Self-care in health practices: The importance of laughter in Work/Life balance

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Self-care defined

Self care refers to actions and attitudes which contribute to the maintenance of well-being and personal health and promote human development.

“Your sense of humor is one of the most powerful tools you have, to make certain that your daily mood and emotional state support good health.”

~ Paul E. McGhee, Ph.D. ~
LAUGHTER
History of laughter

- **Gelotology** (from the Greek *gelos*, meaning laughter) is the study of laughter and its effects on the body, from a psychological and physiological perspective.

- Professor William F. Fry
  - One of the founders of gelotology; Stanford university professor

- 1960’s Study of Laurel and Hardy – comedic films and affects on body

- He found that laughter enhanced the activity of certain immune system cells responsible for killing infectious pathogens

Facts about laughter through research

- **Laughter** is an instinctive behavior, produced and recognized by people of all cultures.

- **Most laughter** is about relationships between people. We are 30 times more likely to laugh in a social situation than when we are alone (without the presence of t.v., books, radio). (/1)

- **Laughter** tends to occur in short bursts of vowel-like sounds such as “ha-ha,” “ho-ho,” or “he-he,” which are repeated every fifth of a second.

- **Most people** can’t laugh on command. Laughter is not something we produce consciously.

Mission of Laughter Yoga:

The goal of Laughter Yoga is to bring good health, joy and world peace through Laughter.
LAUGHTER YOGA:

- Originated in 1995 by Dr. Madan Kataria
- Laughter Yoga began with 5 individuals in a park
- Began in Mumbai, India
- There are now over 6000 laughter clubs in over 60 countries
- Laughter Yoga combines:
  - laughter with yogic breathing
- You laugh for no reason
Health Benefits & Laughter

- **Laughter relaxes the whole body.** A good, hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes after.

- **Laughter boosts the immune system.** Laughter decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, thus improving your resistance to disease.

- **Laughter protects the heart.** Laughter improves the function of blood vessels and increases blood flow, which can help protect you against a heart attack and other cardiovascular problems.

- **Laughter dissolves distressing emotions.** You can’t feel anxious, angry, or sad when you’re laughing.

SELF-CARE
Burnout is a state of emotional, physical and spiritual exhaustion from prolonged stress.

You are at significant risk of burnout when:
- Prolonged stress occurs

Warning signs:
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Feeling overburdened
- Difficulty sleeping
Self-care entails that you are:

- Eating well (healthy)
- Practicing good hygiene
- Getting a good night’s sleep
- Exercising
- Maintaining a positive support/social system
- Investing in “me” time (pampering)
- Practicing “positive” living (attitude)
References:


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THANK YOU!