



## Science of the Heart, by Doc Childre

"If you change your perception, you change the experience of your body and your world." Your perceptions underlie how you think and feel about the person or issue that you are dealing with. The resulting thoughts and emotions, but especially the emotions, cause numerous physiological changes in the body. These changes can be measured in the nervous system, hormonal system, heart and blood pressure. These changes, in turn, feed back and affect what is called the neural circuitry of the brain. The state of your neural circuitry, in turn, affects your perception. Your neural circuitry consists of neural pathways in the brain and body, pathways that are developed and reinforced to the degree we use them. Whether you "learn" a healthy response or a stressful reaction, you are "hard-wiring" this pattern into your system through repetition. Here's an illustration of how the cycle works. If you get frustrated because traffic was unusually heavy on the way to work, that feeling causes the sympathetic nervous system to increase your heart rate and instruct the adrenal glands to secrete adrenaline and other hormones into the blood stream. These changes then affect the neural circuits in the brain. You are then more sensitive to the next stressful situation and more likely to have a more negative reaction. If you repeat this pattern, the neural pathways in the brain are reinforced and your emotional response becomes automatic so you can get stuck in repeating, inefficient thought loops such as worry and anxiety. This then leads to depletion of your energy and clouds your judgement. [Meditation] allows you to break the cycle, and with practice you can begin to retrain and reprogram the neural circuitry so that you are not a victim of your own thought loops and inappropriate self-defeating emotional reactions, but can build new intelligence into your system. -- Doc Childre, founder of HeartMath [<http://www.heartmath.org>] (doing revolutionary work for understanding the role of the human heart in performance)