**Laughter Yoga – a Useful Tool to help in** Reducing Chronic Pain

Retreat Inside Out Workshop Exploring Integrative Approaches SEPT 24, 2016

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**Laughter Yoga** provides a non-intellectual path to laughter. Laughter yoga approaches laughter as a body exercise that can easily be done regardless of mood. These laughing and (yogic) breathing protocols are not dependent on humor but rather a decision and inner willingness to LAUGH FOR NO REASON – JUST FOR THE HEALTH OF IT! No external stimuli are relied upon, instead we laugh with others **encouraging eye contact and playfulness**, soon benefiting from the fact that laughter is contagious. Often in chronic pain, emotional turmoil and depressed moods make it difficult to arrive at extended hearty belly laughter through humorous stimuli. The benefits are the same – Funny OR Fun!

**Benefits Of Laughter Exercise - Goal** **10**+ minutes of **hearty belly laughter DAILY**

* Reduces pain - triggers the release of your body's natural painkillers (endorphins)
* Relieves stress -can help lift depression and alter mood
* Improves well-being and positive emotions. Laughter can activate the chemistry of the “will to live”
* Long Deep Laughing from the belly releases hormones like epinephrine and cortisol
* Enhances the immune system, lymph system stimulated
* Reduces blood pressure, improves blood circulation, cell oxygenation and energy levels
* Improves lung capacity, oxygen levels, helps flush residual stale air
* Provides a massage for internal organs Laughter is internal jogging – improves muscle tone in diaphragm, abs & face.
* Laughter is a great connector! It boosts creativity and improves communication skills.

**Tips to Add more Laughter to Your Life!** Nourish the inner spirit of laughter – positive mental attitude. Be intentional to foster a Loving, Caring, Giving state of mind. Embrace empathy and forgiveness – Be a Happiness Bringer - smiles, laughs and compliments. •    Identify your stressors -**do laughter exercises** targeting them •   **Laugh** in the bathroom, showering •    **Laugh in the car** – release stress, in traffic jams, release road rage

Use the HA HA Mantra – Haaaa haaaa haaaaa ha ha ha ha …….

**Laughing** usually makes us feel more positive about life. This can help us feel better about ourselves and better able to trust the body mechanisms for healing.

Put **signs up** around your kitchen, home office or in your car to remind you to **LAUGH. Smile, breathe, drink water, get sunshine, sleep, move more, stand more.**

LAUGH watching second hand – 60 seconds. Sip water. **Decide to laugh** more or not.

Smile. Breathe, move, dance, stretch, call a friend and laugh together. ETC.

**JUST LAUGH ! It Moves you! BE Light and Joyful !!!**

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Conference calls 20 min. long -just dial this conference line

**🕾 1-712-432-3900 - ID 6071292#**

**calls AM, 7, 8, 11, 12 and 11 PM daily** Central Time www.laughteryogaonthephone.com (see schedule of 5 pm to 10 pm calls on specific days only.)

Laugh with volunteers for a healthy happy day, stress release and a better immune system– if no one is there, laugh alone because you can, try again later or go laugh along with YouTube videos – Robert Rivest and others. Skype laughter also available!

**Take the Laughter Challenge 3 – 5 WEEKS TO Change your Life!**

Decide to mark the calendar daily. Decide how many minutes you will laugh intentionally. Maybe 5 or 10 minutes or more. Build a habit! [Web-based **Seinfeldian chain**](http://lifehacker.com/288323/web+based-seinfeldian-chain) <http://dontbreakthechain.com/what> or just mark a calendar daily.

Watch laughter yoga on YouTube videos and laugh along Here is one of my favorites.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_90HtirEZM8#t=4.144417>

Many others – just do search in YouTube. Try Daily Laughers <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUJYPFuXJUpTe55Yvq4wxug/videos>

This video reviews many of the exercises we did <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJ9E_Td0_dk>

When we commit to just laugh on purpose, just for the health of it, the physiological and psychological benefits are the same. Laughter Yoga was started in 1995 by a medical doctor, Madan Kataria, in Mumbai, India. Now there are thousands of Laughter Clubs in over 104 countries around the world.

**Founder Dr. Madan Kataria says “Laughter helps deal with pain.** Hearty laughter causes the brain to release endorphins, a natural morphine that is also responsible for the ‘runner's high’. A typical laughter yoga session can provide two hours of pain relief without drugs, making it easier for patients to retain full control of their mental abilities and keep their spirits high”.

**Certified Laughter Yoga Leader Training Playshop**

Enroll in this intensive 2 day fun classto master skills to share these wonderful laughter moves

This fun, innovative and research-based training, qualifies participants as Certified Laughter Yoga Leaders, enabling them to lead Laughter Yoga groups in multiple settings: senior centers, corporate retreats, hospitals, senior community living environments, churches, in-service for staff, therapy and counseling sessions, and more. This is a lifetime certification. The two day training cost is just $295 and early pay or bring a friend discounts may apply. See website. <http://laughnow.weebly.com/leader-training.html>

Ellen Mercer has 4 Training Workshops to get certified on the schedule now

-in Tampa Florida November 5 & 6 hosted by Dr. Tanya Gold

-in Fort Worth (Denton) Texas Nov. 12 & 13

**-in Tulsa, OK Jan 19 & 20, 2017 with 12 CEU credits LPC and others!**

-private in November at Tinker Air Force Base

-Maybe one in Wichita area if there are a minimum of six trainees.

Find tons of Info, research, event schedules and videos at[**www.LaughterYoga.org**](http://www.LaughterYoga.org)

Now scheduling fun, health & joy imparting, customized LAUGHTER programs for business meetings, retreats, breakouts, training or special events.

**☺☺☺ Ellen Mercer** 405-947-2653 m 405-818-7997 [www.EllenMercer.com](http://www.EllenMercer.com) LNMirther@cox.net **☺☺☺ *email to request additional information***

Additional information for handout – download at link **www.LaughterMoves.com**

## [Laughter Yoga and Diabetes](http://www.laughteryoga.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=619:laughter-yoga-and-cancer&catid=325:ly-application&Itemid=720)

• Laughter may influence the activity of genes that help control blood glucose levels - -- - - - - - researchers Takashi Hayashi and Kazuo Murakami journal Life Sciences

• Laughter, added to standard diabetes care, lowers the levels of substances related to stress, increases good cholesterol and lowers the risk of cardiovascular disease.- - Lee Berk at the Loma Linda University, CA

• Laughing, even fake or forced, helps diabetics process sugar better. "Once the brain signals the body to laugh, the body doesn't care why. It's going to release endorphins; it's going to relieve stress as a natural physiological response to the physical act of laughing."-- - prof. Charles Schaefer (Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, NJ, April 2003)

Laughter helps counter stress and fear. Hearty laughter causes the brain to release chemicals that reduce stress within minutes. It is typical to measure a 70% reduction in stress indicators after just 10 minutes of laughter.

Laughter exercises burn more calories than regular laughter because of the continuous laughter and physical movement. We even see many people sweating during laughter sessions. Movement of any kind will burn calories but whether enough calories are burned to lose weight is debatable.

Laughter Yoga can be considered an aerobic activity if the leader encourages a fast pace. That means it increases the net supply of oxygen to the body's cells by improving oxygenation, exchange of carbon dioxide and oxygen in the pulmonary tissue, increasing blood circulation by pumping more blood with each stroke of heartbeat, and dilating the blood vessels. Perhaps laughter helps increase the cardiopulmonary endurance as it directly involves breathing and exchange of gases.

Let’s examine physical exercise vs. cardio workouts. Cardio workouts are much more important than physical exercise as it directly affects our cardiovascular health and longevity. Laughter Yoga is primarily a cardio workout rather than a physical exercise like jogging or swimming.

So far, the results of Laughter Yoga have been extremely good in many aspects including changing people's lives for the better but when we speak without much substance, Laughter Yoga may lose credibility. We must all be mindful and very authentic when it comes to making assumptions about the benefits of Laughter Yoga.

The overall effect is that you feel great and ready to take control of your life and carry through your decisions more easily. That can help you stick to your other weight-loss resolutions and programs too.

Laughter yoga comes from India where it was started by an Indian medical doctor Madan Kataria in 1995. After learning how good laughter is for our bodies, Dr Kataria searched for an easy way to deliver laughter to his patients. Working with his yoga instructor wife Madhuri he developed laughter yoga which is already practiced daily by hundreds of thousands of people around the world.

Try the laughter cure --- it’s a lot more fun that a stationery bicycle!

See laughter yoga on videos at www.youtube.com/laughteryoga or visit the laughter yoga website at [www.laughteryoga.org](http://www.laughteryoga.org)

to find laughter yoga in your area.