Laugh for the Health of It!

THE RESEARCH

Studies have shown that breath work, laughter exercises and meditation help improve mental health as well as having benefits similar to exercise. All of these are incorporated into Laughter Yoga sessions.

Medical research shows that the body doesn't know the difference between real and simulated laughter. Done with willingness, all the wonderful benefits can be experienced through simulated laughter. A good laugh can help you release stress. A shift in mood takes place and life can be seen from a more positive perspective.

PHYSICAL BENEFITS

Laughter yoga activates the body's feel good hormones and natural painkillers and lowers the stress hormone cortisol. For sufferers of chronic pain, laughing and smiling can be very effective in pain management, for instance.

Body Language

Recognize your own body language and the signals it's giving to fellow co-workers and customers. Even when unhappy, behaving or acting happy will bring the mind to a state of happiness. And when you give a smile to someone a funny thing happens — they feel important and smile back! One thing you can control is your authenticity to others, which is present in eye-contact, attentive listening, and a smile.

Breathing

After a stressful encounter make sure to take a deep breath and let it out with a sigh. Get rid of negative energy and fill yourself with oxygen which is physiologically calming. Try not to let the tension build up, but release it throughout the day with deep breathing.

LAUGHTER EXERCISES

1. **Milkshake Laughter**
   Hold two imaginary glasses of milk, mix them by saying Aeee...Aeee..., then drink them back with laughter... Ha..Ha..Ha!

2. **Appreciation Laughter**
   Give others a "thumbs-up" or "o-k" sign and appreciate them while you laugh.

3. **Cell Phone Laughter**
   Hold an imaginary cell phone and laugh like you just heard the best joke.

"When you laugh you change, and when you change the world around you changes."

*~ Dr. Madan Kataria, founder of the
International Laughter Yoga Movement*

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