

# The Lightness of Laughter

Use this to examine and explore how you can bring the healing salve of laughter into your life. Laughter might not make your problem disappear, but it can help you to think differently about your problem by helping you think more clearly. Who knows? It may even help you find a totally different perspective.

Studies on laughter show that having a more cheerful disposition can help us live longer, too, as well as help improve sleep and lessen depression. Follow along with the four-part practice below for lightening your load.

## Instructions:

**Part 1:** In the space below, make a list of things you spend too much time worrying about.

*Examples of these include things that push your buttons, critical comments (from yourself or others), what others think, bad drivers, personal demands, expectations from others, and lack of control over certain situations or aspects of your life.*

*Reflections:* What was it like to notice those buttons? How long have these been with you? How would it feel like to respond differently to these, and not let them get to you?

**Part 2:** Make an executive decision to laugh it off! Let it go! Can you relay decide to do that? Yes, of course you can! *Who* says you can't? *Why* can't you? Use the next minute to make that executive decision.

*Reflections:* How does it feel to make this kind of executive decision? What would it be like to continue to make this kind of executive decision the next time one of your buttons gets pushed? What would be the challenges you might face in doing that?

**Part 3:** Write down the “lighter view” for each of the “buttons” or “serious thoughts” that confront you often. Be sure to include evidence that reacting and worrying about these is counterproductive for you.

**Part 4:** Now it’s time to explore just who and what makes you laugh. In the space below, write down all the persons or activities that make you feel “lighter”. Who tickles that funny bone for you? This could be a family member or friend, comedian, neighbor, work associate, TV show, film, or book, etc. Make a point of spending time with these persons or activities. Use them as role models.

*Reflections:* How do you think inviting more humor into your life will change your experiences? How can you bring a little bit of laughter into your life each day?