

Caring Classrooms: A Case for Play and Humour

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Purpose

Descriptive Study

- Two Classes of University Students (Nursing, Recreation and Leisure Studies)
- Perspectives on the Concepts of Caring
- Role of Play and Humour in the Classroom?
- Rapport, Empathy, Enjoyment, Relational, Humane, Increased Enthusiasm and Motivation for Education

Ann Marie in a Nursing Class (Fish Out of Water?)

Anatomy 101

- **There are only 3 bones in the body that are absolutely essential**
- **The backbone**
- **The wishbone**
- **And the funny bone**



Melanie in a Humour Class (Lamb To the S-laughter?)

What is Humour?

- **Why Should You Care?**
- **What do You Know?**
- **What are the Benefits?**



Skeletal Framework

3 Bones

- **Wishbone—Professional Status (Superiority Humour)**
- **Backbone—Prevent Burnout (Abusual Humour)**
- **Funny bone—Preparing Alternatives (Incongruity Humour)**



3 Theoretical Perspectives

- **Superiority**

- **Arousal**

- **Incongruity**

(Physical & Cognitive)

Superiority Theory (Hobbes)

- Functions?
- Communicate “Status” Messages
- Challenges People in
“Positions of Power”



GOOD
THINKING,
WILSON!



Ontario

HOSPITAL & CASINO



WIN!
YOUR
PROCEDURE!
Details inside



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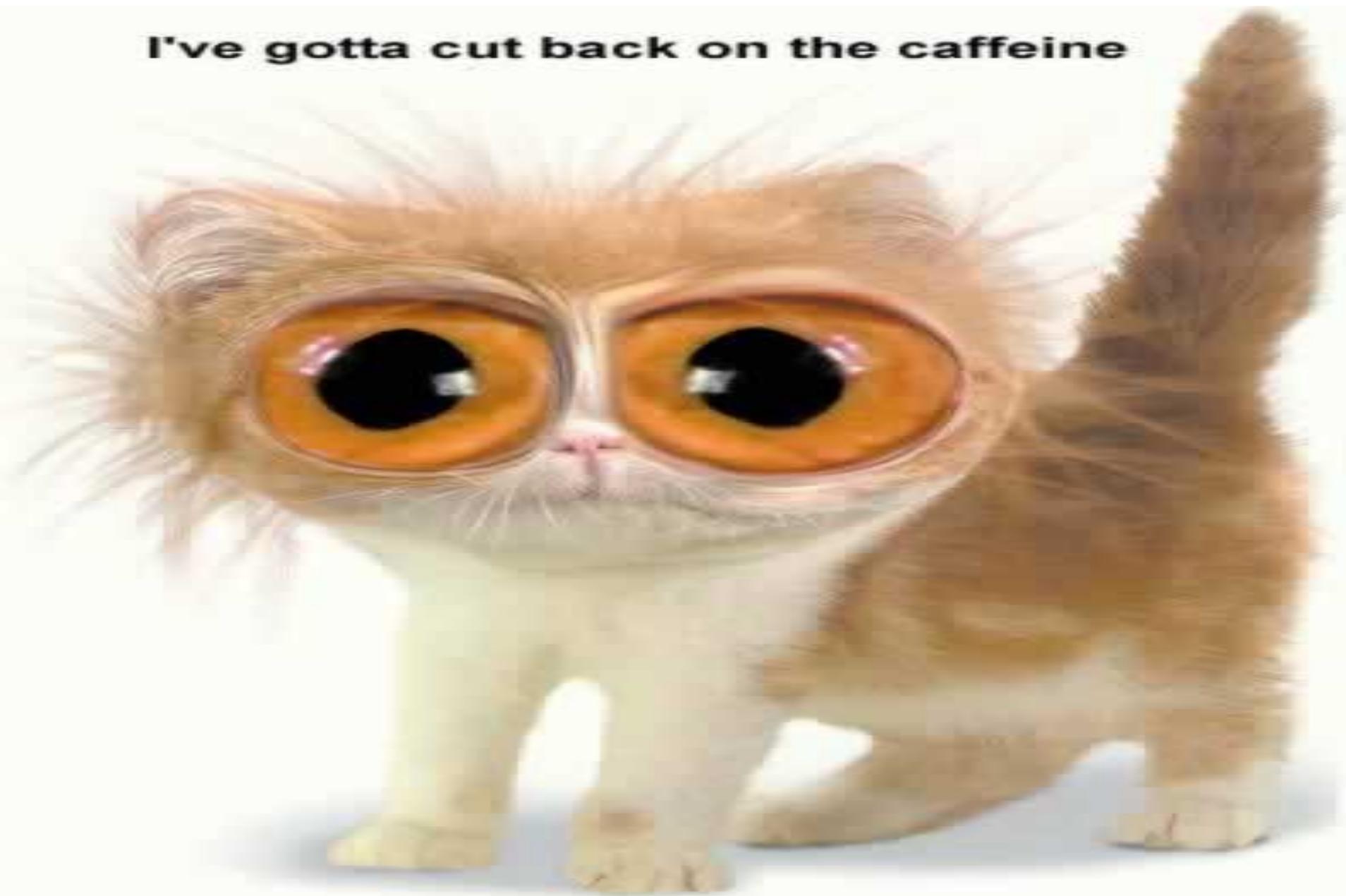
NAZAR, '96

Arousal Theory (Freud)

Functions?

- Manage Trauma/Stress

I've gotta cut back on the caffeine





I HAVE ONE NERVE LEFT,
AND YOU'RE GETTING ON IT.

Seven Dwarfs of menopause

Itchy Bitchy Sleepy Forgetful
Sweaty Bloated All-dried
Up



Shanice

Incongruity Theory (Bergson)

- Functions?
Unexpected “World of the Possible”
- Caring and Humane

Functional Benefits

- **Collaboration**
- **Coping**
- **Caring**

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.” (Leo Buscaglia)

Melanie in a Humour Class (Lamb To the S-laughter?)

What is Humour?

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What is Humour?

- Question 1: Define what humor means to you (definition from text with their ideas)
Responses:
- “a personality trait, playful act, something that makes me laugh in pictures or words”
- “making light of a situation; making fun without hurting someone’s feelings”
- “a way of reducing stress & keeping our everyday lives fun”

More-On (Moron) What is Humour?

- “any experience that promotes a good feeling”
- “something unexpected, ridiculous, silly; anything that makes me chuckle on the inside or out”
- “an expressive communication; state of being”
- “a tool for life; lightening up and disengaging”
- making best of an awkward situation in life

Why Should You Care?

Curricula

- Who CARES?
 - Gap in the literature because no student perspective
 - Back to our roots (professional)
- “Caring is the essence of nursing” Leninger
- Caring is the essence of education

Characteristics of Caring

- human
- moral imperative
- deals with affect
- interaction
- therapeutic
- relational

What are the Benefits?

- “a way of reducing stress & keeping our everyday lives fun”
- “recognizing the difference between a good day and a bad day”
- “a positive aspect in my life that I use to connect with others”
- “health and feeling good”

What are the Benefits?

- “to forget what’s bothering you”
- “increases mood and helps me to deal with stress”
- “play, have fun, entertainment”
- “creates feelings of happiness or playfulness”
- “able to laugh with your friends, at your mistakes”

Premise of Classroom Pedagogy

“Without care we are treated as objects,
(Potential Objectification of Education)

we lose our sense of our own purpose, we
become victims of a dehumanizing system
(Apathetic Students and Faculty)

as we seek out the smile and care of the one who
attends us” (Freshwater & Stickley, 2004)
(Need for Play and Humour in Classrooms)

Premise of Classroom Pedagogy

“Being a model for play and humour will do more than any teaching.”

- Educators must be able to define and describe caring in a way that can be modeled and learned before caring becomes an integral part of a person’s way of being in life and at work.

"When a teacher asks a question in class and a student responds, she receives not just the "response" but the student. What s/he says matters, whether it is right or wrong, and s/he probes gently for clarification, interpretation, contribution. S/he is not seeking the answer but the involvement of the cared-for. For the brief interval of dialogue that grows around the question, the cared-for indeed "fills the firmament." The student is infinitely more important than the subject matter." ~ Nel Noddings, *Caring, a Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*

“Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow.” Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*