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Institute of HeartMath® Celebrating Landmarks, Giving Back for 20th Birthday

Boulder Creek, CA – Aug. 10, 2011 – This month the nonprofit Institute of HeartMath is celebrating its 20th birthday and reflecting on the organization’s achievements, which are highlighted by groundbreaking discoveries in its research of stress management, emotional physiology and heart intelligence. In the spirit of celebration, the institute is throwing a virtual birthday party on Facebook, complete with gifts and special opportunities for some of the partygoers who show up on IHM’s page.

Founded in 1991 by Doc Childre, the Institute of HeartMath (IHM) has become a global leader in stress research and science-based solutions for reducing stress, improving personal performance and building mental, emotional and physical resilience.

"HeartMath is an institution as well as a methodology for exploring, confirming and evolving the coherence between the tonal qualities of heart with the seeing and reasoning qualities of the brain. The world is much blessed by HeartMath’s affirmation that both are required by each of us to navigate the exigencies of daily life with an accompanying love and appreciation for its beauty and meaningfulness," said David S. Jones, MD, President of the Institute for Functional Medicine.

From its roots as a small research and education nonprofit based in Northern California the institute today is an internationally respected organization whose reach extends to nearly 80 countries across five continents. Acknowledged worldwide for its scientific contributions and discoveries related to human emotional physiology, IHM has established a critical connection between emotions, heart function and cognitive performance – a connection that is embraced by many in the scientific and health communities.

Meaningful Research

IHM researchers were among the first to scientifically observe that positive emotional states are directly associated with distinct shifts in heart activity. This observation has led to landmark studies demonstrating how humans can harness the power of emotions to create positive behavioral change.

The institute’s research has made significant contributions to scientific understanding of the relationship between human emotions, the heart and cognition. IHM’s exploration of positive emotions and the heart’s role in optimal function and building resilience has led to practical, heart-based techniques and technologies that help sustain positive emotions, physiological coherence and improve mental processes, health, performance and well-being. IHM’s work has been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals that include the *American Journal of Cardiology*, *Preventive Cardiology* and the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* among many others.

HeartMath published a noteworthy study in 1999 demonstrating that [police officers](#) – their profession is commonly known for high stress – who practiced emotion regulation techniques were able to significantly reduce negative emotions, fatigue and physical stress symptoms while increasing physical vitality and work performance.

In 2007, HeartMath published the [TestEdge® National Demonstration Study](#), which showed that HeartMath tools and techniques were effective at helping students lower test anxiety and improve academic performance.

The study used various measures to compare the effects of HeartMath self-regulation techniques that were practiced by an experimental group of 636 students at one school, with a control group of 344 students at another school who did not use the techniques.

Researchers found consistent evidence of reduced stress levels, improved emotional stability and other benefits based on additional measures among students at the experimental school compared with students at the control school. Students in the experimental group, for instance, acquired the ability to self-activate a coherent state before taking an important test and 75 percent of them showed reduced levels of test anxiety by the end of the HeartMath intervention.

"Well informed educators today recognize the importance of social and emotional intelligence as perhaps a more accurate predictor of life success than are high academic scores. Ability to network and get along well with others seems to make the difference," said Linda B. Caviness, Ph.D., Curriculum and Instruction Chair for the School of Education at La Sierra University. "The Institute of HeartMath is one of few organizations that focus on objectifying this phenomenon by studying emotion from a scientific perspective."

Other significant HeartMath [organizational studies](#) have broken new ground in the understanding and reduction of employee stress and hypertension, and various independent studies have demonstrated how HeartMath techniques used in conjunction with heart-rhythm feedback can effectively reduce stress and increase emotional well-being among military personnel and veterans.

Students, office and other organizational staff and military personnel are only a few examples of the many types of individuals HeartMath has succeeded in helping.

"HeartMath continues to be a significant resource for thousands of people around the world through this era of tremendous change," IHM President Sara Childre said. "Our understanding of human emotionality and stress are providing people with tools for self-empowerment to live happier, healthier lives."

"We're delighted to be celebrating 20 years of success, but more important, we're celebrating the millions of lives we have had the opportunity to reach and their commitment to empower themselves."

HeartMath's Impact and Outreach

The number of lives the institute has benefitted over the years by distilling its research into practical applications is nearly impossible to determine, but estimates put the figure in the millions.

Besides conducting its own groundbreaking research, HeartMath officials say, the organization is an active partner with independent researchers in many countries, settings and disciplines. The HeartMath System of tools, technology and programs have been in use at all levels of education, the military, various health professions, the corporate world, law enforcement and the sports world. Best-selling authors, noted scientists, entertainers, sports figures, performance coaches, spiritual leaders and many others are familiar with, utilize and promote HeartMath.

The Institute of HeartMath Benchmarks:

1992-1994 – HeartMath researchers observe that positive emotional states are associated with a distinct shift in heart activity.

1995 - HeartMath's study, *The Effects of Emotions on Short-Term Power Spectrum Analysis of Heart Rate Variability*, by McCraty, Atkinson, Tiller, Rein and Watkins is published in the *American Journal of Cardiology*.

1998 – HeartMath LLC[†], a for-profit training, product development and distribution company spins off of the Institute of HeartMath.

1999 – HeartMath breaks ground in delivering the first heart-rate variability technology for consumers with the Freeze-Framer® Interactive Learning System.

2002 – Quantum Intech Inc.[†], the HeartMath technology development and licensing company, is established.

2004 – U.S. Department of Education grants the institute \$1 million to research test anxiety and improving test scores with students in grades 3-12.

2006 – The handheld emWave® Personal Stress Reliever (PSR), a heart-rhythm monitor and coherence-building device developed from HeartMath research is released.

2007 – The Heart-Based Education Sponsorship Fund, HeartMath's first Caring Initiative, is launched in midyear.

2010 – The *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine* journal devotes entire issue to heart coherence, featuring several studies using HeartMath interventions.

The Institute of HeartMath launches the HeartMath for Communities Project, which includes the new De-Stress Workshop, to assist nonprofits and social and community agencies.

Review full list of [benchmarks](#).

HeartMath's Reach

- HeartMath tools are used in more than 80 nations across five continents.
- More than 500,000 students and teachers have been reached through IHM's educational programs, and more than 4,000 students have benefited from the Heart-Based Education Sponsorship Fund during its first four years.
- More than 10,000 health professionals in the U.S. are using applications developed by HeartMath.
- HeartMath is helping U.S. military troops with many physical and emotional challenges arising from their service to the nation. It is estimated that more than 17,300 active-duty military personnel and veterans have benefitted from the HeartMath Military Service Appreciation Fund.
- More than 245 people have become HeartMath Licensed Qualified Instructors for education and community programs.
- More than 2,000 people have been trained as HeartMath certified coaches to work with the public or as trainers in schools, business and corporate operations and healthcare institutions.

The HeartMath System

The umbrella of offerings HeartMath has created in its first two decades is commonly referred to as the HeartMath System. It consists of practical tools, education programs and services for improving the mental, emotional and physical health and well-being of children through seniors, regardless of their social, economic or cultural status.

Countless numbers of people around the world have been touched by the HeartMath System, whether through its research, onsite or online learning programs and tools, outreach services or a wide range of products, including books, games and the award-winning emWave[®] technology. HeartMath has developed numerous relationships and alliances with organizations domestically and around the world and licensed many people to use and teach the HeartMath System.

"All of us at HeartMath are grateful that our tools have been so well received and widely adopted over the past 20 years. I experience gratitude when I see people from all walks of life effectively using HeartMath for increasing their personal coherence and reducing stress," founder Doc Childre said.

Giving Back

As it celebrates members, donors and supporters during the next month, HeartMath will randomly select one person each week to receive a \$50 American Express gift card. Starting today, people can go to the IHM Facebook birthday page at <http://on.fb.me/IHM20th> to learn how to enter for a chance to win. Details also are available there on how to obtain a free download of *The Appreciative Heart*, HeartMath's most popular e-book.

In addition to its main Facebook page, the institute also maintains specialized Facebook pages providing up-to-date information and resources for parents and caregivers of children, and another for military, veterans and their families. Links to these pages can be found from its main [Facebook](#) page.

Learn more about HeartMath and its research, programs, resources and initiatives at www.heartmath.org.

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[†] *Three companies have evolved to implement the HeartMath System with complementary missions: the nonprofit Institute of HeartMath, a research and education organization that also launched and oversees the Global Coherence Initiative; HeartMath LLC, a cutting-edge performance and consulting firm that provides unique programs, products and technology to boost performance, productivity and health while reducing stress; and Quantum Intech Inc., a licensing and development company that focuses on biometric and emotion-regulated technology products.*

About the Institute of HeartMath:

The Institute of HeartMath, www.heartmath.org, is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit research and education organization. IHM has been conducting scientific research on the physiology of emotions and the science of the heart for two decades. IHM is a world leader in stress reduction and emotion-management research.