



**Trainer Guide for the
Emotionally-Safe
Relationships Course**

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ESR Breakout Instructions for Facilitators

Activity 1: Group Breakout – Feelings and Needs plus Insight using Cards or Boards

This activity is for a small group plus the facilitator. The objective of the activity is to demonstrate how to quickly build emotional safety in a group. You shouldn't have more than 4 participants in this activity. If the course is in-person, the Cards will work best. If it is online, the Boards will work best.

Preparation: If you are using Feelings and Needs Cards, lay them on a table with feelings on the far left and needs on the far right to create maximum space in the middle.

If you are using Boards, ask everyone to have them handy for reference as they make guesses. However, only the person processing an issue uses their Boards. The facilitator tracks the needs of each person for use in the empathy statement.

In the instructions below, Cards that are chosen will be put in the middle of the table. Magnets that are chosen will be put in place on the Board.

It is not necessary to be exhaustive in choosing feelings and needs. The main need (s) are the liberators and are important to identify before accessing an insight.

A. Feelings	
1.	Person briefly presents a conflict with another person.
2.	The facilitator asks, "When did the negative feelings begin?"
3.	Person chooses feelings, naming each feeling and moving it into place.
4.	The facilitator only guesses other feelings if one is missing that seems significant.

B. Needs	
1.	Facilitator explains and models how to guess the person's needs by identifying a need, making eye contact and using guessing language. The person doesn't say yes or no, just "thank you, (name of person guessing).
2.	Group members each take two turns guessing needs.
3.	Facilitator asks the person to pick any other appropriate needs.
4.	Facilitator asks the person to choose the three most significant needs and then identify the main need.

C. Summarize	
1.	Facilitator takes the three needs Cards or magnets in hand and connects with the needs by pausing. Then makes eye contact.

2.	Facilitator summarizes with an empathy statement: “It seems like when _____, you needed _____, _____ and, most importantly, you needed _____. Only use a few words to summarize the situation and do not use feelings in the empathy statement. Speak slowly when you name each need and ask if the statement resonated for the person.
3.	If you are using Cards, you will need to return the feelings and needs to their original positions, but keep the main need handy.

D. Empathy for the Other

1.	Facilitator asks the person to guess the feelings and needs of the person they are in conflict with. The facilitator only guesses other feelings and needs if one is missing that seems significant.
2.	Ask the person to guess the main need.
3.	Put the two main need Cards side by side on the table or side by side on the Board.
4.	Ask the person if they feel the “ahh” of empathy. If yes, the process is complete. If they don’t feel complete, guess empathically until the main needs land.

E. Heart-Brain Insight

1.	After every person in the group has processed their conflict, the facilitator will lead the group into a Heart-Brain Insight. The facilitator ensures that everyone remembers the main needs in their conflict.
2.	Facilitator explains there will be silence after the 3rd step of Quick Coherence. Then gives instructions for getting coherent after the 3rd step, asking “What do I need to know?”, listening for an insight and then opening their eyes.
3.	Facilitator leads Quick Coherence, is silent after the 3rd step and waits until all participants have their eyes open. If someone doesn’t open their eyes after a few minutes, ask them to do so. Then ask if they were struggling to get an insight and give them empathy.
4.	Facilitator reminds participants that we don’t analyze or discuss insights. We savor and celebrate them. Then participants are invited to share their insight if they like. There is no pressure to share.

Activity 2: The Connection Practice with a Partner in ESR

Person Who Shares	Partner
1 Concisely share your challenge or celebration with your partner. Focus in on the trigger moment and write it on the board beginning with the word "When ...".	Listen with an open heart. Help zero in on the trigger moment.
2 a) Move relevant feelings magnets to the feelings blanks on the board	b) Guess any other important feelings that might be missing. Guess some needs.
c) Listen as your partner guesses needs and move accurate needs magnets to the needs blanks; add any your partner missed.	d) When all needs have been identified, ask what the main need might be.
e) Identify the main need.	
3	a) Ask what the trigger of the other person might be.
b) If another person is involved, guess his/her feelings, and needs and move the magnets into place. Then guess the main need.	c) Help guess the feelings and needs of the other person involved.
d) Close eyes and ask yourself, "Do I feel authentic empathy for the other person, or do I need to go deeper?" Cycle back if necessary. If this is an inner issue, go to the next step.	
4	The Partner gives all instructions for steps 4 and 5, then leads Quick Coherence Technique and remains silent after the last step "Heart focus, Heart breathing, Heart feeling of appreciation."
5	Remain in coherence.
Access Heart-Brain Insight by asking, "What do I need to know?" Listen for the answer and then indicate when you are complete	
6 a) Share your insight with your partner and write it on the board.	b) Listen. Don't analyze the insight.
c) Then close eyes and ask yourself, "Does my insight take both person's needs into consideration?" If the answer is "Yes," you celebrate.	d) If the partner says, "Yes," you celebrate with them.
If the answer is " Yes ," you celebrate together. If the answer is " No ," the partner will lead the sharer back into coherence to help seek another insight	
e) Write down how you will act on your insight.	

Participant Handouts

Branded digital versions of these handouts are found under “*Emotionally-Safe Relationship materials*” in Coach/Trainer Resources at www.connectionpractice.org

Practice Time: Habitual Response or Empathy?

Look at B’s responses. Which are habitual responses, and which are empathic responses?

1. A: How could I do something so stupid?
 B: Nobody’s perfect. You’re too hard on yourself.

2. A: Every time my mother and I talk, it turns into an argument!
 B: Maybe you should take a communication class.

3. A: I feel awful about missing the appointment we made.
 B: Don’t worry about it. It happens to everybody.

4. A: I’m disgusted with how much weight I’ve gained.
 B: Perhaps jogging would help.

5. A: I’m disappointed with your performance. I would have liked your department to double its production last month.
 B: I understand your disappointment, but we had a lot of absences due to illness.

6. A: I asked her for help, but she said she was busy!
 B: Are you feeling disappointed because you wanted support and hoped she could give it to you?

7. A: (child) Everyone is always telling me what to do!
 B: That’s not true.

Insight Review

1. When your heart rate variability is uneven or irregular, you might be experiencing a feeling of:
 - a. Frustration
 - b. Appreciation
 - c. Neutrality
 - d. Coherence
2. When we react with an intense emotion without thinking, it is a result of:
 - a. Heart rate variability
 - b. The reaction of the amygdala
 - c. The “slow track” circuit
 - d. Brain waves
3. Which tool serves to find specific, creative solutions to our problems?
 - a. The pause
 - b. Quick Coherence Technique
 - c. Appreciation
 - d. Heart-Brain Insight
4. The steps of the Quick Coherence Technique are:
 - a. Heart focus, heart breathing, heart feeling of appreciation
 - b. Focus on the heart, breathe through the heart
 - c. Close your eyes, breathe deeply, focus on your heart
 - d. Place your hand over your heart, close your eyes, breathe deeply
5. The Pause is a way to:
 - a. Stop violent reactions
 - b. Move toward coherence
 - c. Attain emotional freedom
 - d. All of the above
6. The steps of Heart-Brain Insight are:
 - a. Close your eyes, breathe deeply, smile.
 - b. Form a question, ask your heart for the answer to the question, and listen for the answer.
 - c. Do the Quick Coherence Technique, ask the question, listen for the answer, act on the answer.
 - d. Focus on the heart, breathe through the heart, feel appreciation.
7. Which is the strongest oscillating system in the body?
 - a. The brain
 - b. The lungs
 - c. The heart
 - d. The digestive system
8. Which can be used for practicing coherence?
 - a. Quick Coherence Technique
 - b. emWave Desktop
 - c. Inner Balance App
 - d. All of the above
9. Spending time in appreciation helps us:
 - a. Maintain coherence longer periods of time
 - b. Overcome the reaction of the amygdala
 - c. Feel peaceful
 - d. All of the above
10. The key to achieving coherence is:
 - a. Buying an emWave
 - b. Being alone and in a silent place
 - c. Generating a positive feeling in the heart
 - d. Touching your heart, closing your eyes

The Connection Practice with a Partner in ESR

Person Who Shares	Partner
1 Concisely share your challenge or celebration with your partner. Focus in on the trigger moment and write it on the board beginning with the word "When ...".	Listen with an open heart. Help zero in on the trigger moment.
2 f) Move relevant feelings magnets to the feelings blanks on the board	g) Guess any other important feelings that might be missing. Guess some needs.
h) Listen as your partner guesses needs and move accurate needs magnets to the needs blanks; add any your partner missed.	i) When all needs have been identified, ask what the main need might be.
j) Identify the main need.	
3	b) Ask what the trigger of the other person might be.
e) If another person is involved, guess his/her feelings, and needs and move the magnets into place. Then guess the main need.	f) Help guess the feelings and needs of the other person involved.
g) Close eyes and ask yourself, "Do I feel authentic empathy for the other person, or do I need to go deeper?" Cycle back if necessary. If this is an inner issue, go to the next step.	
4 The Partner gives all instructions for steps 4 and 5, then leads Quick Coherence Technique and remains silent after the last step "Heart focus, Heart breathing, Heart feeling of appreciation."	
5 Access Heart-Brain Insight by asking, "What do I need to know?" Listen for the answer and then indicate when you are complete	Remain in coherence.
6 f) Share your insight with your partner and write it on the board.	g) Listen. Don't analyze the insight.
h) Then close eyes and ask yourself, "Does my insight take both person's needs into consideration?" If the answer is "Yes," you celebrate.	i) If the partner says, "Yes," you celebrate with them.
If the answer is " Yes ," you celebrate together. If the answer is " No ," the partner will lead the sharer back into coherence to help seek another insight	
j) Write down how you will act on your insight.	

Autobiography in Five Short Chapters – Portia Nelson

Chapter 1

I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in.
I am lost... I am helpless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.

Chapter 2

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in the same place.
But, it isn't my fault.
It still takes me a long time to get out.



Chapter 3

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in. It's a habit.
My eyes are open.
I know where I am.
It is my fault. I get out immediately.

Chapter 4

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

Chapter 5

I walk down another street.



Portia Nelson, There's a Hole in My Sidewalk: The Romance of Self-Discovery
<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/95085-i-walk-down-the-street-there-is-a-deep-hole>



ESR Slides



Emotionally-Safe Relationships

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Review of Quick Coherence® Technique

1. Heart Focus
2. Heart Breathing
3. Heart Feeling of Appreciation

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Share your name, where you are from and one way you have benefited from using the Connection Practice since your first course.

- ▶ Stop stress immediately
- ▶ Open your intuition
- ▶ Find release from negative emotions
- ▶ Maintain emotional balance
- ▶ Resolve conflicts creatively

Another Significant Benefit: Emotional Safety

Harvard conducted a nearly 80-year study of Adult Development. Robert Waldinger, director of the study, a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, said:

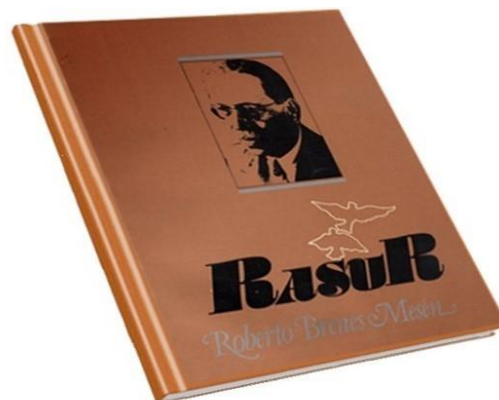
The surprising finding is that our relationships, and how happy we are in our relationships, has a powerful influence on our health. The people who were the most satisfied in their relationships at age 50 were the healthiest at age 80. Taking care of your body is important, but tending to your relationships is a form of self care too. That, I think, is the revelation.

The foundation of happy relationships is emotional safety, leading to physical health and longer life.

Agenda

- ▶ The Connection Practice Vision
- ▶ Creating Emotional Safety
- ▶ Feelings and Needs plus Insight (Cards or Boards) breakout to experience emotional safety in a group
- ▶ Coherence and Its Impact on Emotional Safety and the World
- ▶ Lunch
- ▶ The Connection Practice with a Partner in ESR
- ▶ Next Steps

Our Inspiration: Rasur, Teacher of Connection



Our Vision



We envision a world where generational pain,
that causes so much unnecessary hurt,
will be healed so that
generational peace can be sustained.

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The Science Behind the Connection Practice[®]

Research studies explain why the key elements of the Connection Practice are efficient and powerful in building social-emotional intelligence.

1. Naming feelings reduces the reaction of the amygdala in the brain.
2. Naming our own needs and guessing another person's needs gives us perspective and is called cognitive empathy.
3. Heart-brain coherence reduces irrational reactions and brings about positive affect, which increases access to insights

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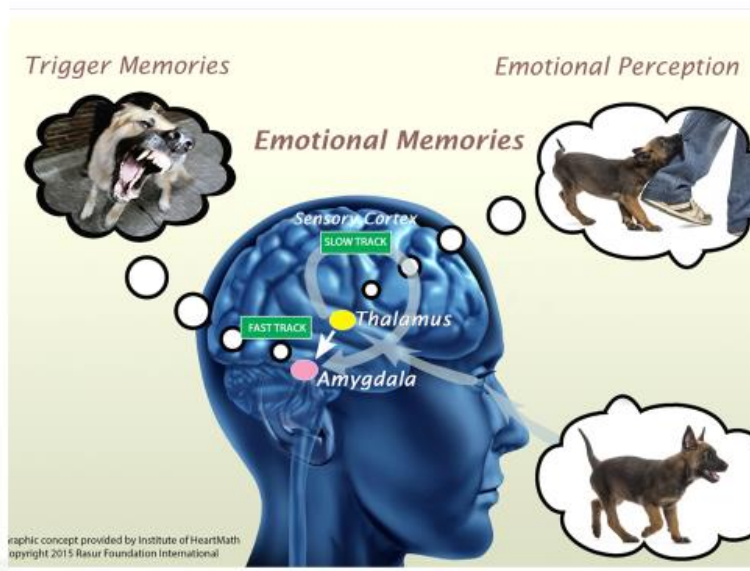
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Definition of the Connection Practice[®]

The Connection Practice is a wellness habit that unites empathy and insight to meet challenges in life. It transforms turmoil into caring connection with self and others.

Empathy is attained through a conscious connection to **feelings** and **needs**.

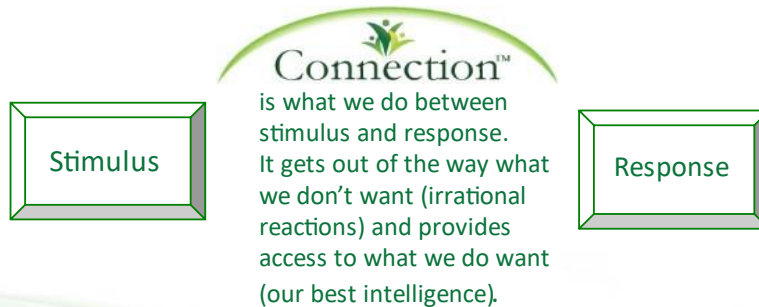
Insight is accessed through **heart-brain coherence**.



Creating A Pause Between Stimulus and Response

Between stimulus and response, there is space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.

~Viktor Frankl



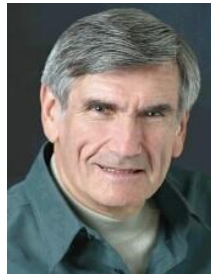
The Power of the Connection Practice

The Connection Practice is a synergistic combination of empathy and insight that maximizes the benefit of a pause between stimulus and response.

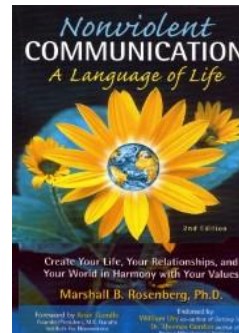
Consequently, the Connection Practice speeds up our personal and professional growth.

Empathy

Identifying Feelings and Needs is the Fast Track to Empathy



Dr. Marshall
Rosenberg



www.cnvc.org

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The Importance of Emotional Safety in Relationships

According to Sarah Peyton in *Your Resonant Self*, the amygdala is asking 12-100 times per second, “Am I safe? Do I matter? ”

It makes sense then, that to connect with someone authentically, it ’s important they first get the message they are safe and matter to you. After that message reassures the amygdala, it is easier to explore other aspects of the relationship.

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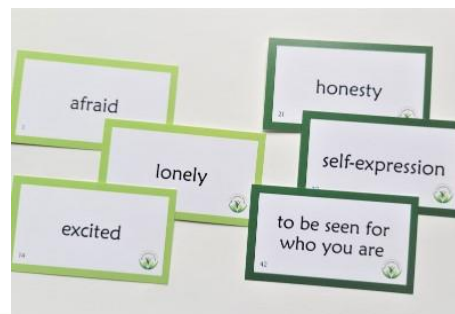
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The Importance of Emotional Safety in Groups

In researching what makes a team effective, Google's *Project Aristotle* found that what really mattered was less about who is on the team, and more about how the team worked together. They found that psychological safety was the most important factor.

In the Feelings and Needs Cards activity, observe how we help people in a small group, who don't know each other, feel safe and that they matter.

Activity 1 in Small Groups: Feelings and Needs Cards plus Insight (Boards can be used instead of Cards): Demonstration and Breakout



Debrief: Activity 1

How did this activity help create emotional safety for those in your group?

**Trauma pioneer, Peter Levine, said:
*Trauma is not what happens to us, but what we hold inside in the absence of an empathetic witness.***

How does the gift of an empathetic guess help us remove our masks and become vulnerable?

Practice Time: Habitual Response or Empathy?

Insight

Heart-Brain Coherence is the
Fast Track to Insight

HeartMath® Institute
expanding heart connections

www.heartmath.org

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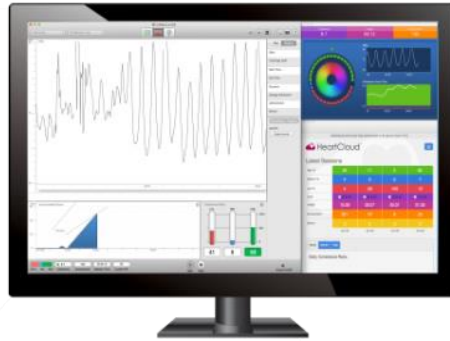
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**Coherence Creates Emotional Safety
in Relationships, Groups and in the World**

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emWave[®] Demonstration of the Garden Game In an in-person course, you can also give it a try!



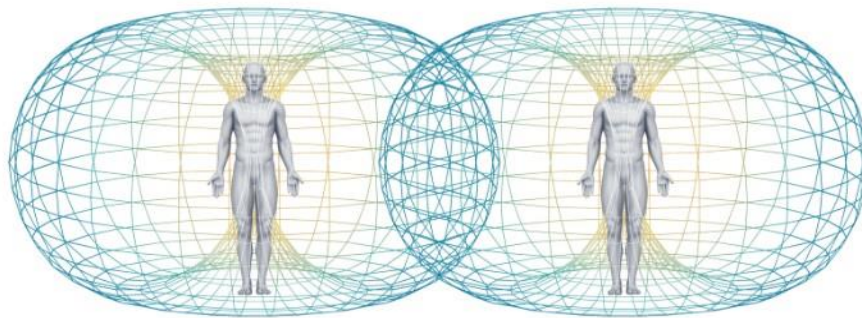
You can order this product at www.connectionpractice.org





Relational Energetics

(page 17)

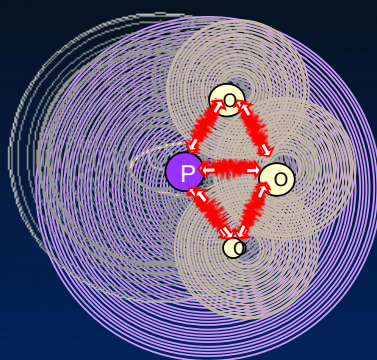


Examples of the impact of coherence in relationships.

INSTITUTE OF HEARTMATH®
Empowering Heart-Based Living

Interpersonal Dynamics

The Incoherent Person and Others



Empowering Heart-Based Living

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The Global Coherence Initiative

What is the Global Coherence Monitoring System?



A global network of sensitive magnetic field detectors that monitor fluctuations in the Earth's geomagnetic fields and resonances in the ionosphere.

www.glcoherence.org

There are groups that regularly practice coherence online together.
Write info@connectionpractice.org for further information.

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Insight Review

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Demonstration:

Connection Practice with a Partner in ESR

You will add steps to the basic CP:
3a, 3d, 6c

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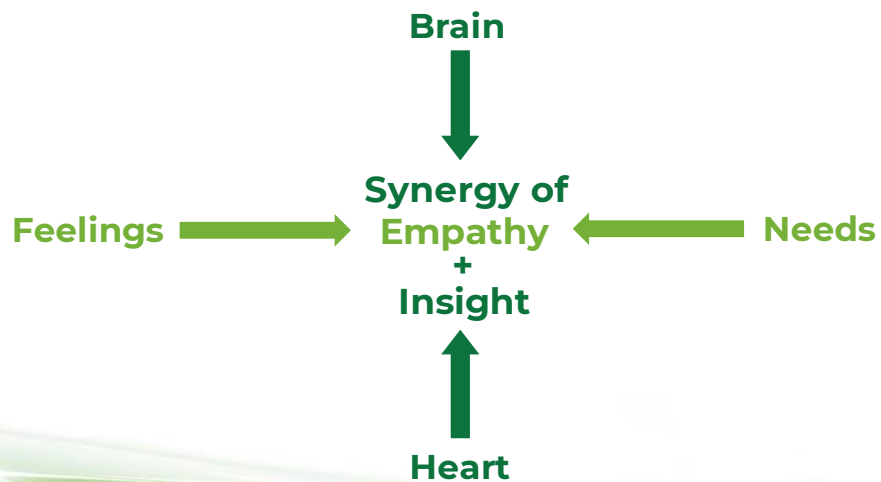
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Debrief: Activity 2

With practice, we can save ourselves and others a lot of unnecessary suffering and speed up our personal growth.

Read Autobiography in 5 Short Chapters.

Connection Practice Summary



Potential Next Steps

Certification	Connection Circle	Additional Courses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mentoring and assessment of readiness (2 hours) 2. Coach Certification (13 hours) 3. Trainer Certification (13 hours) 	<p>Participate regularly in a Connection Circle to provide additional practice and experience</p>	<p>Two options</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Connection Path 2. Connection Mediation <p>(available through Self-Study with or without coaching)</p>

Other Practice Options



Make a habit of using Connection Practice Boards.



Practice with a certified Coach and/or a partner.



Join a Connection Circle.



Interact with others on the Connection Practice and Connection Practice: Daily Coherence pages.

Guidelines for Sharing the Connection Practice After This Course

1. As a graduate of this course, you can practice what you have learned with family and friends.
2. If you become a certified coach or trainer, you will be able to teach this material to adults.

Guidelines for Sharing the Connection Practice After This Course

3. Please respect our intellectual property by asking for written permission from RFI if you want to copy or adapt Connection Practice materials.
4. Please do not define the Connection Practice as a combination of HeartMath and Nonviolent Communication (NVC), as there are legal agreements regarding this issue. One of the strengths of the Connection Practice is its simplicity, while both HeartMath and NVC have methodologies that are richly complex.

Guidelines for Sharing the Connection Practice After This Course

5. We appreciate people's creative intentions when they have added or coupled the Connection Practice with other methodologies. However, we have found that combining or changing it leads to individuals not experiencing the full power of the Practice and as a result, they may conclude it doesn't work. Therefore, please use the Connection Practice in its purity.

Guidelines for Sharing the Connection Practice After This Course

6. If you want to sponsor a course, or help with outreach for a course, we'll be happy to work with you. We will supply you with marketing materials to make it easier for you.
7. If you are interested in teaching the Connection Practice to children and youth, we are happy to talk with you about the Connection Practice Curriculum.
8. Please contact info@connectionpractice.org for support in these areas or with any of your questions.

Continuing with the Connection Practice



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**Before directing
the lightning in the sky,
we must first harness
the storms in our own hearts.**

From the Costa Rican poem, *Rasur or Week of Splendor*,
by Roberto Brenes Mesén

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