

## What I Really Need Right Now...

November 3, 2006 by [lifeshifting](#)

is to hear a good joke! You heard me. If you've got a good one...please send it on. I could use a hearty belly laugh, a little chuckle...a good guffaw! I am still here in decidedly not-so-sunny Florida and it is beginning to feel like a long week. Everyone around me is hacking away with the flu, bronchitis, a cold—something unhealthy—which is exactly what I came south to escape, having just been released from head cold bondage myself a few short weeks ago. Alas, the world is so small these days that those nasty bugs just get on the planes and follow us around. Can't we build a scanner that will zap'em as we go through the x-ray machines? That way there would be a real, tangible benefit to the ubiquitous hassle of airport security. Hah!

Anyway, what's on my mind today is levity. Laughter. Simple, light, good humor. The opposite of yesterday's post, it strikes me that on the other side of deep sadness there should always be a hearty belly laugh. It just makes sense. The old adage that "laughter is the best medicine" is surely true to a certain degree. We all need to lighten up more. Yet, with Americans dying in Iraq for no good reason, and children being enslaved in Africa, and North Korea building a bomb—not to mention John Kerry trying to be a comedian—sometimes it is hard to find the humor in life. But we must.

I suggest that not only is humor and levity an important aspect of the healing process and thus a key leverage point for Life-Shifting, but that it is an essential building block of self-esteem, even leadership. People who can laugh at themselves make better leaders. When asked how he felt about Kerry's mangled joke that supposedly insulted the soldiers in Iraq instead of the President responsible for putting them there, [Barack Obama](#) (an up and coming senator and democratic leader) said it well: "I think that we all need to lighten up a bit. Sure, Kerry may have misspoke, but I do it myself all the time. Every day I wake up and look in the mirror and ask myself if I am willing to go out in public and be humble, human, and fallible. If I can laugh at the face staring back at me, and learn not to take myself too seriously, I know that I'm still up for the job."

Coming off my crying jag in the coastal waters of south Florida (see last post), I too, recognize the importance of lightening up and not taking myself over the top with seriosity (ok, so I'm making up words now...it's fun!). At the end of the day, we are all just hurling through space on a huge dirtball, with no idea why we are here, or where we are going. You gotta laugh at that, right?

So just for today, try a little Life-Shifting levity—make up a word and toss it out in the midst of a "heavy" conversation, slip into an Irish lilt when you feel the talk getting heated, or better yet, un-leash your inner leprechaun by strolling into an Irish pub around noon (don't drive!) and levitating a Guinness. And just in case you want to get serious, even if only for a moment, with this juxtaposition of humor and healing, check out a few of these websites:

<http://www.hahainstitute.com/index.html>,  
<http://politicalhumor.about.com/library/blterrorattack.htm>  
<http://www.carolinahaha.org/>