

## **What's Your Laugh Quotient?**

*By De'Etta Goecker - PWOC-CR Internet Information Coordinator/ Goodfellow AFB  
PWOC President*

***“A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.”  
Proverb 17:22 KJV***

This verse is well known and loved by many. Let's take a few minutes to unpack its meaning. In the original language of the Old Testament this verse reads, “A merry heart does good medicine”. Do you feel like you could use a good dose of medicine in your life? The word 'merry' means, “joyful, glad, to show joy, those who rejoice.” (Strong's #8056).

Joy is far deeper than “happy feelings.” "Merry" does, however, specifically encompass outward expressions of joy. It is said that the average toddler will laugh at least 400 times a day. The average adult laughs only 68 times a day. It is good for us to cultivate an attitude of joy and gratitude. It is good for us to “show joy” even on the days that are less than joyful from our natural perspective. A merry heart, choosing joy, does US good. A merry heart truly IS good medicine.

The second half of this Proverb goes on to tell us, "But a broken, stricken, wounded (Strong's #5218) spirit dries our bones". Dry bones become brittle. They are in danger of breaking and often cannot bear the weight that is needed to daily function. Is my spirit brittle? Can my spirit bear the weight that I'm called to bear in my daily life? Bones also contain marrow - a source of blood (life) in the body. A broken, wounded spirit dries up the marrow of our spiritual life. Could it be that God commands us to “choose joy” (James 1:2), “rejoice always” (Phil 4:4), “give thanks in everything” (I Thess 5:16) because he KNOWS that doing so is medicine to our wounded spirits and vital to a healthy spiritual life?

It is interesting that the word merry can also mean “those who rejoice”. Those who rejoice do good medicine. I so want to be a balm, an agent of healing to those around me, to those who need a dose of good medicine. This appears to be a good place to begin.

I am making a conscious effort to show joy and to cultivate a merry heart even when I feel dry and wounded. I'm not sure how God does it; I only know that time and again He meets me with gracious healing as I begin to exercise my less than merry heart.

From the Old Testament all the way through the New Testament, we see a thread of joy. If God repeated it so often; it's important. I plan to up my laughing stats. I may not get up to a toddler's quota of 400 laughs a day, but surely, I can do better than 68 times. Honestly, I've been laughing far too little. On those days when I can't manage laughter, I at least plan to smile more. This will be good for me, as well as for those around me.