

Humor Can Help You Feel Better

By Sandy Zimmerman
Tribune Media Group

David Jacobson has discovered something very exciting. It has helped him, and now he wants to help others. At the age of 22, David was told that he had arthritis, which affected both the large and small joints. The arthritis limited the range of motion to his ankles, fused some of the smaller joints into deformities, and also fused parts of the spine. It is hard to have a sense of humor when you were in pain. Yet David found, the more he laughed, the less his pain. David moved in with his mom, which was not what every 22-year-old young man wanted. David thinks the character Edith Bunker, on TV, is based on his mom. His first step to getting back on his feet was a humorous one. He wanted to answer the telephone, but since he could barely walk, she always did. One day when the phone rang, David said, "I'll get it," and he dragged himself over like the Hunchback of Notre Dame, speaking in a Peter Laurie voice. She was laughing, and he actually beat her to the phone. That was the first laugh they had together, and it was a life-transforming moment. David thought, "Gee, I have to live in this painful body but there is no rule saying that I can't have a quality of life, and still enjoy live. From that moment on, I purposely used humor more and



David Jacobson is standing with his family and Joe Namith at one of his appearances.



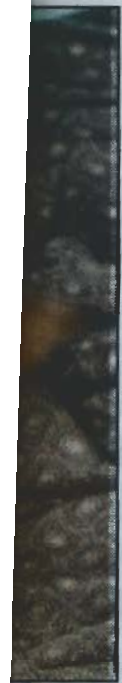
DAVID JACOBSON

people called from other cities wanting to hire him to speak about health and humor. There have been many patients he has helped. Humor is a necessity in a hospital setting. He recently appeared at a regional WIT Conference in Reno Nevada. David participated in a Play Shop to help people remember what it was like to play by using humor for creativity. Little groups got together with toothpicks and

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health. His new book will be coming out in December, "7-1/2 Habits of Highly Humorous People". David explains a few of the habits, "The half habit is the most important one in the book because it is the habit of changing negative thoughts to positive thoughts. This is a half habit because you don't need the whole habit to improve your life. If you only change and have a few negative thoughts to positive thoughts your health will be 10 times better. That's what I've found with me. You have to keep a focus of what you're thinking, to yourself. Are you thinking, 'I'm so tired I can't make it' (See Humor, Page D-3)



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David's son is illustrating "Look for Humor"!

live a more normal life and even enjoy himself. It was fate! As a social worker at a hospital in Tucson, Arizona, David complained that their humor workshop is not very humorous. His boss said, "If you think you can do better, go ahead, at our next meeting." This was the first time he told his story and was doing it for the Adult Protective Service Clubs. Suddenly



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