



**A Hand Book  
on  
Laughteryoga Club New York**

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## Laughter Yoga: Yogic Exercise

"Yoga - the new age fitness mantra", but Yoga is not new age at all. It's just that the benefits of the same are being discovered again. Yoga is a way of life, an art of righteous living or an integrated system for the benefit of the body, mind and inner spirit. This art originated, was perfected and practiced in India thousands of years ago.

What could be best possible medicine than 'Laughter'! All over the world **Laughter Yoga** is becoming known and sought after. The fun and the health benefits are amazing, plus we all know that laughter just feels great! It's easy to lead, anyone can do it, all ages, and all walks of life. Laughter is nature's stressbuster. It lifts our spirits with a happy high that makes us feel good and improves our behavior towards others. **Laughter therapy** is gentle exercise. It fills your lungs and body with oxygen, deep-clears our breathing passages and exercises our lungs.

When we laugh our bodies release a cocktail of hormones & chemicals that have startling positive effects on our system. Stress is reduced, blood pressure drops, depression is lifted, and our immune system is boosted. This laughter practice moves progressively from the ho ho, ha ha exercise to other types of simulated laughter. It is called as 'laughter cocktail. This "cocktail" includes hearty laughter, greeting laughter, open-mouthed silent laughter, humming laughter, lion laughter (an adaptation of Lion Pose), and swinging laughter, with arm movement. Each laughter is sustained for up to 45 seconds, and followed with deep breathing and stretching exercises. Laughter exercises almost always lead to real laughter, especially when practiced in a group. **Laughter yoga** is one of the best stress management known so far.

Many people might be surprised to think of laughter as a form of meditation. Not only is laughing meditation one of the simplest forms of meditation, but also it is a very powerful one. The physical act of laughing is one of the few actions involving the body, emotions, and the soul. When we laugh, we give ourselves over to the immediacy of the present moment. Practiced in the morning, laughing meditation can lend a joyful quality to the entire day. Practiced in the evening, laughing meditation is a potent relaxant that has been known to inspire pleasant dreams. Laughter also can help open our eyes to previously unnoticed absurdities that can make life seem less serious.

A large group of people, mostly older adults, are shown in a yoga class. They are all laughing and raising their hands in the air, some with their arms fully extended. They are sitting on the floor or on mats, and some are holding long, light-colored scarves or shawls. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with some furniture.

There are many laughter clubs who uses laughter yoga and laughter therapy as a mode of stressbuster in New York. **Laughter yoga in New York** is based on one hour introduction of laughter therapy. This age old yogic principles helps in reducing anxiety and stress, burning upto 400 calories per hour. For more information on laughter yoga and laughter club logon to [www.yogalaff.com](http://www.yogalaff.com).

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## Yogalaff Club For Laughter Yoga

'Laughter Yoga' as the name suggests is a specialized branch of yoga that deals with laughter therapy combined with the traditional Yogic postures. It is in a way modern form of yoga with its roots originating from the traditional Yoga. In this hi-speed age, yoga comes as a boon since it not only keeps body in shape but also releases stress. Laughter yoga is becoming popular in every hook and corner of the world, more so in urban areas. On your morning walks you are sure to come across members from a local **laughter club** who laugh away uncontrollably, at the slightest provocation.

Yogalaff club is one such club that was formed by Dr. Madan Kataria, a physician from Mumbai, in 1995. And today it is widespread in 40 countries with more than 5000 branches world over. A miraculous event of healing of degenerative cells through therapeutic laughter prompted Dr. Kataria to form this club. Initially he practiced it with his patients, family and friends through cracking jokes. But soon he realized that he ran short of jokes. But looking at the results laughter therapy was bringing to his patients, he took up laughing yoga more seriously. The yogalaff laughter club is a **laughteryoga** workshop in an informal setting, located in the heart of the garment district in New York. This **laughter club in New York** invites visitors and participants to drop in for a good laugh periodically every week.

Laughter Yoga picks its roots from hasya yoga, the traditional form of belly bursting laughter ending up in amazing health benefits. It brings mind and body in perfect harmony by warding off insecurities. During the course it teaches its members to forget and forgive which helps a person to attain spiritual enlightenment. It stresses on laughing out at all the problems in life and thus shows the true reward of this spiritual healing process.

After one joins the laughter club, he/ she is provided with all the necessary information through printed matters, posters and all reading material. Training is also given through video clippings, where postures are taught through audio video medium. Yogalaff center for **laughter yoga** in New York, also has specialized training programs for corporate teams and individuals. It has the same healing effect for everyone, since it heals a person from within and results in bringing a shining change to one's personality. Dr. Kataria, founder of the club for laughter therapy, today travels extensively the world over to spread awareness about this therapeutic healing exercise. Usher in good health by bringing about a laughing change in your life.

## Yoga For Keeping Yourself Fit

Not so long ago India was known as land of snake charmers and elephants, but now the world knows it as the country where 'Yoga' originated. A psychophysical discipline that has become the most popular form of exercise practiced worldwide, it has changed the course of millions and is gaining popularity in every remote corner of the world. Yoga dates back to 5000 years. It originated as a form of exercise in which stress was laid on physical postures and breathing. **Meditation yoga** is known as the purest form of soul searching and food of the soul. It took years of research, practice and knowledge for Yoga to emerge as the present day perfect form of **body mind yoga** exercises.

In literal terms Yoga means Union. In more spiritual terms it means union of your body with soul. Every year thousands of tourists get attracted to the Indian subcontinent in search of the roots of its origin. And of late, **fitness yoga** regime is gaining popularity worldwide. Yoga has also been included in some schools curriculum.

Unlike gym exercises, **fitness yoga** does not pump up your biceps or tone your abs, but it definitely takes you towards a healthy living. It is far removed from the normal sit up and push-up regime that most of us indulge in, while listening to deafening music. On the other hand fitness yoga stresses on meditating during performing specific postures. Therefore it has a healing effect on both mind and body. The yogic postures not only make body stronger and leaner but also increase flexibility. Yoga is said to be a cure for complex problems like arthritis, gastric problems, hypertension and in more recent times also for dreaded diseases like cancer. **Fitness yoga** also improves concentration and helps in losing weight naturally. And the best part of this fitness regime is the fact that it does leave any side effects even when one discontinues it.

In this hi-tech age when we do not have time to live healthy lifestyles, this fitness mantra acts as a boon. It not only keeps body in shape but also releases stress. Breathing postures, meditation, laughter yoga and others help keep many respiratory problems at bay. Yoga coupled with laughter has proven to be an effective **laughter medicine** therapy. So, just add a little Yoga and see the amazing difference it can make to your life.

## Stress Management: Release Stress & Improve Memory

The word 'stress' is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as "a state of affair involving demand on physical or mental energy". A condition or circumstance (not always adverse), which can disturb the normal physical and mental health of an individual.

At one point or the other everybody suffers from stress. Relationship demands, physical as well as mental health problems, pressure at workplaces, traffic snarls, meeting deadlines, growing-up tensions—all of these conditions and situations are valid causes of stress. People have their own methods of **stress management**. In some people, stress-induced adverse feelings and anxieties tend to persist and intensify.

Every one of us needs to master the art of fighting stress, and what could be best possible medicine than 'Laughter'. Humans were designed to laugh. Laughter is nature's stressbuster. It lifts our spirits with a happy high that makes us feel good and improves our behavior towards others. Just a few generations ago happy healthy humans spent 20 minutes a day or more in laughter. Now adult daily laughter is down to 5 minutes or less in many countries. This is one of the worst aspects of 'modern life'.

We all know that laughter makes us feel good. A regular 20 minute laughter session can have a profound impact on our health and wellbeing. **Laughter therapy** is gentle exercise. It fills your lungs and body with oxygen, deep-clears your breathing passages and exercises your lungs. This is really important for people who don't get regular aerobic exercise.

When we laugh our bodies release a cocktail of hormones & chemicals that have startling positive effects on our system. Stress is reduced, blood pressure drops, depression is lifted, your immune system is boosted & more. Western science is just starting to discover the great effects of laughter. **Laughter Yoga** combines laughter exercises and yoga breathing to give you the health benefits of hearty laughter. Laughter exercises almost always lead to real laughter, especially when practiced in a group. Laughter yoga is one of the best **stress management** known so far.

For more information on laughter yoga and laughter club logon to [www.yogalaff.com](http://www.yogalaff.com).

## Meditation to Keep Fit

It was not so long ago when lives were simple and happiness was not a distant reality. But gone are those good old days. With urban stress and loneliness becoming a permanent phenomenon in our lifestyles, it has become essential for us to spend some time with 'our self'. Stress management is what we all need to practice to lead simplified and happy lives. Not only does it bring a healthy change in our mind, but also in our health challenged bodies.

A simple solution to all these common problems lies in an age-old term that originated in the East and is widely appreciated the world over. It is called 'Meditation'. It works wonders for those who indulge in this self-realizing exercise of mind and body. And all it takes is barely an hour and a silent corner away from the bustle of life. It is this hour when the body meets the soul and you enjoy a state of bliss. **Meditation yoga** brings in a perfect harmony of the mind and body. It is said to be very effective exercise for anger management and **stress management**. Due to the many benefits **meditation yoga** offers, more and more people the world over, are switching over to this form of exercise.

**Meditation yoga** is not as difficult an exercise form, as you may have imagined. All you need is find a silent corner, sit in a comfortable position and then start concentrating on one thing you like the most. Your unwavering concentration will take you to a different realm, which the learned say, is a perfect state, when you experience only happiness and peace. If you don't know of a reliable guru, you can learn this exercise from the numerous books and websites that offer information and guidance about meditation. Meditation is of many types and based on your level of comfort you can gradually progress to a higher level.

**Laughter meditation** and laughteryoga are also forms of this exercise, which has of late become popular all over the world for the many health benefits it offers. When meditation yoga is coupled with laughter meditation it somehow seems less enigmatic to most people, as laughter is something everyone is familiar with. **Laughteryoga** is the easiest form of meditation that brings instant relaxation to mentally and physically fatigued muscles. It brings out the healthy person in you by detoxifying the long suppressed anger and stress within.

Any time you feel anger, stress or bodily discomforts creeping in, don't just pop tablets. Practice **meditation yoga** and revive yourself.

## Laugh your Stress out with Laughter YOGA

Living a stressed out life? If yes, turn onto Yoga now. Yoga has many techniques but the most famous and easy form is the Laughter yoga. Laughter yoga not just oozes our stress but also provide some happy moments.

Meditation serves simply as a means of relaxation from a busy daily routine; as a technique for cultivating mental discipline; or as a means of gaining insight into the nature of reality, or of communing with one's God. Many report improved concentration, awareness, self-discipline, and equanimity through meditation.

The Sanskrit word for Laughter Yoga is **Hasya Yoga**. It is a physically oriented technique that is used as a blend of playful, empowering and otherwise "tension-releasing" simple laughter exercises. With gentle yoga-breathing and -stretching exercises, rhythmic clapping and chanting of Ho Ho Ha Ha Ha in unison a simulated laughter turns into real laughter. Laughter Yoga is done as a way to improve health, increase well-being and promote peace in the world through personal transformation.

**Laughter Yoga** session may lasts about 20 to 30 minutes. The session may be adapted to suit the needs, abilities, and motivations of the group participating. Laughter yoga helps the individuals come out of stress. Stress leads to depression, till now medical science has not been able to find a way out to cure depression. Laughter is therapy, which helps the individual to remain fit and cure the disease like depression.

**Laughter therapy** can be helpful at workplace too. Laughter Therapy helps in boosting creativity and problem-solving activity in the limbic system in the brain of the individual who follows it. Laughter allows us to do more "whole brain work."

United States has more than 500 **laughter yoga clubs** formed. In India, the **laughter** club is a social trend. In order to be healthy again we have to bring out the child within as the researchers has shown that, the average preschooler laughs up to 400 times a day, while the average adult laughs seven to 15 times.

## Know The Relation Of Laughter & Health

A good laugh anytime of the day can rejuvenate your mind and body, like no other exercise. It can detoxify all the stress and anger suppressed deep inside you. **Laughter and health** go hand in hand. In Mathematical terms, it would mean, that your health is directly proportional to your amount of laughter. Most of us spend hours in gyms and devour health related books, but what we don't realize is how effective laughter therapy can really be. There are however, a few who realize how **laughter medicine** is the most effective for stress management.

Dr. Lee Berk from California says that laughter brings about a state of eustress, which in psychological terms is the right opposite of distress. Scientifically, good laughter can instantly lower blood pressure in hypersensitive people. The reason is very simple. When you indulge in long laughing sessions, it enriches your blood vessels with oxygen, which in turn enhances the blood circulation of your body. And if the blood circulation in the body is proper, your skin gets a glow, your brain functions better and you feel a sense of goodness about you. Good blood circulation also makes you look many years younger since your skin retains its suppleness. And the best part lies in the fact is that you don't have to spend a single penny, just a little time and you can achieve a lifetime of good health.

Till recently, **laughter therapy** was considered a leisure time activity, but now it has become popular all over the world as more and more people realize the relation between laughter and health. Yoga and laughter have become popular exercises that can help you shed extra kilos of ill health without racing on those sophisticated instruments in the gym. **Laughter yoga** and laughing clubs have sprung up like mushrooms in most of the cities where people have actively started taking part. On a morning walk you will easily come across a dozen people laughing together lead by a captain. Young and old alike participate since most people today are led down by stress, hypertension and stress related disorders.

So, the next time you come across people laughing in a group, don't just ignore those laughing bouts; realize the relation between **laughter and health** and immediately join them. Laugh and bring about a healthy change in you!

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