



**empathy + insight = connection**

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# Professional Coach Certification Manual

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is a U.S. 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded by Rita Marie Johnson.

Our mission is to empower youth to transform turmoil into caring connection with self and others. We are achieving this goal by teaching the Connection Practice to champions of youth who want to empower them with social-emotional intelligence. We envision a world where generational pain, that causes so much unnecessary hurt, will be healed so that generational peace can be sustained.

Rasur Foundation International (RFI) gratefully acknowledges the work of the HeartMath Institute and the Center for Nonviolent Communication for inspiring the Connection Practice.

Rasur Foundation International is not associated with any political party, group or religion. We take a neutral stand that enables all people to learn the Connection Practice.

Rasur Foundation International  
[info@connectionpractice.org](mailto:info@connectionpractice.org) • [www.connectionpractice.org](http://www.connectionpractice.org)

2450 Alvin Ave. #21853 • San Jose, CA 95151 • USA

This manual was written by Rita Marie Johnson  
with contributions from Ellen Anderson

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## Coach Certification Course Overview

| Topics  | Activities  |
|---|---|
| <p>Day 1: Introductions and Overview<br/>Logistics; Course Overview; Who We Are and What We Do; Professional Values, Conflict List; Assessment process; Launch Plan; Final Interview; Coach Agreement</p>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name, Passion, Strength and Motivation to Become a Coach</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Orientation to Connection Practice Coaching<br/>Coaching Standards; What Coaching the Connection Practice is <u>NOT</u>; Comparison of Coaching Options; Orientation to Coaching Guide, First Coaching Session using Boards and Slides</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstration of a First Coaching Session on a conflict with another person (magnetic Boards, slides):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Quick Coherence demo</li> <li>○ Inner Balance and emWave demos</li> <li>○ Heart-Brain (H-B) Insight demo</li> <li>○ Instructing and leading H-B Insight (assessment in breakouts)</li> <li>○ Sample H-B Insight story</li> <li>○ Demonstration of how to coach a conflict with another person</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <p>Connection Practice Coaching<br/>The spectrum of possibilities for meeting client's needs with coaching</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice coaching a conflict with another person without slides</li> <li>• Orientation to digital Boards</li> <li>• Demo of freeform coaching an inner issue, no Boards</li> <li>• Practice freeform coaching an inner issue</li> <li>• How to facilitate Connection Circles</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Day 2: Connection Practice Coaching Assessments in Breakouts</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching a conflict with another person (slides, magnetic Boards)</li> <li>• Coaching an inner issue using digital Boards</li> <li>• Freeform coaching an inner issue</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Next Steps, Expressing Appreciation and Met Needs<br/>Send assessments; Prepare Launch Plan and agreement for final interview; Closing by expressing met needs.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstration of expressing appreciation</li> <li>• Expressing met needs</li> </ul>  |

## Who We Are and What We Do

### Why do we teach the Connection Practice?

We can learn to live in a way that reflects our innate connection, where we enjoy emotional safety with each other and discover creative solutions to daily challenges. Each person who becomes skilled at the Connection Practice creates a ripple effect that positively impacts future generations.

### Our Story:

Rasur Foundation International was founded to spread the Connection Practice. It is named for an epic poem, Rasur, by Roberto Brenes Mesen, a Costa Rican:

One day, ages ago, in the village of Quizur in Costa Rica, all the children suddenly disappeared! A young teacher named Rasur had called them into a mountain and was teaching them about empathy and insight, the hidden treasures in their hearts. He taught them to use these innate strengths to connect to their own inner lives, to enrich their relationships with others, and to care for nature.

After realizing the youngsters were missing, the parents searched the countryside, calling for them. They heard them singing inside the mountain, and they looked for a hillside entrance but didn't find one. Instead, they had a timeless moment when their painful memories were erased, and their innocence was restored.

At day's end the children emerged, radiant with joy, and told their parents what they had learned from Rasur. Now the adults were reassured that their children were safe and were having an extraordinary experience in this unique classroom. They allowed the children to go back every day and, in the evening, would hear what their sons and daughters had learned.

Before long, the empathy of the villagers created more harmony; now people walked arm in arm and sat beneath trees to listen to each other. Insights soon led to a wave of creativity - an artist was painting a magnificent landscape of the mountains, and the musicians were playing symphonies that could take your breath away. Young people were creating vegetable gardens that looked like works of art, and the women's embroidery depicted the beauty of life.

At week's end, Rasur said he had to teach other children in the world. The children cried, "Oh no, don't go!" Rasur replied, "Don't worry. Just bend your ear down to your heart and you'll know I'm there, just like everyone else that you love."

The children came out of the mountain one last time and told their parents that Rasur had traveled on. They all began to talk about the meaning of this visit. One of the men said, "Before directing the lightning in the sky, we must first harness the storms in our own hearts." The other villagers agreed. And they remembered how to stay connected so that each new generation passed this skill on.

### Vision:

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

### Mission:

We empower youth to transform turmoil into caring connection with self and others. We achieve that by training champions of youth in the Connection Practice, who then teach it to the young people they serve. However, every adult that learns the Connection Practice creates a better world for children, so CP Coaches and Trainers can teach anyone who is motivated to learn.

### Tagline:

empathy + insight = connection

### Website:

[www.connectionpractice.org](http://www.connectionpractice.org)

### Contact:

[info@connectionpractice.org](mailto:info@connectionpractice.org)

### Definition and Benefits:

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.

#### Benefits:

- builds social-emotional intelligence
- reduces stress, conflict, and addictions
- prevents unnecessary loss of human potential
- leads to authentic, rich relationships

### How do we carry out our mission?

Rasur Foundation International certifies coaches and trainers to teach the Connection Practice to champions of youth in:

- Schools and youth organizations
- Counseling centers, therapists in private practice
- Parent organizations
- Job training organizations
- Local and global nonprofits
- Educational degree program in colleges and universities
- Faith-based organizations

In addition, Coaches and Trainers teach audiences they feel called to serve.

### Call to Action:

Take the Core Course (called either *Inner Wellness for Success* or *From Conflict to Connection*), then the *Emotionally-Safe Relationships* Course, participate in mentoring and become a certified Connection Practice Coach or Trainer.

## Credibility:

- Received the *Ashoka Changemakers Innovation Award: Building a More Ethical Society*, chosen from 79 projects in 32 countries
- Implemented in Costa Rican public schools. Over 1500 teachers received 40 hours of training and rated the course 97.9 out of 100 on the Ministry of Education Evaluation.
- Taught for credit at United Nations University for Peace, a graduate school for international leaders.
- Over 100,000 adults and children have learned the Connection Practice
- *Completely Connected: Uniting Our Empathy & Insight for Extraordinary Results*, an Amazon bestseller, received a Nautilus award in Psychology
- Endorsed by President Oscar Arias, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate
- Endorsed by Eileen Rockefeller, co-founder of CASEL, the leading US organization on social-emotional learning.
- Over 200 certified Connection Practice trainers in US, Japan, Canada, Costa Rica, etc.
- All Connection Practice courses can be taken online now so they can be offered to large audiences or school districts
- Cragmont Elementary in Berkeley implemented the Connection Practice Curriculum with the new magnetic Boards with the following results.
  - After sheltering in place and going online, it was the only class in the school that had 100% attendance.
  - 66% of students reported that naming their feelings is very easy or easy to do
  - 66% of students reported that guessing the feelings of others is very easy or easy to do
  - 72% of students reported that naming their needs is very easy or easy to do
  - 61% of students reported that guessing the needs of others is very easy or easy to do
  - 74% of the students reported that it is very easy or easy to get coherent
  - The teacher, Carole Goyen, said she had expected this year to be the worst ever because of the reputation of the incoming cohort. However, it was the best year ever because of the Connection Practice.
  - Parent, Dr. Davi Pakter's testimony <https://youtu.be/RKNEtrBQh2I>
- In the midst of COVID-19 and distance learning chaos in schools in September 2020, on a scale of 1-10, the Connection Practice Intensive received an average rating of 9 from 15 school counselors in 2 different school districts.
- Each step of the Connection Practice is based on science:
  - Naming feelings reduces irrational reactions of the amygdala in the brain.
  - Heart-brain coherence reduces irrational reactions of the amygdala.
  - Naming our own needs and guessing another person's needs gives us perspective and is called cognitive empathy.
  - Heart-brain coherence brings about positive affect, which increases access to insights.

## Our Professional Values

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 1.  | We aim to embody connection. At the same time, we realize it's about connection, not perfection.  |
| 2.  | We put empathy before honesty in our communications.  |
| 3.  | When we react or make a mistake when teaching or working with others in our community, we take responsibility for it. Then, if possible, we create a "do over" that results in greater connection.                              |
| 4.  | We keep sensitive information confidential, whether it is from a client or colleague.   |
| 5.  | We hold precious the integrity of the Connection Practice and don't mix it with other methods.  |
| 6.  | We adhere to the coaching and training standards that we were taught.   |
| 7.  | We refrain from defining the Connection Practice as a combination of HeartMath and NVC. Instead, we explain that the Connection Practice transforms turmoil into caring connection with self and others.                        |
| 8.  | We respect the years of learning that evolved into Connection Practice activities and materials and do not make changes in them. If we have a suggestion for improving them, we write to Ellen Anderson, Director of Education. |
| 9.  | We strive to spread the Connection Practice through the testimonies, stories and images that we gather.   |
| 10. | We are accountable to the agreement we made with RFI, including sending in the names of those we coach and train so they will stay engaged and our global outreach will grow.   |

# Conflict List

Please fill this list out prior to the course so you have a conflict in mind for each exercise. Select conflicts that you are willing to share with others in this group. Having your conflict ready saves time and keeps you in sync with others in your group.

|   |
|---|
| <b>1. List a conflict or tension with another person that is current or that wasn't settled peacefully in the past.</b> |
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>   |
| <b>2. List a conflict or tension with another person that is current or that wasn't settled peacefully in the past.</b> |
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>   |
| <b>3. List some inner turmoil or conflict that is current.</b>  |
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>   |

## Standards for Coaching the Connection Practice

Below are the standards for coaching the Connection Practice clearly, accurately, and with a heart of connection. All Connection Practice Coaches are responsible for maintaining these standards. This enhances name recognition and ensures we pass on the Practice with integrity.

### 1. Demonstrates a heart of connection

- Gives empathy
- Stays connected with the client and tracks with their inner life
- Makes eye contact
- Listens more than talks
- Refrains from giving advice and/or strategies

### 2. Demonstrates empathic facilitation in leading the client to the main needs

- Invites the client to briefly share their issue
- Assists client in reducing the issue to a statement of the trigger (when negative feelings began) that starts with the word “When”
- Invites the client to name their own feelings
- Guesses a feeling only if the client has missed naming something obvious
- Guesses the client’s needs; invites them to add additional needs and the main need
- Works with the client to guess the feelings and needs of the other person; invites the client to guess the main need
- Places the two main needs next to each other

### 3. Introduces Heart-Brain Insight clearly

- Gives all of the instructions at the beginning
  - Says: I will lead you through Quick Coherence
  - Asks: What will you use for appreciation?
  - Says: I will remain silent after the third step
  - Says: When you feel coherent, you ask yourself, “What do I need to know?”
  - Says: When you get an insight, open your eyes so I know you are complete.

### 4. Leads Heart-Brain Insight accurately

- Leads Quick Coherence appropriately
  - Uses the essential words: Heart focus; Heart breathing; Heart feeling of appreciation
  - Doesn’t use “thinking” words, such as “think about,” “thought,” “imagine,” “bring to mind,” etc.
  - Leads each step slowly, pausing to allow the client time to follow the guidance (do it yourself at the same time)
- Stops talking after the third step of Quick Coherence
- Opens eyes and stays in coherence with the client throughout
- If the client hasn’t opened their eyes in a reasonable time, invites them to do so and share their experience; responds appropriately

## 5. Responds empathically after the client gets an insight

- Invites the client to share their insight and savor it
- Asks about the action plan if one is needed
- Refrains from analyzing the insight or strategizing the action plan

## What Coaching the Connection Practice Is NOT

Just as it is important to know how to coach the Connection Practice, it is equally important to know what **not** to do when coaching.

These reminders can be helpful:

1. Do not use feelings words that are not true feelings, such as betrayed, disrespected, ignored, attacked, etc. If the client uses these words, ask them what the feeling is under those perceptions.
2. It is not necessary to be exhaustive in guessing feelings and needs. Identify the ones that are most significant.
3. Do not summarize the feelings as this can re-trigger them.
4. Do not continue to guess needs after the client has indicated through words or body language that the main need has been identified.
5. Do not contribute platitudes, spiritual principles or other beliefs as this takes clients out of their hearts and into their heads.
6. Do not offer your insights, advice or strategies about their situation or their insights – ever.
7. Don't add unnecessary words to any part of the process; trust the Connection Practice to do the work and trust that the wisdom needed is within the client.
8. Don't include extra information; just remember that anything you add will be about you, not the client.

Essentially, as the coach, you need to be the space for transformation to happen and you will shine when you allow that to unfold.

## Heart-Brain Insight Script

Now I'm going to share the steps of receiving a Heart-Brain Insight.

First, I will lead you into Quick Coherence, which you have already learned: heart focus, heart breathing and heart feeling of appreciation.

What will you use for the focus of your appreciation? (Pause for a response)

Ok, good. So, I will lead you into Quick Coherence

After the third step, heart feeling of appreciation, I won't say anything more.

When you feel you are coherent, silently ask yourself, "What do I need to know?" Listen quietly inside, embrace whatever comes.

Then open your eyes, so I know you are complete.

Remember, please open your eyes when your insight comes. If you have your eyes closed for more than 4 minutes, I will ask you to open them.

Now I will lead you into a Heart-Brain Insight.

I invite you to bring your hand to your heart and close your eyes if you are comfortable with that.

Now bring your attention down to your heart, dropping all your energy down; heart focus.

(Pause as you do it with your client)

And now, breathe deeply and rhythmically as if breathing through your heart; heart breathing.

(Pause as you do it with your client)

Now, feeling appreciation for whatever is easy for you, like a big smile in the heart; heart feeling of appreciation.

## Comparison of Coaching Options

There are two primary options in coaching the Connection Practice; with Boards and without. In these options, the steps are different because the Coach must serve as the "Board" when the tactile version isn't used. In a Connection Circle, we do not use Boards, but the steps are slightly different because we do it in a group rather than one-to-one.

|  | <b>Coaching on a Conflict with Another Person (with Boards)</b>  | <b>Coaching on a Conflict with Another Person (without Boards)</b>   | <b>Connection Circle</b>   |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Trigger (when feelings are first noticed)</b> | Help identify the trigger moment and express as "When ..." on the Board  | Trainer asks client to briefly describe the issue and zeros in on the trigger moment   | Each participant (Speaker) briefly shares whatever is up for them  |
| <b>Self-Empathy</b>                              | <p>Feelings: Trainer asks client to identify their feelings, name them, and put them in place on the Board; Trainer only guesses feelings if there is an obvious blind spot</p> <p>Note: In Partner work, the Speaker identifies their feelings (as above)</p> | <p>Feelings &amp; Needs: Trainer guesses feelings and needs in a conversational manner (Are you feeling ... because you need ...?)</p> <p>Client responds to guesses and may add additional feelings and needs</p> <p>Trainer summarizes needs</p> | <p>Feelings &amp; Needs: Another participant (Listener) guesses feelings and then guesses needs. If desired, the feelings and needs can be linked. For example, "Are you feeling hurt because you need respect?"</p> <p>Keep in mind that additional feelings and needs may emerge. Speaker responds to guesses and may add additional feelings and needs</p> <p>Listener summarizes needs</p> |
|  | <p>Needs: Trainer guesses needs and client gives feedback; the selected needs are placed on the Board; the client can add any additional needs</p> <p>Note: In Partner work, the Listener guesses needs (as above)</p>   |  |  |
|  |  | <b>Coaching on a Conflict with Another Person (with Boards)</b>  | <b>Coaching on a Conflict with Another Person (without Boards)</b>   |

|                                     |  |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Empathy for the Other Person</b> | <p>Feelings: Client takes the lead in guessing the feelings of the other person, naming them, and putting them in place on the Board; Trainer helps guess feelings especially if there is an obvious blind spot</p> <p>Note: In Partner work, the Speaker and Listener work together to guess the feelings</p> | <p>Feelings &amp; Needs: Trainer guesses feelings and needs in a conversational manner (Do you think the other person feels ... because they need ...?)</p> <p>Client responds to guesses and may add additional feelings and needs</p> <p>Trainer summarizes the needs that have been guessed</p> | Not applicable   |
|                                     | <p>Needs: Client takes the lead in guessing the needs of the other person, naming them, and putting them in place on the Board; Trainer helps guess needs especially if there is an obvious blind spot</p> <p>Note: In Partner work, the Speaker and Listener work together to guess the needs</p>             |  |  |
|                                     | <p>Main Need: The Speaker chooses; the Trainer asks them to put the two main needs side by side on the Board.</p>  | <p>Main Need: The client chooses; the Trainer names the two main needs before leading Heart-Brain Insight</p>  | <p>After each participant has identified their main need, the Trainer asks them each to recall that main need before leading everyone into Heart-Brain Insight</p> |
| <b>Heart-Brain Insight</b>          | <p>Trainer leads the steps; the client shares their insight</p>  | <p>Trainer leads the steps; the client shares their insight</p>  | <p>Trainer leads the steps; the Trainer and the participants share their insights and savor them</p>   |
| <b>Action Plan</b>                  | <p>Trainer invites client to share how the insight will inform their action</p>  | <p>Trainer invites client to share how the insight will inform their action</p>  | Not applicable   |
| <b>Comments</b>                     |  | <p>Note: This coaching can be done in partners instead of Trainer/Client</p>   |  |

# Demonstrating HeartMath Software in Different Coaching Scenarios

## Comprehensive Session including Coaching Slides

### Target Audience:

Someone who wants to learn the Connection Practice

Note: You can coach with or without Connection Practice Boards; if your client wants to receive a set of Boards, you must provide at least four coaching sessions in your coaching package.

### Coaching Options:

- Online: Attach sensor to coach's ear
- In-Person: Attach sensor to client's ear

### Software Options:

- Inner Balance
- emWave

### Script (refer to the Coaching Guide)

## Coaching Session with Minimal Instruction

### Target Audience:

- Someone with a painful issue – they need immediate support
- Someone to entice – encourage them to do more with the Connection Practice

### Coaching Options:

- Online: Attach sensor to coach's ear
- In-Person: Attach sensor to client's ear

### Software Options:

- Inner Balance
- emWave

### Script:

- (Show the slide with the graph of frustration and coherence and explain it briefly.)
- When you are in a coherent state, that's when you are most likely to access an insight, which you will get to try when we work on your issue.
- What would you like to choose to appreciate? (Listen; respond as appropriate.)
- (Attach the sensor.)
- High coherence will be green, medium will be blue, and low will be red.
- This is where you will see the colors when I run the program. (Point to the location on the screen.)
- (Run the program.)

# Coach-Client Agreement

## Nature of the Relationship

Coaching is not therapy or counseling. It is a relationship of equals. You are accountable for moving your objectives forward. Your coach is responsible for providing insightful and challenging questions and assignments that support you in achieving your goals. Connection Practice coaching includes learning the Practice, improving your mastery, and exploring how to apply it in your life to build greater connection.

### **empathy + insight = connection**

In addition, it is important to maintain a healthy coach-client relationship. If at any time your coach is not meeting your needs or expectations, it's important to let him/her know right away. Similarly, if at any time your coach does not feel he/she can best meet your needs, he/she will share that with you as well. Together you can review your coaching and determine the best path for you to further progress on your goals.

## Confidentiality

Coaching is a confidential relationship, and all information shared remains private.

## Agreement

I have read the Connection Practice Coach-Client Agreement and want to move forward with coaching.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Launch Plan

| In my role as a Connection Practice Coach this year, I plan to: |          |
|---|----------|
| 1.  |          |
|   | by date: |
| 2.  |          |
|   | by date: |
| 3.  |          |
|   | by date: |

## Connection Circles

### What is a Connection Circle?

It's a group that provides a supportive environment for mastering the Connection Practice and building deep friendships.

**empathy + insight = connection**

**A Connection Circle reinforces the skills you have already learned so you can resolve issues and celebrate life. You will experience accelerated personal and professional growth by:**

- continuing to build your feelings and needs vocabulary and enhance self-empathy and empathy for others
- reinforcing the experience of coherence so that you can attain it whenever needed
- accessing insights quickly and efficiently for practical application in your daily life

### Who can attend a Connection Circle?

- Anyone who has taken a Connection Practice workshop or course

**Note:** Members of circles may permit newcomers who are curious about the Practice to attend with the understanding that they may observe and listen. People who haven't yet learned the Practice often struggle and lack confidence if they participate without any preparation. In addition, regular Circle participants may feel frustrated when time is taken to teach newcomers the basics. The decision to allow newcomers to attend should be made by unanimous consent of the members so that emotional safety is sustained in the group.

### What is the ideal number of people in a Connection Circle?

For in-person groups, 4-8 people are ideal depending on the length of the meeting. When more people attend, the group can begin and end together and break up into smaller circles to practice. For online Connection Circles, it's best to limit attendance to four participants. This allows for full participation and an enriching experience in a one-hour session.

### How do you start a Connection Circle?

A certified Connection Practice coach who is willing to lead the group initiates and registers it at [www.connectionpractice.org](http://www.connectionpractice.org). As people master the Practice, the coach may mentor someone in the group to take over the leadership role. Once that person has demonstrated mastery of the Practice, as determined by the coach, he or she can assume leadership of the circle.

### How often does a Connection Circle meet?

Most circles meet every other week, typically for 1-2 hours for in-person groups and 1 hour for online groups.

### What materials are needed?

The leader provides a Feelings and Needs list for every participant.

### How much does it cost?

The Connection Practice coach sets a price for participation and participants pay directly to him or her.

The coach requests that each participant become a member of Rasur Foundation International, which is achieved through a donation. Each person can go to the donate button on the home page of [www.connectionpractice.org](http://www.connectionpractice.org) and choose an amount for the donation. These funds support the infrastructure needed for Connection Circle groups to succeed and help spread the Connection Practice.

## Connection Circle Format

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 1. | Make a circle.   |
| 2. | The Connection Practice coach leads everyone in the Quick Coherence Technique.   |
| 3. | The coach reminds everyone to give empathy, not advice or strategies (e.g., are you feeling ... because you need ...), and asks who would like to begin.   |
| 4. | The first person shares a challenge with another person, an inner issue, or a celebration. The person next to them in the circle guesses their feelings and needs and asks them to identify the main met or unmet need.                          |
| 5. | When the first person is complete, the person who gave them empathy shares. This process is repeated until everyone in the circle has had a chance to share and has identified a main met or unmet need.   |
| 6. | At times, the person who receives empathy is so moved emotionally that it is challenging for them to give empathy to the next person. In that case, skip that person and move on to the next one.  |
| 7. | The coach asks everyone to remember their main need, met or unmet. Then the coach leads everyone into coherence so they can access a Heart-Brain insight. The coach speaks the three steps of coherence and is silent after that.                |
| 8. | After everyone has their eyes open, the coach asks if anyone would like to share. Participants can share their insights but do not analyze them. It is important to respect each person's insight and not allow participants to comment on them. |
| 9. | Lastly, the participants stand and make a circle (online this is a visual connection). They close by saying, "Let's stay connected!"   |