

Walk on the Wild Side: The Power of Laughter



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At the height of laughter, the universe is flung into a kaleidoscope of new possibilities. ~Jean Houston

Given such wide agreement among researchers that laughing benefits the body, mind and soul, we might seriously (chuckle) prosper from laughing a whole lot more than we do. Picture yourself in your mind's eye, doubled over and letting loose with belly laughs again and again. Regardless of what you are doing or where you are, you'd fling off the reins and spontaneously let go with your signature version of ha, ha, guffaw!

Laughter is a universal connector with the power to light up a room and everyone in it. And once beyond the thought of appearing ridiculous to the serious personalities in your life, and perhaps even to yourself, you'll discover it's possible to laugh whenever you choose and about pretty much everything.

Booting the common opinion that those who laugh too often don't accomplish much had me wondering if the opposite isn't true. The first trait I noticed about people who laugh easily is that they laugh while working and about serious stuff too.

Laugh big as joy is contagious. Being too discrete muffles the fun. - Unknown

Instead of shutting down or becoming defensive these people dissolve negativity with laughter. Instead of wasting their energy by resisting, great laughs haul back and howl about what they can't change, and they're wise enough to know what isn't theirs to change includes almost everything. Less than desired outcomes only feed their sense of life being an entertaining game. They've accepted they're on a winding path loaded with contrast and they laugh about that too.

Generally people become decent social laughers or at least they chuckle well. It's harder to observe the enjoyment of people who laugh completely on the inside, but it is entertaining to watch them hold it in. The most fun comes from watching children laugh



because their perception is fully in the moment, and they're without the social program to tell them, "That's not funny".

Everything is funny as long as it is happening to somebody else. - Will Rogers

Still it's a rare find and truly uplifting to be in the company of someone who laughs out loud without holding back. It really elevates your mood when someone laughs his/her way through a personal challenge or an embarrassing moment. Whether you call this *joie de vivre* or joy of life, this approach grows from being o.k. with whatever happens and accepting imperfection in its many forms. Remarkably, somewhere along their line of experience these folk decided to thrive by laughing at the drama that turns many of us inside out.

You grow up the day you have your first real laugh at yourself." - Ethel Barrymore

You probably remember being a child and laughing your head off at the behaviour of adults. Then one day you woke up on the other side of adolescence at which time life seemed more serious and daunting. It's not surprising that the countless circumstances of growing up teach us to survive by focussing anywhere but here. The only time some of us return to now is when someone cracks a joke. When fear directs our attention to control, it's easy to overlook the power humour has to keep us healthy and balanced.

One sure way to stop laughing is to think too much. Gluing your attention to the past or to the future bends your perspective toward believing your best possibilities are over the horizon or else behind you as golden breaks you missed taking. Either belief removes you from recognizing the only opportunities you do have, which are alive and facing you now.

Laughter seems to jiggle our puzzle pieces to better fitting places.

Laughter is a powerful antidote. Numerous published studies show that laughing lowers blood pressure, reduces stress hormones, boosts the immune function and increases muscle tone to name a few benefits. More importantly, laughing feels good. It falls to reason that if we turned up for laughs as regularly as we do for workouts, we'd effectively jump start our spirits as well as stack our abs.

Perhaps you've noticed how the healing power of loving laughter has been introduced to ceremonies such as weddings and memorials. Whether in joy or in grief, we want to keep the best memories of people we love, and frequently the best memories are also the funniest. With this thought in mind, remember that every time you laugh you create a picture (click) for someone to store in their heart.

Spontaneous laughter is part of the present moment.

Seriously though (heh heh), why would anyone want to think too much about laughing which is a simple behaviour that happens on its own? Or does it? As we go through transitions that pressure us to remodel our lives, a good laugh can hang well out of reach where it's less helpful than a carrot on a stick.

From where I sit, it's easier to shift things by laughing than to use a mental bulldozer. Every laugh registers your appreciation of the moment, and all we know for certain is that life is one present moment following another. If anything else is certain, it is that there will never be a moment unable to absorb your laughter.

As well as being free, laughter creates enough power to reset your frequency faster than thinking things through. Simply put: the more you laugh the better you feel. And we already agree that feeling great supports you to live your life out loud.

Closing with this chuckle; there's no career and few situations that won't benefit from laughter.

<http://ca.youtube.com/watch?v=anKhWRz31IQ> (Control + click to follow link)