

LAUGH YOUR WAY TO HEALTH

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THE WELLNESS PARADIGM

- Norman Cousins
 - Correlation between stress, negative perceptions, emotions and certain diseases
 - Ten minutes of laughter allowed two hours of pain-free sleep
 - Positive emotions do have healing effects on health
 - Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI)



Over 40 weeks on the
New York Times bestseller list

How one man
proved your mind can
cure your body
**Anatomy
of an
Illness**
as Perceived by the Patient
Reflections on
Healing and Regeneration
by Norman Cousins



According to Steve Allen Jr.,

"Humor is a physical release, one of four actually. These include crying, yawning, orgasm and laughter. You can do them in succession, just get the order right."

THEORIES OF HUMOR

REASONS WHY WE LAUGH AND SMILE

• Superiority Theory

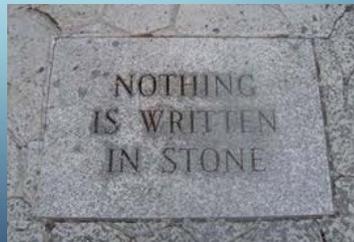
- Plato – the reason why people laugh, is at the expense of others



REASONS WHY WE LAUGH AND SMILE

- Incongruity Theory

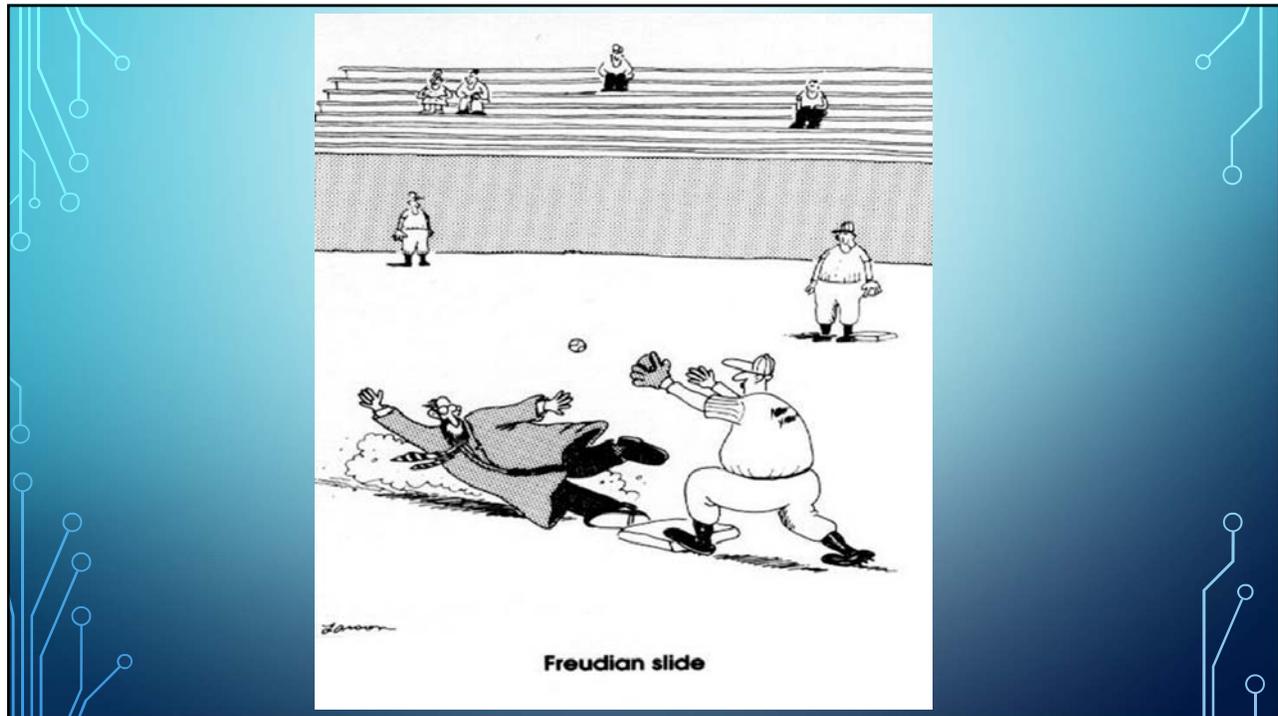
- Two concepts come together in our head and they don't make sense (ex. Oxymoron) "He who laughs last....didn't get the joke"



REASONS WHY WE LAUGH AND SMILE

- Release/Relief Theory

- People laugh because they need to release nervous energy built up from repressed thoughts (Freud)
- "Cocaine addiction is God's way of saying you make too much money."



REASONS WHY WE LAUGH AND SMILE

- Divinity Theory
 - The belief that humor is a gift from God – humor has an adhesive quality that connects people... a component of spiritual well-being.

SENSES OF HUMOR

- A function of one's upbringing:
 - Conventional – laughter occurs **with** someone, not at someone
 - Life of the party – “class clown” – spontaneous, creative, and quick-witted
 - Creative – joke writing is their career – very imaginative, quick-witted, creative, easily entertained
 - Good Sport – laughter is used to cope with personal imperfections; those who can laugh at their own mistakes and enjoy being human

PHYSIOLOGY OF LAUGHTER

- Effects of laughter on the body:
 - Short-term and long-term effects on body's major physiological systems
 - Short-term: initiate the stress response:
 - Increase heart rate
 - Increase blood pressure
 - Increase muscle tension
 - Increase ventilations
 - Quickly followed by a rebound effect
 - Overall effect is homeostasis



PHYSIOLOGY OF LAUGHTER

- Dr. William Fry
 - Study on tears
 - Emotional tear drops – greater percentage of protein and toxins than those produced artificially
 - Rid the body of stress-related toxins



PHYSIOLOGY OF LAUGHTER

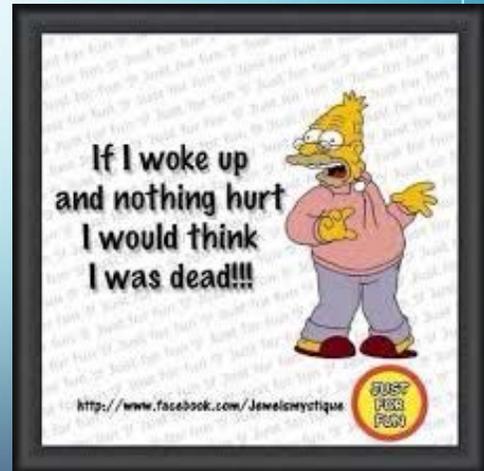
- Long-term effects
 - Negative thoughts
 - Trigger the neural release of the stress hormones, suppressing the immune system
 - Positive thoughts
 - Strengthen the integrity of the immune system
 - Inducing the release of neuropeptides from the pituitary gland, and throughout the body
 - Endorphins, interleukins, interferons
- *"Thoughts are chemicals; they can either kill or cure."*
Bernie Siegel



PHYSIOLOGY OF LAUGHTER

- Laughter causes the body to produce it's own painkillers, (David McClelland MD)

"Humor can definitely lighten the load."
Norman Cousins



HUMOR AS A COPING TECHNIQUE

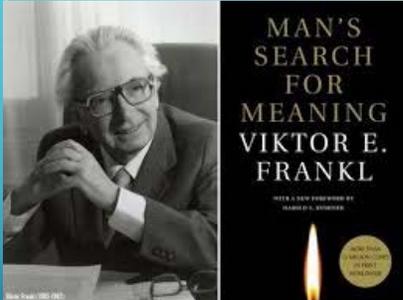
- *“Humor is the one defense mechanism that can increase pleasure and reduce pain at the same moment.”*

Brian Luke Seaward

HUMOR AS A COPING TECHNIQUE

- Humor’s greatest asset – balance the emotional scale between positive and negative perceptions.
 - Diffuse stress
 - Positive emotions derived from laughter have a positive effect on the immune system
 - Laughter is a recommended cognitive-behavioral intervention

HUMOR AS A COPING TECHNIQUE



- Victor Frankl, an Auschwitz survivor, "Man's Search for Meaning," stated that humor was a saving grace among fellow prisoners in the shadows of death.

"Humor was another of the soul's weapons in the fight for self-preservation."

HUMOR AS A COPING TECHNIQUE

- A. Klein states, "...use of humor gives a sense of power in the midst of chaos."
- Humor allows for an intermission in the cognitive war against stressors (Norman Cousins (1989), *Head First*).

HUMOR AS A COPING TECHNIQUE



**COMIC
RELIEF**

- Comic relief – used as a treatment method in many rehab programs today:
 - Physical trauma
 - Alcoholism
 - Drug addiction

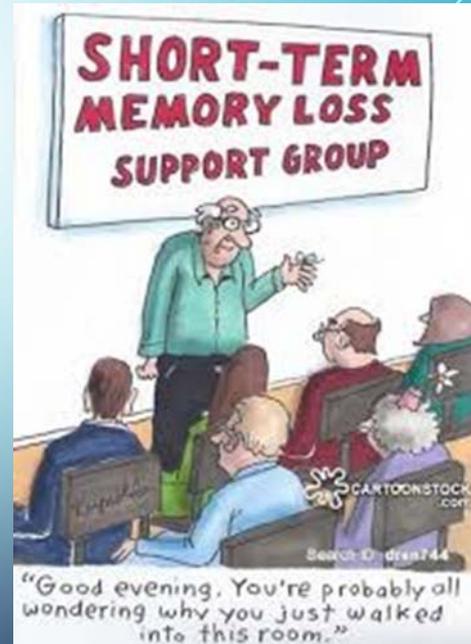
HUMOR AS A COPING TECHNIQUE

- Psychotherapy – when patients joke about their conditions or predicaments, it's acknowledged as a breakthrough in the emotional self-healing process.

TYPES OF HUMOR

TYPES OF HUMOR

- Self-parody
 - Something or someone is made fun of; thought to be the best type of humor to reduce stress, as long as it doesn't sacrifice self-esteem
 - Exaggerating behaviors
 - Celebrity "roasts"
 - Parks and Recreation (TV show)



Granma says



Think Positive - it keeps you young. For example, I fell down the stairs today and I thought WOW - that's the fastest I've moved in years.

TYPES OF HUMOR

- Satire
 - Written or dramatic form of parody
 - Erma Bombeck
 - Dave Barry
 - Saturday Night Live
 - Shrek



TYPES OF HUMOR

- Irony

- Two concepts or events, when paired together, come to mean or expose the opposite of what was expected
 - Oxymoron
 - “Honk if you love peace and quiet”
 - “My other car is a broom”

IRONY

- Oxymoron

- Honest politician
- Working vacation
- Jumbo shrimp
- Microsoft works
- Tight slacks
- Icy hot







A police officer called the station on his radio.
 "I have an interesting case here. An old lady
 shot her husband for stepping on the floor she
 just mopped."
 "Have you arrested the woman?"
 "Not yet. The floor's still wet."

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"I learned about stress management from my kids.
 Every night after work, I drink as much chocolate milk
 as my stomach will hold, eat handfuls of sugary cereal
 straight from the box, then run around the house
 in my underwear squealing like a monkey."

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"Aside from ulcers, heart attacks, bypass surgery,
 drug and alcohol problems, and broken families,
 a little hard work never hurt anyone!"

TYPES OF HUMOR

- Slapstick Comedy
 - Physical farce – aggression based humor
 - Vaudeville
 - Steve Carrell, Jim Carey, Steve Martin



TYPES OF HUMOR

- Absurd/Nonsense humor
 - Gary Larson
 - Monty Python
 - John McPherson's, *Close to Home*



TYPES OF HUMOR

- Double entendre
 - Wordplay where the expression has two meanings

That awkward moment:
When you walk through
the metal detectors
at the airport, and
your abs of steel set
them off



YOU'RE NOT FAT



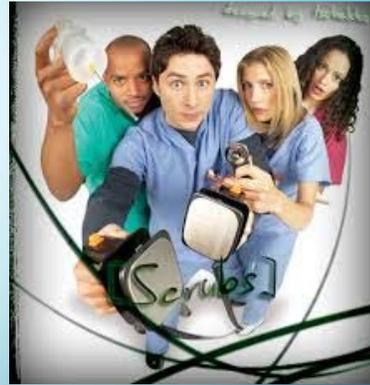
**YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE
HUSKY**

DOUBLE ENTENDRE PUN



TYPES OF HUMOR

- Black Humor
 - Humor based on the fear of death
 - M*A*S*H
 - Scrubs



IRONY



IRONY

- Two concepts or events, when paired together, come to mean the opposite of the expected outcome
 - “Honk if you love peace and quiet”
 - “My other car is a broom”

TYPE OF HUMOR

- Dry Humor
 - Quick wit
 - Puns
- “A pessimist’s blood type is always B-negative.”
- “I fired my masseuse today. She just rubbed me the wrong way.”
- “I used to work in a blanket factory, but it folded.”

PUNS



Frank started to get a funny feeling that his doctor was a quack.

TYPE OF HUMOR

- **Bathroom Humor**

- Crude, vulgar – describing every bodily function imaginable, chosen for cheap laughs



BATHROOM HUMOR



TYPE OF HUMOR

- Sarcasm

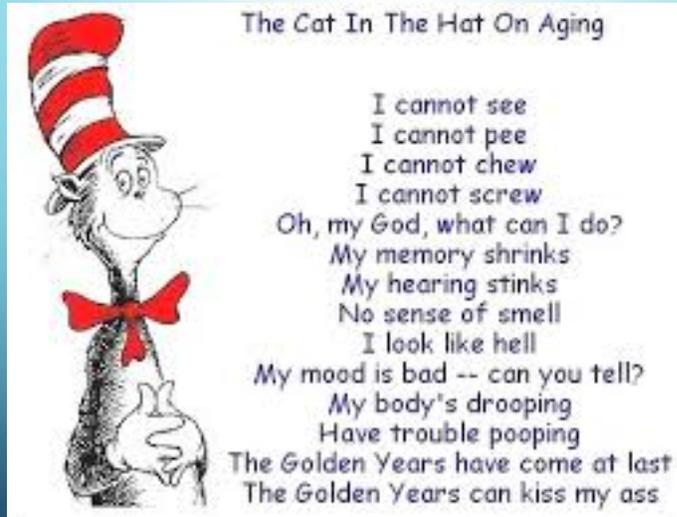
- Means "to tear flesh"
- Reveals latent anger
- The lowest form of humor



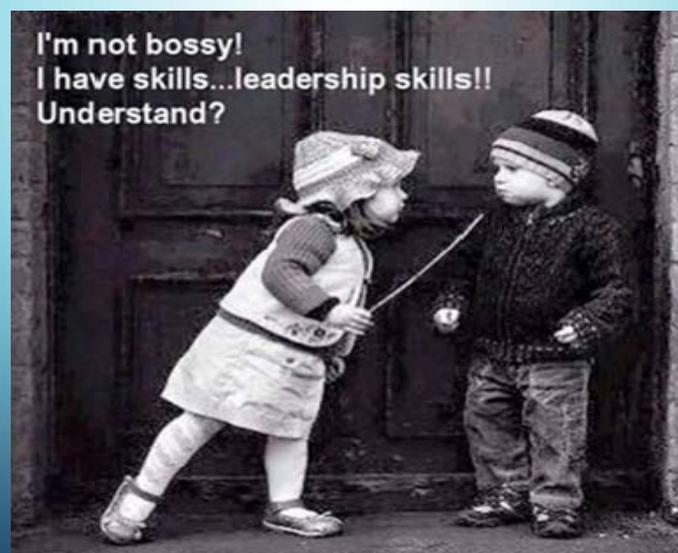
I am sorry, I didn't realize
that you're an expert
on my life and how
I should live it!
Please continue
while I take notes

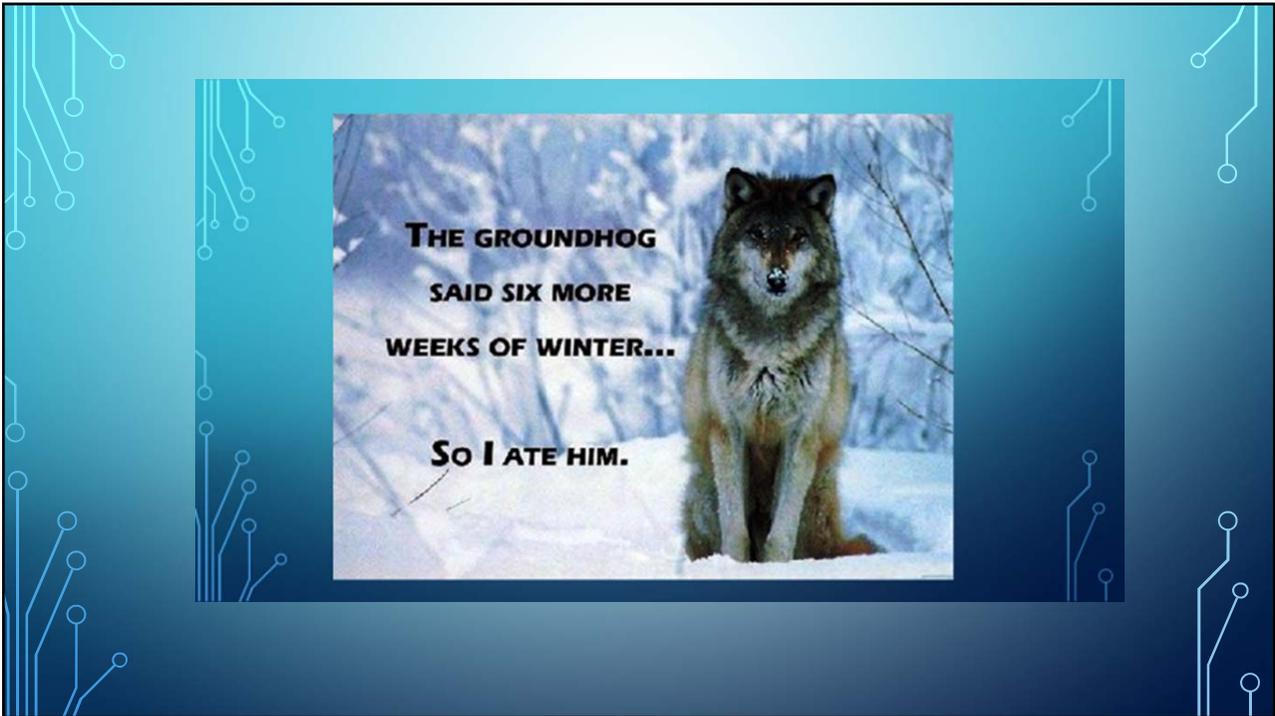


HUMOR AND AGING



TYPES OF HUMOR





STEPS TO INITIATE HUMOR THERAPY

1. Learn not to take life too seriously
2. Find one humorous thing a day
3. Work to improve your imagination and creativity

- Read more books
- Write a story
- Play with children
- Go exploring
- Create something



STEPS TO INITIATE HUMOR THERAPY

4. Start a joke/cartoon-of-the-week swap
5. Learn how to hyper-exaggerate when describing a situation or story
6. Build a humor library
7. Find a host of varied humor venues (i.e. movies, theater, books, music, television, stand-up comedy)
8. Improve your self-esteem (accentuate your good qualities, positive affirmations, learn to love yourself)
9. Access your humor network (connect with someone that can make you smile)

HUMOR THERAPY

- HUMOR is not an emotion, it is a perception, however it can elicit several positive emotions.



- Use humor therapy to find a full range of human emotions, both positive and negative, to maintain a balance in your life.

JUST LAUGH

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uiws904iuEQ>

