

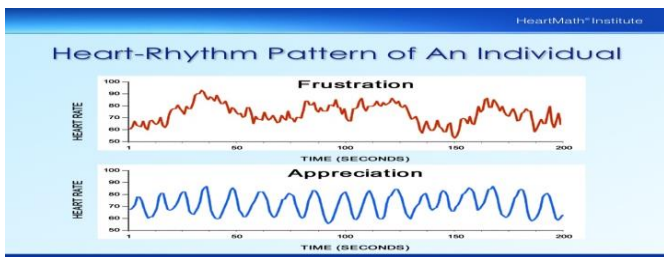
Heart Focused Breathing Technique

This technique has been used with an excellent success rate in traumatised Syrian children and is used by elite athletes, navy seals etc and is a simple effective method for interrupting the stress/anxiety cycle, often present in our daily lives.

Heart Focused breathing releases a hormone from the heart – Atrial Peptide. This hormone interferes with the production of the stress hormone, Cortisol. The heart also produces a hormone called Immunoglobulin A, upgrading the immune system.

These hormones align the heart with the brain and puts the body into a coherent state. This technique is excellent for when you wish to reduce anxiety and fear, particularly useful for many aspects of horsemanship including coping with test/competition nerves and anxiety, when out hacking or any other circumstance where you need to be relaxed and calm.

The heart-monitor readouts (below) contrast the heart-rhythm pattern of someone experiencing frustration, then appreciation. The smooth heart rhythm, measured by heart-rate variability (HRV), is what scientists call a coherent pattern and improves emotional and physical health.



The Heart Focused Breathing Technique

1. Take your awareness into your heart space (centre of your chest just above the sternum). Touch this area if it helps you focus.
2. Tell your body you are in a safe place.
3. Breathe a little deeper than normal and slow your breathing.
4. Inhale from your heart space. Breathe in for 5 seconds and out for 5 seconds and start to feel any of these positive emotions **Care Appreciation Compassion Gratitude**
5. If your thoughts wander, don't worry just let the thought waft by and bring yourself back to thinking of a positive emotion.
6. Do this for approximately 2 minutes. The hormones generated positively impact your body for up to 6 hours.

Researchers have found these 4 key words takes the heart variability rate to **0.1hz** and creates; Super learning; Resilience; Awareness and Creativity; Immune system boost and healing; Heart and Brain neural pathway alignment; Synchronicity of all body system.

Heart Focused Breathing with your Horse

Try the heart breathing method whilst near your horse. I find placing one hand on their breast and the other near their withers allows me to connect physically and emotionally. Start heart breathing and connect from your heart feeling love and compassion for your horse. Your hearts may quickly entrain together (beat in alignment). You will know they are responding and connecting to your heart energy when their ears flicker back and forth.

If you do not see their ears flicker, your horse may be distracted in some way, so recognise this and either persevere, if appropriate, or take a quick break and try again when the horse is settled. I have been able to connect with every horse, but some take longer than others and it is entirely down to the individual circumstances – the environment for example other horses or humans in the vicinity/feeding time etc and the nature of the horse.

On occasions, I feel my heart beat change once connected and my heart beat feels more powerful and resonant. When I connected with a stallion Riacho, his heart beat was so strong, and my heart was *booming* when his tremendous heart energy entrained with mine.

The Heartmath's scientists have a research video on their website documenting Heart to heart communication with the horse and human with Ann Baldwin. The scientist's results found *the horse's heart influences the human heart 30 seconds before the human heart reacts to the influence of the horse's heart energy. The heart monitors placed on the horses and humans recorded the horse's heart frequency reduced the human's frequency to much less than the 0.1hz usually seen in HFB.*

Researchers were amazed to see recorded rates of 0.01 Hz and below. This energy interaction is one of the main reasons why being around horses makes us feel so much better and horses are increasingly being used in human emotional therapy, including autism.

All animals and nature influence our frequency by decreasing the Hz. Chickens are being introduced into care homes, walking in nature calms the mind.

Heart Focused Breathing with a Pet

HMI Director of Research Dr Rollin McCarty conducted this study with his 15-year-old son Josh and their dog, Mabel. McCarty conducted the experiment at the laboratory in Boulder Creek and used electrocardiograms monitors to record the heart rhythm data when the pair were together and apart.

Firstly. They placed Mabel in one of the labs and monitored her heart rhythm. Josh then entered the room and sat down and proceeded to consciously feel love and care towards Mable. His heart rhythms became more coherent and Mable's heart rhythms became more coherent until their hearts entrained and beat together.

When Josh left the room, Mabel's heart rhythms became more chaotic and incoherent, suggesting separation anxiety.

Try heart breathing with your pet.

Coherence Breaks through the day

Take two or three coherence breathing breaks each day. The technique can be used in most places including whilst driving, in the bathroom, taking a break at work, walking riding etc.

If you become stressed and anxious during the day, just start the breathing technique and it can alter your mood from irritated/anxious to calm and joyful, in less than a couple of minutes.