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Your sense of humour is your brightest light. Laughter and joy in your life is a home for your soul.

SOME HELPS:

- 1) Accept responsibility for yourself and for your actions.
- 2) Be a life-long learner.
- 3) Do what needs to be done and trust your abilities and actions.
- 4) See crises and obstacles as challenges. Make them work for you instead of against you.
- 5) Love life and share joy.
- 6) Know what you want and why you want it. This addresses the importance of values and gives meaning to your life.

After an immediate response to a crisis, there is a period of grieving and adapting. In the early stages of grief, we look for ways to ease the pain, while time does the healing. We know that some day we will feel strong again. In the meantime, we need some way to keep a healthy perspective.



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HUMOUR HELPS HEALING

SENSE OF HUMOUR

A sense of humour helps us through the rough spots and makes the good spots even better. Healthy humour is a symptom of physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing. Laughter eases fear, reduces stress and brings a greater self awareness. It helps us to get that foot out of the past, get over the hurdles and past the barriers. It helps us transcend crises and create opportunities.

Laughing is healthy. A good long hard laugh is like internal jogging. It gets the heart beating faster, brings in extra oxygen and stimulates blood circulation.

VALUES, BELIEFS AND PRINCIPLES

These are the central parts of a person's life and are the foundation on which your life is built. They guide you when you have choices to make and when guided by the right values, the choices benefit you as well as the people and community in which you live. Values are central to who you are and what you do.

Laughter helps you to:

- 1) *Reduce stress levels:* You cannot feel anxious and laugh at the same time.
- 2) *Boost morale:* During stressful times morale takes a beating. Keeping things in perspective boosts morale.
- 3) *Facilitate change:* Most of us must learn to cope with rapid ongoing change. People who laugh well are more flexible and more adaptable.
- 4) *Improve communication:* When used appropriately, the timely use of humour can get a point across effectively and opens communication and assists problem solving.

- 5) *Relieve boredom and increase creative energy:* When we are laughing our bodies create chemicals which assist the functioning of the brain.
- 6) *Build confidence:* When humour is working well we feel better about ourselves. If we can learn to laugh at ourselves, we can bounce back when bad things happen.

CHANGES

How you handle changes in your life will affect your physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual health. It will affect how you relate to others and how you feel about yourself.

When a change happens, whether we have chosen it or it was forced on us, we move from a comfortable position to one of discomfort which is letting go of the old and starting the new.

Many of us seek change and variety. We feel a creative urge and welcome new challenges even though we know the disruption could cause us uncertainty and fear.

TRANSCENDING GRIEF

Tears and laughter are born of the same parents; they are two sides of the same coin. Both cleanse the body from the inside and both are methods of externalizing our emotions. Crying and laughing are healing ways of making intense emotions tolerable.

There are five stages that most people experience to varying degrees and for varying lengths of time:

- 1) Denial
- 2) Anger
- 3) Bargaining

- 4) Depression
- 5) Acceptance

Life requires us to accept a series of losses. When we accept these with dignity and grace, we transcend the pain and grow in joy. Life does not cease to be funny when something bad happens any more than it ceases to be serious when we are laughing. A healthy sense of humour is necessary for emotional healing.

FORGIVENESS

Suffering is part of the human condition, but you do not need to make it the center of your life. You can learn to laugh and cope with ordinary everyday pain and to keep things in perspective. Then the hurt becomes part of your existence, not the center of your reality.

“Forgiveness is not so hard. It’s kind of like walking backwards waist deep in molasses……in winter”

When a person hangs on to anger, fear or guilt, it is impossible to feel compassion and to be healed by forgiveness.

Emotions must be acknowledged! Anger, Fear and Guilt are feelings we often have the most difficulty acknowledging and expressing.

Anger: Acknowledge your anger and accept it as a legitimate response to perceived injustice.

Fear: Fear often evokes a desire to hide our feelings and we tend to wear emotional masks. Aggression and arrogance are often masks for fear.

Guilt: If you have done wrong, you should feel guilty! HOWEVER, guilt without cause should be considered a figment of your imagination and should be released.
