

Laughter in Diagnosis and Treatment



Working with Laughter
Co-Founder of the UK Laughter Network
Founder of the World Laughter Pledge

& physicist, researcher, computer consultant, playwright, poet, shiatsu practitioner, meditation teacher...

Laughter in Diagnosis and Treatment

Agenda

The session will include, from a lay perspective, a brief description of:

- The meaning of our laughter.
- The health benefits.
- The application of *therapeutic laughter*.

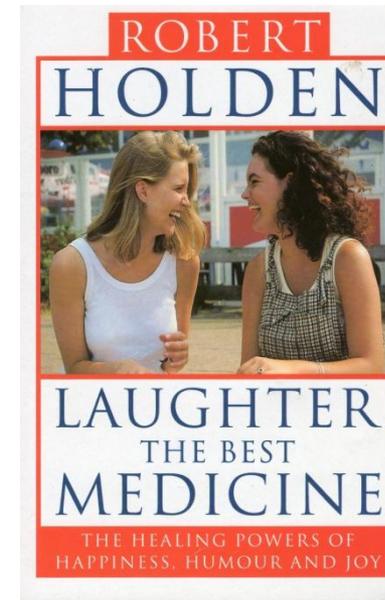
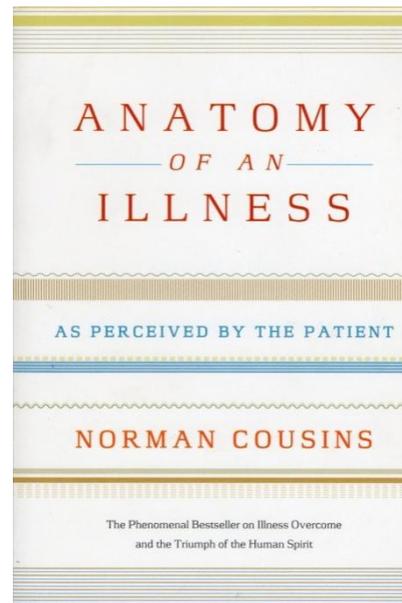
This may involve looking at, discussing or experimenting with:

1. Emotional barriers to laughter.
2. What our laughter and others' laughter actually means.
3. Participatory games which encourage laughing.
4. Laughter and physiology.
5. Laughter Yoga ('Laughter Club') exercises.
6. Stress managing exercises.
7. Laughter coaching

**Participants are requested to fully take part and leave their analysis
until after the session**

WHY LAUGHTER NOW?

The acceptance of laughter as a therapeutic intervention



Laughter Yoga Research Project:

200 participants were randomly selected from 3 Bangalore IT companies. All were non-smokers aged 20-50 yrs with normal weight, no infections, no alcohol consumption within 4-6 days, not on medications, without high BP, diabetes or other clinical conditions, and had not previously tried or practiced Laughter Yoga.

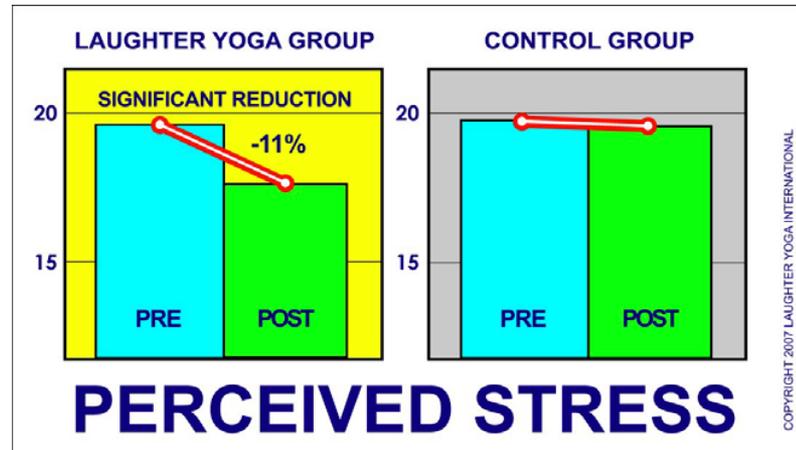
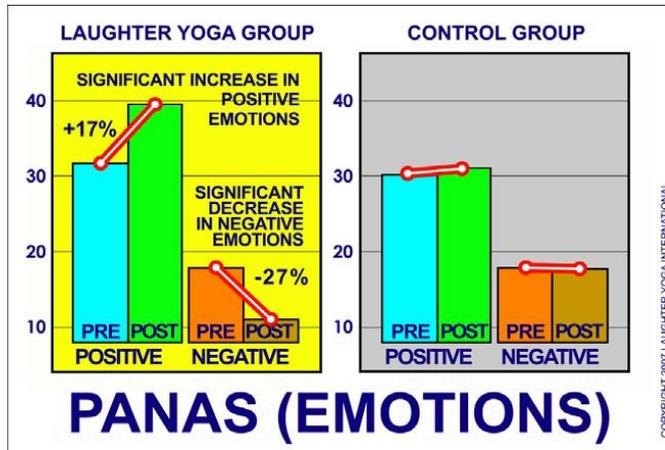
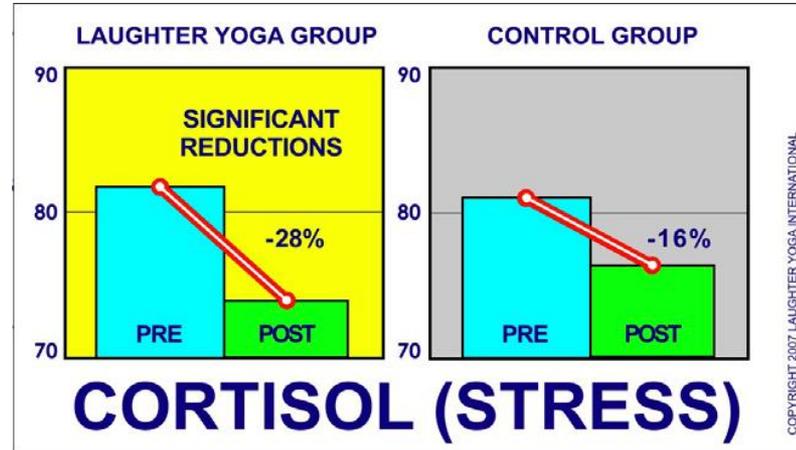
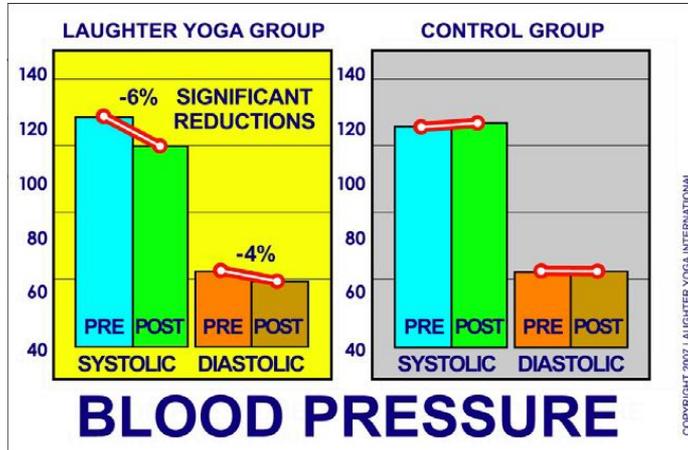
Participants were divided into two groups. One group had laughter yoga sessions every 2-3 days for 18 days, while the other group was told they would have laughter yoga sessions later.

Both groups were tested again after the laughter sessions.

SVYASA in Bangalore India is one of the world's leading Yoga Research Organizations. They are recognized as "Scientific & Industrial Research Organization, (SIRO)" by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India.

Their work includes studies on the effects of yoga on computer users, diabetes, cancer and more.

Laughter Yoga Research Project:



WHY LAUGHTER NOW?

William Fry researched humour, the physiological changes during laughter, its benefits for good health including good mental health and as an alternative way of dealing with stress, instead for example of turning to violence. (1970s-1990s)

Fry W. The respiratory components of mirthful laughter *J Biol Psychol* 1977; 19: 39–50

Fry W. Humor, physiology, and the aging process. *In Nahemov L, McCluskey-Fawcett K, McGhee P (Eds.). Humor and Aging 1986; Orlando, Florida Academic Press pp. 81–98*

Fry W and Savin W. Mirthful laughter and blood pressure. *Int J Humor Res* 1988; 1: 49–62

Fry W. The physiological effects of humor, mirth, and laughter. *J Am Med Assoc* 1992; 267: 1857–8

Fry W. The biology of humor. *Int J Humor Res* 1994; 7: 111–26

WHY LAUGHTER NOW?

Lee Berk shows that the immune system is boosted by laughter and even just the anticipation of laughter releases endorphins. It also decreases stress hormone (cortisol) levels. (1980s-1990s onwards)

Berk L, Tan S, Nehlsen-Cannarella S, Napier B, Lewis J, Lee J, et al. Humor associated laughter decreases cortisol and increases spontaneous lymphocyte blastogenesis *Clin Res* 1988; 36: 435A

Berk L, Tan S, Napier B, Ewy W. Eustress of mirthful laughter modifies natural killer cell activity *Clin Res* 1989; 37: 115A

Berk L, Tan S, Fry W, Napier B, Lee J, Hubbard R, et al. Neuroendocrine and stress hormone changes during mirthful laughter *Am J Med Sci* 1989; 298: 391–6

Berk L, Tan S, Fry W. Eustress of Humor associated laughter modulates specific immune system components . *Annals of Behavioral Medicine Supplement, Proceedings of the Society of Behavioral Medicine's 16th Annual Scientific Sessions* 1993; 15: pp. S111

Berk L and Tan S. Eustress of mirthful laughter modulates the immune system lmyphokine interferon-gama. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine Supplement, Proceedings of the Society of Behavioral Medicine's 16th Annual Scientific Sessions* 1995; 17: pp. C064

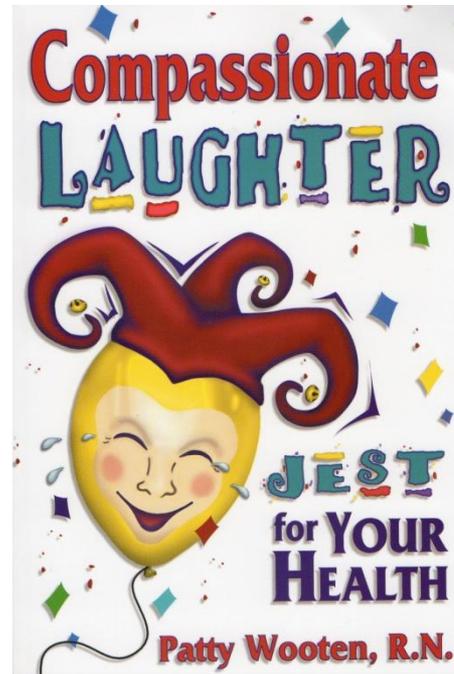
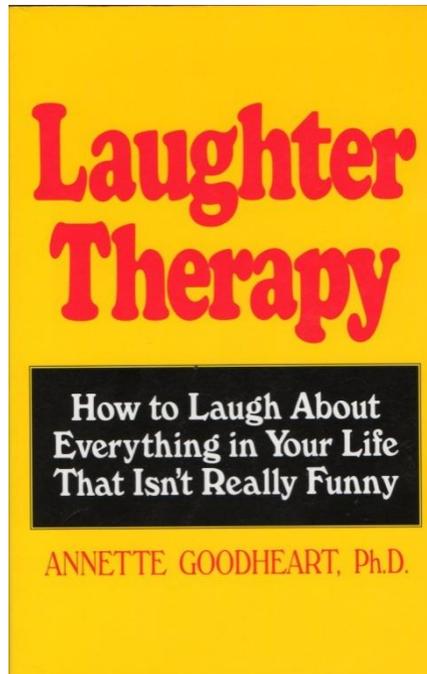
WHY LAUGHTER NOW?

BBC, *Laughter 'boosts blood vessels'*, retrieved 5th October 2009 (Dr Michael Miller) from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/4325819.stm>

Physorg, *Just the expectation of a mirthful laughter experience boosts endorphins 27percent, HGH 87 percent*, retrieved 5th October 2009 (Dr Lee Berk) from <http://www.physorg.com/pdf63293074.pdf>

BBC, *'Therapeutic clowning' boosts IVF*, retrieved 5th October 2009 from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/5099188.stm> : “Just over a third of women entertained by a clown conceived, compared to 19% of a group who were not “

WHY LAUGHTER NOW?



THE LANGUAGE OF LAUGHTER

Laughter does not necessarily mean happiness

Dr Annette Goodheart 's 4 types of laughter

Duchenne and Non Duchenne

When you laugh, you are in the moment. Can't think or stop laughing. And one way of reducing stress is 'being in the moment' (Holden and others)

Also changing physiology.

And even fake laughter or anticipating laughter brings about these changes as long as we are enjoying the game. (Willibald Ruch, *Do cheerfulness, exhilaration, and humor production moderate pain tolerance?*)

BEING OUR OWN CHEMIST SHOP!

- Laughter relaxes our muscles.
- It lowers resting blood pressure.
- We expand our blood vessels (because their walls become more fluid) and send more blood to the extremities. A bit like Viagra. And we get more oxygen
- We strengthen our Immune System by up to 40% - which helps to keep away infections and allergies.
- We increase the amount of our natural killer white blood cells, so it can help fight illnesses like cancer.
- We increase antibodies in the nose and throat that help fight viruses and bacteria so we get less colds.
- We massage our internal organs, enhance their blood supply and increase their efficiency.
- We can reduce stress headaches by shaking tensions out of our shoulders.
- Maybe more importantly, we reduce levels of the 'bad' stress hormones - epinephrine and cortisol. Stress is responsible for many of today's illnesses. So just by laughing, we reduce bad stress and laugh ourselves healthier.
- And we increase the levels of the endorphins in our bodies – the body's natural morphine – the painkiller and happy chemical. So we can laugh ourselves happier. And serotonin and dopamine.
- And socially, laughter acts as a social glue, breaking down barriers and building communities.

LAUGHTER IN DIAGNOSIS

Your patient's laughter

Understand that laughter is a language

1. Know that there are 4 types of laughter
2. Distinguish between duchenne and non duchenne laughter
3. Understand the meaning of laughter during a consultation
4. Train your staff to understand the meaning of laughter too

This gives an additional layer of understanding to you and your staff .

This enables you to respond more appropriately and to see warning signals.

Using the principles of Dr Goodheart's Laughter Coaching, this enables you to be more empathetic with patients

LAUGHTER IN DIAGNOSIS

Your own laughter

Is there room for more laughter in your life?

The more you laugh joyfully, the more you will laugh joyfully

Laugh more , then relax more. Your patients will see the difference.

Humour as coping mechanism, but jokes are not universal; my current doctor has a very dry sense of humour!

If there is stress amongst doctors, then laughter may be a good medicine

LAUGHTER IN TREATMENT

Aims and possibilities

Exercise

Understanding

Application to manage stress

Goodheart (Tee hee)

Art Of Living (Praise)

Clown doctors, Pattie Wooten in hospitals , Patch Adams

Laughter Yoga and Laughter groups

Laughter on Prescription

LAUGHTER IN TREATMENT



“Initially 10 women were recruited to the course. They had all been referred by an internal Sure Start referral or from a Health Visitor. The common factor in all the women and **criteria for signing up for the course, was that they experienced depression, stress or anxiety, and this impacted on the quality of their family life.**

From the initial 10, 7 went on to complete the 6 week course. 2 decided to drop out mid through due to personal circumstances and 1 pulled out as she felt it was not suited to her. A lot of discussion took place on what evaluation methods should take place.

Due to the small number of women in the group it was decided that qualitative semi structured interviews before and after the course would capture the outcomes of the course.

Interviews were conducted with each of the women. They were given letters and advice on the anonymous nature of the feedback.”



“Summary of the evaluation:

“The before and after interviews have highlighted that the course has had a remarkable affect on the way the women deal with stressful situations. The comments also reflect that that they have a more positive outlook and deal with difficult situations in a different way from before. The feedback reflects that the women have aspirations for their future. One noted that she was now looking forward to the future. 2 women mentioned that they wanted to pass their driving test. One mentioned that she wants to gain qualifications. One said that she just wants to be a good mum.

“There is a sense that the course doesn’t provide an instant solution to depression, but that it has provided the women with a sense of control over their situation. With other support from Sure Start, the course does provide a way for depressed women to develop strategies. Over half of the women (6) on the course have gone on to another course called Picking Up The Pieces, which looks at moving on to achieve targets in their lives.”

LAUGHTER IN TREATMENT

OUTCOMES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Learn to laugh again (Salford lady - photos before and after)

When give medication? When give laughter? Only you know... but options

Appropriateness of laughter, contraindications

Silliness (happy, blessed) - what is happiness anyway?

Elderly and exercise

World Laughter Pledge:

Universal Language

Top Tips for Laughter

These tips are all aimed at improving quality of life. Not only does laughter make you happier, but if you as individuals have more laughter in your lives then the people around you will benefit from your happiness, calmness and positive outlook.

As we all have a different sense of humour, never force anyone to do something just because it is funny to you. Remember that laughter is a release of emotion and is only of benefit if it is natural and the person wants to laugh.

1. Start each day with a laugh – a fake one is fine! Laugh with others or on your own. You can even laugh with yourself in the mirror: if you feel angry, have an angry laugh, because being playful about it will encourage genuine laughter.
2. Give a genuine smile to everyone. If at first it's not genuine, then persevere anyway! A genuine smile can light up someone's day.
3. Give compliments to each other without expecting or needing one back. Giving a compliment can be as good as receiving one. Compliments help everyone to appreciate each other more.

Top Tips for Laughter

4. Make a collection of books, DVDs, CDs, pictures, photographs and other things associated with happy memories. Once you have your collection, invite other people to make their own collections.
5. Have an uplifting notice board to encourage you and people around you to smile and think positively. It may include facts on the benefits of laughter, things to make you feel positive, or reminders about some of the points on this list.
6. Have a silly toy which is so silly it makes you think of laughing. Fill a cupboard with them and let people borrow them or play with them.
7. Create silly rituals which make you laugh. Maybe create them in a group. People can have a ritual on arriving at work or when leaving. Join in rituals which bring a smile or laughter.

Top Tips for Laughter

8. Have a treat, a challenge and an adventure every day! Even small things can be treats, challenges and adventures! Seeing things this way helps instil a positive attitude.
9. Give yourself opportunities and encouragement to laugh. Enjoy finding funny things in life. Do gentle exercise, sing, stretch, dancing and above all give yourself permission to laugh.
10. Before going to sleep, remind yourself of three things for which you are grateful. Then end the day with a giggle. The last thoughts you have before sleep are the one you wake up with.