

Outwitting the ‘laughter drought’ is more important than ever



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Guest Column

There is a place nestled in our brains where fun lives.

As children, we went there all the time.

Not so much as we age.

In fact, a Harvard study discovered that babies laugh over 400 times a day.

If you are over 35 years old, you laugh, on average, 15 times a day.

Thus, the study concluded, adults in America

are in the midst of a “laughter drought.”

We have succumbed to Terminal Seriousness.

And that study was conducted before the pandemic!

Laughter is nature’s stress buster, a source of free and instant gratification that floods our bodies with those feel-good endorphins.

As the chokehold of the pandemic subsides, it’s time we all fight this drought.

I’m surely trying to do my part and hope that you can and will do yours.

“How?” you ask.

Five suggestions:

- 1) cultivate a playful attitude;
- 2) look for humor in everyday life;
- 3) laugh at yourself;
- 4) find humor amid stress; and
- 5) laugh heartily and more often.

The Dahlonega Nugget™

It's unhealthy to suppress laughter—it sinks back down and spreads to your hips and belly.

Spontaneous humor is the best.

Crack a funny line at the water cooler or tell a funny anecdote at the dinner table.

Be quick-witted and seize the many opportunities life provides us every day.

Another way you can bust the laughter drought is by reading a humorous book, and that, my friends, is how I'm doing my part.

For the first half of my career, I practiced law.

Then I came to my senses, hung up my wingtips, and got busy pursuing my calling to write humor.

As I march along my actuarial chart, the clarion call grows ever stronger.

So much to write, so little time. I am entering my final quarter and tell-tale signs of aging keep cropping up.

For instance, I walked barefooted to my mailbox the other day and my neighbor complimented me on my alligator shoes.

It's impossible to keep up with technology these days.

"Are you on Instagram?" a friend recently asked.

"No," I replied, "I'm on Metamucil."

Hey, I'm just trying to fight the good fight.

Let's all do our part to bust this laughter drought.

Let it rain, my friends, let it rain.

*Jameson Gregg is a local resident who is also the 2015 Georgia Author of the year. You can find his new book *Uncorked & Off the Chain: Offbeat Ramblings of a Zany Comic on Amazon*, at jamesongregg.com or at Bear Book Market just off Dahlonega Public Square.*