

# HEART MATH INSTITUTE RESEARCH HORSES AS HEALERS

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"Recent studies conducted by the Institute of HeartMath provide a clue to explain the bidirectional "healing" that happens when we are near horses. According to researchers, the heart has a larger electromagnetic field and higher level of intelligence than the brain: A magnetometer can measure the heart's energy field radiating up to 8 to 10 feet around the human body. While this is certainly significant it is perhaps more impressive that the electromagnetic field projected by the horse's heart is five times larger than the human one (imagine a sphere-shaped field that completely surrounds you). The horse's electromagnetic field is also stronger than ours and can actually directly influence our own heart rhythm!

Horses are also likely to have what science has identified as a "coherent" heart rhythm (heart rate pattern) which explains why we may "feel better" when we are around them. . . . studies have found that a coherent heart pattern or HRV is a robust measure of well-being and consistent with emotional states of calm and joy--that is, we exhibit such patterns when we feel positive emotions.

A coherent heart pattern is indicative of a system that can recover and adjust to stressful situations very efficiently. Often times, we only need to be in a horses presence to feel a sense of wellness and peace. In fact, research shows that people experience many physiological benefits while interacting with horses, including lowered blood pressure and heart rate, increased levels of beta-endorphins (neurotransmitters that serve as pain suppressors), decreased stress levels, reduced feelings of anger, hostility, tension and anxiety, improved social functioning; and increased feelings of empowerment, trust, patience and self-efficacy."

## ***Stories About How IHM Enhances Sports Performance***

The following letter of gratitude was from equestrian competitor Beverly Bennett to HeartMath 1:1 provider Dirk Stroda, founder of PeakPerformance Mental Coaching.

"I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to you for delivering to the CentreLine Stables equestrians your outstanding PeakPerformance seminar and workshop. The techniques you promote, combined with your timely follow-up and continued support, have been of immeasurable value to both riders and their horses.

The results of my personal experience with the HeartMath System have been nothing short of dramatic, and I know that my fellow competitors feel likewise. In addition to being easy to comprehend and to learn, the techniques are readily available to the practitioner at any time, in any circumstance.

The ways in which I have benefited from the HeartMath approach are undeniable. I am able to remain calm and mentally acute, focusing only on the moment. Whereas once I was affected by external noise and activity (not to mention the mental 'noise' associated with competition), I now ride every stride, every second, with total focus. It feels as though I am riding in slow motion, where I can hear only what my horse and I are communicating to each other. Nothing else exists.

Most important, though, is that the PeakPerformance tools have reignited my joy in competing. No longer a 'nervous wreck,' I ride only because I love every single moment of the partnership I enjoy with my horse. For me, success is the 'icing on the cake' – the side benefit to the passion I feel for my horse and my sport.

Your contribution to our competitive and personal achievements cannot be overstated. I have appreciated your patience, your availability, your sensitivity and your skillful guidance throughout. The PeakPerformance system is so much more than a competitive performance tool: It is life enhancing, benefiting anyone who chooses to apply it in their daily living. I would urge anyone wanting to improve their performance, competitively or personally, to experience the benefits of PeakPerformance and the HeartMath System."

– Beverley Bennett, Surrey, British Columbia, Canada

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## **Facts at a Glance:**

HeartMath training programs impact sports performance by:<sup>†</sup>

- Preparing athletes for activities that require concentration and motor coordination.
- Maximizing emotional calm, concentration and focus during competitions.
- Moving athletes into "the zone" for achieving their best.
- Lowering performance anxiety, transforming feelings stress and worry into productive energy.
- Improving teamwork and communication with coaches and parents.
- Giving athletes instant feedback for stabilizing emotions, balancing the autonomic nervous system.
- Helping athletes develop skills for creating a calm.
- Enabling athletes to shift attitudes fast so sports activities are always satisfying.

<sup>†</sup> Adapted from HeartMath's *Managing Emotions, Golf's Next Frontier: Ground-Breaking Techniques for High Performance*.