Cutting edge 21st century science was written 3,000 years ago: "A merry heart does good like a medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones." (Proverbs 17:22)

How do you get a merry heart? Scientific studies have shown the value of meditating, planning a trip, spending time with family and friends, moving closer to work, going outside, practicing smiling, sleeping more, practicing gratitude, helping others a couple of hours a week, exercising, and more. It's all good and it works, but the new science of laughter suggests that all your efforts will work even better and often much faster if you include lots of laughter in that mix. Here is why, and it's experientially evident:

**Facial, chest, abdominal, and skeletal muscles are exercised, their tone is improved.**
Extra amounts of serotonin are naturally released in the gastrointestinal tract.

**Diaphragm is engaged. (Laughter is a form of exaggerated breathing.)**
Cardiac vagal tone is improved.

**Parasympathetic tone (relaxation) is enhanced.**
Sympathetic nervous activity (fight or flight) decreases.

**The beneficial impact on cardiovascular health is similar to aerobic activity, but without the aches, pains and muscle tension associated with exercise.**

**The production of cortisol (a stress hormone, often consider public health enemy #1) is reduced.**

**More B, T and NK cells (soldiers of the immune system) are released from the lymph nodes.**

**Laughter helps to provide longer exhalations, thus ridding the lungs of residual air and enriching the blood with ample supplies of oxygen, the lifeline of our system.**

**Muscles relax. "Stress melts away."**
Heart rate eventually slows down, blood pressure is reduced.

**Less tension = cell metabolism improves. More new cells are created, and more dead cells are washed away, faster.**

**Immune functions are strengthened.**
You feel healthier and are less prone to sickness.

**Human cognitive processes improve.**
Less sick days, healthcare costs, absenteeism, presentism.

**Pain thresholds are significantly increased.**
Less stress, frustration, better quality of life, more peace of mind.

**You feel good, connected with our & others. "Here, now."**
Less stress, frustration, better quality of life, more peace of mind.

**You think more clearly, are more focused and have more integrative thoughts.**

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*Credit: The Laughter Consultants, LLC, in partnership with www.LaughterOnlineUniversity.com*