**Ways to Use VIA Character Strengths**

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**CORE VIRTUE: TRANSCENDANCE**

**forging connections to the larger universe and providing meaning**

**IV. Humor [playfulness]:** Humor involves an enjoyment of laughing, friendly teasing, and bringing happiness to others. Individuals with this strength see the light side of life in many situations, finding things to be cheerful about rather than letting adversity get them down. Humor does not necessarily refer just to telling jokes, butrather to a playful and imaginative approach to life.

**Too much:** buffoonery

**Too little:** humorlessness, too serious

**Movies:** *Patch Adams* (1999) – Patch Addams commits himself to a mental ward and finds joy in helping his fellow patients. Disturbed by the staff’s cold and mechanical approach to their patients, he vows to change the system and enrolls in medical school. His unorthodox blend of medicine a humor brings him both praise and condemnation as he helps his patients by breaking the rules of established medical practice.

***Suggested Actions***

1. Bring a smile to someone’s face every day through jokes, gestures, and playful activities. Be observant of the moods of others and respond to them.

2. Learn a new joke three times a week and tell them to friends. Note how laughing together improves the mood of the group.

3. Watch a sitcom, funny show/movie, or read a comic daily. Clip comics and recommend shows for friends.

4. Cheer up a gloomy friend. Be an example of how to approach life with a good-natured attitude.

5. Find the fun and lighter side in most situations. Strike a balance between taking things seriously enough and not taking them too seriously.

6. Be friends with someone who has a great sense of humor. Watch how they use this strength to deal with difficult situations and bad news.

7. Impersonate someone and share this with someone close to you. Be kind and witty.

8. Go out with your friends at least once a month for bowling, hiking, cross-country skiing, biking, and such. Note how the group dynamic improves when you laugh together.

9. Make a snowman when it snows or play volleyball at the beach. Let your “inner child” enjoy the things that you enjoyed during childhood.

10. Send funny emails to your friends. Rather than simply forwarding chain letters, share humor from your own life.

11. Dress up for Halloween. Go to a costume party with friends.

12. Play with your pet daily. Observe the animal’s attitude toward play and novelty.

13. Go watch fireworks with your loved ones. Enjoy the pleasure of being outside and having fun with people you care about.

14. Go with your loved ones to a baseball, hockey, or basketball game. Really get into rooting for your team.

15. Go with your loved ones to a holiday show. If you bring children along, go to a child-themed show.