Humor in Healthcare
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Objectives:

- Define humor
- Historical perspectives of humor and health
- Benefits of Humor
- Why humor in the healthcare setting?
- Techniques to build more humor into the Healthcare setting
“Defining and analyzing humor is a pastime of humorless people”

Robert Benchley
What is Humor?

- Victor Borge defines humor as the shortest distance between two people.
- Humor is the capacity to perceive, appreciate, or express what is funny, amusing.
- Laughter is the bond in human connection. “everyone laughs in the same language”
Historical Perspective on humor and health

- Benefits of humor date back to Biblical times
- “After God created the world, He made man and woman. Then to keep the whole thing from collapsing, He invented humor”
  
  Mack McGinnis

- Proverbs 17:22 a cheerful heart is good medicine.
Historical Perspective on humor and health

- Proverbs 15:13  A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit.
- Ecclesiastes 3:4 A time to weep and a time to Laugh
- “Humor is the great thing, the saving thing, the minute it crops up all of our irritations and resentments slip away” –Mark Twain
Historical perspectives on humor and health

- Norman Cousins
- **Anatomy of an Illness**
- Exercise of Affirmative Emotions
- Findings published 1976 –NEJM
- “Laughter is an antidote to apprehension and panic.”
ANATOMY OF AN ILLNESS
As Perceived by the Patient
Reflections on Healing and Regeneration
“HEARTY LAUGHTER IS A GOOD WAY TO JOG INTERNALLY WITHOUT HAVING TO GO OUTDOORS.”

NORMAN COUSINS
Death is not the greatest loss in life. The greatest loss is what dies inside us while we live.

Norman Cousins
American Journalist
1915 - 1990
Historical perspectives on humor and health

- 1998 Patch Adams
- Alternative therapies being incorporated into traditional medicine

“People crave laughter as if it were an essential amino acid”

Patch Adams, MD
“You treat a disease, you win, you lose. You treat a person, I guarantee you, you’ll win, no matter what the outcome.”
Physical Health Benefits of Humor

- Stronger immune system
- Improved cardiovascular health
- Reduced stress hormones
- Reduced pain
- Muscle relaxation
- Laughter is like yawning
Mental Health Benefits

- Less stress
- Reduced anger, anxiety
- Increased joy, feeling of aliveness
- More positive, optimistic mood
- Increased sense of control
- Excellent coping mechanism
Why Humor in the Healthcare setting?

- Exposure to traumatic events
- Shift work
- Documentation systems/requirements
- Lateral violence
- Code Lavender
- More with less
- CMS/Organizational regulations
- CHANGE
Benefits of Laughter in the Healthcare Setting

- Helps you to cope and distance yourself from stressful situations
- Helps you to connect with other healthcare professionals and gain support...TEAMWORK
- Reduces tension/job stress
- It’s humanizing
- Ha + ha= aha!
- Helps build trust
- Boosts morale
- Recruitment and retention
“Humor is contagious. Laughter is infectious, and both are good for your health”

Dr. William Fry
Humor and Impossible Circumstances

- "Gentlemen, why don't you laugh? With the fearful strain that is upon me day and night, if I did not laugh I should die, and you need this medicine as much as I do." (Abraham Lincoln, start of the Civil War)
Humor and Impossible Circumstances

"Humor, more than anything else in the human makeup, affords an aloofness and an ability to rise above any situation, even if only for a few seconds."

(Viktor Frankl)
ACADEMY AWARD®
WINNER

MIRAMAX
COLLECTOR’S SERIES

“A MODERN MASTERPIECE!”

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL

An unforgettable film that proves love, family and imagination overcome all.

1998 Best Actor
Roberto Benigni

WIDESCREEN
Life is Beautiful Film Clip
Ways to incorporate humor into the healthcare setting

- “but my teammates are just not funny”
- Create the culture
- Designate a space
- Use a joke-a-day calendar i.e. Far Side
- Tell a joke
- Write down jokes “in case of emergency”
Unknown to most historians, William Tell had an older and less fortunate son named Warren.
“Bummer of a birthmark, Hal.”
Telling Jokes

"Jokes are democratic. Telling one right has nothing to do with having money or being educated. It's a knack, like hammering a nail straight. Anyone can learn it, and it's useful in all sorts of situations. You can go your whole life and not need math or physics, but the ability to tell a joke is always handy."

- Garrison Keillor
- Figure out what makes you laugh
- Incorporate humor into staff meetings
- Add comedy to your commute
- Laughter Yoga
- Find humor in seemingly ordinary, everyday things: in life and practice
- Remember a funny moment
- Act silly
- Spend time with animals
Laughter Yoga
LENT IS COMING - GET YOUR ASH IN CHURCH!

SUN 8 & 10 AM
Providence Presbyterian Church

OUR CHURCH IS LIKE FUDGE, SWEET WITH A FEW NUTS

SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:30 11:00
GOD'S LOVE IS DEEPER THAN THIS SNOW
Satan called, he wants his weather back.

Pastor Terry J. Stone
Sorry for driving so close in front of you.
What if the Hokey Pokey IS what it's all about?
“Vegetarian”
Old Indian Word For ‘Lousy Hunter.’
BumperStickerz.com
ICD-10 Codes

- V97.33XD
- W55.41XA
- W61.62XD
- W55.29XA
- W220.2XD
- W56.22XD and W56.22XS
Laugh with Pets
Ways to make humor a part of your life

- Humor tips:
  - Laugh with not at
  - Intend to make people smile, laugh
  - Introduce humor gradually
  - Avoid sarcasm and mockery
  - Avoid ethnic jokes
  - Avoid joking about any patient or condition

Don’t be so serious!
Testing whether laughter is the best medicine
What it actually looked like
Hover to Discover!