



**Transcript  
to Master Class on  
Using the Inner Balance™  
Coherence Plus Sensor and  
Inner Balance App in Clinical  
Practice  
(with Timestamps)**

# User's Manual for “Master Class on Using the Inner Balance™ Coherence Plus Sensor and Inner Balance App in Clinical Practice” (with timestamps)

## [\(00:00:01\)](#): OVERVIEW

Welcome to this guide on using the Inner Balance™ Coherence Plus Sensor and the Inner Balance App in clinical practice. Together we'll explore how these tools can support your work with patients in therapeutic and medical environments. We'll also walk through the science behind Heart Rate Variability (HRV) Coherence, its benefits and how the app and sensor can be integrated into your practice for more effective patient care and improved patient outcomes. For simplicity, I'll use the terms client and patient interchangeably. Hi, I'm Barbara Hudak, HeartMath® certified senior trainer and coach, US Air Force veteran, registered nurse, aroma therapist, and integrative wellness practitioner. I was introduced to the HeartMath system over 15 years ago as part of a pilot study on leadership resilience and agility at the Mayo Clinic in Phoenix, Arizona. And I still remember witnessing an HRV demonstration during class, and then I experienced an aha moment with my sensor.

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Throughout my professional journey as an ER and cardiac ICU nurse and leader, I was surrounded by suffering and trauma, which led me to disconnect from negative emotions. I thought this strategy worked, but my coherence scores revealed otherwise—I had blocked all feelings and ended up numb, merely functioning without awareness of my emotional state. The Inner Balance device and corresponding techniques profoundly transformed me, and now I am honored to support others in similar paths. Those who choose caring professions do so to help others, but it is important, as we navigate this information, to remember the need for self-care. As my self-awareness grew, I noticed measurable improvements in my coherence, enhanced sleep, and a significant boost in my energy levels after work. This realization highlighted how these tools can benefit practitioners and clients alike. Now, I use the Inner Balance sensor with almost every client, supporting healthcare providers, military veterans, pre-surgical patients who wish to optimize recovery, and anyone pursuing preventive wellness to elevate overall well-being, performance, and longevity.

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So today we'll explore how the Inner Balance app and sensor can be a game changer in your clinical practice. Whether you're a healthcare provider or therapist, understanding HRV Coherence can help you improve your patient's emotional regulation, their resilience, reduce stress, and enhance overall health. So let's get started. Before we dive in, here's an overview of what we'll be covering. First, we'll look at the foundation. What is real-time coherence? How does it work? Next, the power of coherence measurement. Yes, it improves our awareness and how do we now frame that and motivate our patients and clients. Next we'll look at the inner balance app and the sensor overview. Just briefly, what does it look like? Next, a little focus on practitioner coherence and self-care. We don't want to forget about ourselves. Introducing the HeartMath app to patients. I'll share with you a best practice, a three minute protocol that you can share with your patients and your clients.

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Next, what do clients need to practice this at home? Then we'll transition over into sustainability, help co-create a practice plan and manage your patient's expectations. Next, engagement, follow up, accountability. How do we support them along their way? Best practices, how is this used in clinical practice as well as different patient populations that this HeartMath technologies being used to support FAQ section and then some closing takeaways.

Real Time Heart Rhythm Coherence: How Does It Work?

So let's begin at the beginning. What is real-time heart coherence? And I'm going to be looking at my notes to make sure that I don't miss anything. So coherence, as you know, is a wavelike heart rate variability pattern and it reflects the alignment of the heart, the mind, the emotions, and the nervous system. Now on the left, you'll see this is an incoherent tracing, and you can see this is a very jagged, chaotic pattern which reflects a dysregulated emotional state.

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Now in this case, this is frustration, irritation, impatience or worry. And if you remember, these tracings were actually taken from the same person they were invited to in this first instance on the left to recall something that frustrated them. They were in a lab setting, they weren't even in a stressful environment. This is just the recalling of a situation that was frustrating, same person, and just within a few minutes apart now was invited to focus on something that they appreciate and to really practice some of these techniques that we're teaching and look at what happened. Much more order, much more rhythm synchronization within their nervous system simply by focusing on something that they appreciated. Again, they were not in a situation or a place. They were recalling maybe a vacation or something that they could appreciate. They just re-focused on that memory and were invited to feel that feeling.

[\(00:05:15\)](#): **The Power of Coherence Measurement**

So again, the inner balance sensor offers immediate feedback on how quickly we can shift from this state. On the left to more coherence on the right, this gives immediate feedback on the emotional state. This is represented in a coherence score and this instant feedback is a really powerful tool for enhancing self-awareness and that can drive long lasting behavioral change. So what does coherence feel like? We get that question is, well, how do I know if I'm in a state of coherence? Well, it's different for each person and it's different in each situation. And the app's real-time feedback offers that immediate accurate snapshot of your state, and that really helps us to understand what coherence is like for me, I didn't know what that was like. As I mentioned, I had gotten really good at blocking most of my feelings, so I really didn't know what was happening internally.

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And so for me, the app really offered an in the moment reflection of, oh, that's what blue feels like. That's what green feels like. And that really supported me in helping to identify and have that felt sense of that's what that feels like, rather than being in a very constant state of incoherence that had become my norm and I didn't even recognize it.

So that may be a similar situation either for yourself or for your patients that you're seeing in the clinic. And so again, the coherence score, which we'll look at in just a moment here, the coherence score gives us a reflection of what's happening in the nervous system and it offers us an actionable clear insight. So take a look at this. We saw in the previous slide that this really jagged incoherent pattern that we see here will translate to a lower coherent score that simply means the nervous system is out of sync, it's not really working together, together.

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Conversely, this smoother rhythm, if you remember from the previous slide, that on the right, more appreciation, more gratitude, more care, a lot of different emotions that we can tap into now translates to a higher coherent score, which means the nervous system is in sync. So it's a really nice visual that really will help your clients to understand what I'm feeling, what I'm thinking, and what I'm doing affects these numbers. And it also helps us to make adjustments in the moment. This really is all about self-regulation and emotional resilience, and this helps us to take care of our physiology and how empowering it is. Now additionally, the scoring system has an element of motivation. Once we start to see that we have control over what is happening internally, we may not be able to be in charge or in control of what's happening externally, but we definitely can take charge of what's happening internally and watching our score improve over time.

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It really helps us and our clients and our patients to stay engaged with the practice. And we know that with consistent practice, this now results in baseline coherence shifts over time. So understanding your patient's motivation is really key. How do we frame this for our patients to make it meaningful for them? Well, whether they're an athlete or an active duty military member that really wants to enhance performance or longevity, or maybe it's a patient that's already on a health journey, maybe they have high blood pressure or anxiety or some other issues, or maybe it's just somebody interested in spiritual self-regulation, they really want to tap into that higher power. Maybe it's meditation or inner peace, this coherence tool, we can tailor it and frame it in a way to motivate them to support them where they are. And it's so important to help us connect with our patients by tapping into their why.

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So let's take a look at how we can position this coherence training in a way that really makes sense for them. Now, first of all, the nervous system is the foundation of everything, foundation of health. We know that when it's dysregulated due to stress or trauma, it can trigger a cascade of dysfunction in the body. And so this can lead to physical symptoms, maybe like poor digestion, again, high blood pressure or anxiety. And before we go into the next slide, knowing that coherence training helps to restore balance to the nervous system, it helps to address those issues. And we think about, well, gosh, what if we think about stress and how it affects and really exacerbates some of the symptoms that we see? I learned this years ago and I thought it was really, really interesting where this was positioned as if stress is a contributing factor too, fill in the blank, whatever the patient is experiencing.

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What if we can offer them a way to get to the root cause to really mitigate some of that stress, that stress response, that cortisol, and all the adrenaline that we're producing in these moment by moment cases? What if we can mitigate that? What if we can minimize that? What a gift would that be? Let's frame this for our patients. Tailoring your approach is really going to be important, and you can certainly use your intuition, you know your patients best. So tuning into what really would resonate with them, what really would help them is really key. But these are three broad categories. Perhaps a patient with healthcare issues, maybe they already have, they're presenting with maybe high blood pressure or anxiety, positioning this coherence as a tool to reduce stress, to promote healing by addressing again the root cause of the situation, which is nervous system dysregulation.

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Really positioning in that way can be helpful. Next, performance oriented clients or patients that really have an issue, they're pretty healthy. It could be your active duty member, they're showing up and they're working out. They want to be stronger; they want to recover from their workouts a little bit more robustly. They want to have more vigor and more aliveness. Well positioning, coherence training is a way to improve performance. Mental clarity and physical outcomes might be an inroad to helping them to engage with this program. And once they start to see the numbers improve, that's going to be really interesting for you to support them in that way because I think seeing is believing in a lot of cases. And finally, for those who are looking for spiritual orientation, we know that this helps to clear energetic blockages, opens the path to deeper wisdom and as well as inner peace.

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We talk about the heart as not just a physical heart, but there's also a component of heart intelligence of trusting our heart. And so if your client or your patient is looking for more of that, this can support some self-healing, especially for those that are going through trauma. So these are just some ways to position this coherence training for your clients. Now to underscore coherence, strengthens brain function, this might be a way to position this for our clients. So here's what we're going to say is when the nervous system is in a state of coherence, it fosters emotional regulation, the brain works better, we can tap into that cognitive functioning, that cortical facilitation. So an example might be, Hey, have you ever said something that you didn't mean when you were under pressure? And most people would say, probably, so I certainly have, and we can explain that to them to say, yeah, well more wonder under pressure the brain is not functioning optimally.

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Coherence in self-regulation helps your brain work better. That might be a way to introduce that to a certain client. Now for those who are performance oriented, physical fitness optimization, longevity, positioning this as a way to boost their performance, really to help them to boost their energy. An example might be to say this practice can help improve your performance on the starting line. Helps you to be a better athlete, helps you to optimize the aging process by keeping your nervous system in top condition. So again, these are maybe people that don't have any physical issues and it's kind of hard to, if we don't have a problem to fix, how do you help them to engage? Well remind them that this program is used by Navy Seals, Olympians and trauma therapists. This has been

demonstrated credible and it translates to motivations for certain patients when they can see that needle move in a certain direction, that might be the motivation for them.

#### [\(00:13:56\)](#): **Inner Balance App & Sensor Overview**

So next, let's look at what does the Inner Balance app and the sensor look like? The newest inner balance sensor, by the way, I'll show it to you here. The newest inner balance sensor is the Inner Balance Coherence plus sensor. It's a small device that clips to your ear, measures your heart rate variability 500 times per second, and this data is then transmitted to the app which processes it and gives you a real-time coherent score. Again, you'll see this right here where my mouse is. That is your coherent score. Now the inner balance app guides you through real-time coherence training. It offers immediate feedback and the goal is to stay in that green zone. This indicates a state of high coherence. It promotes improved emotional regulation, reduces stress, and it improves our health and overall wellbeing. So the key features of the app before I actually show you a couple of the screens if you recall, there is something called the breath pacer.

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And the breath pacer helps to find the optimal grieving rhythm to facilitate coherence. Now you can set the pacer speed in the settings and again, the settings are going to be in your app and it can be based on your needs. So it's set to five seconds in, five seconds out. If that's not quite comfortable, and we'll talk about this in just a moment, you can certainly set that breath pace search as something that is more comfortable for the patient. We want to do that in the clinic when we're with them so that they don't have any disappointment or any confusion once they're on their own. Now the other thing I wanted to share with you is the guides. So you can use the guides right here in this icon right down here below. It's this little headset. This can really be great for onboarding.

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It can help your patients with video learning. It helps you to help them. So the first thing I would like to invite you to look at is the HeartMath experience. It kind of goes through an overview of the HeartMath system. This does the heavy lifting for you, so you can invite them to watch these videos in terms of homework between sessions. And this will give them a little bit of a broader perspective of what the system is about as well as the inner balance tour. So there's an onboarding video review of what is in the history and the programs, how they can do a deeper dive, walks them through their journal feature and other things like that. So that's really, really key. Another thing that might be helpful to introduce in the clinic setting and then to help them to do homework is these guided techniques.

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So the first guided practice walks them through the quick coherence technique, the heart lock-in technique and so on. So they will have, if they choose to have a guided feature, which can really, really be helpful. So as you'll see, the app is really easy to use. It serves as a comprehensive tool that you can share with your patients. And as healthcare professionals, we can leverage the app's learning programs. You can create a tailored lesson plan, tailored to your patient's needs, what your client is looking for, and whether it's recommended by you or it's selected by patients for home use this real-time HRV feedback and learning resources. It really provides a valuable support system in ongoing self-care. So that's for the patients. Now let's focus on ourselves. Let's focus on practitioner.

### **(00:17:35): Practitioner Coherence and Self-Care**

So it's really important, and I'm sure you know this, but I really want to highlight this for us because we are very busy, right? You see so many patients every single day and you really pour out your heart to each of them. And so it's really important to remember to take care of ourselves. This does not take a lot of time, and the benefits that you'll experience firsthand will improve not only your brain function, but your creativity and your intuition, and it will also enhance how you support and educate your patients. Coming into your sessions more coherently not only improves your energy, it reduces some of the drain that you might be experiencing, but it also helps you to be more effective in your work. So let's take a few moments to practice what we teach. I want to walk you through the quick coherence technique if you'll allow me to do so, and we'll just do this for about a minute or so. Step one, focus your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area. Breathing a little slower and deeper than usual, find an easy rhythm that's comfortable. As you continue heart-focused breathing, make a sincere attempt to experience a regenerative feeling such as appreciation or care for someone or something in your life.

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Thank you. Now notice any changes in your body, your mind or your emotions. What's different right now? What do you notice? What do you observe? Think about when this state could benefit you during your day, whether it's before or after a challenging situation or simply to recharge and have more energy available to you when you need it. And just take a moment, pause this video, write it down, and commit to practicing. When can this be helpful? Maybe it's first thing in the morning, last thing before bedtime or maybe before client or patient visits. And don't forget to set a reminder to keep you on track.

### **(00:20:30): Introducing the HeartMath System to Patients**

So I just role modeled not only something for you, but a way that you can introduce this to your patients. It could be that easy or it could be just as simple as sharing a link to a video. There's so many out there on the quick coherence technique on the HeartMath website. I am really inviting you seriously to pause, take a moment and take stock. Take inventory. How often am I practicing? Am I using this to the optimal performance level that I can? If you're practicing quick coherence technique first thing in the morning, when can you uplevel? When else can you add this to your day-to-day? And simply, it can be heart-focused breathing. I know we're busy, but remember, you can use these techniques in the moment, anytime, anywhere, and with practice, no one's going to even know that you're doing this.

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It's really important to integrate this into ourselves so that we can share this with our patients and our clients. Alright, I appreciate you doing that with me. That was helpful for me as well. So next, let's look at another way of introducing this to our clients. Again, this could be just what we just did a moment ago, sharing this technique, having a quick

video maybe in your waiting room or in your clinical practice webpage. There's one listed right here. Now introducing this evidence-based approach can begin very casually and experientially. Again, it could be in a zoom setting if you're doing virtual or telehealth practices. Certainly I was doing this with a business coaching client and I want to share with you a quick story of how this worked. So she was sharing that she was having trouble with sleep, with concentration, and she was really tired.

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And so I asked her if she'd be open to for just a few moments to practice a technique. And I asked her and she said yes. And I asked her, I said, think about one of your favorite things, one of your favorite pastimes or something that you look forward to in your day to day. And she said, "I love walking through a certain park in the autumn when the leaves have fallen and it's just a crunching of the leaves as she was walking." And so I invited her to really just recall that place a hand on your heart if it's comfortable. She was comfortable with closing her eyes. And I guided her through the quick coherence technique that we just did for just a moment or two. It was about maybe a minute, maybe 90 seconds. And as I watched her, she was beginning to smile and I asked her, what was that like?

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What did you notice? And she said, I really felt like I am more clear, like the lights are brighter in the room and I have more focus right now, and this is the most focused and energetic I felt in weeks. And then I explained the science behind this technique and it was so cool. She was so intrigued by this that now she starts all of her daily huddles at her work. She works at a spa and she actually has the Amwa Pro in her staff lounge, her massage therapists, her estheticians, her wellness providers all use this in their break room and the staff love it. And what they found is it improved their teamwork and their productivity and their cooperation, their morale has gone up. And so I just share that with you because we never know what simple technique in walking somebody through that felt sense of, oh, I feel that shift.

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What can that really offer to them? It might offer hope, it might offer motivation, and it certainly helps us to feel better as well, to empower them to self-regulate. So it can really, really be simple. Another way to introduce this might be to, Hey, I really want to be present for you. So how do I introduce this to a client? I might just say, this is what I did. Hey, I've got this really cool technique. I really want to hear you. We've all been busy. We're coming in from the outside. I really want to be dialed into you. Would you be interested in doing this technique? And nine times out of 10 patients will say, yeah, because it helps me to hear you better. It helps me to be present for you. So again, you're positioning this in a way that is helpful for them to show how much you care about that because you authentically do care.

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This will now help them to identify, whoa, this helped me to center. So that's just another example. And just one minute of heart-focused breathing can create immediate benefits. Most clients will say, yeah, I feel different. Well,



that might be a really great launching point is to say, well, when can you practice this? When would this be most helpful? Starting them to identify, oh yeah, before I drop off my kids, before I get onto a zoom call, before I go to morning drill, whatever that might be. Now you're helping them to see how quickly and how easily they can integrate that into their daily practice. It's really, really fun. And the other thing that we want to think about is in our clinical practice, sometimes we think about if a client is stressed, if they're experiencing pressure or anxiety, that's when we would introduce it to them.

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It's a really common misconception that we use these techniques only when a patient has documented stress or anxiety, but stress is a silent epidemic. It affects everyone whether they're showing the symptoms or not. So they may not even be experiencing poor sleep yet or anxiety or things like that. Even if your patients don't express these concerns, their nervous system may still be dysregulated. But we know there's a carryover effect from stressful events. And so the good news is just like stress accumulates in the system, so does coherence. And so oftentimes we don't even recognize that we're walking around with these pressures. And as health professionals, as we need to model self-compassion and to teach our clients and our patients how they can recharge during the day, not just waiting until they go home or they can go to the gym or go for a walk, how do we integrate these practices in our day-to-day to prevent that stress from accumulating long-term?

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So as you remember, just a few minutes of a positive emotion really refocusing on that, refueling, that appreciation, care, compassion, love, confidence, competence, whatever that is in the day-to-day, it's not just love or appreciation. It could be a lot of different emotions that are associated with positive or renewing biochemicals. Remember, when we self-generate a renewing emotion, we put into motion 1400 biochemicals that can support us. And don't forget DHEA, it's a vitality hormone. Just a minute or two of self-generated renewing emotion can last for several hours. Those biochemical benefits can now support us. It's really, really important. Now, it's also important to emphasize that coherence is not the same as relaxation. While a lower heart rate, yes, is associated with relaxation, sometimes a higher heart rate is needed for certain tasks. The key is having a system that is flexible that can recover quickly from high stress situations.

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Now remember, coherence is not just rhythmic breathing. Breathing is certainly a huge part of it, but breathing can be a really good short-term strategy for calming down, lowering that arousal level, but it doesn't change underlying emotional habits. Yeah, patients with anxiety may feel relief, but everyone can benefit from resilience gain through a better nervous system regulation. So when do we introduce coherence training? Well, remember, it could be very casual. It could be during the first visit, maybe you're doing the first introduction or maybe a client may share that they're having some type of physical issue. And you might ask them, what type of coping mechanisms do you use right now? And they may be familiar with different breathing techniques. They may not. It certainly could be a way to casually introduce, Hey, have you heard of breathing techniques? And this might be, rather than doing a whole dissertation on the science behind heart rate variability and breathing, just casually introduce, Hey, have you ever heard of this heart-focused breathing technique?

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Let's practice it right now. Walk them through and then ask them, what do you notice? And then, by the way, did you know there's actually science behind that technique that we just did? That could be a very casual way of introducing it. Now, it's important when working with trauma survivors, being mindful of timing when they're going through acute processing of a trauma, not the best time to introduce coherence technology. So we wait until they're ready. That's out of respect. To really help them to be more grounded and more receptive to these techniques that we want to share, we want to respect their readiness and their emotional state. Now, even if you're not a mental health practitioner or a mental healthcare provider, which I'm not, it's really important to take into consideration that we don't know what trauma any patient has really experienced in life. And so our resilient heart certification offers a lot of great tips for trauma sensitive care.

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It's just always important to tune in, know your patient, be in tune, and I'm sure you already know how to do that is just really important not to push or to press when they may not be ready for it in that moment. Now, another way to introduce this coherence training is in general screenings or annual physical. Truly introduce it. This is just as important as healthy eating, all the things that you're sharing with your patients. Exercise, healthy eating hydration, this is no different. And really what science is showing is that improved hormonal balance and immune function are downstream results of coherence. So the goal is to incorporate these techniques before those health issues manifest. And another way to introduce this would be for symptom management. As I mentioned, if they're having chronic pain, maybe cardiac problems, digestive issues, maybe insomnia, coherence training can help to regulate the nervous system and perhaps begin to alleviate those symptoms.

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So rather than walking around with a chronic pain scale of 10 or nine or eight, what if we can offer them a way to manage this? We don't want to, again, over promise, but a pain scale of 10 is very different than a pain scale of five or four. It can be much more manageable. So, positioning in that way might be helpful as well. So now I want to share with you the app and three-minute protocol that has been really, really helpful for many clients. Now again, a live demonstration is worth a thousand words. Seeing is believing. And during that office visit or clinical session,

introducing the sensor and explaining how it measures HRV can really be important. Again, this is instantaneous feedback. I sometimes call it a lie detector because it certainly was that for me, I thought I was feeling a certain way and it was so not accurate.

**(00:32:01): Demonstrating the App: The 3-Minute Protocol**

So walking them through coherence, training techniques in the app, demonstrating in real time can really help them to feel the difference in their body. So, when we're first introducing this, my suggestion is walking your patient through something called a three-minute protocol. Now, we want to make sure that we set the breath pacer first. So I would make sure that, again, as I mentioned, the default setting is five seconds in, five seconds out. If that doesn't quite feel right for them, help them to find a comfortable pace. So once you've done that, and again, that is in your settings icon in the app, once you determine what that comfortable breathing rate is for them, now you walk them through the three minute protocol in the first minute. This is a baseline. We're not doing any techniques. We're just observing and helping them to notice how do you feel.

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Where is their tension? Where's the emotional framework or their landscape that they're dealing with? This is just tuning in first minute, the second minute. And again, they are not necessarily watching the sensor because that could be a little stress provoking for some people. So, you're just very casually just introducing this. In the second minute, you'll facilitate the heart-focused breathing technique to help them to shift into coherence. And again, if you need to readjust that breath pacer, you certainly can at this point in the third minute. Now you're going to combine heart-focused breathing with a feeling focused technique. Inviting them to experience gratitude or appreciation or calm or ease, that's going to help to deepen that coherent state.

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Now again, if you're preparing for a virtual session, suggest that the client download the app and follow the onboarding process. This is going to help them to understand the basics of coherence, and they're going to get more familiar with the sensor on their own. The goal is to help them to experience that aha moment. Like, whoa, I really feel that shift when they feel the effects of coherence for the first time and they have a visual that really is reflecting to them, oh, I did that. I shifted into coherence. It can be very transformational and quite a game changer in your practice. So the other thing that you might want to do is to help them to track. You can certainly track their results in the EMR in your electronic health record in your client notes. Again, since the HeartMath app will store that session history, we know that we don't want to use longtime storage for your client sessions, but certainly in the electronic health record, you can write down what their coherent scores are, how are they doing? You can track and measure it with them.

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What does the client need or does the patient need to use this at home? Well, they'll need an inner balance sensor. This is where they can order it@heartmath.com and certified professionals. We do get discounted rates. There are also affiliate opportunities, wholesale programs, if you're buying in bulk, if you have questions around that, contact support@heartmath.com, there are also very reasonable international shipping rates. And a final thing for the

patient on the patient education page, which is go heartmath.com, there's a 10% off coupon and free shipping for your patients. Okay, so co-creating a realistic practice plan for consistency. As a healthcare provider, it's really important to co-create something that's realistic. We don't want to set expectations so high that people will fail. We want more achievable goals. We want to remember that consistency is really more important than intensity. So here's a sample plan, five to 10 minutes of practice per day.

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And what might that look like? It could be a morning session and an evening recession. The goal is to spend 80% of practice time in that green zone in the high coherence. Now, a targeted action plan in the app might be the HeartMath experience, as I shared with you earlier in the guide. They can go through the HeartMath experience. There are also those guided techniques and guided practices, if that's something that they choose. Now, how do you manage client progress? What if they're in the green zone and they're like, this is easy. I'm a hundred percent. That's wonderful. Now we want to expand their range to challenge them further. So you would go up to a different challenge level. If they're not in the green zone, encourage self-compassion and let them know that we celebrate small wins. Coherence takes time. We didn't get this way.

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Whatever that looks like for them overnight, this is not going to be an overnight process. There's no magic wand. I wish there was. But really helping to encourage them when they're succeeding and when they're really frustrated. So if they're frustrated, they're saying, "This is not working for me" or "This is really hard." Please reassure them that perfection is not the goal. The goal is long-term emotional resilience and nervous system, and we practice these techniques when we don't need them. That was lost on me when I first learned about this program. I wasn't practicing it because I really wasn't stressed. I didn't recognize it. What we understand is in order to create that baseline shift, we practice when we don't want to, when we don't need to. It's like going to the gym. That analogy might really help people. We may not want to go, but we know those long-term benefits will begin to add up.

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And so this is no different. Again, we practice the techniques when we don't need them so that we can more easily access them when we do need them. When everything is hitting the fan, if I haven't practiced at all, the last thing I'm going to do is to remember to practice hard focused breathing. We help them to understand we practice this consistently so that it becomes wired into us. It becomes integrated within us so that when we do need it, we can really quickly tap into that coherence that we've been practicing for the last few days, weeks, months, or even years. Now, the timeframe is, oh my gosh, this is going to take months. Not necessarily. Research suggests that it takes at least six weeks of regular practice to see significant shifts in coherence. And some of us, some clients will notice changes much more quickly.

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Maybe after the first three or four or five sessions, they'll start to notice that they'll get motivated and they'll prompt this even more. So you never know what you're going to find. So we want to set our expectations. We know that there will be immediate benefits. In the moment, coherence can provide quick relief, especially in moments of panic,

anxiety or stress. Even a few minutes of heart-focused breathing can make a noticeable difference. And the long-term benefits are consistent. Practice. Again, about six weeks or so, clients will see lasting changes, reduce stress, better sleep, improved emotional regulation. And again, it's so different for each person. And so how do we set the expectation? People will say, well, how long is it going to take? My answer is it depends. It really depends on how deep that baseline is. If I'm at a level of maybe experiencing anxiety or stress for years and I'm not as motivated to practice, it's going to take time.

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But with consistent practice, we will start to see that needle move in the right direction for sleep or anxiety. You may see differences within a few days. Who knows? And again, it's not necessarily needing the sensor. When I wake up in the middle of the night and I have a moment of my thoughts are racing and I'm really worried about the next day, I don't have to reach for that sensor necessarily. I could put a hand on my heart, take a slow deep breath, and before I know it, I'm back asleep. There are many different ways that you can position this for your patients and for your clients. Tune into your intuition, hear them, hear what they're saying, and then you can begin to co-create an action plan just for them. Now, we want to prevent disappointment. We don't want to be overpromising what they're going to experience.

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Be realistic. Explain that improvement does not always mean linearly. Some of us may see quicker results. Some of us may take a little bit longer and some days will feel harder than others. There's still days where I still just go, can I experience that appreciation in the moment when everything is hitting me? Maybe not. But what I can do is notice it. Be more self-aware and take that breath, that heart-focused breath is the first step to coherence. And then I can choose to add in more ease, maybe some gratitude, maybe some compassion for myself, maybe compassion for the other person that I'm involved with. We start to create a way to normalize the process, and the more we practice, the more progress we're going to see. And again, consistency. I emphasize that here because it's important for you to highlight that for your patients.

[\(00:41:55\)](#): **Sustainability Strategies: Practice Plan & Managing Expectations**

Consistency is the key. If you miss a day, the world has not ended. Take it up again the next day. It's important to motivate and listen to your clients. The important thing now, once you've created that practice plan, you've set up some expectations. You created, again, an action plan with them. This is what it might look like. Quick coherence technique, for example, practice daily, three to five minutes at a time. Build that up to two to three times a day. It could be first thing in the morning, maybe in the middle of the day when you need some more energy. These tools are amazing, these techniques because they're adaptogenic. So if I need more energy and I practice these techniques in the middle of the day, I feel more energized, more focused, more productive at the end of the day just before bed.

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It helps me to sleep. It's really amazing. I'm still blown away by how these techniques really work when they're used. Now, again, using your inner balance app and the inner balance coherence plus sensor, practice this for a full month, every session that is three to five to 10 minutes a day of practice. So you can get those metrics. You can see what is happening in the nervous system practice with eyes open, eyes closed, it doesn't matter. Another way that you can position this is to do heart-focused breathing technique and or the quick coherence technique with and without your sensor. So again, just throughout the day, whenever you think about it, and are you going to think about it in the moment? If you have not practiced and you've not set a reminder, no. The important part is to create a way to help yourself to remember. Because until it's a habit, it is going to be elusive.

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And we're like, oh, yeah, I could have used it in that moment, but I completely forgot. So practicing throughout your day for about one to two minutes can help to build that habit and help to refresh. So starting your day, preparing for stressful situations. If I know in my day-to-day, and this is going to be helpful for your clients, help them to walk through their day. Where are your pressure points? Where are your things that you know that you're in that situation, you're in that meeting, you're in traffic, you're in drill, whatever that is, that can be stressful. Write that down. This is going to be your action plan before that situation. You walk into it more coherently and can be really, really helpful. Another way to explain or to introduce this is after the stress response. What if you just had that moment? Maybe you prepped and it didn't really work, or maybe you feel like, I don't know, I still got stressed out.

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As soon as we notice it, as soon as we catch ourselves, we can now self-regulate. So it's after the fact. When we practice these techniques, if you remember, it's called shift and reset. So we prepare for situations and then we also shift and reset after stressful situations. A couple of ways or strategies to use these techniques. Another time would be before or during conversations to improve communications, to really hear each other and to transfer the message. If I'm the speaker, my message hopefully is clearer. As the listener, I can hear more appropriately, I can really tune in to the essence of what is being said. These tools really help communication as well. And finally, at bedtime, improve that sleep quality, rest, recovery, which is so important for all of us. So just remember one to two minutes helps to neutralize that stressful feeling, helps to rebalance the system and clarifies perspective. It's like we get to see things from a very different angle when we're in a coherent state. Next, let's look at client engagement and homework. How can we help them to do their best and to hold them accountable?

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Remember to encourage regular use. Consistency is key to establish a habit. This is like any other healthcare practice. People will ask me, what is the best technique? Heart focused, breathing, inner ease, quick coherence, heart lock-in which one's the best one? The best technique is the one you use. The key is whatever your favorite one is, please tap into that and utilize it to establish a habit. This only works when you practice it consistently. If a client really expects that they're going to take that sensor, put it under their pillow and through osmosis, somehow they're going to get more coherent. No, it's not just about owning the device or having it with us. It's about using it to



train that nervous system. So give them homework. Homework that's really easy for them to integrate into their day. They can use the app for learning, but without the sensor.

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Make sure that they're practicing it at home regularly. So practical tips for homework before sleep. We always recommend heart-focused breathing before bed. It resets the nervous system, and improves quality of sleep. Another way is in moments of stress, helping them to become more aware. Like, yeah, I'm having a moment. When they're overwhelmed, when they're anxious, that quick reset is going to help them to feel better in the moment. A way that I do it is just casually during my chat with them, during my time with them, is to just introduce it again and say, Hey, remember that technique we just did? Let's do it again. Focus on the heart, walk them through, and suddenly, yeah, that's right. That does feel better. So the more times that we can introduce this in our session, the more easy it becomes, the more casual it becomes, the more sustainable it can become for them.

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Another thing that we can do as far as practical tips for homework is link it to what you already do. What is something you're talking to your patient, what's something that you would never not do? It could be a shower, brushing your teeth, making coffee, whatever that is, we want to link this practice into what they're already doing. Maybe it could be watching tv. So if you've got somebody that's watching tv, it could be every time there's a commercial, take a breath, put a Post-it note by your tv, by your remote control, whatever it takes to help them to help themselves to remember, every time you log onto your laptop, every time you scroll through your Instagram feed, whatever that is, listen to what your clients are doing and help them to insert this and integrate this practice into what they already do. It might really help them.

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And then how do you help yourself to remember? It could be a sticky note. Again, as I mentioned, it could be a post-it on the remote control, a chime on a phone. It could be reminder on the Apple watch. It could be whenever you're refilling your water bottle, whenever you're using the restroom. I know in nursing we would always say whenever you're going to the bathroom, practice getting coherent. Hopefully that will be several times a day, and you can just have that as a moment to reset that nervous system. Be creative. Another thing that I would suggest is role play. So again, it could be when somebody says, how long is it going to take Barb? Well, it really depends, but let's practice by taking a few deep breaths right now and just notice what happens. Again, you will feel calmer almost immediately. So we're using that moment of when they're asking these questions is do it right now.

[\(00:49:29\):](#) **Engagement, Follow-Up, and Accountability**

Do it now. Anytime, anywhere is when you can use these techniques. Now, follow up and accountability. So regular check-ins are important when working with clients. We want to keep them engaged. We want to keep them on track with their coherence practice, encouraging them to stay committed even if they haven't seen the results. Really, really important because again, it's using that coherence score is a really good motivational tool, but emphasize that consistency is the key to progress. If I have a client who is a hundred percent red, that was me. I was red for two weeks. I could not get to blue. I was so frustrated with this device, I couldn't make it budge, and it was really

irritating. So what my coach actually did for me was when I saw 96% red and 4% blue, she said, look at you. You're moving the needle.

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And I was like, wow. I didn't think that was, I wanted a really big improvement. I wanted to see quantum leaps in my coherence. Well, it wasn't happening. So celebrating those small victories like, Hey, now you're at 90% red and 10% blue. That's movement in the right direction. So whatever you can do to motivate them when they're not seeing it, they're not feeling it, we can be that cheerleader for them. And it could be as easy as, hey, asking them questions in the next session. How'd your practice plan go? How'd it go? When did you practice this week? And if you didn't practice, why? What got in the way? Well, it's not a habit yet, or I didn't have time, or all those things that we often hear, some of the excuses that I had for myself too. We want to make sure that we stay nonjudgmental. We are human after all. It's normal to encounter those bumps along the way, work together to adjust a plan and tweak it as needed, make it more realistic, make it more realigned to their routine for better success. And it's also a really good time to address any questions they might have or concerns they might have about the technology or the practice. Anticipate there are going to be some really common challenges. Time for getting the practice are really, really common and offer guidance to keep them motivated and to keep them moving forward. Don't give up.

[\(00:51:56\)](#): **Best Practices: Coherence in Clinical Practice**

Next, what are some best practices for using coherence training in clinical practice? Well, number one, and you probably already know this - lead by example. So practicing coherence ourselves. When we're in a coherent state, we'll be better equipped to handle their questions, handle the interaction, managing stress, and educate them more effectively and efficiently. Experiencing the system firsthand. Also, it builds our confidence because once we've experienced that, we know what coherence feels like, even in the middle of a busy practice, in the middle of a very, very busy day. When we can tap into that coherence between our clients, we now know what that feels like. And we can say with confidence, "I did before you got here, I did coherence. Let's go ahead and do it right now. And so again, you're instilling this into, I practice this and this is really helping me."

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It goes a long way because people see and they can really be a great role model for them as well. Next, starting and ending your visits with coherence practice. Just start with, it takes a minute to do heart-focused breathing. It helps us to center ourselves. It helps our patients to center themselves. And you can certainly incorporate the depletion to renewal grid. You can incorporate the freeze frame technique if that's appropriate, to incorporate that self-awareness and self-regulation. And ending a session really reinforces the habit and it sends off your client and your patient into the world with a little bit more coherence. And that also helps us before our next client encounter. Another idea would be to involve your team. We've seen this in hospital settings and clinical settings when the team is coherent, so for example, the nurses, the staff, administration and administrators are practicing the coherence technique.

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That team coherence builds and it actually supports the team environment. It supports morale, it improves communication, and it really, there's just this sense. If I walk into an office, clinical office, and I remember doing this at the hospital quite often. We had some teams that were doing this, certain nursing departments and units that were doing this consistently. You could feel the coherence. They were busy as all the other units, but when you walked on that unit, you could feel this hum in this care and this cohesion. I still get goosebumps just thinking about it and talking about it because it's palpable. And you'll get the benefits. Your staff will get the benefits and the patients coming into the environment will get that benefit. So just be your own scientist. See what might happen when you add more coherence into a team environment.

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It's really, really can be awesome. Next, focusing on emotional regulation, not performance. This is not about achieving a perfect score. It's about understanding how your nervous system responds to stress. And we're going to frame this in a journey of self-awareness. This is not a competition. Some of us are very performance driven and it can be a little difficult to break that habit, but really having more softness, more compassion for self can go a long way to helping this become a sustainable skill set. As I mentioned, consistency over perfection. We let people know that they won't always be in the green zone. That may be elusive, and it's okay. It's like building a muscle. Consistency is the key. Daily practice leads to lasting improvements over time. And finally, framing this as an add-on. So this isn't something that takes the place of other practices for stress reduction or for inner peace or whatever we are seeking.

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This could be something that could be added to it. It takes the pressure off of that long-term engagement and progress. This is just simply something that we add in while we're doing maybe a meditation practice. Focus on the heart, slow deep breaths, adding in the appreciation, and just notice how this can really support the current practice that they are using. So again, maybe your patient has a prayer practice or a meditation or a stillness practice. Inviting them to explore what this might look like as they add that in, could be a really, really interesting way to encourage them to stay on track with their current practice.

[\(00:56:32\)](#): **Practice Benefits for Different Patient Populations**

So next, how is this used in different patient populations? Let's take a look at this. This is, again, available to a wide range of patients, not just those experiencing stress or anxiety that's documented. We can all use some more coherence. So here are some ways that I found that this can really, really help. So in terms of stress and anxiety management, clients can use these techniques before stressful situations. Maybe it could be before a meeting, or a conversation, it could be consistently stress producing. Using these techniques can really help to mitigate and offset some of that stress and help sleep improvement. So we know that stress accumulates throughout the day. It impacts our sleep and self-regulation. Techniques that we can use during the day can help to promote better sleep at night. Again, encouraging clients to practice in the evening will help to calm that nervous system before bedtime.

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Emotional self-regulation. What if we are experiencing, we're going through something like maybe grief or sadness or frustration, or maybe we're really frustrated with something in our life. It's really important to help us to understand that these emotions are normal. We can't always be positive or grateful or happy 100% of the time. That's not realistic. These techniques help us to mitigate and offset some of that stress that we will experience in our day-to-day. And it can very quickly help to bring our nervous system back to balance and help us to deal with those emotional responses in a more calm, composed way. Really, really helpful for trauma recovery. We know that trauma survivors often have a dysregulated nervous system. This coherence training provides a safe science-based method to retrain that nervous system to rewire those neural pathways.

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It promotes resilience to triggers, and it helps them to feel more grounded, more calm, and more empowered. They get to take charge of their physiology for chronic pain. Many chronic pain sufferers, as you know, experience heightened emotional stress, and that can worsen their pain perception. Coherence training helps them to manage their emotional responses, perhaps mitigate or reduce that pain that they're experiencing and improve their self-regulation. It's very different going through life at a constant chronic pain level of 10 versus maybe a seven or a five or even less than that. Again, we don't want to over promise, but this is what's possible. The science has shown us that these techniques can really be helpful for those going through life with some chronic pain issues for addictions. Coherence training can help to control impulses. It can help to reduce the urge to use. Again, this is scientifically based, and that might be helpful as well.

[\(00:59:46\)](#): **FAQ Section – Commonly Asked Questions**

Performance enhancement for athletes, military members, executives or anyone focused on peak performance coherence training helps to regulate that nervous system, reduce stress, enhances clarity, and enhances that laser focus, which is really, important. You can see that the HeartMath system can be introduced as a complimentary tool to support stress management, improve performance, and enhance overall wellbeing. And very often, those results, they speak for themselves. So now let's get to the FAQ question. There are so many questions that perhaps you are having around the HeartMath system, about the technology, about the techniques, and maybe your patients or your clients have expressed some of these questions to you. So we've gathered some questions with the help of Dr. Roland McCrady, our director of research, and here are some answers to some commonly asked questions. So number one, what is the difference between the HeartMath HRV devices and other HRV devices?

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So I'm going to refer to my notes to make sure that I don't misquote the information here. So let's start again with a quick review of heart rate variability or simply HRV and its relevance in clinical practice. So as you recall, HRV refers to the variation in the time between each pair of heartbeats, and it provides a noninvasive window into autonomic nervous system into the health and dynamic functioning of the ANS. So again, these time intervals are called beat intervals or ibis. Now there are many measures that have been created to analyze HRV. Some are designed to assess how much HRV there is in a given time period. Some measure the complexity of the HRV and others

measure the coherence for its rhythm. Now we have the highest amount of HRV when we're younger, and unfortunately, there is a steady decline in how much HRV we have as we age.

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Now, one of the most common clinical uses of HRV is for health risk assessment. A lower HRV for one's age is associated with a higher risk of many serious health conditions. Now, for risk assessment or determining health status, the patient's level of HRV is compared to normative values that have been derived from healthy populations. And for more on this topic, see the video using the one minute paste deep breathing assessment. Now, there are a lot of mobile HRV apps for your patients, and they may be familiar with them like an AA ring or a Fitbit or an Apple Watch. And yes, these apps are for measuring how much HRV there is in various times. So for example, in the morning versus during sleep. And these devices often look at the amount of HRV there is during a series of one minute periods. Now, some of these devices provide a readiness or a recovery score that reflects small changes in how much HRV there is from day to day.

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And they claim this is related to how stressed the body was from the previous day and how prepared it is for physical activity today. So for example, a lower HRV after a really strenuous workout might signal the need for a rest day while a higher HRV indicates readiness for more intense activity. Now, in contrast, HeartMath technology focuses on real-time monitoring in feeding back the level of coherence in a heart rhythm. In other words, the HeartMath technology is focused on analyzing the shape or the pattern of the HRV rhythm, which reflects how synchronized the activity in the brain and the nervous system is. Now, hundreds of studies have shown how HRV coherence is an optimal state for improving a wide range of health outcomes, increasing their ability to self-regulate, which reduces stress and improves adherence to treatment strategies. The HRV Coherence score helps patients see for themselves how their thoughts, their emotions affect their heart coherence and how they can use simple techniques to increase their coherent scores.

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Again, the coherence score offers, it's like a mirror offering an objective view of your inner state, which may vary or differ from your perception. This feedback can motivate behavior change and consistent practice. HRV training provides practical tools for applying this awareness to improve outcomes like sleep, anxiety, emotional resilience, and fosters long-term changes in baseline health. Alright, next question. Really common. One of my clients feels good, but their coherent score is low. Well, the coherent score doesn't always directly correlate with the emotional state. It's a measure of how well the body is in sync. If someone feels good, their coherence score might still be low due to stressors that they are not consciously aware of. The goal is consistent practice. They might be drifting into a relaxation state, which is more of a passive state, whereas coherence is an active, focused and engaged state. Next, what if my patient feels stressed but their coherence score is high?

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Well, this can happen because coherence measures how well the nervous system is regulated. So even if a client feels stressed, they may have built up enough regulation capacity through practice, but their score reflects a more

balanced state. They could also be really fit or they could have a significant self-regulation training. Here's a tip. Increase the challenge level to medium or high if needed, and encourage them to continue practicing and trust the process. Next questions are really common. One, what's good coherence score? Well, instead of aiming for a perfect score, ask clients to ask themselves, what's a good score for me right now? Coherence is so dynamic, it always changes and it changes based on factors like stress, sleep, and emotional state over time. Goal is to increase the duration of grain coherence. But to answer the question, the average coherence score over millions of sessions is about three.

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Next question. Can I use my sensor with the Apple Watch or another wearable device? Well, not currently. Currently, these devices don't offer real-time HRV tracking, which is necessary for coherence analysis. Those other devices, they batch HRV data for recovery scores rather than tracking continuously. And while this may change, it's just not available right now. What you can do is you can use both devices, use that device alongside the inner balance sensor to better understand your overall health. Next, how do I adjust the breath Pacer. If it's too fast or too slow, simply go to the settings in the app. It's a gear icon in the top right corner. Hit that icon and you'll see a variety of options. Choose the Breath pacer option, and you'll have the ability to set the pacer there.

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Another common question is, how does the app help somebody if they're already in a state of distress? Will this app include several calming techniques like the heart focused breathing technique, the quick coherence technique, and that can help the person in the moment to downregulate to bring their person back, to bring that nervous system back into a state of coherence, even in the midst of a stressful moment. Another really common question among healthcare providers is how does this work if my patient has a heart dysrhythmia or if my patient is taking beta blockers? Well, here's a response from Dr. McCraty individuals with heart irregularities such as atrial fibrillation, a flutter or clusters of premature ventricular contractions, PVCs may be unable to use the inner balance sensor successfully, so they can still use the techniques, but the information, the feedback is not going to be reliable. Now, beta and calcium channel blockers will not interfere with analysis. However, vasoconstrictors will interfere with the analysis. These patients will, again, still experience the benefits of coherence building techniques, but the measurement is not going to be accurate and not reliable.

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How do we clean our sensor between patients? Well, yes, absolutely. Please do. Just simply wipe the sensor with a moist alcohol wipe between users, and that just ensures hygiene, especially when you're using your sensor between multiple patients. Can I play music during my longer sessions? Yes, you can start playing music on another app like Spotify, Pandora, or any of the other apps that you have. And then go back to the Inner Balance app and you can do your coherence practice session. If you do use audio, the Guided Coherence practice in the audio will switch to the app's audio. So for example, if you're doing the coherence, like a quick coherence technique, that will shut off your Spotify or your other music app, and we'll revert to the Inner Balance app so you can listen to the guided practice. Once you're done with that, it will revert back to your music app.

## **(01:10:00): Final Takeaways**

And lastly, what should we do if we have tech issues? So if it's you or your clients that's experiencing a technical issue, please contact customer service. Here's the email address, it's [support@heartmath.com](mailto:support@heartmath.com). They are awesome. They're very quick and it can help you with your tech issues. So hopefully you've been taking notes, and you have some main takeaways from this guide, but here's the top three that we have come up with for you. As you've heard many, many times during our time together, consistency is the key. Practice, practice, practice any technique, take a favorite technique, try it for a little while, and then advance to another technique. So heart focus, breathing, great place to start leading them into quick coherence, technique and then heart locking. You really get to customize this, but again, consistency will be the main factor in their success. Highlight the science.

## **(01:10:57):**

For those clients that are really interested in that, let them know that yes, heart-focused breathing seems simple. Do not underestimate the power of this technique. There is evidence behind this of how it supports and modulates the nervous system. The more they understand there is evidence behind this, perhaps the more likely they are to stay engaged with the practice. And lastly, make sure that they know these changes may take time. We want to be realistic. We don't want to over promise, but with consistent practice, what the research shows is they will experience improvements in their quality of life, in their sleep, in their energy levels, and hopefully in their overall wellbeing. In conclusion, the Inner Balance Coherence Plus Sensor and Inner Balance app offer a powerful combination of science, self-awareness, and motivation to support your patients in managing stress, improving emotional resilience and enhancing overall wellbeing.

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Introducing it into your clinical practice can help patients experience long-term wellness benefits. Remember, the key to success with this system is regular practice patients and self-compassion. Remember, it's not about perfection. Over time, your practice will build resilience and help you and your clients navigate life's challenges with greater ease. We hope you're excited to start using HeartMath with your patients and clients. If you need further support or have questions, visit our website or reach out to us directly. For more information, certification, training resources or support, visit our [website@healthprofessional.heartmath.com](mailto:website@healthprofessional.heartmath.com). Thanks for watching. We wish you all the best as you help your patients on their journey to greater coherence and wellbeing.

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