

# HEART INTELLIGENCE

The heart is the most powerful source of electromagnetic energy in the human body — more than the head and any of the body's organs.

Words by Deborah Rozman, behavioral psychologist, President and co-CEO of HeartMath Inc.  
This article was excerpted from the book "Heart Intelligence" published by Waterside Productions.

**M**ost people reference their heart as something more than just their physical heart. When I was teaching meditation to children in a public school classroom of seven year olds, I asked them to "Point to your real self."

Everyone in the class pointed to their heart. They naturally felt their heart was who they really are. Regardless of race, religion, or ethnicity, throughout history people have referred to their heart as their source of being, intuition, and wisdom. In most every language, we find metaphors of the heart like, "listen to your heart," "go to your heart for the answer," or "put your heart into it."



## THE HEART AS A SOURCE OF INTELLIGENCE

Many ancient cultures, including the Mesopotamians, Egyptians, Babylonians, and Greeks referred to the heart as a source of intelligence. They maintained that the heart is the primary organ capable of influencing and directing one's emotions, morality, and decision-making ability, so they consequently attached enormous emotional and moral significance to its behavior.

Over thousands of years, most often without knowing about one another, cultures across the planet have seemed to share a similar knowledge about the heart as a source of intelligence and inner guidance.

From my personal experience teaching Gestalt psychology to adult classes in the early 1970s, I realized that the head and the heart were two different intelligence systems. There was nothing I could find in the psychological literature at that time that could explain what I was observing.

When a student was in conflict about a relationship or career issue, I would place two pillows on the floor and have them pretend one pillow was the head and the other was the heart. I would have students sit on the head pillow and have their head talk to their heart.

After sharing their thoughts and concerns, I'd have them move to the heart pillow and tell their head what their heart's view of the problem was and what their heart was feeling. It was often like two different people talking from two different reference points of awareness.

Then I'd have them go back to the head pillow and respond to their heart. After switching pillows in this way three or four times, they'd settle in their heart and speak from their heart's wisdom. What occurred was an obvious shift in the depth of what they would say and a different energetic quality that was palpable to them and the whole class.

The intuitive insights that emerged from bringing their head and heart together resulted in a solution to their conflict or a clear next step. I witnessed this so many times I was convinced that the heart was accessing a source of intelligence.

When I met Doc Childre in the mid 1980s and heard him talk about heart intelligence, I immediately knew what he meant, though I wasn't familiar with the term. He invited me and others to help create an institute to explore heart intelligence through scientific research. It was called HeartMath. I accepted the offer with enthusiasm, because it resonated with my past studies and experience with the heart.

## THE HEART SENDS INFORMATION TO THE BRAIN

Our research began with exploring the latest findings in the fields of neuroscience, neuro-cardiology, psychology, physiology, biochemistry, and biophysics.

In synthesizing research from these different disciplines, it was surprising to discover that the physical heart sends information to the brain and body through at least four different pathways:

- Neurological communication (through ascending pathways in the autonomic nervous system);
- Bio-physical communication (the pulse wave);
- Biochemical messaging (the heart secretes a number of hormones);
- Through the electromagnetic field created by the heart.

The heart's magnetic field, which is the strongest rhythmic field produced by the human body, not only envelops every cell of the body, but also extends out in all directions into the space around us. The heart's electrical field is about 60 times greater in amplitude than the electrical activity generated by the brain. \*

During the 1960s and 1970s, pioneer physiologists John and Beatrice Lacey conducted research that showed the heart actually communicates with the brain in ways that greatly affect how we perceive and react to the world around us.

In 1991, the year that the HeartMath Institute was established, pioneering neuro-cardiologist Dr. J. Andrew Armour introduced the term "heart brain." He found that the heart possessed its own complex intrinsic nervous system that acts as a brain and functions independently from the brain in the head. This heart-brain has been shown to sense, process, and encode information internally.



There is evidence that the heart's brain possesses the capacity to learn, and even has short- and long-term memory and neural plasticity. Moreover, ascending neurological signals sent from the heart to the brain continuously interact with and modify the activity in the brain's higher cognitive and emotional centers.

In this way, input originating in the heart is a major and consistent influence in the very processes underlying our perception, cognition, and emotion. At the physical level, the heart not only possesses an innate form of intelligence, but, through its extensive communication with the brain and body, the heart is intimately involved in how we think, feel, and respond to the world.



## THE HEART'S INDEPENDANT AND INTELLIGENT FUNCTIONS

Today, scientists have learned a great deal more about the heart's independent and intelligent functions, which is still not common knowledge for many people, even clinicians and other researchers. Here are some of the findings:

- The heart starts beating in the unborn fetus before the brain has formed.
- There is constant two-way communication between the heart and brain.
- The heart sends more information to the brain than the brain sends to the heart.
- The heart sends signals to the brain which help inform our choices.
- The heart helps synchronize many systems in the body so that they can function in harmony with one another.
- The heart's signals especially affect the brain centers involved in strategic thinking, reaction times, and self-regulation.

[www.heartmath.com](http://www.heartmath.com)