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Back to all Blog Posts

February 15, 2013 at 2:21pm

SOUTH SOUND SIDEKICK: Exposing a clown in four questions

By Volcano Staff 0 Comments and 1 Reaction



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JUSBY THE CLOWN: He knows how to throw a pite al a face. Do you?

South Sound Sidekick series offers advice from experts living in the, well, South Sound. It posts every Friday. Today, Jusby the Clown will help you discover if you or a loved one is clown material.

Jusby the Clown writes,

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If you suspect that you or a loved one might be a clown you might want to seek professional help.

First, know that clowning exists on a continuum with mutually exclusive elements but some characteristics are shared across historical, geographical and cultural boundaries. Clowns use memorization and improvisation with their voices, bodies and props to entertain, educate and ease suffering. **So ask: "Is this potential clown using one or more of these tools to achieve one of these results?"**

The clown archetype has roots as ancient as the Trickster animals in origin myths, and the first human clowns were wounded healers or medicine people. We've always needed clowns. They tell stories with lessons that

can be overt or subtle. They speak truth to power. **Ask: "Is this potential clown teaching others through mischief?"**

In modern times a class clown may have the mad gifts that go with a diagnosis from the DSM like ADHD or Asperger's, and these clowns need to be shown how to channel their energies and insights into appropriate venues. This is their biggest challenge because one of the defining characteristics of a clown is their INAPPROPRIATENESS! One way to discover if you're dealing with an emergent clown is to note the type and timing of 'inappropriate' behavior such as word play, puns, rhymes, reversals, exaggerations, distortions of size and tempo, repetition, reversals, repetition, reversals, non sequitur, rubber chickens – general bizarreness both in society and in seclusion. These may indicate possession of Clown-Spirit. They must exercise those skills by performing to laughter and applause to satisfy the compulsion. Temporarily. **Ask: "Is this potential clown bubbling and bumbling with unregulated impulses to blurt and 'misbehave'?"**

The root of the word clown means clumsy. Clowns achieve successful engagement with their audiences by showing our human foibles, failing repeatedly until reaching an innovative solution. Another great challenge of a clown is to become graceful and at ease manipulating their bodies, voices, and props. To meet the goals of entertaining, educating or easing suffering a clown will safely transition between confident incompetence and uncertain proficiency. And back. **Ask: "Does this potential clown make easy things look hard and hard things look easy?"**

If you or a loved one answered YES to these questions, seek immediate professional assistance. Unsupervised emergent clowns can become a liability to themselves and their communities. **A well-cared for clown will improve the quality of life for the society that adopts it.**

I call out to all who self-identify as clowns (Buffoons, Comedians, Fools, Jesters, and Pranksters, et al.) to help preserve and improve the field of clowning by collaborating as mentors and mentees. **As the Diet Coke is to the Mentos, so shall Elders hold sacred carbonated space and direct the natural exuberance of Young Clownlings to greater heights.**

Jusby the Clown is a founding member of the Olympia Clown Collaborative, a welcoming community that provides support, encouragement and mentorship to First of Mays and evolving clowns, allowing them to progress toward their uniquely realized selves. He has pried over 750 willing faces including Dr. "Patch" Adams. He is also a Certified Laughter Yoga leader and graduate of the Simple Fool's Silly School of Top-Secret Esoteric Clowning. Connect with him online at <http://jusbythec clown.com>