

Playtime for Adults

"Laughter has been shown to increase our pain threshold, reduce blood-sugar levels, boost glucose tolerance and increase blood flow to vital organs." If that is not enough reason to laugh and play, then how about because it's fun and relieves stress?

I was excited when I came across an article on the internet called **Getting Into Goofing Off**. I loved it and it reminded that as we become adults, we forget or put aside this very important part of life. Sometimes we are so bogged down by work and personal circumstances that we stop laughing.

Something I see often in my workshops is where assistants are "afraid" to be involved in creative learning exercises and have fun in class. Some attendees think it is "silly" when I instruct them to do certain activities or they have to depict a concept visually. What happens, though, when they get to the other side of that activity, is the participant is more creative; they contribute better ideas and dig deeper for answers. They feel relaxed by the end of the day instead of feeling information overload.

When I was an executive assistant working at Coppertone in Memphis, TN, my executive was the Vice President of Marketing. He had some very intense presentations that he had to give twice a year to the big guys! My executive, Steve, was in his early 30's and I was older than him and already 17 years into my executive assistant career. He was a very social person and loved walking around and managing by interacting with his product managers. On the other hand, I was more serious and stay focused at my desk. He used to drive me crazy when a few weeks before these major presentations, when staff was stressed to the max, he would make us go to lunch! I thought, "Is he crazy? We can't afford to take 90 minutes out of our day?"

I *now* get it. I actually just took my staff for an off-site day of rest, relaxation and rejuvenation. The next day we came back to the office refreshed and excited. We buckled down to work and accomplished 50+ little details in 2 days in preparation for our big annual conference which is in September. Plus, we were so relaxed (even me), we spontaneously videotaped my new video series for executive and administrative assistants – 8 short videos! Wow! We were going to do that in late August.

This week, look for every opportunity to have some play time. What do you enjoy? What makes you laugh? Who do you like to spend free time with? Who makes you laugh? Can you spend time with a child – even if it is a neighbor?

I hope you enjoy the last week of July.

Joan