

CAREER HEALTH

Sense of Humor

By Tony Alessandra

“Conversation never sits easier than when we now and then discharge ourselves in a symphony of laughter, which may not improperly be called the chorus of conversation,” according to the eighteenth-century essayist Sir Richard Steele.

Humor is a social lubricant. It gives us something to share and creates bonds of appreciation. We are automatically endeared to people who make us laugh.

Successful people take their commitments seriously, but seldom take themselves or life too seriously. Above all, they have the ability to laugh at themselves. People appreciate those who can see the humorous side of any situation.

Humor should be appropriate, however, if it is going to be effective. Keep the following suggestions in mind:

Keep it in good taste. Know your audience and the type of material that they will appreciate. Some people are more inhibited than others. Use discretion and respect their standards of good taste.

Don't go overboard. If you are making someone laugh, do not assume that being “on a roll” justifies going on indefinitely. If their body language indicates that it is time to get back to work, then get back to work! People appreciate digressions as long as they are short and sweet. You do not want to be known as “that clown who doesn't know when to stop.”

Humor is not just telling old jokes. If you rehash jokes that have been circu-

lating for years, you will be regarded as a jerk rather than a person with a great sense of humor. The best humor consists of original, spontaneous comments that flow with the conversation or the ideas being discussed.

Look for humor in everyday life. This is the best way to improve your sense of humor. Some people believe that a sense of the comic is a God-given talent, but it can be cultivated. There are numerous opportunities for you to increase your repertoire of humorous anecdotes and comments. If you make an awkward mistake, remember: Don't take yourself too seriously.

The television star, Lucille Ball, is a perfect example of someone who learned to take her tasks seriously but not herself seriously. Ball was given the opportunity to audition for the part of Scarlet O'Hara in *Gone With the Wind*. In the middle of this serious dramatic reading, she dropped the entire script on the floor. As she kneeled down to pick it up, she tried to continue reading. She was so nervous that she continued to read right from the floor, picking up the papers as she went. The Director was shrewd enough to realize that although she was wrong for the role, she was a talented comedienne who had the ability to laugh at herself but take her tasks seriously. He ended up giving Ball her first big break.

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Fitness Programs

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special kinds of fitness programs or for group fitness programs. People with disabilities need to follow fitness programs consistently.

There are many professional fitness centers that have sophisticated equipment to suit all kinds of people and their fitness needs. These centers have professionals and medical specialists who would be able to offer advice about the best kind of fitness program to take up. They provide customized workout routines, nutrition plans, personal trainers, and expert guidance to make the results last.

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“Success is falling nine times and getting up ten.”

-Jon Bon Jovi

VALUES - BASED QUALITY OF LIFE™ Newsletter

Because Making Smart Choices About Your Money Impacts The Quality of Your Life

Over the years, we have found that there are elements of your life that are more important than money.

These elements - Physical Health, Relationship Health, Inner Health and Career Health - cannot be delegated.

We hope that you find these articles to be of value in improving the quality of your life.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Fitness Programs

By Eddie Tobey

Fitness is a state of the human body that allows it to function to its full potential. It is the ability to do regular jobs without any strain, while being alert and energetic enough to endure any stressful activities. It is basically a condition wherein all the major parts of the body: heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, bones and muscles are in proper working condition. There are four aspects related to physical fitness: cardio-respiratory endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance and flexibility. Fitness programs are the path to having a healthy body. They are the perfect way to incorporate exercise into the daily routine. Fitness programs, when followed religiously, are a remarkable way to counter several diseases, even in old age. Fitness programs need a lot of commitment and hard work.

There are several stages to incorporating a fitness program into your daily routine. The first thing is to check your present health condition to determine what kind of a program would suit you. This requires a basic health check-up of blood pressure, diabetes-check, and a full work over for any suspected diseases and past injuries. Also, consider your family history. Are you prone to heart attacks, strokes, arthritis, and other ailments? A

major aspect of physical fitness is the body's composition, which indicates the makeup of the body in terms of the ratio of lean mass to fat mass. Lean mass is comprised of muscle, bone, vital tissue and organs. Fat is fat.

Fitness programs take all these physical conditions of the person into account. The ideal exercise regime for a person will suit his/her body type. This is also contingent upon one's objective be it weight loss, physical strength, or others. Fitness programs are composed of several kinds of activities such as: aerobics, aquatic exercises, golf, walking, skipping, jogging, swimming, bicycling, running, skiing, or playing sports like tennis and squash.

A fitness program should be chosen to suit your fitness level. It should be enjoyable, with realistic goals, and should fit well with your lifestyle. Some people may not see immediate results. Depending on the program as well as body type, results may vary. However, patience is very important. Choosing more than one type of exercise would also make it interesting. You can opt for an instructor for

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RELATIONSHIP HEALTH

Listening is of the Essence

By Deb Haggerty

Oh, great! Another article about listening. We all know that we're supposed to listen before we talk. We know about the listening responses, the uh-huhs, the nods that we're supposed to practice to indicate listening. We know we have to listen to what our contact is saying so we can respond intelligently and ensure we make the sale by meeting their needs. We know that listening once in a while is polite.

So what's new?

What's new is "essence" listening, a term coined by Speaking Circle guru, Lee Glickstein. Essence listening goes way beyond the "techniques" we are encouraged to practice to truly listen to the essence of those with whom we are trying to communicate. Essence listening means taking the time to understand our audience, to receive from our listeners that which they can give us and to ensure we are connected before we begin speaking. Essence listening empowers both the audience and the speaker and creates a much greater impact than is available from speaking at them, or even to them. We are now speaking with them. Are there techniques involved? Sure - but once learned, they become part of our essence and being and, therefore, completely natural.

So what is essence listening?

It is pausing before you speak to make a quality connection through your eyes with the person (s) with whom you are speaking. It is not just a quick glance to ensure they're looking at you and then plunging in, but a definite lingering with each person, letting them know through your eyes that you acknowledge their uniqueness,

their humanness. Essence listening is maintaining eye contact, person by person, not skipping around from face to face to face or "sweeping the room". Essence listening is maintaining eye availability and letting our audiences in effect "write our material" for us from their non-verbal responses. Truly allowing people to connect with us lets them relax and learn from the connection. Truly connecting, which occurs when we don't work to connect, but rather allow the connection to happen, lets us relax and share the

"You cannot truly listen to anyone and do anything else at the same time."

-M. Scott Peck

information we have to impart. Once the connection has been made, then communication can begin.

Why essence listening?

Our audiences, our colleagues all want to know what it is that we are going to say; what concepts we're communicating to them. Using essence listening lets them know we care about them as individuals AND allows us to accept their willingness to listen, too.

Essence listening allows us to make an almost electrical connection with our conversant. The best example I've heard is that essence listening is like lightning. The speaker represents the clouds and energy in the sky, making available to the earth the power of their presence. The audience is the earth, also with power

of presence available. Lightning occurs when the earth, in what is called "the response stroke" sends its energy up to join that available in the sky. Lightning goes up, it does not come down! Essence listening allows us to receive those great amounts of energy from those to whom we speak to initiate and, hopefully, continue a connection - a relationship.

Essence listening acknowledges that we are truly present with our audiences and they with us. It respects our uniqueness and our importance. The communication circle of transmitting through a channel to a receiver and then receiving feedback becomes alive and energized.

The noise that disrupts communication is abated. We can concentrate fully on what we are saying and what is being heard.

Consider essence listening a dance of life - a minuet. We come together with our audiences to touch, and then back away to give each other space to absorb the contact. We join and part throughout the dance, finally blending at its completion. We allow all those in the dance to display their real selves, their essence.

When we practice essence listening, the flames of the power of presence within us ignite, explode and burn brightly, lighting up the lives of those we touch.

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INNER HEALTH

Never Give Up!: The Power of Determination

By Jack Canfield

"The way to learn to do things is to do things. The way to learn a trade is to work at it. Success teaches how to succeed. Begin with determination to succeed, and the work is half done already."

-Anonymous

In a previous issue of success strategies, I talked about the importance of taking action toward your goals, dreams and desires. But one of the most important qualities you will need to develop in order to continue taking action is persistence.

You must be persistent in your disciplines and habits; perseverant in the face of adversity, hardship and challenge; and determined to achieve your dreams, no matter what.

There will be many times when you will want to quit, give up, and go back to doing something else, but the one quality that will guarantee your success is the willingness to stick with it, to see it through to the end - to refuse to settle for anything less than your dream.

The longer you hang in there, the greater the chance that something will happen in your favor. No matter how hard it seems, the longer you persist, the more likely your success will be.

"A vow is fixed and unalterable determination to do a thing, when such a determination is related to something noble it can only uplift the man who makes the resolve."

-Mahatma Gandhi

Adversity and Discouragement Is Inevitable.

No matter how well you plan and how well you execute your plan, you are bound to meet with disappointments, adversity and failure along the way to your ultimate triumph. Sometimes you'll encounter what seem like overwhelming odds. And sometimes the Universe will test your commitment to the goal you're pursuing.

The going may be hard, and may require you to refuse to give up while

"Success means having the courage, the determination, and the will to become the person you believe you were meant to be."

-George Sheehan

you learn new lessons, develop new parts of yourself, and make difficult decisions.

Adversity is what gives you the opportunity to develop your inner resources of character and courage. Adversity is a great teacher. It will test you and make you stronger. But you have to hang in there and not give up!

More than 4000 years ago in China, Confucius wrote: "Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."

How to Deal with Obstacles

Whenever you confront an obstacle or run into a roadblock, you need to stop and brainstorm three ways to get around it, over it, or through it. For every obstacle, come up with three different strategies for handling the potential obstacle. There are any number of ways that will work, but you will only find them if you spend time looking for them.

Always be solution-oriented in your thinking. Persevere until you find a way that works.

"Life is not a continuum of pleasant choices, but of inevitable problems that call for strength, determination, and hard work."

-Indian Proverb

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