

Building Personal Resilience™

Guide

HeartMath® Skills
for Personal Effectiveness

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Introduction

Your HeartMath coach or mentor will use this guide to introduce you to simple, practical techniques that can help you de-stress from challenging situations, big or small. You'll learn strategies to build your resilience and boost your ability to "take charge" of yourself by better regulating your energy throughout the day, a key in building and sustaining your resilience. Exploring the energy-management concepts can help you see where you may be draining your energy and depleting your reserves, which can keep you from being your best. You may discover in some cases the source of your stress is not what it may appear to be.

Of primary importance is practicing the science-based techniques you will learn that change the way your body's physiology responds in stressful situations. Then, automatic stress reactions won't dictate how you feel, respond or perform, whether you're at work or at home.

It's important to recognize that we all experience moments when we feel in sync and "on top of the world," when we enjoy projects and interactions with family, friends and colleagues. Certain events and interactions, though, can disrupt those feelings. The techniques you will learn can help you get back in sync and back on track faster, right in the moment. No one will even know you're using them!

We'll ask you to practice these techniques often during the program so they become more familiar and automatic, which will help to build your resilience and give you the ability to maintain your composure and clarity, even in more challenging situations. We'll help you understand when and how to apply the techniques. We'll also see how to Prep for, Shift and Reset and also how to Sustain yourself during and after any challenging situation or interaction.

There are three keys to getting the most out of this program:

1. Review the *Building Personal Resilience Guide* frequently. It contains all the resilience-building techniques and important concepts covered in the program.
2. Consult with your coach or mentor, who is here to support and encourage you as you learn how to apply the techniques to your specific challenges and situations.
3. Make a commitment to yourself to practice the techniques recommended.

Let's get started by first looking at resilience and energy management so you can better understand how to optimize your performance and respond appropriately to any situation, even the tough ones.

What is Resilience?

Overview:

Goal: Introduce the concept of resilience and show how it relates to energy, stress and performance.

Key Concepts:

HeartMath® gives us a definition of resilience that captures the essence of a broader understanding of what resilience is: *Resilience is the capacity to prepare for, recover from and adapt in the face of stress, challenge or adversity.*

- Your resilience capacity can be thought of as the amount of energy you can store in your *inner battery*.
- The greater your resilience, the more energy you'll have available when you need it.
- Having more energy means you have greater capacity to self-regulate and be in charge of how you respond in situations.
- Learning and applying energy-management skills can increase your energy reserves, thereby increasing your resilience capacity.
- Getting enough sleep and plugging energy "leaks" so you don't waste energy is key in building and maintaining your resilience.

What is resilience and what does energy management have to do with it?

You've likely experienced times when you feel you don't have much energy and may have used phrases like "I'm running on fumes," "I'm drained" or "I'm wiped out" to describe that feeling. Think of a time you have felt like that and notice how it affected you and those around you. It's common that when your energy is low, it can be difficult to think clearly, perform tasks well and even bounce back, all of which are good indications that your resilience is low. So, what exactly is resilience and how can you get more of it?

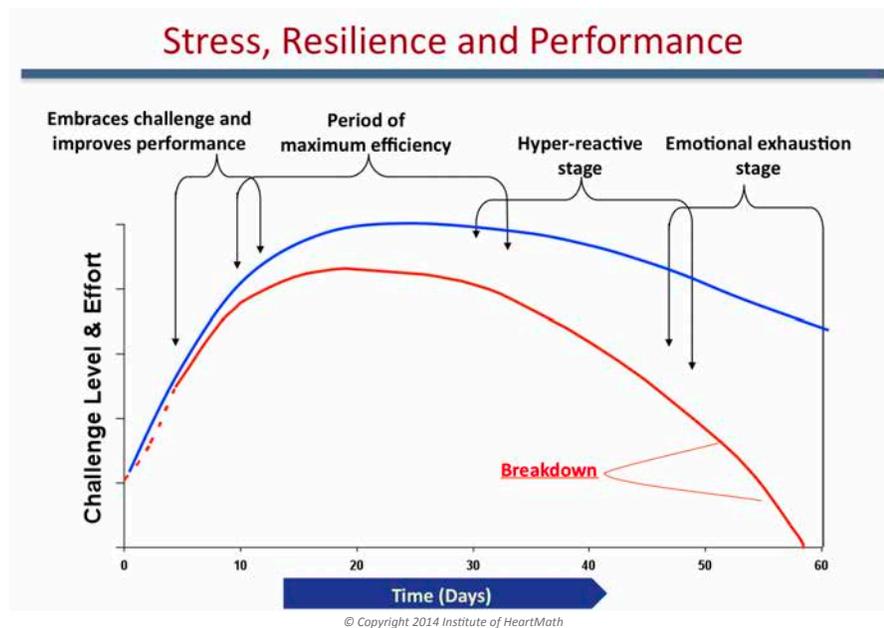
Resilience can be thought of as the capacity to prepare for, recover from and adapt to stress, challenge or adversity. When you are resilient, you are able to bounce back and recoup faster after a challenging situation. This helps offset much of the lingering wear

and tear that affects not only you, but your family and co-workers as well. By building greater resilience capacity you'll be better prepared, have greater flexibility, make smarter decisions and keep a cool head in challenging situations or whatever arises.

Having greater resilience doesn't mean you will not find yourself in difficult situations. What it does mean is you'll have an internal capacity that will give you the strength and resolve to handle whatever comes up.

When you learn and apply energy-management skills, you can increase your capacity to build your energy reserves. You then have more energy to draw from when you need it. If you do not monitor and manage your energy, you can become depleted, making it more difficult to deal with a situation. You can't respond or perform optimally.

The figure shows the findings of research on how stress affects performance over time. The red line shows how performance initially increases if we positively embrace the challenge but then decreases over time. The blue line shows that although stress may affect us, the more serious stages of depletion can be avoided with appropriate stress and energy management.



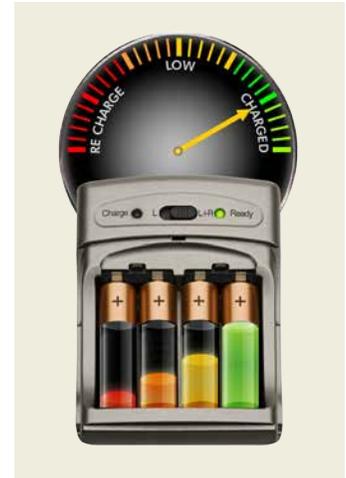
You can think of your current level of resilience as the amount of energy you have stored in your inner battery and from which you can draw to handle your daily challenges and tasks. Resilience is the energy you have available to use not only physically, but also mentally and emotionally. When you have a high level of resilience or a fully charged inner battery, you have greater capacity to remain calm, think clearly and be in control of your emotions so you don't overreact. In other words, you can more easily "roll with the punches" and flow through challenges rather than become stressed, which further drains your energy reserves.

Similar to a drained car battery, when your inner battery is depleted, there isn't energy to draw from when you need it, making it difficult to be at your best and respond well in tough, and sometimes, in very ordinary situations. You also may end up draining even more energy.

In the end it also can affect the people around you.

A key in building and maintaining resilience is managing how you spend and renew your energy. The goal is to not waste energy and to effectively replenish the energy that you use.

A very important way to renew energy and recharge your inner battery is by getting enough uninterrupted, regenerative sleep. Sleep is one of the most basic ways the body renews its energy levels. Sometimes though, it's difficult to get a good, rejuvenating night's sleep. The techniques you will learn can help you gain more of the benefits of sleep.



Getting Sleep

When you are more resilient, you actually can gain more benefits from sleep. Most disturbances are due to the carryover effects of stress reactions that occur throughout the day.

It's essential that you learn to plug energy "leaks" so you don't come away from situations or interactions feeling depleted. Plugging energy leaks also is very important in building and in sustaining your reserves. Greater reserves enhance your ability to maintain your mental focus and clarity and your emotional composure in difficult situations. As you will see, plugging energy leaks also can help you sleep.

The Four Domains of Resilience

Overview:

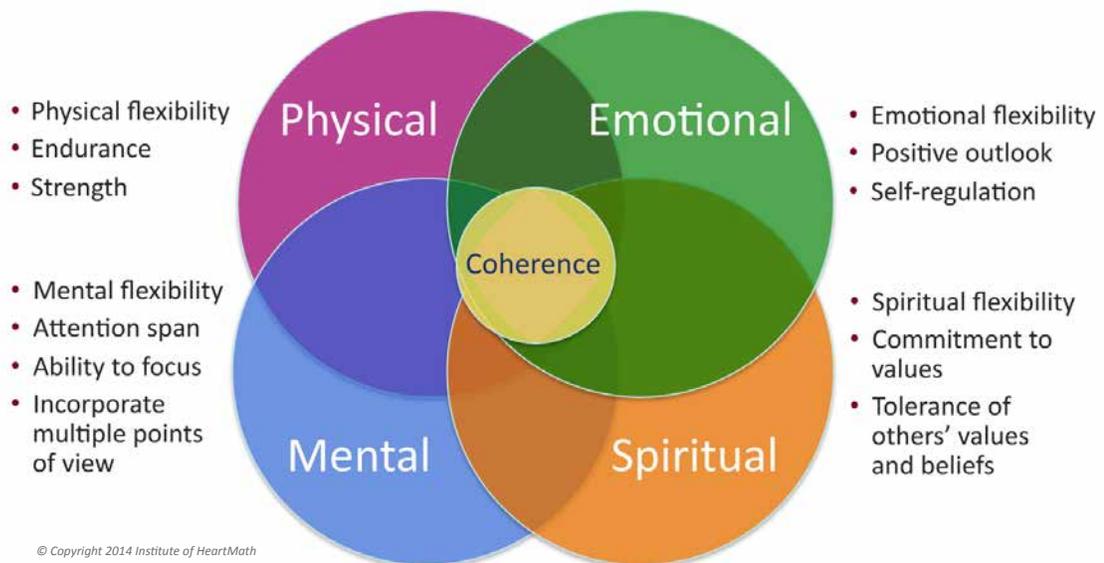
Goal: Introduce the four domains of resilience and gain a basic understanding of building capacity.

Key Concepts:

- The domains are interrelated, with each one affecting the others.
- Some people may be more resilient in one domain than others.
- We can build a new baseline of resilience in each domain.
- We tend to waste a lot of energy and therefore deplete internal reserves in the *emotional domain*.
- The accumulation of small energy drains in the emotional domain can be more depleting than one big emotional outburst.

There are four primary domains of resilience: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. To be fully resilient, it’s important to pay attention to all four domains because, as the overlapping circles illustrate, each affects the others.

Domains of Resilience



Some people are naturally more resilient in one domain than in another. People who are naturally able to better self-regulate their emotions and maintain their cool and composure under pressure would be considered more emotionally resilient. It's important to keep in mind that people who are naturally resilient in one domain can be in a low state of resilience overall if they allow their energy or internal battery to become drained in even just one of the other domains.

The area in which most of us tend to waste a lot of energy *unnecessarily* and deplete our internal reserves is the emotional domain. Feelings like frustration, anger, resentment and anxiety burn a lot of extra energy. Some of the hormones produced during a stressful interaction stay in your system for many hours and can disrupt your ability to get renewing sleep and can diminish your ability to focus.

It's not only the big energy expenditures that deplete your energy. More energy is actually depleted because of the accumulation of more subtle feelings like impatience, sadness or frustration, but they add up to big energy drains at the end of the day.

You may not notice subtle drains as easily as recognizing that you're having a big anger blowout. A big blowout is like flooring the accelerator in your car and is a fast way to drain your fuel. Subtle depleting emotions that run quietly in the background are like leaving the lights on in your car after you have turned off the ignition. They slowly, quietly drain your inner battery.

Let's take a closer look now and identify some of your energy drains and gains. We'll then map them on a grid that will illustrate how they affect your physiology and performance. From there we'll introduce some techniques to help stop the energy drain and recharge your inner battery.

Warning Signal

"It's easy to forget that stress is one of your body's warning signals that tells you something is out of whack. If you ignore those signals, especially your emotions, you could become so accustomed to the stimulation of stress, ongoing tension and strain that stress can start to seem normal. When a lot of people in a particular environment are stressed, they can create a climate that makes it more difficult for any one person to see his or her own stress clearly. When you have a whole culture pushing high performance, sometimes people don't want to admit it or address it."

—Henry J Kahn, M.D

Depletion to Renewal Grid

Overview:

Goal: Help you identify where you spend your emotional energy and relate how it affects your physiology and performance.

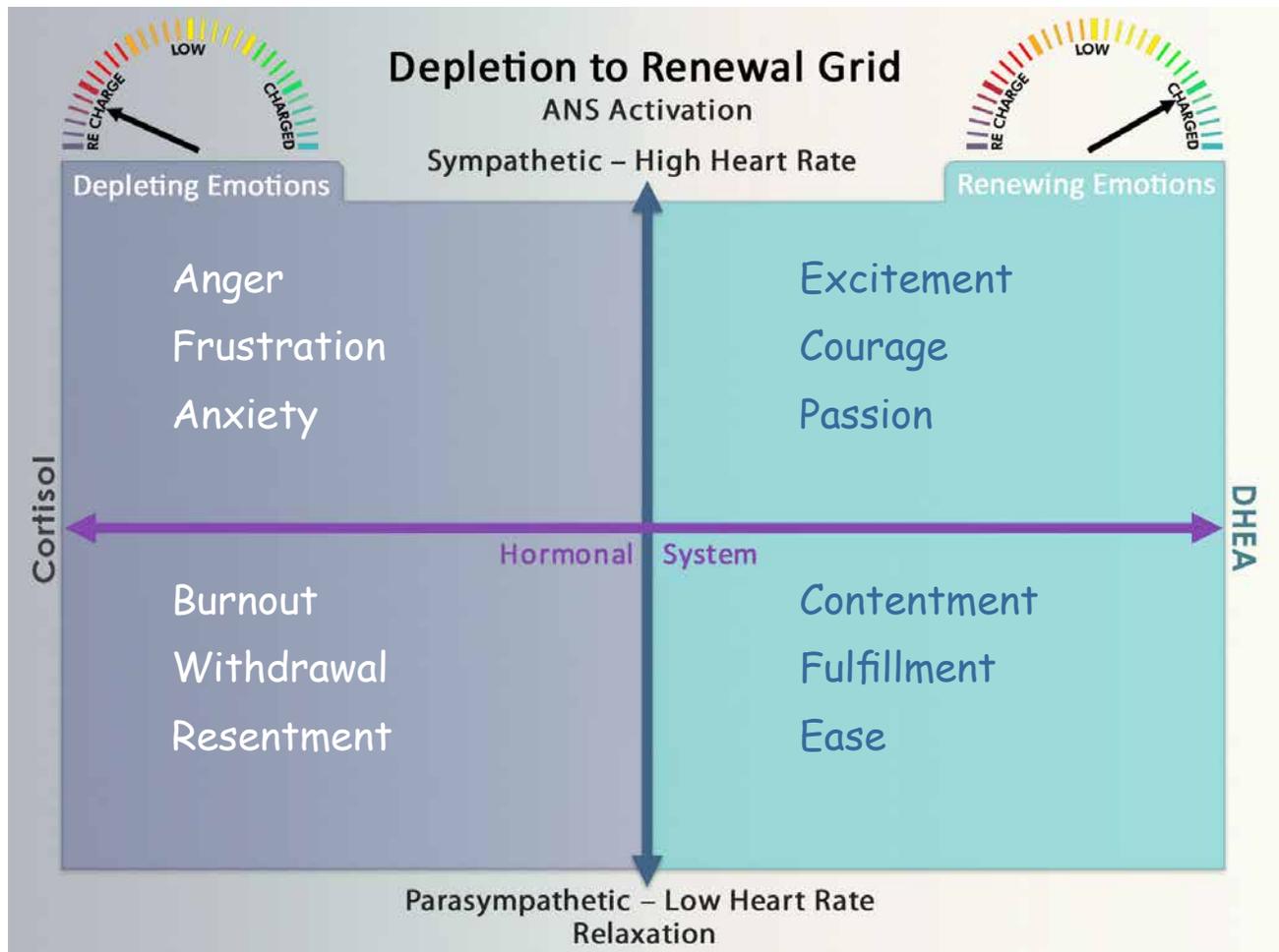
Key Concepts:

- Everyone experiences a wide range of emotions every day.
- Emotions are primary drivers of your physiology.
- Different emotions affect your physiology in different ways.
- You may not be aware of some emotions you experience, but they still affect your body and resilience.

A map of your energy drains and gains

We've discussed the concept of resilience and noted that most people unnecessarily waste energy and deplete their energy reserves in the emotional domain. The Depletion to Renewal™ Grid, sometimes called the Emotional Landscape, pictured on the next page, illustrates some interesting things about your emotions, physiology, energy and performance. It can help you see which emotions you commonly experience and how they affect you.

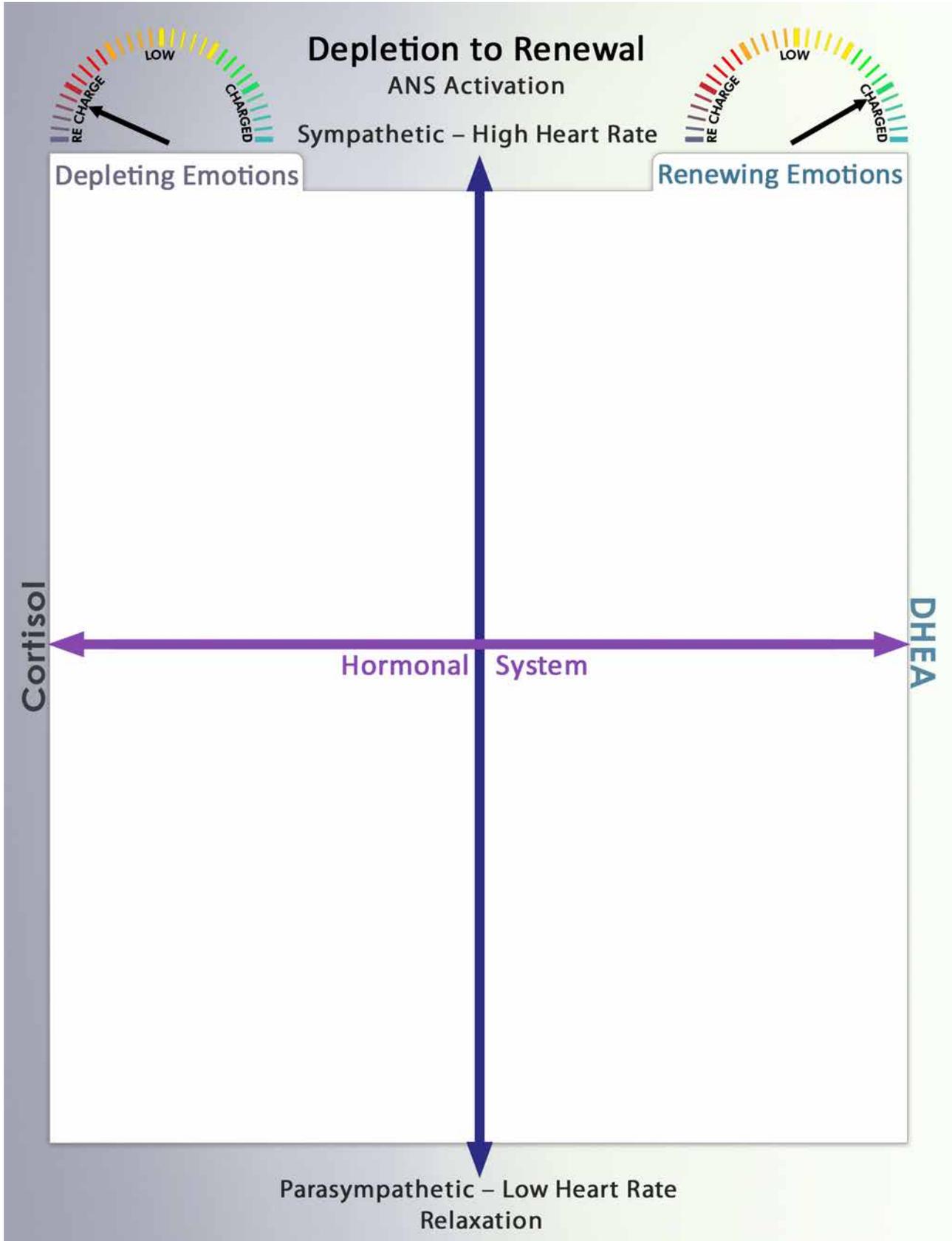
It will be useful to familiarize yourself with the four quadrants, shown in the following grid, that reflect high- and low-energy expenditures and depleting and renewing states. Knowing the quadrants can be helpful when you are faced with challenges so you can better understand how your attitudes, emotions and stress reactions affect your hormones and nervous system, which in turn directly affect how you perform and your resilience. As you map your emotions on the Grid, you'll be able to see where you are draining and renewing your energy.



Every emotion you experience, whether or not you are aware of it, has an effect on your body and on your resilience. Every emotion immediately causes changes in your body, affects your ability to build and sustain your energy and either renews or depletes your body and mind. The two main physiological systems that control the cascade of these changes in your body are the hormonal system and the autonomic nervous system (ANS).

Your coach or mentor will show you how to use the Depletion to Renewal Grid on the next page.

Carrying depleting emotions around with you can feel like carrying a heavy burden wherever you go. Sooner or later, they likely will wear you out.



Three Strategies for Building and Sustaining Resilience

Overview:

Goal: Learn three important strategies to practice daily for building and sustaining resilience.

Key Concepts:

- Building and sustaining energy levels or resilience capacity requires awareness of when you are draining your energy.
- Plugging energy drains throughout the day is essential to prevent depletion.
- Practicing one of the energy-regulation techniques in this guide can help you *Prep* before an event, *Shift and Reset* after a challenging situation and *Sustain* your resilience and composure during your day.
- Consistently practicing the techniques helps build a new coherence baseline and, therefore, greater resilience.
- Practicing the three strategies helps you “take charge” of your thoughts and emotions so you can better handle anything that comes up each day.

The previous sections have talked about coherence and resilience and how they relate to intelligent energy management. Now, let’s look at three important strategies to more effectively regulate your energy and increase your resilience. Understanding these three strategies then will help you see when and where you can apply any of the techniques.

- 1. Prep** to set the tone for the day and to be more composed before upcoming stressful events, or even a regular routine such as going to work.
- 2. Shift and Reset** as soon as possible after a stress reaction or challenging situation by shifting into a more coherent state to minimize energy drains. Shift and Reset again before resting or going to bed to get the maximum benefits from rest or sleep.
- 3. Sustain** your resilience throughout the day by establishing regular practices to refresh your composure between activities. Choose the appropriate technique, in the moment, whenever challenging events occur. Use a technique even when you feel you don’t need one. It all adds up!

1. Prep

The value of prepping cannot be overemphasized

The purpose of prepping is to ensure that *before* entering a challenging situation, you are in a more resilient and composed state so you are able to meet the challenge and respond optimally. This is not merely *thinking* about feeling more calm and composed, but rather creating the actual *feeling* of ease, calm or confidence, which creates coherence. You also can prep by activating a feeling of confidence, clarity or poise or whatever you feel would be appropriate to help you meet a situation with greater internal balance. It takes only a couple of minutes to prep. The benefits are well worth the time.

Practice prepping using one of the techniques you have learned to shift to a coherent state before:

- Potentially stressful situations
- Talks or speeches
- Appointments
- Making important decisions
- Sensitive communications
- Starting your day
- Meetings
- Sleep

2. Shift and Reset

Shift and Reset to re-stabilize your energy system

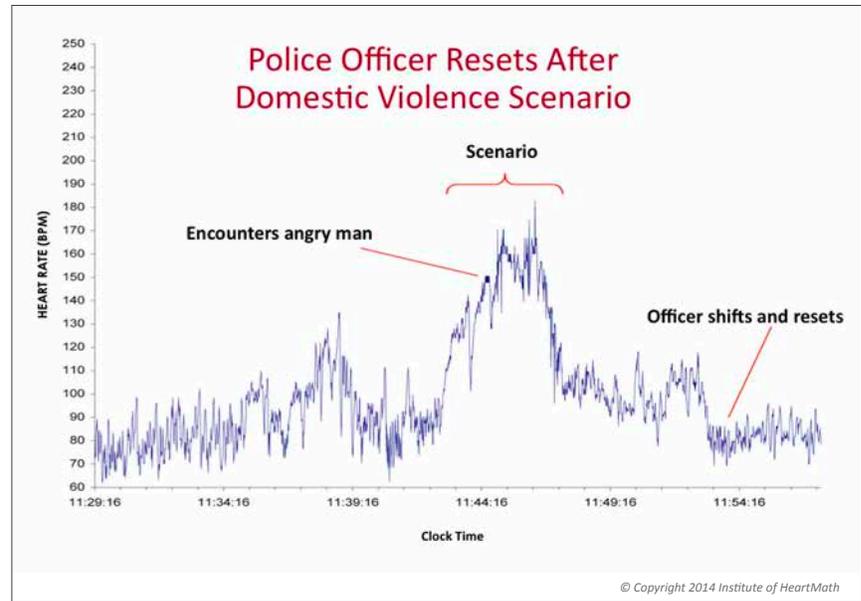
When we have stress reactions and are wasting our energy, it benefits us greatly to shift and reset as quickly as possible. This saves a lot of energy and, in many situations, avoids additional stress and time loss. **Do not underestimate** how much of your resilience is affected by regularly occurring stress reactions and the accompanying energy drain.

Shifting and resetting is similar to when your computer gets stuck in a loop and you hit the restart button to restore it to its normal operating state. The same principle can be applied to your body and emotions. When you find yourself challenged, use Heart-Focused Breathing as soon as you can to help shorten the time you are out of sync. This helps to reduce conscious and unconscious energy drains while restoring self-composure.

Reset as soon as possible after:

- **Stressful interactions or communications**
- **Becoming anxious, angry or frustrated**
- **Unexpected changes**
- **Arguments**
- **Disappointments**
- **Conflicts**

This graph shows the heart rate of a police officer during a domestic violence scenario. Even though the officer is standing still, his heart rate is around 175 BPM while dealing with the situation. Before learning energy self-regulation techniques, it took an average of two hours for the officer's heart rate to return to normal. By using a resilience-building technique, he was able to shift and reset immediately after the event, saving a great deal of energy and wear and tear on his body



3. Sustain

Sustaining coherence helps maintain your resilience throughout the day

Without a conscious effort to sustain more coherence and reduce energy-draining emotions, we can automatically fall prey to feelings of irritation, anxiety, worry, frustration, being judgmental and self-doubt. We tend to replay these same depleting feelings over and over, reinforcing the pattern in our brain circuits. Our responses then become automatic and mechanical and we act before considering our response. We often become our own worst enemy and a victim by reacting in predictable ways to the common stressors and triggers that drain our energy and rob us of vitality.

The key to sustaining resilience is the regular practice throughout the day of a coherence-building tool such as Inner-Ease or Quick Coherence techniques. Prepping also plays a role in sustaining resilience because it helps create a new habit and more stability in your system so you can more easily maintain your composure on the go. The Heart Lock-In Technique is a powerful tool to use to help shift your baseline. Practicing the Heart Lock-In Technique three or four times a week for five to fifteen minutes each time is a very effective way to prep and build your resilience.

Sustain: Maintaining Your Coherence, Creating Flow and Staying Flexible

Stay ahead of stress and the resulting depletion by prepping before challenging situations. Think of it in terms of your inner battery: Your energy capacity must exceed your demand level. Because you cannot always anticipate what you will face, make it a habit to be as fully charged as possible to help you stay ahead of energy depletion. This will equip you with the energy resources to maintain your composure and flexibility.

Even short periods of coherence have a beneficial carryover effect. A small effort can go a long way!

Heart-Focused Breathing Technique

You can use this technique anytime, anywhere, with your eyes open and no one knows you are using it.

An important first step in stopping energy drains

Hear-Focused Breathing is an effective technique to take the charge out of a stress reaction and start the process of shifting into a more resilient state. It's a simple technique that helps turn down the volume of stress. Combining the simple act of focusing on the heart area with a deeper level of breathing helps draw energy away from your distressed thoughts and feelings. You interrupt your body's mechanical stress response and begin the process of getting your nervous system in sync, which is reflected in more coherent heart rhythms and significantly improves your mental capacity. Heart-Focused Breathing is the first step in getting coherent, but only the first one.

Heart-Focused Breathing also is part of other techniques you'll learn, so it's worth taking the time now to get comfortable with this simple and effective step before adding other steps. It's that important!

Start by focusing on the area around your heart.

Heart-Focused Breathing™ Technique

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.

Suggestion: Inhale 5 seconds, exhale 5 seconds (or whatever rhythm is comfortable).

After reading the step, stop for a moment and genuinely try it for a full minute. Heart-Focused Breathing is an on-the-go technique, meaning you don't have to stop what you're doing and close your eyes to do it. Practice doing it with your eyes open! Also, try doing Heart-Focused Breathing at different times during the day and see what you notice.

Coherence

Overview:

Goal: Understand the concept of coherence and how it relates to resilience and performance.

Key Concepts:

- Coherence is an optimal state of functioning.
- Coherence is the key to building your resilience capacity.
- The more coherence you build and maintain, the more energy you build and store in your system. You create a new baseline of resilience.
- Renewing emotions create the measureable state of coherence.
- Negative emotions are costly and inefficient and deplete your resilience capacity.

Gaining and maintaining the coherence advantage

There are times in our lives when we have experienced periods of being in sync and flowing with a sense of ease through whatever challenges come our way. When we are in that coherent flow, things that come up just don't seem to get under our skin. We are firing on all cylinders. That is what coherence is all about: The heart, mind, emotions and body are all working in sync. When this happens, we are able to "take charge" of ourselves and maintain our composure. We have more energy, time seems to pass by quickly and we seem to flow through or around issues. When challenges come up, we can think more clearly, keep our cool, do what we need to do and move on. We have more energy and more stability.

Our ability to stay in an inner state of ease and flow through the day is determined by our ability to self-regulate our emotions and stop energy leaks. The first step to intelligent energy self-regulation is identifying where the biggest areas of unnecessary energy expenditure are occurring.

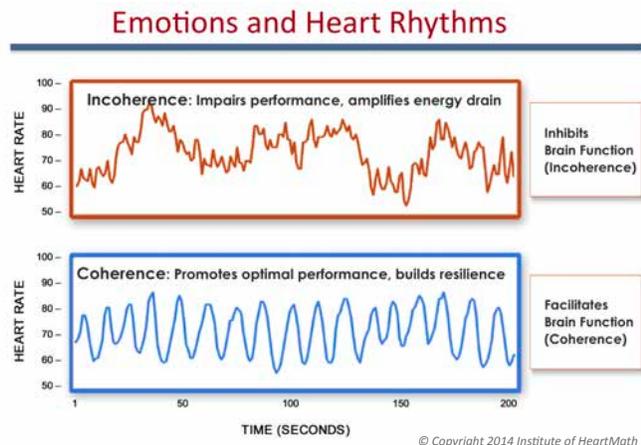
Think of energy as water in a bucket. If there are holes in the bucket allowing water to leak out, you have to know where they are before patching them. It makes sense to plug the biggest holes first.

From an energy-management perspective, depleting emotions are costly and inefficient. They are the big holes in the bucket. The bigger the stress reaction, the bigger the drain is on our energy. The accumulation of smaller reactions throughout the day can have a significant energy draining affect and waste more energy than a big blowout. Refer to the exercise you did on page 6, Energy-Draining Situations.



There is important research showing that when you're under stress and experiencing depleting emotions like frustration and anger, you generate incoherent or chaotic signals in your heart rhythms. This limits the brain's ability to process information affecting decision-making, problem-solving and creativity. Reaction speed slows and coordination is impaired. This helps explain why it's difficult to think clearly and respond effectively when you're feeling angry or irritated: It's because you have drained a lot of energy and because the heart is sending chaotic signals to key brain centers.

*These graphs illustrate how stress reactions and positive states affect the nervous system differently. **Top graph:** the typical heart-rhythm pattern that occurs when we are frustrated or stressed. The chaotic and jerky pattern shows that the signals in the nervous system are out of sync. This negatively affects mental functions and reaction times. **Bottom graph:** the typical heart-rhythm pattern that occurs when we are in a positive state such as appreciation, creating a coherent system.*



You can learn to generate coherent or “smooth” signals by experiencing renewing emotions like appreciation and patience. Coherent heart rhythm signals coming from your heart actually help the brain process information more efficiently. In other words, you can think more clearly and make better decisions when you are coherent.

The *Emotions and Heart Rhythms* diagram **above** shows two actual heart-rhythm patterns of a man. The top, chaotic-looking image, called an incoherent pattern, reflects when he was feeling frustration. The bottom image, or coherent pattern, was generated when he felt appreciation. The techniques you are learning will enable you to make that shift from an incoherent heart rhythm to a coherent rhythm, which is the foundation for intelligent energy self-regulation, optimal performance and mental clarity.

Remember, it's renewing emotions that add energy to your reserves, but it takes more than thinking positive thoughts. Actually *feeling* positive or regenerative emotions is what creates coherence. When you use the energy-management techniques in this guide, you will begin plugging leaks and recharging your battery. Generating coherence even for a few minutes brings your physical, mental and emotional systems into alignment.

Coherence, an optimal physiological state, is the essential key to building resilience and is one you can self-generate using the tools in this guide.

Benefits of Coherence:

- Plugs energy leaks
- Builds resilience capacity for faster recovery from physical, mental and emotional stressors
- Optimizes performance
- Develops faster reaction times and better coordination
- Helps increase capacity to be in charge of reactions
- Aligns the body's systems to work in sync with less wear and tear
- Increases ability to think more clearly, stay focused and make better decisions
- Enhances ability to recover more quickly from physical, mental and emotional stressors
- Facilitates better sleep

The following techniques can help create a feeling of greater ease and balance while plugging energy leaks by creating more coherence in your system. We'll also show you how to make the most of the energy-renewing situations and the feelings you associate with them that you identified earlier.

Quick Coherence Technique

Use the Quick Coherence Technique whenever you recognize energy-draining moments, however subtle. Self-activating renewing emotions leads to greater resilience. – You don't have to wait to feel a drain to use it. Use it anytime!

A critical aspect of learning how to sustain your personal coherence is practice. With sincere effort, most people find they can learn to create or experience a regenerative feeling.

Hearth-Focused Breathing helps take the intensity out of a reaction or background feeling such as anxiety or fear. We need to be realistic, however, and know that we may still have the same energy-draining feelings, but at diminished levels by turning down the volume of our anger or impatience, for example. The next important step in replenishing your energy levels and resilience is to experience a higher ratio of regenerative feelings such as appreciation, compassion, courage, dignity, integrity or one of the feelings you identified in the energy-renewing exercise on page 7. The purpose of the Quick Coherence Technique is consciously self-activating a regenerative feeling. Remember, it's *renewing* or *positive feelings* that create coherence.

Quick Coherence® Technique

Step 1. 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. *Suggestion: Inhale 5 seconds, exhale 5 seconds (or whatever rhythm is comfortable).*

Putting your attention around the heart area helps you center and get coherent.

Step 2. Make a sincere attempt to experience a regenerative feeling such as appreciation or care for someone or something in your life. *Suggestion: Try to re-experience the feeling you have for someone you love, a pet, a special place, an accomplishment, etc., or focus on a feeling of calm or ease.*

Quick Coherence Technique Quick Steps

- Heart-Focused Breathing
- Activate a positive or renewing feeling

Note: With practice, you often can do both steps in one breath cycle. Shift your focus to your heart as you inhale and activate a positive feeling as you exhale.

Inner-Ease Technique

Practice the steps to increase your awareness of when you have shifted to a state of ease.

Remember, you are not trying to fix the emotion. The state of ease helps to quiet the significance within the emotion so you can find practical solutions for handling situations better.

Use the Inner-Ease Technique before, during or after stressful situations, projects or communications.

The state of ease is a highly regenerative state that helps us flow more easily through challenges and builds our resilience capacity. Inner ease is not a sleepy-headed state or merely a state of relaxation. It's a balance between the mind and emotions which allows us to access a sense of inner stillness while on the move. It creates an extra time window for deeper discernment and more competent and conscious choices that can help prevent and resolve many unnecessary challenges and unwanted predicaments. Having an attitude of inner ease can help us remember we don't have to feed into daily drama or depleting emotions such as worry, fear, impatience and judgment.

Breathing ease helps support the alignment between our heart, mind and emotions when we are making decisions, communicating and planning. It gives us extra pause to act consciously rather than react mechanically by repeating the same stress patterns.

Inner-Ease™ Technique

Step 1. 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.

Suggestion: Inhale 5 seconds, exhale 5 seconds (or whatever rhythm is comfortable).

Step 2. With each breath, draw in the feeling of inner ease to balance your mental and emotional energy.

Step 3. Set a meaningful intent to anchor the feeling of inner ease as you engage in your projects, challenges or daily interactions.

Inner-Ease Quick Steps

- Heart-Focused Breathing
- Draw in the feeling of inner ease
- Anchor and maintain the feeling

With some practice, and genuine intent, having the attitude of ease can help facilitate breathing in ease.

Benefits of Practicing the Inner-Ease Technique:

- Creates flow and allows an extra time window so we can discern more effective choices and decisions about how we respond to challenges and to people.
- Balances our mental and emotional nature so we can better see the most reasonable and effective way to respond to routine and challenging situations.
- Helps prevent and eliminate much personal stress and recoup faster after unexpected, stressful situations.
- Prevents energy-drain when used to prep before potentially sensitive or important communications, projects, situations or complex decisions.

Once you know the steps, make a commitment to use Inner-Ease throughout the day. The more you do it, the more you'll remember to do it. It helps to set a regular practice routine in the first couple of weeks to establish familiarity with the technique and develop sufficient skill to be able to maintain composure and coherence in challenging situations.

**Ease up and Find the Flow:
An advanced practice for
finding the flow is learning
how to create the flow,
especially in challenging
situations.**

Some Inner-Ease Applications

- Discerning important issues, making decisions or engaging in creative processes.
- Overloaded from deadlines and time pressures; too much to do and not enough time.
- Experiencing unexpected changes or disruptions that break up your routine or plans.
- Feeling frustrated, anxious or impatient with yourself, others or life's situations.
- Prepping before upcoming events.
- Processing inner drama before, during or after communications.

Heart Lock-In Technique

The Heart Lock-In Technique can help you accumulate energy and recharge your emotional system.

The Heart Lock-In Technique is a powerful method for helping you shift your baseline to create beneficial and sustained changes at the physiological level, which is imperative for building a new baseline of resilience.

Activating and sustaining coherence trains the nervous system to a new “normal.” The nervous system begins to recognize this more resilient and energy-efficient state as the familiar one, so it becomes your new internal set point: In other words, it becomes more automatic.

Building a new baseline is similar to laying a new foundation or downloading a new operating system. In practical terms, it means that things that once triggered you don’t get under your skin as easily. You “operate” from a new set point. You also may find you have more energy and that you flow through your day, handling what comes up with greater ease.

Heart Lock-In® Technique

Step 1. 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.

Step 2. Activate and sustain a regenerative feeling such as appreciation, care or compassion.

Step 3. Radiate that renewing feeling to yourself and others.

Use the Heart Lock-In technique for 5 to 15 minutes several times a week to sustain and build your coherence baseline. It helps to accumulate energy and recharge your emotional system.

Heart Lock-In Quick Steps

- Heart-Focused Breathing
- Activate a regenerative feeling
- Radiate

Making Effective Decisions

Overview:

Goal: Empower you with the ability to make efficient and effective decisions, even in challenging situations.

Key Concepts:

- We make numerous decisions every day.
- Some decisions must be made quickly and with inadequate information.
- Making decisions from an emotionally balanced and coherent perspective helps achieve the best outcomes.

Regardless of our job, or position, we are all decision-makers, making a staggering number of big and small decisions each day. In the fast-moving, sometimes complex work environments, we can be faced with making important decisions quickly and often without having all the information we want or need.

For many people, a high level of mental and emotional performance is required because of complex and urgent decisions that must be made. Those decisions can have broad effects. In some jobs like law enforcement, first responders or nurses, some decisions affect your own safety and those around you. By slowing down your inner mental and emotional responses, you can create a timeout that allows you to think more clearly from a more balanced and coherent perspective.

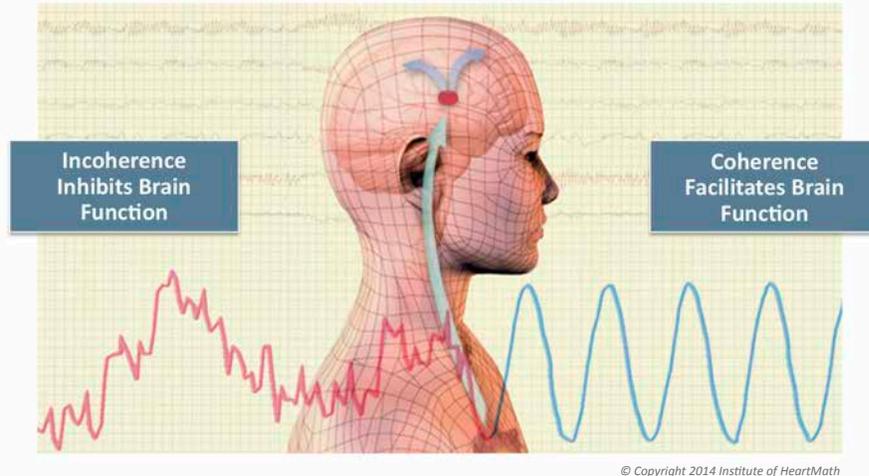
This does not mean you have to disengage from what you are doing and have to go off somewhere and think about a decision that you need to make, although sometimes that is appropriate. *It means more fully engaging in the moment from a more coherent place so that your body, mind and emotions are aligned, allowing you more access to the part of your brain that does the “smart thinking” and to your intuitive intelligence.*

“Sometimes we don’t feel like stopping for a stop sign, but we do it anyway out of integrity and awareness of the consequences.”

— Doc Childre

Heart Rhythms Directly Affect Physical and Mental Performance

Heart signals impact the brain centers involved in decision making, reaction times, social awareness and the ability to self-regulate.



Most of the time, however, you do not have to make such “big” decisions in the heat of the moment. More than likely, you have a constant stream of choices to make throughout the day that can have significant short-and long-term consequences for you, your friends or family. Sometimes, the sheer number of decisions being made creates a stress overload that compromises the quality of choices.

Some decisions may be more important than others, while some may have an emotional charge. Others simply may be more difficult to make. Bigger decisions require focus and the consideration of a lot of information and opinions. Some are made based on intuition, or what we call a gut feeling or an inner sense of knowing. Some decisions, whether personal or professional, can create a low-grade anxiety of which you may or may not be conscious. There may be some decisions you may not want to deal with them and you end up putting them off. When it comes to a more important decision, sometimes it is appropriate to “sleep on it” and get input from others who may have more experience than you.

The following technique, Freeze Frame, is designed to help you look objectively at decisions from a more coherent state so you can make the best decision possible. Freeze Frame can also help you shift perspective, which can help reduce stress. Remember, getting coherent is the key.

Stop and Think

Stop for a moment and think about how many decisions you make in a day. The bigger decisions may be more obvious, but don't overlook all the small ones.

Freeze Frame Technique

The Freeze Frame Technique allows us to use more of our smart-thinking brain and can reduce stress by helping shift our perception.

Freeze Frame is a multipurpose technique that can be used in the moment for gaining clarity and stopping energy drains. It also helps balance your mind and emotions so you can think more creatively and make better choices. Freeze Frame helps you gain a clear and balanced perspective by accessing your intuitive intelligence.

The Freeze Frame Technique allows you to use more of your smart-thinking brain, which can get jammed up and out-of-sync when you are stressed. It's a helpful technique to use when you have to make quick decisions or when out-of-the-box solutions are needed.

Having a genuine desire helps bring in a determined, proactive feeling to ignite the right approach and attitude, especially in more challenging situations.

Clarity or insight might not come right away. This could have a lot to do with the complexity of the issue, past history and the intensity of any emotions that may or may not be related to the issue or situation. That's OK. Be patient with yourself. Repeat the process later or the next day. It will begin to feel more natural with practice. Often, solutions are inspired through communication or input from others. Be sure also to notice any subtle shift in the way you feel. Shifting from feeling anxious about an issue to feeling calm is significant! You not only plugged an energy leak, but you also opened the door for a solution to emerge at another time.

Freeze Frame® Technique

Step 1. Acknowledge the problem or issue and any attitudes or feelings about it.

Step 2. 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.

Suggestion: Inhale 5 seconds, exhale 5 seconds (or whatever rhythm is comfortable).

Step 3. Make a sincere attempt to experience a regenerative feeling such as appreciation or care for someone or something in your life.

Step 4. From this more objective place, ask yourself what would be a more efficient or effective attitude, action or solution.

Step 5. Quietly observe any subtle changes in perceptions, attitudes or feelings. Commit to sustaining beneficial attitude shifts and acting on new insights.

Freeze Frame Quick Steps

1. Acknowledge
2. Heart-Focused Breathing
3. Activate a positive or renewing feeling
4. Ask
5. Observe and act

Read through each step of the Freeze Frame Technique above and use the worksheet on the next page as you do the steps. Have a sincere attitude as you give it a try.

Freeze Frame® Worksheet

Freeze Frame Quick Steps

1. Acknowledge
2. Heart-Focused Breathing
3. Activate a positive or renewing feeling
4. Ask
5. Observe and act

Problem or Issue:

Attitudes and feelings about the issue:

What did you observe?

Before: _____ **After:** _____

Often, solutions are inspired through communicating or getting input from others.

Getting in Sync for Each Situation

Try using Freeze Frame “on the move.”

1. Heart-Focused Breathing
2. Activate a positive or renewing feeling
3. Ask: “What would be an appropriate attitude for this situation?”

Effectively Communicating in Challenging Times

Overview:

Goal: Better understand the importance and outcomes of good, effective communication and what gets in the way.

Key Concepts:

- One of the greatest causes of stress and energy drains is ineffective and inefficient communications.
- Good communication saves energy by plugging energy drains. Effective communication helps prevent strain in relationships since most people genuinely want to be heard. Coherent listening and communication helps avoid mistakes and time waste.
- Being aware of negative or inappropriate emotions and attitudes is the first step in effective communication.
- Creating coherence turns down the volume and quiets the internal noise of depleting or reactive emotions.
- Staying coherent increases the odds that you will truly understand what the other person is saying. It will also help you to clearly state what you genuinely want to say.

Have you ever experienced an occasion in which you found a conversation frustrating, when someone didn't understand what you were saying or you didn't have a clue about what someone was saying to you? Did it annoy you or did you just shrug it off and walk away without a clear message or understanding?

Obviously, we need good communication in the workplace. A lot can be at stake. It's equally important to communicate well in all interactions, whether it is family with whom you must resolve issues or someone to whom you want to personally express that you genuinely care. Good communication involves both what you say and what you hear. It sounds simple enough, but in reality, it isn't. Did you know that 70% of mistakes trace back to problems in communication?

The following are some common glitches that interfere with the spoken message and create an energy drain that depletes your resilience:

1. Your attention is not focused on the conversation.
2. What is being said does not match what the person appears to be feeling about an issue or situation.
3. You blurt out a response when frustrated, sometimes before the person has even finished his or her sentence.



The Energetics of Communication:

- Incoherent emotional energy (internal noise) transfers unspoken feelings. Coherently aligned emotional energy also transfers unspoken feelings. Both can influence communication in important ways.
- The energetics of anxiety, judgment, frustration, preconceptions, etc. can create drama and incoherence and lead to glitches in communication.
- Being genuine helps to create coherent alignment and clarity in communications.

The Coherent Communication Technique, which you will learn next, is an important tool to use when you are talking with someone. The more you use it, the more familiar and automatic it becomes. Remember, no one else needs to know that you are using a technique to improve your communication skills, but it's likely that when you do, people will start to notice a difference.

Coherent Communication Technique

The Coherent Communication Technique brings coherence into communications and can be used in any situation whether you are communicating verbally or in writing.

Coherent Communication™ Technique

Step 1. Shift into a heart coherent state before communicating to effectively share and receive information.

Suggestion: Set an intention to be respectful of others' views or situations.

Step 2. Listen for the essence of what is being said without prejudging or getting pulled into drama before the communication is complete.

Suggestion: Remember to re-center in your heart if you start to overreact or lose emotional composure.

Speak from a genuine tone and consider what you are going to say and how it may impact others.

Step 3. During important or sensitive communications, it's effective to confirm the essence of what you heard to ensure mutual understanding.

Yet, when rushing communications, this is the step most of us forget.

Remember: Quieting the noise in the mind and emotions allows us to become more attuned to our own perceptions before we speak and to more genuinely hear what someone else is trying to say.

Coherent Communication Technique Quick Steps

Step 1: Shift into heart coherence

Step 2: Listen for the essence; speak with a genuine tone

Step 3: Confirm mutual understanding

At the heart of all successful communication is the sense that people feel you are listening to them and that you are speaking authentically.

Don't forget that being judgmental or impatient impacts communication.

Holding judgments or anger blocks the ability to listen.

Action Plan for Plugging Energy Leaks

Identify one situation that drains your energy and which technique(s) and strategies you will use for the next two weeks to plug the energy leaks.

Some examples of typical energy-draining situations:

Meetings	Emails	Financial issues/budget cuts	Sleep disruption
Technology glitches	Making decisions	Dealing with others' mistakes	Inefficient processes
Overload and deadlines	Time pressures	Challenging co-workers, clients	Traffic
Unexpected change	Workplace drama	Balancing work and family	Health challenges

Worksheet for Plugging Energy Drains

What energy-draining situation, interaction, issue or attitude will I commit to “taking on” for the next two weeks to stop the energy drain?

What technique(s) and strategies will I use to stop the energy drain?

When will I use or practice them? _____

How will I remind myself? _____

Your Tool Box:

Heart-Focused Breathing	emWave & Inner Balance Trainer	Depletion to Renewal Grid
Inner-Ease	Prep – Shift and Reset – Sustain	Coherent Communication
Quick Coherence	Freeze Frame	Heart Lock-In

Action Plan for Building Resilience Capacity

Identify actions you can take that will recharge your inner battery and add energy to your system. Commit to them for two weeks.

Actions to charge your inner battery and add energy to your system:

Prep with a coherence technique to set the tone for the day; breathe ease between tasks.

Find something to appreciate each day; practice patience and kindness.

Prep by practicing Inner-Ease before a stressful interaction.

Reset after a stressful interaction by practicing Heart-Focused Breathing.

Commit to taking out the drama, not overreacting and getting in sync.

Practice the Heart Lock-In Technique 5-15 minutes 3 or 4 times a week to build a new baseline.

Practice coherent communication in each interaction.

Use your emWave® or Inner Balance™ Trainer to help you learn to sustain your coherence.

Get adequate, renewing sleep.

Engage in an activity you enjoy such as sports, gardening, cooking, hiking, a hobby, exercising, dancing, music, volunteering or reading.

Worksheet for Building Resilience

What actions, techniques or strategies will I use to recharge my inner battery and add resilience to my system over the next two weeks?

When will I use or practice them? _____

How will I remind myself? _____



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