



# HUMOR

Finding humor in the circumstances of life can lift moods with laughter and help people to better deal with and overcome difficult experiences.

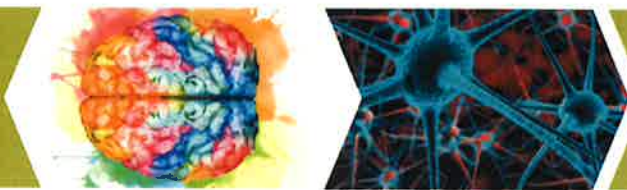
## WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR BODIES WHEN WE LAUGH?

Levels of stress hormones decrease.<sup>1</sup>



Your heart, lungs, and muscles are stimulated.<sup>2</sup>

There is increased activity in parts of the brain's reward system.<sup>3,4</sup>



Endorphins—the body's natural pain blockers—are released.<sup>5</sup>

## INCORPORATING HUMOR INTO YOUR DAILY LIFE HAS MANY POTENTIAL BENEFITS

A stronger immune system<sup>6</sup>



Improved mood and anxiety relief<sup>7</sup>

Better interactions with others<sup>8</sup>



Less burnout on the job<sup>9</sup>

## HUMOR AND LAUGHTER REDUCE THE RISK OF DEVELOPING CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS

Stress and the hormones it produces can do a lot of damage to the mind and body over time. Since humor and laughter reduce the amounts of these hormones, it has also been shown that they can help reduce the risk of blood clots, heart conditions, and other stress-related diseases.<sup>10,11</sup>



## 10 TIPS FOR INCORPORATING HUMOR INTO YOUR LIFE



List three funny things that happened to you each day.<sup>12</sup>

Find a TV show or movie that tickles your funny bone.



Watch stand-up comedy. There are lots of options to watch online or on television and if you can get to a live show – even better!<sup>13</sup>

Reach out to someone who gets your sense of humor. Share the funny things that have happened to you recently or reminisce.



Get online. Comics, memes, YouTube videos, blogs—if it gets you to laugh or smile, spend 15 minutes or so to check it out.

Have a game night. Charades is a classic, and there are also plenty of newer card and board games that are designed with humor in mind.



Try laughter yoga.

Read a funny book.



Spend time with an animal or a child. Their antics are almost always good for a laugh.

Incorporate funny things into your environment. It could be a goofy photo; a page-a-day calendar; or a mug with a witty saying or cartoon.



## SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH #4MIND4BODY

Mental Health America has created a space where people can learn from each other about what they do to stay well.

Tell us how you incorporate humor and laughter into your life or share something you find funny by posting with #4mind4body.

We'll collect your Twitter and Instagram posts at [mentalhealthamerica.net/4mind4body](http://mentalhealthamerica.net/4mind4body). You can also post directly and anonymously to the site if you would like.

## ARE YOU STRUGGLING?

If you are taking steps to care for your mind, body, and soul but still feel like you are struggling with your mental health, visit [www.mhascreening.org](http://www.mhascreening.org) to check your symptoms. It's free, confidential, and anonymous. Once you have your results, MHA will give you information and help you find tools and resources to feel better.

For a complete list of sources, please visit [bit.ly/4mind4bodyHumor](http://bit.ly/4mind4bodyHumor).



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## END NOTES:

### HUMOR

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