

# Humor: It's Good medicine

## Jared's sister, Sonja, Shares...

\*What kind of teeth can you buy for a dollar?

*Buck Teeth.*

\*Did you hear about the rock that ran away from the quarry?

*He was tired of being taken for granite.*

\*Did you hear about the tire that had a nervous breakdown?

*It couldn't take the pressure.*

\*Why should you never tell secrets to a pig?

*They squeal.*

\*Did you hear about the dog that swallowed a clock?

*He had a lot of ticks.*

\*What does a pony sound like when it has a cold?

*A little horse.*

I know. These jokes are super corny. But hey everyone laughs when I tell them. I think we should all have jokes to tell whenever necessary. There's no better social lubricant than humor. When we can laugh at ourselves, when we can enjoy laughing together, we can enjoy a feeling of being united with those around us. We can also relieve the debilitating effects of stress - and certainly humor is a *huge* part of any successful marriage. We all probably need to laugh a little more - especially at ourselves. Laughter is a good thing. Humor is good medicine.

## What Norm Cousins Taught Us

In 1979 when Norman Cousins was suffering from ankylosing spondylitis, an inflammatory condition of almost unbearable pain in which the joints of the spinal column often become fused, part of his therapy included tons of laughter. He watched super funny movies and partook of all available merriment.

If negative emotions had a deleterious impact on his health, then he reasoned, positive emotions would have a beneficial effect. Cousins spent the last 12 years of his life at UCLA Medical School in the Department of Behavioral Medicine exploring the scientific proof of his belief and established the Humor Research Task Force which coordinated and supported worldwide clinical research on humor, says humor expert Patty Wooten, R.N., B.S.N., C.C.R.N.

She adds that research shows humor can stimulate the immune system and renew spiritual energy. Although humor worked for Cousins and he has become

the modern seminal figure in the humor-is-good-medicine branch of medicine or *psychoneuroimmunology*, the noted writer was not the first person to recognize humor's power. Wooten tells us that as early as the 1300's, Henri de Mondeville, professor of surgery, wrote: "Let the surgeon take care to regulate the whole regimen of the patient's life for joy and happiness, allowing his relatives and special friends to cheer him, and by having someone tell him jokes."

## Beneficial to Immunity

Researchers from Loma Linda University School of Medicine's Department of Clinical Immunology have provided highly convincing evidence that laughter is powerful medicine for the immune system. In their studies, they have shown that laughter lowers the body's levels of cortisol, a stress hormone whose overproduction leads to immune function. They have also found that laughter activates the body's T-cells, natural killer cells, and other aspects of immunity. when we are stressed, laughter is even better medicine. A life filled with laughter can help to reduce risk of cancer, heart disease, and many other deadly maladies. Hey, laughing is a whole lot healthier than getting angry.

## Learning to Laugh

Some people are naturally light-hearted. A famous artist by the name of Moscovitz painted a picture of a cow with the body of a hamburger. (It seems like all of the famous people these days are dropping their first or last names or, as in the case of the artist formerly known as Prince, their entire names!) The art Moscovitz produces is always funny, poking fun at society and ourselves in a gentle manner.

There are a lot of ways to get a bellyache from laughing. Go to a comedy club or rent a hilarious video. (\*\*suggestions below) Get a humor magazine or book. Learn some jokes and tell them in situations where you are trying to "break the ice." If you're up late, watch Jay Leno or David Letterman.

Laughter expert Wooten advises people "to stay in touch with our 'inner clown,' that playful, childlike nature that we all have but perhaps fail to acknowledge due to the seriousness of our work."

*Reference: "The Last Word" found in the magazine; The Doctors Prescription For Healthy Living. Permission was granted to use this article on April 20, 2000.*

## Sonja's Two Cents:

I know how important it is to laugh, especially when you are down. Its hard to go from feeling down and depressed to feeling like a good laugh, but use the suggestions in this article (read a funny book, rent a comedy, ect.). I have a few suggestions at the bottom of what to rent if you are looking for a good laugh. If you have any movies to add to my list, feel free to email "Mom" and put "Sonja" in the subject line so it gets to me.

### Funny Video Suggestions:

"The Three Stooges"  
"The Three Amigos"  
"Better Off Dead"  
"Dumb and Dumber"  
"Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure"  
"Liar Liar"  
"Tommy Boy"  
"Black Sheep"  
"The Great Outdoors"  
"Cool Runnings"

## These are awesome links, check them out!

April Fools is coming up - be prepared!

[http://www.123greetings.com/events/april fools day/fun at work/](http://www.123greetings.com/events/april%20fools%20day/fun%20at%20work/)

This could keep you busy for a minute or two. Its hilarious!

<http://junior.apk.net/~jbarta/idiot/idiot.html>

This page is totally dank and really makes me laugh. It's full of jokes.

<http://www.dobhran.com/>