



Laughter Yoga

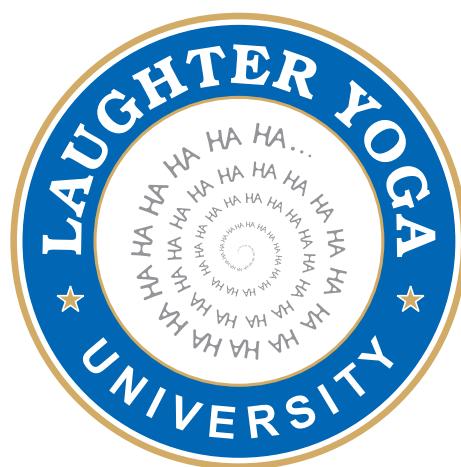
International University

Edition 2017

**Certified Laughter Yoga
Leader Training Manual**

Welcome to Certified Laughter Yoga Leader Training

My Name is :..... **Ha Ha Ha**



Name of My Teacher

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Before Getting Started...

Training Material

1. Training Manual: Please study the e-manual before your training. It will help you understand the concept so that you can focus more on the facilitation skills of Laughter Yoga. You will receive the hard copy of the manual during the training.

2. Dr. Kataria's e-book: Laugh For No Reason: You can find the pdf file in the Resources Pack.

3. Laughter Yoga Resources Pack: This 'must-have' package includes a USB drive of media clips and videos of Laughter Yoga in specialized applications as well as a presentation for use in introductory seminars. It also includes printable scans of important articles on Laughter Yoga, a selection of Laughter Yoga photos you can use, copies of research documents, logos and artwork, printable liability release forms and other useful materials.

IMPORTANT

Leader training certificates are granted only by Laughter Yoga International. Please ensure that you receive an official certificate issued and signed by Dr. Madan Kataria and your trainer. Please note that no change in design is permitted. After training, your teacher will register your name on the international website and you will get six months Prozone membership.

TRADEMARK

By entering into training you confirm your agreement to the following:

The term 'Laughter Yoga' in English and other translations is the trademark of Dr. Madan Kataria and Laughter Yoga International. This term may be used by certified Laughter Yoga professionals to promote Laughter Yoga. It must not be incorporated into the name of any company, business entity, organization or website domain without express permission in writing from Laughter Yoga International.

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Objectives Of The Training

- The first objective is to get more laughter into your own life and the best way to bring more laughter into your life is to become a Laughter Yoga leader.
- You will learn the knowledge and skills to do a group laughter session and meditation.
- You will also be able to lead laughter sessions in social Laughter Clubs, companies, organizations and senior care centers.

How you will benefit from this Training

Know Laughter: You will get in-depth knowledge about laughter and Laughter Yoga wisdom - how and why it works, as well as the immeasurable benefits it provides for body-mind wellness.

Do Laughter: Knowledge alone is not enough. You have to actually do laughter to experience the benefits. Laughter Yoga methods will give you guidelines and practical skills to do laughter in a group and once your body gets the intelligence of laughing without a reason, you can even laugh all by yourself anytime, anywhere.

Be Laughter: Laughter is not just about learning and doing Laughter Yoga - it is about living it. Therefore, it is essential to bring happiness to others in order to find yourself happy. With our experience with Laughter Yoga worldwide, we found that once people start laughing on a regular basis, it automatically brings attitudinal changes in their behavior. They become more loving, caring and forgiving. Not only do they laugh in the laughter session; they carry the spirit of laughter throughout the day. It also helps to keep their mind positive when faced with challenges of life.

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CHAPTER 1

History of Laughter Yoga

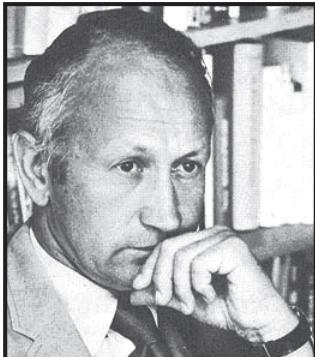


Five people who created history on 13th March, 1995. Standing from L- R: Madan Mohan Pushkarna, Mohan Singh, R K Tandon. Sitting: Madan & Madhuri Kataria

In March 1995, Dr. Madan Kataria, a medical doctor from Mumbai, India was writing an article on 'Laughter - The Best Medicine' for a health magazine, 'My Doctor'. In his research he discovered many modern scientific studies that described at great length the many proven benefits of laughter on the human mind and body.

In particular, Dr. Kataria was impressed by American journalist Norman Cousins' book '*Anatomy of an Illness*' in which he described a potentially fatal disease of the spine – Ankylosing Spondylitis which he contracted in 1964. After taking tons of painkillers each day, which did not help, he finally experimented with the power of humor, laughter and other positive emotions and found that 10 minutes of mirthful laughter gave him two hours of pain-free sleep. His story baffled the scientific community and inspired a number of research projects. Besides this, Dr. Kataria was also inspired by research studies done by Dr. Lee S Berk from Loma Linda University and Prof William Fry from Stanford. Immediately, he decided to field-test the impact of laughter on himself and others.

On 13th March, 1995, he got up at 4am and was pacing up and down in his living room when a sudden idea flashed through his mind: If laughter is so good, why not set up a Laughter Club. He was ecstatic and could hardly wait to implement



Norman Cousins



Dr. William Fry



Dr. Lee Berk

the concept. Within three hours, he hurried to the public park where he used to go for his daily morning walk and tried to convince the regular morning walkers about the importance of laughter and to start a Laughter Club.

The expressions were predictable. They thought he was crazy. They laughed at the idea and scoffed at the whole concept. But, Dr. Kataria did not give up and managed to motivate some people – thus was born the first Laughter Club with just five people. They met for half an hour every morning to laugh together much to the amusement of befuddled onlookers. In the beginning, the session began by someone telling a joke or narrating a humorous anecdote. Soon, people started enjoying the whole exercise and reported feeling much better after a laughter session of 20-30 minutes.

Bearing the initial ridicule and criticism, he firmly continued to explain the health benefits of laughter till gradually people became a little more receptive and showed a keen interest. The attendance started growing, and there were nearly 55 people by the end of the week. For ten days the routine continued with much vigor, after which they hit a snag. The stock of good jokes and stories ran out, and they were left with negative, hurtful and naughty jokes which prompted some participants to complain that it would be better to close the club than to continue with such jokes.

Determined to keep the Laughter Club alive, he asked the club members to give him a day to resolve the crisis. That night, he kept trying to look for some way to laugh without jokes. Providentially, he laid his hands on a book 'Emotions and Health' from Prevention Health Care Series (USA). While reading a chapter on humor and laughter, he was surprised to discover that the body cannot differentiate whether you are actually happy or acting a happy person. It clearly revealed that if one cannot laugh, one should pretend to laugh. He also learnt that not only laughter, but a bodily expression of any motion, generates a similar

emotion in the mind. This was a breakthrough and he thought why not use laughter as an exercise.

The next morning, he explained this to the group and asked them to try and act out laughter with him for one minute. Though skeptical, they agreed and the results were amazing. For some, acted out laughter quickly turned into real laughter. This was contagious and very soon others followed. Soon the group was laughing like never before. The hearty laughter that followed persisted for almost ten minutes. Finally, there was laughter, real laughter – with no jokes.

The fact that one could laugh without an external trigger was a unique feature. But there were some people who were naturally inhibited and shy and found it difficult to generate laughter. As every person has a different psychological temperament; it was harder for some to laugh. His new challenge was how to get these people laughing without any reason.

He soon came up with the idea of warm-up exercises, such as clapping and chanting ho ho ha ha ha. This loosened the inhibitions and helped people to laugh easily. Soon different kinds of laughter exercises were developed, which included elements of role-play, childlike playfulness and other techniques from my days as an amateur dramatic actor.

As the concept evolved, he saw many similarities between laughter and *pranayama* in yoga. Both were based on the principle of optimal breathing - fundamental to good health. Together with his wife, Madhuri, we incorporated the elements from this ancient form of yogic breathing with laughter and the result was Laughter Yoga or *Hasya Yoga* (as known in Sanskrit) - a complete workout for health and wellness. A physically-oriented technique, it allows for multiple health benefits, primarily increasing the supply of oxygen, boosting the immune system and energizing and recharging the metabolism.

Today, with thousands of Laughter Yoga Clubs burgeoning worldwide, scores of people are taking advantage of the enormous benefits of laughter and are experiencing relief from a variety of stress-related illnesses. It has grown on its own strength, and the actual benefits are undeniable.

CHAPTER 2

What Is Laughter Yoga

Laughter Yoga is a unique exercise routine which combines unconditional laughter with yogic breathing (*pranayama*). Anyone can laugh without relying on humor, jokes or comedy. Laughter is initially simulated as a physical exercise while maintaining eye contact with others in the group and promoting childlike playfulness. In most cases this soon leads to real and contagious laughter. Science has proved that the body cannot differentiate between simulated and real laughter. Laughter Yoga is the only technique that allows adults to achieve sustained hearty laughter without involving cognitive thought. It bypasses the intellectual systems that normally act as a brake on natural laughter.

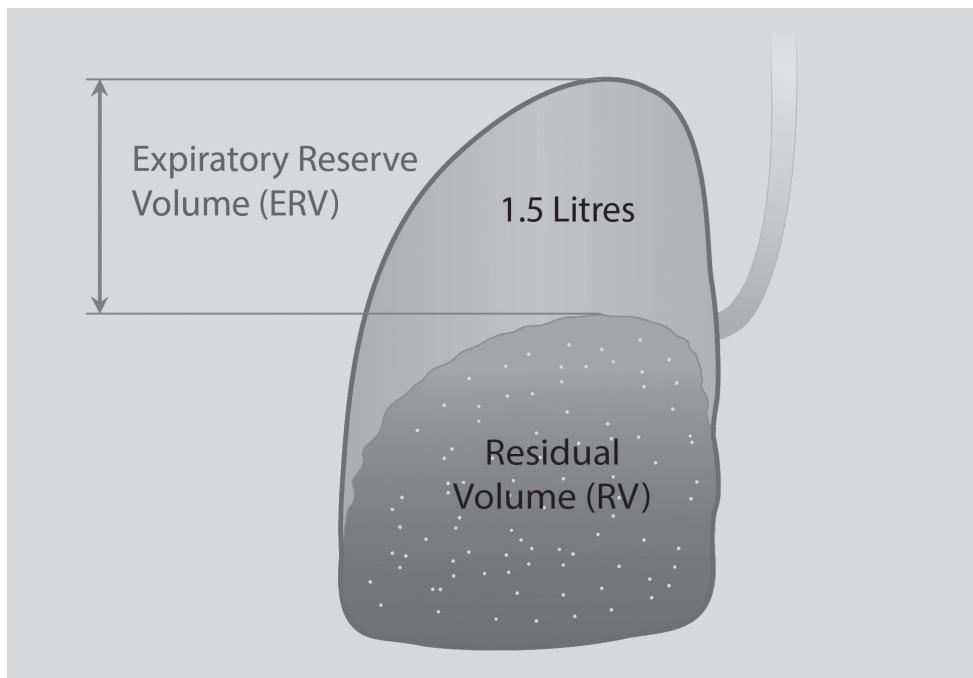
Laughter Yoga sessions start with gentle warm-up techniques which include stretching, chanting, clapping and body movement. These help break down inhibitions and develop feelings of childlike playfulness. Breathing exercises are used to prepare the lungs for laughter followed by a series of 'laughter exercises' that combine the method of acting and visualization techniques with playfulness. These exercises, when combined with the strong social dynamics of group behavior, lead to prolong and hearty unconditional laughter. Laughter exercises are interspersed with breathing exercises. Scientifically, it has been proved that 20 minutes of laughter is sufficient to develop full physiological benefits.

A Laughter Yoga session may finish with 'Laughter Meditation' which is a session of unstructured laughter, whereby participants sit or lie down and allow natural laughter to flow from within like a fountain. This is a powerful experience that often leads to a healthy emotional catharsis and also a feeling of release and joyfulness that can last for days. This is generally followed by guided relaxation exercises.

Connection between Yoga and Laughter

The word Yoga arises from the Sanskrit root *Yuj* which means to get hold of, integrate and harmonize. It means getting hold of our lives, integrating all aspects of life and harmonizing our bodies with our minds, spirits and society. As the concept of Laughter Yoga evolved, Dr. Kataria found a deep connection between the basic fundamentals of yoga and what one did in Laughter Clubs. He incorporated deep breathing exercises from yoga in between laughter exercises, which helps to increase the net supply of oxygen to the body and brain.

Breath is life: Breathing is fundamental to life. One can live without food and water for several days, but cannot survive if breathing stops for even few minutes.



According to yogic philosophy, we are alive because the cosmic energy from the Universe flows into the body through the breath, which is the life energy force or *prana*, as called in yoga.

From a medical point of view, the most important component of breath is oxygen. Due to stress and negative mental state, breathing becomes shallow and irregular. We tend to hold our breath whenever the mind is upset or in a state of turmoil. This leads to lack of oxygen and accumulation of carbon dioxide in the blood which further causes anxiety, stress arousal and emotional reactions.

More oxygen from exhalation: The hallmark of yoga breathing is that we should exhale longer than inhale so as to get rid of as much of the residual air from the lungs and bring in fresh air and more oxygen for the next breathing cycle. Have you ever realized what we do while laughing? Actually, we are exhaling. During laughter, exhalation lasts much longer than in regular breathing. In normal breathing we inhale and exhale only 500 ml of air while there is 1500 ml of residual and stale air which has more carbon dioxide. This can be forced exhaled by laughter exercises which bring more oxygen to our body and brain.

Breathing capacity and laughter: The principal organs of respiration are the lungs. Due to sedentary lifestyle we do not utilize the full capacity of our lungs. As a result, part of our lung cells do not participate in oxygen and carbon dioxide exchange. Laughter and deep breathing exercises open up all the cells of the lungs and also the respiratory passages, which leads to an increase in breathing capacity, also called vital capacity.

Diaphragm activates parasympathetic system: It is important to know that the diaphragm is a major muscle of respiration which separates the thoracic and abdominal cavity. Two thirds of breathing takes place by the movement of

the diaphragm and only one third by the expansion of the rib cage. Under stressful situations, most people breathe from the chest and do not use their diaphragm.

Both laughter and yogic breathing exercises are intended to stimulate the movement of the diaphragm and the abdominal muscles. The diaphragm is connected to a special branch of the autonomic nervous system called the parasympathetic system or the calming branch responsible for relaxation. The opposite is the sympathetic system, also known as the stress arousal system. One can turn off the stress arousal system simply by learning to move the diaphragm. The most important exercise done in Laughter Clubs is the chanting of ho ho ha haha, which helps people to focus on abdominal muscles so that they can learn to train their diaphragm and laugh from the belly.

Change your breathing, change your mind: There is a direct relation between the breathing pattern and the state of mind. When under stress breathing becomes fast, irregular and shallow. There are spells of breath-holding according to the number of disturbing and negative thoughts crossing the mind. In contrast when the mind is at peace, breathing becomes more slow, regular and deep.

Breathing is the only process that has a dual character. It goes on automatically and is under control of the unconscious mind, but it can also be consciously regulated or changed. Through the practice of belly laughter and deep breathing, we can learn to change our breathing pattern from shallow to deep and easily alter the thoughts in the mind. Even if one has disturbing thoughts, with deep breathing, the body will not experience stress response.

Laughter Yoga connects people: Unconditional laughter connects people from different cultures, countries, no matter what language they speak or how they live. Laughter Yoga promotes a strong union between those who laugh together resulting in family-like bonds, providing social interaction and networking --- essential for happiness. The goal of Laughter Yoga is to connect people with one another at heart level without judgment --- this is the true meaning of yoga.

Laughter Yoga promotes spiritual growth: Laughter Yoga goes beyond just laughing. It not only fosters a feeling of physical wellbeing; it also enhances the spirit and touches the emotional core. It has the power to change the selfish state of mind to an altruistic state of mind. It has been proven that people who laugh are likely to be more generous and have more empathy than those who don't laugh.

This inner spirit of laughter becomes apparent as people develop a state of internal peace. The worries and intense goals that have driven their lives become less important. People become aware that true happiness comes from giving unconditional love, caring for others, and sharing with each other. Laughter Yoga inspires members to make the world a better place not only for themselves, but for everyone.

CHAPTER 3

The Concept and Philosophy of Laughter Yoga

Laughing for no reason is the core philosophy of Laughter Yoga methods. Some of the most commonly asked questions about laughter are: Do we need a sense of humor to laugh? How can we laugh when we don't feel like laughing or are not in a good mood? How can we laugh when we have so many problems in life? How do children laugh 300 to 400 times in a day, while adults laugh only 15 times? Can we learn to laugh?

Here are the answers to all these questions which define the five key concepts and philosophy of Laughter Yoga.

1. Do we need a sense of humor to laugh?

Most people believe that one must have a sense of humor to laugh, but Laughter Yoga has proven otherwise. No one is born with a sense of humor, which is the brain's capacity to perceive, relate and experience a situation, and judge if the situation is funny or not. Sense of humor is a mental and intellectual phenomenon - very individual and cultural. Moreover, many people cannot identify with a sense of humor and believe that it needs special talent and skill to be humorous.

Laughter arising out of humor is conditional. It depends upon a reason to laugh, person's state of mind, level of happiness and life satisfaction. But, laughter in Laughter Yoga is unconditional; it is an outcome of childlike playfulness. By indulging in playful activities, Laughter Club members reduce their inhibition and shyness, which helps to open up their perception, thereby enabling them to see more humor in daily life.

Dr. Robert Provine a pioneer researcher on laughter says that laughter which comes in our daily life does not really come from humor and jokes. It actually comes from the little things people do or experience when they are with friends or likeminded acquaintances. In fact, they laugh 30 percent more as they enjoy the company. They do not need any funny situation or a humorous stimulus to laugh.

2. How can you laugh when you're not in a good mood?

a) Theory of motion creates emotion: There is a two - way link between body and mind. Whatever happens to the mind happens to the body. If you observe sad and depressed people, their bodies are also depressed. They walk slowly, talk slowly and their body movements are also slow.



Laughter Club members are of every age group - school children, college students, housewives, doctors, engineers and elderly people.

The opposite is also true; whatever happens to the body happens to the mind. Dr. Kataria remembers what his father said, 'If you're sad, don't sit idle. Keep doing some physical work or go for a walk and jog, you will feel better'. And he was right; one always felt better by keeping the body active. This is known as theory of motion creates emotion.

Psychologist William James in 1884 found that bodily expression of any emotion can reinforce a similar emotion in the mind. The connection works both ways: from **mind to body and body to mind**. For example: Acting sad and depressed (for example sitting in a moping, depressed posture and replying to questions in a sad and dismal voice) soon leads to real emotional sadness. Actors who portray strong emotions often tell of real-life emotional repercussions. Many film and theater actors have reported that while performing tragic roles they experience a real sadness.

b) Laughter Yoga is based on two models:

i. Humor model or mind-to-body model: Do you know why children laugh 300 to 400 times in a day while grown-ups laugh only 10 to 15 times? It's because adults use their cognitive ability to first comprehend humor and then laugh. This model relies on the ability to understand what's funny and amusing. For example, the extent to which a person laughs at a given joke depends on the quality of the joke, the narration and also the state of mind of the listener.

But, the model has its limitations. It does not guarantee how much a person will laugh. It's conditional: dependent on a sense of humor, the state of mind and the quality of the external stimulus. You will not laugh much if you hear the same joke second time.

ii. Childlike model or body-to-mind model: If you observe children, you will find that they laugh the most while playing. Their laughter comes straight from the body and does not make use of humor which is mind. This clearly shows that for children, the source of their laughter is within the body. We, too, can use it whenever necessary by moving the body at our own will. The significant feature of this model is that the person must actively participate in laughter and humorous activities.

Laughter Yoga and laughing without any reason helps to cultivate this childlike playfulness. Once you learn to play, laughter is a natural outcome. When you learn to induce laughter in the body, the mind just falls in step. The physical model of laughter is easy to practice for most people - they are relieved not to feel the pressure to identify with the mental part of humor.

3. How can you laugh when you're not happy?

We often hear people say, "How can I laugh when I have lots of problems in my life and am going through hard times and there is absolutely nothing to laugh about?" But, don't worry – you can laugh even when you're not happy. This is what we learn from Laughter Yoga experience.

a) Fake it until you make it: There is an old saying, "If you are not happy, act like a happy person and you will become one." There is great wisdom and science behind "acting out happiness". Medical research shows that even if you pretend to laugh or act happy, your body produces happy chemicals. According to the principles of neuro linguistic programming (NLP), there is hardly any difference between thinking about doing something and actually doing it.

Therefore, whatever may be the source of laughter; it leads to the same physiological changes occurring in the body. Many actors, all over the world, have experienced the effect of faking emotions. They often felt sick after enacting a sad and depressing role, which clearly indicates that if acting sad can make one sick; acting happy can make one healthy. We have a saying in Laughter Clubs: "**We don't laugh because we're happy; we're happy because we laugh**"

b) Difference between happiness and joy: Laughter Yoga makes a clear distinction between happiness and joy. Happiness is a conditional response subject to fulfillment of desires of the mind and is related to happenings in the

past and the future and hardly ever deals with the present. Do you remember how long you stayed happy after getting that diploma, car, job, or new house that you had worked so long for? The sad fact is that even if the conditions are fulfilled, happiness is often fleeting as it is quickly displaced by new conditions—the idea of forever-moving goalposts.

In contrast, joy is unconditional commitment to be happy from within despite life's problems. It can easily be triggered by joyful activities like laughing, dancing, singing and playing. It is purely a physical phenomenon while happiness is a concept of the mind.

Even when you're going hard times, you can definitely get involved in joyful activities and once you become joyful, your body will experience physiological and biochemical changes. It will release certain neurochemicals from your brain cells and make you feel good and once you feel good within, the perception of the outer world will change. Laughter Yoga is all about learning to be joyful and navigate happiness in a much better way.

4. What is the source of laughter in children?

It is true that children can laugh hundreds of times in day, while grownups laugh very little. Have you ever observed when children laugh? They laugh all the time while playing. Laughter is not about laughing. It is actually about cultivating childlike playfulness. Once you learn to play, you don't have to laugh. Laughter will be the natural outcome of your playful inner child. In Laughter Yoga clubs we encourage people to be like children and cultivate childlike playful behavior through laughter exercises. This helps them to get over their inhibitions and shyness and loosen up.

5. Can we actually learn to laugh?

"I have been a serious person all my life. Can I learn to laugh now?" Some people believe that they cannot learn to laugh because it is a part of their personality and cannot be changed. Either you're a serious person or a laughing person right from the beginning - this is actually not true. We were all laughing a lot as children, but as we grow up, we lose our laughter due to reasons like serious environment, insecurities, fears and discipline.

The good news is that you can train your body and mind to laugh at will. It is very simple. Repetition is the mother of any skill. By repeating any bodily behavior over a period of time, the mind begins to generate a predictable response and it becomes a new habit.

With repetitive laughter exercises, the body starts reacting out of reflex before the conscious brain can rationalize and think. Throughout our lives, we are conditioned in both positive and negative ways. With Laughter Yoga, the brain develops new neuronal connections that produce happy chemistry in the body. These reactions can be triggered simply by laughter exercises, and doing certain actions of the body, which lead the mind to experience the emotion of joy - no matter what.

What is Laughter Yoga

- 1.** Laughter Yoga is a unique concept where anyone can laugh for no reason without relying on humor, jokes or comedy.
- 2.** We initiate laughter as an exercise in a group but with eye contact and childlike playfulness, it soon turns into real and contagious laughter.
- 3.** The reason we call it Laughter Yoga is because it combines laughter exercises with yoga breathing. This brings more oxygen to the body and brain which makes one feel more energetic and healthy.
- 4.** The concept of Laughter Yoga is based on a scientific fact that the body cannot differentiate between fake and real laughter if done with willingness. One gets the same health benefits, whether laughter is real or simulated.
- 5.** It was started by a medical doctor Dr. Madan Kataria supported by his wife, Madhuri Kataria, a yoga teacher, from India with just five people in a Mumbai Park in 1995. There are thousands of Laughter Clubs in more than 106 countries.

Laughter Buddy

We have developed a system of choosing partners called Laughter buddies. This helps in learning the above five points easily. You can practice important statements about Laughter Yoga by saying them back and forth to each other until you memorize it.

In addition to social Laughter Clubs, Laughter Yoga is also practiced in companies and corporations, Fitness centers, Yoga studios, Centers for Seniors, Schools, Colleges, Universities, Physically and mentally challenged and Self-help cancer groups.

Three reasons why Laughter Yoga

Many people ask why they should force themselves to laugh and what's wrong in laughter coming naturally and spontaneously by watching funny movies, jokes and comedies.

Here are 3 basic reasons why one must do Laughter Yoga to get maximum health benefits:

1. Laughter should be sustained: In order to get scientifically proven health benefits of laughter, we need to laugh at least for 10 to 15 minutes; it should be sustained laughter. As natural laughter hardly lasts for 3-4 seconds at a time, it is not sufficient to bring about physiological and psychological changes in our body. Since in Laughter Yoga laughter is done as an exercise, we can prolong our laughter as long as we want. It brings measurable physiological changes like increasing the oxygen level in the blood, muscle relaxation, blood circulation and release of certain hormones in the body.

2. Laughter should be deep: To reap the health benefits of laughter, laughter has to be hearty and deep, coming from the diaphragm. It should be a belly laugh. It might not be socially acceptable to laugh loudly, but Laughter Yoga clubs provide a safe environment where one can laugh loudly and heartily without any social implication.

3. Laughter should be unconditional: Natural laughter that courses through our life depends upon many reasons and conditions, but the fact is that there are not many reasons which make us laugh - This means we invariably leave laughter to a chance; it may happen, it may not. In contrast, in Laughter Yoga Clubs, laughter is unconditional and we laugh for no reason. We do not leave laughter to a chance, but do it out of commitment. This is a guaranteed way of getting the health benefits of laughter.

CHAPTER 4

What happens in a Laughter Yoga Session

Laughter Yoga sessions vary according to the group and its objectives. Sessions conducted in hospitals, nursing homes, schools, for seniors or in business offices might be quite different to Laughter Yoga sessions for the general public.

There are three components of a complete experience of Laughter Yoga

- Laughter Yoga Session – 4 steps of Laughter Yoga
- Laughter Meditation
- Guided Relaxation

Simple rules before Laughter Yoga:

- 1. No talking, only laughing:** This keeps us in the right brain to be more creative and avoids distracting and disrupting others. Just focus on the fun!
- 2. No strain, no new pain:** Take care of your body and modify anything necessary to be comfortable. This should feel good! Less force, more enjoyment.
- 3. Only laugh with each other, never at each other:** We're here to be silly, playful and childlike without inhibitions.

Part A

4 Steps Of Laughter Yoga

STEP 1 : Clapping and Warming-up exercises: We clap with our hands parallel to each other for full finger-to-finger and palm-to-palm contact. This stimulates acupressure points in our hands and increases energy levels.

Then we add a rhythm to the clapping to further increase energy levels and group synchronicity, often a 1-2, 1-2-3 rhythm.

Next, we add movement. There are many variations but mostly we move our hands up and down and swing them from side to side with corresponding movements of the legs and feet. By now everyone is already in a better mood and smiling.



Chanting and Moving: We add a simple chant to our clapping, which is ho-ho-ha-ha-ha. These are heavy exhalations that come from the belly to stimulate diaphragmatic breathing.

We move randomly, smiling and making eye contact with others in the group. Many add dance movements to this sequence which boosts feelings of happiness and joy. Enthusiastic clapping, chanting and movement helps build a positive energy, gets our diaphragm moving and creates a positive group dynamic, preparing us to laugh.

Gibberish Talking: Gibberish is a language of sounds without meaning. Children speak gibberish when learning to speak and during play. We sometimes use gibberish as a warming up exercise to help loosen people up and reduce inhibitions and shyness. Some people find it easier if you tell them what to 'talk' about. Different emotions can be expressed including happiness, anger, sadness, romance and more. It is a playful exercise and helps cultivate childlike playfulness. Gibberish may be fast or at normal conversational speed and generally involves a focus on tone and hand and body movements to convey meaning. Silent gibberish is also fun and easier for some.

STEP 2 : Deep Breathing Exercises

Laughter exercises are interspersed with deep breathing exercises to help flush the lungs as well as bring physical and mental relaxation.

A typical deep breathing exercise:

From a relaxed standing position, bend forward at the waist to a point where you are comfortable (different for everyone) while exhaling through the mouth

to fully empty your lungs. Dangle your arms. Bending helps push the diaphragm up and empty your lungs. Hold briefly.

Straighten up slowly while inhaling through your nose and take as deep a breath as possible. Raise your arms to the sky, stretching your body slightly backwards. Hold your breath for 4-5 seconds.

Exhale slowly as you bring your arms down and bend forward. Try to exhale longer than you inhale in order to empty your lungs completely. Hold... then repeat.

A variation is to hold your breath a little longer, then letting the air burst forth in hearty laughter.

There is no necessity to do the breathing exercise after every laughter exercise. These exercises are designed to take a break so that you don't get tired doing laughter exercises continuously. You can do a breathing exercise after two laughter exercises or you can make your judgment depending upon the energy levels of the group. If they seem more tired, do some more breathing exercises.

STEP 3 : Childlike Playfulness

An objective of Laughter Yoga is to cultivate your childlike playfulness that helps you to laugh without reason. We sometimes chant after an exercise:

Very good (clap), **very good** (clap), **yay** (swinging arms up in a Y shape with thumbs up in childish exuberance and exhilaration). This chanting of 'Very good, very good, yay' in between laughter exercises and breathing exercises helps to keep the energy levels and builds up the enthusiasm. You can decide after how many exercises you should chant this.

STEP 4 : Laughter exercises

There are hundreds of laughter exercises being practiced in Laughter Yoga Clubs all over the world. You can find them in the appendices at the end of the manual. The most popular exercises are categorized as **40 Foundation Exercises**, while other categories may be relevant for different applications, cultures, countries, age groups, situations and breathing and stretching techniques. Some exercises are also based on yoga.

Closing Cheers

Dr. Kataria has established the pattern of chanting the following three cheers at the end of the first section of a Laughter Yoga session. After each statement, the group is invited to throw their hands in the air and enthusiastically shout: "YES!"

Leader: We are the happiest people in the world!

People: YES!

Leader: We are the healthiest people in the world!

People: YES!

Leader: We are the (name of group) Laughter Club!

People: YES!

If the cheers are being done for a presentation and the participants are not members of a Laughter Club, the final statement can be something else, like "We are fabulous laughers!"

Laughter Yoga Closing Ritual

This goes in alignment with our mission statement of Laughter Yoga which is health, happiness and world peace. Place both hands in front of your chest with palms facing outwards. Move them while chanting ho ho ha ha 4 times in all 4 directions (up, down, left and right). Then join your palms together, bow your head as if doing *namaste* and say ha ha ha thrice. This symbolizes people from all over the world coming together through laughter. At the end put your hands upwards, move them in a circular motion and do Hearty laughter thrice – (first hearty laughter means: let everybody in this world be healthy; second one means: everyone in this world be happy and the third time it symbolizes: let there be peace in this world)

Part B

Laughter Meditation and Grounding Exercises

What is Laughter Meditation

While doing Laughter Yoga exercises we make an effort to laugh but following a group dynamic, laughter becomes spontaneous and effortless. It flows like a fountain. This is a state of Laughter Meditation. Here you don't do laughter; you become laughter. It is a deeper experience of unconditional laughter; a kind of laughter in which tears start rolling down your cheeks and your sides start aching. Maybe you'll find yourself rolling on the floor laughing. Still it is without any jokes, humor or comedy.

Laughter Meditation is the purest kind of laughter and a very cathartic experience that opens up the layers of your subconscious mind and you will experience

laughter from your deep within. Many leaders are afraid of doing Laughter Meditation for fear that it might not work. If you learn the proper guidelines, the success rate is very high. Many people don't want to use the word Laughter Meditation which sounds serious, so you can call it 'Free' laughter as they call it in Denmark.

How Laughter Meditation works

To get the deep experience of laughter without any humor there are certain factors which lead to this condition of Laughter Meditation:

- Eye contact
- Group dynamic
- Silence - in between bouts of laughter; brief period of silence deepens laughter.

Guidelines to achieve this meditative state of laughter

Duration: Laughter Meditation should not be more than 20 minutes. Do it for 10 minutes in a sitting position with eyes open, then take a short break of silence and breathing for five minutes followed by another 10 minutes of lying down with eyes closed. There is no hard and fast rule about the duration. If people are enjoying, you can extend it a bit more. Please watch out that no one laughs hysterically as it can bring on tiredness and stress.

Ideal venue: Indoor venues are best suited for Laughter Meditation as there is least amount of distraction. Some leaders have also tried to do this in parks and beaches but have got only partial success. Therefore, while selecting the venue make sure it is comfortable, clean and peaceful. You can also use yoga mats and blankets on the ground.

How to sit: People don't need to sit in serious meditative posture. Ask them to relax and sit in a normal posture with eyes open so that they can see others laughing. They can also move their body naturally while laughing. Make them sit comfortably in an inward facing circle to facilitate eye contact. They should not be too spread out and make sure no one is blocking the view of other group members by sitting in the middle. Rearrange the group so that everyone can see each other.

No talking, no distractions: The most important instruction is to make it very clear to all that nobody must talk or try to communicate in any way (no eye



messages, funny faces, and funny sounds) as this will engage the conscious mind. We need to release the conscious mind. Please ensure there is no outside distraction or noise which may disturb the group. Even children are not allowed for this session as they can be a distraction, so please request the parents to take the responsibility of taking them away.

Role of Laughter Blasters: Through your experience in Laughter Yoga sessions you can easily come to know some people who laugh very easily. We call them laughter blasters. These people play an important role in helping others to laugh and infecting them with laughter. As a leader, while doing Laughter Meditation, you can position these laughter blasters to sit in a strategic position where people can see them easily and get infected with their laughter.

How do we start Laughter Meditation?

Begin with warming up exercise ho ho ha ha ha to stimulate the diaphragm. Then take a few long deep breaths and repeat. Alternatively, you can initiate Laughter Meditation by doing Gradient laughter. Soon it becomes infectious and sets off a chain reaction to infect other people. Laughter often comes in natural waves. The leader may allow laughter to reduce, and then use techniques to restart the laughter, sometimes in multiple cycles. The best way to stimulate laughter is to ask the group to observe silence for a while and then start again laughing slowly and gradually until it becomes spontaneous.

In case of new participants, explain to them that they may not get spontaneous laughter in the first round, or even in the first few sessions. Ask them to participate without expectations but with willingness and respect. If it doesn't work for them, they should observe other people laughing and enjoy the group energy of laughter. At the most, they can keep chuckling gently.

How to end Laughter Meditation?

If the group gets into hysterical laughter, use a hypnotic kind of commentary to engage the conscious mind. Start giving instructions for guided relaxation. If someone can't stop laughing, go up to that person, tap him gently and tell him to take it easy. Beware of saying words like '**Relax**', '**Take a deep breath**' or '**Stop laughing**' ... instead you can say, '**It is ok to laugh, but we need to go the next step**'... Before you start Laughter Meditation, you must inform the group if they laugh beyond a certain point their bodies will stop producing endorphins; instead it will produce distress hormones. It is like you can't eat too much food even if it is healthy.

It is not unusual for people to undergo strong cathartic moments during Laughter Meditation. This is very positive as it helps to release pent up emotions and emotional problems. Laughter may be interspersed with tears and even anger as the emotions surface and are released in a non-violent catharsis.

What if Laughter Meditation doesn't work?

Due to some reasons the group might not get spontaneous laughter and they might not laugh as you would expect. There are many reasons for that. Either the group is inhibited or there are some cultural variations besides some outside factors. If you find yourself in a situation that it is not working, you can try the following:

- Take a short break of silence and ask people to close their eyes and focus on breathing.
- Do Gradient laughter many times until it becomes infectious.
- If nothing works, just keep doing different laughter exercises rather than feel embarrassed.

Each laughter session is different even with the same group. Sometimes, if sitting on the floor doesn't work, you can ask people to lie down and keep their eyes closed. Then start Gradient laughter. It might work because some people can laugh better while lying down with their eyes closed. You can also tell them to lie down on their back, hold their knees against the chest and try to laugh. This will help to push the diaphragm up and makes laughter flow easily.

Cluster Chair Arrangement

Sometimes the group members can't sit on the floor due to some physical limitations or the floor may not be appropriate to sit on. Laughter Meditation can also be done sitting on the chairs. You can ask the participants to arrange the chairs in a cluster and bring them as close as possible to facilitate the process of Laughter Meditation.

Part C

Grounding Techniques

Laughter Yoga exercises stimulates the blood circulation and raises the blood pressure for a short duration before it comes below the base level. Our muscles contract during laughter session before they come back to relaxation mode. It works on the principle of muscle contraction before it goes into relaxation.

Therefore, the real benefit of Laughter Yoga comes not during the stimulation phase, but after the session when we relax. Some people complain that although they laughed heartily during the session, especially during Laughter Meditation, they were left feeling emotionally unstable and 'empty' afterwards. Laughter is a powerful dynamic energy that can open your sub-conscious mind and release pent-up feelings and emotions. After intense Laughter Yoga sessions some people become sad and start crying while others experience bouts of anger, irritability and other negative emotions. For that reason, it is important to do grounding exercises after Laughter Yoga sessions to normalize our systems and allow relaxation.

Here are some techniques that work well to ground the energy of laughter.

1. Guided relaxation (Yoga Nidra)

After Laughter Meditation, energy levels can be too high to return directly to normal. To reduce these levels the leader may talk the group through guided relaxation, also called 'Yoga Nidra', or yogic sleep. This refers to a specific guided meditation that originated from tantric yogic practices. Yoga Nidra produces a wakeful state of deep introversion and connection with us that is not only relaxing and rejuvenating, but also has the power to transform our core issues. Yoga Nidra is the most thorough and profound process to move us systematically through our entire being, including physical, energetic, mental, emotional, and spiritual layers.

This is followed by breath or energy awareness, then an experience of sensations and emotions, often paired together as polar opposites like feeling heavy and then feeling light. The final step is guided visualizations or a journey. The practice is completed by restating the intention, which, in this higher and more open state of mind, is planted in the fertile soil of our unconscious and subconscious layers, and has the potential to bring about positive change.

2. Ho Ho Ha Ha Dancing

Grounding dance is a spiritual method which uses the movement of the hands to direct the energy towards the ground making one feel emotionally stable and well grounded. Good music with strong drumbeats is helpful but not necessary.

Participants should move their hands as if pushing forward the air, saying ho ho twice, then push their hands towards the ground, while bending the knees slightly saying ha ha twice, while moving around and dancing. This is performed more slowly with the ho ho and ha ha being whispered or silent.

The emphasis here is on the dreamlike dancing and the grounding action of pushing hands down towards the ground with some slight flexing of the knees. Continue for at least 10 minutes.

3. Humming

With eyes closed, take a long breath in and hum it out, actually saying the word "Hummm..." with upper and lower lips just touching each other. Vibrations are felt throughout the facial muscles, sinuses and eventually into the head. This exercise is also beneficial for those with chronic sinusitis and nasal blockage because humming vibrations help to dislodge mucus and also increase blood circulation.

Humming has a powerful impact on the autonomic nervous system and can activate the parasympathetic system that is responsible for relaxation. This exercise is most effective when done in a group. It is better to hum at the same time under the instructions of the leader. Humming together creates a unique resonance which is very calming. Different people have different breathing capacities; some people can hum longer than others. When leading group humming ask participants to hum for as long as they can then inhale and repeat. Ten minutes of humming is recommended for grounding. The ideal duration for humming should be 10 minutes

Four Elements of Joy

Singing, Dancing, Playing and Laughing

Many Laughter Clubs end their sessions with singing, dancing, and laughing. The core philosophy of Laughter Yoga is not seeking happiness from external sources, but cultivating it from within, which is called joy. External happiness is not certain, it is conditional. It depends upon getting what you want. But many a times you do not get everything that you want. Conversely, joy, which is called happiness from within, can be triggered by the simplest of physical activities, such as singing, dancing, playing and laughing. We call these the four elements of Joy.

As children we had all these elements. But as we grow up, joy is lost to inhibition and self-consciousness that often limits participation in light hearted activities. A Laughter Club is an ideal platform that gives permission to become like a child again and bring those elements back, making singing, dancing, playing and laughing easier within a safe environment. Therefore, at the end of a laughter session, many Laughter Clubs have incorporated group singing and dancing. Members sing popular songs from films, cultural songs, jingles and nursery rhymes from their school days, and finally end up laughing.

Singing is a mind-body activity that can be used to express emotion, influence thought, and bond human beings. Medical studies have shown that singing can reduce stress, lower heart rate and blood pressure, improve lung capacity, decrease pain, and elevate mood.

People usually find it difficult to sing alone as they feel they are not good singers. Though it requires special talent to have a singing voice, it becomes easier to sing in a group - for example, singing the national anthem, devotional, or birthday songs. The same holds true for dancing. Most people hesitate to dance individually, but it becomes easier when we dance together during festivals, weddings, and any celebrations.

Every Laughter Yoga session is a chance to celebrate being alive, being able to breathe, and allowing our inner child out to play. When we incorporate singing, dancing, playing, and laughing all together our joyfulness becomes multiplied.

Note that it is not necessary to sing full songs and remember all the words. Most often, we sing only the first opening lines and this gets us laughing and running around like kids. You can get ideas for songs from the videos in your resource pack.

CHAPTER 5

Contraindications in Laughter Yoga

Laughter Yoga is like any other aerobic exercise and all the conditions apply as that of any other aerobic activity like swimming, jogging, running etc. Should you experience any pain, discomfort and breathlessness, you must discontinue Laughter Yoga and take medical advice.

People with following conditions must take medical opinion before doing Laughter Yoga exercises:

Hernia: Hernia is very common in elderly people and in those who have chronic cough and prostate enlargement. If you notice any swelling in the groin area while laughing or experience any pain, you must consult your doctor before doing laughter exercises regularly. Hernia normally needs surgical correction.

Incontinence in women: This is most common in women. If there is involuntary passing of urine while laughing or coughing you must consult your doctor. This may be due to sagging of the uterus or weak ligaments.

Bleeding hemorrhoids: Those suffering from bleeding from any part of the body must be very careful while doing laughter exercises.

Heart problem with chest pain: If you experience any chest pain while doing any exercise you must consult your doctor.

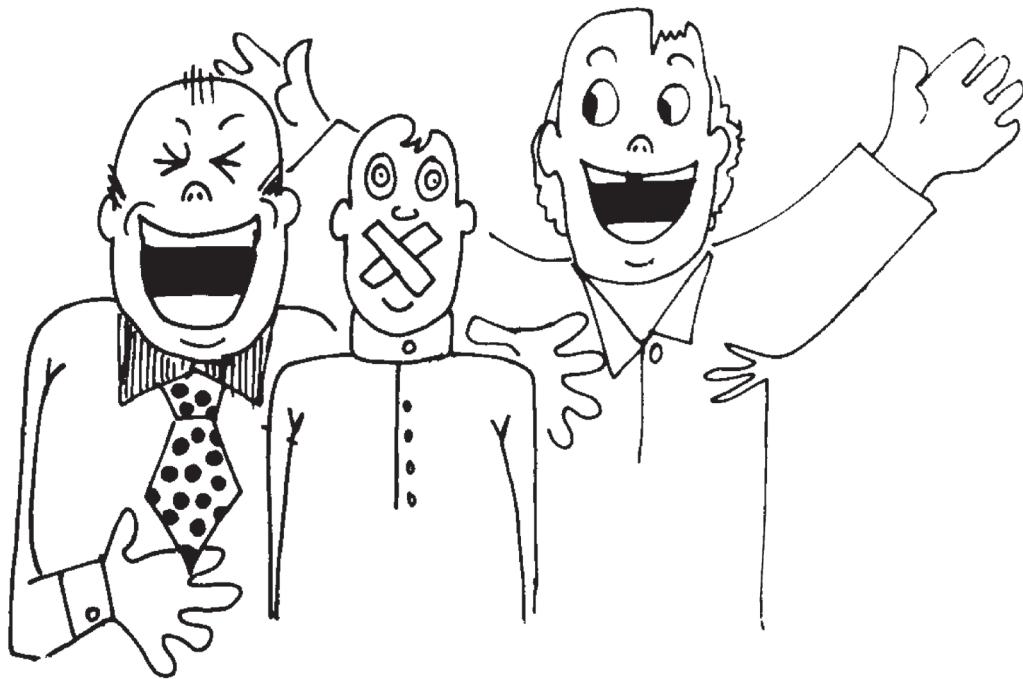
Pregnancy: Women with history of miscarriage and those in the last two months of pregnancy must take precaution and see the doctor before doing Laughter Yoga.

Major surgeries: One must wait for at least three months after any surgery before resuming any strenuous exercises.

Epilepsy: Those with a history of epileptic seizures must be careful as change in any emotional state can trigger an epileptic attack. Take expert opinion.

Cold and flu: In case of severe attack of cold & flu, wait for some time as the virus might spread to other members.

Severe backache: If someone has prolapsed inter-vertebral disc (slipped disc), one should not do laughter and other exercises, unless advised by their physician. Any forward and backward bending can aggravate the symptoms of slip disc.



Minor discomforts after doing Laughter Yoga

1. Heaviness in the head or mild headache: Some people complain about heaviness in the head or mild to moderate headache after doing Laughter Yoga exercises. This is quite common, no cause of concern, and usually settles down on its own. But, if it continues it may be due to excessive force being applied during laughter exercises. Take it easy, and do the laughter exercises gently. Put more emphasis on feelings, breathing, and enjoying the exercises rather than applying force.

Other possibilities of persistent headache after Laughter Yoga exercises are high blood pressure and chronic migraine headaches. People must get their blood pressure checked if they are on the borderline or have hypertension before doing Laughter Yoga exercises. We have had many people suffering from migraine headaches for years who have benefited from doing Laughter Yoga. As one of the reasons for precipitation of migraine attacks is stress and pent-up emotions, Laughter Yoga acts like an emotional release.

2. Irritation in the throat and dry cough: Another common complaint is irritation in the throat or mild cough. This is also quite normal and people should be reassured and advised not to laugh too hard, and drink more water. As a leader, one must give instructions and laugh a bit louder to motivate the group. But if you are laughing too hard and screaming too much, it might damage your vocal cords if you do it for a long time. This can lead to permanent hoarseness in your voice, an occupational hazard! You must be mindful not to persistently misuse your voice. Speak and laugh from your diaphragm to project your voice, not from your throat and mouth.

CHAPTER 6

Health Benefits of Laughter Yoga

There is an ever increasing demand to open more and more Laughter Clubs in the world because people are inspired and motivated by the enormous health benefits derived from doing Laughter Yoga. These benefits can be felt from the very first session and members report amazing improvement in their physical health, as well as a more positive mental attitude and higher energy levels. The first thing they say is that they don't fall sick very often. There are daily reports of partial or total cure of most stress-related illnesses like hypertension, heart disease, depression, asthma, arthritis, allergies, stiff muscles and more.

Laughter Yoga for Wellness

Laughter Yoga is a complete package for physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being of an individual. It has all the elements of perfect health building activity. Therefore, it is not about the concept or the philosophy which attracts them; it is about what they get and how it benefits their lives.

Best cardio workout: As life has become more sedentary and stressful, people find it hard to stick to any exercise routine. Laughter Yoga is an ideal alternative as it can be compared to any aerobic exercise. Just 10 minutes of hearty laughter is equal to 30 minutes on the rowing machine. It is ideally suited for busy professionals and business people who have very little time to exercise.

More oxygen: Oxygen is one of the primary catalyst for all metabolic reactions in the human body. Ongoing scientific studies show that lack of oxygen is the major cause of most diseases. Negative emotions constrict the supply of oxygen and induce shallow chest breathing. Laughter Yoga exercises facilitates longer exhalation and deep breathing through the diaphragm. This helps in flushing the lungs of stale residual air and increasing the net supply of oxygen.

Increases blood circulation: Physical disease or mental problems restrict circulation and slow down the body system. Research has shown that laughter causes an 'internal jogging' that massages and increases circulation to flush the body and organs of waste products leaving us ready to operate at peak performance.

Maintains emotional balance: It is comparatively easy to manage physical or mental stress, but very complex to handle emotional stress which arises due to problems at home or at work, faulty relationships and several other strained situations. Faced with such circumstances, people find it hard to express their feelings and emotions. As a result, they suppress their emotions. Laughter Yoga



helps free flow of emotions and releases pent up feelings. It defuses painful emotions like fear, anger and resentment; instead cultivates positive emotions like unconditional love, generosity, openness, compassion and willingness to help and serve others.

Laughter boosts Immune System

Laughter Yoga strengthens the immune system and one does not fall sick easily. Our experience with regular Laughter Club members is that they don't suffer from frequent cold and cough and upper respiratory tract infections. This indicates that their immune system has become stronger. Scientific studies show that it takes at least 2-3 months of regular laughter practice to bring about changes in the immune system.

Depression

Depression is the number one sickness in the world today. Depressed people seldom laugh; but if they do laugh regularly, they are less likely to be depressed. Laughter increases the levels of dopamine and serotonin in the brain cells. We have seen that many Laughter Club members were able to reduce anti-depressant medication doing laughter exercises. In fact, some have completely stopped the medication.

Laughter Yoga provides social support which helps to prevent depression, usually brought on by loneliness and isolation. It is like an extended family which connects people and creates lifelong relationships.

Anxiety and Panic Attacks

When in a stressful emotional state or turmoil, breathing becomes faster, shallow and irregular. People hold their breath which leads to an accumulation of carbon dioxide in the blood. Laughter Yoga provides an excellent cardiac workout. It lowers the amount of residual air in the lungs, replacing it with oxygen-rich air and reducing the level of carbon dioxide in the lungs, thereby reducing the risk of pulmonary infection.

By shifting the breathing pattern from shallow to deep diaphragmatic breathing, Laughter Yoga stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, which is the cooling branch of the autonomic nervous system and the opposite of the sympathetic stress arousal system. This scientific phenomenon coupled with yogic breathing helps to loosen stress and relieve anxiety.

Heart Disease and Hypertension

Dr. Michael Miller, a leading heart researcher from Maryland University and Medical Center discovered that laughter dilates blood vessels promoting circulation and reducing blood pressure. Having too much cholesterol in the blood can lead to the hardening and narrowing of the arteries (atherosclerosis) in the major vascular systems. A daily dose of laughter reduces cholesterol, improves blood circulation to the heart thereby proving to be a great preventive to hypertension and heart disease.

Laughter Yoga and Diabetes

Diabetes like heart disease is a major health hazard worldwide. Laughter Yoga exercises help to control fasting and postprandial blood sugar as proved by scientific research done in Maribor University, Slovenia. It also reduces the stress hormone cortisol responsible for increase in sugar levels; in effect lowering the blood sugar and helping a diabetic patient. It even increases the blood flow to the pancreas, which improves the production of insulin.

Bronchitis and Asthma

People suffering from allergic bronchitis, asthma and smoker's bronchitis (COPD) can benefit from laughter exercises. They have a lot of residual air in their lungs, which can be removed by laughter exercises, thereby increasing their oxygen levels and improving the breathing capacity.

Laughter exercises also help to remove the thick mucus from the inner lining of the bronchi which improves the flow of air into the lungs. One of the common reasons why people get asthmatic attacks is due to infection. Laughter Yoga

strengthens the immune system and significantly brings down the frequency of asthmatic attacks.

Laughter Yoga for Cancer patients

Cancer is on the rise and has become the second major killer after heart attack and strokes. Cancer centers all over the world are incorporating Laughter Yoga exercises as a complementary therapy along with traditional forms of treatment. When someone has cancer, it causes tremendous emotional disturbance and mental stress. Laughter exercises quickly help to reduce the trauma and put their mind in a positive state, thus enabling them to cope with the disease in a better way. Since Laughter Yoga is a physical method, it is ideally suited for cancer groups who can practice laughter as a form of exercise with no need of any humorous intervention.

Laughter Yoga increases the oxygen level in the body cells and rapidly increases immunoglobulin levels that help fight infection and increases the number of natural killer cells (NK cells) in the blood, which plays a key role in cancer prevention. It should be combined with other forms of treatment to provide cancer patients with an improved quality of life and the best possible chance of survival.

Laughter Yoga for Chronic Illnesses

There are many illnesses which have no cure and one has to take lifelong medication. Laughter Yoga exercises can help to reduce the symptoms of patients with rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, diabetes, blood pressure, auto-immune disorders like multiple sclerosis and other chronic diseases. It also keeps their mind positive, effectively enabling them to manage their disease on a daily basis.

Laughter Yoga and Pain

There are two types of pain people experience in life. One is due to some physical illness and the other due to some emotional disturbance in the mind. Laughter Yoga exercises is a great remedy for release of emotions and lessening of pain as it releases endorphins or natural opiates that are more potent than equivalent amounts of morphine.

It also helps in reducing physical pain in those suffering from arthritis, spondylitis and muscular spasms of the body. Most Laughter Club members, especially seniors, usually suffer from arthritic pain but it is seen that after doing laughter exercises, the intensity of pain decreases significantly.

Five Benefits of Laughter Yoga

1. Elevates Mood

Laughter Yoga can change your mood within minutes by releasing endorphins from your brain cells. This makes you feel good and if you are in a good mood you do everything well. It makes you cheerful all throughout the day.

2. Health Benefits

Laughter Yoga reduces stress and strengthens the immune system. If your immune system is strong you will not fall sick easily and if you have chronic health conditions, it will help to heal faster.

3. Business Benefits

Our brain needs 25 percent more oxygen for optimal functioning. Laughter exercises can increase net supply of oxygen to our body and brain which helps to improve efficiency and performance. You will feel energetic and can work more than you normally do without getting tired.

4. Social Connector

Quality of life depends upon quality of our friends and our relationships. Laughter is a great connector of people and brings lots of good friend with caring and sharing relationship.

5. Laughing through Challenges

Anyone can laugh when times are good, but Laughter Yoga teaches people to laugh unconditionally so that they can laugh even when times are hard. It provides strength in adversity, a coping mechanism to help people keep a positive mental attitude regardless of circumstances.

CHAPTER 7

Laughter Yoga for Business World

When Dr. Kataria started the Laughter Yoga movement in 1995, he never meant business; it was purely a social movement and the objective was to bring good health joy and word peace through laughter. For several years Laughter Clubs were meant to be free and he went all over the world to teach people how to start these clubs. Since Laughter Clubs in India are run by volunteers who are seniors and retired, they have plenty of time to dedicate for social work. But, in the West, people are mindful of their time. Many people running Laughter Clubs have to also work for a living. Therefore, it becomes hard for them to dedicate time for social activities which are not financially rewarding.

Now laughter movement has grown exponentially in over 100 countries and is no more restricted to social clubs. It has gone into different areas like companies and corporations fitness centre yoga studios schools, colleges, universities, prisons, blind schools and many others. Since many years, laughter professionals have been doing several laughter presentations with different companies and corporations around the world. Though, it was a success experientially, business people never really thought of implementing this idea on a daily basis to improve their business performance or work environment. What they needed was some evidence and research based documents to prove that Laughter Yoga is beneficial to business outcome.

Scientific research shows that laughter can help to resolve many major workplace issues, but until now there has been no reliable and effective system to deliver laughter. Humor was the only tool available, and it is not reliable and seldom leads to continuous hearty laughter. Laughter Yoga is a breakthrough laughter delivery system that can enable a person to laugh continuously for 15 to 20 minutes with short breaks of yogic breathing.

With new research on laughter, the business world is beginning to consider laughter seriously as a tool to improve workplace performance. However, business people are cost conscious and analytical and may wait for further scientific evidence of Laughter Yoga methods to emerge before adopting it widely. Therefore, it was in 2006 in Bangalore, India that we did the first scientific study to confirm the benefits of Laughter Yoga in the business world. In 2007 another study in the US validated the concept and proved that Laughter Yoga can definitely improve capability profiles among business people.

Laughter Yoga Research

Two studies completed in 2007 may help convince the business world of the potential of Laughter Yoga for business. Both studies used a series of Laughter Yoga sessions (rather than funny movies or humor) to generate laughter in the workplace and measured stress and emotional variables before and after the course of the study.

Bangalore Study

In December 2006, Laughter Yoga International commissioned a scientific research project involving 200 IT professionals in Bangalore, India, to study the effects of Laughter Yoga on their stress levels. Seven Laughter Yoga sessions were administered to half the group over an 18 day period, with physiological, immunological and psychological tests performed on each person before and after the Laughter Yoga sessions.

The study was undertaken by one of India's leading scientific research organizations.

The results of the Bangalore study were extremely positive. In the Laughter Yoga group there was a significant drop in heart rate, blood pressure dropped significantly, cortisol levels were significantly reduced, positive emotions increased by 17 percent and negative emotions dropped by 27 percent, perceived stress dropped significantly, and Alexithymia dropped by almost 9 percent, indicating a significant improvement in emotional intelligence.

A copy of the research document will be available on the resource pack CD.

US Study (Beckman, Regier & Young)

Another important 2007 study in the United States looked at the effects of Laughter Yoga on personal efficacy in the workplace.

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to organize and carry out courses of action necessary to achieve a goal or manage a situation (Bandura, 1986). This personal belief influences the choices people make, the effort they put forth into working toward a goal, how long they persist when confronted with obstacles, and how they feel during the process of working toward goals. Self-efficacy beliefs affect performance in the workplace. Personal efficacy testing was done the week before, the week after, and 60-90 days after the series of daily Laughter Yoga sessions. Laughter Yoga was administered for 15 minutes a day for 14 days.

The results show significant improvements of the Laughter Yoga group in all areas, with positive changes of 100 percent occurring in a number of areas. It is particularly interesting to note the long-lasting effects of the laughter interventions.



Concerns of the Business World

To sell Laughter Yoga services to businesses, one must first identify and then address the client's major concerns. During your initial discussions make a point of asking what their main concerns are and then focus your sales presentations and your Laughter Yoga sessions around helping to address those concerns.

Business concerns that Laughter Yoga can address include:

- Stress management
- Creating a happy, healthy and energetic workforce
- Peak performance
- Teambuilding
- Positive work environment of hope and optimism
- Motivation and enthusiasm
- Increasing productivity
- Communication skills
- Leadership
- Innovation and creativity
- Learning skills

How Laughter Yoga improves Business and Performance

By introducing Laughter Yoga sessions for all staff, companies have reported a happier workplace, increased efficiency, better communication, increase in sales and productivity, increased creativity and better teamwork, decrease in illness and absenteeism, and a reduction in employee turnover.

Stress in the workplace: In this high pressure, high tension modern world stress levels are higher than ever before. Many people are facing an enormous amount of stress and burnouts in the workplace. Even highly talented and skilled people cannot perform well if they are emotionally imbalanced and stressed. There are many methods being used to reduce stress but Laughter Yoga is most cost effective, less time consuming and is a single exercise routine which reduces physical, mental and emotional stress simultaneously and brings an emotional balance.

Stress in the workplace can be divided into three types:

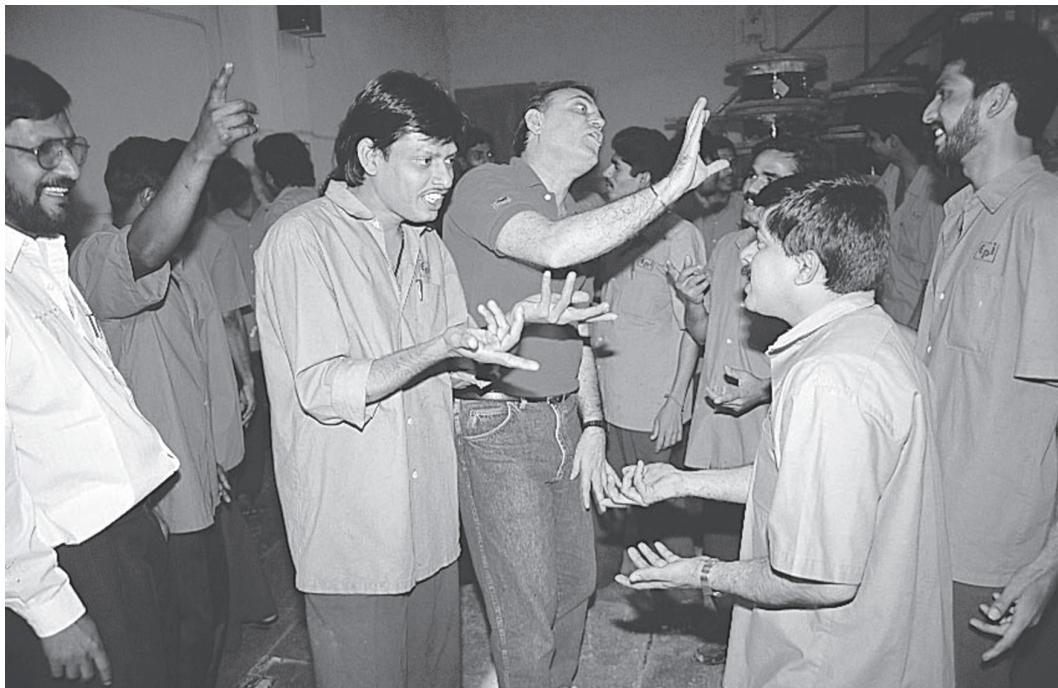
Physical Stress results from working beyond one's physical capacity. Working continuously without sufficient rest or recharge makes one physically tired and exhausted.

Mental Stress in the workplace stems largely from heavy workload with tight deadlines, from fear of losing one's job or pushing too hard to fulfill basic needs. Competing with others or competing with yourself to improve your performance also leads to mental stress.

Emotional Stress is deep-rooted and caused by bad relationships at home or at the workplace. Even highly talented and skilled employees cannot perform well if they are emotionally disturbed. Emotional problems at home reflect at work and vice versa. Emotional stress is more difficult to cope with (and to reduce) than physical and mental stress.

One needs to deal with emotional stress at two levels:

1. Develop skills to express emotions freely without fear: Laughter Yoga helps to develop emotional expression through physical playfulness and a playful mental attitude. While playing, you focus entirely on the play process and one's personality takes a back seat. One is creative, dynamic and playful. Most people spend a lot of time and energy holding on to their masks and personalities. Physical playfulness helps to shed these masks and enables free expression of emotions without fear.



2. Increase one's ability to release pent-up emotions: Suppressed emotions cause ongoing physical or mental pain and reduce physical and mental performance. Laughter Yoga provides a simple, painless and effective release mechanism to help rid the subconscious mind of pent-up emotions through catharsis during intense laughter. Such release helps to build performance and improves one's emotional intelligence and communication skills.

Peak Performance

At a given time, performance depends upon mood and Laughter Yoga has the power to change the mood state within minutes by releasing neuro-peptides from the brain cells called endorphins. Science tells us that the brain needs 25 percent more oxygen than other body organs. Laughter Yoga increases the net supply of oxygen which helps in optimal performance and boosts energy levels.

Team Building

"People who laugh together, work together" John Cleese, a renowned British comedian, once said during his visit to Mumbai that Laughter is a great connector of people. It breaks all hierarchies and is a force for democracy. Laughter Yoga is a powerful tool that can give you a highly motivated and energetic workforce for maximum productivity and profitability. It also develops a positive mental attitude, hope and optimism and increases communication skills to help in teambuilding.

Motivation and Communication

For people working in front office and sales and marketing, Laughter Yoga helps to bring a smile on their face and generate good feelings within the body. This enhances their communication and motivational skills thus increasing their client base and customer satisfaction.

Innovation and Creativity

The essence of Laughter Yoga system is to cultivate childlike playfulness. This playfulness stimulates the right brain activity which is the seat of creativity. This helps to generate new ideas and new insights about workplace issues and problems. In this highly competitive market one needs constant innovation to stay ahead. Laughter Yoga will help people to become more creative and innovative.

Increasing Attention Span in HR Trainings

Human brain cannot concentrate for more than 90 minutes after which the attention span reduces. Even a 5-10 minute Laughter Yoga session can provide a great energy boost during long HR training sessions and conferences. It helps to increase the attention span, enhance learning skills, concentration powers and potential.

Positive Work Environment

Job dissatisfaction and hostile work environment compel people to change jobs more frequently thus affecting productivity and profitability. Laughter Yoga creates positive energy and improves communication between people. The Bangalore study also confirmed the increase in positive emotions and decrease in negative emotions, thereby developing an emotional intelligence. This helps to create a more constructive work environment and ensures loyalty and commitment.

Five Corporate Benefits of Laughter Yoga

- 1. Quickest way to reduce stress:** Of the many ways to reduce stress, Laughter Yoga is the fastest and most cost effective because the benefits can be felt in even just a few minutes. It is a single exercise that simultaneously reduces physical, mental and emotional stress while improving emotional intelligence. This reduces stress-related illness and contributes to employee wellness and job satisfaction.
- 2. Healthy exercise for busy people:** According to several scientific studies, including research by Dr. William Fry of Stanford University, sustained hearty laughter exercises can be a powerful cardiovascular workout comparable to any other aerobic activity. Laughter Yoga helps to stimulate heart rate, increase blood circulation, supply oxygen to the brain and eliminate toxins.
- 3. Peak Performance:** There are two important factors that impact performance - mood state and oxygen supply. Laughter Yoga can change your mood state in minutes by releasing neuro-peptides called endorphins in the brain. Science tells us that the brain needs 25 percent more oxygen than other body organs even though the brain is only 2 percent of our body weight. Laughter Yoga increases the net supply of oxygen to improve efficiency and performance.
- 4. Team Building:** Laughter Yoga is a great team building exercise because it is a powerful tool that easily connects people with each other. Laughter yoga fosters a positive mental attitude, hope, optimism, and enhances team building. It makes people smile and feel good, enhancing motivation and communication within the team and with customers. So we say "People who laugh together work well together."
- 5. Innovation and Creativity:** The childlike playfulness in Laughter Yoga stimulates right brain activity, the seat of creativity. Laughter Yoga helps people become more creative and innovative to stay ahead of the competition.

CHAPTER 8

Laughter Yoga for Seniors

There is a distinct rise in life expectancy due to advances in medical science, creating a much larger population of senior citizens who long to find emotional comfort and solace. As the joint family structure crumbles and youngsters steer away from parents, seniors, particularly in the West find themselves alone either in aged care facilities or old-age homes. They are prone to frequent bouts of depression that often leads to a debilitating condition. Faced with age and age related troubles, seniors find that their physical and mental faculties decrease.

As far as laughter goes one finds that as we grow older our capacity to understand humor decreases because of Senile Dementia, Alzheimer's and other diseases. The degeneration of the brain cells makes it difficult for many seniors to understand and organize facts, let alone humor. Simple tasks become difficult and frustration levels rise.

Under such conditions, Laughter Yoga is ideal for seniors to reap the scientifically proven benefits of laughter to improve their health and well-being. It helps to provide an emotional bonding and is one of the most powerful tools against depression.

Since humor is an intellectual phenomenon, seniors find it difficult to laugh without a reason. This is where Laughter Yoga enables them to laugh and start living a life full of joy once again. Being physically oriented process Laughter Yoga does not require any mental abilities thus helping the older people to comprehend humor without using their mental faculties.

Benefits for Seniors

Scientific studies have proven that Laughter Yoga increases the net supply of oxygen to our body cells giving a sense of well-being. According to Dr. Otto Warburg a Noble Laureate, his findings about the importance of oxygen confirms that the reason we fall sick frequently is because there is a lack of oxygen in the body cells. Laughter exercises and yoga breathing help to attain good health by increasing the supply of oxygen. It also helps to release special hormones from all brain cells called endorphins also known as feel good hormones.

Guidelines for Laughter Yoga session with Seniors

Most seniors are not aware of the fact that you can laugh without a reason. Sometimes they find it silly and can be put off. Hence, there is a need to explain



to them that the session is not about real laughter, jokes, humor or comedy. It is not an entertainment session, but laughter exercises based on scientific facts. It entails creating a connection with them, building a rapport by talking, listening and physical touch. Since they are lonesome they will appreciate your connection with them and will be more willing to participate and co-operate in the Laughter Yoga session. To achieve this, it is advised that the trainer reaches the session half an hour before the actual exercises begin.

Older people are more fragile and melancholic because of health reasons. Therefore, you must find out about their health status or any medical conditions they are suffering from that might be contraindicative to take any physical exertion.

Creating a Positive Environment

We normally don't use tools or humor in Laughter Yoga sessions but for seniors it is important to create a lively atmosphere with color, sight and humor props. This helps them to lighten up. Leaders should wear bright colors and avoid black, grey drab colors. Props like balloons and familiar music from yesteryears can create a happy environment.

Normally in Laughter Yoga sessions we encourage people to move around and have eye contact with others. With seniors we often conduct sessions sitting in chairs. Position chairs in a tight circle so that people can see each other and connect with each other. This also prevents them falling and hurting themselves.

Introduction: Meet and Greet

Allow plenty of time to go from person to person and introduce yourself getting to know their names and something about them. Seniors are generally hungry for company and will respond more easily if you make an effort to get to know them.

Warming Up and Clapping

Laughter Yoga sessions for seniors start with group singing as a form of exercise. Let them join hands and sway together while singing in a chorus. This warms up their lungs and helps build a loving and connecting atmosphere.

Chanting

Since most seniors are slow, we deviate from our regular ho ho ha ha ha chant to a much slower ho ho ha ha. Instead of 12-123, chant ho ho twice followed by ha ha or 'ho ho way to go'. Chant 'very good, very good, yay' in between different laughter exercises. Do this as an exercise several times in the beginning to raise their energy levels. Clap as you say 'very good very good' and then raise your arms up in the sky with your thumbs up to say 'yay'. Another affirmation we use with seniors is the positive chant of 'I am incredible'.... 'You are incredible'.

Laughter exercises for Seniors

Greeting Laughter: Make the seniors sit on chairs in a circle. The leader goes round the circle shaking hands and laughing with each and every person in the group. Make sure not to leave anybody in the circle while doing this.

Argument Laughter: This is a very playful laughter exercise as people love pointing fingers at each other while having fun.

Cell phone Laughter or Mobile Phone Laughter works well.

Rollercoaster laughter: Bring the chairs closer and ask the senior participants to join hands and move them up and down with the sound of Aee... aeee..Tell them to laugh together while raising their hands jointly.

Bicycle laughter: An excellent way to exercise lower limbs. Imagine holding the handle of a bicycle with both hands and move your legs as if you're peddling and laughing.

Laugh away your aches and pains: Since seniors usually suffer from aches and pains, this is a good whimsical exercise that gives a positive perspective.

Deep breathing: In between laughter exercises do some deep breathing. One of the creative ways of making seniors do it is to pick up a flower, take a long inhaling smell and a long 'haaaa' exhale.

As the session progresses you will see positive feelings develop and happiness and joy a spread among group members. Their will to live and love is aroused. Their emotional and physical well being improves noticeably with regular Laughter Yoga sessions.

Five Benefits of Laughter Yoga for Seniors

1. Adds more laughter to life: With advancing age, older adults stop laughing due to dementia and Alzheimer's disease. As a physically oriented technique, Laughter Yoga is an ideal exercise to get many health benefits without using mental and cognitive abilities.

2. Promotes physical health: Because of the wear and tear of old age, many seniors develop ailments like high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, and other age-related illnesses. Laughter Yoga facilitates healing by strengthening the immune system, improving blood circulation, and increasing oxygen to the body's cells. It provides a powerful cardiovascular workout, especially for seniors unable to move their bodies for physical exercise.

3. Improves mental health: Isolation, loneliness and depression are also common among older adults as they lose loved ones and their health. Laughter Yoga improves mental health by boosting neurotransmitters dopamine and serotonin.

4. Building social bonds: Laughter Yoga encourages strong social bonding with friends, relatives, fellow residents at care facilities, as well as care givers and medical personnel. Retirees and able bodied older adults attending Laughter Clubs develop friendships that decrease loneliness and increase quality of life. Even people with dementia or others in assisted living facilities forge meaningful connections and communicate more.

5. Laughter Yoga adds to longevity: Laughter Yoga gives the elders a reason and purpose to living fully every day. This simple and easy to do exercise routine is being practiced even by people in their 70s, 80s and 90s. As the population becomes increasingly older every day, Laughter Yoga is a tool for transformational aging and increased longevity.

CHAPTER 9

Laughter Yoga For Children

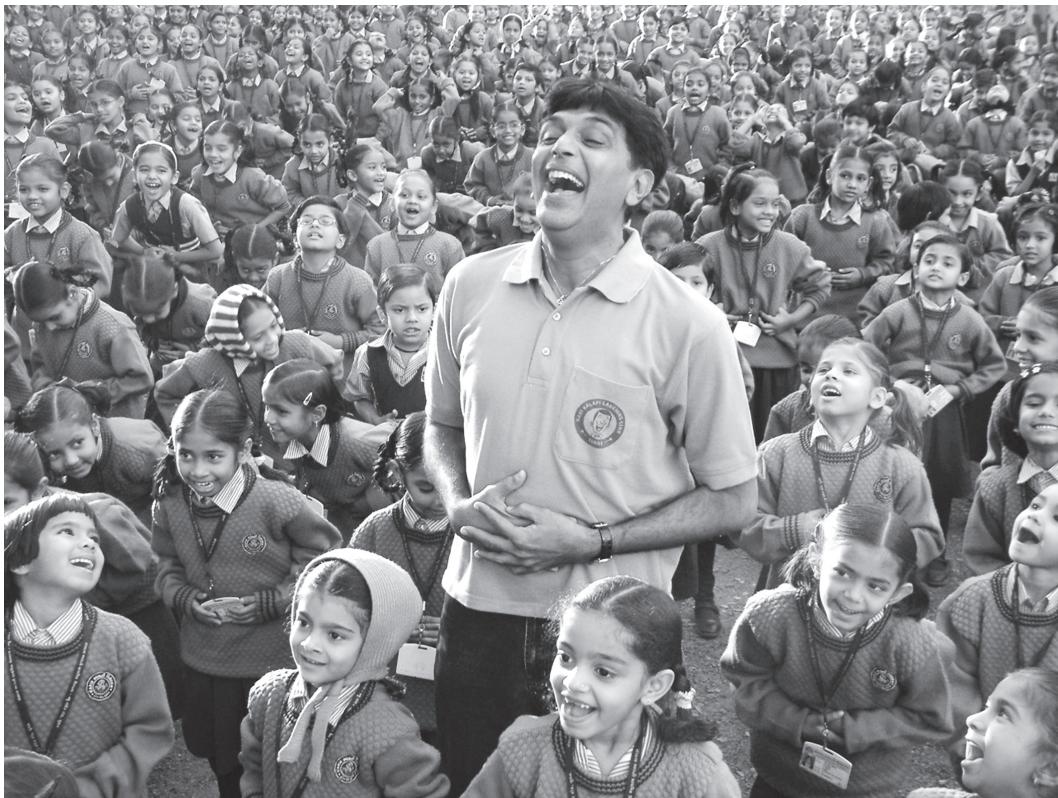
From time immemorial childhood has been a time for children to lead low-stress lives full of personal exploration and group play. It is a time of joy and unconditional laughter, with many children laughing more than 300 times a day. Modern studies reveal that through this period of play we develop emotional intelligence, now recognized as being the single major factor in our long-term life and career success.

Growing bodies require the intense physical exercise of play to learn motor skills, develop and cope with rapid growth. In play we develop emotional and social skills and learn how to cope with different situations – skills that determine and influence much of our future life.

Children today are increasingly subjected to new and very different childhood realities. Play and physical activity is restricted, new stresses are imposed, adult behavior is demanded at very early ages, group play and child-to-child interaction is being replaced with electronic games and remote communication devices.

Stresses faced by children

- Children whose natural energy is traditionally expressed in movement, laughter and play are being forced to sit still and concentrate for extended periods from an early age.
- Studies show a huge leap in attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Children with this disorder are extremely hyperactive and find it difficult to concentrate for even short periods. They act on impulse and often appear to have no sense of danger.
- Children faced with a competitive academic environment from early age are being pressured by their parents and teachers to attain excellent grades.
- Schoolwork results in several symptoms of stress and high social anxiety.
- The increase in broken homes and the consequent lack of emotional bonding and long-term relationships with parents or responsible adults combine to cause a host of emotional problems.
- Working parents and the reduction in family size leaves children alone for long stretches of time, rather than in healthy group play.



- A general decrease in parenting skills deprives children of strong moral and emotional guidance and role models.
- Video games, television and the internet have taken over the free and interactive play. High tech communication skills have eroded the fun of laughing at simple things.
- Teenagers in particular are faced with demands of college and parents to perform and achieve goals that may be unrealistic. Not meeting these goals often leads to anxiety that is detrimental to physical and mental health, in some cases even resulting in suicidal tendencies.

The Need for Laughter

A desperate and increasing need for laughter and playfulness exists in children of all ages today. Laughter can help children to cope with stress and also replace some of the play and laughter time that they are losing to formalized educational systems and changes in lifestyle. Laughter Yoga can bring more laughter into children's lives and therefore it should be promoted and integrated into educational systems.

Laughter Yoga is Fun, Easy and Economical

Laughter Yoga is a very economical addition to any school or educational institution. Training costs are low and the major investment is time. Because Laughter Yoga is fun, it is normally welcomed and enjoyed by students and staff. No known downsides or negative side effects have been reported.

Laughter Yoga introduced in school books

With the growing popularity of Laughter Yoga, many school books have incorporated Laughter Yoga as a chapter. In India and South East Asia there is a full chapter on 'Fundamentals of Laughter Yoga' in Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) X standard course book. A Japanese high school book has introduced Laughter Yoga for the students, while Cambridge University language book also carries an article on Laughter Yoga. But, just the knowledge about Laughter Yoga is not enough for children, we are now creating a Laughter Yoga program which will soon be incorporated as a curriculum for school children.

At the end of the manual, in the appendix, you can find different categories of laughter exercises, which may be suitable for school children. For example, children love all the exercises related to animals, having fun on the beach, birthday party theme etc.

Techniques for Laughter Yoga session with Children

For Young Children (Below 15)

The best technique to laugh with young children is to play 'follow the leader'. Children are very good imitators and love copying. Use this technique to make laughter a game. Ask the kids to mimic your actions and then create a one minute sequence of laughter, funny gestures, funny faces and funny sounds. Try to use laughter sounds for 60 to 70 percent of the sounds. Give them time to finish, then immediately start a new sequence.

For Older Children (Above 15)

For older children we normally use standard Laughter Yoga exercises, but be warned it can be hard work. As children reach adolescence, it becomes harder for them to simulate laughter. They are very self-conscious and less open to laugh without reason. Making teenagers laugh can be daunting and unnerving. It's a challenge to cut them loose from their inhibitions and shyness, but it can be done. Remember that they're just kids trying to set foot in the adult world, so be patient and work hard to establish a bond and an understanding which will bring them closer and help them express more freely.

Five Benefits of Laughter Yoga for College and University Students

- 1. Stress Release:** Students in college students experience a higher academic workload than in high school and often take on large financial burdens for the first time. As they look to enter the workforce they also encounter greater competition than ever. Laughter Yoga exercises are the fastest way to release stress and anxiety.
- 2. Emotional Intelligence:** IQ often influences the ability to get a job, while emotional intelligence plays a big role in the ability to thrive at it. Laughter Yoga is a great tool for developing emotional intelligence in college students to create healthy social, academic and professional relationships.
- 3. Develops Self-Confidence:** Laughter Yoga helps overcome shyness and inhibitions, improves the ability to speak in public and develops self-confidence. This will help them the children perform well in extracurricular activities.
- 4. Preserving Creative Edge of Childhood:** Laughter Yoga encourages us to be childlike and playful. For college students transitioning from youth to adulthood, Laughter Yoga is a reminder to take life less seriously and use the creativity naturally possessed in abundance as kids.
- 5. Improves stamina for sports:** Since Laughter Yoga is an exercise for your lungs that improves the breathing capacity, it builds stamina for sports and other physical activities.

CHAPTER 10

How to lead a Laughter Yoga Session Effectively- Systems and Procedures

Pre-session Guidelines

Frequency: In India laughter sessions are held every day, while in the West it takes place just once a week or once in 15 days. From our experience, the benefits of Laughter Yoga are greatest when practiced every day. This is why Laughter Clubs members in India are getting the maximum health benefits.

Venue: While selecting the venue for a laughter session, especially indoors, remember high roof venues are not suitable as there is a lot of echo and the energy of laughter gets lost due to large space. Another factor you should keep in your mind is the size of the group. Do not select big venues if you have a small group size, because it is better to be close to each other while doing laughter exercises.

When doing a laughter session outdoors, e.g. in public parks, make sure they are away from residential buildings so as not to disturb other people. Even indoors Laughter Yoga can get noisy so ensure that the doors and windows are closed to minimize the noise levels.

Group size: To run a Laughter Yoga session we need at least 5 to 15 people to make a good group dynamic. The more the merrier as it makes the laughter session more infectious, and becomes easy for people to laugh. As a leader, one has to spend little energy and effort to keep the group dynamics and energy going of a large group. But, when there are less people, the leader has to spend more effort and energy to keep up the group dynamic.

Clothing: Wear loose clothing which does not restrict your abdominal movements. Avoid tight strings or belts above the navel area.

Utilization of Space: Put posters/banners on the walls. If you use only a part of a large space, try and partition the area with a row of chairs. Also have chairs available for people who cannot sit comfortably on the ground. Make sure all people coming for the first time sign a liability release form and you have your proper insurance.

Session Guidelines

Duration: 30 - 45 minutes

Laughter Leader or Anchor Person: Laughter Yoga sessions are led by a laughter leader or teacher who controls the session, explains and gives commands to start and complete different exercises. The leader guides members to start and complete exercises together for improved group dynamic.

Introduction: Briefly introduce yourself and Laughter Yoga. Explain contraindications and make sure people have signed the disclaimer.

Caution the group: They have to clap, breathe and laugh which may lead to some strain. Tell them if in doubt, they should not do it. They can just watch or walk out if they lose control.

How should people stand: While conducting a Laughter Yoga session, make sure people do not stand in a circle as they need to keep moving and have an eye contact with other group members. In a circle, people feel more self-conscious and try not to move much. This affects the quality of laughter as there is lack of interaction and eye contact. Therefore, ask the group to stand randomly and close to each other to help maintain the group dynamic.

Less force more enjoyment: Most sessions focus on enjoyment rather than force when doing laughter exercises. So remember don't strain or force out laughter.

Childlike playfulness: We strive to cultivate childlike playfulness during Laughter Yoga exercises.

Open your mouth a bit wider: While doing laughter exercises, ho ho ha ha clapping and chanting ask people to open their mouth a bit wider to experience the sounds of laughter and ho ho ha ha coming from the belly. This will help the diaphragm to move which in turn brings more relaxation.

Remember the exercises: To run a successful laughter session, one needs to practice and remember at least 30 to 40 Laughter Yoga exercises. You can learn these from our 40 Foundation DVD. In case you can't remember, keep a little card with the names of exercises in your pocket and refer to it while taking the session.

Giving Commands

The most important skill of a leader is to give commands for participants to start the exercise together and laugh at the same time. He has to constantly maintain the group dynamic and energy. This requires clear commands. Therefore, as a

leader, always embody good energy levels, be audible and clear. Remember powerful people have a powerful voice. How much people laugh will depend on your energy levels as they are copying you.

How to end the exercise is equally important. Use clapping or other techniques like ho ho ha ha chant to stop the exercise. In case the group responds well to a particular exercise, you can allow them to continue a little longer. But, remember never to stop the exercise midway or prematurely. Stop it when you feel it is complete.

Before starting any exercise, tell its name, explain how to do it and demonstrate.

Every leader will develop a personal style. A command to start may be ONE.... TWO....THREE or ONE... TWO.... START... delivered slowly, loudly and building in volume.

For deep breathing, participants must start together as the timing of inhalation, holding and expiration should be carefully controlled to remain within group limits but push these limits gently. The command may be: '**Now we'll take a deep breath.... Ready.... Start!**'

Demonstrate Stretching and New Exercises

Practice giving instructions for stretching and other exercises. Especially with new participants, the leader should demonstrate an exercise to show the movement, speed and timing. Always keep them moving and you must also move so people follow your example. Clap dynamically (motion creates emotion). Swing from side to side, introduce easy dance movements and keep smiling. Move them around to avoid people sticking with friends or in one area throughout a session.

Sometimes you can promote good sustained eye contact by dividing the group into two facing each other. This format is interactive and playful and works well for certain types of exercises.

Pay compliments. Keep telling them how great they are --- '**I Like It', 'You Are Great', 'Very Good' etc.**

We generally do not instruct or correct members during sessions. This is not a martial art and people will not have negative side effects from finding their own style.

Be Creative

Vary the exercises to control the pace: start slow, build up, slow down, build up, slow down and build up again. Having a theme like 'At the airport', 'In the kitchen', 'In a hospital' etc helps some people to visualize more easily and become caught up in the playfulness.

Keep it fresh and try to change the exercises every session. Challenge participants to develop their own exercises but try them before the class begins, to decide whether to use them. It can be fun to hand the group over to participants sometime, but be careful. Some people may get out of hand or behave inappropriately. Ask ahead before the session what they plan to do. Interrupt and take over if you feel things going off course. Introduce dancing or singing. Laughter Yoga is about joy and dance and music can help build the joy.

Other Factors

Mind the time: A laughter session should start and end on time. Excessive laughter may create distress in some.

Be mindful: If your group responds well to an exercise let it continue. When you believe it is time, stop it.

Keep religion and politics away: Do not use religion or politics in any exercises or explanations. We are non-political, non-religious, non-parochial, and non-judgmental. We love everyone equally.

Conclusion

Involve your members. Ask for feedback. What did they like best? What don't they like?

Invite active participation. You must actively work to develop a 'core group' of people who are willing to lead exercises and in the course of time, lead sessions so that you can take time off occasionally without canceling sessions. These people will also help and support you in special events.

Successful leaders develop their core members to take over a club or session, and then start another. Some leaders in India have started dozens of clubs in this way.

Keep the interest of the group in mind. If your group wants more exercises, longer or shorter sessions, sessions at another time, listen to them and discuss it with the group before making a decision.

CHAPTER 11

Role of a Laughter Leader

Leadership Qualities: A successful laughter session requires a skilled leader. Their main function is to explain, start and stop different exercises and to control and adjust the 'pace' of the session varying stretching and breathing with hearty laughter. The leader is an example to all and laughs more easily and infectiously than others. In addition, a good leader is one who leads people from behind helping them to become leaders. In order to have a good relationship with other co-leaders, never find faults, instead look for positive qualities and profusely appreciate them. In other words, do not correct people; connect with them.

Motivate: The leader motivates others to drop their inhibitions and be more playful so that simulated laughter can change into genuine peals of hilarity using techniques including 'motion creates emotion'. Be careful to interact with each person through eye contact and even physical proximity, especially those that require help getting into laughter.

Promote Punctuality: Try to start on time and encourage your participants to be there. Punctuality is a sign of respect and getting to a session on time will reinforce their self-esteem. However, if most people are unusually late one day due to a traffic jam, accident, sports event, etc., then ask the others if they mind waiting ten minutes to start (you will end late) and play a game to occupy and amuse those who have arrived.

Maintain Discipline: Try to keep control through a loving attitude rather than through forceful behavior. Avoid confrontation during a session. If a member gets out of hand talk to them privately after the session and ask them to modify their behavior as a mark of respect towards the group.

Stay Current and Tune In: Laughter Yoga is evolving continuously worldwide. Try to keep up to date with improved techniques so you can deliver maximum benefit to your participants. Laughter Yoga International is constantly building ways to capture the latest developments and deliver these to all Laughter Yoga leaders and professionals through a new website that promotes networking and sharing. Please visit www.laughteryoga.org regularly and be sure to add your insights and experience so that all can benefit.

How to become a better Leader

The joy and benefits you receive through laughter are passed to others. Try to laugh often in laughter sessions, when socializing, with your family, or by yourself. Dr. Kataria has developed a system to make it easier and more effective to laugh alone.

Trust and do the best you can. You will not always succeed; you will not always achieve your objectives. If things don't go your way, don't become disappointed or gloomy. Be thankful for what you achieved and look at the positive side.

Actively listen. Develop your empathy. When you listen to people, try to imagine how they feel, try to stand in their shoes. Take the time to hear people out.

Devote 30 minutes a day to introspection/meditation/laughter/time spent in contemplative stillness/writing a journal/walking in creative silence/doing one thing perfectly and with full attention. Any of these activities will positively impact your life. Spend some time each week thinking about Laughter Yoga and your role, achievements and plans.

Work smart. Learn to tap into the creative powers that are manifest in your group. Involve your members and be open/willing to change.

Develop a core group of committed members and develop their skills in leading parts of the session until they can lead occasional sessions. Lead by inspiring them to do this good work. Make your club a team effort rather than a one-man show. Develop common or shared goals. Find people who are retired or have lifestyles that allow them to volunteer and devote time.

Acknowledge people with good ideas. Good leaders recognize and praise others for their contribution.

Practice Lion Laughter on a regular basis to develop your voice, and try to improve your skills in leading exercises.

Practice opening your mouth a little wider. A wide open mouth brings laughter deeper from the abdomen. Laugh from your belly (not your throat).

Be aware of your body language. Try to use full-arm movements and use your body to express yourself.

Make eye contact with as many different participants as possible. This promotes laughter and tells you who may need more help.

Be dynamic in your exercises with almost exaggerated movement. You are the role model -- swing your arms and upper body and move around. Bend your knees in rhythm and encourage group rhythm.

Don't talk too much. Laughter Yoga is about doing and experiencing.

Walk the talk. Laughter Yoga is about developing joy, becoming more emotionally sensitive, developing feelings of caring and sharing, and improving your mental attitude. Develop these qualities in all aspects of your life.

CHAPTER 12

How to Start a Laughter Club

Laughter Clubs are a worldwide network of social clubs run by volunteers under the aegis of Laughter Yoga International based in Bangalore, India. People get together in groups in public

places or indoor venues and practice Laughter Yoga exercises along with breathing and stretching exercises to reap the enormous health benefits.

What's Free?

Laughter Yoga Clubs are social clubs that are free for all anywhere in the world. We do not charge any membership fee. However, members of the club should share expenses towards hiring of venue or equipment.

What's Fee Based?

Outside of Laughter Clubs, any teaching, coaching and training conducted by laughter leaders or teachers for personal and business development are chargeable as per the skills and abilities.

No Control on Laughter Clubs, No Posts, No Hierarchy

All Laughter Clubs are individual entities and are free functioning units. They are not under control of any other organization of a group or an institution anywhere in the world. Although there are no rules and regulations but on behalf of Laughter Yoga International we do offer important guidelines for social Laughter Clubs.

All Laughter clubs must follow three guidelines-

- 1. Non- political 2. Non-religious 3. Not for profit,**

Laughter Club Registration

The registration of Laughter Club is FREE. You can register your clubs Laughter Yoga International website www.laughteryoga.org.

Starting a Laughter Club in India

In India, most Laughter Clubs function on a daily basis and the members meet at public parks. If you want to start a Laughter Club, find a place in your locality where people can assemble early morning, after their regular walk. It can be a public park, an open ground or a beach. The chosen place should not be in the immediate vicinity of residential complexes so as to prevent any disturbance to others. Apart from social Laughter clubs, Laughter Yoga exercises can be combined with traditional yoga classes at the end of their sessions, as well as with any other health building activities like aerobics, gymnastics, dance and singing.

In Western Countries

The concept of Laughter Clubs is slightly different in the West where club members like to meet for 1-2 hours every weekend or fortnightly. They laugh together for 30 minutes along with breathing and stretching exercises, followed by Laughter Meditation for 30 minutes. Later, there are humor activities, fun games, brain storming on psychological and philosophical aspects of laughter and dancing with music.

Training for Leaders

You need to be trained as a laughter leader to start a Laughter Club. Laughter Yoga workshops and trainings are being done all over the world by qualified Laughter Yoga professionals. You can find the details on www.laughteryoga.org.

Core Group: If you take the responsibility of running a social Laughter Club, it will too much of work and commitment. It is better to form a core group of 4- 5 like-minded people, who can lead the club by taking turns and also jointly promote different activities.

Frequency and Timing: Daily meetings are best in terms of benefits for yourself and participants, but for many this will not be practical. Consider meeting once or twice a week, or even less frequently. The days of the week are also important. Weekends may be easier for many people (and for you if you work also).

Venue: Finding a free or very cheap venue can be a challenge. During some seasons you may be able to meet outdoors, but rainy and the winter season would make it difficult. Even in a park you may require permits, so do your research. Church halls, community centers, scout halls, public libraries, museums, hospitals or clinics may provide free venues if you do not charge. Another option is to meet at someone's home. If there are companies or organizations with an ideal space, ask them to donate the space in exchange for sponsorship promotion. They will generate goodwill among members.

Make sure the venue matches your group size, that it has adequate ventilation, toilet facilities and heating if you have cold winters. Be careful not to disturb neighbors as Laughter Clubs can get very noisy. Is the floor suitable for sitting or lying down? Also, beware of very high ceilings as laughter energy could be dissipated and echo may be a problem.

Try at all times to avoid costs or keep costs very low. Laughter Clubs need to be provided as a free service. If there are costs for venues and other necessities, these can be defrayed by making a small charge or asking for donations. You can also look for sponsors who will gain considerable goodwill from members of the club by helping to keep it free.

CHAPTER 13

Laughter Yoga Alone

As the Laughter Movement gained momentum, Dr. Kataria traveled to different parts of the world spreading the word of laughter and helping people to start their own clubs. There were times when he traveled almost six to seven months in a year, which finally took its toll and he became very stressed out. He started missing his moments with laughter. It was then he decided to do laughter exercises on his own. After trying a few exercises he continued experimenting different techniques every day. He felt great, and the result was similar to what he got from Laughter Clubs. Highly motivated, he started laughing alone for few minutes on a regular basis... That was the beginning of Laughter Yoga Alone.

Laughing Alone confirms that Laughter Yoga not only heals when practiced in a group but also when practiced alone. This exercise regime which comprises laughter and breathing exercises is very beneficial to people looking for alternative methods to laugh daily and also for patients suffering from chronic ailments and for those unable to move and exercise. Especially, in the West where Laughter Clubs meet just once a week, this is an innovative way of practicing laughter exercises and reaping the same health benefits as from the Clubs.

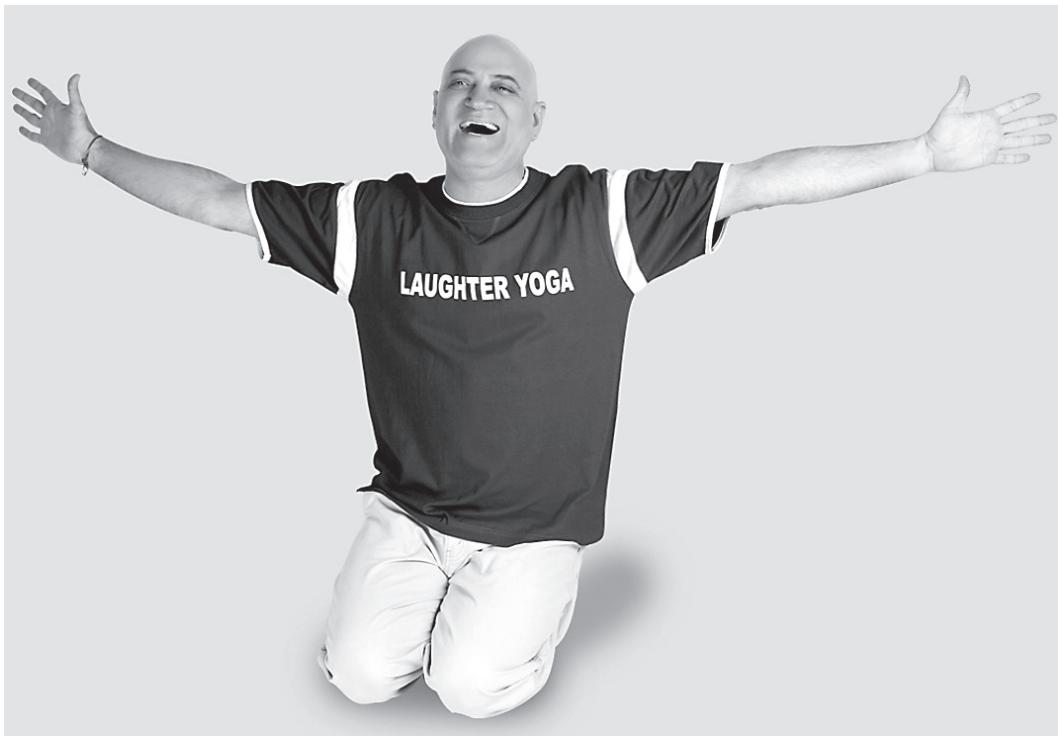
Many leaders and teachers tried Laughing Alone and the results were positive. People loved this new technique of Laughing Alone that helped release their feelings and maintain steady health.

Willingness Factor

It is very important to have the willingness to laugh. This factor sets a positive frame of mind and helps the person to open up and willingly do laughter exercises. While Laughing Alone, try to put feelings in your laughter which will enable you to fully express yourself and release suppressed emotions.

Have a Self-Dialogue

Do not judge the quality of your Laughter. Tell yourself it's not about real or spontaneous laughter. You are laughing and playing like a child only as a form of an exercise, which has scientifically proven benefits and gives more oxygen to the body to remain healthy. Appreciate and give yourself a pat each time you laugh more and without a reason.



40-Day Formula

If you continue to do Laughter Yoga Alone 40 days it will become a new habit. The brain develops new circuits and the act becomes a part of your unconscious mind.

Laughter is all about Playfulness

As laughter is all about cultivating childlike playfulness, it comes straight from the body and does not make use of any intellectual capacity of the brain. This clearly indicates that the source of laughter is within the body. Thereby, one can use it whenever necessary by moving the body at will. Even when alone, one can devise methods and exercises which help induce laughter in the body, which will soon be followed by the mind.

Though Laughter Clubs are an ideal platform to cultivate this playfulness, one can also practice the exercises while alone. In effect, Laughing Alone is the easiest way to overcome psychological barriers and inhibitions. Once you learn to play, laughter is a natural outcome.

Laughing Alone is a revolutionary technique that helps develop a positive conditioning of joy and bodily experience of laughter by doing laughter and breathing exercises over a period of time even without going to a Laughter Club. The brain develops new neuronal connections to produce happy neuropeptides and hormones in the body that can be triggered by the repetition of this physical action.

In NLP language, eliciting such a bodily reaction is called an "ANCHOR". By performing a joyful anchor action with the body, the mind can experience the emotion of joy complete with the chemical reactions it triggers. Our body and mind can be trained to laugh at will. It's like learning to ride a bicycle. Once learnt, you never forget it.

Every Person is Different

There is no one way of laughing. People can develop their own comfort zone with different sounds and gestures and different postures which facilitate Laughing Alone. As each person is different, it is important, that you create your own exercises and develop new ideas to discover what works best. More and more people are enjoying Laughing Alone. In fact, there has been quite a significant success in techniques that are playful, amusing and motivating. Once you start laughing and playing you become more creative.

Guidelines

Open your mouth wider and wear loose clothing: Don't try to keep your jaws tight. Each time you do Laughter exercises; open your mouth a bit wider to enable laughter from the belly. If your mouth is tightly closed, laughter will come from the throat or the upper chest. Wear loose and comfortable clothes for breathing and laughter exercises. The trousers should be tied below the naval and should not obstruct the abdominal movements. Try and avoid tight belts that restrict belly movement.

Duration and ideal time: Ideally one should spend 15 minutes each on yoga breathing and laughter exercises, with short breaks of relaxation. But you can begin with 10 minutes and gradually increase the duration. Laughter Yoga Alone should be ideally practiced the first thing in the morning as it will carry the cheerful mood and good feelings right through the day. If you don't feel like laughing early in the morning, begin with some warming up and breathing exercises. This will help to charge the body and soon facilitate laughter. You can also do it at anytime of the day to boost your energy levels.

Warming Up Exercises

Before you start laughter exercises, you must do some warm up exercises like ho ho ha ha ha, gibberish talking and tongue swindling and very good very good yeah are few bodily expressions of joy which you can practice. These exercises will be a



lot more fun if you do them alone in front of a mirror. Do them gently in the beginning and gradually increase the intensity until you get comfortable with screaming with joy. You can change the pitch and tone of your voice to find your comfort levels.

Five Laughter Exercises for Laughing Alone

1. Fake It Until You Make It

The slogan of all Laughter Clubs is, 'Fake it until you make it'. This is based on a scientific fact that even if you are faking a particular emotion, the body cannot differentiate between real and make belief emotions.

Try faking laughter by making different sounds of laughter ha haha; he hehehe; ho hoho.... and keep playing with these exercises. It is a kind of silliness. You will discover that you start laughing genuinely while hearing absurd sounds of your own laughter.

Keep trying different ways of fake laughter sounds and you'll find some of them affordable and amusing. Stick to them and practice it more and more. Initially fake laughter may seem awkward but with repeated practice your body will get conditioned and the moment you start faking laughter it will get into the real laughter mode very quickly.

Voice Reinforcement Technique

Sound of Laughter: As children, we shout and scream to express ourselves fully, but as adults we have learnt to control the pitch and tone of our voice. As a result, we are not able to express our feelings to the fullest.

The freedom and expression of the voice affects the freedom of emotions in the mind and vice versa. This is the reason that everyone has a distinct sound of laughter which keeps on changing according to our state of mind and personality type. The way one laughs is a signature of one's character. Since there is a two way link between the body and the mind, by opening up your voice and sound of laughter, you can bring about a change in your emotional expression.

Keep the following points in mind while doing Laughter Yoga exercises:

The purpose of laughter and breathing exercises is to prolong the exhalation in order to empty the lungs out completely. This will help to inhale deeply and get more oxygen flowing into your body. While doing laughter exercises, try to keep on laughing until you run out of breath. This will remove the residual air from the lungs.

While laughing alone, keep your chin up as it becomes much easier to laugh if you are looking upwards. It makes the respiratory tract straight and facilitates the flow of air.

Spreading your arms out and looking upwards creates a happy body language. Because of the body mind link, this happy posture leads to release of happy chemicals in the brain.

Voice Reinforcement Helps Bring Laughter Easily.

You can try this technique in two ways:

- a) Take a long breath and start saying HaaaaHaaaaHaaaaHaaaaaHaaa five to seven times. Then try to laugh and keep laughing until you run out of breath. Keep in mind that the sound of HaaaaaHaaaaa and laughter should continue within the same breath so as to empty the lungs out completely. In the beginning it might feel a bit awkward but soon you'll start getting bouts of real laughter.
- b) Use the vowel sounds Aeeeeeeeeeeeeeee and prolong it while raising your arms over your head. Keep your chin up and laugh ha ha ha ha. Repeat the same with Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa.....and Oooooooooooooooo..... Do it five to six times and take a few deep breaths in between.

Voice Reinforcement Techniques are best performed while standing but you can also do them lying down. Some people find it easier to laugh in this position, as bringing the knees towards the chest helps to expel the air easily.

Childlike giggling is also a great way of doing Laughter Yoga exercises alone.

2. Breath Holding Technique

Take a long breath, raise your arms over your head and hold your breath while stretching the spine backwards. As you try to hold the breath a little longer, you will burst out laughing. It builds up pressure inside the lungs and facilitates laughter and gradually the brain develops new connections of combining breathing, stretching and holding the breath with laughter. It becomes a conditioned reflex. You can easily do it alone at home because it has been programmed into your body.

Variation: Keep your eyes closed and take a long breath. Try to hold it as long as possible and hold the urge to laugh. In your anticipation of laughter, you will really burst out laughing. In the beginning do it deliberately or pretend to laugh but soon you will experience the real feelings and laughter will be more spontaneous.

3. One-Meter Laughter

It is preferably done in a standing position but can also be done while sitting. Stand with your feet a little apart and take both your hands to the left. Then slide one arm over the other and stretch it to the opposite shoulder as in measuring one meter piece of fabric. There are three stages as you do this: First is when you touch the elbow while sliding, second is when you reach the opposite shoulder and the final position is when you stretch both your arms, push your chin up, open your mouth a bit wider and laugh heartily.



This technique helps the movement of the diaphragm and allows laughter to flow easily straight from the belly. It has a cathartic effect you can release all pent up emotions and feelings and experience a sense of joy and freedom.

4. Aloha Laughter

Derived from the traditional Hawaiian greeting this exercise is very stimulating and provides for better circulation as the body movements facilitate an improved supply of blood to the brain. If practiced alone it also give you freedom of space to share moments of laughter all by yourself, thus giving you a feeling of well being and joy.



It is ideally performed in the morning, right after you wake up, straight on the bed. Sit on your knees and place some cushions in front of you. Raise your arms, push up your chin and start saying a prolonged Alooaaaa in a crescendo. Then end it by saying a loud Haaa and laugh heartily. Go down as you do this and dig your head into the cushions---carry on laughing and don't stop if you're enjoying it. As you dig into the cushions you can also cover your head with your arms and continue to laugh. This helps in the flow of air and lots of people find it very stimulating. They even go hysterical and laugh longer to experience a total feeling of release.

This can also be performed while standing. Just raise your arms, put up your chin and say Alooaa in a crescendo. End it with saying Haaaa and laughing out loud.

This exercise should not be attempted by people suffering from positional vertigo as they might feel giddy on bending down. Also remember to pad your bed well with cushions so that you don't hurt yourself as you bend down.

5. Holding your Knees Laughter

This exercise helps facilitate the upward movement of the diaphragm by pressing the abdominal muscles. It also helps to increase the blood flow to the brain thus improving the circulation. It involves simple steps of pulling in the knees and releasing them as you exhale and inhale.

Lie on your back, hold your knees together with both your hands and slowly bring them closer to your chest. While doing this, push your chin upwards and keep your mouth a little open and exhale. This helps to straighten the respiratory tract and allows better and free flow of air.

In the next step, release your knees and inhale while taking in deep breaths.



How do we use this technique in Laughter Yoga Alone?

As you bring your knees closer and push your chin upwards use the sound reinforcement technique of laughter. Say a prolonged Haaaaaaa in a crescendo and then start laughing. Take a few deep breaths in between bouts of laughter. While laughing you can either keep your eyes open or closed depending on whatever makes you more comfortable and helps you laugh easily.

Application

Laughter Yoga Alone is a great way of releasing stress and negative thoughts. It is a very useful technique to dissipate anger and helps focus on meditative activity. It also helps develop self-confidence as it reduces shyness and inhibitions. It helps to deal with minor irritations that come across our way in daily lives. Broken vending machines, traffic jams, rude teenagers, long queues in supermarket can cause major stress reactions. Learning to laugh alone helps to face these 'free floating anxieties' in a much positive way.

It not only helps to communicate with others effectively but also creates a safe environment for others to connect with you and come closer. This goes a long way in achieving success in business, personal and social life.

Laughing Alone in the Bathroom

The bathroom provides for privacy and safety. You can be as funny as you want to and have no fear of anyone watching. Regular laughing while having a shower gets programmed into the body. The moment you turn the tap on, you will start laughing automatically. This is the benefit of repeating any activity and combining physical behavior and with it.

Walking and Laughing

While walking alone, you can find a safe place and laugh at the top of your voice and experience the feel of freedom.

Laughing in the Car

Laughing Alone exercises can be very effectively used during trying times on the road with traffic snarl-up and other daily irritants. Instead of losing patience you can laugh away these situations and change your feelings. You can do the hoho ha ha exercise without any sound. It all depends upon your level of comfort as you might be aware of other people watching you laughing. You can also pick up your mobile phone and pretend to laugh for a few minutes.

Laugh At Your Own Self - Ha Ha Mantra

Laughing at your own self is not about degrading but is a gentle reminder that life is serious and we must take ourselves lightly in order to keep our spirits high. Instead of laughing you can just say haaaaahaaaaahaaaaa a few times and it will make you feel good. It will change your negative perspective of the situation. Try it in case you mess up something or drop food on your shirt or when something falls from your hands.

Ha Ha Mantra for Free Floating Hostilities

Our lives are flooded with innumerable situations that give rise to irritability and stress. We call them 'free floating hostilities' as they are freely available everywhere. These infuriating situations bring a big change in your temperament and attitude. The best substitute for these hostilities is Ha Ha Mantra. Every time you find such a situation you will remember doing haaaaahaaaaahaaaaa.. and it will protect you from getting into a bad mood.

Laughing with Household Chores

You can laugh while doing repetitive household chores like washing dishes, mopping floor, vacuum cleaning, hanging clothes, cleaning windows and many others. This is not a loud laughter but a gentle giggle which will help to change your perspective towards mundane chores and will make them less daunting.

CHAPTER 14

Skype Laughter Clubs

What is Skype Laughter Club

Do you want to add more laughter to your life but can't find time to join a Laughter Club? No problem. Now, you can laugh from the comfort of your home or even on your cell phone. Skype laughter sessions are happening many times in a day suitable for different time zones. Just choose a convenient time and laugh several times in a day if you wish to.

Skype Laughter Club is an online community of laughter lovers from all over the world who connect and practice Laughter Yoga on Skype for 15 – 20 minutes every day.

On January 2009, Laughter Yoga professionals Ines Schwarz from Austria and Anu Saari from Finland created Skype Laughter Club and invited several laughter lovers from all over the world to join them and since then it has caught up globally.

Why Skype Laughter Club

The demand for Laughter Yoga has increased exponentially and we are getting inquiries from all over the world from people who wish to practice Laughter Yoga and get multiple benefits from it. At many places there are no Laughter Clubs, no laughter leaders or teachers and no laughter classes. So how does one practice their laughter exercises? Skype Laughter Club is the answer where you can do Laughter Yoga every day.

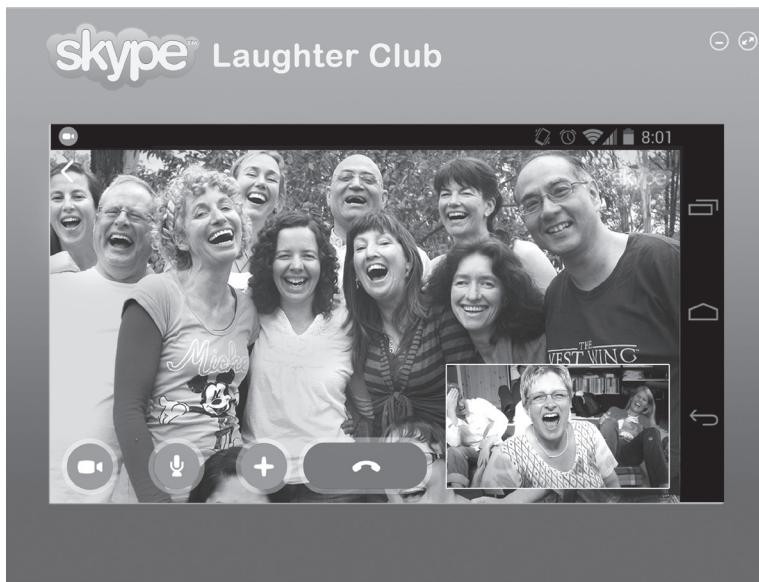
You will get the benefits of laughter exercises only if you laugh every day for at least for 15 – 20 minutes. Laughter Clubs in the West happen only once in a week and that's not good enough to reap the benefits. Therefore, Skype is a great way to practice laughter every day, especially for Laughter Yoga teachers and leaders.

Laughter Yoga on Skype

How to Join Skype Laughter Club

What you need is a computer with Skype (it is free to download www.skype.com) internet connection, a headset or a microphone and speakers. Joining Skype Laughter Club is easy.

Step 1 – Add "laughterclub" to your Skype contacts. We will accept your request and you are on.



Step 2 – Choose a convenient time according to your time zone and you will find a list of different laughter sessions on our website.

Step 3 – Before starting a session, the coordinator of Skype Laughter Club sends out a message inviting the online

contacts to join. If you wish to join the session please send a message saying "I am in... ho ho hahaha... Please call" or send a smiley sign. At the scheduled time you will get a call and you can join in.

How long does a session last: Normally, Skype laughter session is for 15 minutes but if there are some latecomers the session is extended for another five minutes.

What can you expect from a Skype Laughter session: It is a conference call where we just laugh for no reason and focus on laughter as a form of exercise. You can laugh gently, hear others laughing and wait for your laughter to become spontaneous. Even if it does not, just keep laughing in order to prolong your laughter. In between, you can take breaks and do deep breathing while you hear other people laugh.

You can also have a look at the chat box and interact with people from different parts of the world and get to know each other. You can even write if there is any problem with the Skype call. Normally, we hear other people laugh on audio and do not encourage people to show up on video chat as it affects the quality of transmission and the Skype calls start breaking. However, at the end of the session if there are less than 10 people you can show up on video and say hello to each other.

If your call drops during the session due to a connection error you can call again and join the group or send a chat message again saying "please call".

Important: During the session make sure that is no disturbance in the form of funny sounds and noises in the background. Let the laughter be pure laughter. Nevertheless, you can play with fun stuff, gibberish talking, animal sounds and anything playful.

CHAPTER 15

World Laughter Day

History

World Laughter Day was created in 1998 by Dr. Madan Kataria, founder of the worldwide Laughter Yoga movement. The celebration of World Laughter Day is a positive manifestation for world peace and is intended to build up a global consciousness of brotherhood and friendship through laughter. Its popularity has grown exponentially with that of the Laughter Yoga movement now counting thousands of Laughter Clubs in more than 100 countries.

The first World Laughter Day gathering took place in Mumbai, India, in 1998. Twelve thousand members from local and international Laughter Clubs joined together in a mega laughter session.

"HAPPY-DEMIC" was the first World Laughter Day gathering outside India. It took place in the year 2000 in Copenhagen, Denmark where more than 10,000 people gathered at Town Hall Square. It was the largest ever gathering that laughed and bonded together and the event went into the Guinness Book of World records.

Why World Laughter Day

The main objective of Laughter Yoga is to promote world peace through laughter. Some people find this idea fanciful, but an understanding of the science of emotions and emotional contagion in particular shows how this might be achieved. The practice of Laughter Yoga causes the body to release certain 'Feel Good' hormones into the bloodstream related to feelings of happiness, warmth, unconditional love, bonding, tolerance, forgiveness, generosity, and compassion. Let's call this a joy cocktail. The presence of this 'Joy Cocktail' of hormones and neuro-peptides precludes the production of other hormones and neuro-peptides that correspond with hatred, fear, violence, jealousy, aggression and the emotions associated with war and oppression.

By practicing Laughter Yoga in groups, the level of this Joy Cocktail is raised to high concentrations through the multiplier effect: people leaving Laughter Yoga sessions go forth and interact with many people who are in turn affected to varying degrees by this powerful emotional state of joy. They in turn 'infect' other people they come into contact with. You can experience this 'chain reaction' after your very first Laughter Yoga session. Not only will you cheer up your friends and family but you may also cheer up the bus driver and others on your bus, the people you work with, the staff at the shop and more. They in turn will cheer up others, and so on. By having tens of thousands of Laughter Clubs all over the



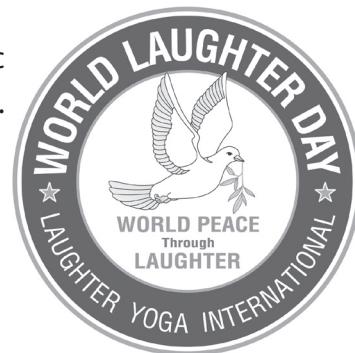
world, it will create a positive energy which will change the consciousness of the globe for the better. Actually, the formula for world peace is very simple – one person at a time multiplies it and spread it...

Format

The usual format of WLD celebration is the congregation of Laughter Club members, their families and friends at some important landmark in their city like big squares, public parks or auditoriums and laugh collectively. They pray for world peace and read out the message from Dr. Kataria.

In India, Laughter Club members gather in public parks and take out a procession or a Peace march. They carry banners and placards such as -

"World Peace Through Laughter",
"The Whole World Is An Extended Family",
"Laugh & Make Others Laugh",
"Join Laughter Club – It's FREE!" etc.



During the march all chant "Ho, Ho, Ha, Ha, Ha" and "very good, very good, yeah!" clapping and dancing. After walking some distance, they stop to do a few Laughter Yoga exercises and then move on. At the end of the march, they assemble on a stage or platform where laughter leaders conduct a brief 10 min laughter session followed by reading of Dr. Kataria's message for World Peace.

This is followed by a variety entertainment program of music, dance and laughter contests. One can organize contests with prizes like: Best laughing man / woman / child / senior, Horrible singing contest, etc. Winners are those with the most infectious, natural and effortless laughter for no reason.

CHAPTER 16

Different types of Trainings at Laughter Yoga International University

Since group laughter without reason is a new concept, one is required to understand the basic philosophy and learn different skills in order to conduct a successful laughter session. We need proficient laughter leaders who can lead a group of people through Laughter Yoga exercises along with yogic breathing and Laughter Meditation. To facilitate knowledge and skills, we have developed different types of trainings, seminars and workshops conducted by trained Laughter Yoga professionals.

There are four levels of trainings:

1. Basic Learning Course – This is a one day experiential workshop which can be offered by certified leaders, teachers and master trainers. This is not a certified program but participants will get basic knowledge about the concept and philosophy of Laughter Yoga. They will learn how it works and what benefits it brings to the body and mind. Participants will also experience a Laughter Yoga session and Laughter Yoga Meditation, plus how to get involved in different areas of application of Laughter Yoga. They will also learn how to laugh alone at home and get practical ideas about how to bring more laughter into daily life. This course can be taught by Certified Laughter Yoga leaders, teachers and master trainers. You can find the course agenda in Appendix 15.

2. Two - Day Certified Laughter Yoga Leader Training (CLYL): This training is done by certified Laughter Yoga teachers for two days, at the end of which participants are certified as laughter leaders.

What you will learn in this training: This is a basic training on how to lead a laughter session for social clubs, corporate organizations, seniors, school children and people with special needs. You will acquire the basic facilitation skills of how to lead a group of people through laughter session and meditation. You will also learn the history, concept, philosophy and different steps of Laughter Yoga and Laughter Meditation. During this course, you will also learn why we need to laugh more today, scientific research on laughter and its effects on human physiology and behavior, essential link between yoga and laughter and the multi health benefits of Laughter Yoga.

3. Five- Day Certified Laughter Yoga Teacher Training (CLYT): During the course, you will learn how to lead a group of people through simulated Laughter Yoga techniques and skills of converting this simulated laughter into real infectious and spontaneous laughter without using jokes, comedy or humor. You will be given an opportunity to lead a laughter session during practice sessions. You will also learn the powerful technique of real and deeper Laughter Meditation, where you do not have to make any effort to laugh and laughter flows like a fountain. You will be taught how to lead the people through guided relaxation and other grounding techniques. You will get the opportunity to watch video presentations

This is a five- day intensive training course for laughter leaders conducted primarily by Dr. Kataria and some authorized laughter teachers or master trainers. At the end of the training, laughter leaders are certified as laughter teachers and have been given an in depth knowledge about leading Laughter Yoga in different areas of application along with promotion, marketing, PR and training skills.

Who needs it: Anyone who is committed to spreading Laughter Yoga will benefit from this training. It will be of special interest to:

- Yoga and fitness teachers
- HR and management training professionals
- Health care professionals
- Teachers and sports coaches
- Psychologists and psychiatrists
- Entertainment professionals
- Senior care workers
- Marriage and family therapists
- Life coaches and alternative therapists
- Sales managers
- Tourism professionals & tour guides

4. Certified Laughter Yoga Master Trainer - This is the highest level of certification and you will be authorized to conduct five- day Certified Laughter Yoga Teacher trainings. Master Trainer courses are conducted only by Dr. Madan Kataria, the founder of Laughter Yoga and are offered by invitation only at his discretion depending on the knowledge, experience and skills of the Teacher.

CHAPTER 17

Prozone Membership: Continued Education for Laughter Yoga Professionals

After taking this training, you will be certified as a Laughter Yoga leader. Laughter Yoga is spreading exponentially all over the world and is constantly evolving. We have a special section on our website called Prozone, which is dedicated to update your knowledge and skills of Laughter Yoga methods on an ongoing basis. As a certified leader you will get six months free Prozone membership. We will receive your user name and password as soon as your teachers submit your names to our admin team.

Highlights of Prozone membership

Laughter Yoga Prozone is a premium membership program dedicated for continuing education for Laughter Yoga professionals. It is a way to stay current with new concepts and programs of Laughter Yoga which include laughter exercises, techniques, business tips, training tips and articles on scientific research. It is also a way to connect to news about Laughter Yoga Foundation and Laughter Yoga International University. Use your membership to maximize your potential in the growing new fields of Laughter Yoga's different areas of application, such as social Laughter Clubs, seniors, schools, corporate, and special needs. In addition, you will receive a monthly newsletter from Dr. Kataria.

Value added services

We are enhancing several value added services for Prozone members. With the help of our designers at Laughter Yoga International University we offer complimentary design services for you in the following:

- Your business card
- General Basic Learning Course Flyer
- Training Flyer
- Corporate Flyer
- E-Flyer / E-Brochure

You supply us with the text information and your professional photograph and we do the rest. Any artwork and design requested beyond this will be chargeable.

Here are other subscription options:

1 year	USD 99
2 years	USD 170
5 years	USD 395

CHAPTER 18

Promotional Seminars / Free Public Seminars

To get more people involved in Laughter Yoga, whether it is a social Laughter Club, teaching, coaching, trainings or you want to develop business with Laughter Yoga, you need to do several promotional seminars, mostly free of cost. The objective is to make more and more people aware about the benefits of Laughter Yoga and give them an experiential session. Once they have gone through the experience, they will be motivated to get involved in different activities of Laughter Yoga. These public seminars will also be a great opportunity to invite media, which will further help to spread the message.

Who should organize Public Events?

If you organize the event you might have to incur heavy costs and there will be a lot of work. A better idea is to find a suitable sponsor, who will take away your burden of organization and promotion. There are many such social organizations like NGOs, Rotary Club, Lions Club, Cancer self-help groups who are always on the lookout for free speakers and will be willing to organize the entire seminar. You just need to deliver the seminar and promote yourself and your services. This is the most cost effective way of promoting Laughter Yoga.

Guidelines in case you want to organize / promote your own event

Promote your seminar with some low-cost flyers that you can put up in public places and possibly distribute to homes in the area. Try to put up notices in cafes, supermarkets, takeaways, pubs and other local places that many people visit. Check your local papers; many run free notices for community events if you place them in good time.

Prepare a press release with basic details and send them to your local radio and TV stations, magazines and newspapers. Free publicity is a great way to get a crowd. Don't neglect radio as it is generally an easy medium to get featured on. They might ask you to come in for an interview and also feature your seminar in repeated community announcements.

Planning and Material

Before you plan for a public event, make sure you have all the basic material required for free distribution - like the one page trifold flier and your business card, which should be professionally designed. You can find free templates in the Resources Pack. It will be great if you can make one banner and one or two standees, which can be displayed during your public seminar.



In addition to planning and scheduling your event, prepare and practice your presentation carefully. Keep it short. Get friends and family to listen. If you lose their attention, then go back and cut it shorter. Make sure you answer these questions: How did you become involved in Laughter Yoga? What is your story? What is Laughter Yoga? How does it work? Why is it 'Yoga'? How did it start? What are the benefits? Who is this for? Are there contra-indications? Will it change my life?

Try to get a few experienced Laughter Yoga professionals or participants to help you out at the event. They can help with tickets, seating and welcoming people. Keep them close during your presentation and session as they will help you spread the laughter. If you are lucky, they will include one or more 'laughter blasters'. To boost your spirits and get over the anxiety of the presentation you may want to do a short laughter boosting session before show time.

The Presentation

Welcome people, introduce yourself and quickly outline the planned sequence of what will happen during the event. Ask them to take a moment to survey their body and mind as to how they feel right now, or use a short form for this. Call attention to their breathing, energy level, aches and pains, state of mind, enthusiasm for life and stress level.

Try to show a few video clips about Laughter Yoga as this increases credibility. Talk about your personal experience, why and how you were drawn to laughter and what it has done for you. Quickly outline the history and benefits, and then talk about your new club. Keep it short. If your audience is not actively engaged,

try to incorporate a few simple laughter exercises to get their attention focused.

Don't sell. Inspire with your personal story and emotions. Speak from you heart. Allow your vulnerability to show, but be positive. Emotions are infectious, and if yours (and those of your team) are positive and demonstrate that you believe absolutely what you are saying, you will get a positive response.

Start your Laughter Yoga session and build a strong energy, if possible moving into laughter meditation. After the laughter, have a quick question and answer session. Don't let people become bored and start to leave. If there are complicated questions, reschedule them for personal discussion after the event.

Now, tell them you have a question for them. Can they please take a moment to scan their body and mind to see how they are feeling, and compare these feeling with those before the laughter session. You will get some wonderful responses from the floor!

Thank people for attending and invite them to follow through by coming to the club meetings and trying Laughter Yoga themselves.

Seminar Timetable (60 – 90 minutes)

Your seminar timetable may be something like this:

Introduction, welcome and event schedule, personal body-mind scan - 5 minutes.

Video presentation – 5-10 minutes.

Your story, Laughter Yoga history, concept and benefits - 15 minutes.

Laughter exercises - 20 minutes.

Laughter meditation – 10 minutes.

Q&A – 10 minutes.

CHAPTER 19

Frequently asked questions by Laughter Yoga professionals

While conducting Laughter Yoga sessions in a Laughter Club, trainings, seminars, workshops etc. you might face some awkward situations which may make you a bit nervous. Here are the answers to some frequently asked questions:

1. How to deal if a group member gets injured, becomes ill or has mental health problems?

Set an example for everyone else by staying calm. Pause the session and immediately pay attention to the sick or injured person. Notice their vital signs - breathing, pulse - but do not overcrowd that person. Offer water if they are conscious. Open windows if indoors. Pause to assess improvement. If trouble persists, call 911 (emergency phone in your country) or make other arrangements to get person to proper medical care. One person can leave with the person and the rest can resume the session, if it feels appropriate. In some cases, people may prefer to just have a group discussion. This is a reason why leaders should have insurance.

2. How to handle disruptive group member? (Drunk, talks too much, inappropriate touching)

Take this person to the side and make a personal request to stop the undesired behaviour. Suggest that any issue needing discussion can be addressed after the class. Do not confront this person in front of the rest of the group. Approach the conversation in a loving way. If the person continues disruptive behaviour, take the person aside again and tell them they have to behave or leave. If the behaviour was really severe in the beginning you can skip directly to telling them to leave.

3. What to do in case club/class location is unexpectedly unavailable at the last minute?

Find nearby alternate location - roof or basement of building, park or terrace, any open space. If you receive a little advance notice from the venue of the class, send an email to current group members to cancel or give alternate location.

4. How to handle complaints from nearby offices or groups when club is too noisy?

Close main doors and windows to reduce noise. Ask members to laugh more quietly. This is a lesson to consider when evaluating possible locations for clubs to hopefully avoid this problem in advance.

5. What to do if someone attends a training and later asks for a refund?

This is why your registration form should have a cancellation and refund policy in the terms and conditions addressed in advance. Stick to your policy and try to address whatever they were not happy with to make it more satisfactory so they withdraw their request for a refund. But if you are threatened with bad publicity, a lawsuit, or in any other way, you may consider if returning the money may be a simpler and easier way to be done with the situation to maintain your peace of mind.

Appendix 1

The Importance of Oxygen

Extracts from scholars on the importance of oxygen

"Deep breathing techniques increase oxygen to the cells and are the most important factors in living a disease-free and energetic life. When cells get enough oxygen, cancer will not and cannot occur."

– Dr. Otto Warburg, President, Institute of Cell Physiology, Nobel Prize Winner (Dr. Warburg is the only person to ever win the Nobel Prize for Medicine twice and was nominated for a third).

"Breathing correctly is the key to better fitness, muscle strength, stamina and athletic endurance."

- Dr. Michael Yessis, Ph. D. President Sports Training Institute, Fitness Writer – Muscle and Fitness Magazine.

"Oxygenation through deep breathing boosts the immune system and can rid the body of chronic illnesses."

- Dr. Sheldon Handler, MD, Medical Researcher Cell Oxygenation, author 'The Oxygen Breakthrough'.

"All body functions are breathing-related. Proper oxygen delivery to all parts of your body is crucial to health and wellbeing. Aerobic exercise increases the body's available oxygen and therefore promotes wellness. Delivering oxygen to the body is the responsibility of the respiratory system. Breathing is the process by which air enters the bloodstream via the lungs. Thus proper breathing and correcting common breathing disorders is the ultimate form of aerobics."

- Dr. Robert Fried, Breath Connection, Insight Books, 1990, p. 52.

"Oxygen tension in tissues enhances the action of some antibiotics — notably amino-glycosides — and the immune system and stimulates cellular metabolism." – Linda Collison, Hyperbarics: When Pressuring Patients Helps, Health Index.

"Deep diaphragmatic breathing stimulates the cleansing of the lymph system by creating a vacuum effect which pulls the lymph through the bloodstream. This increases the rate of toxic elimination by as much as 15 times the normal rate."

– Dr. J.W. Shields, MD, Lymph, Lymph Glands, and Homeostasis. Lymphology, v25, n4, Dec. 1992, p. 147.

"Oxygen plays a pivotal role in the proper functioning of the immune system. We can look at oxygen deficiency as the single greatest cause of all diseases."

– Stephen Levine, a respected molecular biologist and geneticist, and Dr. Paris M. Kidd, Ph.D., Antioxidant Adaptation.

Appendix 2

Laughter Yoga Best Practices

Certified Laughter Yoga professionals agree that they shall:

1. Promote and practice Laughter Yoga according to the principles and practices declared by Laughter Yoga International and Laughter Yoga University.
2. Have a sincere commitment to provide Laughter Yoga services of the highest quality to those who seek their service.
3. Acknowledge the confidential nature of all professional relationships and respect them accordingly.
4. Strive for professional excellence through regular assessment of personal strengths, limitations and effectiveness.
5. Any prospective participant with a medical condition which might make participation difficult will be advised to consult with their healthcare professional prior to participation.
6. Present themselves and the work they do with professional integrity and honesty.
7. Always develop their relationship with clients and participants in the best interest of the client or participant.
8. Ensure that all persons' basic rights are upheld at all times.
9. Conduct themselves in their professional lives in a manner that will enhance the status of Laughter Yoga and Laughter Yoga professionals as a group.
10. Strive to keep international headquarters updated with the details on themselves, their Laughter Clubs and Laughter Yoga services and activities.
11. Maintain the Laughter Club format as a free community service, which is offered not for personal profit. A donation may be requested to cover actual costs that are incurred, such as room rental or liability insurance.
12. When non-Laughter Yoga ideas and practices are incorporated into a service that is described as Laughter Yoga, such ideas and practices will be clearly described as being different from and not part of Laughter Yoga.
13. Maintain Laughter Yoga as inclusive for all, and refrain from exclusive affiliations with religious, political, racial or other divisive groups.

14. Work to achieve the goals of Laughter Yoga as a means to world peace.
15. Comply with the rules and regulations of the country where the program is presented, including Liability, Insurance, required Permits, etc. Refer to the approved Liability Release Form in the Training Manual, which can also be obtained from the Laughter Yoga international headquarters.
16. Agree that the copyright, trademark and service mark for the term "Laughter Yoga", in English and in translation, is the property of Laughter Yoga International Foundation, and Laughter Yoga University. Certification grants permission to use the term "Laughter Yoga" in the name of workshops, retreats, seminars and classes; however, the term "Laughter Yoga" may only be used in the name of a business or internet domain if the applicant first receives permission to do so in writing from Laughter Yoga international headquarters.

In the event of a clear and serious break from adhering to these practices, a party may be contacted by an authorized representative of Laughter Yoga international headquarters. Failure to return to harmonious cooperation may result in disciplinary action, even loss of status as a Laughter Yoga professional.

Appendix 3

40 Foundation Exercises

1. Greeting Laughter : Namaste Laughter – Since Laughter Yoga started from India, the first laughter exercise is to greet each other by joining both the hands and looking into the eyes and laughing. **Handshake Laughter:** Alternatively, one can shake hands with different group members and laugh as in the western way of greeting. We can also combine *Namaste* with handshake laughter.

2. Milkshake Laughter: Hold two imaginary glasses of milk. Pour one into the other saying, "Aeee...", pour the second into the first, saying (a little higher) "Aeeee ..."; then pretend to drink saying "Aah-ha-ha-ha-ha!". **Variations:** 1. If you don't like milk, just pretend to mix it and throw it behind you or onto the ground in front of you.

3. Cell Phone Laughter: Imaginary cell phones "rings," put it to your ear and laugh as though you heard the funniest joke ever. Move around and share with others, laughing. You can also pretend to hold two imaginary phones in both your hands laughing alternately on each one.

4. Credit Card Bill Laughter: Hold an imaginary bill in your open hand (palms facing towards you) and laugh at what you see and show it to others.

5. Just Laughing: Imagine someone is asking you why you're laughing and you don't know. Put your palms up, shrug your shoulders and pretend as if saying, "I don't know why I am laughing; I'm just laughing."

6. Argument Laughter: Laugh by pointing and wagging index fingers at each other as if you are arguing and laughing at the same time. **Variation:** This laughter can also be done between two groups facing each other and laughing competitively, while pretending to argue.

7. One Meter Laughter: In this exercise we pretend to measure imaginary one meter of fabric. Left arm out to the right hand sliding over arm like shooting bow and arrow. Right hand slides over in three jerks, chanting "Aeeeh!" until both arms open outstretched. Tilt head up and belly laugh. This cycle is repeated twice.

8. Lion Laughter: This particular laughter has been derived from a Yogic posture known as *Simha Mudra* (lion posture). Stick your tongue out fully, while keeping your mouth wide open. Stretch both your hands like the paws of a lion, roar loudly and laugh from the belly.

9. Gradient Laughter: This laughter is practiced at the end of the session. The members are asked to come closer to the leader. Starts with a gentle giggle and then slowly and gradually increase the intensity of laughter and then burst into hearty laughter for about a minute.

10. Hot Soup Laughter: Stick out your tongue, shake your wrists up and down and wave the heat off your tongue as if you have just had very hot and spicy soup. Keep laughing as you do this.

11. Hearty Laughter: One laughs by throwing their arms up and laughing heartily. One should not keep the arms stretched upwards all the time during a hearty laugh; instead keep them up for a while, then bring them down and raise them again.

12. Swinging Laughter (aka Arm Swinging): Stand in a wide circle holding hands. On instruction from the laughter leader, move forward towards the center by mimicking prolonged vowel sound of Ae... Ae... Aeeeeee..... After a bout of laughter, move back to their original position. Second time, move forward by saying Eeee. Similarly, the third and fourth time make the sounds of Eh... Eh... E... and Oh... Oh... O... **Variation (a)** - For a large group, come forward as a big cluster of people not holding hands, raising the free arms to the sky. **(b)** - Use vowel sounds from other languages.

13. Appreciation Laughter: This is a value-based laughter where the leader reminds the participants of how important it is to appreciate others. In this exercise, the tip of the index finger is joined with the tip of the thumb, making a small circle, while the hand is moved forwards and backwards, looking at different members and laughing in a gentle manner, as if you are appreciating your fellow beings in the group. It is followed by ho ho ha ha ha chanting along with clapping. **Variation:** put both hands in a thumbs up position and look at others as if appreciating and laughing.

14. Forgiveness / Apology Laughter: Indian way – Cross your arms and hold your ear lobes with index finger and thumb. Bend at the knee, bow down and laugh. **Western way** – spread both your arms out as if saying sorry and laugh.

15. Laugh At Your Own Self: Point one finger towards your heart and laugh. Move around and look at other people as if you are laughing at yourself. This is the best ego busting exercise.

16. Electric Shock Laughter: Reach as if to shake hands and pretend that you've got an electrostatic shock from the other person's hand. Laugh at the surprise!

17. Silent Laughter: Laugh very quietly as if someone is sleeping in the adjoining room, so as to not wake them up. Open your mouth wide open, and look at each other while laughing without sound.

18. Guru Laughter: This is a value based exercise which conveys that one can learn from one's own mistakes as well as from the mistakes of others. Place one hand on your head saying, 'I learn from my mistakes ha ha ha'. Then put the other

hand on your head and say, 'I learn from others' mistakes ha ha ha'. By placing both hands on your head keep laughing and moving and meeting other group members

19. Aloha Laughter: This comes from the Hawaiian greeting called Aloha. Inhale while raising your arms towards the sky saying prolonged "Alooooooo" to end of breath, and then bend down saying "haaaaaaa" while bringing your arms down and laugh.

20. Laughter Cream: Pretend to squeeze a tube of cream into your hands (or scoop it out of a jar), then apply (to self and to others) and laugh.

21. High Five Laughter - Walk around and give High Fives to each other (slap palm of your hand to palm of other people's hands). Can do with both hands for High Ten. Can also try to connect and miss.

22. Wi-Fi Laughter - Place both index fingers pointed up from head like antenna trying to get Wi-Fi signal. Walk around laughing.

23. Mental Floss Laughter: Move your hands sideways on either side of your head as if you were flossing your brain and laugh.

24. No Money Laughter: (precedes "Jackpot Laughter") Pull your pockets inside out and laugh with palms up pretending to have no money.

25. Jackpot Laughter (follows "No Money Laughter"): Imagine you have won a lottery. Start jumping and laughing as if you have become rich.

26. Magic Laughter: Hold up both index fingers. Move them together and apart three times saying "Aaaay" and on the third time turn one hand into the peace sign while laughing. Do a second time to create two peace signs. Do a third time and put up four fingers on both hands.

27. Waxing Laughter: Pretend to apply wax on your forearms thrice and the fourth time pull it out as if removing hair from your arms. You can do the same on your legs and laugh.

28. Laughter Center: Point a finger to your head as if trying to find the brain's "Laughter Center" (could be anywhere: temple, crown, occipital ridge in back).

Variation: "Find the Laugh" – point to various body parts, questioning "Where is it?"

29. Crowded Elevator Laughter: Pretend you're in an elevator, which is overcrowded. Stand close together shoulder to shoulder making different laughter sounds.

30: Motorboat / Lawnmower Laughter: Bend a bit with both hands close and

pull as if trying to start a motorboat / lawnmower engine. First time say "ha" a bit shorter, next time prolong the haaa a little bit and third time still longer and finally burst into laughter as if the engine has started.

31. Laughing at Aches & Pains: Point to any part of your body that is hurting and uncomfortable (e.g. knee pain, backache, tummy ache, shoulder pain, neck pain and headache) and laugh your pain away.

32. Airport & Flight Laughter: Laugh at the following situations faced during flight:

AIRPORT: 1. Pretend you're late and run around with bags. 2. Get Boarding Card. 3. Wave goodbye to your bags, disappearing on the conveyor belt. 4. Board the airplane.

FLIGHT: Demonstrate: 1. Show emergency exits (in front; behind; two sides). 2. How to operate the seatbelt. 3. Pull down oxygen mask; put on self, then another. 4. How to inflate life jacket (blowing into it)... + 5. Ask (and offer) directions at destination (all in gibberish). 6. Show pictures you took, but you left the lens cap on and they're all blank... ; throw them away, you're free! (etc.)

33. Household Chores Laughter: Keep laughing as you pretend to do household chores like washing dishes, using the vacuum cleaner, cleaning windows and folding clothes etc.

34. Animal Kingdom Laughter: Imitate movement and sounds of different animals and laugh. For example, monkey, penguin, chicken, elephant etc.

35. Sports and Games Laughter: Imitate movement of different sports and games while laughing. For example, weight lifting, short put / discuss / javelin throw, archery, boxing, karate, swimming, volleyball and cricket etc.

36. Laughter Yoga Ritual and Food Blessing: This exercise is done before finishing the laughter session and has two components.

a) Laughter Yoga Ritual: This goes in alignment with our mission statement of Laughter Yoga which is health, happiness and world peace.

Place both hands in front of your chest with palms facing outwards. Move them while chanting ho ho ha ha 4 times in all 4 directions (up, down, left and right). Then join your palms together, bow your head as if doing *namaste* and say ha ha ha thrice. This symbolizes people from all over the world coming together through laughter. At the end put your hands upwards, move them in a circular motion and do Hearty laughter thrice – (first hearty laughter means: let everybody in this world be healthy; second one means: everyone in this world be happy and the third time it symbolizes: let there be peace in this world)

b) Laughter Yoga Food Blessing: This exercise started at Laughter Yoga University, Bangalore and is becoming popular worldwide. Imagine you have a plate full of food in front of you. Place both your hands above the plate and move your palms up, down, left and right saying ho ho ha ha ho ho ha ha. By this exercise you acknowledge that the food given to you provides energy to your body – it is a source of *prana*, which makes us live. Then move your hands in a circular manner above the plate thrice while laughing. This symbolizes that you're grateful to all the people who have worked behind to serve you this plate of food.

37. Head On Belly Laughter: Lie down on your back, bodies at right angles (with your head on someone's belly, and someone else's head on your belly) and laugh.

38. Bull's Eye Laughter: Participants lie on the floor with heads towards the center of the circle and feet towards the periphery (looking like the petals of a flower or a target board) and do Laughter Meditation.

39. Centipede Laughter: Lie in a line on the floor with everybody's heads in the center and feet facing outwards. Every alternate person's legs should be placed in the opposite direction. Now kick your legs in the air like the multiple legs of a centipede. **Variations:** 1. Kick legs like riding a bicycle in the air. 2. Arms up, hold/touch others' hands. 3. Hold knees close to chest. 4. Arms up; kick legs and shake the arms/waggle the fingers of the outstretched hands.

40. Rowing Laughter: Sit in a straddling position with arms in front; pretend you are rowing a boat and say, "Aeee; aeee..."; after 2 to 4 times, lean back and laugh, resting on the belly of the person behind you.

Appendix 4

Categorizing Laughter Exercises

Here are the categories of different laughter exercises. You can find the videos of some of these exercises in our YouTube channel and inside the Prozone section of our website. Keep checking the Prozone video section for new exercises as we will be uploading many new exercise videos from time to time.

De-stressing Exercises

1. Contract the whole body muscles, release with laughter
2. Where's the problem?
3. Too many problems
4. Blow your problems in a balloon and pop it
5. Laughing at your own self
6. Windshield wiper laughter
7. Minefield laughter
8. EGBOK cheer (Everything's Gonna Be OK)

Mistakes and Embarrassments

1. Pigeon poop laughter
2. Doggie doo-doo laughter
3. Drop food on your shirt laughter
4. Trousers fall off laughter
5. Smelly armpits laughter
6. Lose your towel laughter
7. Itching powder laughter
8. Parking ticket laughter
9. Someone walks in while you're changing clothes laughter
10. Drunk laughter

Group Exercises

1. Wave Laughter
2. Necklace Laughter
3. Swinging Laughter (Vowel Movement)
4. Roller Coaster

Red Carpet (Car Wash/Royalty/

Appreciation)

5. Red Carpet (Car Wash/Royalty/ Appreciation)
6. Row Boat
7. Centipede
8. Target (Bull's Eye)
9. Orchestra
10. Laughter Blessing

Car Exercises

1. Red Light/Green Light
2. Gear Shift
3. Stuck in Traffic
4. Car Wash
5. Driving crazy
6. Winter car won't start
7. Windshield Wipers
8. Bumper Cars
9. Changing flat tire
10. Flat tyre Laughter

Moods and Emotions

1. Bored Laughter
2. Shy Laughter
3. Crying Laughter
4. Flirting/Winking Laughter
5. Celebration Laughter
6. Worried Laughter
7. Afraid Laughter
8. Falling in Love Laughter
9. Meeting a friend after a long time (surprise)
10. Love Yourself

Beach Exercises

1. Kids run from sea waves
2. Sand castles (making and breaking)
3. Hot sand
4. Swimming
5. Eating ice cream
6. Too tight swim suit
7. Losing your towel while walking
8. Sun screen lotion laughter
9. Crab Laughter
10. Clam Laughter

4. Too much stress laughter
5. Boss in/boss out laughter
6. No Money Laughter
7. Jackpot Laughter
8. Wifi
9. High Five/High Ten
10. Mental Floss
11. Brain Wash
12. Zipper Laughter
13. Super Brain
14. All Brain Gym Exercises

Medical Exercises

1. Ambulance laughter
2. Revival laughter
3. Laughter pill
4. Injection
5. Stethoscope
6. Aches & pains laughter (knee, back, shoulder, headache, etc)
7. Laughter gargling
8. Oxygen mask
9. Hiccup Laughter
10. CPR Laughter

Household Chores

1. Washing dishes
2. Vacuum cleaning
3. Cleaning Windows
4. Ironing
5. Shower
6. Brushing teeth
7. Laughter cream
8. Cutting veggies
9. Cooking
10. Lawn Mower

Exercises in Pairs

1. Mirror Laughter
2. Milking the cow
3. Bullfight Laughter
4. Standing on one leg
5. Back to back laughter
6. Airport screening
7. Two people on a motorbike
8. Eye gazing
9. Clam laughter
10. Reading the palm

Food Exercises

1. Peel and eat banana (small, medium, big)
2. Milkshake (coffee or cocktail)
3. Hot soup
4. Ice cream
5. Spaghetti/Noodles
6. Watermelon and spit seeds (also song)
7. Squeezing fresh juice (lemon or orange)
8. Food fight

Corporate Laughter Exercises

1. Milkshake (cocktail)
2. Visa bill
3. Cell phone (two cell phones at a time)

Beauty Parlor Exercises

1. Waxing
2. Manicure/Pedicure
3. Head massage (body massage)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Hair cutting 5. Tight facial mask 6. Botox 7. Laughter cream | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Inhale, hold it, run around slapping thighs 9. Quick inhale, hahaha (Fire Breath) 10. Fishing |
|--|--|

Animal Exercises

1. Lion
2. Panting Dog
3. Penguin
4. Elephant
5. Chicken (flying bird)
6. Kangaroo
7. Monkey
8. Gorilla
9. Milking the cow
10. Dog pee

Sports Exercises

1. Boxing
2. Karate
3. Throwing exercises (Shot put / Discuss/Javelin)
4. Archery
5. Swimming
6. Rowing the boat
7. Weightlifting
8. Golf
9. Sumo Wrestling
10. Jogging/Jumping

Breathing and Laughing Exercises

1. Three parts of the lungs (upper, middle, lower lobes)
2. Pick a flower and smell it
3. Three quick inhales and laugh
4. Hundredth birthday (blowing candles without teeth)
5. Balloon Laughter
6. Accordion Laughter
7. Breathing in and to the ground

Value Based (Spiritual) Exercises

1. Laugh at your own self (ego busting)
2. Guru laughter
3. One door closes, another door opens
4. Appreciation laughter
5. Forgiveness laughter
6. Generosity laughter (Give away everything; *Namaste*; Open heart laughter)
7. Oneness (I belong to everyone, everyone belongs to me)
8. Life is a change, everything is changing
9. I have lots of good qualities, very few weaknesses
10. Red Light/Green Light

Exercises for Children

1. Jumping Jack/Jump Rope
2. Animals
3. Any Narrative/Sequence/Theme (go to beach, zoo and birthday party)
4. Breathe in, hold it, slap thighs and run around
5. Age laughter - child, parent, and grandparent
6. Peek-a-boo laughter
7. Blowing laughter bubbles
8. Magic Laughter (peace sign)
9. Centipede
10. Row, Row, Row Boat (and do Row the boat laughter)

Popular Fun Games

1. This is pineapple
2. Pizza/Pasta
3. In the bedroom
4. Whiff/Biff
5. Apple, Banana, Orange
6. Toaster, Washing Machine
7. Swish, Boing, Bang (Ha Ho He)
8. Taiwan Triad Fun Game
9. Hot Potato

Singing, Laughing, Dancing

1. Fruit Salad (Banana, Mango, Kiwi)
2. Mixed Vegetables (Pumpkin, Capsicum, Tomato, Potato)
3. Laughter Magic
4. Watermelon Song
5. Mexican Ha Dance
6. Ha-va Nagil-ha (Jewish celebration song)

7. Take Me Out to the Ball game
8. Row, Row, Row Your Boat
9. Tak Jhum
10. Old McDonald Had a Farm

Brain Gym Exercises

1. Double Double Ho Ho
2. Nicht Nicht, Dies Dies
3. Right Brain, Left Brain
4. Finger tips
5. One finger makes circles around fingers on other hand
6. Belly Ho Ho
7. Shaka Raka
8. Kitty Ha Ha
9. One Little, Two Little, Three Little Ha Ha
10. Body Percussion

Appendix 5

List of more Laughter Exercises

We have given the description of most of these exercises but some are more visual, which you can understand better by watching videos. Please refer to Laughter Yoga Prozone videos from time to time.

Alien Laughter

Pretend to be from outer space; or pretend to be human and you've met someone from another planet.

Alien Greeting

Put your hands on your head like an antenna and move around saying "AAAHHH-EEEEEE!!" to one another in greeting.

Ants in your pants Laughter

Run around shrieking and laughing as if your pants were filled with ants!

Army Greeting Laughter

March around like soldiers and salute others, laughing as you do.

Balloon Laughter

Use real balloons and bat them, kick them, bounce them on your knees like a hacky sack. Every time someone makes contact with the balloon, they must laugh. This is a real workout and can keep you laughing a while.

Balloon Popping Laughter

Pretend you have balloons attached to your ankles. Try to pop each other's balloons and laugh.

Barbaric Yawp

One at a time or as a group, run out to the middle of the space, plant your feet in a wide stance, extend arms out and give a long loud "yawp!" then run to the other side of the space.

Beauty Pageant Laughter

Have the group stand as if they're all finalists for a beauty pageant and then call each person's name (or have them call their own name) and let them react and carry on as if they're the winner.

Bouncing Laughter

Bounce around laughing with one another.

Bowling Laughter

Pretend to throw a laughing bowling ball and cheer if you get a strike. Do it all in unison for the biggest impact.

Bunny Hop Laughter

Stand in a line with arms on the person's shoulders in front of you and laugh the bunny hop. Ha haha!

Bumper Car Laughter

Put your arms out in front of you and your hands straight up like they are bumpers. Run around and make contact with other people's hands and bump, laughing as you do.

Boss quit office Laughter

It is allowed to laugh - laugh with enthusiasm and volume now that the boss is gone.

Body shaking machine Laughter

Laugh as you pretend to be strapped to an exercise machine that shakes your body.

Ballet dancing Laughter

Dance and do ballet dance moves.

Blooming Laughter

Laugh as you pretend to be a plant slowly blooming.

Buddha Laughter

Sit in meditation pose and laugh from the belly.

Bumper car Laughter

Walk around laughing with hands out in front, bump into other people by pushing off of their hands and redirecting yourself.

Blowing laughter bubbles

Pretend to blow bubbles and laugh; pop the bubbles in the air and laughter comes out.

Back massage Laughter

Make a circle where everyone can laugh while rubbing the shoulders and back of someone in front of them and receive a shoulder and back rub from the person behind them.

Binocular Laughter

Make a circle with your fingers and look through it while laughing. Make lots of eye contact through these binoculars. Make circles bigger or smaller to adjust focus.

Bag Pop

Inhale, then exhale problems into bag. Repeat three times. Then count 1, 2, 3 and pop the bag to release laughter.

Boss in the office Laughter

Don't laugh - laugh quietly or hold it in because the boss is still in the office.

Call-On-Me Laughter

Raise your hands and carry on grunting to get called on by the teacher. Have one person pretend to be the teacher and call on others who cheer when they get called on.

Car Laughter

Pretend these scenarios are happening with the car while laughing:

- Startup car with four starts in belly
- Drive around and laugh and wave at other people
- Car stops, argue in gibberish with it
- Check oil dip stick that has no end, laugh about it
- Pump up tyre with laughter
- Drive away happy

Celebration Laughter

Everyone huddles in a small circle then the leader tells them a "secret" and everyone cheers and laughs wildly. Ask for other volunteers to share a secret.

Chicken Dance

Do the chicken dance with traditional actions and laugh.

Chicken Laughter

Impersonate chickens until you crack one another up!

Closed-Eye Laughter

Close your eyes and walk around slowly with arms in front of you. When you bump into someone, laugh together and try to figure out who it is.

Cocktail Party Laughter

Pretend to hold a cocktail glass. Laugh with people in a stuffy, pretentious way and look over their shoulder to find someone better to go laugh with.

Conga Line Laughter

Make conga line by placing hands on the shoulders of the person in front of you. Dance around with the conga tune, singing with a "ha" sound. Be sure to kick your legs out at the end of each measure.

Crack Up Laughter

Walk around and look someone in the eyes with a serious, scowling face. Then, at the same time, crack each other up. Your scowl will give way to happy laughter. This can also be called the "turn that frown upside down laughter."

Creative Laughter

Laugh in your own creative ways. Laugh all at once, or one at a time.

Crab Laughter

Laugh and move sideways like a crab and pretend your hands are claws.

Cutting and eating watermelon

Laugh while cutting and eating a watermelon and spitting out the seeds.

Cleaning window glass Laughter

Spray the window pane with a cleaner, wipe it and laugh.

Cold shower laughter

Laugh while pretending to take a cold shower.

Celebrate for no reason

Laugh give high fives, jump up and down and cheer without any reason.

Clasping hands Laughter

Inhale while swinging arms to one side (like a golf club), then exhale while swinging through to the other side and laugh.

Canned Laughter

Leader gives everyone an imaginary can - "don't open it!" One by one, everybody in the group takes a turn opening their can and being delightfully surprised at whatever laughter sound comes out. The group copies that laugh until the can is closed. Then it is the next person's turn to open their can.

Copycat Ho Ho Ha Ha He He

Leader makes a short laughter sound and everyone copies. Then leader makes a slightly longer laughter sound and everyone copies. This continues with increasingly longer series of sounds until it is just ongoing laughter.

Doo Wop (A Capella Singing)

Separate into three groups. Leader assigns each group a pattern of laughter sounds. Each group sings their pattern at the same time, making a combined song. This can also be done with actual words, such as banana, mango and kiwi sung in a special rhythm.

Driving crazy Laughter

Laugh as you pretend to drive around the room wildly.

Dysfunctional GPS Laughter

Laugh at getting lost.

Drunk Laughter

Stagger around laughing and pretending to be drunk.

Doggie Doo Doo Laughter

Pretend that with every few steps, you land your foot in doggie doo doo, laugh, look grossed out and pretend to wipe it off.

Doggie Leg Lift Laughter

This is only for the adventurous! Get on all and pretend to be a dog, and then lift your leg as if you are peeing on others and laugh about it.

Duck Waddle Laughter

Tuck your arms up like wing and waddle around like a duck, quacking and laughing.

Eating noodles Laughter

Laugh while eating a bowl of noodles with chopsticks.

Echo Laughter

Divide group into two. Have first group do a big hearty laugh and the second group will echo it. Groups love to run forward at each other for this.

Electric Shock Laughter

Pretend you are giving one another static electricity shocks that cause a jump and a laugh.

Evil Laughter

Do your best impersonation of an evil character's laugh. The more over-the-top, the better.

Fake Laughter

Do a really fake laugh. Be obnoxious!

Fall down dead Laughter

Laugh so hard you fall down on the ground and roll around laughing.

Filing the nails Laughter

Laugh while pretending to file your nails.

Flying Bird Laughter

Flap and run around the room laughing like you're a big bird.

Find your Laughter Center

Find the place in your abdomen from whence your laughter comes and hold it while laughing. See if you can laugh even deeper now that you've found your center.

Food Fight Laughter

Pretend to throw cheesecake and other yummy food at one another, laughing. Simulate a pie fight!

Falling in love Laughter

Walk around laughing while touching your heart and opening your arms for hugs.

Funniest thing you've ever seen

Put hands together, walk around and show people that inside your hands is the funniest thing you've ever seen.

Full Moon Laughter

Howl at the moon together until it cracks you up.

Five Weight Lifter Champion Laugh

Pretend you are a champion weight lifter. Grab imaginary set of heavy weights and lift it in increments, grunting with each movement. When you get it overhead, laugh out loud.

Gorilla Laughter

Bang your chest with your fist and make gorilla sounds and movements while laughing.

Gibberish punch line

Have one person tell the punch line of a joke using gibberish instead of real words. When they finish, everyone bursts into laughter as if it is the best joke they have ever heard.

Go-Team Laughter

Stand in a huddle like a sports team. The leader puts his or her hand out and everyone else put their hand on the top. The leader says "1-2-3" then everyone pushes their hand down and laughs.

Giving away everything Laughter

Walk around laughing and pretending to give away everything you have.

Gear Shift Laughter

Drive a manual car, increasing energy and volume of laughter going from first gear to fifth, then reducing while down shifting gears. Return to neutral for breathing.

Giggle Jiggle Laughter

Hug self and laugh while twisting and jumping. (Same as Love Yourself Laughter) Inhale, then exhale problems into bag. Repeat three times. Then count 1,2,3 and pop the bag to release laughter.

HoHoHaHaHa finger tip taps

Place wrists together with finger tips slight apart. Touch thumbs and say "Ho." Then thumbs and index fingers "Ho Ho" Then thumbs, index and middle fingers "Ho Ho Ha." Then first four fingers "Ho Ho Ha Ha." Then all five finger tips "Ho Ho Ha Ha Ha." Repeat increasingly fast until you're just wiggling your fingers and laughing.

Half Laugh

Laugh with just one half of your mouth open. Try the right, then the left.

Head Fluffing Laughter

Run around playfully messing up one another's hair with by giving it a gentle fluff and laughing.

Heavy ball Laughter

Try to pick up a big ball but pretend it's too heavy and laugh.

High-Ten Laughter

Give each other high tens (slap both hands) and laugh.

Hot Potato Laughter

Sit in a circle and pass an invisible hot potato around as fast as you can, laughing when it is in your possession.

Hot Sand Laughter

Tiptoe around like you are walking on hot sand and react to the heat by laughing, running and carrying on.

Hurricane Laughter

Laugh and act scared of wind and rain.

Hugging Laughter

Run and hug one another and laugh (also known as heart to heart laughter). You can feel the laughter in one another as you hug if you're laughing hard enough. Works well at the end of the session.

Humming Laughter

With lips closed, make a humming laughter sound and do silly gestures.

I Love You Laughter

Make the sign language sign for "I love you" with both hand (extend all fingers then pull the middle and ring finger down) at one another to non-verbally say "I love you" and laugh.

Ice Cube Laughter

Pretend you're putting ice cubes down one another's back. Be playful, laugh and shriek.

Ice Cream Cone Laughter

Pretend to lick an ice cream cone that is extremely drippy. Lick the cone and way down your arm, laughing. Perhaps even throw your cones at one another.

Itching powder Laughter

Laugh as you discover your clothes are full of itching powder.

Inspiration Laugh

Rub your chin like you're pondering a difficult question. Then suddenly inspiration strikes! Make an expression of surprise as you take a deep breath in and put one finger in the air, then laugh.

Inhalation Laughter

Laugh while inhaling. This makes a really funny, snorting sound.

IPod Laughter

Pretend to put headphones on. Dance around to the music in your own head, singing and laughing.

Jack-in-the-Box Laughter

Squat down, and pretend to wind up your crank. Sing the tune of "Pop Goes the Weasel." Spring up on the pop part and laugh like a wild jack-in-the-box!

Jelly bean Laughter

Pretend you are holding a jelly bean between your lips so your mouth is open just a little. Laugh. Then replace with a marshmallow so mouth is open a little more. Laugh. Replace with a grapefruit and laugh. Then go back to jellybean and chew it up on one side of mouth, then the other, then swallow and laugh. Then stick your tongue out and lick all around your mouth and laugh.

Jell-O Laughter

Wiggle and giggle as if you are a Jell-O.

Jump Rope Laughter

Pretend you're skipping rope and laugh with each jump. You can also have two people pretend they're turning the rope and have other laughers jump through, laughing.

Juggling laughter

Laugh while pretending to juggle.

Killing mosquitoes laughter

Laugh while swatting mosquitoes or stomping them.

Kangaroo Laughter

Jump around like a laughing kangaroo.

Karate Brick Laughter

Pretend to break a brick with your hand, then head, laughing as you make contact with the brick.

Kick Boxing Laughter

Pretend you are doing kick boxing and laugh with every kick or punch (be sure to kick the air and not anyone standing nearby).

Knees Laughter

Pretend you lose control of your knees but pretend to be normal otherwise. Smile, wave and walk around until with your wild knees to crack one another up.

K-Mart Shoes Laughter

Walk around with really tiny steps and hops like you have just tried on a pair of K-mart shoes with the plastic band holding the shoes together. Laugh at how silly you look.

Laughter Ball

Play catching the ball in pairs or as a group. Throw an invisible laughter ball to one another. Whoever is holding the ball laughs. You can also dribble the ball and laugh each time it hits the floor. In certain circumstances, it works well to use a real ball. A soft one is best

Laughter Blessing

The person to be blessed sits in a chair and the rest of the group stands in a semicircle around him/her. One at a time, each person says an affirmation about the person in the chair—but with gibberish instead of English. After all have had a chance to say/dance their affirmation, all lay hands upon the person —on head, shoulders, arms, knees and laugh to bless them with love and laughter energy. Leader begins and ends the blessing (about 10 seconds).

Laughter Car Wash

Have the group stand in two parallel lines, laughing with their hands moving in creative ways like they are brushes and mechanisms of a car wash. Then the person on the end gets to run through the “laughter wash” line. When they get to the end of the line, they become a “brush” again. Make sure everyone gets a chance to go through.

Laughter Chorus Line

Stand in a line with arms over one another’s shoulders like you are a chorus line. Bring right knee up with a laugh, then kick with a laugh. Repeat with the left leg and so forth. Call yourself the “Laughettes”!

Laughter Explosion

Stand in a clump and whistle like a laugh is heading your way, then throw arms up and "explode" with laughter all at once.

Laughter Leaps

Have everyone stand in a line on one side of the space, then run forward with an "oooh" sound and leap with a big laugh. For a greater challenge, make two lines facing each other and run towards each other for the leap, being careful to not collide. Yet another option is to let everyone run and leap randomly in the space!

Laughter Party

Pretend to prepare for a party while laughing: blowing up balloons, frosting cake, wrapping gifts, etc. Then pretend to gather for the party, sing "Happy Birthday" with just "ha ha ha", pretend you've got cocktails and you laugh with one another then quickly mingle off to laugh with others, etc.

Laughter Pills

Take imaginary laughter pills and laugh, and then try one another's pills. You can try "over the counter" variety for a snicker or "prescription strength" for a big laugh.

Laughter Snacks

Hold your hand out pretending you have laughter snacks. Pop one into your mouth, chew it and laugh. Try one another's laughter snacks and laugh.

Laughter Snow Angels

Lie on the floor and pretend to make a snow angel by moving arms and legs and roaring and laughing at one another (this is great for the thyroid gland).

Laughter Wave

Stand in a circle and do "the wave," laughing as your arms go up.

Lawnmower Laughter

Pretend you're pushing around a lawnmower with a laughing motor. Have fun starting the mower by laughing as you pretend to pull the pull cord.

Lemon Laughter

Pretend you're holding a lemon; take bites of it, cringe and laugh.

Library Laughter

Pretend you have a case of the giggles but you are in the library so try to keep it down, stomp around and laugh quietly then shush each other.

Loose trousers Laughter

Hop and skip around trying to keep your pants up while laughing.

Laughter necklace

Seven to ten people stand in a circle, close their fists with thumbs pointing outwards. Then everyone holds each other's thumb and makes a circle of fists like a necklace. Raise this necklace up and down while laughing. Everyone takes turns to go in the middle and pretend to put this necklace around their neck.

Laughter Train

Make a line and move forward together with arms making circles along the sides of the line and sounds like "chugga chugga Ho Ho, chugga chugga Ha Ha"

Light house Laughter

Pretend to project a beam of light and laugh as it scans the horizon.

Look moon in the sky Laughter

Point to the sky, pretend to look at the moon and laugh.

Leg is very heavy, can't lift

Laugh while pretending to be stuck in one place because your legs are too heavy to move.

Losing swimsuit Laughter

Laugh and try to cover up because you've lost your swimsuit.

Laughter Finger Kisses

Pretend to draw a smiley face on the tip of your index finger. Walk around and give laughter kisses with your finger.

Laughter Crank

Start with very small crank in front of belly. Turn it and get very small laughter. Get bigger crank, hold it by chest, turn it and laugh bigger. Exchange for biggest crank, hold it overhead for biggest laugh.

Laughter Boxes

Put hands together and pretend inside is a laughter box. Everybody has a laughter box and they are very attracted to each other, drawn to laughing or having gibberish conversations together.

Laughter Intervals

This is a genuine aerobic exercise modeled after the way sprinters practice alternating between running and walking. First laugh for 10 seconds, then breathe for 10 seconds. Then 20 seconds laughing, 20 seconds breathing. Then 30 seconds laughing, 30 seconds breathing. Then 20/20 and 10/10 again. The leader should watch the time, reminding everyone verbally what segment is starting and signaling with fingers (3, 2, 1) as each segment is ending.

Making expressions Laughter

Make different shapes with your mouth, along with different laughter sounds and facial expressions.

Moon Walk

Laugh while imitating the Michael Jackson dance move; or laugh while pretending to be on the moon where there is less gravity.

Model Laughter

Show people OK sign and thumbs up, admiring their beauty and laughing.

Making and breaking sand castles

Play and laugh as you make sand castles. (repeat)

Magic Bag of Laughs

Everybody pulls a bag out of their pocket. Everyone reaches in to their bag and pulls out a random laugh, then discards it and picks another. Repeat three times.

Minefield Laughter

Tiptoe around the room while giggling, imagining that you are avoiding landmines which are actually the challenges and problems in your life. When you accidentally set one off your giggle turns into bigger belly laugh.

Magnet Laughter

Pretend a giant magnet is pulling you all across the space. Laugh as you try to resist it but it will eventually pull you all to the other side. Play with having it pull certain body parts—head, foot, arm, backside, etc.

Meeting a friend after a long time

Laugh with open arms and approach people as if they are old friends you haven't seen in a while.

Monster Laughs

Laugh like one or more of these famous monsters:

- Cookie Monster - eat cookies wildly and laugh
- Dracula - show teeth and put cape up by face, laughing
- Frankenstein - put arms out of you and walk around making laughter grunts
- Godzilla - take big steps and laugh like a giant

Nicht, Nicht, dies, dies

Brain gym, in German! Clap twice while saying "Nicht, Nicht." Then pat both face cheeks twice while saying "dies dies." Double clap "Nicht, Nicht," followed by left hand double patting top of head and right hand double patting under chin while saying "das das." Next is single clap "Nicht," single cheek pat "dies," single clap "Nicht," single head/chin pat "das." Finally single clap "Nicht," single cheek pat "dies," single head/chin pat "das." Repeat increasingly fast.

Opera Singer Laughter

Pretend to be a famous opera singer and sing with exaggerated ha ha ha-s.

Orchestra Laughter

The entire group assembles in the orchestra pit with one person as the conductor in front. Everyone pretends to play their instrument, which makes only laughter sounds, while the conductor guides the tempo, volume and emphasis of different sections or even calls for a solo. Take turns being the conductor. Participants can change instruments between songs.

Octopus Laughter

Purse your lips and move your arms like the tentacles of an octopus and laugh.

Pendulum Laughter

Clasp hands. Inhale while swinging arms to one side (like a golf club), then exhale while swinging through to the other side.

Paint Brush Laughter

Paint one another with invisible laughter brushes. Laugh only when your "brush" touches someone.

Pat on your back Laughter (self-appreciation)

Pat yourself on the back and laugh; walk around and pat each other on the back while laughing.

Picking dog poo Laughter

Walk the dog and laugh as you pick up poo.

Puppet Laughter

Pretend you have a funny sock puppet on your hand and have it laugh and make funny faces at others' sock puppets (or use real sock puppets if you have them).

Pee urgency laughter

Laugh while hopping and dancing around because you need to pee.

Peanut Butter Laughter

Pretend your tongue is stuck to the roof of your mouth because of peanut butter. Laugh about it!

Phantom Tickle

Imagine a phantom is tickling you. Wiggle, giggle and try to get away from your invisible tickler.

Pigeon Poop Laughter

Look up in the sky and pretend pigeon poop suddenly falls into your eye. Act surprised, try to wipe it off and laugh. Then, look up and another bit of pigeon poop falls into your eye!

Politician Laughter

Run around shaking as many hands as you can quickly and smiling a big plastic smile and laughing.

Regal Laughter

Take turns playing royalty and walk between two rows of applauding subjects, waving like the queen or king.

Relay Race Laughter

Set up a few chairs in a line and have a relay race where team members have to weave in and out of the chairs while laughing. Remind them that the competition between teams is simulated and the real point is big fun and happy laughs.

Robot Laughter

Make abrupt robot movements and laugh like a robot would.

Roller Coaster Laughter

Sit on the ground (or stand) in a double line like a roller coaster and pretend you're ascending. Bring arms up and say "ooooh" then scream and laugh as if you're going down the hill and loving it. If you are seated on the floor, flop down onto the floor as you come down the hills. If you are standing, try running around to simulate the hills.

Riding a Unicycle

Laugh while pretending to balance on a one wheeled vehicle.

Sword fight Laughter

Laugh while having a sword fight (this is also the sport of fencing)

Reading the palm Laughter

Walk around and show each other your palms for reading and laughing.

Remote Control/TV Channel

Break into groups of three or four. One person is separate and has the remote control. Point the remote at each group and tell them a category of TV show (i.e. Soap opera, Cricket match, Nightly news, etc), which they improvise with only laughter and gibberish. Click the remote and announce a different type of program, which they then switch to acting out.

Right Brain/Left Brain Laughter

Clap Ho Ho, then left hand on nose and right hand to left ear while saying Ha, and quickly switch right hand to nose and left hand to right ear while again saying Ha. Repeat this twice, then clap Ho Ho and double head pat Ha Ha. Repeat entire pattern or create new variations.

Revival Laughter

One person pretends to be unconscious. Everyone else argues in gibberish about calling emergency help. Group places hands over person, laughing gently. Person regains consciousness. Celebrate!

Silly Walk Laughter

Form a line. Person in front of the line walks in a silly way while making a unique laugh. Everybody copies the walk and laugh until the person in front gets to the back of the line. Then the next person at the front leads until everybody gets a turn.

Santa Claus Laughter

Say "ho ho ho" and act like Santa.

Serious Laughter

Try to laugh like a very serious person would laugh.

Shy Laughter

Put hands in front of face as if you are really shy, then peek out and people, laugh and hide face again.

Slow Motion Laughter

Laugh in slow motion with big gestures. You can also combine silent laughter with slow motion laughter.

Smile Greeting

Walk around smiling at each other with a huge smile. Science says that even faking this kind of smile makes you happier. Try it for 1-2 minutes.

Sneezing Laughter

Instead of bursting into a sneeze, burst into laughter: "ah ah ah... ha haha!"

Surfing Laughter

Laugh while pretending to surf.

Smelling a rose Laughter

Pick a rose in your hand, smell it and laugh.

Sumo Laughter - Face off with another person, lift one leg while slapping your thigh, then lift the other leg while slapping that thigh. Repeat a few times then move toward each other laughing and push off of each other's hands.

Spiderman Laughter

Pretend you are Spiderman. Send out webs from your hands that will catch others in your laughter web.

Standing on the very edge Laughter

Stand in a line and pretend you are on the edge of a high cliff. Wave your arms about like you don't want to fall off. Keep one another from falling off!

Standing Ovation

Give yourselves a standing ovation with lots of wild cheers.

Stethoscope Laughter

Pretend to put a stethoscope on someone and listen for the laughter inside them. Laugh as if you hear it clearly inside of them.

Stress Release Laughter

Cup your hands together and imagine that all your problems, worries, anxieties and stresses are trapped inside your hands. Now, release them by opening and closing your hands quickly. A burst of laughter will come out with each opening. Move around releasing your problems until they are all laughed out, then open hands and shake off all remaining stress.

Subway Laughter

Have everyone stand in a clump with one arm up like they are hanging onto a loop in a subway. Bump around into one another gently and laugh.

Spring doll Laughter

Place your hands with palms facing upwards in front of your body and jump as if you have springs underneath your feet.

Sea waves Laughter

Pretend to run away from the incoming waves and chase them as they recede. Keep laughing as you do this.

Sprinkler Laughter

One arm bent in front, the other straight out going from one side to another making the sound “ch-ch-ch-ch” then coming back the other way saying “hahahahahaha”; repeat for the other arm; then both arms; then remove the nozzle from the hose and have a water fight with the group.

Squeeze orange juice Laughter

Laugh while making fresh orange juice.

Sunburn Laughter

Laugh while soothing sunburnt skin.

Smelling laughing gas

Wave your hand in front of your nose, pinch your nostrils, and laugh

Something stuck on your shirt

Laugh while being unable to remove something stuck on your shirt.

Swimming in the sea Laughter

Pretend to swim in the sea and laugh.

Sharp shell hurts your foot

Laugh and hop around holding your foot as if you've got hurt.

Sowing seeds of Laughter

Laugh while pretending to sow seeds of laughter.

Step into Peace Laughter

Use one hand to make shape of peace sign in the air while making HA sound, complete the outer circle swinging the arm wide and laughing more energetically. Step into the peace circle and embrace self in a hug ("giggle jiggle").

Smiles Ups

Smile while inhaling, return face to neutral expression on exhale. Each breath stretch a different part of the body. Get increasingly complicated (arm and leg together).

Spin The HaHa Laughter

This is a follow the leader game played sitting down and is patterned after the teenage party game "Spin The Bottle." The first person pretends to spin a bottle, waving their arm around in circles until they stop and point to one person. That person then laughs and everyone copies their laugh. That person then "spins" and points to a new person who laughs while everyone imitates the laugh. Repeat until everyone has had a chance to lead a laugh. This exercise works well from groups of 6-15 people but with more or fewer people it is not a good choice.

Telling joke in gibberish Laughter

One person at a time tells a joke to the group in gibberish and everyone laughs.

Throwing water Laughter

Laugh and play dumping water on each other.

Taking a photo Laughter

Laugh while taking pictures of each other as well as selfies.

Tai-Chi Laughter

Rub hands together to feel energy between palms and laugh while making slow movements of Tai-Chi.

Telling a secret Laughter

This can be for individuals to walk around and whisper gibberish in each other's ears then laughing. Or it can be for the whole group to converge in a very tight circle and one at a time people can offer a secret that is actually a very obvious statement ("today is Saturday" or "my toes are painted green") and then everyone laughs.

Touching others with eyes closed

Place your hands in front of your chest and move around. The moment you touch someone, just laugh.

Tight swimsuit Laughter

Laugh on finding your movement restricted because your swimsuit is too tight.

Three on a bicycle Laughter

Have three people in a line moving their legs in sync as if riding a single bicycle. Everyone laughs.

Teeth Wired Shut Laughter

Clench teeth like they are wired shut, open lips as far as possible and laugh.

Twitter Glitter

Pretend you've got a bag of magical twitter glitter that makes people laugh. Toss it on one another and twitter, giggle and guffaw.

Volley ball on the beach Laughter

Make two groups and pretend to play volleyball on the beach. Just two people can also do this exercise.

Wide Mouth Laugh

Open your mouth as wide as you possibly can, then walk around laughing that way. Get up close to the other laughers. **Wipe On /Wipe Off Laughter**
With a hand gesture, put laughter on your face, and laugh. Then wipe it off and look really serious. Gesture and put laughter back on.

Walk and laugh like a model (aka Red Carpet)

Make two rows with space in between for each person to walk down the catwalk, waving, laughing and pretending to be a model.

Wagging the tail Laughter

Laugh while imitating a dog or other animal with a tail.

What's the problem Laughter?

Extend arms out at sides to indicate the size of your problems. Move hands toward center in chopping motion with HA sound, then brush hands together to indicate problem is gone and say "Where's the Problem?"

Windshield Wiper Laughter

Laugh while waving hands up and down in front of the face to clear the view we have of the world around us. Vary the speed. Pause to look through fingers spread apart. Pretend to spit on finger tips and shine the windshield, then resume the wipers.

Woody Woodpecker Laughter

Pretend to peck like a woodpecker and laugh.

Wonder Woman Laughter

Pretend to be the powerful and glamorous wonder woman. Run around deflecting bullets with your wristbands and laughing.

YMCA Laughter

Laugh to the song "YMCA" by the Village People. Do the traditional arm gestures to the letters. You can use a recording of the song to heighten the impact.

Appendix 6

Laughter Yoga Liability Release

Laughter Yoga is a fun and healthy exercise regime with beneficial effects for the body, mind and emotions. Like any form of aerobic exercise, it should not be practiced by people with medical problems without first taking advice from their medical practitioner. Laughter Yoga should not be considered as a substitute for proper medical consultation for physical, mental and psychological illnesses. If during a session you feel sudden or new pain please leave the session immediately, or advise the leader if you require assistance.

Please read this carefully and give your consent:

The group is participating in Laughter Yoga sessions requiring physical exertion that may be strenuous and may cause physical injury. I will ensure that each participant is informed of the risks and hazards involved.

Group members are physically fit and have no medical condition that would prevent their full participation in Laughter Yoga sessions, or if they have medical problems or conditions these will be fully revealed to the Laughter Yoga leader before each session.

I assume full responsibility for any risks, injuries or damages, known or unknown, which might be incurred by all group members as a result of participating in the sessions, and knowingly, voluntarily and expressly waive any claim against the Dr. Kataria School of Laughter Yoga, Laughter Yoga International, their leaders, teachers, employees or assistants for injury or damages that may be sustained as a result of participation. Group members, their heirs or legal representatives forever release waive, discharge and covenant not to sue for any injury or death caused by their negligence or other acts.

*I have read the above release and waiver of liability and fully understand its contents.
I voluntarily agree to the terms and conditions stated above.*

Laughter Yoga News

To receive our e-newsletter please

Provide your email address:

Signature of adult: _____
authorized to act on behalf of the Group.

Date(Day/Month/Year): ____ / ____ / ____

Appendix 7

How Do You Feel Form?

To measure immediate effects of Laughter Yoga

BEFORE	<Worst CIRCLE Best>	AFTER	<Worst CIRCLE Best>
Enthusiasm	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Enthusiasm	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Energy Level	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Energy Level	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Mood	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Mood	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Optimism	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Optimism	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Stress Level	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Stress Level	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Level of friendship with group members	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Level of friendship with group members	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
*Level of awareness about your Breathing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	*Level of awareness about your Breathing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Level of muscle relaxation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Level of muscle relaxation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Level of mental relaxation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Level of mental relaxation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Ability to laugh without a reason	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Ability to laugh without a reason	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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General Comments:	General Comments:
Name:	Name:

Important Guidelines:

- This form should be filled after the session
- This is to evaluate the immediate effects of one particular session of Laughter Yoga

- Breath awareness: Normally we are not aware of our breathing. After LY exercises you may feel you're breathing more freely and easily and you become aware of breathing more deeply into your lungs.

Appendix 8

Laughter Quotient Form

Find Your Laughter Quotient

The following questionnaire has been formulated according to the concept and philosophy of Laughter Yoga and it will help to determine your ability to laugh for no reason, your ability to express emotions, your communication skills and if you incorporate the 4 elements of joy like singing, dancing, playing and laughing in your life and other such parameters necessary to make life more joyful and happy.

Rate each question/statement on a scale of 1 to 5:

1 = Not at all true

2 = Slightly True

3 = Moderately True

4 = Mostly True

5 = Absolutely True

1. I laugh a lot everyday

2. My source of laughter is driven from my internal desire to laugh and have fun

3. I use humor daily to perceive, express and experience a given situation in a humorous way

4. I add physical playfulness and a playful mental attitude while interacting with others

5. I sing for no reason everyday

6. I dance for no reason everyday

7. Every day, I express freely my positive and negative emotions

8. Every day, I have a high percentage of positive thoughts

9. I am peaceful and calm often

10. Frequently I feel excited and passionate about life

11. I express myself as an extrovert often

12. I am satisfied and happy with life
13. My physical, mental & emotional well-being is relaxed often
14. I am able to communicate and interact with strangers easily
15. I often feel refreshed and energetic
16. I stay positive during challenging times
17. I am connected to a lot of friends
18. It is easy for me to laugh for no reason
19. I often perform random acts of kindness
20. I have the ability to be silly in the presence of others

Scoring section:

If your score is 80 - 100: You are a great laugher. Keep it up!!

If your score is 60 - 79: You are good at laughing, but can be better

If your score is 40 - 59: You laugh very little and need to laugh more.

If your score is under 40: You have a serious problem and need to do something to bring more laughter in your life.

Appendix 9

Laughter Yoga Training Evaluation Form

Date _____ Location _____

Please indicate your impressions of the items listed below.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I will be able to apply the knowledge learned.	<input type="radio"/>				
2. The training objectives were identified and followed.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. The content was organized and easy to follow.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. The material distributed was relevant and useful.	<input type="radio"/>				
5. The activities stimulated my learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
6. The quality of instruction was good.	<input type="radio"/>				
7. The trainer was knowledgeable.	<input type="radio"/>				
8. The trainer was helpful.	<input type="radio"/>				
9. Adequate time was provided for questions and discussion.	<input type="radio"/>				
10. Class participation and interaction was encouraged.	<input type="radio"/>				

11. How do you rate the training overall?

Excellent Good Average Poor Very poor

12. What was most valuable about the training?

13. What would you recommend to improve this training?

14. Please provide other comments and testimonials? Use the back if you need more space.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this evaluation form. It is our desire to maintain a high degree of professionalism as we conduct these workshops. Your input will assist us in achieving this goal.

Appendix 10

Photo / Video Release Form

Project Description-----

I, _____, in consideration of your photographing, videotaping me / my children, or recording me/ my performance or voice for the above described project, hereby grant permission to Laughter Yoga International, which term shall include not only yourselves, but your employees, agents, successors, licenses and assigns, the irrevocable right and license to use my likeness and/or voice on videotape or film, photograph or audiotape; to edit such videotape or film or audiotape or crop photographs at your discretion, to incorporate the same in the above production and to use or authorize the use of such videotape or film, audiotape of photograph or any portion thereof in any manner or media at any time in perpetuity and to use my name, likeness, voice and biographical or other information concerning me in connection therewith, including promotion in all media.

I agree to hold Laughter Yoga International, harmless against any liability, loss or damage resulting from the use of my image and/or voice, and I hereby release and discharge them from any and all claims whatsoever in connection with such use of my image and/or voice.

I am signing this release freely and voluntarily and in executing this release do not rely on any inducements, promises or representations made by Laughter Yoga International.

Signature:_____ Date:_____

Address:_____

City/State/Zip:_____

Telephone:_____

Approval/Consent of Parent or Guardian

Family Member Names: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 11

Laughter Friendly Songs

Laughter Yoga sessions are enhanced by spirited singing. Here are some songs I recommend.

If You're Happy and You Know it

If you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap clap)
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap clap)
If you're happy and you know it and you really ought 'a show it
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap clap)

Happy Ha Ha to You (Tune: Happy Birthday)

Happy ha ha to you, Happy ho ho it's true Happy heehee dear -----
Happy ha ha to you!

The More We Laugh Together

(Tune: The More We Get Together)
The more we laugh together, together, together
The more we laugh together, the happier we'll be!
I laugh with your friends and you laugh with my friends
We'll all be friends together and happier we'll be!

A Bicycle Built for Two

Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer do
I'm half crazy all for the love of you
It won't be a stylish marriage
I can't afford a carriage
But you'll look sweet upon the seat of a bicycle built for two

The Hokey Pokey

(You know the words)

Simple songs to sing with "HA" instead of words:

- Frere Jaques
- Jesus Loves Me
- Row Row Your Boat

- William Tell Overture a.k.a. the Lone Ranger Song (gallop with this)
- The Old Gray Mare
- Roll Out the Barrel (polka with this) • Head and Shoulders, Knees & Toes
• Skip to My Lou
- Yankee Doodle Dandy
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Every Little Cell In My Body Is Happy

(Tune: Mama's Little Baby Loves Shortnin'Bread)

Every little cell in my body is happy
 Every little cell in my body is well
 Every little cell in my body is happy
 Every little cell in my body is swell
 Feel so good, feel so well
 Every little cell in my body is well
 Feel so good, feel so well
 Every little cell in my body is swell (repeat part 1)

Do You Know How Much Your Love Means?

Do you know how much your love means?
 (bobble index finger at someone)
 Do you know how many hearts you have lifted?
 (arms go up in front of body)
 Do you know your love is healing
 (arms come down and hands wiggle in blessing)
 What a wonderful feeling!
 (roll arms in front of body and move to a new partner)

Laughter Yoga Anthem (Les Laughettes)

(© Thomas Topolanek& Gabi & Rainer Fink 2010)

Refrain: We spread joy, peace and laughter

Happy ever after
 Laughing like a child
 Healthy, strong and wild
 It was in 1995
 When Doc Kataria and his wife
 They started laughing in Mumbai
 And many people asked him why

Five started laughing in the park
From early morning until dark
The scientists confirmed it's true
Laughter's good for me and You

Add some breathing exercise
Give your lungs fresh oxygen
No more stress and not depressed
That feels really nice !!

It's contagious but it's safe
Let's do a giant laughter wave
It is easy to make this choice
You decide to raise your voice

Say: Ho Ho Choir: Ho Ho
Say: HAHAHA Choir: HAHAHA

Refrain: We spread joy,....

People all around the world
Listen to my voice
Clap your hands and stomp your feet
Let us make some noise

HOHO 1,2,3
It is good for you and me
HAHA 3,2,1
Let us have some fun

Open heart and also mouth
North, east, west and south
Be sure you are divine my friend
No beginning and no end

Refrain: We spread joy,....

You can find Mp3 free audio in the Resources Pack pen drive courtesy Laughter Yoga team Austria. There is also a gibberish version of this anthem. You can play this audio with your group and sing along.

Appendix 12

Fun Games from Laughter Clubs

Pizza pasta

This is very popular all over the world. It's also a great game for picnics and parties. It helps people to laugh at themselves graciously and overcome their embarrassment at making mistakes.

How to play: At least 8 to 10 people or more are required. Participants stand in a circle. One person calls out 'One', the person next to them (to the left or right --- you decide) calls out 'Two', and so on around the circle, with the person after 10 starting with 1 again. Once they are comfortable counting ask them to: Say pizza instead of number six; say pasta instead of number seven...Then continue counting from eight onwards... You should hear 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, pizza, pasta, 8, 9, 10, 1, 2, ...

Rules: Call out loud and clear without any pauses. Anyone who makes a mistake, fumbles or takes too long is out of the game and has to stand in the middle of the circle, point a finger at him/herself and laugh out loud then sit down in the circle to enjoy the rest of the game. Group members clap "Very Good, Very Good, Yay!!" in order to appreciate the gesture. As the game continues change the passwords to "Cola-Pepsi" "chicken rice" or any other combination of words. Besides food items you can also have bodily expressions and gestures like kissing, farting or whatever makes people laugh. If the group is very skilled try changing directions between 10 and 1. With gradual exclusion of participants the circle shrinks. The last person standing is the winner and gets a laughing ovation.

Whiff/Piff - This is a Fun Game where one person at a time gives an impromptu one minute speech with their tongue either behind the lower lip or lower teeth. This will make it difficult to speak clearly so we laugh. However, we are never to make fun of people with speech impairments so this should be made clear by the leader before starting the game.

Apple, Orange & Banana - Start in a seated circle. Each person calls out the name of a fruit like apple, orange, or banana in sequence, creating a group according to the fruit. The leader then calls out one name of a fruit and everyone in that group gets up and runs through the circle to a new spot, while the leader removes a chair. The person who couldn't find a new seat then sits in the center of the circle. Everyone says Very Good, Very Good, Yay. Continue until only one chair remains and everyone else is sitting in the middle.

Swish, Boing, Bang - Stand in a circle. First person turns to one side and says "Swish"

Each person keeps passing on the "Swish" until someone decides to say "Boing" or "Bang"

"Boing" means the direction of the "Swish" reverses. "Bang" means the person saying it points to anyone else in the circle who then starts the "Swish". When a person makes a mistake they sit in the center of the circle. Everyone says Very Good, Very Good, Yay and the "Swish" starts again. These words can be replaced by "Ho Ho," "Ha Ha," and "He He"

Zip, Zap, Zop - Stand in a circle. Leader points to anybody at random and says "Zip"

That person points to anybody at random and says "Zap"....That person points to anybody at random and says "Zop"....That person points to anybody at random and says "Zip" and it continues, getting faster and faster, with everyone laughing the entire time.

Hot Potato - Stand in a circle. Leader tosses a "hot potato" to anybody at random.

Person catching it can briefly play with it in any way and then toss it to someone else.

This continues with everyone laughing the entire time and leader signals the end.

Body Percussion - Stand in a circle or crowd. Make sounds and clap on body parts as indicated.

Clap Clap (hands out in front).

Ho Ho (clap hands on chest, one at a time).

Do both above three times, then add next step.

Ha Ha (clap hands on thighs, one at a time)

Do all above three times, then add next step.

He He (clap hands on butt, one at a time)

Do all above three times, then add next step.

Bom Bom (stomp feet, one at a time)

Repeat faster and faster as indicated by leader, including possible variations.

Appendix 13

Laughter Yoga Products

Available on www.laughteryoga.org/shop

Books

- Dr. Kataria's book, 'Laugh For No Reason' in English and other languages
- The Inner Spirit Of Laughter
- Five Secrets From The Laughing Guru

DVDs

- Laughter Yoga Concept And Session
- Laughter Yoga Alone
- Laughter Yoga Training
- Laughter Yoga Learning
- Laughter Yoga One on One Coaching
- Laughter Yoga For Seniors
- Laughter Yoga for School Children
- Laughter Yoga In Business
- Laughter Yoga Bank (40 Foundation Laughter exercises + Laughter Bank vol 1 + Laughter Bank vol 2)
- Fun Games

Audio CDs

- Yoga Nidra
- Humming Meditation
- Exhalex Relaxation Technique
- Breath Connect Meditation
- Ho Ho Ha Ha Dancing Laugh & Dance Party

Other Products

- Laughter Yoga T- shirts
- Fun game cards
- 'It's Time to Laugh' watches and clocks
- Laughter Yoga badges
- Laughter Yoga key rings
- Laughter Yoga Umbrellas

Laughter Yoga Online Learning Center

Laughter Yoga Online Learning center gives you the opportunity to get an in-depth knowledge about Laughter Yoga methods, history, concept, philosophy, steps, benefits and different applications through videos, explained in detail by Dr. Kataria, the founder of Laughter Yoga movement. The unique features of online learning center are: no DVD player or DVDs, no shipping cost, most economical and life time membership.

It is a great library for those who want to acquire a knowledge base and wish to become Laughter Yoga professionals in future.

IMPORTANT: By watching these videos you cannot get any certification for laughter leader, teacher or master trainer. For that you have to undergo the training sessions in person.

Laughter Yoga APP

Laughter Yoga University has just launched its App on both android and i-phone application, which can be viewed on smart phones, i-pads and tabs. This App will keep you informed about Laughter Yoga activities around the world in text and videos. We will update the latest news, Laughter Club activities, training programs etc. You can also learn Laughter Yoga exercises by watching videos. This App is absolutely free. Download it by searching in Google Play Store and Apple Store by typing 'Laughter Yoga University'

Laughter Yoga Learning Resources

If you don't have a Laughter Club in your vicinity, and it is difficult to start one, just dip into our resource center where we have numerous books, training videos learning kits, e-books and other products. You can learn Laughter Yoga methods and enhance your skills by buying these products from our online shopping center.

Appendix 14

Resource Pack Inventory

As a part of the training each leader must receive a Resource Pack USB drive containing the following documents:

Folder: Basic Learning Course

Basic Learning Manual e-version.pdf
Basic Workshop Tri-fold Brochure
Basic Brochure
Laughter Yoga Business Card Sample
English Leader Training Manual
English Teacher Training Manual
Laughter For No Reason (ebook)
Liability Release Form .pdf
Science of Breathing .pdf
Laughter Yoga Info Booklet (Your Happiness Guide) .pdf

Folder: LY Logos

LY International Logos (.eps, jpg, png) —LY University Logos (eps, jpg, png)

Folder: LY Research Papers

US Study
Impact of Laughter on Stress of Cancer Patients Before Chemotherapy —Article from Alternative Therapies —Australian Research on LY Clubs —Bangalore Study —Cindy Miles' US Research on Blood Pressure in Seniors —Current Psychiatry article —Dialysis research from Australia —Effect of LY on Depression (German) —Effect of LY on Abdominal Muscles (German) —Iranian research on Cancer —Effect of LY on Depression (Korean) —Effect of LY on Dialysis Patients (Australia) —Effect of LY on Blood Pressure, Blood Sugar (Slovenia) —Effect of LY on Mental Health (German)

Folder: Popular Newspaper Articles

Photos
Sub-folder - Dr. Kataria's photos
Sub-folder - Images of people laughing (permission granted to use these)

Folder: Resource Pack Videos

20 Years of LY
LY in Business
LY in Business (3 minutes)
LY In Business (1 minute)
LY in Schools (2 videos)
LY in Blind School
LY with Deaf and Mute Children
LY with Police
LY in Prison
LY Senior Songs
LY 4 Elements
LY Geo Laughter
Science of Breathing video

Folder: Sample Fliers

Business Flyer (2)
Basic Learning Flyer
General Flyer
Leader Training Tri-fold brochure

Folder: Schools Books

Cambridge University
CBSE, India
Japanese High School

Folder: Standees

LY in the News (2)
LY Applications
LY Worldwide

Folder: World Laughter Day Banners**Folder: World Laughter Day Logos****Folder: World Laughter Day Placards**

Appendix 15

Laughter Yoga Basic Learning Course Agenda

One Day Experiential Program For Beginners

Duration : 6 hours (3 hours before & after lunch)

Time: 9.30 am to 5 pm (Includes lunch and tea / coffee breaks)

9.00 am - 9.30 am	Registration Logistics / Filling Laughter Quotient form
9.30 am -10.30 am	Special Introduction: Tell your name and laugh & what you do and laugh. Talk about what we learn from this exercise. Watch videos on worldwide LY movement : (Resources Pack DVD, History, What is Laughter Yoga, 5 points 3 reasons, Concept & Philosophy & 5 unique features of LY)
10.30 am - 10. 45 am	TEA BREAK
10.45 am -11.45 am	Complete Laughter Yoga Session with Exercises, Meditation and Yoga Nidra Relaxation (20 mins each)
11.45 am - 12.30 pm	Discussion: Why we need to laugh more today, how to laugh who will make you laugh, benefits of Laughter Yoga & talk about new research & studies being done on Laughter
12.30 pm -1.30 pm	LUNCH BREAK
1.30 pm- 2.30 pm	Learn how to Laugh Alone by adding laughter exercises with your daily routine e.g. while taking a shower, cooking, washing dishes, cleaning & driving etc.
2.30 pm - 3.30 pm	Learn to Cultivate the 4 Elements of Joy (Singing, Dancing, Playing & Laughing) Participate in a Gibberish session & Ho Ho Ha Ha Dance, Fun Games and Laugh Dance party
3.30 pm - 3.45 pm	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
3.45 pm - 4.30 pm	Find out how to get involved in Laughter Yoga and learn the strategies to bring more laughter into your life
4.30 pm - 5 pm	Quick Laughter Session, networking photos & feedback

Appendix 16

Laughter Yoga Introduction Worksheet

Special Way of Introduction in Laughter Yoga Trainings

Tell your name and laugh ha ha ha

Tell where you come from and laugh ha ha ha

Tell what do you do and laugh ha ha ha

Sample Answers:

My name is Madan Kataria ha ha ha ha

I come from Mumbai, India ha ha ha ha

I am a medical doctor ha ha ha ha

At the end, the facilitator will set up a dialogue program on what we learn from this exercise:

You can laugh for no reason simply by deciding to laugh

Laughter makes you less self-conscious

Laughter is contagious—one person's laugh can easily get the whole group laughing

Laughter helps you take yourself less seriously

Laughter sets us free from our own labels, titles and designations

Laughter works as an icebreaker to break down initial barriers and connect people right away

Laughter can remove the competitive dynamic from introductions

Laughter relieves stress

Laughter helps create a safe environment

This great exercise gives us a quick introduction to the concept and philosophy of Laughter Yoga. This answers most of the questions what we teach in Laughter Yoga.

Questions for Discussion:

How easy was it for you to laugh without a reason?

Do you feel differently after this exercise than you did before it?

How has this exercise changed your perception of the other people in the group?

Has the depth of your breathing changed as a result of this exercise?