



Have you heard of Heart Math? I knew about the term but only recently took a deeper look. What I found compelled me to share with you. We are going to take a look at two major components of [HeartMath®](#) along with an archived strategy from the resources page of their website.

Before we dive in to the details of HeartMath®, I want to highlight a specific aspect of the website with you. On the page linked in the title of this article, you will find testimonials from teachers across the United States (haven't found much Canadian content yet) about how the strategies and tools can be applied to get you ready for your workday, to bring you back to center during your work day and to help you to access your "after school you" as you move from work to home.

Let's try a few of the techniques. Disclaimer: this information is shared for information purposes only and does not constitute any official advertisement of these resources. All of this material, including videos and coursework can be found by accessing the HeartMath® website.

How many of us are scrambling each morning to get ourselves (and also our family members) out the door? We know this time can be hectic and set our day off in a stressful state. Let's review some options to remedy this.

Under the resources tab of the HeartMath® website is **appreciation**. We have explored gratitude from time to time in the *Well Teacher*. From the perspective of HeartMath®, let's explore how appreciation works to maintain our heart health. The HeartMath® team has researched how feelings of sincere gratitude helps boost the power of our immune system, our intuition and inspiration.

Tomorrow morning, when you're feeling overwhelmed, notice your heart rate as you are rushing around. Try to stop, take a deep breath and say a phrase to yourself that starts with, "I get to....". Here are some options:

"I get to help the family get ready and start the day on a positive note."

"I get to tackle (some of) my to-do list."

Your turn: how would you finish this—"I get to..." tomorrow morning?

What about appreciation at work?

"I get to work on this project."

"I get to work with my students/colleagues."

"I get to...."

Finally, arriving home **at the end of your workday**. How can you practice appreciation and boost your immune system and heart health?

"I get to organize my living space."

"I get to try a new recipe for supper."

"I get to spend time with my family/pet(s)."

"I get to...."—your turn again.

Let's try the coherence activities. Similar to the appreciation activity, the HeartMath® website offers insight into how our emotional and physical heart work together and how reciprocity can impact the functioning of each, respectively.

When you are experiencing a state of stress, like in the morning, you can try to practice **coherence** in that moment:

Focus your attention on your heart and notice your breathing.

Try to slow your breath.

Activate a positive feeling—similar to following the, "I get to" prompt. This feeling could be appreciation or another comfortable emotion. This feeling could also be one of caring for someone or something in your life.

This quick technique can be just what we need during a stressful time to allow us to get out of our head, step back and make time to respond to a situation rather than react.

I challenge you to find at least one opportunity to practice **coherence** during your workday after reading this article. The more you practice these seemingly small habits, the more routine you will build—remember, practices makes possible.

Once you've tried some of these techniques for yourself, you can try them with family members and through social and emotional learning in your learning spaces. HeartMath® offers exercises for youth as well. Each of the techniques below is explained through text, audio and visuals on the website and can be accessed by clicking the link the name of each technique.

[Shift and Shine Technique™](#) for Ages 3-6

[HeartShift Tool®](#) for Ages 7-11

[Quick Coherence Technique®](#) for Ages 12-18

If you do try these techniques in your learning spaces, please feel free to reach out to share your experience with us by sending a message to appl@nstu.ca. Put "HeartMath" in the subject line.

To enter this month's giveaway for *The HeartMath Solution* audiobook, update your email address in the membership registry. Then, email us from your primary email you provided in your Member Registry Profile to be entered for a chance to win!