

## **SCIENCE AND THE HEART'S WISDOM**

By Emily Laurel

*After an encounter in the fall of 1998 with her own mortality (in the form of oral cancer) and her subsequent miraculous healing, Emily Laurel realized the role her heart's wisdom played in her healing. In this-series written for The Indigo Sun she shares what she is learning with our readers.*

Let's try an experiment. Close your eyes right now and focus on your %self.+ Stretch your arm out in front of you and point at your %self.+ Did your finger point at your head? Your stomach? Or your heart? Everyone who has tried this experiment for me has pointed to the heart as %Self+. In the Wisdom teachings of various cultures through time, the heart has been called many things, such as %the doorway,+ %the crucible,+ %the center point.+ But I believe the heart is even more. It is the Central Intelligence Agency or CIA of our being. It is the energetic prism through which we are able to see, feel, and know ourselves as who we really are.

We all know persons who seem to have been born with an innate ability to access the heart's wisdom readily, but many others seem to search endlessly outside themselves for enlightenment. I frequently hear from such people, which is one of the many reasons I write these articles. I do believe my heart's wisdom and intelligence got me through the experiences of the past several months, including warning me about the cancer growing in my mouth, but I realize that I have much to learn about accessing my heart's wisdom and intelligence. To learn the ways that have been successful for others, I simply asked to be shown the path, and it is unfolding before me. This is what I share with you.

Recently, I ran across an A.R.E. catalog I had received in the mail several months ago. Circled in red was the name of a book, *The Intelligent Heart: Transform your Life with the Laws of Love*, by David McArthur and Bruce McArthur. I did not even remember having received the catalog, but I immediately ordered the book as I realized reading this book would be part of the path unfolding before me.

The book combines scientific evidence from the Institute of HeartMath's® electrophysiology lab with the authors' years of research and real-life applications into a simple five-step process based on the Laws of Love and Transformation. These laws are part of Universal Law, the set of laws that govern our lives. I don't want to get into a description of Universal Law, but this book does logically explain the Laws of Transformation and how they can be used to achieve personal transformation, which seems to be what many of us are seeking.

As I read *The Intelligent Heart* I remembered traveling to Austin several years ago. I was guided to work with a person there named Terri Fitzgerald. I didn't know what she did or why I was there. I just knew I had to go. In our work together, she used electrodes to measure certain brain wave cycles and then directed me in some mental imagery work. She instructed me to bring a feeling of

joy into my heart. As I achieved the coherent brain wave cycle associated with joy coming into my heart, I had an aha moment because I recognized the feeling. The Joy Feeling was the same feeling I experienced several years before during a healing service when I felt Spirit move through our midst. With Terri the feeling in the heart area was induced by mental imagery, and in reflecting on this experience and how it relates with my research on the heart's wisdom, I realize now that there are many ways to elicit this coherent energy in our bodies. Now more than ever I realize the incredible power we can evoke when our minds and hearts are working together. Focusing on my heart and experiencing the intense feeling of joy there came from my intent and my mind, which caused the brain wave cycles being measured to come into coherence (a smooth, evened-out wave pattern I call the healing niche).

Medical professionals have found that they can look at certain functions of the body to understand how well it is operating. One of those functions is heart rate variability . the speeding up and slowing down of our heart rate over time. A greater range between the high rate and low rate tells us our heart is healthy and can make changes quickly. Although the source of the heart beat is within the heart itself, it gets directions from the brain through the sympathetic and parasympathetic parts of the autonomic nervous system telling it whether to speed up or slow down.

If we look at the difference between the effects of love and frustration on the heart's rhythm it's easy to understand the importance of bringing more coherence into our lives. With the feeling of frustration, the relationship between the increase and decrease of heart rate is very chaotic. What is actually happening is that the two branches of the autonomic nervous system are in conflict. One (the sympathetic nervous system) is trying to speed the heart up while the other (the parasympathetic nervous system) is trying to slow it down. It is like driving a car with one foot on the brake and one on the gas. That would cause a lot of wear and tear on the engine and drive train, make the ride uncomfortable, and waste a lot of energy. The same is true of the heart. This pattern shows great inefficiency, stress, and waste of energy.

On the other hand, let's look at sincere appreciation as an expression of a deep, heartfelt feeling giving expression to love. If that cycle were charted it would show a gentle, rhythmic cycle, indicating the two functions of the autonomic nervous system working in balance with each other. This is a more youthful, efficient, harmonious utilization of the body's energy. It is a dynamic example of the transforming power of love operating at the level of our physical bodies. When this pattern is present in the heart, other systems in the body are strongly affected by its order and efficiency. In addition, when this pattern is present in your heart, it profoundly affects the hearts of the people around you.

Using HeartMath tools described in *The Intelligent Heart*, such as Freeze Frame® and another one called Cut-Thru® we can bring our hearts and minds into coherence or synchrony, a powerful state of being. With coherence we

cause positive change to occur at all levels: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual through changes in our attitudes. And we can now directly measure the effect of attitudes in the body's chemistry, giving us proof that is acceptable to the most skeptical scientist.

Freeze Frame® is a one-minute, five-step technique intended to be used when you are feeling stressed or out of balance. This exercise is deceptively simple but very effective. When using it you consciously disengage from unpleasant mental and emotional reactions, shift attention to the heart, and focus on feeling appreciation or a similar positive emotion toward someone. Really feeling the feeling, in contrast to mentally recalling or visualizing a past positive experience, is essential to success. Here are the steps as they are stated in *The Intelligent Heart*:

1. Recognize the stressful feeling, and Freeze-Frame it (take a time-out).
2. Make a sincere effort to shift your focus away from the racing mind or disturbed emotions to the area around your heart. Pretend you're breathing through your heart to help focus your energy in this area. Keep your focus there for ten seconds or more.
3. Recall a positive, fun feeling or time you've had in life and allow yourself to re-experience it.
4. Using your intuition, common sense, and sincerity, ask your heart what a more efficient response to the situation would be, one that would minimize future stress.
5. Listen to what your heart says in answer to the question.

You may be thinking, "I already know all that," but its simplicity makes it far more likely to be useful when you are under stress than a complicated technique you must look up in a book. To enjoy the benefits of this technique, read *The Intelligent Heart* and practice the techniques described in the book. In this short article I can only briefly describe the benefits of focusing on your heart and the wisdom that is waiting there for you.