Rx: A Dose of Laughter

Directions: Take daily, Refills: Unlimited
by Joyce Meyer

Do you find yourself just trying to make it through the day? Are headaches and stress a common occurrence in your life? Can you even remember the last time you had a good laugh? If you don’t spend more time being overwhelmingly joyful, it could cause a lot of pain—emotionally and physically.

Joy can be anything from a calm delight to extreme hilarity. Most of the time we live in the calm delight stage, but the times of extreme hilarity have their value also. I once heard someone say that laughter is like internal jogging. Laughter certainly improves emotional and mental health, and according to scripture, it has the capability of doing so much more. So my point is that we need to learn how to laugh. Laughter and smiling are outward evidences of inward joy and they are proven to make you feel better.

Start with a Smile

Often I say that some people who are saved need to notify their faces. Some Christians are so sour-faced, they look as if they were baptized in lemon juice or vinegar. You are the light of the world. Imagine that your smile is the switch to turn it on. And one thing is for sure, there is not much chance of laughter if you don’t start with a smile.

I can be all by myself and smile. I don’t even need a particular reason. It just makes me feel happier to smile occasionally when I’m alone. I might add that I have, by nature, always been a very serious-minded, even sober-faced individual, and if I can learn to smile, anyone can who is really willing.

If I have a frown on my face, with the corners of my mouth turned down, it almost begins to drag me down emotionally. But when I smile, I sense an entire lifting of my countenance. Right now I suggest you frown and see how you feel...okay, now smile and see how you feel.

It Just Feels Good

Maybe you have not laughed—I mean really laughed—in a very long time. You will find that you feel better all over after a hearty laugh. Sometimes I feel as if my pipes have been cleaned out, so to speak, after a good laugh. If I am tired and weary from dealing with life’s issues, I often feel like a dusty closet inside—stale and in need of refreshing. When God provides me with opportunity to have a real good laugh, it seems to “air me out”—refreshing me and lifting the load off my tired mind.
You may be thinking, **Well, Joyce, I don’t have anything to laugh about!** Many times I don’t either, but I have learned to find something. We need to laugh every day as much as possible. In Philippians 4:4, Paul wrote **Rejoice in the Lord always [delight, gladden yourselves in Him]; again I say, Rejoice!** In this verse, we are told not once but twice to rejoice.

When the devil launches war against you, retaliate with joy and laughter, with singing and praises to God. The apostle James wrote: **Consider it wholly joyful, my brethren, whenever you are enveloped in or encounter trials of any sort or fall into various temptations** (James 1:2). He goes on to say that the final outcome will be good.

Despite your problems, your trials and temptations, be assured that you will benefit in the end, so look ahead to the end and rejoice now!

**Take Your Daily Dose**

Laughter not only makes the journey endurable and even enjoyable, it also helps keep us healthy. Worry and anxiety cause stress, which eats away at our health. The root cause of most sicknesses and diseases is stress. Start laughing and it will reduce your stress.

Proverbs 17:22 says **A happy heart is good medicine and a cheerful mind works healing....** I once read a story of a man who was dying. The doctors said there was nothing they could do. He had his family rent all the funny movies they could find, and he lay in his bed day after day, laughing and laughing. He was completely cured.

**It’s Contagious!**

I would much rather someone catch joy from me than sadness. When we are around someone who is depressed and negative, if we do not aggressively resist it, that person’s depression and negativity will start to affect us in a similar way. It is the same way with happy, positive people. They make us feel better, help us forget our problems for a while and their joy is contagious.

One evening I was playing games with some of my family members, and I had been suffering all day with a bad headache. My older son, who has a gift of humor, began to clown around, and I started laughing. I laughed so hard that tears were running down my face, my sides were hurting, and I was close to falling out of my chair onto the floor. When I finally finished laughing, I realized that my headache was completely gone.

**Choose to Laugh**

Several years ago I probably passed up many opportunities to laugh. I was too busy being serious and intense. Now, when opportunity comes my way, I enter in and get the most out of it. I figure I may as well laugh when I have opportunity, because I don’t know how long it will be before I get another opportunity. I know I need to laugh—and so do you.

Jesus talked about joy and fullness of joy. I want all I can have of both, but it takes a conscious effort to keep our heart merry. Satan is always willing to steal or block our joy, and he will do so if we allow it.

The world cannot see our heart; they need expression. Our general attitude should be pleasant, abundant with smiles, and if the season is right, we should laugh whenever possible.

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