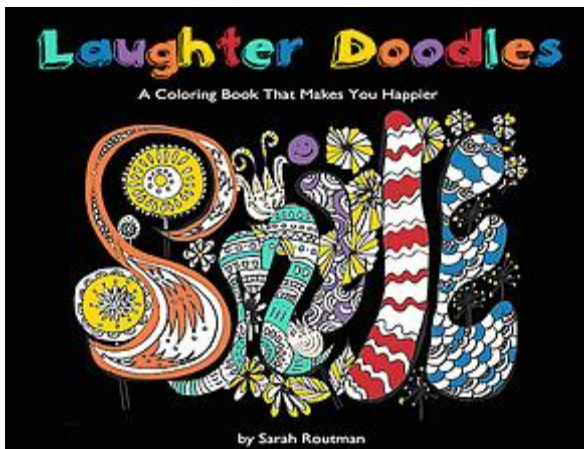


Laughter doodling—a new way to find your inner joy

27 Jul 2016 by The Laughing Hippie www.wordelation.com



In this day and age of soaring stress levels, adult coloring books have risen in popularity around the world, so much in fact that there even is a National Coloring Book Day celebrated in the U.S. on August 2nd each year. Laughter Yoga teacher Sarah Routman in Minnesota, USA, decided to add some extra playfulness to these coloring books by publishing her very own Laughter Doodles.

Sarah Routman, a Laughter Yoga teacher from Minnesota, USA, describes the day when she got the idea for her *Laughter Doodles* book, an adult coloring book that she believes will make you happier.

- I browsed through some of these coloring books at a bookstore one day and was amazed to find that although the designs were beautiful, there was nothing happy about them.

This happened in December of last year. Only a few months later, in March 2016, she self-published her very own adult coloring book, designed to facilitate joy and laughter.

Each page has positive words and phrases that are meant to make you smile and lead you toward a better mood.

*Laugh while you color and breathe deeply.
Every day is better with laughter.
A smile is the prettiest thing that you can wear.*

...are just some of these positive messages found on the pages of the book. Sarah says that practitioners of Laughter Yoga will find this a great complement to their work, offering people something that they can do on their own in between sessions to reinforce the message that happiness is a choice.

Why you should color as an adult

Coloring is normally something we associate with childhood. But there are many benefits to this activity that people of any age can enjoy. Even the famous psychologist Carl Jung suggested to patients suffering from anxiety that they use coloring as a way to relax. Sarah took this idea one step further when she decided to add laughter to the equation.

- The idea is that you'll be contemplating the positive messages of the page while you're coloring. It's fun just discovering the hidden messages. You can't help but smile. It becomes a miniature smiling session! You also get to be creative. As children we learn to color a certain way and stay inside the lines. But we *can* color outside the lines!

Sarah wasn't always a coloring enthusiast. In fact, she didn't color much at all before she decided to create *Laughter Doodles*.

- I've discovered it's fun! And I find it more relaxing than I had imagined. You become more focused on what you're doing right at that moment, on the paper in front of you, on what colors to use and how to color.

Being a combination of self-employed and a night owl, Sarah says she spends a lot of time in front of the computer, sometimes well into the late hours of the night.

- You know how they say that you're not supposed to use the computer before bed because it hinders good sleep? Well, nowadays I color for 10 minutes before bed. And it helps!

Sarah has designed the whole book herself, except for 2,5 drawings and the cover which her daughter helped her create. Her daughter is also responsible for creating both of Sarah's websites. It was her other daughter's friend who first introduced Sarah to Laughter Yoga. The first time Sarah was invited to experience a session, she loved it, and almost immediately got certified herself as both a leader and a teacher and made it her full time job. She eventually certified both of her daughters, who took Laughter Yoga on the road, volunteering at Ronald McDonald Houses across the country on a 4,5 month road trip last summer.

National Coloring Book Day

On Aug 2nd, National Coloring Book Day will be celebrated across the U.S., which is a day to relax and color. And that is exactly what Sarah will be doing on Tuesday in Minneapolis, Minnesota, when she partners with Uptown Minnesota, a store that sells works by local artists. Sarah will hold events at both locations, one at a mall and one at their airport location. The airport is of particular interest to Sarah as she is proud to share that *Laughter Doodles* has already made its way to 5 countries and 15 states within the U.S. With the help of her coloring book, she will speak on the benefits of laughter, share coloring and laughter tips, and inspire people to laugh by giving them the opportunity right there in the store to experience a Laughter Yoga session. She has created several creative laughter exercises related to coloring and will be giving away free pages to color in honor of the holiday. Sarah is excited that her sister, who she also trained as a Laughter Yoga leader, will be celebrating a similar event in Atlanta, Georgia, at Tall Tales Book Shop. Though she can't be there to hold a special event, The Blue House in Bethesda, Maryland, which also carries *Laughter Doodles* will also highlight Sarah's book and give away free pages to color on August 2nd. Sarah believes so passionately in her coloring book that she is already working on several new editions of *Laughter Doodles*!

The Laughing Hippie gives coloring a try

I, The Laughing Hippie, picked a page from *Laughter Doodles* that says SMILE, not just because I found it pretty, but also because I knew I could use a smile after a few days of stress and bad sleep. I left my normal spot in front of the computer, sat out in the sunshine and started coloring. Coloring is something I haven't done since I was a child, but after 10 minutes or so, I asked myself why I ever stopped. It can truly become a meditative activity, something easy, playful and creative that we can do when we need a quick escape from the seriousness of our lives. Looking at my finished 'work of art', I can't help but SMILE :)



SARAH'S LAUGHTER TIP: SMILE-UPS!

Her own warm-up exercise that she uses at the beginning of each laughter session. It's like push-ups for your lips. Push the corners of your lips up, and relax your face. Repeat until you feel the endorphins kicking in and you feel the smile turning into a laugh!

Sarah Routman:

'I inspire other people to lead happier, healthier, more meaningful lives through laughter which ultimately helps them to unlock their full potential.'



For more information about Sarah and her work:

www.seriousgiggles.com

<https://www.facebook.com/LaughWithSarah/>

<https://www.facebook.com/laughterdoodles/>

Laughter Doodles – Laugh & Color Your Way to Better Health (Volume 1) is available for online purchase on Amazon.com and Createspace.com

The Laughing Hippie sharing favorite laughter pose with Sarah Routman, creator of the book *Laughter Doodles*.

(Short video to trigger your own laughter! ~

<https://youtu.be/WCIXoIcBPFU> *Special note: pose NOT required for

laughter – the wonderful thing about laughter is that it's a come-as-you-are exercise: no special clothes, special poses or yoga mat required!)

