



CONCERN:EAP

# Healthy & Resilient You

**Laughter** is  
strong medicine for  
the brain and body



## Laugh it up why don't you!

It is common knowledge that a natural cure for stress is talking with someone who can give you new perspectives. More recently, regular exercise, a healthy diet, and meditation have been prescribed. Now there's a proven new remedy for de-stressing both your brain and your body—Laughter.

That's right. Whether you're out unwinding with your friends, guffawing at an episode of *The Big Bang Theory*, or giggling at your most recent dating blunder, this month's prescription for stress reduction is a healthy dose of laughing!

## Chuckle up!

It's now been proven that all forms of laughing cause the release of both endorphins and serotonin in your body. These "happy hormones" are responsible for contributing to the well-being of your brain and body.

## What's in it for you?

- ✓ The endorphins released by laughing significantly increase your "pain thresholds" by creating temporary opiates in your body. In other words, they're a natural high and pain reliever!
- ✓ Serotonin is considered the "happy hormone". So, imagine when you laugh that you're pumping pure positivity into your bloodstream and your brain.



### Resilience Tip:

*Long day at work? Have a movie night complete with popcorn and spin your all-time favorite comedy. You'll feel better in no time.*

## Bona fide benefits of laughing

*Promotes healthy organs...*



**Your heart** — A rousing whoop raises both your heart rate and blood pressure, which stimulates the entire cardiovascular system, similar to the effects of exercise.



**Your lungs** — A good guffaw stimulates the respiratory system. It forces you to take in more oxygen and expel more carbon dioxide, which deepens your breath and helps you get calm.



**Your skin** — A rollicking roar brings more oxygen into your body. This causes the capillaries close to the skin to dilate in a similar way to when you exercise. These capillaries become filled with blood, which then feeds the skin with an increased supply of oxygen and nutrients, causing a natural glow.



*Did you know that laughter burns calories? Laughing for a total of 15-minutes a day burns up to 40 of them!*

## Supercharges your body and mind

- ✓ **Stimulates your circulation.** When you laugh, you're stimulating your circulation, which encourages your muscles to relax. Have you ever thought of merriment as a massage for your muscles? Well, it is!
- ✓ **Improves your immune system.** Contrary to how negative thoughts and gloominess create everything from ailments to aging, positive thoughts and laughter release neuropeptides that help fight stress and actually boost your immune system. They are keys to having a vibrantly healthy body.
- ✓ **Increases personal satisfaction.** Unlike the feelings of anger and frustration that come from negative thoughts, looking for the good and the humor in a situation can relieve stress, which helps you cope with and navigate through life's more difficult situations.
- ✓ **Improves your mood.** The serotonin that laughter releases into your brain is not just a bad mood buster, it also decreases anxiety and fights depression!

## Laugh until it hurts so good

Whether you're giggling or laughing until your face hurts, know that you're doing something good for your body, mind and emotions. Increase the likelihood of making an okay day into a great day just by turning the corners of your mouth up. You'll notice your steps get lighter and your eyes get brighter. And when you make another person's day by getting them to smile with you, notice how good you feel about yourself. That's the wonder of laughter at work.

## When you smile, the world smiles with you

**There's plenty of seriousness in the world.** Have you noticed that you feel better when you've brightened someone's day? Think of your ability to see the humor in life and to laugh as a way of actually making a difference.

**Lighten up!** When you're willing to laugh at life's curveballs, an overall lightness takes over your personality. You'll feel more buoyant, and believe it or not, so will people around you.

**Tag! You're it!** Laughing is contagious. It's hard to keep a straight face when someone else is rolling on the floor laughing. Right? Think of your laughter as the best virus you can spread.

**Timing is everything.** There's a time and a place for humor, just like there's a time and a place to buckle down and get serious. Be cognizant of when and where it's appropriate to inject humor.



**Resilience Tip:** Hang out with people whom you like and whose humor you appreciate. You'll have each other in stitches before you know it!



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If you find your level of stress is impacting your well-being, you can contact us for additional help and support.

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