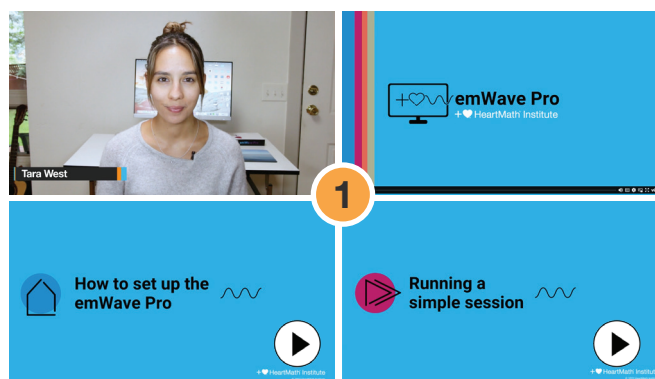
Resources: Technology & Videos

■ emWave® Pro

The emWave Pro is a computer-based HRV coherence training system developed by the HeartMath Institute. It connects to your desktop or laptop via USB and uses a pulse sensor to provide real-time feedback as you practice simple, interactive coherence-building techniques and games. Designed for multiple users, the system creates individual profiles that track ongoing progress and display heart rhythm patterns over time, supporting increased resilience, emotional self-regulation, and mental clarity.

■ emWave® Pro – Video 1

- 1 Tara West demonstrates how to set up the emWave Pro and how to run a simple session.



■ emWave® Pro Plus

The emWave Pro Plus includes all the same hardware and core features as the emWave Pro but adds advanced data acquisition capabilities. Its enhanced software captures up to ten detailed HRV metrics using multiple collection protocols, making it ideal for research applications and more intensive assessment environments that require structured, in-depth data analysis.

NOTE: When working with schools, share the data privacy document (p.47) with your IT department.

For more information, visit the HeartMath store at store.heartmath.org

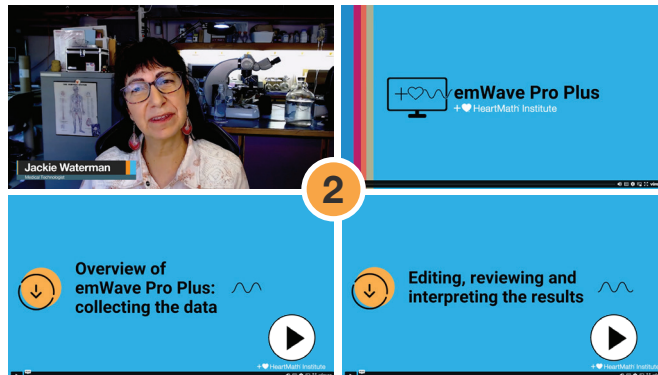


Global Coherence™ Initiative

Resources: Technology & Videos

■ View emWave® Pro Plus Videos

- 2 Jackie Waterman, a HeartMath Institute Medical Technologist, takes you through an overview and how data is collected.



■ Inner Balance™ Coherence Plus Sensor (iPhones, Androids and Chromebooks)

The Inner Balance™ Coherence Plus is HeartMath's latest sensor, combining an intuitive design with advanced heart rhythm sensing to help you experience deeper levels of coherence. Compatible with most smartphones and Chromebooks, this Bluetooth-enabled sensor connects seamlessly with the HeartMath and Global Coherence apps, allowing you to view your heart rhythm patterns and HRV coherence scores directly on your device. The apps can also use your device's built-in camera as an optical pulse sensor, offering an additional way to practice HRV coherence without external hardware. Since many schools primarily use Chromebooks, it's important to confirm that your specific model is compatible with the Inner Balance Coherence Plus before use. The app provides real-time feedback, guided coherence techniques, and tools for both individual and group sessions, supporting personal growth and collective coherence practice.



When working with schools, share the data privacy document (p.47) with your IT department. To explore features or order the Inner Balance Coherence Plus Sensor, visit heartmath.org/heart-coherence/technology

Resources: Technology & Videos

- **This video shows the functions and features of the Inner Balance Coherence Plus Sensor**



- **Barb Hudak, a Master HeartMath® Trainer, shows you how to connect the Inner Balance Coherence Plus Sensor to the HeartMath App & how to unlock your Free Lifetime Subscription**



- **Global Coherence™ App (Free)**

A free mobile app that can use your phone's camera or a HeartMath sensor to measure heart coherence. It also enables participation in group coherence experiments and reflects the total coherence contribution worldwide.

- **Heart Rate Variability for recording observations (*optional*)**

HeartMath's HRV Coherence technology makes it possible to see and measure your inner state of heart coherence in real time.



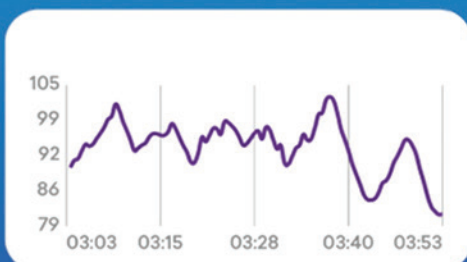
Global Coherence™ Initiative

The Science Behind the Inner Balance™ Coherence Plus

Our heart rate is always changing, creating a pattern. Heart -rhythm patterns, also called heart rate variability (HRV), are a powerful window into our health and emotional wellness.

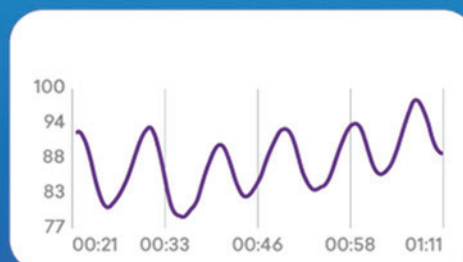


Feeling Stressed



When we are out of sync (stressed, frustrated, anxious, etc.), our heart-rhythm patterns are jagged and chaotic.

Feeling Appreciative



When we are in sync (composed, easeful, grateful, etc.), our heart-rhythm patterns look like smooth sine waves.

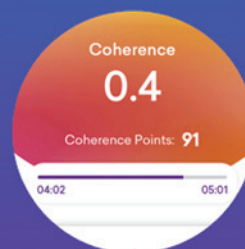
We can learn to change our heart-rhythm patterns to change how we feel and perform. Inner Balance Coherence Plus translates your heart-rhythm patterns into a real-time coherence score that you can use to build your heart coherence.

Jagged HRV



Out of Sync

Lower Score



Smooth HRV



In Sync

Higher Score



Global Coherence™ Initiative

HeartMath® Institute Student Data Privacy Policy

This statement discloses the privacy practices for schools who used products and programs from the **HeartMath Institute**. The HeartMath Institute recognizes the importance of protecting the privacy of all individuals who provide information to us, either directly or indirectly. With a growing presence in schools, universities and homes, we earnestly try to adhere to the guidelines of the Children's Online Privacy and Protection Act (COPPA). This regulation is designed to protect the privacy of children.

Determine if Your Company is a Website or Online Service that Collects Personal Information from Kids under 13.

We do not seek to collect any personal information of children under the age of 13. We request that users enrolling students use student ID numbers or in some cases, fake names can be used in place of real names. All personal information including birthdates, gender, location or emails are not requested.

Post a Privacy Policy that Complies with COPPA

Our policy is under privacy policy in our classroom programs. Parents or educators can contact Jeff Goelitz at jgoelitz@heartmath.org if they have questions or concerns. Parents or educators can request that any data of their children or students be deleted at any time. There is a privacy policy for the nonprofit organization, HeartMath Institute, but that pertains to programs for adults, not the programs highlighted in this platform which specifically address only student data privacy protection: <https://www.heartmath.org/policy/privacy/>

Implement Reasonable Procedures to Protect the Security of Kids' Personal Information

We are trying to minimize what we collect from parents or schools in order to protect the privacy of children. Any information collected or seen would coincide with a technical issue that needs to be resolved. Technical issues mostly deal with the program not functioning for a client. Otherwise, all information provided by an educator, parent or student is anonymous and unseen by Heartmath Institute. As a nonprofit, our interest is to serve the educators or parents who use the program.

What Personal Data We Collect and Why We Collect It?

We collect the names and or emails of the educators or parents who have purchased and use the programs as part of the registration process. Educators will often add users in the form of student identification numbers. In some cases, parents will add the name of their child as one of the program's users. We only see these names or numbers if there is a technical issue to resolve. Otherwise, all of this information remains anonymous and out of our view. All data stays stored on the user's hard drive.

What Personal Data is Collected with HeartMath Biofeedback Technology?

All data gathered from use of the emWave Pro® and Inner Balance™ is stored on the hard drive of the computer or device. HeartMath Institute does not see that data nor do they wish to see that data. The data points stored are the following: average coherence scores, coherence points, amount of coherence in low, medium, or high, heart rate average.

With the emWave Pro, the main way schools and universities protect the identity of those students who use the emWave is through the use of student ID numbers (not first and last names) in the emWave data base stored on the hard drive of the computer being used.

Who We Share Your Data With?

We do not share client data or user data with any organization. We will never sell this information to anyone.

What Rights You Have Over Your Data?

If you have an account on this site, you can request that any personal data be deleted immediately.

CITIZEN SCIENTIST PLAYBOOK

For Schools & Youth Groups

+  Global Coherence™ Initiative

+  HeartMath® Institute
A Nonprofit Organization