

WHY DO WE LAUGH WHEN THINGS ARE SAD?



Coping with distressing circumstances

It might feel uncomfortable to laugh when something is sad, shocking, or scary.

MAKE IT SMALLER

However, laughter can be a helpful way your body protects itself in distressing circumstances. Laughter can help make problems feel smaller or more manageable so you don't have to avoid thinking about them entirely.

WAIT TIL LATER

Laughter can also help us temporarily set other more difficult emotions aside until we are in a place where it is safe to release and process them.

For some people, sometimes

IS IT USEFUL?

Like any coping mechanism, laughter is only as helpful as it is useful to you. For some people, laughing helps make a problem feel smaller or wait for a safe space. But for others, laughter does not feel so helpful – and that's okay too!

FLEXIBILITY

How do you know when laughter is becoming unhelpful? One sign may be if you find you are *only* able to laugh when things are hard. Laughter can help us cope but it can be beneficial to create space for emotions like anger, fear or sadness too.

If that feels like you, think about some other coping strategies you might try. Maybe crying in the shower, listening to some angry music, taking a walk outside, or curling up under a blanket could be more helpful for you.