



**Empathy:** Being sensitive to and understanding the feelings and thoughts of others

## Make ‘Em Laugh

**Life Skill:**

Communicating with others  
Inventing sounds and actions  
Developing empathy

**Success Indicator:**

Youth will learn empathy by determining actions that make other people laugh.

**Time:** 30 minutes – Depending on Group Size

**Suggested Group Size:**

Classroom or less

**Supplies:**

Club kit

What do you think is funny? Is it the same thing that other people think is funny? There is a word for that understanding: *empathy*. If we are aware of what makes other people laugh or cry or feel good about themselves, we are much better at understanding ourselves and at getting along with other people.

Great actors are successful because they have great empathy. They are very good at “putting themselves in other people’s shoes.” They can imagine what it would be like to be a queen or a pirate or school teacher.

**Do the Activity:**

Divide the group into two teams.

Have someone pick a topic. If there is an audience, let them choose the topic.

It should allow participants to do some action which everyone is familiar with.

For example:

- *The World’s Greatest Super Hero*
- *Feeding the Animals*
- *You’ll Never Guess What Happened to Me!*

Each team will go back and forth, taking 10 – 15 seconds per turn. The leader can call “Switch!” to change participants.

They have to do something funny with one of the props in the box. Whatever they do, it has to have something to do with the subject.

The goal is to make everyone laugh.

[This activity can be repeated several times with the selection of different topics.]

**Talking It Over**

**Share What You Did**

What did you like about activity?  
What was most difficult for you?  
Which improvisations did you enjoy the most?  
What was funny about them?

If you did the activity several different times, how did it become easier or harder to do?

**Process What's Important**

How did people exaggerate (make bigger) their words or actions?  
How did this help you understand what was going on?  
How would it have been different if they had spoken softly and made very small movements?

**Generalize to Your Life**

How can you tell when someone is sad?  
How can you tell if they are happy?

**Apply What You Have Learned**

How can we more aware of what people around us are feeling?  
How can we better use our voices and body movements to communicate with other people?