



## HOW DO I ACCESS EAP?

To make a confidential appointment via Telephone, Video, WEB e-Counselling or In-Person

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**There's nothing  
more beautiful  
than the sound  
of children's  
laughter and joy**



Children laugh easily and often but as we get older, adults may forget to make room for laughter in their daily lives.

Babies begin to smile during the first weeks of life and laugh out loud within months of being born. Even if laughter was not a common sound in your childhood you can learn to laugh at any stage of life. Much like the importance to eat a variety of vegetables and the need to exercise regularly, we should all try to achieve 15 to 20 minutes of laughter a day. The more you get used to laughing each day, the less effort you'll have to make.

### Fascinating facts about laughter

- Laughing can burn calories – although you would need to laugh for an hour or more to burn 10-40 calories
- Laughter is contagious: They say “laugh and the whole world laughs with you” The sound of laughter triggers regions in the premotor cortical region of your brain
- Laughter has a wealth of physiological, psychological, social, spiritual and quality-of-life benefits

**A little laughter can go a long way . . . . .  
Laughter can improve**

- Your blood pressure
- Enhancing oxygen intake
- Easing digestion
- Improving your sleep
- Boosting your immunity
- Relaxing your muscles
- Improves well-being and positive emotions
- Enhancing creativity and memory

## Laughter brings people together and strengthens relationships

You are more likely to laugh around other people than when you're alone. The more laughter you bring into your life, the happier you and those around you will feel.

**Sharing humour is half the fun** – most laughter doesn't come from hearing jokes, but rather simply spending time with friends and family. When you care about someone enough to switch off your phone and really connect, you're engaging in a process that rebalances the nervous system and puts the brakes on defensive stress responses like “fight or flight.” If you share a laugh as well, you'll both feel happier, more **positive** and **relaxed**.

**Adding humour** is a powerful and effective way to heal resentments, disagreements and hurts. Humour and laughter can unite people during difficult times. You can learn to use humour to smooth over disagreements, lower everyone's stress level, and communicate in a way that builds up your relationships rather than breaking them down.

Emotional sharing builds strong and lasting relationship bonds and sharing laughter also adds resilience, vitality and joy.

Sharing laughter is one of the most effective tools for keeping relationships fresh and exciting.



### HOW TO BRING MORE LAUGHTER INTO YOUR LIFE:

**Smiling is the beginning of laughter  
and like laughter, it's contagious.**



Instead of looking down at your phone, look up and smile at people as you pass in the street, the person serving you a morning coffee, or the colleague you share a lift with. Notice the difference when you look at someone or see something even mildly pleasing - practice smiling.

Spend time with fun and playful people, these are people who laugh easily both at themselves and at life's absurdities and who routinely find the humour in everyday events.

Ask your friends, family and co-workers What's the funniest thing that happened to you today? This week?

# SPLIT FOR DEVELOPING YOUR SENSE OF HUMOUR TIPS

## Learn to not take yourself too seriously and laugh at your own mistakes and foibles

- When you become the “problem” and take yourself too seriously, it can be hard to think outside the box and find new solutions. As much as we’d like to believe otherwise, we all do foolish things from time to time.
- Instead of feeling embarrassed or defensive, embrace your imperfections. Surround yourself with reminders to lighten up.
- Choose a phone screen or computer screen saver that makes you laugh or smile or even bring back a funny memory. Put a funny poster up at home or in your office.
- Frame a photo of you and your family or friends having fun.
- If you hear of a funny story or something amusing happens that you like, write it down or tell it to someone else to help you remember it.

**Don’t dwell on the negative:** Try to avoid negative people and don’t dwell on sad news stories, entertainment or conversations that make you sad or unhappy. Many things in life are beyond your control – particularly the behaviour of other people. While you might think taking the weight of the world on your shoulder’s is admirable, in the long run it’s unrealistic and unhealthy.

**Deal with your stress:** Stress can be a major impediment to humour and laughter, so it’s important to get your stress levels in check. Try to draw upon a favourite memory that makes you smile or something your children did or something funny a friend told you.

**Count your blessings:** Make a list, simple acts of considering the good things in your life will distance you from negative thoughts that are a barrier to humour and laughter. When you’re in a state of sadness, you have further to travel to get to humour and laughter.

**Living a life of positive thinking and laughter:** This is bound to have you feeling happier and more successful throughout your day-to-day routine. One of the first things you’ll want to do in developing your “happy habit” is to change the way you look at things in your life. It’s important to keep a realistic view about things that happen in your life and your attitude about setbacks can make a big difference. Having a sense of humour can empower you and instead of making a bad situation worse, a sense of humour can help you overcome any negative emotions and get you in the frame of mind to solve whatever problem is at hand.

Try achieving happiness by incorporating a good attitude and a sense of humour in your life by: visualising goals and maintaining the right attitude.

*Start today . . .*

*Don’t go a day without laughing*



### Smiling Is Infectious

*Author: Unknown*

Smiling is infectious,  
you catch it like the flu,  
When someone smiled at me today,  
I started smiling too.

I passed around the corner  
and someone saw my grin.  
When he smiled I realised  
I’d passed it on to him.

I thought about that smile,  
then I realised its worth.  
A single smile, just like mine  
could travel round the earth.

So, if you feel a smile begin,  
don’t leave it undetected.  
Let’s start an epidemic quick,  
and get the world infected!

### SMILE IN THE MIRROR

Do that every  
morning and you’ll  
start to see a big  
difference in your life.

*Yoko Ono*

Through your Employee Assistance Programme you can speak to a Professional and explore possible strategies that will help and assist you. Remember, your EAP Programme is a confidential and professional service. Your EAP Professional will work to assist you develop a plan for you to achieve a positive outcome.



Employee Assistance Programme