



Laughter **THERAPY**

Information Guide to Hasyayog



Priyadarshni Academy

1 Arcadia, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400 021.
Tel. : 2287 3456 / 6630 7160 Telefax : 2287 5373
Email : pa@priyadarshniacademy.com
Website : www.priyadarshniacademy.com

The Making of an Institution

Priyadarshni Academy came into being in 1984 as a socio-cultural and educational organization with prime goal of service to society. Since then it has been steadily progressing to achieve its goals with continuous efforts of its Founder and Chairman Emeritus, Mr. Nanik Rupani and Chairman Mr. Niranjan Hiranandani. Mr. Rupani had the unique honor of presenting a portrait of late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India, to Parliament for installation in Central Hall of Parliament and addressing the Parliament on August 20, 1993.



Mr. Nanik Rupani addressing August gathering at Parliament

Education being its main objective, the Academy provides scholarships to meritorious and needy students for their academic accomplishments. Thousands of students have benefited from these scholarships. Academy also presents annual literary awards to eminent authors in Marathi, Hindi, Sindhi and Gujarati languages and provides a platform for the upcoming artistes in performing arts through its 'National Integration through Dance and Music' project.

INTRODUCTION



Dear Friend,

We, at **Priyadarshni Academy**, a socio-cultural-educational organization, are pleased to inform you that **Priyadarshni Laughter Club International**, a division of the Academy, succeeded in giving a significant push to the Laughter Movement resulting in more than a hundred Laughter Clubs in India, and several in London, the USA and other parts of the world.

In ancient India, teaching of Yogic exercises in Gurukuls was widely prevalent and "**Hasyayog**" was taught as one of the Asanas. It was particularly practiced during periods of war, epidemics, and natural disasters, as a stress-management measure. Priyadarshni Laughter Club International has applied the same concept of Hasyayog into practice in combination with yogic exercises which has benefitted thousands of people.

We have placed particular emphasis on Group Laughter as it creates an enormous feeling of fellowship among the participants. Group Laughter generates very subtle but positive and powerful vibrations that affect and envelop the whole group, akin to the vibrations experienced during a prayer session in a temple, mosque, or a church.

NANIK RUPANI

Chairman Emeritus

Priyadarshni Academy

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Hasyayog - The Yogic Technique of Laughter

Today, life is very stressful and stress-related diseases are on the rise. 70% of illnesses have some relation to stress. High blood pressure, anxiety, depression, nervous breakdowns, heart disease, peptic ulcers and others, are some of the examples of stress-related diseases. As a matter of fact, the increase in incidence of cancer has been attributed to the stress of modern life.

People use a number of relaxation techniques like yoga, meditation and massage, but the kind of complete relaxation and feeling of joy that you experience while laughing is unique and unparalleled, as it harmonizes all your sense organs in a moment of total concentration. The demands and stressful impact of the modern, mechanized life style is such that people seem to have forgotten to laugh. We have fewer reasons to laugh and many more to feel despondent about. The things which inspired hearty laughter 3 to 4 decades ago when life was simpler; no longer stimulate even a smile.

It has been proved by researchers all over the world that laughter is a simpler form of stress busting. Benefits of laughter have been mentioned in the texts of ancient India and many other civilizations. Extensive research is being conducted all over the world and it has been proved that laughter has a positive impact on various systems of the body. Many books have been written on the subject. People have tried laughter as a therapy to control many diseases. There are many laughter clinics in the UK, USA and other countries in the West. But these are hospital-based and on a one-to-one basis. The social worker or doctor makes the patient laugh by telling jokes or showing humorous video clips.

Osho (Rajneesh) was a strong promoter of laughter. Yet, laughter therapy was restricted only to a small group at his ashram. In spite of being beneficial, it was not possible for the common man to practice laughter therapy every day because one needs some stimulus to provoke laughter, some jokes or humorous things to tickle one.

Then, for the first time, laughter therapy was placed on the public platform. Anyone was invited to participate in group laughter without taking the help of any jokes or humorous anecdotes for 15-20 minutes every day. Scores of people found it very relaxing and derived health benefits from stress related diseases like sleeplessness, anxiety, depression, tension, hypertension, chronic bronchitis, asthma and migraine headaches.

HOW THE IDEA ORIGINATED

Laughter Therapy, known as Hasyayog, was prevalent and practiced thousands of years ago in India, as is evident from its mention in the ancient texts. However, in recent times, it was a group of people in Mumbai who put the concept into practice in 1995. Initially, people laughed at the concept and ridiculed the idea. But when the health benefits were explained, many people got interested and the attendance started growing. The participants were mostly men who were forty plus, as well as ladies and children.

In the beginning, all the participants stood in a circle and would invite someone to come in the center and crack a joke or tell a humorous anecdote. People enjoyed the fun and felt nice after 10-20 minutes of laughter every morning. This method worked fine for about 15 days, after which the stock of good jokes ran out. Stale jokes, jokes targeted at a particular community, hurtful jokes and dirty jokes began to be told, which embarrassed many members, especially the ladies. It was evident that if we wanted to laugh every day we could not depend on someone telling jokes 365 days in a year. Jokes were, therefore, given up and it was decided that the club members would laugh spontaneously.

Most members found it difficult to laugh with no reason. It was then that prominent doctors of Mumbai came out with an action plan, to help people laugh spontaneously without jokes and did some basic research. Since then, many leading medical practitioners began practising spontaneous laughter therapy in Mumbai and also began suggesting it to their patients.

TIME AND PLACE FOR LAUGHTER THERAPY

“What is the right time to start a laughing session?” “Can I do it in the evenings after I return from work?” “Must I go to a public garden for the therapy; can’t I just do it at home?” These are common queries that people eager to be part of the laughter therapy movement ask. You can laugh anytime you want, but to get the best results out of laughter therapy, there are certain rules as regards place and time.

IDEAL TIME

Ideally, laughing session must take place in the morning. Most clubs have their session between 6 and 7 o’ clock in the morning, according to the convenience of their participants.

Why must it be done only in the mornings? There are many reasons for this. It is always better to start the day with laughter. It keeps you in good spirits throughout the day. It energizes you, raises your spirits and keeps you in a good mood till it is time to retire to bed.

When one wakes up, one’s body is usually stiff and tired. This is the right time to stretch and exercise the body. Yoga too is ideally performed at the time of sunrise. So the practice of ‘Hasya Yoga’ or laughter therapy must take place at about the same

time. Pollution is least in the mornings and so, while laughing, you manage to get the freshest air you are likely to get in the day. This is an added benefit of doing your laughter therapy in the morning.

By the time it is evening, people are so tired that they do not have the strength to smile, let alone laugh. Hence it is best to have laughing sessions in the morning.

PLACE

It is best not to do the therapy in the house. Not only will it disturb the other family members and neighbors, but you will not be able to laugh freely either, due to deep-rooted inhibitions. It is basically a group therapy.

A public place is the best, but make sure it is away from any residential areas so that public peace is not disturbed. A garden or a school ground is ideal. The open air assures a good supply of air and oxygen. Laughing in a public place encourages others around to join the session. You thus spread the laughter message and happiness. In public places, large groups can assemble and the presence of a crowd makes laughing easier.

MORNING WALKERS AND LAUGHTER THERAPY

A morning walk and a laughter therapy session are complementary to each other. Both take place in the morning and in a public place and hence it is ideal for walkers to have a session either at the beginning or at the end of their walks. They can also use the laughing session as an interval. Morning walkers are health conscious people and can easily form a laughter club to add to their health-related activities.

By making laughter a part of your morning walk, you make the session a part of your routine without the bother of specially finding a particular time for laughing. Thus, the ritual becomes regular and you become healthier.





What Happens During A Laughter Therapy Session?

TECHNIQUES OF LAUGHTER

All the members of the Laughter Club gather at a fixed time in the morning in an open area such as a garden and stand in a circle or semicircle with the anchor person in the middle. He/she gives commands to initiate various types of laughter and deep breathing exercises.

BREATHING, STRETCHING EXERCISE

The session starts with deep breathing & stretching exercise, which is done 3 times. People take a deep breath, simultaneously raising their hands up towards the sky, keeping elbows straight. The breath is held for a few seconds while stretching the body. The breath is then released slowly taking double the time than that of inhalation. This breathing/stretching exercise resembles *tadasna* in yoga.

TECHNIQUES OF LAUGHTER: The laughter recommended is “SUGAR” for positive health.

S - Spontaneous

U - Unprovoked

G - Group

A - Action

R – Remedy

The laughter session consists of the following:

1. WARM UP LAUGHTER: The anchor person says 1-2-3 and group members start chanting “Ha-Ha”, “Hey-Hey” rhythmically. The tempo is gradually increased and at its peak, members burst out into a gentle laughter. Members look at each other’s faces and move about and slap each other’s hands, thus reinforcing their laughter. This lasts for about 30 to 45 seconds.

The members then relax their bodies by stretching their hands and bodies upward, going up on their feet, at the same time taking a deep breath. After holding this position for some time, they exhale and relax their bodies. This is “*Tadasan*”. This is repeated between each laughter session.

2. HEARTY VIGOROUS: The second laughter is Hearty Vigorous Laughter. Here, members open their mouth widely and laugh heartily and vigorously moving their

hands as well as slapping each other's hands and looking at each other's faces. This is a powerful aerobic exercise. It usually lasts for 30 to 45 seconds. It is followed by "Tadasan". It is often called "Patiala" laughter.

3. SILENT 'JOKER'S LAUGHTER: This is the third laughter. This is the same as the previous laughter but without any sound. It is thus a vigorous but silent laughter. It is colloquially called "Joker's Laughter". There is vigorous churning of the air in the lungs. This also lasts for 30 to 45 seconds and is followed by Tadasan".

4. ETIQUETTE OR OFFICE LAUGHTER: This is the fourth laughter. Here, members keep their lips shut and laugh gently internally making a humming sound like a pigeon or a bee. This is how one would laugh in the office or social function. This also lasts for 30 to 45 seconds and is followed by "Tadasan". This is colloquially called "Pigeon Laughter"

In each laughter session, people move about, slap their hands and this reinforces their laughter. The anchor person initiates each laughter session by command 1-2-3.

EXERCISES: It is preferable to combine exercises with laughter session. One good regime is to perform gentle shoulder, arms, forearms and finger exercises in the first half followed by a laughter session. In the second half, one performs gentle exercises of spine, hips, knees, ankles and abdomen. This is followed by a second laughter session. These exercises are gentle exercises of the various joints to keep them mobile and make the spine supple.

This whole schedule lasts for half an hour and should preferably be done in the morning in an open area such as a garden.





Health Benefits of Laughter Therapy

INTRODUCTION

Laughter is an age-old method which has benefited mankind for centuries. Everybody understands that laughter is beneficial and relaxing. But, it is only recently that the scientific basis of benefits of laughter has been understood. This chapter analyses the scientific principles of Medical benefits of laughter therapy and presents clinical data from some of the “Laughter Clubs” in India.

LAUGHTER AS PRACTISED BY US

Laughter as practiced by us is different from laughter therapy practiced in the Western world. They have hospital-based laughter clinics for individual patients who are made to laugh by reading jokes or viewing comic videos.

Our laughter is Spontaneous, Unprovoked, Group Action Remedy (SUGAR) for positive health.

LAUGHTER AS EUSTRESS OR STRESS BUSTER

Hans Selye described laughter as a form of Eustress. It is a positive life-enhancing type of stress. Laughter has a built in balancing mechanism that encourages two-step action of stimulation and relaxation due to release of chemicals adrenaline and noradrenalin.

This produces a feeling of well-being by relieving minor stresses and strains of daily life. Laughter reduces anxiety, tension and depression. Thus, it helps in mitigating several serious diseases such as hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, etc., where anxiety and tension are predisposing factors. Kay Herth (Am. J. of Nursing, 1948) has documented reduction of hypertension after laughter therapy. Many of our members have demonstrated the beneficial aspects of laughter in hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, anxiety, insomnia, etc.

MEDITATION AND RELAXATION

Laughter therapy is one of the finest anti-stress measures. It is ideally suited for today’s stress ridden life style. It can be compared to any form of meditation or



relaxation. To achieve the desired end through meditation, one has to put in a concerted effort to completely detach oneself on mental and emotional levels from one's own feelings and thought process, as well as from the physical world to prevent distractions. On the other hand, while laughing, we do not have any conscious thought process and all our senses naturally and effortlessly combine in a moment of harmony to give joy, peace and relaxation.

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE AND HEART DISEASE

There are a number of causes for high blood pressure and heart disease like hereditary, being overweight, smoking and excessive intake of saturated fats. But stress is one of the most important factors.

Laughter definitely helps to control blood pressure by reducing the release of stress-related hormones and bringing relaxation. In experiments, it has been proved that there is a drop of 0-20 mm pressure after participating for 10 minutes in a laughter session. It does not mean that those who are taking 2-3 tablets for blood pressure everyday will be completely cured. Maybe, you will require 2 tablets if you are taking 3, or borderline high blood pressure patients may not require any medication. Similarly, if you are at a high risk of developing heart disease, laughter may be the best preventive medicine. Those who are suffering from heart disease and have stabilized on medication will find that laughter therapy improves the blood circulation and oxygen levels to the heart muscles. Those who have had heart attacks or have undergone bypass surgery can also participate in laughter therapy.

LAUGHTER AS ANALGESIC

Laughter releases two neuropeptides, viz., Endorphins and Enkephalins. These are opioids which are body's natural pain suppressing agents. The ability of laughter to release muscle tension and to soothe sympathetic nervous system stress also helps

to control pain. Increased circulation also helps to minimise pain. Thus, laughter has multipronged approach for the relief of pain, in painful conditions such as arthritis, spondylitis, etc. This is aptly demonstrated by the famous article of Norman Cousins (New England Journal of Medicine, Dec. 1976) where he documents that 10 minutes of laughter had an analgesic effect of 2 hours in his personal problem of severe ankylosing spondylitis. Cogan et al (Journal of Behavioural Medicine 1987) has demonstrated by clinical experiments that discomfort thresholds were higher in subjects after laughter bouts.

Some (21%) of our members with painful orthopedic conditions had relief.

LAUGHTER AND IMMUNITY

Lee S. Berk (Clinical Research, 1989) has found that laughter may attenuate some stress-related hormones and modify natural killer cell activity resulting in immunomodulation. Labott also supports Berk's findings (Journal of Behavioural Medicine, 1990) and concludes that laughter results in improved immunity.

In a study at Canada's University of Waterloo (Well Being journal), it was well documented that laughter increases the levels of immunoglobulins IgA and IgG. Norman Cousins ('Prevention', March 1988) also states that laughter serves as a blocking agent against disease.

Thus laughter, by improving body immunity, can mitigate a host of chronic diseases such as bronchitis, common cold, rheumatoid arthritis, allergies, etc. By improving immunity, it may also be a supplementary measure in control of AIDS. Some (12.9%) of our members had improvement in such chronic diseases, viz., bronchitis, common cold, etc.

LAUGHTER AN AEROBIC EXERCISE

Fry states that laughter is a good aerobic exercise. He says that 100 laughs a day is equal to 10 minutes of rowing or jogging. Lloyd (Journal of General Psychology, 1938) showed that laughter is a combination of deep inhalation and full exhalation, inspiring excellent ventilation, wonderful rest and profound release.

Thus, laughter increases lung vital capacity and oxygenation. We measured the lung vital capacity (Peak flow rate) of our members using a Spirometer. The peak flow rate was lower than normal (<300 l/m.) in 13%, was normal in 67% (300-500 l/m.) and high in 20% (>500 l/m.) This would benefit patients with lung disease such as bronchitis, bronchial asthma, bronchiectasis, etc.

Some (7.8%) of our members have relief of such lung diseases.

BRONCHITIS AND ASTHMA

Laughter is one of the best exercises for those suffering from asthma and bronchitis. It improves the lung capacity and oxygen levels in the blood. Doctors recommend chest physiotherapy to bring out mucous (phlegm) from the respiratory passages. Blowing forcefully into an instrument and blowing balloons is one of the common exercises given to asthmatics. Laughter therapy does the same job, more easily and cheaply.

There are many individuals suffering from asthma and bronchitis who participate in laughter clubs. They have reported reduced frequency of their attacks. Laughter therapy may cause some discomfort if you have severe bronchospasm. There is a small percentage of asthma cases that may get a little aggravation by doing any exercise (exercise induced asthma). Such individuals should consult doctors before taking up laughter therapy.

One of the most common causes for frequent attacks of asthma is infection. Laughter therapy increases the antibody levels in the mucous membrane of the respiratory passages, thereby reducing the frequency of chest infections. It also tones up the normal mucous clearing system of the bronchial tubes. Stress is another factor which can bring on an attack of asthma. By reducing stress, it might improve the prognosis of the disease.

IMPROVES STAMINA IN ATHLETES

Since breathing capacity is one of the factors which determines stamina in sports, laughter therapy may improve athletic performance.

There is a lot of tension before appearing in a competition. Laughter before any competitive sports activity will increase the relaxation levels and hence, performance. Laughter therapy can be introduced as a regular exercise in any kind of sports activity.

INTERNAL JOGGING

There are plenty of exercises available for your body muscles, but laughing provides a good massage to all internal organs. It enhances their blood supply and increases their efficiency. It has been compared to magic fingers which reach into the interior of the abdomen and massage your organs.

GOOD FOR ACTORS AND SINGERS

Laughter therapy can be very beneficial for singers and actors. Increased lung capacity, exercise of the diaphragm and abdominal muscles will help to gain better control over voice. It may enhance self confidence and reduce stage fright.

MAKES YOU LOOK YOUNGER

People do exercise for all the muscles of the body, but there is no regular exercise designed for facial muscles except in Yoga. Laughter is an excellent exercise for your facial muscles. It tones up the muscles of the face and improves facial expressions. When you laugh, your face becomes red due to an increase in blood supply which nourishes the facial skin and makes it glow.

Laughing people look more cheerful and attractive. By squeezing the tear glands through laughter, it moistens the eyes adding a little sparkle to them. Laughter exercises your abdominal muscles and helps to improve muscle tone of those with pot bellies.

SNORING

Snoring occurs as a result of lack of tone in the muscles of the soft palate. Laughter therapy is very good for the muscles of the soft palate and throat. Some individuals have reported improvement. We have already started clinical studies on the effects of laughter on snoring.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Laughter brings people together and improves interpersonal relationships. All the members of a Laughter Club meet each other with open minds and they care for each other. You will get a chance to interact with a positive frame of mind. Today, all the members of different laughter clubs are like family members. They know each other well. They share their grief and sorrows. They share their joyful moments by meeting each other, going out for picnics, etc. They organize health workshops, yoga camps and naturopathy seminars from time to time. People from various walks of life come together and greet each other with a smiling face. Their attitude towards their family members as well as towards their professional colleagues and staff improves considerably.

WORLD PEACE

This is an ideal platform to promote world peace. Laughter has no barrier. Why can we not hold Laughter Contests on an international level to promote fellowship, brotherhood and make this planet a better place to live in?

SELF-CONFIDENCE THROUGH LAUGHTER

When you are laughing in a group in a public place with your arms up towards the sky, it removes your inhibitions and over a period of time, you become a more sociable,

unreserved and outgoing person. Admittedly, some people are a bit reluctant to join the laughter group initially, in spite of strong inclinations, for fear of appearing absurd to onlookers. However, this is a passing phase and the very decision to join a Laughter Club opens your mind. Gradually, it also adds to your self confidence.



LAUGHTER THERAPY FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN AND COLLEGE STUDENTS

At present, a majority of the members of Laughter Clubs are 40 plus or senior citizens. However, we have already begun to initiate and spread this concept amongst students as it has various benefits for them. Its positive and refreshing effect can help them to improve their level of concentration and memory, and equip them to cope with examination related stress. Young people enjoy laughter sessions a lot.

Many school teachers have shown interest in introducing laughter therapy in their schools and colleges. India's first school Laughing Club was set up on 27th of October, in Progressive English School in Aurangabad (Maharashtra). Reports indicate that, nearly 250-300 children are laughing for 10 minutes after the morning prayers. It is being conducted by senior teachers of the school. Alternately, a laughing session can be incorporated in P. T. Classes.

SOME OF THIS THERAPY'S POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO CHILDREN ARE:-

1. Laughter therapy will increase the level of relaxation and reduce nervousness and stage fright.
2. It will help children to be more outgoing and develop self-confidence.



3. Laughter therapy will increase their stamina and breathing capacity enabling them to excel in sports activities.
4. Laughter therapy will increase oxygen supply and improve mental functions and academic performance.
5. Cheerful moods will become a way of life and help children to develop a positive attitude towards life, as well as enhance their leadership qualities. We are approaching educational authorities and government officials to introduce Laughter Therapy in schools and colleges. Meanwhile, we shall also assist and guide people who wish to start Laughter Clubs in private schools or colleges.

LAUGHTER THERAPY IN CORPORATE HOUSES

In Japan, it is a regular practice to do some physical exercises in office premises in the morning before employees start their work. All the members of the company, from Managing Director to peons, participate. We believe that introducing Laughter Therapy in corporate houses would be a very significant and worthwhile idea. It can help improve inter-personal relationships at all levels in an organization, replacing mutual lack of trust and confidence with a more positive outlook and cooperative attitude towards one's colleagues and subordinates. This should, in turn, definitely help to improve the prevalent work environment and overall performance of an organization. One such Laughter Club is being conducted at Larsen & Toubro's head office in Ballard Pier.

LAUGHTER THERAPY FOR BLIND STUDENTS AND OLD AGE HOMES

In the month of October 1995, a unique experiment was conducted in making blind

students laugh in an organization in Dadar (Mumbai). There were about 30-40 young girls, mostly below 12 years of age, along with some senior members of the organization. Initially they were hesitant, but after a live demonstration, the little girls were laughing non-stop and they were laughing as if they were starved of this natural gift. We are also approaching institutes for the blind to introduce laughter in the lives of blind students.

It will certainly help them to become more cheerful and cope with depression and frustration that haunts them quite often. We call upon social workers and philanthropists to join hands with us in this mission. Similarly, this nature cure can cheer up residents of old age homes.

CLINICAL ANALYSIS OF 516 MEMBERS OF LAUGHTER CLUBS FROM ALL OVER INDIA

A simple Proforma prepared by Dr. S. D. Khandwala was sent out to all the Laughter Clubs in India in September 1997. Replies were received from 516 members. An analysis of these 516 forms which was an eye-opener, was presented at the World Congress of Alternative Medicine held in Colombo in November 1997 by Dr. Khandwala. This data is presented here. Most members (71.7%) were males and in the age group 50 to 70 years (63.5%) and retired, or housewives (40.2%) as the male senior citizens are more interested in such activities. However, almost 10% were younger people. It is necessary to target younger people and even students as well as women.

This movement has started only recently and still almost 40% members have been attending for over a year. It is most heartening to note that 93.8% of members are regularly attending indicating the popularity of laughter sessions.

A majority (59.3%) of the elderly members are suffering from some disease as would be expected in this age group, and laughter therapy resulted in amelioration of the disease in as many as 83.6%. The amelioration was moderate to substantial degree in 56.1%. It was heartening to note that 44% needed less medication and there was not a single case of worsening of the disease.

The holistic benefits of laughter therapy are also well documented and 77.1% had a positive improvement in their general health, both mental and physical. The attitude of majority (82.6%) of members towards their family members improved resulting in a harmonious family life. 71.7% of our members reported improved relationship with their colleagues in their profession, business or places of service. The self-confidence was increased and 85.7% reported increased concentration.

Almost all (99.6%) stated that they would like to continue laughter sessions as well as recommend the same to others.

Many members reported several additional tangible benefits such as feeling energetic and fresh (32.1%); improved outlook on life (11.2%); improved social behavior (8.5%); increased stamina (3.9%); increased appetite and improved digestion (3%). All these minor benefits go to improve the quality of life.

WHO SHOULD NOT JOIN A LAUGHTER CLUB?

People are instructed to laugh forcefully so that all the residual air in the lungs is emptied and is replaced by oxygen-rich fresh air. Forceful laughter involves some physical strain and rise in abdominal pressure. Patients with the following complications are those who should not join in laughter therapy sessions.

HERNIA: Hernia is a protrusion of abdominal contents through the muscle wall of the abdominal cavity. Those suffering from inguinal (groin) hernia or abdominal incisional (operative scar) hernia should avoid attending laughter sessions. This is because laughter produces additional abdominal pressure and may aggravate the condition. However, if the patient has undergone surgical treatment for hernia, he/she could be assessed by a surgeon for fitness before attending laughter therapy.

ADVANCED PILES: The condition of patients with long standing piles may worsen with laughter therapy. They should get themselves treated before attending therapy.

HEART DISEASE WITH CHEST PAIN: Heart patients who get chest pain while walking or during routine activity, should not participate. Patients whose condition has stabilized and who can walk for 30-45 minutes without difficulty are fit to join the laughing session. Avoid laughter therapy for three months after a heart attack and for two months following abdominal surgery.



PROLAPSE: Ligaments supporting the uterus become weak after the age of 40. They may sag and cause prolapse of the uterus. Such women have lower abdominal discomfort and may lose complete control over their urine flow (stress incontinence). They should avoid laughter therapy until they are treated surgically.

PREGNANCY: Pregnant women with any complication should avoid attending a laughter session. Even patients without any illness, but who feel uneasy after a laughter session should discontinue their attendance and consult a doctor.

SEVERE COLD, FLU AND ANY LUNG INFECTION: Those suffering from a viral common cold with running nose along with fever and chest infection should stay away from the group for 2-3 days till the infection and fever settle down.

GLAUCOMA: Those having Glaucoma should avoid laughter session as the condition may worsen.



PRIYADARSHINI **Laughter Club International (PLCI)**

Priyadarshni Laughter Club International is a division of Priyadarshni Academy, which is a prominent socio-cultural educational organization of Mumbai. The Academy under the inspiring guidance of its Chairman Emeritus Nanik Rupani has been working in Mumbai since the last 20 years. Some of its most prominent activities include promotion of the performing arts, providing scholarships to poor and meritorious students, presentation of global and literary awards, and publication of books pertaining to ancient Indian wisdom.

The Academy has always been in the forefront of taking up causes relevant to different sections of society. In the same spirit, on the proposal of Shri Kishore Kuvavala, the Academy organized and sponsored a Laughing Competition on April 14, 1996 at Priyadarshni Park, Mumbai. It received an unprecedented response with the participation of hundreds of people and wide coverage in the print and electronic media, with international TV channels like the **BBC, CNN, Zee TV, ATN, Sky TV and Doordarshan National Network telecasting it worldwide.**

The Competition placed the concept and the practice of Laughter Therapy on the world map. It provided a big boost to the Laughing Movement and succeeded in creating wide ranging awareness about it, resulting in a constant inflow of inquiries from within India and from different countries.

It was in response to the overwhelming enthusiasm of people to this concept that the Academy decided to start its new division-Priyadarshni Laughter Club International, to take the concept far and wide. It was started on June 26, 1996. **Shri Kishore Kuvavala** is its Chairman and **Dr. Siddhartha Khandwala** is the Vice Chairman. Since then, the Laughing Movement has progressed tremendously. Our experts have personally guided the opening of various branches in different parts of India and abroad. There are at present about 500 Laughter Clubs in India, several in London, and a few in the USA, with plans to start similar clubs in other countries. In India, the movement has been joined by many distinguished personalities - educationists, top civil servants, leading medical practitioners, and industrialists, among others.

OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES ARE:

- To make people aware of both physical and mental health.
- To discover the benefits of laughter therapy in normal individuals and those suffering from stress related diseases.

- To encourage the general public to come out of their inhibitions and achieve self-confidence.
- To spread the message of good health and fitness all over the world.
- To impart practical training in laughter therapy in a group on a daily basis.
- To promote laughter therapy all over the world through practical demonstrations and workshops by a team of experts from various parts of the country and abroad.
- To organize workshops, seminars and conferences on laughter therapy and health campaigns.



UNDER ONE UMBRELLA

The convention of Laughter Clubs held on January 18, 1997, was one of our most significant endeavors in which about 600 delegates from various Laughter Clubs of Mumbai and all over India gathered together on the lawns of the Radio Club in Mumbai. This was the first step in attaining the ultimate goal of bringing all the Laughter Clubs under one umbrella, so as to take the Laughing Movement forward with the collective strength of all the Laughter Clubs and the implementation of a uniform and scientifically correct method to practice Laughter Therapy.

LAUGHTER THERAPY RESEARCH

Priyadarshni Laughter Club International feels proud that its constant efforts have helped increase awareness about this priceless natural concept. New Laughter Clubs

were started in Mumbai in Sion, Matunga, Carmichael Road, Ladies Club of Amarsons as well as in Kopergaon and Malegaon. Talks and demonstrations of laughter therapy were presented by Shri Kuvavala, Dr Khandwala and their colleagues in Mumbai in various organizations like Giants International, State Trading Corporation of India, Bank of Baroda, Canara Bank, H. R. College, Thadomal College of Engineering and at the branches of Lions Club, Rotary Club, Mahalaxmi Ladies Club, Prempuri Ashram and Indian Banks Association, Vile Parle Ladies Club, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, St. Lukes Medical Guild, Mahila Mandal Programme of All India Radio, etc..



Participation in “World Congress for Intergrading Healing Methods”

Priyadarshni Laughter Club was invited by **The Open International University of Complementary Medicines**, a prestigious international organization recognized by the United Nations, to present a symposium and a workshop on Laughter Therapy at the World Congress for Integrating Healing Methods held in Colombo from November 25 to December 2, 1997.

Mr. Nanik Rupani, Chairman Emeritus of the Academy, was conferred with a doctorate in acknowledgment of his contribution to alternative medicine at the World Congress. The Doctorate was presented to Shri Rupani at Bandaranaike Memorial Hall in Colombo on November 28, 1997 by Dr Anton Jayasuriya, Chairperson of The Open International University amidst resounding applause from more than 900 delegates from over 100 countries at a glittering ceremony. At this prestigious International Conference, experts from these countries presented papers on systems of alternative and traditional medicine practiced in their respective countries for thousands of years.

Experts on the panel of PLCI (Priyadarshni Laughter Club International), Mr. Nanik Rupani, Mr. Kishore Kuvavala and Dr. Siddhartha Khandwala presented research work papers on various aspects of Laughter Therapy and Laughing Movement. In the symposium entitled “Laughter - The Elixir of Life”, Mr. Rupani and Mr. Kuvavala placed before the gathering of international experts, the research findings on various aspects of Laughter Therapy, including the origin, re-discovery and revival of this concept, its emotional, social and psychological impact, its global relevance in the contemporary society, and progress of the Laughing Movement. Dr Khandwala presented his research findings on medical benefits of Laughter Therapy.

The above mentioned experts and other members of the delegation conducted a workshop consisting of a live demonstration of the laughing session and various scientifically evolved types of laughter techniques. The presentation at the symposium and the workshop on Laughter Therapy by the experts of PLCI (Priyadarshni Laughter Club International) for a distinguished global audience on an international platform provided a great boost to the Laughing Movement and increased awareness about this wonderful natural therapy, which is a gift to mankind, worldwide, and it generated great interest and enthusiasm amongst the participants.



How to Start A Laughter Club in Your Area

Find a place in your locality where people can assemble early in the morning when they go for a walk. It can either be a public garden, a ground, or a beach. The advantage of selecting such a place is that you can combine your laughter therapy session with your morning walk. You may have a laughing-cum- exercise session of about 30 minutes' duration before or after your walk.

Also, it is easier to gather a large number of people in such places. The chosen place should not be in the immediate vicinity of residential complexes so as to prevent any disturbance to others. It is not advisable to have such sessions in residential premises either.

1. The ideal time to start a laughing session is between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m. Small adjustments can be made according to the convenience of the participants. The advantage of laughing in the morning is: 30 minutes of laughter-cum-exercise in the morning keeps you in good spirits throughout the day. It energizes your body and charges you with happiness. Moreover, pollution levels are lowest in the morning and this ensures a good supply of relatively fresh air.
2. Morning walks and laughter therapy sessions are complementary to each other and the benefits of both can be experienced together, at the same place and time of the day.
3. Organize a group of at least 25 people (the larger the number of people, the easier it is to laugh). Get in touch with Priyadarshni Academy. We will organize a team of experts who will come to your area for a demonstration of various techniques of Laughter Therapy. We will also train some persons from your group as Anchor Persons, who give commands to initiate different kinds of laughter.

Since Laughter as a Therapy need to be carefully monitored by medical experts, it is important that all the laughter groups be trained In a scientific manner. There has to be a uniform format for a laughing session without any diversions or irregularities. This should be followed by all the groups for the best results. Many groups have made some changes in the laughing exercises on their own which may not be effective.

5. The expenses of conveyance, boarding and lodging of the team of experts will be borne by the organizing group. Apart from these, there are no charges involved either for the demonstration provided or in the form of a membership fee.
6. Persons residing in places other than Mumbai in India who wish to start a laughter club in their area, should seek an appointment at least one month in advance.

If you cannot afford the expenses of the team, you can approach social organizations like the Rotary, Lions and Jaycees or Corporate houses, and philanthropists to sponsor the effort in the public interest.



Laughter in the Life of Sex Workers

Living in one of the narrow lanes of Kamathipura in Mumbai, may not be a laughing matter, especially for the sex workers residing there. With a view towards bringing some gaiety in their lives, Priyadarshni Laughter Club International collaborated with Dr. I. S. Gilada, the Secretary and Founder of Indian Health Organization, to hold a Laughing Competition in this part of Mumbai to mark IHO's 15th anniversary on April 6, 1997.

It was a competition with a difference. The spontaneity of the ladies who readily participated in it was amazing. The competition was set off with a brief demonstration by Mr. Kishore Kuvavala and members of Priyadarshni Laughter Club International, which the assembled audience enthusiastically repeated. After that, the women were on their way, with each trying to outdo all others with the loudest and heartiest laughter. The drab brothels echoed with the loud laughter of brightly dressed women who seemed to have overcome their miserable existence for the moment.

Sangita, the winner of the Laughing Competition was overwhelmed and said, "It was one of the greatest moments of my life when I was declared winner of the competition. I have decided to continue laughing in the face of all odds in life." So infectious was the laughter that the women decided to form a Laughter Club of their own to enjoy a hearty laugh every day. Residents of Kamathipura Lane may face untold challenges, but as Manda Kamble, the Runner-up in the Competition rightly summed up, **"Today, we learned to take life as it comes - with a smile."**





Laughter Contest

To increase awareness about Laughter Therapy, on the proposal of Shri Kishore Kuvavala, Priyadarshni Academy organized a laughing competition on April 14, 1996 at Priyadarshni Park, South Mumbai, which received an overwhelming response with the participation of more than 700 people. Ms. Charu Singh, Chief Executive Officer of Priyadarshni Academy, coordinated the event publicity and awareness with resultant wide coverage by print media as well as national and international TV networks, such as Doordarshan, Zee TV, BBC, CNN, ATN, Sky TV, NHK, Japan and various cable networks all over the world. The Competition was cosponsored by the Bank of Baroda at the behest of its Chairman & Managing Director Shri K. Kanan. The Laughing movement gathered a tremendous momentum with this competition. Shri Kishore Kuvavala, Chairman, Priyadarshni Laughter Club International, organized another successful laughing contest on December 9, 1996 in the same venue, which further boosted the Movement.



All Mumbai Laughter Competition - 2001

November 13, 2001

Priyadarshni Academy's division of the **Priyadarshni Laughter Club** celebrated its **8th Anniversary on 11th November 2001**. The event was well attended with over 200 people representing 25 clubs from all over Mumbai and covered by the press and electronic media.

The **Chief Guest** for the event was **Mr. K. C. Shrivastav, Municipal Commissioner of Mumbai**. All the representatives of the various clubs were presented with a Laughter book, the Priyadarshni Academy profile, a cap and a rose by the Municipal Commissioner.

The Program included demonstration of the various sets of laughter as well as the exercises done by the different clubs. **Mr. Kishore Kuvavala**, Chairman of the Club, spoke a few words about the Priyadarshni Laughter Club and how it has grown and flourished over the years. He stated that the Priyadarshni Laughter Club symbolizes National Integration for the people of Mumbai with no discrimination of caste, sex, creed, or financial status of its members.

Mr. K. C. Shrivastav, Municipal Commissioner, in his speech, congratulated the Priyadarshni Laughter Club for its wonderful efforts in contributing and sustaining a more healthy city of Mumbai. Mr. K. C. Shrivastav also stated that the aim of the Club was to create not only a **Clean and Green Mumbai**, but also a healthy Mumbai and requested the various clubs to volunteer their time to clean up their localities in order to have a clean, green, and healthy Mumbai.





All Mumbai Laughter Competition - 2003

November 17, 2003

Priyadarshni Laughter Club International affiliated to Priyadarshni Academy organized the **All Mumbai Laughter Competition in Priyadarshni Park, Napean Sea Road** on November 16, 2003 at 6.45 a.m. The event was conceptualized and compered by Mr. Kishore Kuvavala, Chairman of the Priyadarshni Laughter Club International, and co-organized with **Ms. Gwyneth Alphonso**, Senior Executive Officer, Priyadarshni Academy.

The event was graced by **Shri Nana Chudasama**, Former Sheriff of Mumbai, as Chief Guest and **Shri Ajit Wadekar**, Former Captain, Indian Cricket Team, as Guest of Honor. The **Special Guests** at the event were **Shri B. A. Desai**, Chairman, Malabar Hill Citizens Forum, **Mr. Hirachandani**, MDHC, and **Shri Nanik Rupani**, Chairman Emeritus, Priyadarshni Academy.

The Laughter Competition received tremendous response from 18 Laughter Clubs from all over Mumbai and the suburbs to compete in demonstrating their skill and effectiveness of the Laughter exercises and sequences. Five schools in South Mumbai and schools for physically and mentally challenged also attended the event.

The event was attended by more than 300 people and it was extensively covered by the electronic and print media.

Priyadarshni Academy

1 Arcadia, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400 021.

Tel. : 2287 3456 / 6630 7160

Telefax : 2287 5373

Email : pa@priyadarshniacademy.com

Website : www.priyadarshniacademy.com

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from Inside front cover page

The Academy's Global Awards function is a unique and most prestigious event in Mumbai, which acknowledges and honors outstanding contribution of individuals in spheres of education, human rights, medicine, environmental protection, international diplomacy, science and technology, corporate social responsibility, public service among others, on national and global levels. Some of the past recipients of Global Awards include Rt. Hon. John Prescott, former deputy Prime Minister of U. K., Mrs. Megawati Soekarnoputri, former member of House of Representative, Indonesia, Mr. Martin Luther King III, Civil Rights leader, USA and Mr. N. R. Narayana Murthy, former Chairman and Chief Mentor, Infosys Tech. Ltd.

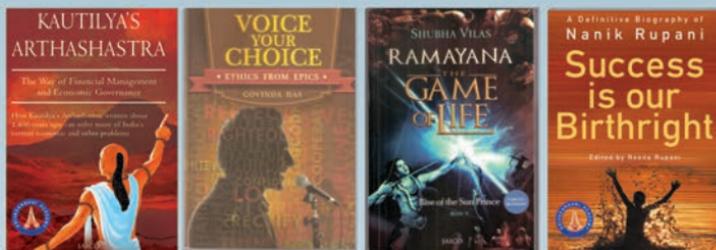
Recently Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was awarded Priyadarshni Academy's prestigious Global Award at an exclusive and special ceremony at the Taj Palace in New Delhi on January 26, 2014 at the hands of Mr. L. K. Advani, former Deputy Prime Minister of India. The Japanese Prime Minister was in India as the first-ever Japanese Prime Minister to be Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations and to hold talks with Indian leaders.



Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe receiving Priyadarshni Academy's Global Award.

PUBLICATIONS

(AVAILABLE FROM CROSSWORD OUTLETS,
LEADING BOOK STORES AND PRIYADARSHNI ACADEMY)



Kautilya's Arthashastra: The Way of Financial Management and Economic Governance, Jaico Publishing House and Priyadarshni Academy, 2014, paperback (in English)	₹ 299
Hindi translation (2014)	175
Tamil translation (2014)	199
Marathi translation (2013)	175
Gujarati translation (2013)	195
Kannada translation (2013)	150
Telugu translation (2013)	199
Farzi translation (e-publication)	\$ 6
Das, Govinda - Voice Your Choice: Ethics from Epics (a collection of thought provoking articles that distill the mature wisdom of Mahabharata and Ramayana to assist one in empowering the inner voice), White Woods Publishing House, in association with Priyadarshni Academy, 2014, paperback	125
Vilas, Subha - Ramayana: The Game of Life – Rise of the Sun Prince, Book 1 (a book that decodes the teachings of the verses from the first chapter of Ramayana and discovers their relevance to day-to-day life struggles), Jaico Publishing House, 2014, paperback	250
Patil, Shivraj V. – The Dasbodh of Ramdas Swami, Guru of Shri Shivaji Maharaj, Vol. I, 2008, hardback	1000
Vol. II, 2008, hardback	1000
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Rupani, Reena, ed. - Success is our Birthright: A Definitive Biography of Nanik Rupani, Ameya Inspiring Books, 2006, hardback	395
Priyadarshni Academy, paperback,	250
Animation format	30
Association of Adolescent and Child Care in India – Teen Tips, Priyadarshni Academy, paperback	150
Association of Adolescent and Child Care in India – FAQs for Parents of Teenagers, Priyadarshni Academy, paperback	250

Priyadarshni Academy, 1, Arcadia Bldg., Nariman Point, Mumbai 400021, India

Tel.: +91-22-22873456/66307160; Fax.: +91-22-22022671

E-mail: pa@priyadarshniacademy@gmail.com; Website: www.priyadarshniacademy.com