



Laughter Yoga Therapy & Stress Management.

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Abstract:

Stress is any physical or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental unrest. Stress is major component of ill health. Most health benefits people get because they are able to physical, mental & emotional stress with laughter yoga exercises. Once the stress levels are down, the immune system becomes stronger automatically.

1. Psychological/Mental Benefits: *Participating in the Yoga Laughing Club benefits in Stress and tension reduction, overall attitude development, improves relaxation and sleep, reduce depression, improve overall mental health, boost self confidence and mental functions. It was also confirmed that it does not benefits for psychosomatic disorders and natural pain killers.*

2. Physical benefits: It was confirmed that regular members believed that participating in Yoga Laughing Club improved breathing, protect heart, blood pressure, controls blood sugar level, relax muscles, feels younger, improves oxygen intake. It was not useful for cancer patients, bronchitis and asthma, weight loss, and physical pain killers.

3. Social benefits: Survey revealed that participating in the laughing club improves social life, interpersonal relation, sense of well being.

After all "Laughter Yoga Therapy" is one of all time favorite stress management strategies because it's free convenient & beneficial is so many ways.

INTRODUCTION:-

What happens when we laugh?

We change physiologically when we laugh. We stretch muscles throughout our face & body, our pulse & blood pressure go up, & we breathe faster, sending more oxygen to our tissues.

Laughter Yoga Therapy is a unique exercise routine which combines unconditional laughter with yogik breathing (Pranayama). Laughter is initially simulated as a physical exercise while maintaining eye contact with others in group & promoting child like playfulness. "Our body doesn't see to know the difference between simulated Laughter & stimulated Laughter." Laughter Yoga is the only technique that allows adults to achieve sustained hearty laughter without involving cognitive thought. It bypasses the intellectual systems that normally act as a break on natural laughter.

Laughter Yoga session start with gentle worm-up techniques with include stretching, chatting, Clapping & body moment. These help breakdown inhibition & develop fillings of childlike playfulness. Breathing exercises are used to prepare the Lungs for laughter, followed by a series of "Laughter Exercises." That combines the method of acting & visualization techniques with playfulness. These exercises, when combine with the strong social dynamics of group behavior, lead to prolonged & hearty unconditional laughter. Laughter exercises are interspersed with breathing exercise. Twenty minutes of

Please cite this Article as : Anagha Chikte ,Laughter Yoga Therapy & Stress Management. : Golden Research Thoughts (Aug. ; 2012)



laughter is sufficient to develop full physiological benefits.

A laughter Yoga session may finish with "Laughter Meditation." This a session of unstructured laughter where by participants sit or lie down & allow natural laughter to flow from within like a fountain. This is a powerful experience that often leads to a healthy emotional catharsis & also a feeling of release & joyfulness. This can be followed by guided relaxation exercises.

"World Laughter Day" takes place on the first Sunday in May. The first celebration was on January 11, 1998 in Mumbai, India, was arranged by Dr. Madan Kataria, founder of the worldwide Laughter Yoga movement. The celebration of World Laughter Day was meant to be a positive manifestation for world peace & to build up a global consciousness of brotherhood & friendship through laughter. As of 2011 there are more than 8000 Laughter Clubs in 65 Countries. Each Club has its own Laugh captain & operates as an independent cell.

Stress is any physical or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental unrest. Stress is major component of ill health. Most health benefits people get because they are able to physical, mental & emotional stress with laughter yoga exercises. Once the stress levels are down, the immune system becomes stronger automatically.

Laughter Yoga Therapy has stress management benefits relive depression, reduce stress and tension, anxiety & psychosomatic disorders, natural pain killer, improve self confidence, promote relaxation & improve sleep, improve mental health & mental function, improve overall attitude. Laughter protect heart, gives you a mini work-out, balanced blood pressure, improves breathing, lose weight, alleviates bronchitis & asthma, make you look younger, blood sugar level control, for cancer patients, relives pain, relax muscles throughout the body, enhance oxygen intake, internal workout improves stamina & also effective for improves social life and boosts interpersonal relationships.

For understanding the effects related to participating in Yoga Laughter Club which was not just laughter club but has an Indian touch with yoga activity inclusion in the daily routine of the club, the researcher has conducted the survey.

RESEARCH METHOD

Survey was conducted with the help of the questionnaire prepared by the researcher. Five Laughter Yoga Clubs out of fifteen, form western area of Pune City were selected randomly. There were 975 registered members out of which 285 were selected randomly from the randomly selected clubs. Out of these 285 members 250 members answered full questionnaire and those were taken for data analysis. Data collection was done after they finished their daily routine of the club. One hour daily routine of the clubs was as follows;

1. Standing in circle & start clapping
2. Prayer-
 - a) Shloka reading
 - b) Omkar
 - c) Vaidic Mantra
3. Laughing Exercise- (20-25 Minutes)
 - a) Compulsory- 13 Types
 - b) Optional- 12-15 Types (Total Laughing Types 73)
 - c) Deep breathing Types- 1,2,3,4
4. Thoughts, Slogan etc.
5. General Exercise
 - a) Suryanamskar
 - b) Simple starching exercise
 - c) Yogasanas
 - d) Simple Aerobic exercise
 - e) Different group games
6. Pranayama
7. Singing, Group Dance, Bhajan, Birthday Celebration etc.
8. Omkar & Closing Prayer
9. Group Pledge.

FINDINGS-

Psychological or Mental Benefits-

- a) It was found that total 88% (N-220) members admitted that participating Laughter Yoga Club activity reduces Stress & tension.
- b) It was found that total 88% (N-220) members admitted that participating laughing club activity improves overall attitude.
- c) After analysis total 80% (N-200) members admitted that participating laughing club activity promotes relaxation & improves sleep.
- d) It was observed that total 68.00% (N-170) members admitted that participating Laughter Yoga Club activity reduces Depression.
- e) It was found that total 68% (N-170) members admitted that participating laughing club activity improves mental Health.
- f) It was observed that 64 % (N-160) members admitted that participating laughing club activity improves self confidence.
- g) It was found that 56% (N-140) members admitted that participating laughing club activity improves Mental Functions.

1. Physical Benefits-

- a) It was observed that total 80% (N-200) members admitted that participating laughing club activity gives internal workout.
- b) It was found that total 72% (N-180) members admitted that participating laughing club activity improves your breathing.
- c) It was observed that total 64% (N-160) members admitted that participating laughing club activity protects Heart.
- d) It was found that total 64% (N-160) members admitted that participating laughing club activity balanced blood pressure.
- e) After analysis total 64% (N-160) members admitted that participating laughing club activity control blood sugar levels.
- f) It was found that total 60% (N-150) members admitted that participating laughing club activity relax muscles throughout the body.
- g) It was observed that total 56% (N-140) members admitted that participating laughing club activity makes you look younger.
- h) It was found that total 56 % (N-140) members admitted that participating laughing club activity enhanced oxygen intake.

2. Social Benefits-

- a) After analysis total 92 % (N-230) members admitted that participating laughing club activity improves your social life. Only 8% (N-20) members felt that their social life is not improved.
- b) It was found that total 80% (N-200) members admitted that participating laughing club activity boost your relationship/ interpersonal relationship.
- c) It was observed that total 72% (N-180) members admitted that participating laughing club activity produced a general sense of well being. It generates the positive view points towards life.

NEGATIVE POINTS-

1. Psychological/ Mental-

- a) It was found that total 60% (N-150) members admitted that participating laughing club activity their anxiety & psychosomatic disorders was not removed. Only 40 % (N-100) members felt that their anxiety & psychosomatic disorders get reduced.
- b) After analysis total 52% (N-130) members admitted that participating laughing club activity is not a natural pain killer.

2. Physical –

- a) It was found that total 84% (N-210) members admitted that participating laughing club activity is not useful for cancer patients.
- b) It was observed that total 72% (N-180) members admitted that participating laughing club activity felt that their bronchitis & asthma is not cured.
- c) It was found that total 64 % (N-160) members admitted that participating laughing club activity, their weight was not reduced.
- d) After analysis it was found that total 60% (N-150) members admitted that participating laughing club activity is not relieved physical pain.

CONCLUSION:

1. Psychological/Mental Benefits: Participating in the Yoga Laughing Club benefits in Stress and tension reduction, overall attitude development, improves relaxation and sleep, reduce depression, improve overall mental health, boost self confidence and mental functions. It was also confirmed that it does not benefits for psychosomatic disorders and natural pain killers.
 2. Physical benefits: It was confirmed that regular members believed that participating in Yoga Laughing Club improved breathing, protect heart, blood pressure, controls blood sugar level, relax muscles, feels younger, improves oxygen intake. It was not useful for cancer patients, bronchitis and asthma, weight loss, and physical pain killers.
 3. Social benefits: Survey revealed that participating in the laughing club improves social life, interpersonal relation, sense of well being.
- After all “Laughter Yoga Therapy” is one of all time favorite stress management strategies because it's free convenient & beneficial is so many ways.

RECOMMENDATIONS:-

1. Each Laughter Club should appoint a well trained coach.
2. A proper shelter should be provided by Municipal Corporation, so that these clubs get the cover space in rainy seasons.
3. The number of parks must increase, so that the numbers of clubs increase.
4. Yearly physical fitness check-up is necessary.

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