



REBECCA FOSTER

*Integrating Contemplative Practice with
Joy Inspired Movement, Laughter and Play*

thecenterofjoy.net

Top Eleven Ways to Incorporate More Laughter into 2011

1. As soon as you realize you're awake, but before you open your eyes, smile. Then chuckle. As you open your eyes, take in the simple gifts of your surroundings. Breathe in a sense of gratitude, then exhale laughter—your morning's first offering to the world.
2. Designate a specific bar or bottle of soap as your "laughter soap" and proactively laugh whenever you use it. Scrub-a-dub-dub...
3. Learn the Ha Ha Mantra: Whenever life's minor irritations and annoyances (a red light when you're in a hurry, spilled coffee on your white shirt, etc.), take a breath and say Haaaaaaa, Haaaaaaa, Ha ha ha ha ha... (Note: the Ha Ha Mantra is best said in silence when you are with people who might not appreciate laughter in that particular moment.)
4. Make a point of hanging out with kind friends who laugh easily and with whom you laugh often. Schedule them into your week. Encourage them to stop by unexpectedly.
5. Designate a "laughter doorknob" in your home or work setting—one place where you always pause for a moment to laugh as you transition from this activity or state of mind to the next. It might help to post a small note at eye level as a reminder...
6. Keep the number for the National Laugh Line (712-432-3900, 6071292#) in your wallet or program it into your cell phone. Schedule a regular time to call in each week or use it as needed—at the airport, when you're feeling blue, as a "laughter break" from work. Remember: twelve times a day there's a volunteer Laughter Leader ready to laugh with you and other laughers from around the country. (I'm on at 8am EST every day...)
7. Join a Laughter Yoga Club—what you practice grows stronger! There are now more than 6,000 clubs in more than 60 countries. (Coming soon to Rhode Island in 2011!)
8. Honor your own grief and pain when they arise, but remember that nothing is solid. Even in the midst of great suffering there can be moments of great beauty, joy and laughter. Look for them and allow them in.
9. Practice the "You are amazing" mantra with a loved one. Sit across from each other. Agree to keep eyes connected, no talking other than the mantra (which can be said intermittently, spontaneously, playfully and/or silently). Share smiles, silence, laughter and "you are amazing" for at least 3 minutes.
10. Remember that to care for someone else (particularly over the long haul) you must first take care of yourself. Taking time to laugh, whether proactively (as in Laughter Yoga) or in response to a funny movie, book, person or situation is nourishment for your soul and gives you the strength and buoyancy to show up wholeheartedly for others.
11. Find a certified Laughter Coach! Step out of the noise of your head and into a joy-filled transformational journey of new possibilities. More info at thecenterofjoy.net.