**TTouch, Heart Resonance and the Role of Intention**By Robin Bernhard LCSW, MED

The universality of Linda’s methodology is unique to TTouch. Linda didn’t have to develop different techniques to teach horses, whales, snakes, parrots, cats, dogs or humans. TTouch works for all species. Through touches that are universally understood, Linda and her students of TTouch, invite their animals to participate in harmonious mutual communication; cell to cell and heart to heart. In her book, Tellington TTouch, Linda states: “Instead of seeing the TTouch as something that I do to animals, which would create separation between us, I view the circles as a way to come into cellular harmony with them, a way of allowing my cells to speak to theirs. At a cellular level, no living thing is alien to any other, and so the sense of connections remains the same whether I’m working with a gerbil or a lynx, a kitten or an elephant.” Both the practitioner and the animal benefit from the mutual communication.

Linda believes that the TTouch practitioner’s intention for healing is communicated from the person to the animal (or person to person) on many levels. These intuitive ideas are now being scientifically documented by The Institute of HeartMath with new research about mind-body communication and the heart. Research at The Institute of HeartMath has shown that we can regulate heart rhythm coherence by holding positive feelings and intentions. Increased heart rhythm coherence produces more alpha brainwaves, enhanced awareness and improved cognitive performance. Alpha frequencies induce a state of tranquility, not unlike the tranquility experienced during TTouch, and interestingly, alpha brainwaves are associated with peak performance. The results of the research at the institute of HeartMath supports the hypothesis “that the changes in brain activity that occur during states of increased psychophysiological coherence lead to changes in the brain’s information processing capabilities. Results suggest that by using heart-based interventions to self-generate coherent states, individuals can significantly enhance cognitive performance.” It would be very interesting to see if TTouch enhances heart rhythm coherence. I suspect that it does.

The heart produces an energy field that can be measured for five feet in all directions. It is quite possible that all species are able to perceive influences from another being’s heart from a short distance. When humans communicate and touch is involved, the brain registers the heartbeat of the other in the EEG, physiological evidence that we are influenced by another’s heart rhythm chaos or coherence. Research has shown that horses are sensitive to the heart energy fields produced by humans and that humans are sensitive to the fields produced by the horse’s heart. The practitioner of TTouch knows well the experience of peace that comes while engaged in the practice of TTouch. Scientific knowledge about the energetic communication from the heart suggests that TTouch practitioners are energetically engaging their animal partners at the deep level of the heart. When the TTouch practitioner consciously holds the intention of healing and a compassionate attitude to generate heart rate coherence within the self, the person or animal being touched benefits from the calming influence of the energy field created by the practitioner’s heart. The research at the Institute of Heart Math suggests that the heart to heart engagement is reciprocal and thus, we have the beginnings of scientific documentation for the experience of healing intention, compassion, respect and positive regard that is part of TTouch practice.

There are more neurons running from the heart to the brain than from the brain to the heart. Some research suggests that the heart directs brain regulation and not the other way around. Linda has stressed the importance of holding a compassionate attitude coupled with the desire to support healing as the correct mind-set for the TTouch practitioner to allow the heart to influence the work. The research on the power of the heart from The Institute of HeartMath documents the scientific basis for what Linda understood intuitively about the heart’s influence on TTouch outcome and the mutual benefit for the practitioner and the animal when the practitioner intentionally generates a genuinely positive heart felt connection between the self and the animal during a TTouch session.

On the other hand, forceful methods generate fear and impede “thinking” as the horse moves into its instinctual fight/flight survival mode. During fight/flight activation, thinking is shut-down in favor of split-second non-thinking reflexive reactions that the horse can’t control. It is often in this fear driven state that horses can’t meet the demands placed upon them, for which they are frequently punished and pushed further into fear, pain and freeze responses. Instinctual reactions may be activated through a dominating relationship, and animals can be managed through such training methods. TTouch does not elicit instinct driven behavior mediated by the limbic system, rather Linda seeks to calm the limbic system and stimulate learning that is mediated by the cortex through a relationship infused with a heart-felt connection.