



"Have you heard the one about ...?" Those six words have begun many a hilarious joke. You hear that beginning and know someone is attempting to be funny. Whether you agree with their sense of humor, you'll probably hang around to hear the joke.

Have you ever thought about why you do this? Probably not. People understand that they enjoy laughing. Whatever happens in the body, it just makes them feel good. They don't need to understand the physiological processes that make them smile, laugh and enjoy a little less stress. They hear somebody telling a joke, so they'll listen in to see if it's good.

They know a good joke is enjoyable. It makes them laugh! Even on a difficult day when nothing seems right, that joke gives them a slice of happiness.

Many don't know that a healthy sense of humor can help you balance your emotions. You experience fewer emotional spikes and crashes because of how laughter and humor communicate with your brain.

### **It's All about Dopamine, Serotonin, and Endorphins**

Dopamine is a hormone that influences pleasure reward and mental health. It's a neurotransmitter that sends chemical messages to your nervous system to communicate with your body. Serotonin is also a hormone and neurotransmitter influencing your level of happiness and even hunger.

Endorphins are hormones related to your level of happiness and stress. When these neurotransmitters are in abundance, you experience a drop in stress and a boost of happiness.

The presence of these three feel-good chemicals gets a lift from joke time. A sense of humor naturally triggers the release of these hormones. At the same time you are laughing at a funny joke, your body naturally reduces the presence of cortisol, which is related to stress and anxiety.

This means that if you want healthier emotions that are more positive than negative, work on your sense of humor. Spend time with friends that make you laugh. Read a funny story or watch silly videos on YouTube and Facebook. You'll enjoy healthier, happier emotions and a better mood.

### **Are Happy Emotions and a Positive Outlook as Simple as Telling a Joke?**

Sometimes life is difficult. You might be looking at that as the understatement of the century. The daily grind can take its toll; then, life adds a little dose of conflict and turmoil here and there.

Other times life makes things easy for us. How you were made provides a simple and quick way to feel better and enjoy more positive emotions. Just access your sense of humor.

Smile and laugh more often when alone and with others. You'll find your outlook on life is more positive, and you'll enjoy less stress and fewer anxious feelings. Your brain and nervous system will reward your silly jokes with feel-good chemicals. They are accompanied by a dose of happiness and other positive emotions that can help you through a tough day.