

Gelotology and the Laughing Buddha

By Jean Kadkbodaian

Gelotology is the study of humor and laughter, and its effects on the human body. It also the psychological and physiological study of laughter. The word is from the Greek gelos, geloto meaning laugh, laughter, laughing . Laughter reduces stress and puts painful experiences into a lighter frame work.

There is vast research on the healthy effects of laughter on the diseases and conditions such as diabetes, blood flow, immune response, relaxation & sleep, physical fitness, anxiety & children, asthma and more. When I was in the army we would often find ourselves in stressful situations that required extreme amounts of self discipline and control. So when we did get the luxury of letting off some steam we would sit around telling stories and laughing. We would often talk about mistakes we made and of course times when we embarrassingly feel down. Coming from a family of 9 when I sit with my brothers and sisters we often laugh about some of the more stressful and painful times of our childhood. Laughter really is best when shared it is hard to do by yourself and impossible not to do with others who are laughing. I would like to share 3 tips to bring on the healing benefits of laughter.

Watch something funny. Funny movies are so much funnier if you watch them at the theaters with others. Try to

be the person laughing the loudest and the longest it is so contagious. If you can't get out, go to youtube.com and watch videos of people falling down— it is sure to brighten your mood!

The 2nd tip is to follow the wisdom of the Laughing Buddha. This is the Buddha that has his hands raised above his head in a standing position. Try it stand up and put your hands over your hear and make a diamond with your thumbs and first fingers. Look up though the diamond and laugh. It really is a lot of fun. Try it in groups. Buddha wisdom says that you should walk around with a slight smile so that you get smile lines instead of frown lines as you age. Try it is will instantly brighten your mood.

And 3rd take the advice of Liz's medicine man in her book Eat, Pray, Love and meditate by smiling. Sit still close your eyes and smile. Smile down your throat and into your belly. Smile with your liver. Try it— simple yet profound! ✨

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