

5. BENEFIT FOR GROUPS

Laughter brings physiological changes that help with different conditions and situations. It is a universal communicator so can be shared by people who don't speak the same language.

In self-help groups, appropriate laughter activities can help create an atmosphere for sharing, discussing and healing.

Gentle laughter activities could be used as icebreakers so that members might benefit from the relaxation that laughter brings and the connections that we make through laughing with people.

Laughter is a great medicine, and understanding better the meaning and cause of everyone's laughter can help guide us in supporting each other.

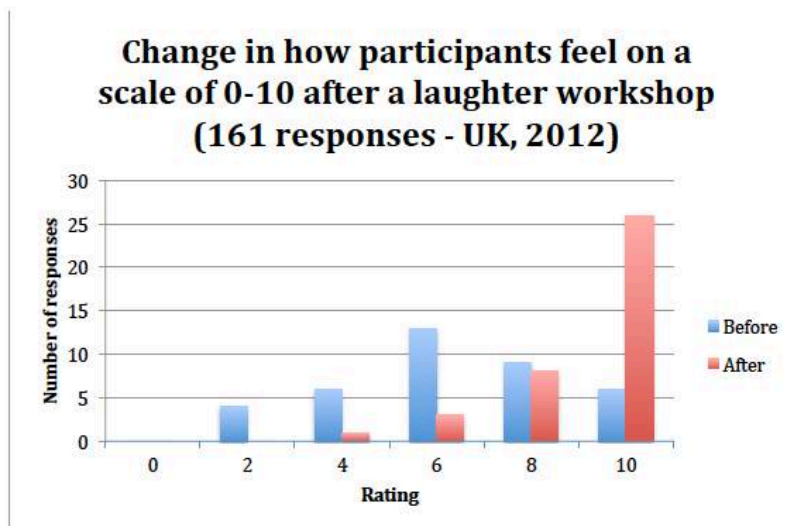
- Laughter is a way of releasing all sorts of emotions;
- Laughter is linked to relaxation and the parasympathetic nervous system;
- It helps support physical and mental well-being;
- Laughter (and Laughter Yoga) can be used as a group activity, often volunteer led;
- Laughter can be part of the toolkit for pain management programs;
- Appropriate laughter can help with morale, motivation, teambuilding, creativity, communications, reduced absenteeism through improved health, and managing stress.

Dementia:

Even if we don't remember what we have been laughing about, laughter leaves us feeling happier and more relaxed in our life. The activities for people living with dementia can be very simple, connecting with other people.

Carers:

When we laugh it is a release of emotion. It does not mean that we don't care. It gives us a boost to our well-being.



Data from sessions in the North West in 2012-13

*This is typically the sort of benefit we find from our workshops.
We have been running laughter-based sessions since 1999.*