

RESILIENCE RX

LAUGH THERAPY

Those who need a good laugh are usually the ones who feel least like laughing, yet the heart can hold joy the same time as sorrow, so go ahead and laugh. One laugh can scatter a hundred griefs, and help lift your spirits.

Even in difficult times, a laugh—or even simply a smile—can go a long way.

WHY IT MATTERS

Laughter creates the perfect diaphragmatic breath that oxygenates the brain. It also stimulates the brain into a positive state, which helps clear the mind and allows you more clarity and focus. When you're having a tough time, laughing creates psychological distance and can slow the momentum of overwhelm, frustration or disappointment.

A powerful healing modality, studies show that laughter offers many physical, psychological, and emotional benefits. Smiling and laughter stimulate the facial muscles that trigger the brain to release happy hormones called endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals that promote an overall sense of well-being, temporarily relieves pain, decreases stress, and increases immune and infection-fighting antibodies.

BENEFITS OF LAUGH THERAPY

Because the body can't tell the difference between a real or fake smile, hold a pencil between your teeth to "fake it until you make it." When you smile, the stimulation of the involved facial muscles trigger the brain to release the chemicals that cause the feeling of happiness. A phenomenon called facial feedback, this works even if you weren't feeling happy in the first place.

The brain can't tell the difference and will be tricked into releasing those feel-good chemicals.

WHY IT WORKS:

- Laughter and crying are like yin and yang, they both release energy.
- Laughing bypasses the mind and helps us keep a positive attitude.
- Laughter engages in perfect diaphragmatic breath. When we laugh, we exhale completely and then inhale completely, which oxygenates the brain and body. When our brains are fully oxygenated, our minds become calm and clear.

HELPFUL TIP

Enjoy a good belly laugh at least once every day to oxygenate the brain and trigger endorphins that help us feel good. Studies show that ten minutes of laughter is equivalent to thirty minutes on a cardio machine.

- Laughter releases endorphins which help us feel good. The combination of brain oxygenation and endorphins is like a joyful cocktail.
- When we feel good and the mind is clear, we feel grounded and peaceful, less stress and less reactive.
- Laughter doesn't change reality but does help us cultivate a positive mental attitude.
- Be silly, be playful. Laughter is contagious and allows our inner child to come out.
- Fake laughter often turns into authentic laughter. The brain can't tell the difference, and the health benefits are the same.

HOW TO LAUGH WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE IT:

- Watch a comedy movie or TV show
- Watch funny YouTube videos
- Listen to children laughing
- Watch blooper reels on TV
- Read a funny book
- Try laugh yoga
- Look at funny pictures
- Read funny social media memes
- Listen to funny jokes

No matter how you choose to induce a good belly laugh, the bottom line is that whatever makes you laugh is truly good medicine.