

Play Time

by

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Did you laugh today? I'm not talking about those half-hearted twitters or an all too easily stifled giggle. Nope. Not even close. I mean a genuine laugh. You know the one I'm talking about. It's the one where joy takes over your consciousness and when you come back to reality, you're vaguely aware of acting childish but you just don't care, it was fun. Yeah, that laugh. Did you do laugh yet today?¹

Kids know how to laugh, but adults tend to forget. That's not good for either kids or adults. Yep, it's time for a dabble of psychobabble.

Dead folks didn't laugh. Well, they did kinda snort on the way out, but that's not what I mean. It's a little known fact that every person, yes, that's 100%, of those who did not laugh enough, died. Do you want that to happen to you? Of course not. You want to laugh and live. What's worse, they didn't have much fun when they were here. But that's far less than the half of it, because their somber silence smothered nascent laughs from others. Talk about a buzzkill.

Oh, sure, I know, I've heard it all before. You work far too hard to have time to laugh. You just haven't got the time. What with your job and school and potholes, you can barely sneak in a snicker here and there. Your budget is just too tight to include a belly laugh.

I don't want to be rude, but that's sick. And once you're sick it's just a hop, skip, and a jump to dead. You need to laugh. Why else would you have a boss or a professor?

There's an old expression about working hard and playing hard. I tried it, but mostly I ended up real tired. However, while I've gotten exhausted laughing, I've never gotten tired. Why is that? Because laughing is good for you.

Because you are an adult, you seem to think you need an excuse to laugh. Well, OK, everyone's weird in their own way, so, make an excuse. As a kid, you found many ways to play. You so much smarter today, so you'd think you could come up with at least one sure fired ringer dinger an hour. I have an idea, how about playing with that kid that lives at your house? The kid might think you strange at first, but just laugh it off. Maybe that kid now is a teenager whose speaking ability has devolved to grunts. You're sure to get a chuckle when you watch a teenager's face as it comes to think you have lost your mind. Next time you get a grunt, answer in a grunt. Keep it up until you get a whole sentence out of 'em. Caution, however, is called for when taunting this species of animal: they can be volatile if taunted when in an attitude² of teenagers. For me, it's cats and dogs. They always are up to something. Cats particularly are fond of feigning superiority, especially if they just fell off the back of a chair.

Did you hear the one about the accountant, the economist, and the MBA?

¹ You knew *I* would have a footnote. But seriously folks, there's no time like the present. Just throw back your head back and let loose with a laugh. Go ahead, I'll wait right here until you can focus your eyes again. Now, that didn't take long, and don't you feel better? What, you didn't do it? *Puhlezzze!* So what if people are looking at you? You're reading something really funny and they're not. Let's show 'em how it's done. Ready? OK, since you're a tad self conscious we start slow and let it build. First, you smile. Next, pump a couple of silent breaths out your nose to loosen up your lungs and chest muscles. Third, add some snippets of sound to your staccato breath. Fourth, open your mouth for a little more projection of your burgeoning laugh. Fifth, let 'er rip. After every exercise period you need your cool down, and laughing is no exception, so your last step is a long exhale with a satisfied over tone and lingering smile. Now that was not too hard, was it? Good. Be sure to repeat it 400 times a day.

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