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### **Comedic relief**

Comedy was and still is an art form that brings people together, and since Ancient Greece, people have enjoyed comedic shows that made families laugh together. It also has many mental health benefits that keep people destressed and rejuvenated. It is shown to relieve stress, anxiety and depression (Gelkopf). Comedy is a mental health benefit that is used by many people, and they don't even know it.

One negative aspect of comedy is that there are people who may use comedy as a coping mechanism, and that can lead to not solving mental health problems. Studies have also shown that people who have a greater sense of humor are less likely to take health problems seriously. ("Humor May Not Be So Good for Your Health"). However these problems are not as likely as you think, and using comedy as a coping mechanism in dark times isn't always a bad thing. The people who are negatively affected by comedy are actually more likely to be comedians. However, not all comedians struggle with mental health issues and addictions, and many are very successful without any problems.

Though there are negative aspects of comedy benefitting your mental health, it isn't an argument for everyone, and many people use humor and never see the negative effects. It has been said that laughter is the best medicine, and that can be true in some cases. When you laugh, your entire body relaxes and your body releases a chemical called endorphins, which are known as the "feel good" or "happy" chemicals (Robinson). Comedy and laughter also can help you live

longer according to a study done in Norway. “A study in Norway found that people with a strong sense of humor outlived those who don’t laugh as much. The difference was particularly notable for those battling cancer.” (Robinson). Laughter is also good for your organs, it momentarily stimulates your lungs, heart and muscles. Laughter can help with blood circulation and flow which in turn releases stress and anxiety symptoms (Robinson). Comedy also brings families together. Many people have fond memories of laughing along with their family and friends.

In summary, comedy is beneficial to mental health. It stimulates your organs which reduces stress, it releases endorphins and it brings people closer together. Using comedy as a mental health benefit is something that a lot of people use to have a good time with family or friends. Comedy is something that people use as a great benefit for many different reasons.

### Comedic distress

Some of the greatest comedians who make people laugh are the people who suffer the most. Stress and criticism can weigh down some comedians and have negative effects to their health. Some comedians struggle with addiction, depression and anxiety. Addiction is a serious condition that many people in the entertainment industry struggle with. Addiction can lead people to developing depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions.

While some may argue that comedy has mental health benefits, and it does, those benefits are not always for everyone. Some use comedy as an unhealthy coping mechanism or defense mechanism to deal with real world problems or health issues (“Humor May Not Be So Good for Your Health”). As well as coping mechanisms, people who do stand up comedy are more likely to have a history of mental illness in their family, or have a mental illness themselves. Some standup comedians compare standup to a drug. Jim Gaffigan, a famous standup comedian says “Stand-up is an endorphin rush probably similar to a drug. It’s also a strange combination of control (you have a mic) and no control (the reaction of the audience)” (Humor May Not Be So Good for Your Health). Addiction is common with standup comedians, and perhaps it is because of the adrenaline rush they get from performing.

Though positive aspects shine through with comedy, and many enjoy having a laugh with friends and family, comedians see it as a job. And sometimes it can be hard to harness the on stage persona all the time. Another comedian, Jenny Saldana says “We struggle with our onstage persona and our personal lives” (Humor May Not Be So Good for Your Health). This leads to seeking out night clubs and drugs, and stand up comedy is very active in bars and in nightlife.

In conclusion, comedy can be beneficial to some people's mental health, however the creators of the things that make you laugh are greatly affected by the stress that causes them to have mental health problems.

Works Cited

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