

From
FRUSTRATION
to **FUNNY**
in
10 Seconds
Flat!



3 Steps That Work Every Time
You Actually Do Them

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From Frustration to Funny in 10 Seconds Flat

**3 Steps That Work
Every Time You Actually Do Them**

**By Vicki Hannah Lein, MS Counseling
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**"Although the world is full of suffering,
it is full also of the overcoming of it."**

~ Helen Keller, blind & deaf educator

"If you could see what I see,
you could set yourself free."

~ Vicki

"Vicki is funny and wise and
I value her friendship dearly."

~ Oprah, if she had ever met Vicki

A Funny Book About a Serious Topic

Note: You can learn how to move from frustration to funny in 10 seconds flat by going to India and living in a cave for three months, eating only yogurt and seeds.

Or -

You can roll up your sleeves, sharpen your funny bone, and learn how to stop frustrating yourself and have fun - most of the time.

Here is the main point of this book:

Life does not frustrate us. We frustrate ourselves by telling ourselves a story that invites us to feel victimized. We tell ourselves we are entitled to have whatever we want when we want it - a story guaranteed to make us miserable and insufferable.

Wow! Talk about starting a book off by heaving a bucket of ice water right straight at the reader's face! Well, yes. Wake up! You are giving your precious joy, energy, and

optimism away to strangers who change lanes without signaling or toasters that burn your cinnamon raisin bagel. You have a bad habit of frustrating yourself and now, in three steps that work every time you actually do them, you can reclaim your bouncy spirit and tremendous sense of humor.

When we practice frustrating ourselves, we raise our blood pressure, lower our immune system's ability to fight off disease, and disturb our peace of mind. We also disturb the peace of mind of those innocent people around us, such as those replicas of our DNA who are held captive in our car.

You can learn to stop frustrating yourself and start learning to find the Cosmic Joke more quickly than you can imagine. You are not being captured by Frustration and being hauled off to the Slough of Self-Righteousness. You are leaving The Land of Perspective and Funny and hurling yourself off a cliff.

Stop it. Stop it right now. Learn to stop frustrating yourself and find the funny in 10 seconds flat starting right now. You will live longer and the people around you will be happy you are living longer because you are so much more fun to be around.

Why Listen to Me?



When I lost my central vision 20 years ago, while I was in the middle of a divorce and losing my job, I had to get very good very fast at finding the funny. Every day I had the choice of focusing on what was missing in my life or what I had left. I chose to focus on what I had left, and that, my friends, has made all the difference.

I had to get used to asking for help and receiving it graciously, waiting for rides patiently, and finding the humor in situations that begged me to fall on the floor sobbing. Actually, after asking for help and not getting any, my

backup plan is to fall on the floor sobbing. I've never had to do this, but it is comforting to have a backup plan.

As a result of losing my central vision, I am kinder, more patient, more grateful, and much, much funnier. Ask anyone who knew me when I could see. I occasionally regress to my old "I want what I want and I want it right now, dammit!" self, but that happens rarely and I catch on quickly and get myself back to the truth: I am one of the luckiest people on the planet. I live surrounded by beauty and love and I've worked very hard to become the kind of person who can see that. There are many ways to be blind.

You don't have to go blind to learn how to find the funny faster, but it helps.

Just kidding. If hardship always resulted in compassion, war would end immediately, and greed would be a word dropped from the dictionary.

For our lives to be full of serenity and joy and laughter and gratitude, we need to take each situation by the horns, as it were, and wrestle it into humorous submission. "Take that, Murphy! (You of the what-can-go-wrong-will-go-wrong religion.) I befriend you! I smile in your general direction!

Make yourself this promise and change your life forever: I will not sacrifice my joy on the altar of I-did-not-get-what-I-. wanted. I will not impose my bad mood on other people because I feel I'm entitled to anything.

Hint: Make friends with Murphy and then when he strikes, you will find it funny instead of irritating, unfair, terrible, horrible, or very bad.

If I, a blind, AARP member,
can do it,
you can do it.



This book is for you if:

- You are in jail because you gave into your road rage and punched that jerk driver in the nose. Your incarceration has caused you to think that perhaps there is a better way.

- You are sick and tired of being frustrated and you are willing to entertain the idea that perhaps you are frustrating yourself.

- You did something really stupid or dangerous in a moment of frustrating yourself, such as kicking a dog and falling down the stairs (I did this once) and you don't want the Universe to up the ante and break your leg to get your attention.

- You have high blood pressure and your doctor or your friends are telling you to lighten up.

- You think you have a great sense of humor, but no one else **agrees**.

- You have a great sense of humor, but somehow you aren't able to find your funny bone when you need it most.

Frustration Prevention

An ounce of prevention as they say is worth a pound of cure. If you can commit to the following three habits, you will eliminate almost all of your frustration.

Here are three habits I practice on a daily basis that keep my brain working, get the best out of everyone I encounter, and increase my life expectancy.

Habit #1: Make Their Day

Habit #2: Create a Back Story that Makes You Laugh or Fills You with Compassion

Habit #3: Make Friends with Murphy

Habit #1: Make Their Day

This is one of the rules of improvisation (see Tina Fay's book **Bossypants**) that helps make the world go around more cheerily: make the other person look good.

What if, all day long, your goal were to make the day of that clerk in the grocery store, the gas station attendant, or even the teller in the bank? These people will laugh or smile at the smallest provocation. They are happy for a friendly, human connection. As a result of practicing this habit, I've had bank tellers ask if they could follow me around all day.

"Sure," I say, "but following me around all day doesn't pay well -- in monetary terms, anyway."

Here is what Making Their Day looks like:

Smile. Research shows that smiling changes your brain chemistry. When you smile your brain is too stupid to know if you are really happy or not. It starts kicking in those delicious mood altering chemicals. Yum.

Not only that, smiling changes the atmosphere for everyone around you. It's free and it takes fewer muscles to smile than frown, right?

Comment on something they are doing well. "I wish I could pack a bag that quickly," you might say to the guy at Trader Joe's who is cheerfully stuffing your sack with goodies. Ever notice how friendly and helpful the staff is at Trader Joe's? I think their job is to make YOUR day. Make their day right back at them. You'll show them, by golly, who is the Queen of Making Their Day!!

Make some kind of joke about something, anything. Clerks are an easy laugh. Almost everyone is an easy laugh except custom agents. I do not chitchat with them, but I do smile. If you do not have a good sense of humor yet, keep smiling.

Say something complementary and true: "You make the best chocolate croissants in town. I feel as if I'm back in France."

That's enough for now. Give it a try. You will change your body chemistry.

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