



The Sibley Report

July 2001

... the place to find valuable information to help make your job - and your life easier! If you have a topic idea or any other suggestions, please give our Editor - Angie Catenaro - a call. Sibley & Associates is a national disability management firm with a decade of experience, 165 plus healthcare professionals and state-of-the-art technology. Our customers benefit from all the advantages a large company has to offer...while also benefiting from the "small business" customer service philosophy of our dedicated Insurance Services Division.

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DON'T FORGET TO LAUGH!

As our lives continue to get busier and the demands on our time increase, we tend to not set aside enough time to take care of ourselves. However, did you know that by just laughing more each day we could do ourselves a world of good? Because work is one of the most stressful activities that we face and where we spend the majority of our time, humor at work can help balance our emotions and keep situations in perspective.

According to a study carried out by Dr. Lee Berk of Loma Linda University in California, laughter actually activates and stimulates the body's immune system and reduces our level of stress.

When a test group was exposed to humor the following immune responses were noted:

- An increase in the number and activity level of natural cancer and virus fighting cells known to suppress cell growth.
- An increase in activated T cells (T lymphocytes). T cells when activated improve immune system function. There are many T cells, which appear to wait for activation. Laughter appears to turn on the "switch" of these cells.

- An increase in the antibody IgA (immunoglobulin A) which fights upper respiratory tract infections.
- An increase in gamma interferon, which tells various parts of the immune system to turn on and appears to strengthen the actual immune response.

Exposure to humor was also found to decrease the level of stress-related hormones. These hormones include epinephrine and dopamine. High levels of these hormones are known to raise blood pressure and suppress the immune system.

Dr. Herbert Lefcourt, a Psychologist at the University of Waterloo, recently concluded a study that was also on the positive effects of humor. This study showed that actually training people to find the humorous aspects of our day-to-day lives and how to laugh in the face of momentary set backs and frustrations, lessens the length and intensity of the body's stress related response.

So although work can be stressful, it is important to try to see the lighter side of stressful situations and add laughter to the workplace.

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