

“Ho, Ho, Ho” for the Health of It

by Jeri Mae Rowley

“Laughter is to life what shock absorbers are to automobiles. It won’t take the potholes out of the road, but it sure makes the ride smoother.”

Unknown

Improve your personal health—and the health of your organization—by finding opportunities to experience lots of “Ho, Ho, Ho” on the job. People who laugh can cope better with the stress of everyday life. And, laughter helps us to create positive connections with coworkers and customers.

When you smile or laugh, physiological changes in your body literally make you “feel better.” Today scientists can measure laughter’s role in improved circulation, stimulating the nervous system, heightening the immune system, and making the heart stronger. Laughing reduces stress hormones like cortisol and increases mood elevating and pain reducing brain chemicals called “endorphins.”

Healthy people laugh at least 100 times a day. (That’s just four times an hour, or just 8 minutes a day.) Here are some ideas for adding a little more “Ho, Ho, Ho” to your workplace:

- Keep an office first aid humor kit that includes a comedy CD, cartoon books, stress balls, jokes, and toys.

- Build your own, personal file of jokes and cartoons. give yourself a periodic humor break.
- When a coworker has solved a tough problem, or deals with a difficult customer, provide an award for “hazard duty.”
- Create an award for peers to give each other like the S.P.U.D. (Superior Performance of Unheralded Duties.)
- Periodically have executives serve coffee or cook for everybody. (Or for a real laugh, have executives take the job of an employee for a day!)
- Require chronic-complainer coworkers to sing their complaints—out loud—a *Capella*.

You can improve your personal health--and that of your organization--by getting plenty of “Ho, Ho, Ho.” Find situations and activities that make you laugh and enjoy them more often.

Surround yourself with funny people. Laugh every chance you get. Smile often and laugh lots—just for the health of it.

Jeri Mae Rowley, MS Human Resource Management is a professional speaker, master trainer and saddle maker’s daughter. She would be absolutely delighted if you shared this complete article with others. You can read more of her articles, learn more about Jeri Mae’s unique brand of **Western Wit & Wisdom for the Workplace**, and her many speaking and training topics, on her website: www.jerimaerowley.com.

Laughter

Quotable collection from Jeri Mae Rowley

A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.

Proverbs 17:32

Humor is the great thing, the saving thing. The minute it crops up, all our irritations and resentments slip away and a sunny spirit takes their place.

Mark Twain

Humor is always based on a modicum of truth. Have you ever heard a joke about a father-in-law?

Dick Clark

There's no trick to being a humorist when you have the whole government working for you.

Will Rogers

Comedy is tragedy plus time.

Carol Burnett

Laughter gives us distance. It allows us to step back from an event, deal with it and then move on.

Bob Newhart

Laughter is an instant vacation.

Milton Berle

He deserves Paradise who makes his companions laugh.

The Koran

And frame your mind to mirth and merriment, which bars a thousand harms and lengthens life.

Shakespeare

The most wasted of all days is one without laughter.

e e cummings

Laughter is the closest distance between two people.

Victor Borge

The human race has one really effective weapon, and that is laughter.

Mark Twain

Laughter and tears are both responses to frustration and exhaustion. I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning up to do afterward.

Kurt Vonnegut