
*Ways to see the lighter side of life and bring more laughter in**

- **Smile.** Smiling is the beginning of laughter. Like laughter, it's contagious. Pioneers in "laugh therapy," find it's possible to laugh without even experiencing a funny event. The same holds for smiling. Our bodies can tell the difference between a fake smile and a real one.
- **Count your blessings.** Literally make a list. The simple act of considering the good things in your life will distance you from negative thoughts that are a barrier to humor and laughter. When you're in a state of sadness, you have further to travel to get to humor and laughter.
- **Take yourself less seriously – Laugh at yourself.** Share your embarrassing moments, talk about times when you took yourself too seriously.
- **Attempt to laugh at situations rather than bemoan them.** Look for the humor in a bad situation, and uncover the irony and absurdity of life. This will help improve your mood and the mood of those around you.
- **Surround yourself with reminders to lighten up.** Keep a toy on your desk or in your car. Put up a funny poster in your office. Choose a computer screensaver that makes you laugh. Frame photos of you and your family or friends having fun.
- **Keep things in perspective.** Many things in life are beyond your control—particularly the behavior of other people. While you might think taking the weight of the world on your shoulders is admirable, in the long run it's unrealistic, unproductive, unhealthy, and even egotistical.
- **Deal with your stress.** Stress is a major impediment to humor and laughter—but it works both ways so employ stress management techniques, including "fake laughter" or other humor techniques to deal with the stress.
- **When you hear laughter, move toward it.** Sometimes humor and laughter are private, a shared joke among a small group, but usually not. More often, people are very happy to share something funny because it gives them an opportunity to laugh again and feed off the humor you find in it. When you hear laughter, seek it out and ask, "What's funny?"
- **Spend time with fun, playful people.** These are people who laugh easily—both at themselves and at life's absurdities—and who routinely find the humor in everyday events. Their playful point of view and laughter are contagious. People tend to laugh more when in groups.
- **Bring humor into conversations.** Ask people, "What's the funniest thing that happened to you today? This week? In your life?"
- **Pay attention to children and emulate them.** They are the experts on playing, taking life lightly, and laughing.

- **Get a pet.** They are a rewarding way to bring more laughter and joy into your life and can protect you depression, stress, and even heart disease.

*adapted from Smith, Melinda, et al. "Laughter is the Best Medicine: The Health Benefits of Humor and Laughter," Retrieved

http://www.helpguide.org/life/humor_laughter_health.htm