Last spring, at our annual AATH conference in Orlando, I suggested we do one issue of The Voice on Sex, Humor and Romance. They thought the topic was worth a shot, and I could be the guest editor. Sex, Humor and Romance? Was I crazy? The only thing funny about sex when you are past middle age is the hilarity of trying to re-create the positions you mastered 10 years ago when it was still possible to untwist a pretzel!

An article in my daughter’s Oprah magazine for October 2017 included the following information: The median period required for an adult heterosexual encounter is five minutes and 24 seconds, and it is possible to add 20 minutes for foreplay and pillow talk, so, as the article suggests, “if you give up 50 minutes a day on Facebook, that adds up to two quickies or one leisurely romp.” (Molly Simms) Needless to say, finding the five minutes would be simple, but finding a willing companion in my age group to fit into that time slot may take longer!

In truth, humor can be found in all aspects of sex and romance. To begin with, for those of us who like to shower before embarking on a sexual escapade with our significant other, glancing at a mirror on the way to the bedroom can be a hoot. As a way of keeping one’s mind sharp by testing memory skills, I try to use that time to recall where the various body parts used to be! Phyllis Diller made the most practical suggestion — “Whatever you may look like, marry a man your own age — as your beauty fades, so will his eyesight.” She was a pretty funny comedian, who once admitted she loved to go to the doctor. “Where else could a man look at me and say, “Take off your clothes..”

Phyllis Diller was not the only person who had some clever things to help us deal with our less than perfect romantic lives. In preparing for this issue, I have read hundreds of quotes on the subject, spoken to dozens of friends, and hopefully have encouraged some of our best writers to submit their thoughts. A variety of stories, some significant truths, and sweet romance is shared as well. I leave you to enjoy the profound words of our colleagues on this topic. Clearly, we can all agree sex is the most fun you can have without laughing.

Joyce M. Saltman, CHP, Guest Editor
In my work as a national speaker, I talk about an unusual subject...rectums, or shall I say, lack of them, in some cases. Raising awareness about colon cancer screening became my mission after I was diagnosed with it at age 39. I decided to not be shy about it, but instead to educate people wherever I had the opportunity. I found out that humor helped a lot dealing with this subject. I have written three books dealing with bowels that have gone beserk and these stories show love through challenging times of adjusting to life with an ostomy. (Ostomy is the general term for people who have ileostomies, urostomies or colostomy and had surgery to remove part or all of their colon and now have permanent pouches or as the general public calls them, “bags.”)

I thought the following stories and excerpts from my books showed how we can laugh and love together through uncomfortable things.

Mile High Club

Gil Lorenz of Fenton, Missouri, shared his version of the mile high club: “We were on an airplane heading for Vancouver when all of a sudden, my pants were wet. I grabbed my good old pink tape and headed for the rest room to try to repair my pouch. We were having some turbulent weather — I simply could not fix it. I opened the door and told the flight attendant my problem. I asked, “Would you please ask my wife to come back here?”

What a time we had. The plane was jumping around, and we were both in the bathroom. You know how tiny those restrooms are on the plane, and neither of us are small people. She sat on the toilet seat and I was hanging on to the wash-basin. After about twenty minutes, we got the job done. My wife asked, “What should we say when we leave here?” I said, “Nothing. Just smile!”

Gil and Melba Lorenz were married for sixty-six years at the time this story originally printed in 2004. *Gil had a urostomy in 1999 due to cancer. From my book, I’d Like to Buy a Bowel Please!*  

Yes I Can! By Lisa Mayfield (Excerpted version)

I was married when I had ileostomy surgery at age twenty-one. After six surgeries for Crohn’s disease, I was finally well enough to get on with my life.

Eventually I met the guy I am married to now. He was a good old red-neck country boy. When it came time to tell him, we were in a restaurant, his favorite — any buffet; he’ll eat anything that doesn’t eat him first.

“I have something important to tell you and it’s kind of serious,” I said.

“Right now?” he said, anxious to eat.

“Yes. I have Crohn’s disease; I have had surgery for it. After I got done with all the surgery, I’ve been healthy ever since. This is the deal, they took out the colon, and I have to wear the pouch. Do you understand what I am saying to you?”

He nodded.

“Do you have any questions?” I asked.

He hesitated, “Can you have sex?”

I replied, “Yes, I can.”

Continued on next page
He continued, “Can you have kids?”

“Yes, I can,” I repeated.

“Can we eat now?” he asked as he eyed the buffet.

That was the specifics and that’s all he needed.

From the book,
It’s in the Bag and Under the Covers by Brenda Elsagher

In 1995, I had surgery for colorectal cancer which not only removed my rectum giving me a permanent colostomy, a hysterectomy and part of my vagina was removed and reconstructed. That last part of the surgery was rare and was not always successful. We had only been married for six years and we both agreed that sex was a great benefit of marriage. But, we had more important things to worry about. I was told if the cancer had spread to my liver or lungs they wouldn’t do the operation but would make me as comfortable as possible.

All of a sudden the idea of that invasive surgery looked like a great option. My children were only three and five at the time, and I wanted to see them grow up! The night before the MRI I was tossing and turning, couldn’t sleep, lamenting on what if it’s in my liver? And my husband, the pun master said, Oh Liver alone. It was so ridiculous that it made me laugh out loud and I was able to sleep.

This began a series of doctor visits; one with the vaginal reconstruction doctor who told me it would only be his second time performing this surgery in seven years. As he explained the intricacies of the surgery, my mind wandered to the blue waters of Hawaii until I heard him say, “After surgery, you may have to use a dilator for a while.” In a flash I was back in the room and I said, “If I have to use a dilator, I hope it vibrates!” He laughed hesitantly.

Excerpted from my book,
If the Battle is Over, Why Am I Still in Uniform?

After a week on the surgical floor, the gynecologist came by to check his work. As I braced myself, he gently inserted his finger through layers of sutures that lined my vaginal area. He held up his finger like he was testing the wind and said, “I had my whole finger in there. All the flaps are holding beautifully it seems like every stitch is still in place, it couldn’t look better!”

“Way to go doc, good job!”

Soon after, my favorite sarcastic nurse, Kristi, came in. “The doctor was just here and he put his whole finger in my new vagina.”

“Well, I hope he kissed you first!” she said with a wink.

My husband would want you to know that everything turned out okay—wink, wink.

Author Brenda Elsagher, CHP

Brenda Elsagher, CHP, is an in-demand Keynoter, author, AATH conference planner and a ton of fun. www.livingandlaughing.com
Why Sex is Funny and Funny is Sexy

By Gina Barreca

Sex is funny and funny is sexy.

I learned about sex from books. As a kid, I looked up in the dictionary words I heard that nobody was willing to explain. I’d read the definitions over and over, as if reading were a sexual act. I think that’s why I’ve spent my life in school.

In junior high school, my friends and I read every book we could find that included anything about sex. We looked for scenes describing sex, embodying sex and revealing sex. We looked for sections that would incite discussion about sex, that will provoke us not only into giggling arousal but into discovery—why did people DO these things? We discussed it endlessly. But since this was the in late 60s and early 70s, we didn’t do anything about it. We were Good Girls and afraid. But we were sure curious and willing to study the subject.

And did we laugh—we laughed about every part of this ridiculous subject.

In graduate school, I picked up a copy of Anaïs Nin’s Little Birds, thinking it was simply a book of short stories, and was shocked to discover a selection of erotica that made my fingers tingle and my face blush. That wasn’t the worst or the best of it. I was on the way back from seeing my boyfriend, and there was no train ride I remember with such a sense of enormous pleasure. I was laughing at my own reaction even though my reaction was undeniably sincere.

I started reading more women writers. I paid attention when Nora Ephron ended her novel Heartburn with a list of reasons why it is absolutely essential to “turn everything into a story.” When a friend asks the heroine why she has to give a funny answer to even the most serious questions, the heroine announces that it is important “because if I tell the story, I control the version. Because if I tell the story, I can make you laugh, and I would rather have you laugh than feel sorry for me. Because if I tell the story, it doesn’t hurt as much. Because if I tell the story, I can get on with it.”

Then I started paying attention to stand-up comics and writers of not only of witty prose but of humor itself. I listened to the experts—the humor experts. I went to clubs in the late 1980s and early 1990s and listened to comic Karen Haber who took on sex and humor as a topic. Haber asked the audience “If they have ever had sex so good it was like shopping” and the women were laughing in a whole new way and the men who accompanied them were not; it was fascinating. Haber took it further: addressed the repercussions of women telling the truth in bed. “Guys want to know, if the sex goes on for more than two minutes or if not looking thrilled if ‘They’re hurting me.’ I just wanna say ‘Honey, you’re not hurting me. You’re just annoying me. You thought you could hurt me with that?’”

Women in comedy were telling the truth about women and sex. And while it was funny, it was — as good comedy often is — unnerving.

Women humorists were warning us that there was going to be a backlash long before Susan Faludi got hold of the term. Cynthia Heimel suggested as much in 1991’s If You Can’t Live Without Me, Why Aren’t You Dead Yet? when she wrote “Don’t think for a second I’m trying to wheedle and cajole men into thinking of women as peers and pals, or asking women to come back baby, feminism never forgets.” Heimel pointed out, “If I were a man, a man as successful as I am, they’d be lining up. I’d go to cocktail parties and snap my fingers: ‘You! Take me home and cook me dinner! Then maybe if I’m in the mood we’ll have sex!’ And they would.” And yet it wasn’t that way for most women, Heimel admitted. For many women, it would go like this: “Get a job, your husband hates you. Get a good job, your husband leaves you. Get a stupendous job, your husband leaves you for a teenager.”

In her first book, My Horizontal Life: A Collection of One-Night Stands, Chelsea Handler illustrates the difference between women’s lives as they appear in films and as they are when actually lived: “At some point during almost every romantic comedy, the female lead suddenly trips and falls, stumbling helplessly over something ridiculous like a leaf, and then some Matthew McConaughey type either whips around the corner just in the nick of time to save her or is clumsily pulled down along with her. That event predictably leads to the magical moment of their first kiss.
Like Chelsea Handler, Sarah Silverman embodies the shattering of every idea about women, romance and sex. She appears in complete control over any situation and as far beyond anyone else’s control as a falling star or a wild animal. Drop-dead gorgeous, apparently brilliant, and filthily funny, she’s a puzzle society must solve. Silverman relies on the outsider’s recognition of society’s deeply entrenched moral hypocrisy. Her deviance has increasingly become the essences of her self-definition, with rape jokes becoming a staple of her routine. “I was raped by a doctor,” declares Silverman and smiles sweetly before adding “So bittersweet for a Jewish girl.” But she saves the killer line for last: “I need more rape jokes” she explains, unblinking and speaking with direct appeal to the audience. “Who’s going to complain about rape jokes? Rape victims?” She pauses. “They barely even report rape.”

By confronting the authentically taboo subject — not that rape happens, but that rape victims are still too afraid, ashamed, or appalled to admit they’ve been criminally assaulted — she’s using humor to slice, dice, and present for examination one of the culture’s most deeply buried dirty secrets. Silverman, then, is building on a long tradition of women’s humor that gives the microphone to those regarded as prey, thereby making them a challenge to the predator. The woman who wields humor in such a way removes the “gag” and refuses silence. She gets her voice back by making a joke and by neither shutting down nor shutting up. A “gag,” after all, is both a joke and something put across your mouth to silence you. Funny women reserve the right to fight against both.

Finally, behind the curtsey to the ruling culture — or the mooning of them — the funny woman who deals with sex presents a wink to readers, an encoded signal to those who understand that the heroine’s delight in the erotic (or laughter at it) does not negate her instinctive rebellion against outdated, unfair or confining rules about it. The point is shared pleasure, an honest perspective, not faking it, an even match, a generous intelligence, a welcoming spirit and with the hope that a good time will be had by all.

Author Gina Barreca

Gina Barreca is Professor of English at the University of Connecticut. She is a very entertaining speaker and has written a number of books including They Used to Call Me Snow White…but I Drifted and Perfect Husbands (& Other Fairy Tales). Her most recent book is If You Lean In, Will Men Just Look Down Your Blouse?

“Women need a reason to have sex. Men just need a place.”
Billy Crystal

“Obviously Clinton lied. A man might forget where he parks or where he lives, but he never forgets oral sex, no matter how bad it is.”
Barbara Bush

“Women might be able to fake orgasms. But men can fake a whole relationship.” Sharon Stone
As we all know, Joyce Saltman is a very persuasive person. Really, she’s a great lady so when she asked me to humiliate myself by writing a Sex and Humor article, of course I said “yes.” So here I am, and apparently, so are you.

To save you time, I’ll get right to the salient point here in the top of the article. Then if you’re in a hurry, and who isn’t, you can skip the rest of the article. To set the stage for the important nugget, you need to know that I’m in my late 60s and my “boyfriend” is in his early 70s. How we ended up in this situation is a long story too juicy to be told here! (Contact me on the side if you’d like more details…)

For so many of us who are not married, but living with someone, introductions are awkward. Using words like ‘boyfriend,’ ‘partner,’ or ‘main-squeeze’ makes us feel like teenagers with an experimental commitment to each other. It just feels lousy to use these words to describe a wonderful full-time life with someone. So we came up with a perfect one for us. Ready? We are Prime-mates… primates! Yup, that’s what I said. When we say that, we usually pause a moment, let that sink in, then do a little ape-like scratching of each other’s sides to reinforce the joke. It makes everyone laugh and makes us feel good about having a title for our relationship.

So that’s all I want to write, but no… Joyce needs more. She set a 400-word minimum in order to be sure we didn’t skip any great details (Ed. Note: Always an over-achiever, Linda’s article came in at 559 words.) So here goes.

If she had asked me to write this when I was around 25 years young, I would have probably described anticipating the exciting physical pleasures couples all around me seemed to enjoy. I would have been concerned that if the occasion ‘arose,’ I would have had on sexy underwear and that I had recently shaved my legs. Alas, I wasn’t married or even dating. (Not my choice!)

So I’m certainly not 35 years young either. But if I was, I would have been more serious and critical about myself and my partner. I would have been concerned about the aging shape of my not-so-brand new body. If I was being seen in the buff, I would have concentrated on pulling in my stomach and doing ‘it’ right.

If I was 45, I would have been too busy to write this article or have sex. I was expanding my business, making money and trying to stay fit. OK, there’s an angle here, sex is a form of exercise… but, fuhgeddaboudit.

If I was 55, I would have been scheduling sex into my still exhausting, filled-with-important-things schedule. At least I would have been mature enough to strive to be a generous partner.

These days are all about sharing an amusing time and making sure my Prime-mate has fun too. All I have to do is show up — to hell with expectations. Now I’m all about gratitude. What a gift to laugh a lot in intimacy.

One of the best things you can have up your sleeve is a funny bone.

— Stolen from Linda’s Website.

Author Linda MacNeal

Linda brings her passion about humor to corporations and associations teaching her audiences how to become responsible for providing ourselves with our daily requirements of fun, humor and laughter. http://humorsolutions.com
Three Steps to a Great Sex Life
By Margarita Gurri, PhD, CSP

Do you have the sex life you desire? What gets in the way? What’s the secret to a great sex life? I asked these questions of hundreds of couples. The 25% who were satisfied shared the following tips.

What Gets in the Way?
Stress is not sexy. Kids, work, fatigue, competing priorities, and, oddly enough — dogs — get in the way.

Secrets to a Great Sex Life
Sex is play and intimacy. Luckily, we are born to play! You are three steps away from the sex life you desire.

1. Reboot Your Play Habits
Make playfulness a priority, in and out of bed.
■ Flirt. Build anticipation with playful or sexy notes, texts, gestures, or calls.
■ Plan spontaneity. Mix it up. True or planned spontaneity can rule the day.
   Make the most of your playful moments.

2. Re-think Sex
What does sex mean to you?
■ Know yourself. Decide what you like and how you like it.
   Are you into romance without touch, with sex play, or abstinence?
■ Choose a loving partner. Sex play is having fun with a trusted and thoughtful partner.
■ Decide on monogamy or not. You can stick with one partner or enjoy the smorgasbord of life. As a partner, be honest and safe.

3. Enjoy Your Partner
No one enjoys a selfish partner. Focus on your partner, not on the activity.
■ Establish agreements. Decide who, when, what, and for how long. Try things once or never. Decide what happens when only one person is in the mood.
■ Do things together. Use together time to get in sync. Wash dishes, cook, shower. Tidying the house can be a powerful aphrodisiac.
■ Pick a safe base. Safety is sexy. It invites playfulness, risk-taking, and ramps up anticipation. Bases can be a touch, gesture, word, or sound.

Laugh! Funny noises, uncool faces, and awkward moves are normal and can build playfulness.

Your sex life is up to you. Own it. Love it.

“According to a new survey, women say they feel more comfortable undressing in front of men than they do undressing in front of other women. They say that women are too judgmental, where, of course, men are just grateful.”
— Robert De Niro

Author Margarita Gurri, PhD, CSP
By Margarita Gurri, PhD, CSP is the Founder and CEO of the Red Shoe Institute. She speaks to military and business audiences. Find helpful hints, FAQs, and more at http://www.RedShoeInstitute.com. at +1-844-Dr-RedShoe (+1-844-377-3374) or Margarita@RedShoeInstitute.com
When was the last time you laughed uncontrollably? Tried something at the “edge of your comfort zone?” Thought about sexual fun with a smile on your face!

We can learn so much by watching how children meet one another and play for the first time. Authentic. Carefree. Exploratory. **FUN!**

We have such a hard time getting back to that awe-inspired spirit and yet, far beyond the tucks and peels, it is truly what will keep us youthful and happy!

Stuart Brown, MD, researcher and founder of National Institute for Play collected thousands of play case studies over 20 years, cases on play in the workplace. Brown argues that “PLAY is the best way to live to joyful old age.” He identified six properties of play: “Purposelessness, voluntary, inherent attraction, freedom from time, diminished consciousness of self, and opening to improvisation and imagination.”

**SILLINESS and LAUGHTER provide immediate access to play.**

When was the last time you screamed for joy or skipped with abandon? When I do it makes me laugh at myself. That is the key to experimentation with sexuality.

If we do not take ourselves too seriously we become open to exploration.

No one is selfconscious while having an orgasm.

Explore new ways of connecting to your partner sexually with a light-hearted approach.

Many of the women I work with plan on experimenting on vacation or they will plan, or ask their partner to book an overnight locally, to feel more freely self-expressed and explorative. Google Women’s Health magazine for sex & love/crazy sex positions www.womenshealthmag.com/sex-and-love/crazy-sex-positions/slide/2 —and laugh with your partner about which one you may be able to try.

Another way to add fun is to make a playdate in the middle of the day/work week in your house by role playing that one of you arrives as a stranger. If you really want to make it fun DRESS the part — you will create a truly memorable experience if you allow yourself to fully take on the roles you choose!

Even regular sex in your own bed and bedroom can be FUN — using mindfulness to SMILE as you bring attention to your sex organs and how they feel rather than being in your head about what you like or don’t like — MAKE IT FUN AND SILLY to practice dropping inhibitions so that playful energy will let you make new sounds and experience new sensations with lighthearted fun!

Again — no one who is in the midst of a full blown embodied orgasm is wondering how they look, they are fully in the activity! Remember it’s not how we look on the outside, (dancing, doing a sport) but how we FEEL on the inside that will rejuvenate our youthful spirit!
When we as adults get back to moving energy in new ways we tap the subconscious part of our bodies that are not in continuous self-judgment. This is the reason that sex can be mind blowing – it can transcend and open new pathways, and being a “playful sensation scientist” or “explorer” is one of the best ways to get there.

Adapt one of those attitudes as you enter the new season with curiosity and fun in order create more joy in your life on a daily basis. Try something NEW today!

**Author Stacey Battat, MA**

Stacey Battat, MA, Speaker, Author, Coach, is on a mission to help women confidently embrace their bodies and awaken playfulness in the bedroom and beyond. Stacey offers coaching on getting into a playful mindset. mindfulsexualitycoach@gmail.com  www.Mindfulsexuality.net

“Sex at age 90 is like trying to shoot pool with a rope.”

Camille Paglia

“Sex is one of the nine reasons for incarnation. The other eight are unimportant.”

George Burns

“See, the problem is that God gives men a brain and a penis, and only enough blood to run one at a time.”

Robin Williams

“There are a number of mechanical devices which increase sexual arousal, particularly in women. Chief among these is the Mercedes-Benz 500SL.”

Lynn Lavner

“I love you so much I’d fight a bear for you.
Well, not a grizzly bear because they have paws.
And not a panda bear because they know Kung Fu.
But a Care Bear, I’d definitely fight a Care Bear for you.”

Unknown
A couple is lying in bed, when the husband leans gently across his wife's shoulders, and she says “Mmmm.” He reaches across her breasts, and she responds even more enthusiastically, saying “Oh, Yes!” Finally, he slides his hand down her thigh and she says “Don't stop!” — but he stops!

Surprised, the wife asks, “Why did you stop?” and he responds, “I found the TV remote!”

This is meant to be a joke — and yet it embodies so many of the kinds of incidents reported to me as a therapist, teacher and friend. How can we have an entire issue on Humor, Romance and Sex, without at least acknowledging the fact that the older we get, the less likely we are to remember the excitement of sexy touch and romantic interludes like the one described in the above hunt for the remote?

At 74, I do recall the months after my divorce, back in 1979, when I had completely removed any thoughts of sex from my mind. I no longer dreamt about it, checked out strange men when I entered a room, or even included it on my list of favorite activities. I was, as I reported to my close friends, “cured.”

One day, (in the day of full service gas stations), I pulled into a local station for gas, and the young attendant asked if I wanted him to check the oil. Apparently, I was down a quart, so I agreed to have him put one in. He took the metal spigot, pierced the top of the can of oil, and all the old fantasies of penetration rushed back, full force, as I sat in the driver’s seat of my car. The experience was hilarious, and one I will never forget.

Does it prove that one is never “cured” from thinking about sex and romance? Who knows! But I suspect that most of us will recall at least one humorous event involving an experience that may have seemed embarrassing or even tragic, at the time, but in retrospect, has become a funny tale. Feel free to share those with me in San Diego at our upcoming AATH Conference, or via e-mail, if you won’t be able to attend!

Author Joyce M. Saltman, Guest Editor
Joyce is a professor Emeritus of Special Education at Southern Connecticut State University and is a very popular speaker averaging 100 talks a year, which has allowed her to donate over a million dollars to charities.

Recently, we looked at data from 20,000 of our eHarmony members and found that both men and women listed “I must have someone who is sharp and can enjoy the humorous side of life” as their most important must-have.

From eHarmony

“My best birth control now is just to leave the lights on.”
Joan Rivers
Remembering Bobbe Lyon

By Don Baird

For over a decade, we were on-stage buddies sharing our love of humor and comedy through fond remembrances of the “friends of humor” who had died the previous year. We remembered and celebrated Andy Griffith, Johnny Carson, Richard Pryor, Robin Williams, Gene Wilder, Mary Tyler Moore and many, many more of those who’d brought laughter into our lives.

It was our wish to take a few moments each year to be sure those who’d left us (and left us with so much laughter) were honored and their special kind of immortality was recognized. But we wanted to make it fun, not sad, a celebration of joyfulness in an often sad world.

Bobbe totally believed in this mission and brought her own zest, humor, and affirmation of life to each presentation. She had this incredible gift for enjoying life, in spite of its difficulties and hardships and downright unreasonableness. And she shared this gift on stage in our memorials.

I did the writing and research and handed out the cue cards. She did the magic, bringing each word to life through her enthusiasm and playfulness. As in all the best on-stage partnerships, we appreciated and enjoyed each other and each presentation. “Why not?” she said. “SOMEBODY’s got to!”

In her last months, we exchanged text messages daily, and her good humor and zest for life came through, despite her illness.

“I’m a menace at the grocery store zooming around in the motorized car” she wrote. Loooook out!!!"

And later, in one of her last messages: “Actually it’s not bad today. Heavy drugs will do it every time. Altered states abound!”

According to the Dalai Lama, the best teachers are those who show us by example what we need to learn. Bobbe, you were a great friend, a fantastic on-stage partner, and the teacher we all wish we had.

For anyone uncertain about future plans, I can promise you that Heaven will be a lot more delightful place from now on.

Author Don Baird

Don Baird is a long-time AATH member and contributor. For years he has written our beautiful and humorous remembrances of treasured humor friends.
She was born to lead the parade. When Donna “Kinza” Christenson was a child, she said, “My mom gave me 25 cents to take to our local white elephant sale in town, and I could buy anything I wanted. I always bought an old prom dress and then I’d play dress up.” In the old family movies of “all the aunts and uncles, there was always this crazy little girl all dressed in a big, glitzy costume, dancing through them.” By the age of 8, she was taking baton lessons, and in high school as a majorette, she really did lead the town parades.

Years later, as a young mother, she started a 4th of July tradition when she would have her kids decorate a wagon and have a few neighbor kids parade over for ice cream. Then the neighbor children were invited, and before long, it was a real event with hundreds of participants from the Lac La Belle community.

But there are enthusiasm-spreaders and show-offs. Kinza has always been the former. She grew up on a dairy farm in southern Wisconsin where being far from town meant you had to make your own fun. While having her own horse helped when she was a child, her high spirits have led her to all the adventures that followed.

Kinza was Lac La Belle’s village clerk for 18 years of the four+ decades she lived in that little community near Oconomowoc, which meant, “I was able to come up with all sorts of social ideas for the village, which was a lot of fun.”

When she was about 30, she saw a Middle Eastern dancer being interviewed on TV and said, “My gosh, I am going to learn how to do that.” Within a month she was driving an hour each way to take lessons in Milwaukee. Within two years, she was teaching her own classes in four communities, and for about 20 years had her own troupe that performed at colleges, churches, state fairs, and other events.

Kinza’s husband doesn’t like to dance, and Middle Eastern dancing requires no partner. Perfect! She loves the choices: ethnic or cabaret style, Turkish, Bedouin, Gwahzee, or Egyptian.

“The cultures dictate the rhythms, dance steps, and costuming.” Ah, the costuming. “I started my sewing machine humming, and I’d get halfway through one costume and I’d already be designing the next two. . . Other children would come home from grade school and their mothers would be canning tomatoes, and I would be trying on my newest costume.” A friend teased her that the summer glow above her house at sunset was not from the sun, but from “all of the sparkle in my closets.”

The sparkle also comes from her “Can do” personality. When she was 50, she attended a women’s wellness event and was inspired by the keynote speaker, Rosita Perez. She thought, “Oh my gosh, I’m probably not going to be able to dance forever, and I’m not a real great singer, but I can speak.

“Kinza” is her chosen Middle Eastern name first used in her dance performances, but she soon realized it made her stand out from the crowd in gaining speaking engagements, too. As did the topic of one of her signature talks. “War, Peace, and Sex” immediately makes you want to know more. In reality, it’s a family-friendly, but business-oriented presentation.
Some presentations involve dancing (her own and audience participation) and comedy, and others have engaging learning activities, but all have a serious message lightly delivered, as titles like “Hurray, It’s Monday,” and “Laugh and Live Your Dreams” suggest. Kinza says her biggest honor was to be the keynote speaker at the recognition banquet honoring the Wisconsin Red Cross volunteers coming back from their work in New York after 9/11. She had spent time interviewing some of the volunteers in advance and knew she had to figure out how to pull everybody up again. She handed out tambourines to everybody, and then came dancing in. “Basically the whole thing was paying tribute, recognizing their efforts, and giving them permission to laugh again. It was a pretty awesome experience.”

The tambourine is a vital symbol for Kinza and has served her well in her talks with all her audiences. Its shape represents the circle of life, and the colorful ribbons a person attaches to it represent that person’s achievements – “the love you’ve given, all the good you’ve done in your life.”

Kinza finds new ways to spread her inner joy wherever she finds herself. A few of my favorite of her ideas:

- **Gifts from the Heart** are her family’s Christmas presents which must be hand-made or personalized and must be accompanied by a tribute to the receiver – a song, poem, skit, or other activity.
- **Chuckles Bags** are gift bags filled with 60 one-a-day jokes and one-liners meant to bring daily cheer to someone enduring a tough time. This product was born when Kinza’s brother-in-law was undergoing chemotherapy and has been used by her many times since.
- **Hats of Fun** began with a visit to her sister-in-law as a way to celebrate the Kentucky Derby in spite of her advanced Parkinson’s disease. Then Kinza realized the hats could brighten the days of others in care settings no matter what day it was.

Kinza joined AATH the year the conference was in Las Vegas and included an attendee talent show – glitz and laughter were her perfect combination. She signed up within five minutes of reading about it. “It was awesome fun.” Now as a Laughter Leader with the World Laughter Tour she has the skills “to lighten the load of others whenever I can.” And does.

One lesson that ends a chapter in her book is, she agrees, her life philosophy: All that remains when we’re gone is what we have given away. And she’s still got a lot of giving to do. So don’t rain on her parade.

Kinza’s books:
- **Burnt Toast & Jam**
- **Thoughts to Motivate**
- **193 Survival Tips for a Professional Image**
- **Elephant on My Chest — Children’s asthma book written with her son**

Visit her website at www.kinza.net and sign up for her newsletter “Keys for Success” Reach her at kinza@kinza.net or 262-893-4035.

**Author Kathy Laurenhue, CHP**

Kathy has been a Humor Academy advisor and writes a quiz column for the Voice. See her work later in this edition.
“My wish for you is that you continue. Continue to be who and how you are, to astonish a mean world with your acts of kindness. Continue to allow humor to lighten the burden of your tender heart.” — Maya Angelou

Maia Aziz is a Social Worker (PSW), Certified Humor Professional (CHP) Consultant to McGill University Hospital System, contributing writer and member of Positive Psychology People, AATH member, wife and mother, and she says this is the deepest, hardest and truest thing she knows.

“What do I know for sure? That love and laughter might not cure what ails you but they sure go a long way to getting you through those tough moments.”

Mais has had some tough moments in her life. Born in Hamilton, Ontario, to Pakistani parents, she moved with her professor father and mother to Oxford England and back again to Hamilton, Ontario. Hamilton residents know about donuts as it has the most donuts shops per block than any other North American city. But these donut eaters didn’t see many brown children, and Professor Aziz’s three children were often greeted with racial epitaphs. Although little Maia felt hurt and confused, parent Maia, par excellente, delights in her blended family of six children — all beautiful shades of brown.

Maia married a musician whose father is Jamacian and mother is African-American. They met while both were singing back-up for Canadian pop/rock singer/songwriter, Dan Bigras danbigras.com. If you go on Maia’s face book you will also see a wonderful melodic Maia singing one of her first compositions. Keep on scrolling and you will see this extended wonderful, laughing family singing, celebrating and joyously enjoying one another in all seasons.

Maia got her degree in Anthropology (to please Mom and Dad) and went on to get her Masters in Social Work. However, she always “self medicated” with comedy — worked in musical theater, wrote song parodies, tried improv and all of you who have read Maia’s blog, maiaaziz.blogspot.ca, know that one day she will be on the best seller list.

Maia went through a robust parenting phase with her children — now ages 11, 14, 26, 30, 32, and she also has a grandchild, Mattie, age 4! Now she calls her parenting style, “slacker parenting” as she learned that “exhaustion is a great motivator for change.” Most important to her now is hearing a lot of laughter in the home and guessing how big the dust bunnies can really get. This extended family has potlucks every week with no family member wanting to miss – recounting the stories of their days and what made them happy this week. When I asked her whom she admired, she quickly said her children because “they all help each other, always find the funny and their possibilities are endless.”

For the last 4-5 years, Maia was Assistant Administrative Chief of Allied Health Services at the Montreal Children’s Hospital. Maia managed, supported and cheered on at least 200 employees — psychologists, social workers, speech therapists, nurses, nurse’s aides and everyone else who worked there. The result was the clients — the children and their parents felt cared for and supported.

Beginning February 2018, Maia will be THE McGill University Health Centre consultant to 10,000 employees in all the various departments. The Minister of Health obviously recognized that Maia’s

Continued on next page
Maia Aziz (continued)

knowledge of positive psychology and her belief in community—employees standing shoulder to shoulder working on trust, openness and an understanding of their best selves makes for the best workplace climate ever.

Maia quotes: "Leaders who undermine employee autonomy are corrosive because they undermine the dignity of work. This is a serious issue, because dignity is fundamental to well-being and to human and organizational thriving. And since many of us spend the majority of our waking hours at work, work is a major source of dignity in our lives." -Monique Valcour

Is she daunted? Probably but Maia believes her mission is to help employees find meaning from their work—to help them leave a legacy and feel they belong.

Maia has been studying Positive Psychology principles for about five years and it will be no surprise to all who know her that her signature strengths are curiosity, emotional intelligence and humor. AATH has also benefited from Maia’s life-changing perspective. Maia has been on the Board of Directors, membership chairperson, welcome committee, etc. At the 2018 annual conference, April 12-15, in San Diego (have you all signed up?) Maia and Dwayna Covey will give a workshop on Burnout 911.

Maia is kind and so open to the world. She makes the world gentler for us all. We are all so lucky she is in our AATH community.

Author Kay Caskey

Kay Caskey, long-time AATH member and interviewer extraordinaire, is also a very kind person.

“I went to a meeting for premature ejaculators. I left early.”
Jack Benny

“Some people claim that marriage interferes with romance. There’s no doubt about it. Anytime you have a romance, your wife is bound to interfere.”
Groucho Marx

“Men always want to be a woman’s first love — women like to be a man’s last romance.”
Oscar Wilde
Book Review by Kelly Epperson

A Round-Heeled Woman: My Late-Life Adventures in Sex & Romance by Jane Juska

We use this space to review books from our AATH authors, but it seems none of our members have written a book about sex, this issue's theme. (Hey, Karyn Buxman, do you think “What’s So Funny About … Sex?” could make it into your series? Or Allen Klein, a book of quotes on sex? Or Joyce Saltman, anything you want to write?) If you are an AATH member who has a humor and sex book (keep your sex videos to yourself, thank you very much), let us know!

Anyway, VOICE editor Laurie Young, steered me to a book to read and review which I thoroughly enjoyed. It's a memoir so perhaps females will be more inclined to read it, but men will get some insights too if they dare give it a glance.

A Round-Heeled Woman: My Late-Life Adventures in Sex & Romance by Jane Juska was published in 2004, and made this author a late-in-life celebrity as well. She became an international bestseller, was on Oprah's television show, and went on to write two more books. Juska died in 2017 at the age of 84.

The term “round-heeled woman” is an old slang term for a woman who is promiscuous—someone who today might be called “easy.” That is what Jane dubbed herself after going thirty years without sex. “I’m an easy lay. An easy sixty-seven-year-old lay.”

After her divorce, Juska had devoted herself to her career as an English teacher in Berkeley, California, and raising her son as a single mom. The next thing she knew, three decades had passed, and the only sex she had, was with herself. When Jane retired and her son was grown, she realized she may die without having sex again if she didn’t do anything about it.

In 1999, Juska placed a personal ad in the New York Review of Books, her favorite thing to read, that stated: “Before I turn 67 — next March — I would like to have a lot of sex with a man I like. If you want to talk first, Trollope works for me.” (Anthony Trollope was her favorite author.)

Juska received 63 letters, ended up corresponding with perhaps a dozen, and did have trysts with five men, most of them older, but one in his 30s. This book details her exploits and she is wide open and blunt about it all. One reviewer called Juska “frank and funny,” and I agree.

A wonderful storyteller, the story encompasses so much more than sex. Jane does provide details of her encounters, but the emotional journey is really the crux of the book, not the sex. Juska goes deep, but keeps it light.

Jane Juska shares her wit, wisdom, and ultimately her heartbreak. Incredibly candid, A Round-Heeled Woman is as touching as it is humorous. If you need inspiration to go for it — whatever your it may be — let Jane Juska light your fire.

[Available on Amazon. The book was also made into a play starring Sharon Gless.]

Reviewer Kelly Epperson

Reviewer Kelly Epperson says sex and humor at any age is important. For more “late in life” adventures that include sex and plenty of funny, tune in to Grace & Frankie, the Netflix original series starring Jane Fonda (age 80) and Lily Tomlin (age 78). To see what Kelly is up to, check out kellyepperson.com

On dating sites, a sense of humor consistently rates in the top three most desired qualities in a mate.

“Men or shoes??
I choose shoes. They last longer.”

Unknown
Trivia quiz: Gender Differences
By Kathy Laurenhue, CHP

This quiz is inspired by one in Uncle John’s Bathroom Reader Puzzle Book #1, called the “Mr. and Mrs. Quiz.” Uncle John’s series of puzzle books are great fun, but not verifiably accurate. I did my own research where I could, and in other cases simply took Uncle John’s word for it.

Which gender is more likely to...

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<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<td>1. …be naturally blond?</td>
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<td>2. …laugh more?</td>
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<td>3. …sleep more?</td>
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<td>4. …snore?</td>
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<td>5. …have a keener sense of smell?</td>
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<td>6. …hold their liquor better?</td>
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<td>7. …talk to their cars?</td>
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<td>8. …literally have thicker skin?</td>
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<td>9. …be left-handed?</td>
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<td>10. …get hiccups?</td>
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<td>11. …take longer showers?</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. …subscribe to an Internet dating service?</td>
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Answers:


Notes:
2. Men usually make others laugh more than women do, but women laugh more, often reacting to men or just being socially polite/cooperative. As John Tierney wrote in an old New York Times article, that’s because “women are kinder and more empathetic.” He quotes a woman named Jackie who said, “I often laugh not because someone is especially funny, but because I sense that the person/speaker wishes to be found funny, and I want to be kind to that person.” Do you find that’s true? On the other hand, Robert Provine wrote in Laughter: A Scientific Investigation, “The evidence is clear. Women seek men who make them laugh, and men are anxious to comply with this request.” Do you find that’s true?
3. My sources say women are chronically short on sleep.
6. This isn’t about overall weight, but body water. Men have a higher percent than women, so they dilute alcohol better.


Author Kathy Laurenhue, CHP
Kathy is the creator of Wiser Now, www.wisernow.com, which aims to promote healthy aging by using a lighthearted touch—backed by science and fueled by fun.
What Do You Call That?

By Deb Gauldin, RN CHP

The first mistake is asking an OB nurse if she is interested in writing about humor related to sex and romance. A flood of stories come to mind, but I will spare you by sharing just a few.

The children of nurses have abrasions, not scrapes. They are dehydrated rather than thirsty. They have vulvas and penises, instead of pee-pees or wee-wees. Years ago a nursing school classmate boasted about the way she handled a question posed by her six-year-old son. “Where do babies come from?” he asked. Pam told us about the anatomically correct terminology she chose and how she followed our child development curriculum to make sure her explanation was age appropriate.

A few days later, she and her husband overheard their son explaining reproduction to another child. It went something like this. “First Mommy and Daddy get into bed and because they love each other, they scoot very, very close to one another. Next some little “fishies” come out of Daddy. They crawl down the side of the covers and march under the bed. Then they crawl up mommy’s side of the bed and swim into her tummy. Apparently Pam skipped a chapter, but I always thought she deserved an “A” for effort.

My own children spent their car pool days climbing over an assortment of posters and props I used for teaching birthing classes. There were times I glanced back to see my 3 year-old and his friend happily sporting cloth pelvis models on their heads. Or they would be swinging a placenta by the umbilical cord like nun chucks. Who shouts toward the back seat, “Christopher! Stop tossing mommy’s breasts back and forth.” Then again, whose 5-year old reminds her brother to stay out of Mom’s basket of lactating breasts? I’m surprised anyone allowed their child near my van!

My 6-year-old nephew described his favorite ride to the soccer fields. “I like the mom who has hot pads in her vulva!” he exclaimed. I would imagine a Volvo with seat warmers would be a toasty way to greet those chilly, fall, early morning practices.

One morning my husband came out the bathroom wearing only his Tidy-Whities.

My daughter asked, “Hey Dad. What do you have in your pocket, there?”

A fellow accompanied his wife during the birth of their first child. Her labor was progressing rapidly and the doctor was on the way. The bag of waters was still intact as the baby’s head began to emerge. He looked at this shiny bulging membrane and exclaimed, “Honey! Honey! I can see the egg!” All I could think of was swaddling their newborn LIZARD.

My favorite:

I was stepping into the shower when my 3 year-old daughter spotted the string to my Tampon. She crouched down on her haunches and stared with bewilderment. “Mom, Where’d you put that balloon?”

Author Deb Gauldin, CHP

Deb is a former obstetric nurse and life long champion of women’s causes. This year Deb earned third place in Jeanne Robertson’s prestigious Comedy with Class competition where Robertson presents a simple challenge: MAKE US LAUGH.

You can watch it yourself: www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7IowA0jZZw
Message to Members:

Welcome to the AATH Humor Voice Newsletter

Welcome to our Humor, Sex, and Romance issue. Our Guest Editor is the fabulous Joyce Saltman, hilarious keynoter, prolific program deliverer and genuine funny person. You can read this issue now or click on the attachment at the bottom to download and read later.

Next Issue
Therapeutic Clowning

Contact Guest Editor Patty Wooten with your articles and ideas: patty@pattywooten.com

Farewell

After nearly three years of producing the AATH Voice, your editorial team has decided it is time to let others have some fun. We have spotlighted 30 members and we have focused our humor eyes on important subjects, like humor and health, spirituality and death. We have also watched Finn go from a little man-baby complaining about kids playing on the lawn (Issue #1) to a strapping three-year-old hoping Haley shares his feelings.

This organization is filled with such interesting, quirky, funny, lovely and talented people we couldn’t have had a better time. This newsletter is a love letter to AATH, an organization that has nurtured and supported all of our humor journeys. Its members are some of the best people on the planet and it has been a privilege highlighting their work. Special thanks to Interviewer Extraordinaire, Kay Caskey, Master of all Thing Correct, Sporty King, Kathy and V2, and most of all, thank you AATH.

Laurie Young and the entire AATH Voice team

Thanks to all the authors who have helped make this newsletter a reality!

Editorial staff:

Laurie Young, CHP, Hunter and Gatherer - the place to come if you need to be hunted or gathered. Laurie@Laughways.com.

Joyce Saltman, CHP, Guest Editor for this edition of The Voice, is a professor Emeritus of Special Education at Southern Connecticut State University and very in-demand speaker. Demonstrating her sense of purpose, style, and priorities she chose Columbia as the university where she would earn her PhD because she loved the color of their doctoral gowns.

Kay Caskey, CHP. As always, she takes care of the serious stuff reviewing scholarly articles. Her enormous brain soaks up challenges and she is now working in cyber security for Equifax. Of course, the complaint department is all hers. Kay@LaughWays.com

Allen Klein, leader in finding just the right quotation at the right time. He is the author of numerous books including the classic, The Healing Power of Humor. In spite of his celebrity status he is a very sweet person and will talk to anyone!

AATH Voice Regulars:

Kelly Epperson Of course Kelly Epperson has been giving us great reviews since our first issue. Contact her if you have a book. kelly@kellyepperson.com.

You may have noticed Deb Gauldin, CHP, heads up our “Funny Page”. If any of you have stories you think might be a good fit, please send them along to her at deb@debgauldin.com

Kathy Laurenhue, CHP, creates quizzes to go along with the focus of each issue. kathy@wisernow.com

FINN: I think she’s going to want to see my new Big Wheel