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Original research manuscript

# An Experiential Evaluation of Arka Dhyana (Intuitive Meditation) from the Perspective of HeartMath and the Theory of the Six Main Levels of Consciousness

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**Abstract:** An introductory course of Arka Dhyana, also known as Intuitive Meditation (IM), consisting of five sessions, was offered to an international audience via Zoom technology. Participants were shown how to connect to their deeper self, essence or soul by bringing their I-ego-awareness from the thinking mind, often associated with the frontal part of the brain, to 19 energetic stations in the body including the heart centre. In this limited study, evaluation was both process and outcome orientated and included HeartMath (HM) Inner Balance or emWave2 electronic technology to measure mean coherence and achievement before and after each session. A highly significant increase in both coherence and achievement in six participants was found, which was also reflected in a reported increase in wellbeing related to feelings in qualitative statements indicating changes in levels of consciousness and individual transformative experiences as predicted by the Theory of the Six Main Levels of Consciousness.

**Keywords:** Intuitive Meditation; Consciousness; Inner Balance technology; Coherence; Feeling; Thinking; HeartMath; Wellbeing; Self; Qualitative

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## 1. Introduction

The authors of this study collaborated in a new mixed-method investigation into the Arka Dhyana meditation method also known as Intuitive Meditation (IM) which had previously been researched by Tina Lindhard for her doctoral thesis (2016) and later disseminated in two articles (Lindhard, 2017; 2018). In this paper, we report on part of the results obtained in this new study which involves an evaluation of IM from the perspective of HeartMath and the Theory of the Six Main Levels of consciousness.

Srinivas Arka is a philosophical author and inspirational speaker, and he (2020) describes IM as a journey from “the rational mind to the emotional heart to Self-discovery. This is an experience-based spirituality, simple and highly effective method to tap into our deeper, inner mind. From here, we can receive intuitive inner guidance about our true nature or any topic that concerns us... many have gradually gained courage, improved their health and come to experience peace and love through which many new portals open”. The term Arka means sun or light in Sanskrit and, according to Patanjali, Dhyana refers to a practice that leads to the second-highest state before samadhi (Maas, 2006).

According to Arka (2013), practitioners of IM experience six main levels of consciousness on their journey to self-discovery. This is accompanied by individually

unique experiences within each level. This insight is based on his own personal experiences and that of his pupils and has given rise to a theory known as the 'Theory of the Six Main Levels of Consciousness'. The main levels Arka (2013) identifies are: 1) M (Mind)–Consciousness, 2) SM (Subliminal-Mind)–Consciousness, 3) F (Feeling-Mind)–Consciousness, 4) H (Emotional-Heart)–Consciousness, 5) HS (Heart-Soul)–Consciousness and 6) PS (Pure-Self)–Consciousness. In IM, the intention is to achieve ultimate wellbeing through discovering the true nature of our self via rewinding our surface consciousness by descending from our rational mind to our feeling heart-mind to pure consciousness. In this introductory course, we are concerned with the initial shift in experiencing consciousness between the thinking Mind which is associated with the surface of the cerebral region and the feeling mind associated with the heart and possibly the experience of other deeper levels also connected with the heart.

The initial IM course consisted of five weekly sessions via Zoom and was attended by an international audience, including four South African Psychologists, who assisted with the collaborative evaluation. In the section reported here, the HeartMath (HM) electronic devices, Inner Balance and emWave2, provided quantitative data. Qualitative data were derived from participants who were asked "in what way or how do you feel Arka Dhyana has complemented to your wellbeing", and also "to add something about your experiences while practising the method Arka Dhyana (IM), and how you feel afterwards". These reflective questions are part of the Revised Feeling Consciousness Scale developed by Lindhard (2016) and were filled in online by the participants after the fifth IM session. Data was also based on a more detailed report of their experiences after each session.

According to Arka (2018) ultimate well-being is based on ... some aspects of the Indian philosophy and the spiritual quest... for it involves how to live a most meaningful yogic life in full clarity and with respect to all that exists around oneself. Indian spirituality, as depicted in the Vedas and resumed in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, also embraces and guides as to how to live both a material and spiritual life in parallel and at some point, dropping the material tendency and embracing spiritual enlightenment. (2018, p.101)

The rationale behind the use of the HM electronic devices may be understood in terms of HM coherence model that rhythmic activity in living systems reflects information transmitted by interconnected biological, social and environmental networks (McCraty, 2016). The term coherence implies logical argumentation, harmony, interconnectedness and consistency. For example, in IM it can be seen as implying a relationship between various bodily subsystems and related energies and the quality of yoking with divine energy, implicit in the term "yoga" (Iyengar, 2001; Iyengar, et al., 2005).

Both IM and HM emphasize the "feeling heart" and increases in intuition, which literally refers to inner understanding and knowing. HM studies distinguish three dimensions or types of intuition; the implicit process of insight, energetic sensitivity in detecting electromagnetic and other environmental signals and non-local intuition, which transcends conventional space-time (Childre, et al., 2016). All types typically operate inclusively in that gestalt apprehension experienced as intuition by many people, especially traditional diviners, healers, psychologists and medical doctors. Extensive HM studies endorse empirical research on South African traditional healers as to the crucial function of the coherent heart before the brain in intuition. Further archetypal, cultural endorsement of this empirical research is apparent in the similarity of the experiential terms *umbilini* and *kundalini*, respectively used to describe intuition by Zulu indigenous and yogic practitioners (Childre et al., 2016; Edwards, 2013).

## Hypotheses

Although the IM method intends a shift in consciousness from the rational mind to the feeling heart-mind to the discovery of the self, owing to empirical, experiential and cultural evidence for the role of the coherent heart in intuition, it was also expected that IM participants would experience increases in mean coherence and coherence achievement as measured by HM technology before and after IM practice.

It was further suggested that the participant's qualitative statements of how the IM method had added to their wellbeing, and descriptions of their individual experiences during this initial experienced shift in their level of consciousness, would also provide interesting information regarding what coherence involves using the IM method.

The Null hypothesis was therefore that IM would not increase mean coherence and coherence achievement as measured by HM technology before and after IM practice

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Participants

The convenience sample of six participants who had varying prior experience with the HM method consisted of five women and one man who had access to HM Inner Balance or emWave2 technology. Sample mean age was 53 years, standard deviation of 16, and age range from 31 to 74 years. Three held doctorates, one masters and two bachelor's degrees. There were four professional psychologists, one yoga teacher and one artist. Five practised various forms of Christian religion and the sixth practised various mystical traditions. For confidential reasons, the six participants were simply coded A to F.

### 2.2. Intuitive Meditation Course Process

Following the establishment of relationship rapport and appropriate intuition of ambience within the group, the Arka Dhyana Intuitive Meditation process was introduced and progressively the three pillars of the Arka Dhyana method consisting of touch, breath and sound were demonstrated in sequential stages. This demonstration was preceded by practicing the gesture of leading the thinking mind to the area of the heart in the center of the upper chest. This gesture typically involved moving one's hand slowly from the region of one's head (thinking mind) to that of one's heart while maintaining the fingers in *Gyan* mudra (ie the thumb and the index finger forms a circle) and inviting the thinking mind to come on a journey. Participants were invited to set the intention of connecting with their deeper essence, self or soul (mentioning the three terms allows participants to use the one with which they most resonate). The course as presented consisted of practicing touching 4, then 8, 12 and 19 particular body parts, consisting of feet, calves, knees, thighs, sacrum, naval, solar plexus, heart, shoulders, elbows, hands together, throat, mouth, nose, cheeks, ears, forehead, and head each accompanied by a syllable of the mystical vibratory sound, SAROOGOVAUM. Except for the first session consisting of 3 hours, each of the following sessions lasted 2 hours. Each stage built sequentially on the previous stage. Finally, in the fifth session, physical touch was superseded by visualized touch with hands of light. The IM course lasted 11 hours but, between sessions, participants were invited to become more familiar and involved with the IM method by practicing it.

*Evaluation was both process and outcome orientated. Evaluators using HM equipment measured mean coherence and achievement before and after each session. Their simple, limited HM electronic measurement instructions were to rest and record coherence and achievement quantitative data for exactly five minutes before and after each session. These quantitative data were supplemented by qualitative data which rested on participants' comments concerning 1) how they felt Arka Dhyana had complemented their wellbeing, 2) a general statement outlining their*

*individual experiences while practicing the method Arka Dhyana (IM) and 3) a more detailed record of the experiences of the participants after each IM session.*

### **2.3. Intention**

The Intention in IM is to discover the true nature of our Self via rewinding our surface consciousness through descending from our rational mind to our feeling heart-mind to pure consciousness. For Arka, at least 40% of what happens during meditation rests on our intention (unpublished comment).

The modulation of the vibratory sound SAROOGOVAUM is directed at each energetic station, and it increases in pitch and duration as the body is ascended. This encourages the out-breath to become more and more prolonged. This practice initially facilitates the shadow emotions to surface, during which the practitioner is invited to become one with each station touched, as well as the arising emotion that is seen as a part of emotional consciousness but is not the whole of the self.

The IM intention can be contrasted with that of HM, which typically focusses on coherence, through intentionally slowing heart and breath patterns, while cultivating positive, renewing feelings such as peace and love.

### **2.4. Instrument**

HM Inner Balance electronic device measures and monitors physiological coherence, which emerges from the harmonious activity and interactions of the body's subsystems. Physiological coherence is associated with a smooth, sine wavelike pattern in heart rhythms and a narrow-band, high-amplitude peak in the low- frequency range of the heart rate variability power spectrum, at a frequency between 0.04 and 0.26 hertz range of the heart rate variability (HRV) power spectrum. This is associated with general well-being and optimal performance (Childre et al. 2016). The Inner Balance coherence means and achievement totals were used in this study. In addition, the Inner Balance app is unique in its potential to measure insight, energetic sensitivity and non-local intuition. HM and related studies repeatedly affirm the influence of the coherent heart on the human brain, social relationships and wider ecology (Childre et al., 2016).

Initially, from a purely psychophysiological perspective, as assessed on an Inner Balance app, coherence reflects cardiovascular phase synchrony. Coherence refers to the order in the relationship between heart and breath rhythm patterns, as well as other oscillating physiological systems, such as blood pressure, brain waves, cerebrospinal fluid, and emotion, all of which are influenced by the heart, which is the greatest physiological oscillator, the conductor of the orchestra so to speak. Correlated variables include the heart's electromagnetic field, oxytocin; the love hormone, and neurochemicals, such as serotonin and dopamine. HM studies have shown that higher coherence results from positive renewing emotions independently of cardiovascular rhythm; in real (lived) life, all are intimately interlinked. An important naturally occurring variable is respiratory sinus arrhythmia (RSA), whereby inhalation and exhalation are associated with increasing and decreasing pulsation, respectively.

When one breaths in heart rate increases and when one breathes out, heart rate decreases. The electronic Inner Balance app contains a photoplethysmogram (PPG), which uses a light- emitting device (LED) to monitor blood volume changes from light absorption. Photoplethysmography sensors are usually attached to the earlobe. The changes are monitored on a downloaded app in a smart phone, such as an iPhone or any Android device (McCraty, 2016; 2017).

### **2.5. Data Analysis**

The small convenience sample recorded HM Inner Balance Coherence Mean and Achievement records of 39 pre-test and post-test IM practice sessions. This indicted a simple Wilcoxon Z nonparametric statistical analysis of related samples of data. Unfortunately for technical connectivity reasons, participants A and B could not participate in all five IM sessions, so reported only limited quantitative and qualitative

data, as will be apparent in the results that follow. The small sample ensured that all participants' experiential descriptions could be included in the thematic content analysis and related discussion.

### 2.6. Ethical Statement

All appropriate ethical standards as required by the Helsinki Declaration and Professional Boards for Psychologists applied. The study was approved by the Academic Committee of the International University of Professional Studies. Participants who signed informed consent forms were informed that their participation was voluntary. Their refusal to participate would involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which they were otherwise entitled, and they might discontinue participation without penalty or loss of benefits to which they were otherwise entitled. Participants were regularly informed that if they needed any help with the arising emotions or clarification concerning the practice or their experiences of Arka Dhyana (Intuitive Meditation) - or if they would like to share anything about how their life was unfolding, they were more than welcome to contact Dr. Lindhard via e-mail or WhatsApp. Regular contact between individual and group participants and Dr Lindhard was maintained throughout the course. After the five sessions, participants unanimously indicated that they would like the course to continue, which happened.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. Quantitative Findings Evaluation of the IM course

Because they occurred before and after any IM session, quantitative findings essentially refer to ongoing process evaluations of the IM course. These consisted of coherence and achievement mean scores and related statistical findings, as appear in Table 1.

*Table 1: Quantitative Process Evaluation of the IM course*

Assessment	Number	Coherence	Achievement	Wilcoxon Z	Significance
Pre-test	39	1.79 (1.54)	99.77 (91.20)	4.249	.000
Post-test	39	2.84 (1.56)	190.18 (96.87)	4.354	.000

Table 1 refers to 39 comparisons of coherence and achievement mean scores (with standard deviations in parentheses), of HM Inner Balance recordings as taken by 6 participants before and after 39 Intuitive meditation sessions. Non-parametric comparisons of these 39 related data samples using Wilcoxon Z statistics indicated highly significant increases in both coherence and achievement associated with these Intuitive Meditation sessions ( $p < .0001$ ).

### 3.2. Qualitative Findings

Qualitative findings rest on two questions, 1) in what way has the IM method added to your wellbeing, and 2) add something about your experiences while practicing the method Arka Dhyana (IM), and how you feel afterwards. These reflective answers were collected on-line as part of the Revised Feeling Consciousness Scale. 3). Finally, a record made of their experiences after each IM session and shared with the researchers at the end of the course.

*Qualitative Answers:*

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As this study only involved a few participants and their answers were concise, answers to question 1 are given in full. (Participant codes appear in parentheses).

Question 1: "In what way or how do you feel Arka Dhyana has complemented to your wellbeing?" The IM method was said by participants to increase wellbeing as it led to

"a recognition and acceptance of different parts within me and that is ok" (D)

"helped to still my mind and calm and still the agitation and anxiety in my body, bringing me into the body and heart-focus more easily" (F)

"brought me back to a place of remembrance of how much more I am than this body and this experience on earth. Through my daily challenges I now have something to continuously return too, that helps me feel less stressed and more connected to myself and my higher power resulting in me flowing through challenges with more grace and acceptance" (C)

"more aware of many aspects of light love and life. It is easily amalgamated into my existing meditative and contemplative practices" (E)

"opened a new way of approaching my inner being that I feel I need to connect with more so it's a positive move in my life" (A)

One subject also reported "not being sure as yet" of how the method had benefited her (B)

Question 2: "Please add something about your experiences while practicing the method Arka Dhyana (IM), and how you feel afterwards." As expected, the experiences reported during this initial shift in consciousness from the rational mind to the feeling heart-mind were highly individual. Five of the six participants gave concise, one or two- sentence type answers, whereas the 6th included the record of experiences noted after all 5 sessions.

Reported personal experiences include:

"I have become aware of energies and vibrations externally of me and in other people. It is made me MORE sensitive to that energy I feel in other people" (D)

"I noticed that being in the group practice space would bring up a kind of jittery feeling and agitation that would settle by the end of the practice. I was able to observe how busy and agitated my mind is. I was surprised at how it works so well; I didn't expect that. The sounds and sensation helped to focus my mind so that it didn't drift off and dissociate as is its usual habit. I am still impatient with the whole procedure when I do it by myself. The final session helped me to experience the process more viscerally, especially experiencing the spirit body so clearly. I practiced that this morning. It does help me to feel centered and integrated and aligned in my heart, soul and body after practicing" (F)

"It helped me focus (B)

"I generally feel very relaxed after practicing and hungry for some unknown reason. But I for sure feel more connected to my body and my soul. I have a groundedness and surety of myself and my decisions (C)

I felt an escape from everyday problems (except when the unstable internet cut us off in sessions). It was a relief to remind myself there is a way to find this peace and time for connection. I still have difficulty quietening my thoughts but have this as a much-desired goal" (A)

Record of experiences 3). Although the participants were asked to record their individual experiences after each IM session, three participants (A, B, and F) gave limited, one sentence or phrase type feedback on their personal experiences. One participant (C) reported fully on all five sessions, providing a valuable illustrative qualitative example of transformative personal change. This participant C's experiential descriptions associated with each of the five Intuitive Meditation instruction sessions follow verbatim:

Participant C (1) A sensation of a loving, gentle touch that I crave from another, I find I can give it to myself through the method of meditation. Connecting to my body and creating a relationship with parts of my body that I haven't had before- it feels new and comforting. (2) This takes time and showing you daily to my practice like all relationships. Body and soul are all one. A lot of tingling through my body almost scary- mostly my feet. It got extremely strong and then I broke through to a place of peace, surrender and grounded ness. (3) Feeling immense gratitude for this session- it felt like a breakthrough into the present moment where u was feeling really agitated before the session and I didn't know where to put my mind. (4) I was feeling really tired before starting the session, found the session challenging to keep going but I relaxed my body - jaw, stomach and shoulders coming back to my breath. A lot of electric feeling on the right side of my brain. Feeling really present and in the moment. An acceptance of where I am in the moment, which is a sadness. Less resistance and more connected to my body and essence. (5) Finding more acceptance of my true self that includes the not so pretty parts of selfishness and self-centredness. They all belong and need to be seen to lose the power. Less judgement and more compassion of for myself. Less whipping myself and more allowing things to be without judging them as good or bad.

Two participants (D and E) gave very full feedback in the form of artistic and phenomenological reports, respectively, that are beyond the scope of the present study. A summary of D and E's descriptions follows:

Participant D. "I have become aware of energies and vibrations externally of me and in other people. It is made me MORE sensitive to that energy I feel in other people and in myself.

The experience was over-whelming, and I found myself close to tears. I have not managed to 'feel' emotions for so long and suddenly I became aware of turmoil... it is exactly how it felt on day 1. Big mess of swirling colours and lines and blurs.

I am a very visual person and not good with words (?) or parts of me struggle to verbalise what I want to say. I think it is a way of "blocking" that which I do not want to confront. I like the idea of parts of me, needing to be free, attended to, waiting to be heard.

I, my 'messiness' coming together. I could visualise the end product of a creation.

Two parts of the pot, Yin and Yang on opposite ends of the base, black and white circles built out of stones or pebbles, big stones and smaller stones, can both mean before and after. Smaller stones in the 'white' part represent the little things that come into our

lives/hearts, good or bad. The black part consists of mainly the big things in my life, good or bad.

While ‘moving between the parts’, healing between the parts and connecting between the parts, bending and shaping the tree (using IM methods throughout the various sessions).

I still feel a deeper connection to my bonsai garden, where I am happiest. I am more aware of the insects visiting, the snakes and little birds that come and play. I find myself humming SaaRooGoVaum as I like to feel the vibrations in my chest near my heart. Every day is a learning curve for me as more and more opens up for me”.

Participant E. Personal experiences of this participant were recorded after each IM session and summarized as follows: “There are different layers and levels of heart consciousness involved in intuition; personal, social, and global, life, love, and light. Hands of light made me more aware of the mainly, old, sport injury issues on the right side of my body, which I am healing further: hip, lung, shoulder, throat and eye are all getting extra love and care. Socially our group gelled more in the fourth session. Many processes seemed similar to other group processes: intention, expectancies, attitudes, motivations, relationships, energy, sentience, awareness, consciousness. I have included other variables in my earlier, experiential descriptions. At the lower collective consciousness level, dreams, which initially flooded through, were represented by more than usual reptilian imagery, e.g., crocodile and snake, spiritual sexual imagery, which were energetically transmuted into intuition, love, empathy and compassion. Inner umbilini kundalini awakening, isangoma animus, embryology, Jung’s (1995) active imagination, Sufi imaginal world, phallic clitoral physicality, lower-level animal unconsciousness, ancestral calling, feet-sand running, integration of sea and river ancestors, rewinding for fast forward planet generational healing. Traditional spiritual images included Zulu isangoma, the black Madonna of Monserrat and related African and Spanish geographical and historical associations, typically divine and feminine, as related to our group who were predominantly women. I found IM similar to my usual meditation and comfortably used personal, Christian, ancestral, HM and IM mantra interchangeably during practice. Differences noted was that my usual meditation, contemplation and/or prayer is relatively less past, whole body and Self-orientated and more psychophysiological, heart, personal, group, global and future directed. IM is essentially more orientated towards knowing and global coherence towards healing. However, all these orientations appear inextricably interrelated”.

#### 4. Discussion

From a purely experience-based spiritual perspective, participants experienced a change in their level of consciousness reflected by an increased focus, less dispersion on the mind, stilling of the mind, recognition of the different parts, and bringing the participant into heart-focus.

Participants’ experiential responses also varied appreciably in depth and detail. Participant (B’s) single comment that the method helped her focus is highly relevant as increased focus is a very important aspect of the IM method as it leads to the dhyana experience. Focus was also mentioned by another participant (F) when reporting “the sounds and sensation helped to focus my mind so that it didn't drift off and dissociate as is its usual habit”. These comments show a shift from the thinking mind to the feeling heart-mind as specified in Arka’s theory of the Six Main levels of Consciousness.



However, some participants could go further and awaken level 4 (Emotional-Heart)—Consciousness mentioned in his theory. This was indicated by the acceptance of shadow emotions as different parts leading to “calming and stilling of anxiety (and other emotions) in the body”. The acceptance of these emotions, often classified as negative in a non-judgmental way, awakes participants to other arising emotions like gratitude. Participant’s descriptions of the IM course resonated with appreciation, a positive, renewing and paradoxically, often unappreciated emotion, which has been given due recognition in HM studies (Childre et al., 2016) and has interesting methodological and contemporary connotations (Cooperrider & Fry, 2020).

Furthermore, spiritual levels were touched on by some participants reflected by participant D’s answer, which can be summarized by a shift to a full brown emotional level of consciousness, which allowed her to tap into the deeper energetic level and increased creativity. Other changes to a deeper and more spiritual level are recorded in the statements as having a “remembrance of being more than the body, more connected to the self and higher power, recognition of many aspects of light, love and life and the opening of a new way of approaching ones’ inner being, kundalini awakening and many intuitive personal insights.

Participants’ (D and E) artistic and phenomenological reports provide enough depth and detail for two separate studies. Depth psychologists emphasize the immediate total sense of the whole that characterizes the intuitive experience (Assagioli, 2012; Jung, 1995). From an experiential perspective, Assagioli (2012) notes that intuitions enter consciousness via levels of personal and/or collective unconscious in two ways: The first involves a conscious welcoming openness; the second is more akin to a revelatory flash of lightning. The experiences of participants D, E, and F emphasize both intrapsychological (between the conscious and the unconscious) and transpersonal features (from the collective unconscious). Similar findings are reported in other studies (Geils & Edwards, 2013; Mayer & Viviers, 2016).

So, what do the significant coherence findings mean, especially as the intention of the IM method is not coherence as in HM but connection to our self or soul so we can discover the pure nature of our consciousness? Also, HM and IM methods are uniquely different. By prolonging the breath, IM initially facilitates the shadow emotions to surface during which the practitioner is invited to become one with each station touched as well as the arising emotion that is seen as a part of emotional consciousness but not his or her identity, and on the other hand, during the HM method the breath pattern is counted, and positive feelings are generated using different words like love.

The findings can be viewed as applicable at various levels of sentience, awareness, and consciousness from an HM perspective. From an embryo model perspective, the Inner Balance application (app) works directly with the heart system, both autonomic parasympathetic and sympathetic divisions, as well as the central nervous system (CNS), especially vagus nerve with its 80% afferent fibres going from heart to brain via amygdala and prefrontal cortex. Cardiovascular synchronization entrains all other physiological oscillatory systems as well as other organ systems, immunological, hormonal, biophysical, neurochemical, and electromagnetic systems from a physiological standpoint. Coherence is related with good and renewing emotions, ranging from appreciation to serenity and love to happiness and ecstasy, from a psychological standpoint. Interpersonally, coherence implies alignment and synchronization in interpersonal and group processes. Another example was the development of typical group processes, such as openness, trust, and freedom to express emotion verbally and in writing. Although the focus was on embodiment and embodied spirituality, broader, wider spiritual apprehensions also applied.

From an IM understanding, the behavioural gesture of taking our thinking mind to the heart area coupled with the desire to connect with the soul in the beginning of the IM practice opens us to a change in level from the thinking mind associated with the frontal part of the brain to the feeling heart-mind associated with inner mesoderm layer. The heart (mesoderm tissue) is the first system to develop in the embryo with blood arising from ectoderm tissue. Through pulsation which starts at the cranial end of the germinal disc, the incarnating entity is linked to the underlying core principle and property of universal existence, cosmic existence, and local existence (Arka 2015 in Lindhard, 2016; 2021) and therefore to the Absolute which in its creating form, is perpetual spanda (Singh, 1992, p.10) or creative pulsation (Lindhard, 2021). This is consistent with Planck who declared:

There is no matter as such. All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force which brings the particle of an atom to vibration and holds this most minute solar system of the atom together ... We must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent mind. This mind is the matrix of all matter. (as cited in Singh, 1992, p.10)

Connecting to one's soul via the "feeling heart-mind" also connects us not only to the Absolute but to all creation which is pulsating. One participant (E) playfully and alliteratively described this coherence interconnectedness and/or oneness as an embodied, whole making, symphonic synchrony, of spirit, soul, self, sky, sea and silence.

#### *Limitation of the study*

This study was part of a larger qualitative and quantitative study on Intuitive Meditation. Participation was limited to participants having access to the Heart Balance or emWave equipment. Two participants did not complete the course and did not complete the post-test. The small sample makes it difficult to generalise to a wider audience.

#### **5. Conclusion**

IM and HM have similar, different and unique features. Both of these meditation techniques are based on the heart and breath; emphasize the feeling heart, sensation, pulsation and intuition. Both are scientific in the broad sense of science as a historical, cultural, natural, human, social, ecological, systematic process and product of knowledge acquisition. Both emphasize the body, but relatively more from perspectives of embodiment and psychophysiology respectively IM's science is relatively more Eastern and spiritual, HM is relatively more Western and natural scientific in orientation. Touch, a vibratory sound and shifts of levels are integral components of IM as are coherence, mathematics, and heart rate variability and heart rhythm for HM. In IM, coherence is a by-product, and in HM it is the intention. We could go on pointing out many more similarities, differences and uniqueness. These all seem relatively superficial and readily integrate as meditation deepens. Also, as in most forms of meditation and contemplation practice, individual practitioners readily develop unique personal styles, which are often technically eclectic combinations of practices to which they have been exposed over their lifetimes, which contain relatively unique, esoteric and exoteric forms, respectively. For example, in addition to enumerating various names for the Mystery such as God, Allah, Source and Spirit, Silence may instruct best at this point.

There can never be a final statement on any form of meditation practice or meditation tradition, as these are continually developing. Although only based on five formal IM instruction sessions, this study provisionally satisfies its purpose of providing an evaluation of IM using HM technology, accompanied by qualitative statements. For now, the following conclusion emerges. IM concerns a body-based practice where you raise your 'spiritual consciousness' or the 'whole life-force of self-awareness' (which some refer to as Life, Light and Love and others to Sat Chit and Ananda, pure Being, pure Knowledge and Pure Bliss) to become fully manifested in the physical body (Lindhard, nd).

It also seems that HM technology is a relevant and suitable way of showing that when practitioners begin an inner journey into the nature of their consciousness using the IM method, high levels of coherence and achievement are obtained during the process. The statements regarding how IM has added to the participant's wellbeing suggest shifts in levels of consciousness as described in Arka's theory of the Six Main Levels of Consciousness. Although outwardly very different in philosophy, it seems coherence is a concept that adds additional insights to what is happening during the IM experience, and possibly the Theory of the Six Main levels of Consciousness might provide further insights concerning the HM model as both are heart-based methods. This venture of looking at the data using the HeartMath coherence model and Arka's Theory of The Six Main Levels of Consciousness adds new insights to both perspectives on a theoretical and practical level, as well as increases our knowledge of human consciousness, different levels of mind and coherence.

To summarize, this limited phenomenological and experimental evaluative study attempts to understand more about human consciousness based on direct spiritual experiences when one starts the inner journey into its exploration using the IM method in which HM technology seems an exciting way to help validate reported changes in consciousness that are described by participants as leading to increased wellbeing related to feelings. Further comprehensive research is needed to understand more about the IM method and the levels a practitioner undergoes or his or her inner journey from the rational mind to the emotional heart-mind to pure consciousness which is said to result in ultimate wellbeing or enlightenment.

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**Institutional Review Board Statement:** The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the *Academic Committee* (or Ethics Committee) of **International University of Professional Studies** (protocol Lindhard 2, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021). PDF attached

**Data Availability Statement:** Supporting data details are attached: Arka Dhyana (IM) - HeartMath Coherence and Achievement, Pretest and Posttest Data.xlsx; Meditation - HeartMath study Participant Codes and Qualitative Dta.xlsx

**Informed Consent Statement:** Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

#### *Notes on Contributors*

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