

Humor.... Adding life to Medical Teaching

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Abstract

Humor and creativity are related. (Goodman, J. (1995). Humour increases the interest in teaching and leads to improved student attendances and there is direct correlation between student attendance and improved performance.

Key Words: Humor, Creativity, Attendance, Performance

There is a connection between “Ha Ha and Aha” as stated by Goodman stressing that, humour and creativity are related. (Goodman, J. (1995). Humour increases the interest in teaching and there is direct correlation between student attendance and improved performance. However some teachers believe that teaching being a serious business and its use can be undignified and demeaning to the profession(Berk, Ronald A. (2003).

I have used humour frequently in my teaching sessions, even without the serious intention of improved learning experience for students at times. Well, I have personally not researched the direct connection between student performances and humour however it does have direct connection between improved teacher’s grades in student feedback. Most of the student feedbacks that I got highlight this. The next question is where to use it? Can/should it be used for bed-side teaching, in front of the real patients? There is no consensus yet. I feel the onus lies on the teacher to judge the situation and use appropriate humour techniques (self-effacement, rather than put-down others or situational humour). Having said that, “the appropriate” humour techniques are still subjective and difficult to define. The ones I have used frequently are single liner jokes, short jokes and paronomasia. So far the techniques have worked and student responses have been very rewarding. Sometimes (I must admit), the students don’t understand the pun, and it becomes embarrassing to come out of it. But this has not deterred me from using humour in teaching sessions. I believe every human being has different nature, but tricks can be taught to “be funny”.(<http://pages.jh.edu/jhumag/0206web/bigques.html>) This applies to both teachers as well as students. For me, Humour is a fragrance in human life to make it blissful. It adds spice to life. Humor produces laughter that in turn adds years to your life by making your blood vessels more elastic and resilient.

Usually looking at old patients in Orthopaedic wards students feel pity then I crack this joke and I start as; Let’s add some years to our life An 80-year-old man is having his annual check-up. The doctor asks him how he's feeling. "I've never been better!" he replies. "I've got an 18-year-old bride who's pregnant and having

my child! What do you think about that?" The doctor considers this for a moment, then says, "Well, let me tell you a story. I know a guy who's an avid hunter. He never misses a season. But one day he's in a bit of hurry and he accidentally grabs his umbrella instead of his gun. "So, he's in the woods, and suddenly a grizzly bear appears in front of him! He raises up his umbrella, points it at the bear, and squeezes the handle. The bear drops dead in front of him." That's impossible! Someone else must have shot that bear. "Exactly”