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## **The Universality of a Child's Laughter**

If there is one thing in the world that everyone relates to, and cannot help but bring a smile to one's face, is the uninhibited laughter of children. In an instant that laughter melts away all other concerns and worries, releasing in the listener a hidden reservoir of joyful abandonment. That connective commonality confirms that underneath all the layers of differences built up over the years between individuals, cultures, religions, and nations there is a center within each that is identical. It does not matter what nationality you are, what religion you adhere to, or what your politics are, the moment you hear the infectious laughter of a child you cannot help but connect to the center within yourself where laughter emits. That is one absolute commonality of all humans. It would be an interesting world if everyone consciously related to, and operated from, that center rather than relying upon one's self-created or accepted differences. Failing to recognize, and respond, to that commonality can be thought of as an unrecognized failing of humankind and a lost opportunity.

The unconstrained freedom of a child's laughter warms the heart as nothing else can. Its universality is a connective reality where differences melt into oblivion. It brings everyone into an absolute equality creating the opportunity for potential adversaries to recognize common ground within each, and that connective commonality is borderless. Meaning, it is a space within each where all our accepted or constructed differences have no influence. It is a center containing the seeds to move beyond those self-created differences and recognize that we are all intimately connected as brothers and sisters of one family: the human family. Appreciated or not you are an active participant of that family. The implication inherent within any family is an unconditional support of its members. Meaning, you have an intrinsic responsibility to everyone upon this planet to support each as you would like to be supported. That responsibility is an unrecognized rule of existence that the laughter of children can awaken, potentially inducing an awakening of what we have lost or forgotten.

However, if you are living in abject poverty, with no economic prospects to relieve that burden, the laughter of children can sometimes appear an irritant as their cheerfulness is in conflict with an adult's suffering. Nevertheless, the joyful center within children will always find something to laugh about as they can appear seemingly oblivious to the conditions around them that may not be laughable. They only suffer the consequences of those conditions. Regardless of those circumstances laughter in children is always on the cusp of erupting when something is observed to release it. In a millisecond those not laughable conditions surrounding them are forgotten and the hidden joy within is released

in a universal sound that affects everyone: the sound of a child's uninhibited laughter.

Therefore it is imperative to support, or actively participate in, the removal of those conditions that would prevent the laughter of a child which is acting as a responsible universal-family member. Maintaining the conditions for an unfettered childhood freedom protects children's innate ability to cut the air of despair with their unrestrained joyful outbursts. The enjoyment you receive, because that unreserved laughter exists, is payment far outstripping the cost to remove the conditions that can silence it. As a family member of our tiny planet it is not only your obligation to participate in that endeavor, it is also an opportunity. Recognize the opportunity and you are living within the center where childhood laughter originates. From within that center you will witness the world in a new light. That light illuminates a pathway allowing others to see by the same light you use to illuminate it. That light is our common heritage and children have an innate ability to illuminate it through their unbridled laughter.

Questions: when is the last time you laughed with the outright abandonment of a child? When is the last time you actually nonsensically played and enjoyed the experience? When is the last time you were intrigued and fascinated by any aspect of nature's spectacular beauty? Or, captivated by the slimy trail and movement of a snail? Is part of the innocent-wonder that children use to witness daily 'things' and events missing in the lives of adults? If so, where has it gone? Has living as an adult, with grown up responsibilities, stifled our ability to laugh with absolute freedom, not caring who hears or worry about what others will think? If those cares or worries exist the next time you hear an adult laugh like a child, and some infrequently do, check to see if what you experience is annoyance at that person or a feeling of open-ended lightheartedness. Each will point to where you live.

There is a time and a place for everything but a child's laughter fits everywhere, all the time. Appreciated or not that form of laughter also fits in the life of an adult. There are serious times, stressful times, difficult times, and heart-wrenching times. Within those times, the center from where a child's laughter emits is a place where relief from those constricting mental conditions have space to self-negate. The conditions that caused the mental strife to exist, in all probability, may remain. However, the 'awakened' center where the laughter of children has its birth has an innate ability to release within each a lighter or clearer vision of those problems. Surprisingly, that liberated release contains the potential to solve those problems, as you are no longer tied to their negativity. Hence, the value of a child's laughter exists as a constant reminder that there is a space within that holds a key too many of life's issues. Children and adults both have it but only children appear to access and use it with regularity. That center is our commonality that is blind to social standing, ethnicity, religion, politics, and all the various forms of discriminative conditioning.

If you regenerate the internal freedom children naturally radiate you will witness life in a new illumination, opening a vision to see with clarity. Allow the laughter of children to penetrate that rediscovered center and you cannot

help but smile and become part of that the cheerful moment. It may surprise you but that one single moment is sufficient to change your day from gloom and doom to cheerful joyfulness, making laughter one of the most potent forces upon this planet. Learning to use that force indiscriminately not only makes you a true and valued citizen of this planet it also makes you a happier one.

The laughter of a child heals what a doctor cannot. Hence, anything you do to maintain an environment that supports a child's laughter, or removes 'things' that prevent it, you are not only helping yourself but humanity as we are all, in some manner, interconnected through that internal space where laughter has its origins. Enjoy the connection as it teaches as well as heals.

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