PLEASE POST

Health-Related Benefits
of Humor and Laughter

February 9, 2018 in Redwood City, CA

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The IBP Experience

Our non-profit organization (tax ID 77-0026830) has presented informative and practical seminars by great speakers since 1984. IBP is the leading provider of accredited programs concerning the brain and behavioral sciences.
In this new 3-hour evidence-based program presented by Brian King, Ph.D., a neuroscientist/comedian, learn why a sense of humor and laughter are good for the brain and body, increase stress resilience, reduce pain, improve immune function, elevate mood, and reduce generalized anxiety. Participants completing this program should be able to describe:

1. How humor and laughter can be good for the brain and body.
2. The benefits of the appropriate use of humor and laughter in medical settings.
3. The benefits of humor for improving psychological health.
4. The application of humor to promote healthful habits.

Why Humor is Good for the Brain and Body

Start the day off with a smile and get it over with.

• Why We Laugh: why being able to laugh and to make others laugh

• Stress-Related Hormones: humor reduces hormones associated with acute stress (norepinephrine and epinephrine), chronic stress (cortisol) and improves trust (oxytocin).

• Brain Health: laughter increases activity of natural killer cells and improves surveillance of pathogens.

• Brain Health: inability to laugh at humorous words (left hemisphere) or images (right hemisphere) are signs of humor deficit disorders; ability to laugh at oneself is a sign of mental health.

Humor and Laughter in Medical Settings

Laughter is the best medicine.

• Acute Pain: the patient’s experience of threat prior to a medical or dental procedure can be reduced by appropriate use of humor.

• Chronic Pain: how humor breaks the link between pain, insomnia, laughter and elevation of pain-reducing endorphins.

• Heart-Warming Humor: the ability to laugh is associated with lower blood pressure, fewer arrhythmias, reduced risk of angina and disease of the coronary arteries.

• Cancer: how laughter and humor increases resilience, reduces the adverse effects of cancer treatment and promotes recovery.

Using Humor in Your Practice by Practicing Humor

Laughter is the closest distance between two people.

• Reducing Generalized Anxiety: how to use humor to stop the cycle of “what if” thinking that perpetuates anxiety.

• Depression: how adding humor to psychological therapies can facilitate recovery.

• Interpersonal Therapy: how humor shifts perspective, diffuses tension, reduces confrontations, and improves communication.

• Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy: helping patients revise maladaptive thoughts so they can view them as unrealistic and humorous.

• Positive Psychology: how to use humor to enhance the practice of positive psychology.

• Acceptance and Commitment: how to use humor to improve stress resilience and to accept flaws in self and others that are unlikely to change.

• Enhancing Mindfulness: when we laugh, we are in a positive state.

• Difficult Conversations and Situations: guidelines for using humor to improve the health and wellbeing of clients and health professionals.

Using Humor to Promote Healthful Habits

Good humor is an acceptance of reality.

• Enhancing Willingness to Change: how to use humor to improve the way people develop positive associations and emotional expectations.

• The Humor-Habit: how being able to refrain daily hassles in a humorous way reduces everyday stress and improves the willingness to initiate and maintain health-promoting practices.

• Reducing Apprehension: calming emotions before they are “up and running.”

• Changing How We Feel By Changing How We Think: revising habitual narratives that perpetuate shame, hurt, isolation, incompetence, inferiority, sadness, worry and perfectionism.

• Calming An Overactive Brain: how to find and share humor to help relieve daily hassles as a happiness-enhancing habit.