



## Member Spotlight: Laugh with Sarah Routman

### ***Describe your business:***

I attended my first Laughter Yoga session in 2007 and have been doing it ever since. I started doing it as a business in 2013. As a certified Laughter Yoga leader and teacher, I have presented countless Laughter Yoga sessions for corporations such as Grand Hyatt Hotel, Cigna Health Care, and Best Buy. I have laughed with nurses, teachers, professionals, seniors, college students, families with young children, and even hospice patients and their caregivers. I've led sessions for the Minnesota Jail Programmers, the MN Hospice and Palliative Care Conference and the National Wellness Conference. I have been featured at health conferences and trainings, women's retreats, fund raising events and humor festivals. I inspire others to lead happier, healthier, more meaningful lives through laughter, which ultimately helps them to unlock their full potential. I have shared laughter with thousands of people all over the world and can't wait to give you the giggles! I created *LAUGHTER DOODLES: A Coloring Book that Makes You Happier* to combine the health benefits of both coloring and laughter for a heightened coloring experience that unleashes your own creativity and leaves you more energized and optimistic. The second book in the series, *LAUGHTER DOODLES: A Coloring Book to Inspire You*, is a pocket-size book of laughter quotes to color. Now you can literally "Carry laughter with you wherever you go!" (a quote by Hugh Sidey) You can learn more at: [www.SeriousGiggles.com](http://www.SeriousGiggles.com)

### ***What are the best things about being an entrepreneur?***

I love working for myself and deciding what takes priority and making room for the creativity.

### ***What are the worst things about being an entrepreneur?***

It's sometimes really challenging to work alone. I want a team to sit around and brainstorm and discuss creative ideas so we can decide what the priorities should be. (Yes, I see the complete irony of the answers to these two questions!)

### ***Any advice for new entrepreneurs?***

Talk to as many people as you can. There are tons of free resources out there – take advantage of them. Network like crazy. Relationships matter. Never be afraid to ASK – you may be surprised when the answer far surpasses your wildest dreams.

### ***How do you get your business/clientele?***

I've strategically found the right places to volunteer that have led to future work. I've connected with strangers on Facebook who liked the sound of what I do and my energy. They reached out because they wanted to work with me. NETWORKING is key. Don't be that insurance salesperson who sees every handshake as a future client, but keep your creative antennae up and look for creative collaboration possibilities. Because I genuinely love what I do and believe so strongly in the benefits of it, I give it away for free as much as possible. The benefits have come back to

me in multitudes. I've also learned to confidently state a reasonable price for my services when asked. Learn to be quiet and wait for the answer before you cut your price. You may just get what you ask for!

***What is your background? Is it related to your entrepreneurial business?***

I have a BA in English, a BFA in Photography and a Master's in Adult Education. After teaching high school English and Drama for 10 years, and running two nonprofits for 18 years, I became a leadership instructor at the University of Minnesota. I've trained in several alternative healing techniques and care deeply about health and wellness. When I first experienced Laughter Yoga, I knew instantly that it was the perfect way to bring all my talents and passions together. It took a job transition to give me the push to go for it and try my hand at my own business. I feel very fortunate that I'm able to let it evolve at its own pace. I believe that the ability to make decisions based on where I am in any given moment, rather than being driven by the urgent necessity to pay bills directly from my business allows me a certain freedom that not everyone may experience when starting a new business. That reality allows me to make smarter decisions than I might otherwise make.

***What do you do when not building your business (in your free time)?***

I teach Leadership Class at the University of Minnesota, where I am also a proud Wellness Champion, providing an inspirational voice to help steadily create an authentic wellness culture in the workplace. I am also a freelance corporate trainer for Compsych, the biggest Workplace Employee Assistance Program provider in the world. When I was asked last year to collaborate on a book of poetry and photography using my photographs, something clicked and I decided it was time to refocus my energy on photography. I haven't stopped taking pictures since college when I first started exploring the world through a camera lens. I love sharing what I see. I've had a blast re-exploring this early passion by creating a website so I can share my work: [www.ThroughSarahsEyes.com](http://www.ThroughSarahsEyes.com), joining an Artist's Lab and showing my photographs around the Twin Cities. I try to walk every day, and love to read and travel.

***Any other insights that you would like to share?***

We are so much more than the split second we meet someone and size them up can tell us. Take the time to learn other people's stories. Never underestimate a single act of kindness. And, of course, add a giggle to your day. Seriously, it matters.

NOTE: No idea where the highlighted words came from or how to eliminate them!