

Laughter, Humor and Play to Reduce Stress and Resolve Problems

Presented by ComPsych® Corporation



Stay Ahead of Performance, Productivity and Health Issues

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Objectives

Understand the benefits of smiling

Know how to use laughter to reduce stress

Understand the value of humor and play



The Benefits of Smiling

Smiling can help me:

- Improve my mood
- Keep a positive focus
- Build confidence and gain receptiveness



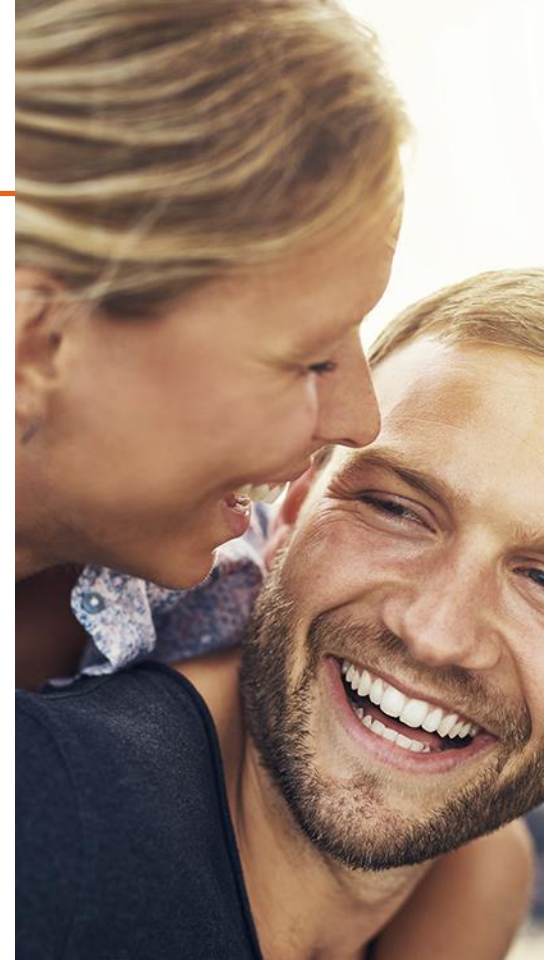
Research About Smiling

Emotional effects of smiling

The Duchenne Smile

Smiling cools the brain

People feel more positive



Smiling Affects Me and Others

According to research from Duke University:

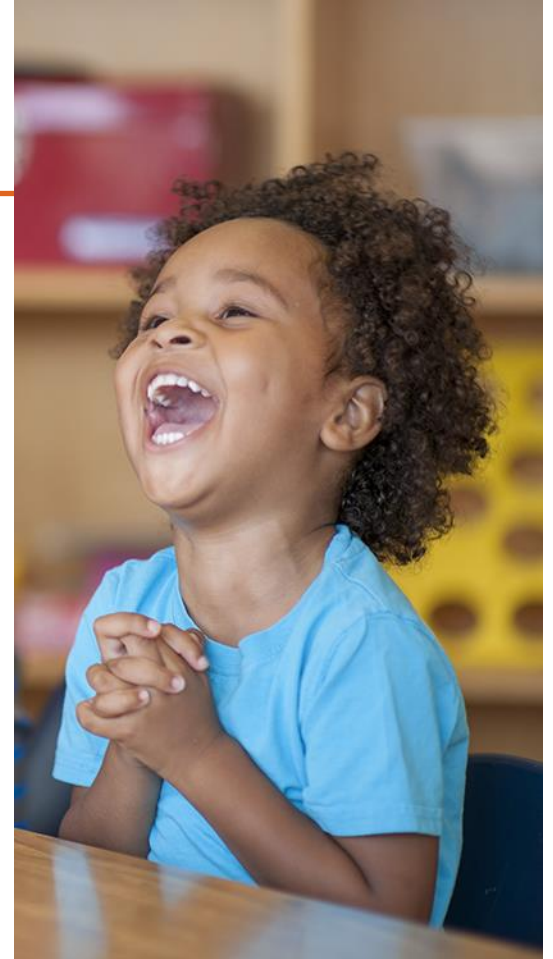
- The human brain prefers and seeks smiles
- Smiling people are more memorable
- People tend to smile back at us and see us in a positive way



Benefits of Laughter

Laughter can help me:

- Improve my health
- Reduce stress
- Improve group dynamics



Health Benefits of Laughter

Laughter has been shown to:

- Stimulate cardiovascular system
- Strengthen immune system
- Increase endorphin release

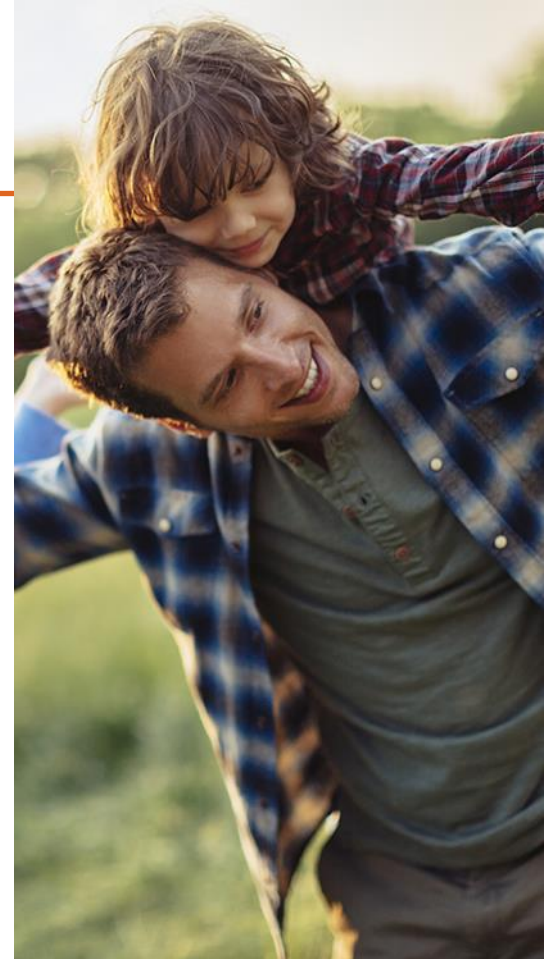


Laughter Reduces Stress

A study at the Mayo Clinic shows that laughter also:

- Relaxes muscles
- Improves mood
- Reduces anxiety

Laughter Yoga is one way of enjoying these benefits



Group Dynamics of Laughter

Laughter can:

- Signal support (or a challenge)
- Facilitate “flow” for the group
- Create beneficial ambiguity



The Value of Humor and Play

Improving my sense of humor

Creating simple jokes

The power of “Yes, and...”

Editing after creating



Improving my Sense of Humor

Actions that can improve my sense of humor include:

- Keeping cartoons that I find funny in my workspace
- Laughing at myself (even fake laughing)
- Spending time with people who make me laugh
- Enjoying jokes and humor online, in books, in magazines, on TV and in movies

Avoid laughing at the expense of others, or at humor that is inappropriate



Creating Simple Jokes

Recognition

- Play with events from your life
- Exaggerate real events

Surprise

- Make light of obviously important events
- Change or reverse familiar things
- Third thing doesn't belong

Caution

- Don't do anything that MIGHT make people uncomfortable

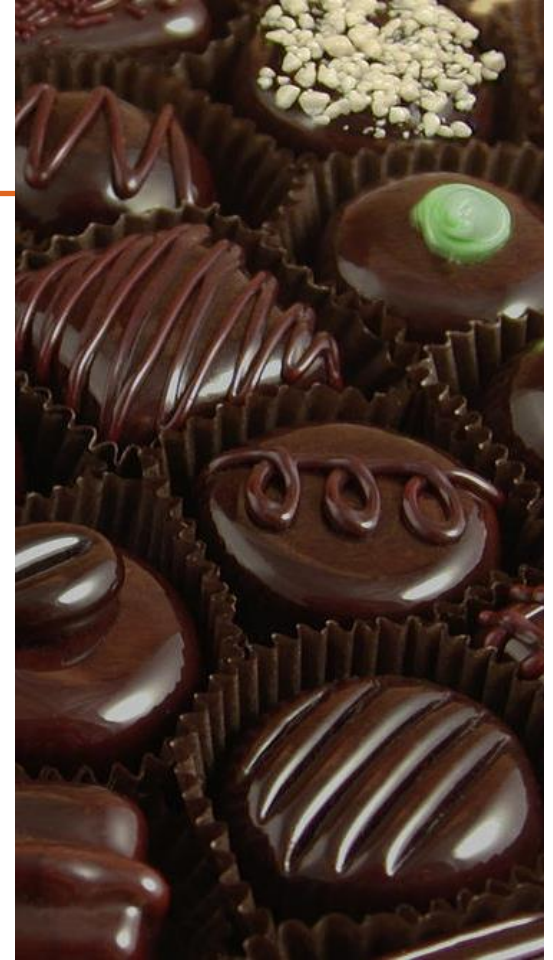
Is the cartoon funny? Why?



Simple Joke Exercise

Life is like a box of chocolates,
because _____.

(Fill in the blank)



Simple Joke Exercise

Try creating your own joke by completing the line below:

Life is like a box of chocolates, because

Feel free to concentrate for a few moments, while you create and write your joke on a piece of scratch paper.

Even if you don't like your joke, or don't think it's funny, or even if it doesn't make sense, write it down. Resist the urge to edit, reject or critique your joke. Look at the joke you've written, say Yes, and write another if you like. When you're ready, we can move on.

“Yes, and...”

Pete: What a hot and miserable day to be a ranch hand!

(With “Yes, and...”)

Everett: Yep and the boss said we don’t get no water until this fence is mended.

Pete: Yes and ain’t he the meanest cuss we’ve ever worked for?

Everett: Yep and it’s made me think about leaving behind this cowboy life and headin’ off for San Francisco.

(Without “Yes, and...”)

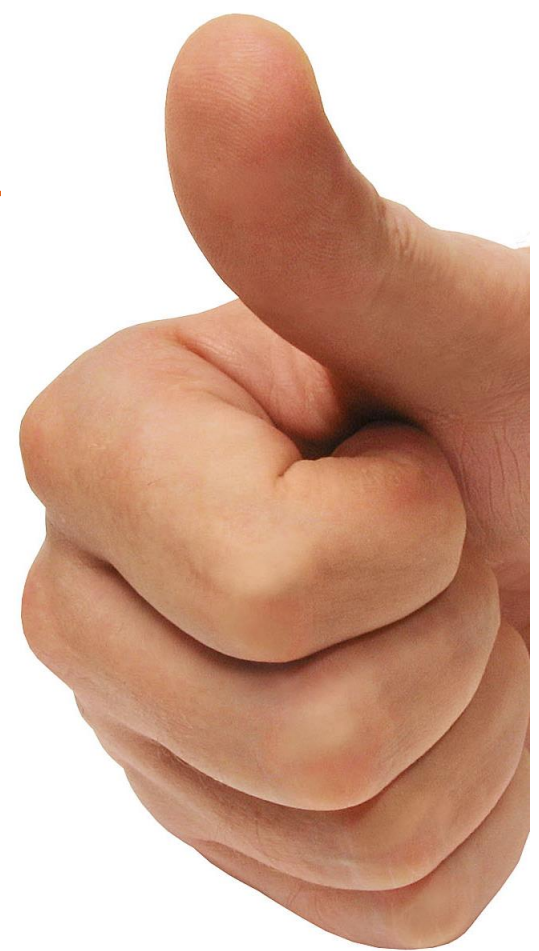
Everett: No it’s not. And we’re not ranch hands either.



The power of “Yes, and...”

“Yes, and...” is:

- Positive and makes things happen
- A relationship builder
 1. Avoid changing the subject
 2. Offer words of encouragement
 3. Ask leading questions
 4. Respond to generic questions with fun answers
 5. Defuse awkwardness with wit
 6. Bring things full circle
- Not the best choice in EVERY situation



Editing After Creating

Focus on quantity

Withhold criticism

Welcome unusual ideas.



Summary

Understand the benefits of smiling

Know how to use laughter to reduce stress

Understand the value of humor and play



Thank You for Attending

Your single source for confidential support, expert information and valuable resources, when you need it the most.

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Phone: **844.266.0707**

Online: **guidanceresources.com**

WebID: **NORFOLK**

