

LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

by:

Rhodora R. Parreñas

Teacher II, Samal National High School – Annex

Many of us may be familiar with the saying that laughter is the best dose of medicine. MayoClinic.com (2021) presented that laughter provides us short term effects such as helping stimulate our organs, activate, and relieve our stress responses and soothe our muscle tensions to reduce the physical symptoms of stress. Also, laughter has long term health benefits for us like improving our immune system, relieving physical pains, increasing our personal satisfaction, and improving our mood. But why do we laugh? According to an article by Scientific American (2020), one scientific explanation for our laughing is that we humans are naturally born social, which means that we have the capacity to actively interact with other people and when we are able to relate to us the kind of message that they are conveying to us, our natural tendency is to react. So, when some crack jokes and we are able to relate to them, we laugh. Also, when someone shares their sad emotions to us and we are able to relate, we also feel sad. Among all human emotions, laughter, which is of course triggered by positive stimuli such as love, friendship, and belongingness, has been found to benefit us physically and medically. I, for one, am a very jolly person. Just a simple crack of jokes from my friends, for sure I will burst into laughter. When I contracted the Covid virus back in December of 2020, I somehow loss this sense of joy, as my emotions became filled with worries and my mind was filled with negative thoughts. Yet, my family and those good friends of mine never ceased to be there. I could still remember a friend who screen-captured the post of the then governor Abet Garcia on the report of Covid cases in Bataan and edited the part which states that “Isang 48 na taong gulang na babae mula sa Samal” to “Isang 48 na taong gulang na babaeng kamukha ni Marian Rivera mula sa Samal,” (because they were teasing me as resembling the looks of Marian Rivera) and sent that edited report to me.

Upon reading the edited report, even though I was feeling extremely down physically and mentally, I burst into laughter. And guess what, that helped a lot. Those simple means of making me laugh made me recover from the pains of disease quickly. My thoughts became filled with hopes and joys, and even though I was then struggling physically, my thoughts were filled with positivity that I know, with God's help, I and my son will be able to overcome that ordeal.

Now, I am here with renewed strength and hopes, and with renewed sense of joy. I lived and survived the most difficult life challenges I have experienced so far for the past two years of the pandemic. I am once again ready to share these joys and hopes not just to my son and husband, but also to my friends and to my students. I would like my life experiences to be a reason for them to smile and laugh and always see life in a positive way. As they say, laughter is the best dose of medicine, and I was a living proof of that.

References:

Mayoclinic.com (2021). Stress Relief from Laughter? It's No Joke. Retrieved from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stressrelief/art-20044456>

Scientific American (2020). Why Do We Laugh? Retrieved from <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-do-we-laugh/>