

WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

The Secret Sauce is Laughter



Annette in the early 1980s, showing her younger self's "mad" face. (Courtesy photos)

What a way to start the day! I was having one of the most absurd dreams I've ever had. Suddenly, I started snickering. Then giggling—at the fact that I was snickering—all while still asleep.

My giggles were soon followed by my hubby's chuckles—in his sleep. When he fully woke and asked what was so funny, my giggles turned into belly laughs. We both hee-hawed until the bed shook with our amusement.

I'm reminded of the famous

phrase, "Laugh and the world laughs with you." My hubby certainly couldn't help but laugh along, even though he had no idea why I was laughing.

I couldn't stop smiling throughout the day. Every so often, I'd recall the laughter-filled night and start laughing again. It turned out to be one of the most pleasant, delightful days I can remember. I found humor in everything.

I've read about the health benefits of humor and laughter.

Besides the physical benefits often listed, studies say the ability to find humor in our life experiences—even in extremes—can help us look at our problems in a fresh way. Seeing humor in difficult situations can also normalize our experiences and make them feel less overwhelming.

Think about the everyday situations often portrayed in comedy sitcoms. It's usually when everything is going wrong—again and again—that we laugh the most. I wonder if, in real life, we

can laugh at ourselves on those days when everything seems to go wrong. And I think it may be good for us if we could.

I believe the ability to laugh at ourselves keeps us from taking ourselves too seriously and helps keep our egos in check.


My country boy would agree with me when I tell you, in our early married years, I had a short fuse and would get mad at him about this and that. As my mamma would say about her baby girl, my lips would puff



and pout.

After my angry outbursts and his response, when we'd find ourselves glaring at each other in a standoff of wills, we'd often begin laughing. Honestly, one of the times humans look the most ridiculous is when we're angry.

The wonder of those moments—when anger gave way to laughter—was that whatever caused the anger in the first place suddenly seemed smaller. Our shared laughter has been the secret sauce—helping us make whatever adjustments felt fair and reasonable to resolve what needed resolving.

I can definitely say waking up laughing is a better way to start the day than getting up on the wrong side of the bed. And even when I don't wake up laughing, I'll do my best to find humor in each day. I just have a feeling it'll help keep life happier, lighter, and problems more solvable. 



Even if you don't wake up laughing, try your best to find humor in every day. (Courtesy photo)

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