

a HeartMath e-Book



solving sleeplessness

 HeartMath®

Solving Sleeplessness

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Our intention in presenting this aspect of HeartMath's material is to share practical information and useful techniques with people who are looking for a more satisfying and fulfilling life experience.

We appreciate and support your interest in the HeartMath System, and in learning how to use your own heart's intelligence as an efficient source of intuition and answers to apply to all areas of your life.

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Solving Sleeplessness

Sleeplessness, or insomnia, is more common than many people realize. If you've been having sleepless nights lately, you'll find a lot of information here to help, and instructions for using a simple, powerful tool for sleeping more peacefully more often. You'll also find examples and success stories from people whose sleeplessness was improved by using the same simple method. You, too, can learn to use the power of your heart to help relieve your insomnia in a way that comforts you and contributes to your overall health and well-being.

To get started, we'll share some facts and findings about sleeplessness and insomnia. We will use both of these terms interchangeably throughout this booklet.

Part I: Sleeplessness and Stress

One popular consumer health website indicates that most adults experience insomnia or sleeplessness at one time or another in their lives. This website estimates 30-50% of the general population is affected by insomnia, and 10% have chronic insomnia. By their definition, insomnia is "difficulty initiating or maintaining sleep, or both."

The National Sleep Foundation reports that disordered sleep (difficulty falling asleep, light sleep or non-restorative sleep for several nights weekly or more) affects nearly two-thirds of American adults at some point—and it stems most commonly from stress.

Although most of us know what insomnia is and how we feel and perform after one or more sleepless nights, few of us know what to do about it.

Many turn to pharmaceutical aids, alcohol, herbs with sleep-inducing properties and other “ingestibles.” But the search is clearly on for other forms of real relief. A quick Google search turns up over 3 million hits for “sleeplessness” and over 32 million for “insomnia.”

Another interesting Internet fact suggests that between the hours of midnight and 3:00 am, over 20 million people are watching TV. Add to this the number of those surfing the ‘net, reading, wandering around the house, or simply lying in bed awake, and you get an idea of how elusive a good night’s sleep is for many, many people.

Although sleeplessness affects all age groups, the incidence of insomnia is shown to increase with age. As mentioned before, research shows—across the board—that stress is the common trigger for both short-term and acute insomnia. In some cases, patterns of sleeplessness extend over time and develop into chronic insomnia. “Stressors” contributing to sleeplessness range across a wide array of issues, from everyday stress, to health issues, to depression and anxiety issues.

To further paint the picture, in an article on the topic, a doctor writes that sleeplessness often creates a vicious cycle. People will wake up in the night, realize they are wide awake when they should be sleeping, and then they become anxious. Anxiety causes adrenaline to flood the

system, and adrenaline prompts the body into action—the opposite of what’s needed to sleep effectively.

While the experience of not being able to sleep when you want to is challenging enough, it seems to be the daytime problems that result from lack of sleep that create even more significant symptoms of stress. Do any of the following apply to you during the days after a few (or several) sleepless nights in a row?

- Waking up early, but not feeling rested
- Poor concentration and focus
- Feeling tired and irritable during the day
- Feeling dull and apathetic
- Forgetful
- Reduced motor skills; less “coordinated” overall

Sound familiar?

As mentioned, stress is at the root of a lot of sleeplessness and stress in general has become a huge problem in our fast-paced society. Time and events have sped up dramatically over the past twenty years due to high-speed technologies and communication systems—and people’s emotional reactions have sped up with them. Fears and anxieties are amplified as a result, and so are irritations and anger. Your mind races to keep up with the onslaught of incoming information. Instant media coverage of every negative event happening everywhere raises the fear and anxiety levels. On top of that, a culture of speed pushes you to multitask, doing two, three, or four things at the same time. If you

don't take time to rebalance before the next task or the next download of information, your energy starts to drain.

Emotions go on overload when you can't keep up with the increased pace of life. The mind's tendency is to stay glued to the Internet or incoming e-mails (even when they're not a priority) instead of stepping back to ask, "Do I really want or need to be doing this now?" So things that are more important don't get done or get done in a rush, which adds to feeling overloaded and pressed for time. You can become addicted to the stimulating pace of incoming information and demands, and get pulled along by their momentum. All of this leads to a stressful state that can create many sleepless nights.

Stress accumulates during the day and often we take it to bed with us. The body's systems just won't shut down, leading to difficulty in sleeping or staying asleep.

There is a lot of material available from HeartMath on how to better deal with stress. In this booklet, we'll focus on just one technique that can be very effective in removing the stress that prevents us from sleeping.

There is a simple, non-pharmaceutical technique you can use and we consider it to be one of the foundational tools in the HeartMath System. It's easy to learn, and with consistent practice, your mastery of it can change your life. It's called the *Heart Lock-In®* technique. The Heart Lock-In has been validated in many research studies as an

effective way to achieve beneficial results physically and psychologically.

One area people cite over and over again in reporting benefits of their use of the technique is sleep. People who use the *Heart Lock-In* quite simply experience better, more restful and refreshing sleep.

The Heart Lock-In has been described as being like a machine you can climb into, that bombards you with revitalizing energy. Or like a special power place you can go to at will, high in the mountains or deep in a tropical forest, where you are sure to reach your next level of insight, awareness, and vitality in just a short visit. You can move easily into a healthful physiological state and slide into peaceful sleep by learning and applying the Heart Lock-In technique.

Part II: The Heart Lock-In Technique

“I don’t think I’m exaggerating when I say that the Heart Lock-In saved my marriage—and possibly my life,” says Eric, age 35. “A year ago, I started a new company. My wife and 2-year-old daughter and I were the perfect postcard family, complete with my wife’s belly-bump of our expected son. Then, shortly after our new little guy was born, the world pretty much blew up in my face.

We expected a month or two of sleepless nights, which we experienced when our daughter was born. But it was soon clear that this new baby was a whole different story. We started calling him ‘the sleepless wonder.’ We talked to the pediatrician and he told us that it’s more and more common for infants to sleep sporadically and very little.

“By the time the baby was six months old my ‘perfect’ life was in tatters. My wife was exhausted, our now-3-year-old was acting out in jealous anger at her brother’s constant intrusion into her world, our once-tidy house was in shambles, and I had dark circles under my eyes that looked like I was back on the football field in college with shiners painted on to catch the sun. I had paced many miles around our living room, all night long, night after night, trying to soothe a crying, restless baby while my wife pleaded with me to let her sleep so she could face the next day. After a while, my body went through a change and I developed a new pattern—the inability to sleep even when I had the opportunity. My new business was floundering and I was too tired to know what to do about it. The stress was taking a toll.

“Then a friend turned me on to the Heart Lock-In technique and showed me how to do it. She’s a HeartMath coach, and explained the physiological benefits and gave me a HeartMath music CD called *Quiet Joy*. When I did my first Heart Lock-In, I fell into what seemed like a coma, that’s how deeply I conked out. She explained that that was natural at first, given my state of fatigue, but that I would soon be more in control.

I tried it some more and within a week, I had a whole new routine for my once sleepless nights. I would take the baby, kiss my wife and daughter goodnight as they settled in for their evening cuddle time together, and go out to the living room. I’d put *Quiet Joy* on endless loop, and settle my son close to me while I did evening chores and wind-down activities. Then, I’d get both of us ready for bed and lay

back with him in my recliner, baby boy on my chest, secure in a sling. I would do a deep Heart Lock-In, radiating love and appreciation for my family—my wife, daughter, and son—and he and I would both drift off.

“He’d wake up a time or two in the night, needing a bottle or change. But I wasn’t a sleepwalking zombie anymore. The Heart Lock-In helped me gain an entirely new approach to sleeplessness, and in fact, to life. I’m not kidding—it changed everything for me. My wife and daughter are regaining their balance and I have hope that things will level out for our family again, in a new and better way. I’m more productive in my new business, too. Hard to believe one simple technique could help accomplish all this. But that’s the Heart Lock-In for you!”

Eric’s story is inspiring because it shows how his whole life shifted as a result of using the Heart Lock-In to soothe his sleeplessness—it helped ease the strain on his family and in his business.

Sleeplessness happens for a lot of reasons. Before offering the steps to the technique, we’ll share another story about the effectiveness of doing Heart Lock-Ins. Just as these people have overcome sleeplessness with this technique, Heart Lock-In can help you as well.

Isabel, age 56, says, “I haven’t had a decent night’s sleep in three years. That’s when I decided to go off hormone replacement therapy and move through the rest of the menopausal years on my own. Prior to that decision, I’d spent years going to doctors of all kinds,

alternative and traditional practitioners, and giving the pharmacy and nutritional supplement stores a brisk business. I tried so many things, with such unsatisfactory results, that I finally decided I'd be just as well off on my own.

"I knew the hot flashes were likely to continue as I made this decision—and they did, with a vengeance. Hot flash after hot flash, I would erupt like Mount Vesuvius. Day in, day out; night in, night out. The nighttime ones were the worst. You can't sleep through a hot flash, I'm here to tell you.

"After I'd have the second or third episode in the night, I'd be so wiggled out with frustration that I'd be too wide awake to go back to sleep. Then I'd start mind-churning and worrying about this, that, and the other. In a nutshell, it was as though I spent my nights in a type of anxiety attack, until around 4:00 a.m., when I'd finally fall into an exhausted sleep for a couple of hours before time to get up.

"When I learned how to do Heart Lock-Ins, it was from a place of resignation. I felt I had nothing to lose and everything to gain, and I had heard great things about HeartMath, so I thought, why not? And the results have been incredible. Now, I do a Heart Lock-In before I go to sleep. As I lie in bed greeting the night to come, I radiate appreciation for my life, for the wisdom I have spent a lifetime cultivating, and sending my body care for safe passage into graceful maturity. This puts me in a beautiful state of being and I am sleeping longer before the first hot flash incident.

“During each flash, I’m able to be more poised as it moves through. When it’s over, I do another short Heart Lock-In, and I can usually ease back into sleep within a few minutes. Sometimes, in these middle-of-the-night Lock-Ins, I just radiate a feeling of love to the world. I have gained so much joy from doing this, that even if I don’t fall back to sleep immediately, I am in such a peaceful state, I eventually drift back to sleep without trying.

“I’m not through the other side of menopause yet, but with consistent use of the Heart Lock-In, I will truly be wiser and more compassionate when I get there—and in the meantime as well!”

As with Eric’s story, Isabel’s story shows how quieting the mind and sustaining a solid connection with your heart—locking in to its power—adds regenerative energy to your entire system. As you lock in, you create coherent heart rhythms that foster a state of harmonious balance among your body’s various systems that promotes sleep. Now let’s get into exactly how to do a Heart Lock-In.

Part III: Steps of the Heart Lock-In Technique

Doing a Heart Lock-In has a powerful, calming effect on your body. Using this technique creates ordered, coherent heart rhythms that send signals to the brain and the rest of the body which create a favorable cascade of beneficial hormones. These coherent heart rhythms help bring the body into a more balanced, less stressful state that help to reduce the release of a stress hormone called cortisol. High cortisol levels are often associated with of sleep problems.

Additionally, coherent heart rhythms are often naturally prevalent when we are sleeping deeply and soundly. So, by doing Heart Lock-Ins we are literally re-training our bodies to be able to enter into the coherent, balanced state on demand that can make it much easier to sleep and to stay asleep during the night.

As you do the Heart Lock-In technique, it's important to be in a quiet place. Because you are learning the technique in order to alleviate sleeplessness, you might find that your bed is the perfect place to learn and practice.

Here are the steps of the Heart Lock-In technique:

Step 1. Shift your attention to the area of your heart and breathe slowly and deeply.

In this step just focus your attention in the center of the chest, the area of the heart. Try to make it a gentle process. Then pretend your breath is flowing in and out through the area of the heart. Just breathe naturally and feel as if your breath is entering through the heart on the in-breath and leaving through this area as you exhale.

Step 2. Activate and sustain a genuine feeling of appreciation or care for someone or something in your life.

Without forcing yourself, try to feel a positive feeling. If this is difficult, just think about someone you love, something you really like to do

that makes you feel good, or perhaps remember a special time or place.

Step 3. Send these feelings of care toward yourself and others. This helps recharge and balance your system.

In this step, just radiate positive feelings from the heart. Gently feel as if these positive emotions are going out to others, to the world, or to you. As stressful thoughts or preoccupations, like the events of the day or what you have to do tomorrow, try to come in, bring your focus and your breathing gently back to the area around the heart. Try to feel a softness in the heart and reconnect with feelings and attitudes of care or appreciation.

So now you know the three simple steps of the Heart Lock-In technique. Here some other suggestions that can enrich your experience. After you've finished, if you're so inclined, write down any intuitive feelings or thoughts that are accompanied by a sense of inner knowingness or peace, to help you remember to act on them.

Using music along with the technique can also be effective. We suggesting using a CD called *Quiet Joy*, composed by HeartMath founder Doc Childre. It's been scientifically designed to serve as an atmospheric conditioner to promote deeper Heart Lock-Ins.

We also recommend doing Heart Lock-Ins along with our coherence-building technology products, the Freeze-Framer®, a PC based stress relief system or the convenient hand-held version, the emWave™

Personal Stress Reliever™ Many people have found this technology extremely useful at developing the ability to enter into a more balanced state especially before trying to go to sleep.

For a while you'll want to review the steps of Heart Lock-In before you start, until you know them by heart. Every session will give you more confidence that you are doing each step correctly, and eventually the steps will flow, one into the other, almost automatically. The Heart Lock-In is an "easy does it" process, not something you force or will yourself into. A key to maximizing your Heart Lock-In experience is to relax and not try too hard.

If you are very, very tired from many sleepless nights, you may discover, like Eric did in the story he shared, that you fall asleep while attempting to learn the technique. Since getting more restful sleep may be your goal for learning how to do the Heart Lock-In, this is not a bad result! However, to gain the full benefits the technique holds in store for you, be sure you continue practicing all the steps until you're confident that you know them all. Once you do, you may still find that you drift off to sleep after anchoring in the deep heart feeling—there's nothing wrong with this.

You may find, as Isabel did, that remaining in a sustained state of radiating love out to a chosen destination—in her case, the world—is so fulfilling that you are able to extend your Heart Lock-In for quite some time. Something to note about radiating positive heart feelings outward is that radiant energy is passing through all the cells of your body as it goes. In fact, the electromagnetic field generated by the

heart actually envelops your entire body and extends out in all directions into the space around you. The heart's electromagnetic field—by far the most powerful field produced by the body—can be measured several feet away from the body. Once you understand the advantage you have in using your heart's power to benefit you, you can feel new hope about improving sleep.

When you send out positive feelings during Heart Lock-In, you may find, as some people do, that you can actually feel a warmth around the heart: a warm liquid feeling, as if it were a pool or river of care or appreciation, or as circles of warm energy expanding from your heart. This all feels wonderful and soothing to the emotions, mind, and body.

When you use the Heart Lock-In to help you sleep more peacefully, it will help you in your waking life as well. Deep, restful sleep, which you enter from a coherent heart place, will help you stay balanced and grounded—more able to be effective in your day-to-day life. In closing, here are a few words from the authors of *The HeartMath Solution*, Doc Childre and Howard Martin: "Don't underestimate the depth of what goes on when you do a Heart Lock-In. It develops the most important relationship of all— the relationship between you and yourself. Become your own scientist and experiment with it."

Next Steps

Reducing the stress buildup that leads to sleeplessness requires regular practice of increasing your coherence and releasing your stress. In this e-booklet you've learned about the Heart Lock-In technique which, as you have read, is effective for helping people get a

better night's sleep. Learning and applying additional HeartMath stress relief techniques and technology can also be of great help.

The music CD, *Quiet Joy*, by Doc Childre, mentioned earlier, is great to use with the Heart Lock-In technique and to listen to as you fall asleep.

Another resource we recommend is *Transforming Stress*, by Doc Childre and Deborah Rozman. In this book, you will learn more about the real sources of stress, research behind the HeartMath System and other techniques, along with a step-by-step program to reduce stress in your life. Practicing the techniques and learning about the concepts found in this book will give you additional tools for achieving better sleep patterns.

Many people have found our technology products, also mentioned earlier, especially valuable in dealing with sleep-related issues. The *emWave™ Personal Stress Reliever™* and the *Freeze-Framer® Interactive Learning System* are effective tools to learn to manage your emotional energy and transform stress. They utilize a patented process that guides users to create more internal coherence, a highly synchronized and regenerative state. The *emWave* is a mobile device and the *Freeze-Framer* operates on personal computers with games that help you sustain coherence. Both of these offerings provide a calming yet energizing effect that can help bring your system into balance. Doing a short session with either of them while doing the Heart Lock-In technique before going to bed is a great way to train your body to relax and prepare for sleep.

To learn more about tools, techniques, technology and training programs that can help you develop improved sleep patterns and cultivate a state of coherence and emotional balance, please visit our web site at www.heartmath.com or call us toll free at 800-450-9111.

All the best and take care!