

Hospital manager touts humor's benefits

by Bob Christman
The Arizona Daily Star

Consider humor as a kind of aphrodisiac for the workplace, a mask for pain, a "social lubricant" to improve your personal relations with others.

Humor offers so many benefits, says David M. Jacobson, that it's worth pursuing and expanding in our lives.

Jacobson, manager of volunteer services at University Medical Center, makes it a point to clip funny headlines, collect humorous books like George Carlin's "Brain Droppings," record Marx Brothers' movies - even keep a humor journal of good jokes and family situations.

Keeps "humor bottle" filled

He's on chemotherapy and anti-inflammatory drugs to fight what ails him. But he also keeps a "humor bottle" filled with one-liners that at times work better than the drugs, he said.

Yesterday at a meeting of the Health and Wellness Marketing Group, he asked attendees to list the things that happen

when they are threatened: increased heart rate, sweating, adrenalin increase, shallow breathing, decreased ability to tolerate pain, decreased ability to digest food.

"The humor response is the antidote to all that," he said, giving off a hearty guffaw to prove the point. "You're taking real deep breaths, you're oxygenating your blood, your ability to tolerate pain increases. Research shows that people who laugh heartily on a regular basis have lower blood pressure than the average population."

Jacobson explained that at age 22, while working at a kibbutz in Israel, he came down with rheumatic fever, systemic arthritis and heart problems.

"One of the ways I got back on my feet was by using humor to cope with the illness and pain. It was my No. 1 coping mechanism," he said. "Humor can be a very powerful thing. Ten minutes of hearty laughing can give you two hours of pain-free sleep."

Even small things can be made humorous, he told the meeting at the Pima Coun-

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David M. Jacobson

ty Medical Society, 5199 E. Farness Drive.

"When I find an empty elevator at UMC, after I get in and the doors close, I celebrate," he said.

"When I started as a social worker at UMC around Christmas 1988, my boss asked how the week went. Words couldn't describe it, so I just collapsed on the floor. I was complimented by others afterward for making the meeting a little lighter."

Even flipping through a church bulletin can bring on the smiles.

His favorites: "Don't let worry kill you. Let the church help," or "A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the

church hall. Music will follow," or "This afternoon there will be a meeting in the south and north ends of the church. Children will be baptized at both ends."

Take a stressful situation and turn it into a funny one, he suggested.

If you're involved in a heated argument, pause a moment and think to yourself "What would Elmer Fudd do in this situation?"

"Back in control"

"When you smile to yourself, you're back in control of the situation," he said.

In traffic, rather than stew about how stressed you are waiting for the traffic light to change, "look for something funny around you. Enjoy the moment.

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Information on the Health and Wellness Marketing Group is available by calling T.J. McGreevy at 323-3288.



Owner of new station serving area predicts approval of TV tower

By Alan D. Fischer
The Arizona Daily Star

Tower-location issues delaying the launch of the area's newest

under the project, Marshall said.

A 158-foot tower, topped by a 41-foot antenna, has been proposed by KWBA-TV58, which will specialize in "family friendly"