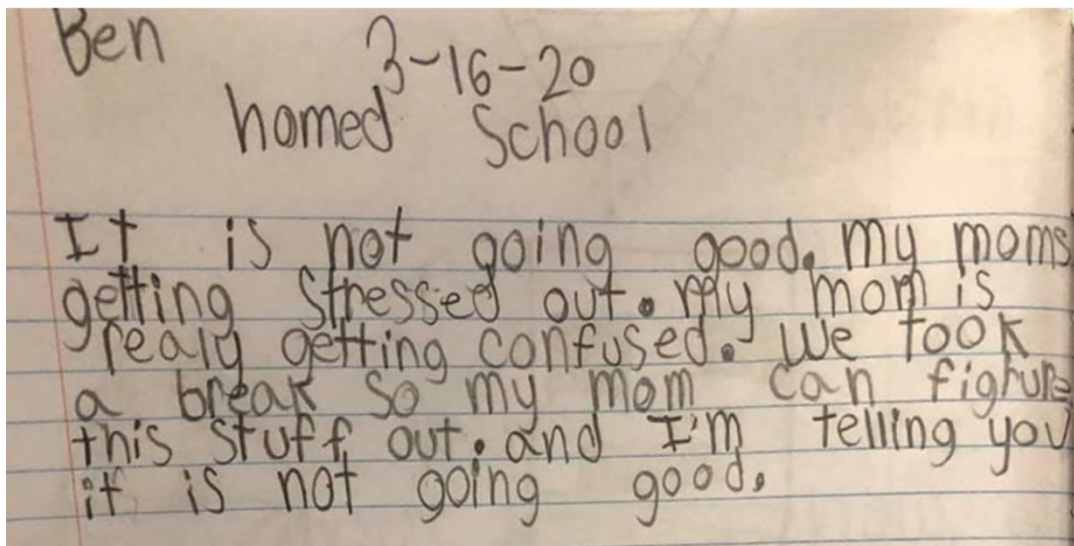


10 Ways to Laugh During the Time of Corona

If our spirits are down during quarantine, Coronavirus, and business closures, don't let humor die. In a time of hardship, jokes are a relief, a distraction, and are a connection to humankind at large. They offer universal experiences, collective therapy, a distraction to the pandemic, and most of all, reassurance that we are not alone. We may not have any control about political decisions or the path of destruction the virus will follow, but at least we can laugh. Our time, along with its jokes, should be preserved and left accessible for future historians and to the public at large. Since the middle of May, I've been working with Arizona State University creating a [fast-response archive](#) to preserve our experiences, thoughts, and images in this time of Coronavirus. Many people around the world haven't lost their sense of humor and funny memes are found everywhere and I am working to preserve them in the Humor collection within the archive. During my time working on this collection with ASU, I realized that what makes us laugh these days is important to preserve. The collection features topics such as our leaders' response to the virus, homeschooling, remote work, family life during quarantine, and so much more. The archive also contains heartwarming and inspiring stories of how humor has helped many deal with loss and hardship.

Homed School

The humor collection features such items as little Ben's journal written during his first day of second grade at home. In his newly minted uneven printing and oversized punctuation he titles his first journal entry "homed school."¹ He sums up his moms (sic) confusion with, "I'm telling you it is not going good."



A woman named Candice Hunter Kennedy from Verona, Kentucky received this report card from her son Ben on the first day of their homeschooling journey. (Source: Facebook: Candice Hunter Kennedy)

1. Shellie Sylvestri, "Y'all I'm dying!!!": Mom shares son's hilarious note on her homeschooling skills," March 20, 2020, <https://www.nbc12.com/2020/03/21/yall-im-dying-mom-shares-sons-hilarious-report-card-her-homeschooling-skills/>.

Leave Me Alone. Please!

One of my favorite videos in the Humor Collection was created by the Holderness family. This couple is working from home without any, and I mean *any*, distance between them. He's in the kitchen on the phone, she's 2 feet away, typing. He goes upstairs to the office, she sits at his feet and makes a call. He decides to get some exercise on the trampoline in the yard, she plops herself down cross-legged and starts working on her laptop. Then the day is finally over, and at dinnertime she asks, "How was your day?" He replies, as he tries to elbow out some personal space, "You should know, you were right there *every* second of it!"

Working From Home

Zoom video conferencing was the new way to hold business meetings and seminars. People's questionable computer skills were revealed and *The Onion*, a sort of *Mad Magazine* of the Internet, wrote the headline, "Breaking News: Nation Close to Getting Videoconferencing Software to Work." It added, if you stuck your head out the window, you can hear all 327 million Americans saying in unison, "Hello, hello, okay, I can see you now, but I can't hear you—is there something else I need to do?"²

Along with the Zoom software glitches were children and pets interrupting even the major news outlets by walking across the screen, announcing that they can't find their other shoe or demanding to know how long Mommy or Daddy will be "sitting there." The first breach that caught the national eye occurred on BBC news when in the middle of a serious broadcast about North Korea, a toddler appears moving like a bandleader in front of a 100-piece marching band. She's waving her arms with all the fanfare and enthusiasm only a three-year-old can muster. A few seconds later, the baby scoots through the door in her walker. Next, Mom slides through the door in a full panic, and very unceremoniously grabs those kids and yanks them back out.

We also discovered the new definition of "business casual." Will Reeve, a *Good Morning America* reporter will never live down the shot of his bare thigh being shown on national television.

2. "Nation Close to Getting Videoconferencing Software to Work," *Theonion.com*, March 23, 2020, <https://www.theonion.com/nation-close-to-getting-videoconferencing-software-to-w-1842456277>.



Photo: PerezHilton.com

Although a participant could get away with remaining comfortable in pajamas on the bottom or even nothing down there, the camera also showed the surroundings—with unsuspecting and undressed family members in it. You’ve got to wonder: When the pandemic has passed, what will the office Christmas party be like when the workers and spouses show up fully dressed? We will not forget!



Composite: Lyn Ribisi

What Are the Rules?

If you happen to be as confused about what we should and should not do, have a look at the video by singer and comedienne, Adley. She holds a mock press conference to “clear up any

3. “GMA Reporter Caught Wearing NO PANTS During Video Chat Segment!,” *PerezHilton.com*, accessed July 30, 2020, <https://perezhilton.com/gma-reporter-will-reeve-no-pants/>.

confusion.” She imparts such gems as “You must not leave the house. For any reason. Unless of course, you have a reason. Then...you may leave the house.” “Stores are closed. Unless...they are open.” “This virus is deadly....But don’t be afraid of it.” “You must homeschool your children unless you have: poor internet access, more than one child, or work from home.” “Baking cakes can be considered math, science, or art.” “Don’t go out. Unless you have to.” “Stay home. Unless you have to go out.”⁴

For a heartwarming story, turn to the account of a father who was depressed because of his isolation in quarantine. His daughter dug out the book, *Exceptionally Bad Dad Jokes*, and he started posting one groaner every day on a whiteboard in his front yard. Once he heard the first chuckle from a passerby, his life took on a new purpose—making others happy during these difficult times. Humor made his life worth living again.⁵

The Journal of the Plague Year

Our jokes, laughter, and humor hold us together and offer us a life raft in troubled times. Experts agree that laughing during stressful times is very therapeutic, so grab onto that raft, ride it, and use its life-saving qualities to heal and make it through these crazy times which give the phrase “going viral” a whole new meaning.

Keywords: Humor, jokes, laughter, therapy, memes, underwear, videoconferencing, Zoom, family life, remote work, homeschool

4. Adley, “Here’s What We All Should Be Doing Right Now,” Instagram, April 21, 2020, https://www.instagram.com/p/B_PrVZdhMiR/.

5. Allison Klein, “Maryland Man Posts Daily ‘Bad Dad Jokes’ in His Front Yard to Ease Stress of Coronavirus Stay-at-Home Orders,” May 10, 2020, <https://www.baltimoresun.com/coronavirus/bs-md-covid-bad-joke-maryland-20200510-uxerpvwf3ffbdzxibivsyfzza-story.html>