

Perk Perkins collection of entertaining, humorous and motivational columns.

The Smile Factor

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The Smile Factor

Perk Perkins

This book is a collection of **Perk Perkins** humor and inspiration columns which have appeared in **The Nixa Xpress Newspaper** each week since 2007. He also writes a column for **The Wall Street Journal** and **USA Today**.
(But they won't publish it.)

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The Smile Factor

What is the Smile Factor? Not counting this goofy little book and my weekly newspaper column, the Smile Factor is a theory. The Smile Factor is at first an experiment, second a realization and finally a way of life. If it could be put into a simple definition, it would be this; Anyone (The Smiler) who shows off a great big smile to another person (The Smilee) is causing an internal, positive reaction to take place in that person. This reaction in the Smilee has both instant and time released effects in their mental, physical and spiritual health.

Simultaneously, the Smiler enjoys the same instant and time released benefits, but to an even greater degree. The Smiler understands the concept and is a regular practitioner of the Smile Factor and therefore continues to receive compound benefits daily, like interest at the bank! When a kind greeting or warm, positive conversation is added to the Smile, the benefits to both parties are multiplied tenfold!

Grumpy people really need a smile and a warm greeting. True Smile Factor practitioners go out of their way to smile at grumpy people. It's a fun challenge to see if you can get a positive reaction from a grumpy person. We can't get them on board overnight, but I promise you if you are not Smiling at them, no one is.

Are you going through a rough time right now? How bad is it. Are you sitting in a jail cell or lying in a hospital bed? Are you in a waiting room in a hospital as your loved one undergoes a surgical procedure? Work problems, relationship troubles, worried about your children? It seems that suffering is as much a part of life as joy. I hope that something you read in The Smile Factor, will lessen your suffering and increase your joy, cause your face to break open and maybe you can forget your troubles if only for a little while.

QUOTES

"I don't like to commit myself about Heaven and hell...you see I have friends in both places." **Mark Twain**

"Don't tell your problems to people; eighty percent don't care and the other twenty percent are glad you have them!" **Lou Holtz, Notre Dame football coach.**

Things I believe!

In my last column I wrote about how I was tired of going with the flow and nodding in agreement every time someone would make a point or a fact that I thought was ludicrous. The 'going along to get along' mentality has taken a toll on my creative, fun loving, sarcastic character. So last week I mentioned just a few of the things I've heard over the years that I don't believe. Here are a few things that I DO believe.

I believe that in every life some rain must fall, but when can I finally take off these hip-waders?

I believe that the children are our future, but what the heck do we do with them right now?

I believe the first snowfall of the year is like a visit from your mother-in-law. At first you're glad to see it, but after a couple days you're ready for it to melt and go away.

I believe the Beatles had it right when they sang, "All you need is love, love is all you need". I also believe they had it right when they sang, "Can't buy me love." I think when they sang, 'we all live in a yellow submarine', they should have sang something about love instead.

I believe if you let a smile be your umbrella you may drown, but at least you would go smiling. (And probably gurgling)

I believe my mother was a saint.

I believe the Roadrunner has an amphetamine problem and a death wish.

I believe if I smile really big at someone, they won't notice my crappy shoes.

I believe my father was a hero.

I believe that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone and now he is where he belongs, separated from God and is really alone.

I believe in first impressions and second chances.

I believe that most people in Missouri don't realize their cars are equipped with turn signals.

I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for our sins, was buried, rose on the third day, ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God.

I believe that many celebrities have an amphetamine problem and a death wish.

I believe if someone offered me 'a penny for my thoughts', they would ask for a refund.

Okay next week I will write about things I believed at one time but now have carefully reconsidered and I'm thinking about changing my mind to a different point of view. Or maybe something about Christmas!

Three Seconds

Tom was reading the newspaper in his kitchen one morning when he heard a high pitched scream. He jumped up as quickly as his seventy-year old legs would allow and dashed to the front door. As he looked outside he found the source of the commotion. A viscous Doberman had 2 small children pinned against a tree in Tom's front yard. The dogs ears were laid back, his teeth were flashing and he was growling savagely at the kids.

Tom yelled forcefully at the dog hoping to scare him away, but the dog instead crept closer to the children. The kids, a boy and a girl, looking to be six or seven years old were crying hysterically. It appeared the dog was seconds away from attacking and nothing was going to distract him.

With no time to call for help, Tom grabbed his rifle from the hall closet and ran back to the front door. As he tried to open the bolt action and slide a thirty-ought-six shell into the chamber, he dropped the bullet. Quickly he bent down and retrieved the shell and with difficulty was finally able to load the rifle.

He leaned against the door jam and raised the rifle up. It was then that he realized the impossibility of the shot. It wasn't very far; even an average person could shoot the animal from that distance. But Tom suffered from Parkinson's Disease. His arms, especially the right, flailed violently and uncontrollably, as if he were swatting at imaginary bees. His head jerked wildly as well with no way to take careful aim at the beast.

In the 1960's, there was little in the way of medications or treatments to calm the tremors and muscle spasms caused by the disease. Tom was helpless to stop the wild movements even for an instant. He was a family friend and as a child I remember how good natured and happy he was, despite living a tortuous life of constant, uncontrolled movement.

Just as Tom raised the shaking rifle up to his face, the Doberman attacked the girl. She turned away and the dog sunk his teeth into her jacket, luckily missing the flesh. It was then that Tom prayed simply, "Just give me three seconds Lord."

Instantly Tom's arms, his head, his whole body relaxed and came into submission. He leveled the rifle, picked his mark and squeezed the trigger slowly. Boom, the dog fell over dead and the kids ran to Tom's door. By the time the hysterical children reached Tom, the tremors had returned.

I never knew Tom to complain about his disease and he was in fact grateful for those 3 seconds of peace.

Chain Letters

I would like all my friends, relatives and acquaintances to read this column very carefully. Stop sending me chain letters in my email! They are a waste of time and valuable space on the Internet.

Back before the invention of email the postman would bring chain letters to your door. I stopped believing in the special power of the chain letter when years ago I received one that read something like this, *'Copy and send this letter to 10 of your friends and you will come into a large sum of money within 7 days. If you break the chain, something very bad will happen to you. Kyle McMillan didn't believe it and threw away his letter and broke the chain. Twenty-four hours later, his wife left him!'*

I remember wondering if Kyle broke the chain, how did I get this letter? And I always seemed to get chain letters from the same people over and over. I know those folks never came into a large sum of anything, let alone cash. Why did they keep sending them out?

Also, I happen to know Kyle McMillan and when his wife left him it was the happiest day of his life! She constantly nagged and henpecked the man until he was afraid of his own shadow. The poor guy almost starved to death because she was the worst cook I've ever known. Kyle had the only dog in the world that would beg for Alka-Seltzer. No, that was Kyle's lucky day.

At least back then, when a friend sent you a chain letter you knew they had gone to a lot of trouble. They had to make copies, then hand address all the envelopes, stuff them, seal them, buy stamps and mail them. You knew that these people were simple minded, gullible and possibly dangerous. But, one thing they weren't was,

lazy! You have to appreciate the kind of dedication and desire it took to be a moron in those days. Here in the computer age you can become an idiot with the touch of a button.

Along with the email chain letters, I don't want to be forwarded amazing pictures that are fake, incredible stories, that are phony and I really don't have time to read your, joke of the day! I pick up The National Enquirer, The Globe, US Magazine, The Springfield Newsleader and The Nixa XPRESS every week, so I get my fill of that sort of stuff.

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