

My Family Makes a Big Difference!

Zulma Y. Lizarazo

My Kids Make Me Laugh

For me, spending time with family is a big part of my mental and emotional well-being.

My kids make me laugh because they always come out with something. I want to get mad, but I cannot. For example, my son Edwin James is only seven years old, but he corrects my English most of the time. The other day, I was trying to make an appointment, and I couldn't pronounce the word August. The lady on the phone could hear my son in the background, saying the word August. I felt so embarrassed!

Have you heard the saying, "Silence is golden"? Well, that is not always true when you have small children. One day, it was so quiet in the house. When there is no noise at all, that is when you know you better check on the kids. When I got to their room, I saw the whole bottle of baby powder on the rug, and my son was licking the baby powder off the rug. I called his name, and when he looked at me, his face was completely

covered in baby powder. I wanted to laugh out loud.

Long Walks and Praying Together

Walking also helps me. The pandemic was hard for me because I lost the job I had had for ten years. I was very sad. During that time, I stayed home, and I walked ten miles every day. My kids came with me. They rode their bikes, and I pushed the stroller with my baby son Giovanni. We went to different places, even different cities. Walking is great therapy for me.

I also pray every morning with my children. We sit by the sunny window. Praying helps me to relax because I know that God can make all things possible. I feel blessed that I have my family; they help me stay emotionally healthy.



Laughter is Medicine?

Yes! According to the Mayo Clinic, laughter causes physical changes in your body that relieve stress. In the short term, laughter brings more oxygen into your body. It stimulates and then relaxes your muscles. It brings energy to your heart and lungs, and it releases endorphins. (See p. 46.) In the long term, laughter helps your immune system and even helps relieve pain.

Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relief/art-20044456>

AFTER YOU READ:

1. According to the author, how does her family make a big difference for her?
2. Tell a story about a time your kids or someone else made you laugh.
3. Find funny videos online and share them with class. Make sure they are kind. (Laughter is best if we laugh *with* others, not *at* them!)

Zulma Y. Lizarazo is from Colombia. She is a writing student at Portland Adult Education in Portland, Maine. She has been in the United States since 2008, and she lives with her husband and three children.