

Carmela Carlyle's Tips for Laughter Yoga Exercises for Older Adults

Context: Use Cultural References appropriate for their age-group I like to make references to listening to the radio.

- *Hi Ho Silver Away*
- And going to matinee movies. How much did it cost when you were a kid? 10 cents? 15 cents? A quarter? *Tarzan and Jane Laughter* is a favorite.
- Laughing using your jaws side to side is *Charlie Mc Carthy Laughter* (ventriloquist dummy of Edgar Bergen)
- I make up laughter exercises based on famous musicals of their day such as *Shampoo Laughter* "I'm gonna wash those cares right of my hair an send them on their way" based on South Pacific.
- *Mae West Naughty, Naughty Laughter*: "When I am good I am good when I am bad I am better." Invitingly use your shoulder and beckon with your finger "Why don't you come up and see me sometime?"
- Make up Laughter Yoga exercises for seasons of the year and holidays that are important to elders. Veterans' Day and Flag Day are more significant to them.
- Examples: *Fireworks Laughter* (use hands and make pop pop sounds high and low) July 4th *I love a parade Laughter*. (imitate a parade with everyone choosing their favorite Marching, playing instruments, twirling a baton) *Betsy Ross American Flag Laughter* (laugh for every star and for every stripe while stitching it) *Summer Picnic Basket Laughter*: What's in yours? *Carnival and State Fair Rides Laughter*.
- *Dancing with the Stars Laughter* (Ho Ho HAAAAHA Cha Cha or 123, 123 Waltzing Laughter)

Invite folks to interact and give a response. Then YOU make up the LY exercise to go with that response for the group to do. This gives elders a chance to interact, but they are not *pressured* to create a LY exercise. I LOVE hearing the surprises they offer up and no matter what they say, I make it work. Examples:

- What's your favorite cake? Your favorite pie? *Pickin Apples Laughter*. *Sour Lemon Laughter*. *Mix it Up Laughter*. *Nut Crackin' Laughter*.
- In what body of water did you swim when you were a kid? *Pond Laughter*. *Jump in a Lake Laughter*. *Atlantic Ocean Laughter*. *Big Wave Laughter*. *Rope Across the River*.
- Did you go to Summer Carnivals, State Fairs or Amusement Park? *Coney Island Roller Coaster Laughter*. *Merry Go Round Laughter*.
- Favorite Hobby? *Trout Fishing Laughter*. *Horseback Riding*. *Bowling Laughter*.

ALWAYS include a positive, guided meditation affirming the benefits of today's laughter practice. Close with feeling grounded, smiling and healthy.