

DO WE NEED HUMOR ROOMS?

Contributed by Tony Robinson
Monday, 10 July 2006

Researchers have spent a lot of time on the study of laughter and how it affects the body in many ways. Did you realize that laughter can do a lot more for you than just put a smile on your face? It plays a strong role in reducing blood pressure, stress and even helps you improve the effectiveness of your immune system. Some side effects that may be attributed to loss of humor are depression and other psychological disorders. They've compared the effect of laughter to drugs in a number of ways. If more people would become addicted to this "drug", society might be a better place. Today's a good day to start on it. Laughter as a science itself is important enough where researchers have spent lots of time on it, and still continue.

Laughter is a very effective treatment during recovery from illness. Some hospitals have even setup a room for it alone, with a TV with comedy channels. The researchers found that laughter lowered blood pressure, reduced the hormones related to stress, and improved healing. There were also other positive effects on the body noted. Laughter also causes the body to release some chemicals that are necessary to reduce pain. These natural painkillers give us an overall sense of well being. Research showed also that 15 minutes of laughter each day, can add years to your life. A lot of laughter's positive effects stem from its effect on blood flow and easing of the heart.

One scientist compared the benefits of laughter to those of aerobic exercise, but without the aches and pains that come from it. They've also shown laughter cases with many positive outcomes. As far as negative side effects, they seem to have been unable to find any. Imagine going to visit a friend in the hospital, and instead of them being hooked up to machines with medicine feeding into them, there being a video cart with all sorts of choices to watch being in the room, and the friend not being in pain, and getting well. It really could help somewhat in improving their healing as well as general health. Of course other things are needed, but the added humor can sure make treatment go along better too.

There is also medical proof as well. I'm sure you have seen it yourself a time or 2, when a family member might not be feeling so well. Then while watching something truly funny on TV, seem to get better. The same concepts can work with laughter. We become absorbed in both and lose a lot of focus on what is around us especially during the moment when the laughter is the greatest. It's kind of hard to be in misery when something has you so tickled you feel it all the way into your belly. Pain, discomfort, cancer, or any other illness can be their own form of misery for some, and just the same you can forget for a few with a good laugh, and in the end, feel a little better (both of mind, and body). But how does it work?

Researchers discovered that laughter can fight pain. While studying the brain for years, in their conquest to understand how emotions affect it. From there maybe they can understand how to treat emotional disorders and pain. Their goals are to determine the precise roles that different parts of the brain do, and how they function together.

Over time there will undoubtedly be improvement on how patients are treated. I know children often do find pain and sickness more tolerable in a happy environment. That's enough for me to think that it goes a bit further than the children. It splashes all over us adults that watch them as well. So bring on the videos and everyone can work together to get better health. Bring on the movies, laughter, and all that it brings!

The theory has been formed, and maybe with an acceleration of humor and laughter in people's lives the prognosis could improve dramatically. Maybe we would live longer happier lives, as a direct result of looking forward to something. Happiness...

Today, many children's hospitals include a "humor room" as a replacement for the standard lounge and waiting areas. It provides positive side affects that laughter and happiness can bring for the whole family of the patient, and help their patient get well faster too. Giggles, laughs, true excitement and such in the picture make it hard for everyone to feel so bad, and of course the many effects that come from it for everyone there. If "humor rooms" can do this, so be it.