

humor persona

build a happier, healthier, and
more productive life with humor



enthusiast

YOU APPRECIATE THE HUMOR OF EVERYDAY LIFE



TAKE A PEEK INSIDE

Knowing your humor persona can be the missing ingredient to becoming more memorable, improving your connection with co-workers (and fellow humans), and enjoying life *more*.



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'Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.'

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WELCOME

Welcome Enthusiast! You're about to unlock a more productive, less stressed, and happier you by tapping into your natural sense of humor.

I know first hand how transformative learning the skill of humor can be. Growing up, I was the nerdy introverted kid who was much better with computers and video games than I was with other people. I always wanted to make friends and be social, but it was hard work and draining. I would sometimes feel awkward speaking up or dejected when I would start to share a story only for the conversation to move to another topic.

Things changed when I went to university and got pushed into doing improv comedy. While I wasn't very good to start, I had a blast learning the principles of thinking and reacting on my feet. From there, I tried my hand at stand up comedy. Once again I was terrible, but enjoyed the process and found a weird comfort in the structured nature of the art.

As I discovered, refined, and employed my sense of humor, I started noticing other changes too. I was more comfortable presenting in meetings, I was quicker to speak up, I had confidence when talking with strangers, and, when I shared stories with friends, they not only paid attention, they laughed. I also discovered that how I used humor was different than some of the other people around me, just how you use humor is different than me. Each person has a style of humor that comes more naturally to them.

Since then, I've helped more than 50,000 people, from over 100 countries on 6 continents, learn how to tap into their own humor to get better results and have more fun. I'm excited to see where your humor takes you, so let's get started!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Tarvin".

ANDREW TARVIN

Founder of Humor That Works

1. GETTING STARTED

There are 7 primary humor personas that people typically adopt: Enthusiast, Curator, Inventor, Entertainer, Engineer, Advocate, or Skeptic. It starts first with nurturing your *primary* persona.



SKEPTIC

The Skeptic discourages the use of humor.

2. OVERVIEW

As The Enthusiast, you enjoy the humor of everyday life, whether that's a funny TV show, someone trying to make you smile, or the absurdities of human existence.

What's not to laugh about being a conscious, bipedal organism on a rock hurtling through an ever-expanding universe of uncertain origin?

connotations

POSITIVE



upbeat
positive
fun

NEGATIVE



pollyanna
annoying
naive



you're in good company

Paula Abdul (*American Idol*)
Emilia Clarke (*Actor*)
Andy Richter (*Conan*)
Budai (*Laughing Buddha*)
Paul Schafer (*Letterman musician*)
Garth (*Wayne's World*)
Buddy (*Elf*)
Puumba (*Lion King*)
Elmo (*Sesame Street*)

3. BENEFITS

Each of the 7 personas come with their own strengths, weaknesses, benefits, and impact on the world around them. These are the benefits to being an enthusiast:

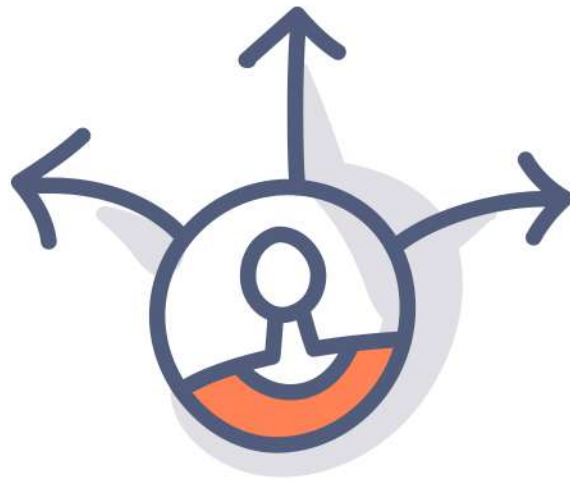


FOR YOURSELF

You take time to **appreciate the joy** in big and small things alike, and recognize that humor doesn't have to come from a punchline, it can also come from a new perspective.

As a result, you build **resilience** against the stress of everyday life, you maintain an optimistic outlook through various trials and tribulations, and you tend to have a lot of fun.

While you know that not everything is awesome, you find that **when you can laugh through life**, everything seems to be a little bit better.



FOR OTHERS

Other people also benefit greatly from your enthusiasm. You're a **pleasure to have around** as you are quick to laugh or smile, and your mere presence can boost the mood of the people around you.

You may notice that friends, family, and coworkers **come to you to vent** about their frustrations because you're able to find humor in even the toughest of situations.



*'Success is getting what you want.
Happiness is liking what you get.'*

H JACKSON BROWN

4. WATCHOUTS

As you probably know from personal experience, not all humor is created equal or considered appropriate. In addition to benefits, each persona also has some watchouts to consider.

If you always laugh, even when something isn't meant to be funny, **people can perceive this as being sarcastic** or that you're unable to have a serious moment. Not everything is a joke and not everything can be solved with a smile. To some, your constant positivity can come across as annoying or fake, especially if your humor isn't grounded in the reality of the moment. If you laugh while everyone else is serious, such as during an emotional part of a movie or a somber moment at a funeral, you **come off as insensitive or immature**.

YOU SOMETIMES HEAR...

1. "What's so funny?"

You laugh at inappropriate times, either because the moment is somber or other people are trying to be serious. While you might think you're breaking the tension, you could be undermining the situation or disrupting the concentration of those around you.

2. "I wasn't kidding."

You laugh at topics that other people deem inappropriate. Just because you find something funny, it doesn't mean other people do. By laughing at dark humor, you might create more distance between you and other people.

3. "It's not that funny."

You laugh way more than what people think is deserved, like Jimmy Fallon at anything his guest's say. Sometimes this goes hand-in-hand with a comment you make yourself only to laugh way more than anyone else.

5. ENTHUSIASTS AT WORK

The Enthusiast is a great persona to use at work, especially as a way of uplifting other people. Being present and engaged when others are presenting, talking, or simply working on a task helps them feel supported and valued.

As a leader, smiling and nodding along in a meeting (or while on video when connecting virtually) can be a **confidence boost** to the person who is presenting.

When it comes to other people using humor, no feedback is negative feedback. If someone attempts to use humor and no one reacts, it's discouraging. When you appreciate what others do, it encourages them to continue.



watchout at work

Laughter can be a sign of endorsement. If you laugh or smile, even awkwardly, at something that is offensive or prejudiced, it implies that you're okay with it.

In order to create a more equitable and inclusive workplace, there are **times when laughing is inappropriate and counterproductive.**

applications at work

1. Turn on your camera and **look engaged** when your direct report is presenting virtually.
2. Ask people about their days and be **genuinely interested** in their response.
3. **Smile when you make eye contact** with people.
4. Schedule **short humor breaks** throughout the day to relieve stress and recharge.
5. Listen to a comedy podcast on your way home from work to **strategically disengage from work** and be more present for your family.

when to use

When you want to support other people, or you just need to relieve some stress, be the **Enthusiast**. Stay engaged and celebrate the levity that other people provide.



*'Humor is not something just fun and frivolous.
It is necessary and should be encouraged.
Laughter is too good a thing to leave to chance.
Laugh and pass it along.'*

VERA ROBINSON



6. THE 7 PERSONAS

You're an enthusiast, however, there is a high likelihood that you will recognize yourself in more than one of these 7 types: **Enthusiast, Curator, Inventor, Entertainer, Engineer, Advocate and Skeptic**. That is because the way you use **humor isn't set in stone** and can change depending on the context, the people you're with, or simply how you're feeling that day.

Once you've mastered the persona that comes most naturally to you, I recommend you start exploring the other ones as well. The more **familiar you become with the other humor personas**, the more likely you are to forge meaningful connections AND the better you'll become at adapting yours to match theirs.

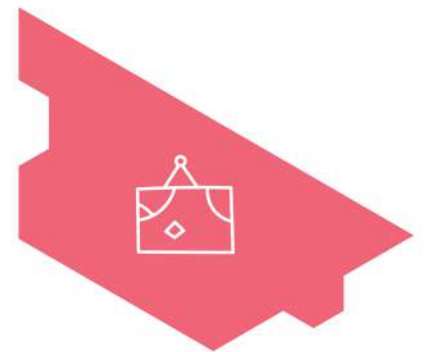


curator

AMUSES OTHERS BY SHARING WHAT AMUSES THEM

Curators like to collect and share the things that make them laugh or smile. Whether that's a funny meme, an interesting quote or stories they've picked up along the way.

They realize they don't have to create humor to curate moments of levity.



inventor

CRAFTS CURIOSITY INTO COMEDY

Inventors find satisfaction in creating humor from the things that happen to them, whether that's playing through scenarios in their head, building stories from life events, or writing jokes because it's a pun thing to do.

They understand consciously or subconsciously, comedic structure and how to compose an idea in such a way that elicits a laugh or a smile

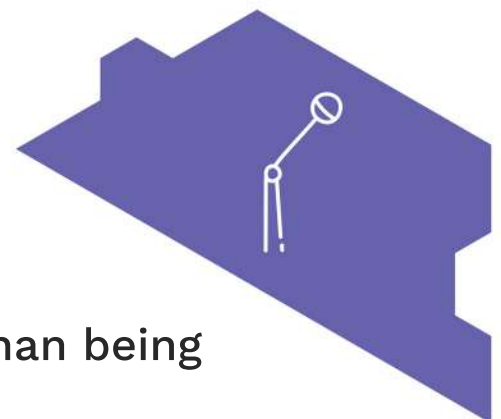


entertainer

URNS COMMUNICATION INTO PERFORMANCE

Entertainers know how to speak in such a way that other people listen, whether it's a message they planned, an idea they had in-the-moment, or simply a facial expression that says it all without saying a single word.

After all, giving a funny look is different than being funny looking.



engineer

SOLVES HUMAN CHALLENGES WITH HUMOR SOLUTIONS

Engineers make strategic use of humor to solve problems around them, whether that's making their own work more fun, getting past a sticking point or better managing the hardest resource there is to manage: humans.

Unlike computers, humans have 'emotions' and have to 'sleep' and do things out of 'joy' and not because they were programmed to.

Engineers know how to tap into positive emotions to increase productivity.

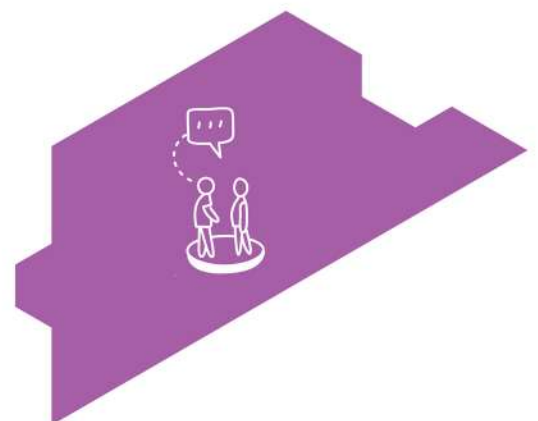


advocate

CREATES SPACE FOR OTHERS TO SHINE WITH THEIR HUMOR

Advocates encourage more joy and positivity in the world, whether that's by talking about the benefits of humor, creating opportunities for people to share their humor, or encouraging individuals to embrace their sense of humor.

One would hope that you wouldn't need to tell people to have more fun, and yet here we are.



skeptic

DISCOURAGES THE USE OF HUMOR

Skeptics doubt the use of humor, whether that's by avoiding humor themselves, discouraging others from doing it, or actively banning it from their presence.



Why turn a frown upside down when you can wipe a smirk off someone's face?

Being a skeptic isn't always bad. They understand that humor doesn't always work.



These are the 7 humor personas and, even though this report focused on your primary persona, imagine the results you'll attain and how confident you'll feel when you're able to seamlessly move from one persona to the other.

7. OPTIMIZE YOUR TEAM'S PERSONAS

Once you've refined your own humor persona, you'll be able to spot qualities from the **other personas in the people around you**, your family, friends, colleagues, even that guy in the subway who's laughing a little too loud at a video on youtube.

By knowing the personas of the people around you, you'll have a strong advantage in connecting with them and they won't even know it. Imagine being able to **set them up for success** (and fun) by putting them in positions where they can leverage their strengths. This leads to high performing teams that actually like each other and aren't on the verge of burning out.



**to humor
is to human**

If we're asking people to bring their whole selves to work, humor absolutely has to be part of the equation.

Whether you decide to do a team or organizational assessment (or not,) simply getting your team to reflect on how they choose to let their personality and **sense of humor show at work** is an incredibly valuable exercise.

THINK ABOUT THE PEOPLE ON YOUR TEAM

Who are the **enthusiasts**?

Who are the people that lift others up and how can you make sure they also feel appreciated?

What about the **curators**?

Tap into their ability to know what's going on by asking for stories, pictures, or examples whenever you need to communicate something out to the larger team.

Identify the **inventors** so they can help you create effective communication and use the **entertainers** as meeting leaders or event emcees.

Find the **engineers** so you can go to them when you need help solving a problem and leverage the **advocates** to create a more positive workplace environment.

And for the **skeptics**, encourage them to explore the type of humor they're most comfortable with and know that they may not enjoy what you do no matter how impressive or funny it is, so don't let the haters get you down.



8. WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT

Now that you have a better understanding of all the personas, let's return to you as the Enthusiast. When you're with your group of friends, you're the one who is constantly laughing or smiling, having some fun no matter the circumstances. Whereas other personas focus on using humor for a bigger purpose, **your primary goal is joy**. And honestly, isn't that enough?



Imagine humor didn't give any other benefits; it didn't burn calories, didn't build rapport, it didn't capture attention. If all it did was make you happy, wouldn't it still be worth it?

You also don't need a well constructed punchline to make you laugh. Life is absurd enough, it doesn't have to be perfectly crafted to be funny. As a result, **you may not understand why other people aren't laughing with you**, why others are so serious all the time, or why people are trying so hard to be funny.



"Time you enjoyed wasting is not wasted time."

T. S. ELIOT

9. PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

how to nurture your enthusiasm

1. Take a **"humor break"** at least once a day to watch or read something that lifts your mood.
2. **Follow funny or positive people** on social media.
3. Carry a **humor notebook**. Write down observations, thoughts, and the things that make you laugh or smile.
4. Answer the question, **"What's not wrong with my life?"**
5. Try to **smile a bit more**, even if for no reason.



RELATED SKILL

resilience

PROMISE

want to be happier?

10. NEXT STEPS

Take one "humor break" a day for at least five minutes.

bottom line

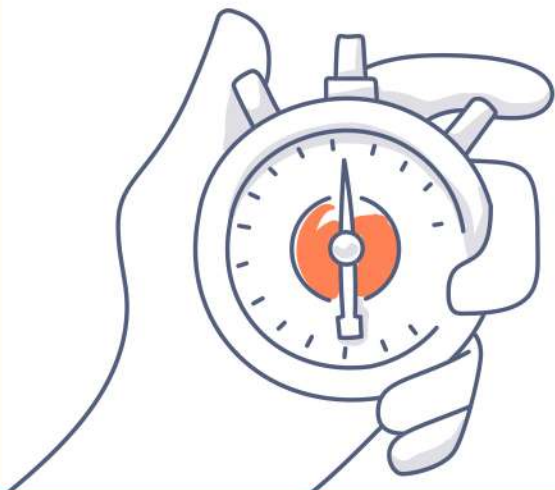
Laughing or smiling **costs you nothing**. But it can be a very easy way to encourage more humor in the workplace and more levity on your team. Just be sure that whatever you laugh or smile about is **inclusive for everyone in the workplace**.



"Laughter and tears are both responses to frustration and exhaustion. I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning up to do afterward."



KURT VONNEGUT



how well do you know your team?

Think about the people on your team right now. Which of the personas do you see? Diversity strengthens a team and makes it more cohesive. Leaders need to know how to tap into their team's variety of personas to give them the best chance to succeed.

We can also **run the assessment for your team or organization** so you can skip the guesswork and know exactly how to best leverage each person.

If you have questions, or want to learn about some of our other programs like the cubicle comedy challenge, let's connect!

Find me on LinkedIn at drewtarvin or you can reach me directly at **andrew@humorthatworks.com**.

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