

SANE AUSTRALIA

SANE Australia Online Peer Group

Date: 3/2/2022

Topic: Laugh Out Loud

Description: Humour can be a great tool when it feels like the world is falling apart. Let's come together to discuss how having a laugh and incorporating humour in your self-care routine can help us to cope with everyday complexities of life.

Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about the importance of inculcating humour in our lives to support our mental health recovery. We really value your thoughts on how it goes so we will send a link to a short survey for you to complete. Tonight, peer support workers @earthling95 and @Mrnobody21 will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of exploring the therapeutic value of laughter and humour. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both. We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing. Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature as we talk about mental health struggles. @Otter who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety.

If you're having any technical difficulties, please see our FAQ

(<https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support>)

or message @Otter

earthling95
(PSW)

earthling95
(PSW)

We'll just wait for a few more people to join and then begin the conversation.

earthling95
(PSW)
mrnobody20
21 (PSW)

Welcome everyone! Feel free to introduce yourselves. I'm earthling95 :)

Hey everyone

The Hams
Otter

good evening all

(Moderator)
earthling95
(PSW)

Otter here checking in :)

earthling95
(PSW)

Hello @The Hams and @Gwynn :)

Gwynn

Okay so first question- They say laughter is the best medicine. What are people's thoughts on that?

Sometimes you can use it to say the unsayable, which can be a double-edged sword.

The Hams

Humour helps a lot i think - there are times where you need it to get through a tough time.

earthling95
(PSW)

I think for me personally laughter and humour has provided me with a perspective when life has been down in the dumps- it's a shared relief.

Otter
(Moderator)

Agreed. I've heard people say if you're ready to laugh about something, you're ready to overcome it and it no longer has a complete hold over you

mrnobody20
21 (PSW)

Couldn't agree more. Humour has certainly helped me though many tough times

earthling95
(PSW)
earthling95
(PSW)

Sometimes situations arise where there is no other option but to power through- laughter can be therapeutic!

What are some ways in which we can find the humour in life's challenges?

Otter
(Moderator)

Memes

earthling95

Memes!!!!!!! <3

(PSW)

mrnobody20
21 (PSW)

Hahaha yes definitely memes

earthling95
(PSW)

Also I think its leaning into the absurdities of life and not take ourselves too seriously

mrnobody20
21 (PSW)

I love that we can often find humour in some of the most unpredictable places

Gwynn

pretending I'm a Sim, haha...

Otter

(Moderator)
mrnobody20

Are you fluent in Simlish @Gwynn?

21 (PSW)

Lol

Gwynn

Only the curse words, @Otter ;)

earthling95
(PSW)

Hey..I am feeling left out haha

earthling95
(PSW)

Can we talk about need for speed

earthling95
(PSW)

lol

earthling95
(PSW)

What are some ways in which humour can help us foster healthy relationships? (Whether it be with friends, family etc)

Gwynn

It can help normalise mental health challenges

mrnobody20
21 (PSW)

I feel like humour can be one of the best ways to break the ice when meeting new people and making new connections

Gwynn

and make people feel more comfortable to talk about it

The Hams

I think if humour can be introduced in interactions it also breaks up the monotony and repetitive nature of tasks

mrnobody20
21 (PSW)

Definitely @Gwynn It can be so effective in helping people lower their guard and be vulnerable

earthling95 (PSW) My bestfriends live overseas and one of our ways to connect is looking forward to our daily instagram scroll and be in stitches thanks to all the memes and reels we keep sending each other. Laughter is the closest distance between us. As one of my favourite meme goes- Normalise sending memes for communication. I got nothing to talk about sorry.

mrnobody20 21 (PSW) So perfectly said @earthling95 !

earthling95 (PSW) **Mental health memes have become a popular tool to help individuals feels that their experience is validated. What are your feelings about them?**

earthling95 (PSW) I only have feels about them haha

Otter (Moderator) I think they are great in allowing an open frank discussion and normalising mental health issues in an enjoyable way when done well, but feel they can contribute to stigma or possibly promote ill mental health or destructive behaviours if done poorly

Gwynn My feelings are kind of mixed - they can be a great way to make people feel not alone, but sometimes it can almost glamourise the pain?

mrnobody20 21 (PSW) I agree. I think they're generally super helpful. My only issue is if they oversimplify certain conditions/experiences or reinforce negative stereotypes

Gwynn apparently they can help people cognitively reappraise their circumstances

earthling95 (PSW) I agree 100%. I have definitely found myself turning to memes sometimes to block away some big emotions. It's hard to find a balance with escapism.

earthling95 (PSW) I also think the self-deprecating nature of memes can sometimes dismiss the struggles someone has gone through - especially with dark humour

earthling95 (PSW) **What are some of your daily sources of humour?**

Gwynn The hashtag #auspol on twitter helps me cope with the political situation

mrnobody20 21 (PSW) The news lol sometimes anyway

mrnobody20 21 (PSW) Hahaha absolutely Gwynn!

Gwynn I do browse for memes on imgur and tumbler

earthling95 (PSW) Betoota Advocate- when watching the news feels like there is an upcoming apocalypse

**mrnobody20
21 (PSW)**

I feel like regular news often outdoes the Betoota now days lol

Gwynn

the chaser is also good

**earthling95
(PSW)**

I love stand up comedy- hoping to watch more live shows when hopefully COVID settles down

**Otter
(Moderator)
mrnobody20
21 (PSW)**

There is no shortage of absurdities to lean into these days hey @earthling95

**earthling95
(PSW)**

When I first saw that the government suggested children driving forklifts I genuinely thought it was a chaser article

**mrnobody20
21 (PSW)**

My all time favourite shows would be Kath & Kim and Bojack Horseman. I don't know what I would do without these shows <3

Omg Bojack

**earthling95
(PSW)**

Welcome @Shaz51 :D

**mrnobody20
21 (PSW)**

Hey @Shaz51

**Otter
(Moderator)**

Hiya @Shaz51 !

Shaz51

Heyyyyy @mrnobody2021 (PSW) , @earthling95 @Otter (Moderator)

Shaz51

Love the YouTube videos of funny things that happen with pets

**mrnobody20
21 (PSW)**

Me too @Shaz51 I could spend hours watching doggo videos!

**earthling95
(PSW)**

How can humour help us deal with life's everyday stress? What might that look like for you?

Shaz51

That is what we have on now instead of tv @mrnobody2021 (PSW)

Shaz51

@earthling95 it helps us to take our minds off today's stress, what happened during today

**Otter
(Moderator)**

I have found opportunities to work in the office with colleagues during the pandemic have been very valuable, made me realize how much mucking around and having a laugh with co-workers can take the edge out of the week

Shaz51 Different here @Otter (Moderator) With our work it is usually just us 2 working together
Shaz51 Hello @Gwynn
Gwynn Hi Shaz!
Apc Evening everyone

Otter
(Moderator)
mrnobody20
21 (PSW)
earthling95
(PSW)
earthling95
(PSW)

Hello @Apc !
Hey Apc :)
welcome @Apc :)

Where do you draw the line when joking about something as sensitive as mental health issues?

mrnobody20
21 (PSW)
Gwynn I think similarly to what we were discussing before around memes, its a no go for me if it reinforces stereotypes
Gwynn I try to consider my audience
Gwynn If it's going to trigger them or if they're seeming uncomfortable, I don't go there.
Shaz51 @earthling95 , I think when the jokes goes too long sometimes everyone needs to know when to stop

earthling95
(PSW)
Apc 100%. Tact and empathy are so important.
Gwynn When you start feeling uncomfortable and feel like it's directed at you, way over the line I think
also I've heard about 'punching up' with your humour

earthling95
(PSW)
earthling95
(PSW)
Shaz51 Definitely. I think culture plays a big role as well.
earthling95
(PSW) It's so nuanced and complex.
Shaz51 Very true @Apc
earthling95
(PSW) **Have you learned anything helpful from others' experiences here tonight that you might be able to apply in your own life? If yes, what did you learn?**

**Otter
(Moderator)**

I will binge watch Bojack Horseman, the nightly news and doggo videos for lulz

**earthling95
(PSW)**

As an empath I can struggle with boundaries and mentally exhaust myself. I am trying to not take myself so seriously and find joy in the little things that life has to offer.

Shaz51

More animals videos here @Otter (Moderator)

**earthling95
(PSW)
mrnobody20
21 (PSW)**

Tonight's topic may have brought up some heavy feelings as we talked about (POTENTIALLY HEAVIER ASPECTS OF THE TOPIC). Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do? 😊

Cup of tea and some Bojack for me

Watch a scary movie - I think I'll watch Alien, where a smart woman tells everyone they're in trouble, they ignore her and she's the only one to survive... with her cat.

Gwynn

**mrnobody20
21 (PSW)**

One of my favourite movies Gwynn!

**earthling95
(PSW)**

I will watch Kath & Kim, drown myself in Tiktok reels and some lavender spray to try and sleep....ZzZz

ApC

@Gwynn love the Alien movie series especially the Alien vs predator

Gwynn

Great :)

ApC

Sometime I watch musical movies and just sing along don't care what I sound like lol

**earthling95
(PSW)**

[We'd like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. As we're trialling this service, we'd love to hear any feedback you only take a few minutes to complete. Please click this link: https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW](https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW)

**earthling95
(PSW)**

Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at: <https://psychcentral.com/health/ways-that-humor-heals#the-connection> https://www.ted.com/talks/judy_croon_the_superpower_of_humour https://www.ted.com/talks/sophie_scott_why_we_should_take_laughter_seriously

**Otter
(Moderator)**

Would def watch Alien The Musical

ApC

Actually that would be a pretty good movie to watch just a pity one does not exist that I know off anyway

**earthling95
(PSW)**

[Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion 😊 If you'd like to be informed when our next Peer Group Chat will be taking place, you can sign up here https://www.sane.org/peer-support/online-mental-health-meet-up. You can also ask questions for us to discuss in future peer chats!](https://www.sane.org/peer-support/online-mental-health-meet-up)

**earthling95
(PSW)**

Have a good night everyone- it was lovely connecting with you all today :)

Otter

(Moderator)

Goodnight all :D

mrnobody20
21 (PSW)

Night everyone!