

Preparation for Session S79 - April Fools

The preparation for this session is essential, as much of the discussion will involve how you felt about doing the things you did.

Call them fools, sacred clowns, tricksters, or court jesters every society has them. From Loki and Coyote to Emmett Kelly and Whoopi Goldberg there need to be people and characters whose job it is to hold a mirror up to society by turning things upside down. Often, these characters simply behave in a way that is outside the norm – in effect, challenging what is “normal” and forcing us to think about it. In many cultures, the clown is even allowed to do things that might be considered sacrilegious, highlighting what is sacred to us and forcing us to think about it.

As preparation for this session, you are asked to do something that is outside of normal – something that will probably make you feel uncomfortable – and to pay attention to the reactions of the people around you, as well as to how your own feelings change as you go through the process. Please do at least one of the following things during the coming weeks.

1. Put on a clown face (white face, or just a clown nose or wig) and go out in public for an hour or so. Do this in silence – just walk around a busy area smiling at people. You might want to add handing out small candies or pennies.
2. Wear something silly on your feet (bunny slippers, swimming flippers) to do the grocery shopping. Do this without comment.
3. When you are out in public, do something unexpected: do a somersault or cartwheel, walk backwards for a while, hold a book or newspaper upside down and pretend to be reading – anything that will make people look at you and wonder what on earth you are up to.
4. Spend a day out shopping making eye contact and smiling broadly at everyone you see.
5. Make a list of four or five activities that you think are foolish. Do at least one of them.

In addition to doing those things, think about humor and its place in your life. Read through a joke book or go online to read jokes. Some suggested sites are:

<http://www.netfunny.com/rhf/>

http://www.humor.com/html/j_a/

<http://www.lotsofjokes.com/>

What things do you find funny? Why? Are there things that make other people laugh that don't affect you? Are there things that make you laugh that others do not find funny? Do you know why?

Choose one joke you like, and tell it to several people.

Finally, be sure to bring a joke to share at your next Small Group Ministry session! Remember that there is a limited amount of time in each session, so this should be a relatively short joke.