



By Silver Rose

As I ponder the concept of Passionate Self Care, I realize I've left out something very important—laughter.

Laughter is magic. Like so many, my childhood was spent with a dysfunctional group of people I call my family. (By the way, I fit right in even though it didn't feel like it at the time.) What my family had that saved me from going stark raving mad (instead of just crazy which was the route I took) was laughter. To this day, when my siblings and I get together, there is much laughter.

Laughter is good for you on so many levels:

- It provides a way to release stress, a bit like letting steam out of a pressure cooker.
- It's a terrific abdominal exercise. They don't call them belly laughs for nothing.
- You can use it anywhere; no special equipment is required.
- It sends a signal to your brain that you're in a good mood. In return, your brain releases those feel good chemicals that guarantee you stay that way.

You don't need a reason to laugh. You can, right at this moment, start to laugh. Of course, if you're sitting in an office surrounded by lots of people, this is likely to get you sent to the Employee Assistance office where they'll force you to take a battery of psychiatric tests. SO.... If you feel the need for a good laugh, simply pick up the phone, pretend you hear something funny and let it rip. Once you're done, if an office mate asks, "What was so funny?" simply reply, "You had to be there." Since we've all said that at one time or another, it lets you off the hook for providing an explanation. If you decide not to say this and instead to make up a joke, you put yourself in the embarrassing situation of discovering you really stink at joke writing. And word gets out. Trust me on this.

If you don't believe you can make yourself laugh at will, there are many tools on the Internet to help. Just

Passionate Self Care

Laughter

type into your search engine the words "laughing baby" and you will receive all sorts of laughter aids by clicking on the various links. Here's my favorite: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXXm696UbKY>

If babies don't do it for you, simply type in "funny videos" although this is a riskier venture. What some people find funny!!!

In India, Dr. Madan Kararia founded "laughing clubs" to promote good health. Members meet each day at the same time, look at each other and laugh. They leave and go about their business.

Imagine what life would be like if you started each day with laughter!!!

If you want to practice Passionate Self Care, add laughter to your day. Whether it's triggered by something you hear or see or you just decide to laugh, it will serve you on so many levels.