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Imagination is Funny

By Dawn Fields

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Imagination: 1: the act or power of forming a mental image of something not present to the senses or never before wholly perceived in reality; 2a: creative ability b: ability to confront and deal with a problem: RESOURCEFULNESS c: the thinking or active mind: INTEREST 3a: a creation of the mind; especially : an idealized or poetic creation b: fanciful or empty assumption

Our imaginations are incredible things. They can be used in a positive way, such as in definition 2a, creative ability. Or they can be used in a not so incredible way such as 3b, fanciful or empty assumptions.

Most of us use our imagination to create fanciful or empty assumptions.

Let me tell you a story.

My father and mother are at my brother's house babysitting for him and his wife so that they may get away for a few days. It's their sixth anniversary.

Yesterday morning my father starts complaining of chest pains. Everyone tries to convince him to go to the doctor but he won't. He says he believes he has only pulled a muscle.

Well, word got to my uncle that my father was having chest pains so he tries to call him over at my brother's house. There is something wrong with the phone lines and the call goes straight to voicemail, and my uncle can't get through. The phone company has been working on this problem for about a week now.

Because my uncle could not get in touch with my father, he creates an entire horrible scenario in his imagination. He calls and calls but can't get through. He imagines that my father has had a heart attack and that my mother is so upset that she passes out. Now the children, my two nephews whom my parents are babysitting, are in the house by themselves and no one is watching them. This is the story he creates in his imagination. My uncle can't sleep and stays up all night worrying. The longer he

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cannot get in touch with them the more his imagination runs wild, and he begins to build more horrible images in his mind.

He calls my aunt, who also lives in the Poconos, and tells her to get in the car and drive over to my brother's house because Carnell, my father, is probably having a heart attack and Jessie, my mother, has, more than likely, passed out. He also calls my sister and tells her this incredible story.

They continue to try calling and finally, at 4:00 a.m., my sister gets through to my parents who are awoken by the phone and are now upset. You know how it is when you get a call in the middle of the night. It's usually bad news, so they are nervous and anxious when the phone rings.

Well, my mother reassured everyone that my father was fine and so was

she. Do you see how he let his imagination get the best of him? There was absolutely NOTHING to base his "story" on except the fact that my father had chest pains earlier in the day. Yet, from that brief explanation he created an entire scenario that, in his mind, became real.

That is what we do with a lot of things in our lives.

Let's say you know what your purpose is, but you are afraid to go after it. You are afraid because you have used your imagination to think of all the negative things that "could" happen.

You picture yourself as a failure. You imagine that you won't be able to make a living doing what you love. You imagine losing your house or your children starving to death because you can't support them. You imagine everyone laughing at your idea. You imagine that it will never work. You imagine that people will think you are crazy because you even THOUGHT that you could do something wonderful.

So, you do nothing. You stay on a job that you know will never pay you the type of money that you want and need. You stay on a job that just doesn't feel good to your soul. You stay on a job that stresses you out each and every day of your life because you imagine that you would die without this job. You imagine that if you weren't working there, you probably wouldn't be able to do anything else—well, with the economy as it is and all. You imagine that you'll be on unemployment for months and not have enough money to survive. NO THANK YOU! I'LL STAY RIGHT HERE AND SUFFER.

But, what if you used your imagination in a positive way? What if you imagined yourself living the life you've always wanted to live? What if you imagined yourself having all the things you want and need? What if you imagined yourself moving closer to God and God supplying all of your needs for you? What if you used your imagination and created ways that you could make a living doing the one thing that you love to do the most? What if you used your imagination and imagined that you were a multi-millionaire? What if you did this all the time? What if you imagined you living the life you've always wanted to live?

Do you know that by using your imagination in the positive way that positive things will start to happen for you?

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You will start to have ideas and thoughts that will bring you closer to what you want out of life. You will start to create things that will help you get to where you want to be and do the things that you want to do.

ACTION POINT: From this day forward, whenever you find your imagination running towards the negative—STOP. Rewind. Shift gears and use your imagination towards something POSITIVE. It takes the same amount of energy to think of something positive as it does to think of something negative. Why not create positive things in your life?

Use your imagination wisely.

Dawn Fields is a motivational speaker, author and coach. She has an amazing way of reaching you with her down-to-earth style and her ability to make the impossible seem possible. Sign up for her

FREE weekly newsletter by sending a blank email to <mailto:yourlifepurpose-subscribe@topica.com>.

Did You Hear The One About The Funny Quiz That Was Walking Past a Graveyard?

By Brian Fong

Q. My company publishes a monthly employee newsletter. My boss asked me to write a funny quiz. I'm not exactly a stand-up comic. Help!

A. Ah, the funny quiz. Lucky you! It's not often that a company has an official sense of humor that they are willing to display for all to read. This is going to be a great assignment for you!

A funny quiz is typically one where the questions and answers have no real purpose other than to make the quiz taker laugh. Although almost anything goes, there are some taboo subjects. Off hand I'd say that anything that pokes fun at a specific person, or groups of people, as well as anything that's anti-semitic, racial, sexual, political, or religious should be off limits. Remember, what one person thinks is funny can offend someone else. Even seemingly innocuous subjects like "hillbilly" or "redneck" jokes might not be funny to someone who lives in the mountains or the deep South (like I do).

You can think of a funny quiz as a series of one-liners with multiple-choice punch lines. Because you are writing for a company publication you have a built-in "affinity group" as there is bound to be some common subjects that are company related and could be made into something funny.

For example, if you work for a software development company then you might have a question that asks:

What's longer: A CEO's week or a programmer's week?

If you're not laughing then you have never had a programmer tell you that the project will be ready in a

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week.

You need to walk a fine line even when using subjects like this in your funny quiz. Say that your company just posted a 4th quarter loss because a new software product missed its launch date by a "programmer's week". It doesn't take a rocket scientist to determine that you are about to tick off a lot of people if you add that question to your funny quiz.

Try to avoid wornout jokes or cliches. A funny quiz should be funny, not lame. For example, still on the software train of thought, a question like...

Q. How many programmers does it take to change a lightbulb? A. None. They don't do hardware.

...is older than the mystery meat in that Tupperware container in the back of the lunchroom refrigerator. No one is going to laugh at that one. No laughing = not a funny quiz!

The best thing to do is to keep an eye out for humorous, safe things to poke fun at and then write a funny quiz question. My advice is to start right now and don't wait until one hour before deadline. The

only thing that's less funny than a lame funny quiz is no funny quiz at all!

Brian Fong runs the popular quiz site

Quiz Faq – Your solutions for the quiz.

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