



Make Time to Laugh

I was sitting with my family last weekend eating freshly baked rolls, smothered in jam and drinking some freshly brewed coffee, contemplating the current economic woes when my six year old announced that we should all play animal charades.

The portrayal of cats, dogs, eagles, sleeping joeys, mermaids, bears, moose, chimpanzees etc that followed was great fun and the troubles of the world rapidly faded in importance and my real priorities were once again to the fore. When we started to tire of the game, my coffee was cold, and both I and my husband had pains in our sides from laughter.

What really struck me was that an hour later, I was still in good form and feeling far more positive around about life in general. This positive energy helped me to feel ready to take on the world and meet all my challenges.

Of course this is not surprising as there is a body of Psychological evidence to support the positive impact of laughter on humans and in particular on reducing stress and boosting our immune system.

The basis for this is that when an individual experiences any emotion, the body produces chemicals and hormones in response to that emotion. Laughter produces immune-enhancing and stress relieving hormones. When we laugh, blood pressure is lowered, and there is an increase in the oxygenation of the blood. It also gives our diaphragm and our abdominal, respiratory, facial, leg and back muscles a workout. That is why we can feel tired after a long bout of laughter.

In these challenging times we each have a responsibility to ensure that we nurture ourselves so that we are best able to deal with the challenges that the economic environment sends our way. While we all know the obvious things like diet and exercise, my challenge to you for this week is to take the time to experience at least one hour of laughter – through a film, comedy show or just clowning around. What is important is that you can let yourself go and really laugh. – Have fun!

There is a second part to the challenge. It would be really good if you could be watchful of your energy levels and attitude following the laughter. Armed with this knowledge you can then make good decisions on how you and use laughter to support you through stressful periods.

Warm Wishes

Mary

If you are currently feeling stressed and would like support to develop your action to move to a more relaxed place then give me a call.