



Midwest Conference  
On Problem Gambling  
& Substance Abuse


**Using humor on  
the road to recovery:**  
*Laughing to Ease the Pain*

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*Overview*




- Presenter's story of using humor to overcome adversity
- Benefits of humor as we grow older: physiological, psychological, social, and spiritual.
- 7 1/2 Humor Coping Strategies
- The 7 1/2 Habits of Highly Humorous People
- Q & A

*The Texas Billionaire*

My story

*The Stress Response*

- Shallow breathing
- Increased blood pressure
- Adrenalin floods blood stream
- Increased muscle tension
- Digestion slows down
- Increased heart rate




*The Laughter Response*

- Deep breathing
- O<sub>2</sub> in blood increases
- Blood pressure decreases
- Muscle tension decreases
- Better digestion
- Brain releases endorphins

*Psychological Benefits*

- Helps with replacing losses
- Increases self-esteem
- See new perspective
- Reduce internal stress
- Increase mental flexibility
- Helps gain control over situation



You are here

### Social Benefits

- Helps to diffuse anger
- Decrease conflict
- Builds trust
- Decreases fear
- Eases tension
- Enhances group activities

The shortest  
Distance between  
2 people is a smile  
\* Victor Borge

### Spiritual benefits

- Laughter is universal
- Decreases prejudice
- Reveals connections of all
- Balances mind, body and soul
- Helps towards obtaining tranquility



To help other's apply humor as a coping skill, you must be comfortable in using humor yourself.

Steps to improve one's sense of humor

### *Humor Strategy One*

- Develop a willingness to laugh and play attitude

### *Physiological Exercise*

stand

***Humor Strategy Two***

Get to know what amuses you.

Your favorite comedian?

**Humor Strategy Three**

Identify humorous situations

***Inappropriate humor***

Puts others down - pokes fun at other people's short comings

Reflects anger

Offends with inappropriate use of sexual references or profanity

Uses stereotypes to denigrate a person or group

Creates a cruel, abusive, offensive atmosphere and is insensitive to others

Divides a group by put downs

**Appropriate Humor**

**Reduces tension by joking about universal human faults**

**Delights in poking fun at oneself**

**Encourages people to relax and laugh**

**Unites people**

**Creates a supportive atmosphere of fun and caring**

**Includes everyone in the good time**

**Builds rapport**

**Notes the positive aspects of human relationships**

***Humor Strategy Four***

Take risks and share humorous situations and embarrassing moments

***Humor Strategy Five***

Use humorous fantasies



### *Humor Strategy Six*

Collect & use humorous memos, signs, posters, bumper stickers, etc.

### *Top Ten Church Bulletins*

1. Don't let worry kill – let the church help
2. Thursday night – Potluck supper. Prayer and medication to follow
3. Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community
4. For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs
5. This afternoon there will be a meeting in the South and North ends of the church. Children will be baptized at both ends

### *Church Bulletins*

6. Tuesday at 4 P.M. there will be an ice cream social. Will ladies giving milk, please come early
7. Wednesday the Ladies Literary Society will meet. Mrs. Jones will sing "Put Me In My Little Bed" accompanied by the Pastor
8. Thursday at 5 P.M. there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All wishing to become Little Mothers will please meet the Minister in his study.
9. On Sunday a special collection will be taken to defray the expenses of the new carpeting. All wishing to do something on the carpet, please come forward and get a piece of paper
10. The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon

### *Humor Strategy Seven*

Keep a humor journal

### *Humor Strategy 8*

Start a humor library

### *Playshop*

List 5 things you love to do, that you feel joyful when you do them, that you haven't done in the last several months. (I.E. lying in the sun, taking a cruise, getting a message, reading a good book, dancing, going to a humor talk, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Now, besides each of these things list what stops you from doing it – something either inside (your feelings) or outside (lack of money, time) that keeps you from doing it.

Take two things on your list that hold the most joy and think of one step you can take toward bringing it into your life.

- 1.
- 2.

Make your calendar with a date and time that you will bring each of these joyful activities into your life.

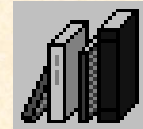
### *Humor Strategy Eight*

Buy gag gifts



### *Humor Strategy Nine*

Start a humor library



### *Humor Strategy Ten*

Create your own strategies

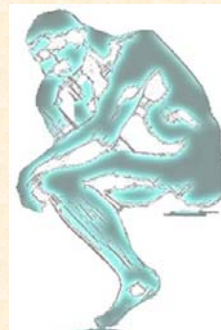
### *The 7 1/2 Habits of Highly Humorous People*



### *The Half Habit*

- You don't need the whole habit in order for it to be effective. It is the most difficult habit to maintain.
- This is the habit of changing your thoughts.

- Mastering your thoughts is a constant struggle, if you master them half the time, you'll be twice as healthy!
- The thoughts you share with others can have a profound influence on them.



***Habit One***

- Treat humor as a necessity, not a luxury

*The Moving Name  
Game*

***Habit Two***

Use Self Effacing Humor

**Know your  
weaknesses and  
turn them into  
strengths.**

***Habit Three***

Keep your eyes open for humorous situations and share them!



**Humorgy**  
To have the ability, when you are in a poor mood, to merely think about something funny and begin to feel better.  
Incorporate humor into your worldview

***Habit Four***

Use the power and influence of humor to make your life and the lives of others better


***Habit Five***

**Use your humorous imagination to improve your communication**


**Humor is a therapeutic communication technique**



**Habit Six**



**Humorize with Humorgy** (humor force)



**Habit Seven**

Act Like the highly humorous person you've become or are becoming.

**An exercise**

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*A Place for Pain*

I open the door pain walks in filling my home with darkness and discontent	I open the door joy walks in I explain that she has the wrong address she should be next door She comes in anyway joy, like pain knows not of manners or proper protocol
I open the door love walks in replenishing the bedroom	I open the door humor walks in It fills the empty spaces
I open the door faith walks in illuminating my living room	Pain is still here but, it has little room.
I open the door hope walks in filling the kitchen with wonderful smells	

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