

6 Ways to Embrace Your Sense of Humor for a More Fulfilling Life

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How would it feel to live your life efficiently and effectively while still having fun? While laughter may feel like a luxury, having a sense of humor might be more important for a healthy and happy life than you think.

While there is plenty in life to be serious about, taking life *too* seriously can deplete your happiness, impair your sense of connection to others, and leave you feeling depressed and lonely. That's why it's important to take your regular dose of humor like a daily vitamin. Life without a sense of humor is no life at all!

Do You Need to Work on Your Sense of Humor?

People who lack a strong sense of humor are sometimes hard to spot. Just because you're not a curmudgeon with an eternal frown, doesn't mean your humor doesn't have room to grow.

Here are some ways to know if you are taking life too seriously:

- You are constantly stressed out, and it feels like the stakes are at a 10 all the time.
- You need to be right (or have the last word) in personal and professional conversations.
- You resist being in positions of vulnerability or taking risks.
- You are defensive or quick to anger when someone teases or prods you.
- When things go wrong, your first response is a negative one.
- Being "cool" and fitting in is high on your list of priorities.

6 Reasons Why It's Important to Lighten Up and Laugh

Humor is a strength, and considered one of the 24 characteristics related to well-being.

Humor According to the VIA Survey of Signature Strengths, humor falls within the “transcendence” category, in that it reflects people’s ability to feel connected to one another, and therefore to a higher power. [Research](#) on strengths has shown that working to improve one of your strengths (such as humor) can show marked improvement in happiness levels all around.

Lightening up reduces stress by helping you to trust your instincts.

It is important to feel like you can trust your spontaneous reactions to life’s curveballs. If you are prone to anxiety, you might notice yourself regularly swept away by a barrage of *what if’s*. When you are able to see the comedy in life’s “adventures” (e.g., a flat tire in the first hour of a road trip!), you’ll be able to move through them with greater calmness, ease, and efficacy.

Laughing at yourself can improve your self-esteem.

Imagine someone you know who takes themselves very seriously. Are they able to laugh at themselves? Probably not. Just a pinch of playfulness with regard to how you see yourself will help you to celebrate your uniqueness, rather than compare yourself to others. You’ll actually feel better in your skin when you feel laughter relieve some of your self-imposed pressure.

You want to reap the benefits of smiling and laughter.

[Smiling](#) has been shown to improve health, effectiveness in the workplace, and even longevity. Combine the benefits of smiling with those of [laughter](#), and you’re likely to see an improvement in your social relationships as well. Imagine how you’d feel if all of your relationships improved by 10 percent. That would be nothing to laugh at!

Humor helps you problem solve.

If you have children, you know that the quickest way to help them navigate through life is to get on their level. Creativity and playfulness will help you come up with the game you create to get everyone working together to clean up the toys. Your willingness to make funny sounds and faces might get the baby to open her mouth and try her peas. And modeling for your teenager how you handle having broccoli in your teeth can help minimize his embarrassment when the same thing happens to him at the school lunch table.

Humor improves your likeability.

While wanting to impress others can be a dangerous desire for overall well-being, it’s human nature to want to be liked. It’s undeniable that people want to be around people who make them feel good, and a solid sense of humor can do just the trick. Since [social relationships](#) are one of the highest indicators of happiness, tending to your ability to be playful will amp up your likeability, and therefore your overall well-being.

6 Ways to Improve Your Sense of Humor

1. Smile More

Share a smile with people you pass on the street, in a store, or in neighboring cars. It helps others to feel like they aren’t alone, and you will get a natural high off the happiness chemicals being released in your brain.

2. Listen to Music

Dance in your kitchen while grooving to your favorite songs. Sing in your car like a Grammy depended on it. Make a workout playlist that makes you smile, laugh, and strut your stuff. Music is excellent medicine, and not just for singing the blues!

3. Get Silly

Take a cue from kids and be willing to be a goofball. Make jokes, do funny faces, and identify common absurdities (in a kind way, of course), as a way to exercise your silly genes.

4. Get Some Perspective

When you notice yourself getting bogged down, take a moment to breathe and gain some perspective. If you make an embarrassing mistake at work, rather than beating yourself up over it, try to shift your point of view to see the bigger picture. Laugh at yourself rather than entering a shame spiral, and see how much better you feel.

5. Identify a Humor Hero

Think of a celebrity or someone you know personally who takes life with a grain of salt. When things get difficult, imagine how that person would handle it. By taking a cue from someone you admire, you can become more relatable, approachable, and human.

6. Watch a Sitcom or Funny Movie

Take an inventory of your most recent entertainment sources. Sit down and watch your favorite sitcom and allow yourself to laugh out loud.

Life Has a Sense of Humor

Choose the glasses through which you see life. You can choose to take it all seriously, or you can choose to see your challenges as an assignment. Make it your work to be of benefit to others while keeping your vibration high.

And as often as you can, remind yourself that life itself has a sense of humor. Have you ever seen a [quokka](#)?

Edited Version.

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