

# Stories of Laughter Healing...

## **Marginalized by Mainstream Society**

My adult son TJ lives with severe, long-term developmental disabilities, and as his Mother, I also serve as TJ's caregiver, advocate and legal guardian. My Mother, who turns 90 in 2008, is also very involved in our lives, so the term that's used for me is --- sandwich generation! Family care needs have precluded many opportunities for community inclusion. I kept praying, asking for a healthy, happy way in which I could honestly reach out into the community while including both my mother and son in the process. Laughter Yoga is the inspired answer to my prayers!

TJ and my Mother both join me at our laughter yoga clubs in Clearwater and Largo, FL. We serve as authentic models for the healthgiving joys inherent in the practice of laughter exercises in combination with yogic breathing techniques. Truly, Laughter Yoga is for everyone, and our lives are transformed by giving and receiving its benefits! Please check us out on [www.laughteryogaflorida.org/Patty\\_TJ.htm](http://www.laughteryogaflorida.org/Patty_TJ.htm)

## **Laughter Yoga Heals Depression**

31-Aug-07

Filed under: Uncategorized, Depression — Dr Madan Kataria

This is one of the most magical healing instances I came across. The dramatic change in Dianne's condition confirms the effective therapeutic power of Laughter Yoga. Depression is number one sickness in the world and it is estimated that more than 12000 million dollars are spent in producing anti depressant pills in USA alone.

In January 1997, my thoughts of suicide became frequent and by April 1997 I was officially diagnosed with Clinical Depression. Over time my condition became severe and by this year I was spending over \$400 on depression medication each month.

I first heard about Laughter Yoga on the American TV show 'Dancing with the Stars'. It seemed delightful. Then on April 11<sup>th</sup> 2007, I happened to see LY on the Oprah Winfrey show. Even before the show ended I signed up for the May Sierra Madre training and tried to find a local LY group. The next day I met Jeffrey, a Laughter Yoga teacher who guided me to my initial session.

Just two months after my first LY experience on April 12, I had amazingly decreased the use of medicines by almost 80%. In fact, I'm completely free of all medication now and am saving over \$400 each month. I sleep better than I ever have in 11 years; people tell me I look great, especially at 64!

My life has undergone a remarkable change. I have been interviewed on three TV programs and I also co-host a local cable TV show. I have more requests to conduct sessions than I can handle.

Love, light, laughter and many blessings

Dianne Theil McNinch

### **Laughter Yoga Transformed My Life**

Hi my name is Nili and I am from Israel. I always knew I was a "funny" person with a great sense of humor and a good joke teller, but ever since I started to practice yoga laughter I realized something very important. Before yoga laughter my laughs helped me keep a safe distance from people; since I laugh for no reason I opened my heart and let people in. I feel more comfortable and can love people and accept them as they are. I am closer to my own self and my own spirit thus able to be closer to others. I sleep better, I don't have heartburns anymore, I feel more confident and comfortable with my round body and the list goes on and on.

### **Seniors Had High Blood Pressure**

I recently held three different Laughter Yoga Sessions for seniors in senior centers in the Chicago area (January 2007). A Northwest Community Hospital nurse took their blood pressure readings before and after.

Systolic pressure decreased by 10 and the diastolic pressure - by 5 - for every senior - in every center! It was a testament to the benefits of Laughter Yoga. Our site is at [www.laughteryogachicago.com](http://www.laughteryogachicago.com) for more information....

### **Surgery**

I've had abdominal surgery and have three incisions,. I made the most of what I had learned in the laughter movement ! AND HAD FUN DOING IT !

I blew up balloons for two weeks ahead to strengthen my lungs and abdomen- and practiced laughing. For an hour and a half before surgery I laughed in the prep room. with ho, ho's and very goods ! . I asked for my own music to be played during surgery and asked the surgeon, anaesthetist and two O.R. nurses to laugh along with me while I went 'under - which they did. I also wrote funny notes on my gown ahead to keep the atmosphere light - like 'made from scratch - another makeover - another scratch"- and 'for awhile we are journeying together so one of us must stay awake" " I like to keep abreast of things - do not remove "

David said I woke up with a smile on my face !

I was in the hospital for 24 more hours - no pain killers.

Day 2 stayed quiet at home, Day 3 went to buy a new computer - Day 5 rode a horse if slowly !

Most useful things -

To know I was sore not ill - people often mistake the two - made a lot of difference.

Breathing deeply before and after.

Laughing all through with the ho's ho's and very goods - all added different components  
Stretching exercises two days later increasing stretch gradually each day - by Day 4 I  
was doing the same as before I had surgery but slower.  
Laughing even when I move and it is sore !  
Warmly - Jan MacQuarrie

## **Breast Cancer**

6 months after I had finished chemotherapy I saw the movie, "The Laughter Clubs of India". I had already been incorporating a lot of yoga, meditation and qi gong into my recovery. I decided that laughter was the missing healing ingredient. Also, I had read that breast cancer is related to a blockage in the heart chakra. Laughter helps to open the heart chakra and in Chinese medicine, they say laughter helps to open the heart meridian. I knew I needed to learn to laugh freely again.

So I went to Toronto and became a laughter leader and came back to St Louis , Missouri and started my own laughter group , in large part for my own health and healing. We have several other cancer patients who attend regularly as well.

The laughter has been one of the best and most therapeutic things I have done. It helps me to create a positive energy, to feel more positive and self confident. I laugh more freely now and have become more playful. It can help pull me out of a negative place.

I am just approaching my 4 year anniversary since my diagnosis and have remained cancer free. HO, HO, HA, HA, HA.

## **Chronic Fatigue**

Starting around my 40th birthday, which just happened to be March 13th, 1995, my health began to collapse and I found myself in a place of chronic fatigue and post-traumatic stress for about 6 years, until I discovered Laughter Clubs. Almost immediately I began my own club in the fall of 2001, got trained as a laughter leader in the spring of 2002 (forgive me for putting the cart before the horse) and have experienced my health and stamina slowly and steadily improve more and more over the years. When I was too exhausted to lead a laughter session or workshop, I quickly learned to push and do it anyway. Miraculously I would become more energized for days after the session. It has now been 5 years that I have been in this wonderful business of laughter. Not only is my health far less of an issue, my entire life has turned around. I have a life partner, more self-confidence, have gone from being an introvert to a public speaker, and have a calling to use what has always been my greatest gift - my laugh.

## **A Source of Spiritual Fulfillment**

My wife and I are natives of India and have been in the US since 1970. It was in the year 1995 that we read about Dr. Madan Kataria's work in ABC News and World Report Magazine. Intrigued by his innovation of laughter clubs we started to track him down and very much desired to meet him and learn about laughter clubs.

During one of our periodic visits to India, we went to Mumbai and mentioned to our family elder, the late Mr. J.K. Kapur our curiosity regarding laughter clubs. As chance would have it, he was already a part of Dr. Kataria's budding organization. Dr. Kataria was away so we could not see him.

It was in the year 2002 that Dr. Kataria and his lovely wife Madhuri came to Florida. This is where we had the privilege of meeting them and got coached in Hasya Yoga. Since then we have been active in practicing it and have been conducting laughter sessions as part of Virginia Laughter Lovers Club.

Besides bimonthly regular sessions, we have made presentations about Dr. Kataria's work on laughter, its benefits, and conducted experiential laughter exercises at businesses, churches, community fairs, clubs and schools. Our audiences have consisted of people of all ages, genders, ethnicity, religions, political bends, - in short humanity. We may have already laughed with over 1000 people since getting coached by Dr. Kataria.

Laughter to us represents a complete package. In addition to personal health benefits, becoming more productive and innovative at work, we are part of one humanity. World Laughter Day for Peace - we've have celebrated it three times in our area. It is a source of spiritual fulfillment.

**From [www.laughteryoga.org](http://www.laughteryoga.org)**

***Please visit [www.laughteryoga.org](http://www.laughteryoga.org) for More!***

Love and Laughter,  
Grace