

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 stress and maximize your effectiveness.

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SPECIAL EDITION OF LIGHTENing BOLTS

This special edition of LIGHTENing Bolts coincides with the release of my new book "Is Your Glass LAUGH Full?" and includes excerpts from the book. The book is full of funny stories showing the power of humor to balance stress, see a new perspective and connect with others.

Here is what others have said about "Is Your Glass LAUGH Full?"

"This well-written book will show you how easy it is to find the lighter side of life. With amusing anecdotes, witty words, and wonderful wisdom, this is the perfect book for anyone seeking the gift of humor." - Allen Klein, author of "The Courage to Laugh" and "The Healing Power of Humor"

"Enlightening will strike again and again in this wonderful book, which inspires you to see and seize the opportunity to bring humor to life. Ron's collection of delightful and insightful stories shows how to give yourself the gift of amusing grace. Come fill your cups with the magic elixir of laughter!" - Dr. Joel Goodman, Director, The HUMOR Project, Inc. and author of "Affirmations"

HUMOR AT WORK - I SCORED!

(From "Is Your Glass LAUGH Full?")

My wife Wendy and I are very different when it comes to how we view the

future. I tend to assume everything will be fine unless I find something that proves otherwise. I expect the positive and then deal with the negative if I need to. Part of this is my avoidance of negativity. I figure if I don't think about it, it won't happen.

Wendy, on the other hand, would prefer to assume the worst, on the off-chance things don't turn out like she hopes. That way, she is not disappointed. By expecting the negative, she is pleasantly surprised when it doesn't materialize. This is what I call Reverse Escape Pessimism and by the way, it's incurable.

We discovered this difference early in our courtship at UVA. Wendy was an engineer and I was in liberal arts (whatever that means). In some ways, she was in real college and I was in unemployment training. Not that my classes were easy. I was destroyed by Organic Chemistry and Cell Physiology. But I also took classes in Perception, Abnormal Psychology and The History of Circus in America! I did not have a compelling argument for a Rhodes Scholarship.

Here's how our differences usually played out. Wendy would finish an exam. When I would see her later that day, she would be devastated. She'd mope around, saying over and over, "I know I failed that test." In specific detail, she would describe the questions she missed and how she just knew she could never have passed with those incorrect answers. For the next couple of days, she would live in this un-comfort-able funk, convinced she would flunk out of college and end up working at McDonald's with me. Needless to say, she had higher aspirations.

At UVA, and I assume at most colleges, professors posted the grades on their office doors and we, the victims of their psychological torture, would gather around the list like Romans at the gladiator matinee.

Wendy would make her way to the "coliseum" and force herself to look at her score. To her surprise, she not only would have the best grade in the class, but the professor would set the curve based on her grade. In other words, she was the standard by which her classmates were measured. She was the Grand Poobah. The Queen of the Exam. Best in Show. In four years of engineering at the University of Virginia, my lovely Wendy received one A minus. And that was the worst it ever got.

I, on the other hand, had a slightly different experience.

After I took an exam, I was ecstatic not just because the torture was over but because I knew I had done very well. I would proudly sashay back to my dorm with the look of a poker player who has no idea his pair of threes is just not that good. I would announce to my roommates that I had finished my

test and in fact had faced it. I would exchange high fives with everyone in the room and would confidently explain that I knew I had done well because I was the first one to leave! Obviously, you can see the tragedy of my feeble mind.

For several days, I would not only live on Cloud Nine, I would own it. The sky was blue, the birds were singing and I was probably going to be asked to live with the exceptional students on The Lawn during my last year. Confident I would be accepted at Harvard Graduate School or perhaps given a Heis a Jolly Good Fellowship, my troubles were over. I was smart.

Then the moment of truth would arrive. The affirmation that the last minute studying had paid off that you actually could party too much and make good grades. That there was no genetic defect in growing up in Appalachia.

I went to my professor's office to get the final proof of my achievement and to leave the coliseum as Galadiatorus Unum.

I glanced at the list of grades and quickly noticed I was not in the first few on the list. Perhaps he accidentally put my first name last. I looked again. Not there. I kept going down the list. Not there. Not there. As I crouched down near the bottom of my professor's door hoping at this particular moment he did not come rushing out, I noticed my name.

Culberson, Ronald 68 C-

Crushed, I would escape to the local student bar and hope to spend an evening in the supportive reassuring arms of my A+ girlfriend.

Unfortunately, she was studying.

[Click here to find out how to purchase your copy of "Is Your Glass LAUGH Full?" and other FUN products.](#)

HUMOR IN REAL LIFE ñ GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

(From "Is Your Glass LAUGH Full?")

Ed Gulnac has a master's degree in Guidance and Counseling. He was the Executive Director of a residential treatment center for some of the most difficult youth in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Ed was leading a group counseling session when one young man became angry,

stormed out of the room, went through the kitchen and out the back door of the building. Ed ran out the front door to cut the guy off in the driveway.

The young man had picked up a butcher knife in the kitchen when he met Ed in the driveway and he held the knife out in a threatening way.

The residents in this facility had served time in jail, so stabbing a counselor was not out of the question—even though it would result in being sent back to prison for a much longer time. Ed had a black belt in karate and could easily take the knife away from the young man but he knew the kid had potential and did not want to see him go to jail. So Ed knew he had to do something before the young man made any move towards stabbing him.

Ed had gotten married a few weeks before and the shirt he was wearing was a gift from his new wife. He said to the young man, "Have you ever tried to get blood out of a shirt?"

"What the hell did you say?" the kid responded.

"Have you ever tried to get blood out of a shirt? If you stab me, my wife will be so upset about your getting blood on my new shirt, she will hunt you down."

The thought of this ludicrous idea caused the young man to burst out laughing. He handed the knife back to Ed. After a soda and a long talk, the situation was better and the young man remained in the residential program for further treatment.

"If it hadn't been for humor, he would have been in jail, one of us would have been moderately hurt and the other one would have had serious injuries." Ed said. "Humor saved the day for both of us."

JUST HUMOR ñ MAKE YOUR MESSAGE MEMORABLE

(From "Is Your Glass LAUGH Full?")

I read about a company's customer who had not paid his bill in nine months. The company sent out one more invoice to him that said:

YOUR PAYMENT IS 9 MONTHS OVERDUE. WE HAVE NOW CARRIED YOU LONGER THAN YOUR MOTHER.

Allegedly, the bill was paid within two weeks.

HUMOR RESOURCES ñ LET US FUNSULT YOU!

In addition to "Is Your Glass LAUGH Full?", FUNsulting, etc. has several humor tools to add more FUN to your life and work. The following are available at our website:

"Humor Me: America's Funniest Humorists on the Power of Laughter" (Book)

"The FUNdamentals of Humor" (Video)

"The FUNdamentals of Humor"; "The FUNdamentals of Life"; "The FUNdamentals of Leadership" (Audio CDs)

"Leading with Laughter" (Audio Cassette Album on Presidential Humor)

[Click here](#) to see all of our FUN products.

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Ronald P. Culberson, MSW, CSP, Director of Everything! at FUNsulting, etc., 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 450 individuals worldwide who have received this designation. He is a humor expert and has provided entertaining and informative programs to over 50,000 people in more than 500 associations, government agencies, non-profit organizations and Fortune 500 companies. To find out more about programs, services and products visit our website at www.FUNsulting.com or call (703) 742-8812.

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