

## Laughter Is the Soul of Wit

By CC Huffhines

Why have Jack Benny and Bob Hope become so famous? It was because of their witty stories that made us laugh and laugh. This tendency to laugh loudly at their jokes drew us to these men and in the process made us feel better about ourselves. Even a smile from anyone present lifts our spirits, no matter the bad day we might be having.

*Laughter Yoga* currently is very popular. My daughter is a participant. This revolutionary exercise from India involves intentional laughter, as each person is required to look at another person, eye to eye, and initiate laughter as a body exercise. The body cannot distinguish between fake and real; one soon gets real physiological and psychological benefits. *Laughter Yoga* involves deep breathing that improves both body and brain; laughter has proven to lower the level of stress hormones in the blood.

Honest laughter is a priceless gift we can give to anyone in our presence. The keyword is "honest". Belly laughs improve our health and those around us, too.

Laughter is so powerful that it often is used in mockery. Laughing at someone's deficiency is dishonest ... laughing at obesity ... laughing at one's financial problems ... laughing at one's failure in business. All are misuses of laughter. Laughter employed in this manner creates many new situations that damage people.

Often, we mistake clever sarcasm, a form of humor, as something worthwhile in making judgements about other people. This is a dangerous situation that requires subtle new thinking.