



Humor on the Brain: A Tool for Learning
Mary Kay Morrison

Description of Workshop

Educators are facing new accountability requirements, an increasing focus on standards, and new societal pressures that impact the learning process. Stress increasingly permeates the learning process in our educational systems. This session explores current research on the impact that stress has on both learning and living. Research on the psychology of humor will be explored along with the benefits of humor and laughter as a therapeutic strategy for coping with stress. Participants will examine the neuroscience of humor and review how these strategies can be implemented to create a positive school climate.

Competencies/ Objectives

- Participants will be able to describe the impact of stress on the brains of adults and students
- Participants will be able to compare the differences between the research-based benefits of laughter, happiness and humor.
- Participants will explore the value of play as it relates to mental illness.
- Participants will be able to identify the benefits of laughter as a therapeutic intervention.
- Participants will be able to identify strategies to use in the workplace in order to incorporate a positive framework in the cultural health of the organization.
- Participants will be able to define several ways to cope with stress.

Mary Kay Morrison is the director of Humor Quest <http://www.questforhumor.com/> and has spent over 25 years teaching and promoting the benefits of healthy humor. She is author of numerous articles and books including: “Using Humor to Maximize Living” which is the text for many university humor studies classes. She is past- president of AATH (The Association for Applied and Therapeutic Humor) and a faculty member of the AATH Humor Academy graduate program in humor studies. She was awarded the 2016 AATH Lifetime Achievement Award.