

LAUGHTER YOGA LEADER TRAINING

With Hannah Airey



Christchurch: 12-13 September 2026, Mary Potter Community Centre

Price: \$575 Early Bird Special (available until 14 August 2026)

\$675 Full price

Limited spaces available

What is this?!

This experiential (and often life-transforming) workshop is ideal for personal development and anyone interested in running a Laughter Yoga group (certification upon completion of workshop).

What is Laughter Yoga?

Laughter yoga is a form of exercise that combines laughter exercises with deep diaphragmatic breathing techniques. It was developed by Dr. Madan Kataria, a medical doctor, in 1995 and is used as a way to reduce stress, promote wellbeing and relaxation and alleviate anxiety.

Incorporating laughter into your daily life can be a valuable tool for promoting physical and mental health, in part due to its influence on the vagus nerve and the parasympathetic nervous system.

Laughter is our body's natural antidote to stress.

Course outline

Over this 2 day transformational workshop, we will be covering:

- Laughter Yoga: history, concept, philosophy
- Health benefits of laughter
- Stress, anxiety and laughter
- Laughter session(s)

- Laughter Leader facilitation skills
- How to start a community laughter club
- Laughing alone; with mental health support groups; in aged care facilities; people with addictions; people with disabilities; and schools
- Relaxation techniques (diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, mindfulness)

At the end of this workshop you can:

Start a community Laughter Club	Take laughter into aged care	Share laughter with people with disabilities
Take laughter into workplaces	Share with clients	Take laughter groups for mental fitness
Share with prisoners	Take laughter into domestic violence centres	Share laughter with people in recovery

Laughter Yoga and the Vagus Nerve

Laughter and the vagus nerve are interconnected in several ways. The vagus nerve, also known as the tenth cranial nerve plays a crucial role in regulating various bodily functions, including heart rate, digestion, and respiratory rate. It has both sensory and motor functions and is a key component of the parasympathetic nervous system, often referred to as the "rest and digest" system.

Here's how laughter and the vagus nerve are related:

1. **Stress Reduction:** Laughter triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals and increases the production of neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin, which play a role in regulating mood. When you laugh heartily, it stimulates the vagus nerve, promoting the parasympathetic response. This helps reduce stress and promote relaxation, counteracting the effects of the sympathetic nervous system (the "fight or flight" response).
2. **Improved Heart Rate Variability:** Laughter can increase heart rate variability (HRV), which is a measure of the variability in time between successive heartbeats. A higher HRV indicates a healthier autonomic nervous system balance, with the vagus nerve playing a significant role in regulating this variability. Improved HRV is associated with better overall health and resilience to stress.
3. **Enhanced Digestion:** The vagus nerve influences digestive processes, including the production of stomach acid, enzyme secretion, and peristalsis (the muscular contractions that move food through the digestive tract). Laughter can stimulate the

vagus nerve, which may aid in digestion and reduce symptoms of gastrointestinal discomfort.

4. **Social Bonding:** Laughter is often a social activity, and shared laughter can strengthen social connections and build trust. The vagus nerve is involved in the physiological response to social bonding and feelings of safety. When you laugh with others, it activates the vagus nerve and enhances social bonding and feelings of connectedness.
5. **Pain Relief:** Laughter has been shown to have a mild analgesic (pain-relieving) effect through the release of endorphins. The vagus nerve is involved in pain modulation, and its activation during laughter may contribute to this pain relief.
6. **Respiratory Benefits:** Laughter involves deep and diaphragmatic breathing, which stimulates the vagus nerve and enhances its function. This helps improve respiratory health and lung function.

Other physiological and psychological benefits are:

- Brain and body is flooded with oxygen
- Muscles relax
- Circulation is increased
- Natural Killer T (NKT) cell production is increased
- Immune system is stimulated
- Internal organs are given a massage
- Respiratory system is cleaned out
- Cardiovascular workout
- Blood pressure returns to normal

When participants partake in a laughter yoga session, they are also engaging all Five Ways to Wellbeing: Connect, Give, Keep Learning, Be Active, Take Notice. Becoming aware of when you are engaging in these five actions has been proven to increase your wellbeing – no matter what your circumstances.

About your facilitator:

Hannah Airey trained with the founder of Laughter Yoga, Dr Madan Kataria, in 2007 and started the second Laughter Club in NZ and which was the first one in the South Island. At the time she was experiencing high anxiety and stress due to personal circumstances and found that this was the most powerful bio-hacking tool she had come across. It was also extremely effective in becoming more mindful and quietening her mind.

Hannah became a trained teacher in 2009 and has trained hundreds of participants as well as having facilitated workshops nationwide in the following industries: corporate organisations, retirement villages, prisons, schools, drug and alcohol addiction units and mental health

support groups. She continues to hold trainings around the country and mentors those who are setting up community laughter clubs.

Hannah trained with Wim Hof in 2017 and re-trained in bioenergetics in 2022, she combines her expertise, experience, knowledge and passion in her trainings. She is a highly respected facilitator, visit her website to find out more.

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