

## Laughter v's Stress

Laughter is nature's antidote to stress - they are physiological opposites. The predominance of one tends to prevent the other:

Hearty sustained laughter has exactly the opposite symptoms and effects of the stress-related illnesses and symptoms listed below. Stress promotes illness, depression and anguish. Laughter promotes health, wellness, emotional balance and joyfulness.

By providing an easy path to unconditional laughter, our laughter workshops provide a quick way to reduce stress levels. This is beneficial for all but is especially important to people in stressful jobs or living in stressful relationships.

Not only can stress levels be reduced, but we can efficiently protect our systems from the effects of further stress.

- Laughter quickly reduces the levels of stress chemicals and hormones in our body. Significant reductions can occur in minutes and last for days.
- Laughter switches on and boosts physiological systems that stress switches off, including the circulatory, digestive, sexual and immune systems.
- Stress, worry, fear and emotional problems stifle learning ability, creativity, teamwork, productivity, efficiency and motivation while laughter boosts and strengthens these attributes.

## Stress

Stress is the number one disease in today's society.

The body's stress response system was developed during prehistoric times. In response to stress the body releases a stress cocktail of hormones and neuro-peptides into the blood to instantly prepare for a 'fight or flight' response that may demand extreme physical action. This response allows the body to perform superhuman physical feats.

The stress cocktail shuts down and disrupts a number of important body systems not required or 'fight or flight' action including the immune, circulatory, digestive and sexual systems. It also constricts many capillaries and blood vessels to reduce bleeding in case of a wound (increasing blood pressure), dumps huge amounts of glucose into our blood to provide fighting energy (disrupting the body's sugar control system), and pumps up muscle groups for fighting or fleeing, and more.

In prehistoric times when this stress system was developed and became hardwired into the body, stressful situations occurred only occasionally, allowing the body plenty of time to dissipate the stress cocktail.

However, today we are subjected to constant (and chronic) stress that results in the continuous release

of stress-related substances into the body. Without time to dissipate, the stress cocktail can reach toxic concentrations and attack the body, resulting in a wide variety of stress-related illness.

These include cardiovascular problems such as high bloody pressure, heart disease and heart attacks; arthritis; asthma and other allergic conditions; diabetes; cancer; chronic fatigue; anxiety attacks; mood swings; psychological distress; depression; sleep problems; eating disorders; peptic ulcers; poor immune function; chronic pain; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); colds; flus and viruses; headaches and migraines; alcoholism and drug abuse and more. *More than 80%* of all doctors visits and medications prescribed today are for stress-related illnesses.