

Optimum Health through Heart Based Living

Dr. Bryan Mc Elroy believes that it would do the world we live in a great service if we could all tune-in to the intelligence of our hearts more and more of the time. In this short article we learn why it is so important to listen to our hearts and how we can about this.

Is your heart beating coherently?

The concept of "Cardiac coherence" was introduced by the Institute of Heart Math. During stress or negative emotions, our heart rhythm pattern becomes erratic and disordered. Corresponding "non-coherent" patterns of neural signals travelling from heart to brain inhibit higher cognitive functions. This limits our ability to think clearly, remember, learn, reason or even to make effective decisions. We often act impulsively and unwisely when we're under stress. While on holiday, we can enjoy some relief from the stress of everyday living. However, simply by adopting the simple principles of cardiac coherence, we can begin to enjoy that holiday feeling wherever we are!

During positive emotional states, a more ordered and stable pattern of the heart's input to the brain facilitates cognitive function (we become smarter) and reinforces emotional stability (we are less likely to experience stress). Learning to generate increased heart rhythm coherence, by sustaining positive emotions, not only benefits the entire body, but also profoundly affects how we perceive, think, feel, and perform.

As we "tune-in" to our own heart, we improve our wellbeing. As we sustain positive emotions we can facilitate a whole body shift in functioning at all

levels. In scientific terms, cardiac coherence generates increased synchronisation, harmony and efficiency in the interactions between brain, heart, and body. Effects of cardiac coherence include blood pressure regulation, increased levels of oxytocin (bonding hormone) and DHEA (youth hormone), lowered cortisol (stress hormone), optimised cognition - reflection, abstract reasoning, planning, clarity and enhanced immunity.

Feelings of stress, depression, worry, hopelessness and anxiety are not uncommon in today's world. Diagnosing what is wrong and managing symptoms with limiting treatments appears to be a focus of our present mental health system. As a G.P. trained in Ireland, my own sense is that the current mental health system might be better named a 'mental illness' system. I feel blessed to have met some inspiring and courageous individuals on my life's journey who have deepened my understanding of health to include a wider perspective.

The present paradigm suggests that we are at the mercy of circumstance. It seems that we constantly ignore (and are often encouraged to ignore) how we actually operate from the inside out as human beings.

The Quick Coherence Technique from the Institute of Heart Math, shown here, offers us a "choice point", an opportunity to change how we respond from the inside.

In the year 2012, the World's Health Organisation designated Cork as a 'Healthy City'. Cork is indeed a health haven and boasts a variety of activities and restaurants for the health enthusiast. For health conscious foodies it is worth checking out restaurants such as the Quay Coop, Loving Salads, Cafe Paradise and most definitely the English Market for nutritious and healthy treats.

In Cork we are spoiled for choice when it comes to healthy pursuits with plentiful options in yoga, dance, hillwalking, rowing, sailing; the list goes on. If you get a chance it is worth going for a cycle around our enchanting city on one of the Coca Cola bikes, visible everywhere on the streets of Cork. If walking is your thing, I would personally recommend the Scilly Walk in Kinsale or the walk out by Blackrock castle. Both are very scenic. However, if you are willing to go further afield, take a walk on the beautiful Inchydoney beach near the picturesque town of Clonakilly. Cork promises to satisfy you and will expand your health horizons - the beauty of Ireland's coastline is certainly food for the soul!

Micheál O' Mathúna is producer and presenter of the popular 'The Health Zone Show'. Tune in to listen to interviews with such luminaries of the health world as Dr. Gaber Mate, John Gray, Marianne Williamson, Dr. Bruce Lipton, Robert Kiyosaki, Byron Katie and Julia Cameron. www.thehealthzonestow.com



In Ireland and worldwide, there has been a growing volume of "critical voices" in the field of mental health. The Critical Voices Network Ireland (CVNI) is a network for people from diverse backgrounds and provides an opportunity to share, discuss and debate critical perspectives on and beyond recovery.

