

LIGHTENing Bolts
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WELCOME TO LIGHTENing Bolts

Welcome to LIGHTENing Bolts, a somewhat regular email newsletter to help you lighten up by using humor to minimize your stress and maximize your effectiveness.

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Click here for our archive of previous newsletters http://www.funsulting.com/newsletter_archives.html

HUMOR ME ñ RAVE REVIEWS FOR ìIS YOUR GLASS LAUGH FULL?î

The reviews are rolling in for my new book ìIs Your Glass LAUGH Full?î

ìI really liked it!î My mother.

ìI laughed and laughed.î Both my sisters.

ìRon is my favorite author.î My wife.

Weíd love to hear your reaction. Get your copy today before they sell out. Just kidding, weíll get more before they sell out!

Click here to order your copy of Ronís book at www.funsulting.com.

HUMOR AT WORK ñ A STORYÍS WORTH A THOUSAND LAUGHS OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT

Question: What do the following have in common? Star Wars, Lance Armstrong, The Wizard of Oz, Into Thin Air.

Answer: Theyíre all good stories.

Stories are a powerful and integral part of our lives and are also a great source of humor. The late Joseph Campbell, an authority on storytelling, said that every culture in the world uses stories to convey its most

important values. It appears that we learn from the subtle and not so subtle messages in stories.

In the examples above, the stories follow a classically defined structure that involves a hero, a conflict and a resolution. That's one of the reasons Lance Armstrong's recent Tour de France win is so compelling - his life is a great story. Prior to his first win, he should have been dead. His testicular cancer had metastasized to his lungs and his brain. Yet, he successfully fought the disease and came back to arguably be the greatest cyclist ever. As the hero, he battled the conflict to a successful resolution.

Every time my family gets together for Christmas, Thanksgiving or some other special occasion, we always find time, usually during a meal, to tell new stories as well as recall the funny stories from our past (which we've told to each other many times, by the way). These don't always follow the mythical formula defined by Joseph Campbell but they do have tremendous benefits. Here are a few of the benefits of stories.

First, stories connect us. By recounting the stories in our past, we maintain a connection to who we are, where we've been and to those who were there with us. We also bond with others through the universal truths that are conveyed by our stories. If I can relate to your story because something similar happened to me, we are connected by that experience.

When my brother was in college, he went parking with his girlfriend. Problem was, it had rained a lot that week and he got his car stuck in the mud on a back road near our home. Covered in mud, he had to wake an elderly man to call a tow truck. Every time we hear that story, we visualize my brother smooching with his girlfriend as his tires sunk deeper into the mud. We can all relate to those experiences when we aren't as "lucky" as we had hoped!

Second, stories show our frailties. Often, funny stories show how we screwed up, embarrassed ourselves or failed at something. The more we can laugh at these everyday goofs, the better we can handle the stress of not being perfect. Ethel Barrymore said, "You grow up the day you have your first real laugh - at yourself."

During my father's birthday party, he had one of those brain skips that all of us experience. My friend Mike was unable to come to the party. Just before cake and presents, my father turned to me and said, "Didn't Mike know it was your birthday?" I looked at him, not knowing what to make of this, and said, "It's YOUR birthday!" To this day, anyone in my family can say, "Didn't Mike know it was your birthday?" and get a laugh!

Third, stories convey important messages. In addition to the valuable benefits already mentioned, our stories often represent deeper life issues. They convey the life struggles that we all go through and help us feel that we're not alone in our journey.

When we hear about Lance Armstrong, we realize that we can overcome just about anything. And even if we can overcome a physical illness, we can overcome the emotional barriers that prevent us from coping. In the midst of a great story, there is a message we can all understand.

Finally, stories entertain us. The reason that Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings are such blockbuster hits is because they combine all the classic elements of a story with incredible entertainment. Our family storytelling experiences could go on forever because of the humor, the laughter and the way it captures our attention. It's far better than an afternoon of reality TV or Play Station 2.

Stories are an important part of our lives. Before radio and television, they were how we captured our history. Are you taking advantage of the stories in your life? Look for ways to share your stories and the stories of others. It's a wonderful way to connect, laugh and learn.

Click here for information about the National Storytelling Network.
<http://www.storynet.org>

HUMOR IN HEALTHCARE ñ A SPECIAL TELESEMINAR SERIES

ìPutting The FUN back in Healthcareì
A live four-part tele-seminar series

From the convenience of your own conference room, you and your healthcare team can gather around the speaker phone for 4 one-hour audio laugh-fests with four of America's funniest healthcare professionals.

Here's the lineup:

Sept 16: ìThe FUNdamentals of Humorì by Ron Culberson, MSW, CSP
Sept 30: ìImprov to Improveì by Clifford Kuhn, MD
Oct 14: ìWeeks of FUNì by Dr. Ann Weeks, RN, DNS
Oct 28: ìPrescription for Laughterì by Karyn Buxman, RN, CSP, CPAE

This program is offered by Leading Home Care and is designed to show you:
*How to apply the healing power of humor

- *10 reasons why laughter is good for you
- *Ways to use improv theatre to improve performance
- *How to increase customer service with playfulness

The series includes 4 one-hour tele-seminar presentations, 4 audio CD recordings of the sessions, a discussion leader's guide, participant learning guide and CEUs for nurses and other professionals.

Don't miss this great opportunity to laugh and learn.

For more information and to register your site, visit:
<http://www.leadinghomecare.com/teleseminars/fun2004.html>

HUMOR IN REAL LIFE ñ RON'S MONTHLY HUMOR COLUMN

I is now a columnist and I really right good! Once each month you can read my humor column in the "Observer Newspapers" in Reston, Herndon and Leesburg, Virginia.

To see the inaugural column, click here: http://observernews.com/stories/current/news/071604/humor_071604.shtml

JUST HUMOR ñ COUNTERFEIT HUMOR

Paul Harvey recently reported that some thick-headed criminals had printed thousands of counterfeit ten dollar bills. The design and the printing were done on state-of-the-art equipment that ended up costing the crooks eleven dollars for each ten dollar bill that was printed. I guess crime doesn't pay after all!

The following was told at a conference where I spoke in Baton Rouge, LA:

Some not-so-bright fellows that live in a rural area of the south decided to make some counterfeit money. Unfortunately, when they reviewed their first batch of ten dollar bills, they discovered that they had accidentally created eleven dollar bills.

One of the fellows suggested that if they went to one of the more isolated towns near them, the backward people that lived there might not know there was no such thing as an eleven dollar bill.

They went to a small general store, handed the owner the counterfeit bill and asked him for change. The owner looked at the bill, put it in the cash register and gave them an eight and a three.

HUMOR RESOURCES ñ STORY TIME

Check out the following resources for great stories and information about storytelling:

ìThe Hero with a Thousand Facesî by Joseph Campbell. Princeton Bollingen. (Book)

ìA Beginners Guide to Storytellingî. Anthology. National Storytellers Network. (Book)

ìImproving Your Storytelling: Beyond the Basics for All Who Tell Stories in Work or Playî by Doug Lipman. August House Publishers. (Book)

ìNever Be Boring Again: Make Your Business Presentations Capture Attention, Inspire Action, and Produce Resultsî by Doug Stevenson. Cornelia Press. (Book)

ìJoseph Campbell and The Power of Myth with Bill Moyersî. Mystic Fire Video. (Video series)

Click here to find these resources at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

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Ronald P. Culberson, MSW, CSP, Director of Everything! at FUNsulting, etc., is a speaker, humorist and author of ìIs Your Glass LAUGH Full?î who works with organizations that want their people to lighten up by using humor as a way to manage stress and become more effective. He is a Certified Speaking Professional (CSP), the highest earned award from the National Speakers Association, and is one of less than 7% of speakers worldwide who have received this designation. He is a humor expert and has provided entertaining and informative programs to over 70,000 people in more than 600 associations, government agencies, non-profit organizations and Fortune

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