



Conference Early Bird Rates Expire January 31!

You still have the opportunity to register for the Annual Conference AND take advantage of early bird registration rates. Check out the great lineup we have in store for you at:

SCHEDULE 2016

REGISTRATION RATES

REGISTER NOW!

Make your hotel reservations and take advantage of special AATH rates:

HOTEL RESERVATIONS



Share your knowledge, your information, your products with fellow conference attendees by participating in the exhibitor showcase. Member rate is only \$50 for 1st table and \$30 for a

This complimentary Humor Connection newsletter is one of the many ways that AATH fulfills our mission to study, practice and promote healthy humor. You can join our efforts by joining AATH at www.aath.org

Letter From the President

Fun is an indicator of trust

Our AATH board knows how to have fun! Just ask any of us how much we enjoy working together. This board brings the gift of laughter every time we interact. The great leadership of our board is correlated with building wonderful and laughter-filled relationships within our AATH community. Trust is considered the basis for creating successful learning communities, because it facilitates teamwork and is the foundation for cultivating relationships. A strong bond of trust among members of an organization is essential for growth.

But what does trust look like? Its simple to observe if you know the indicators. Look for laughter, fun, and joy. When I attend an AATH board meeting, I can actually feel the joyful nature of our relationships. Humor thrives in an environment of trust and is a major factor that contributes to trusting relationships. When multiple choices are available to an individual within a relationship or within an organization, there are increased opportunities for a sense of humor to thrive. For more information on this topic, you will enjoy reading the book FUNWORKS by one of our past AATH presenters, Leslie Yerkes. Her book and other resources for incorporating fun into business are found [here](#).

With humergy,
Mary Kay Morrison
AATH President

AATH Member, Rev. Susan Sparks kicks off the New Year with some thoughts about New Beginnings:

Member News

Congratulations to Allen Klein who is glowing with joy because his book, You Can't Ruin My Day, recently won a BookAndAuthor.com award for the best 2015 book in the self-help/health category.

Over 40 Females, a national organization founded by MORE magazine editor Judy Goss, has the motto of connect, inspire, encourage. The Chicago chapter recognizes a

2nd table. NonMember rates are \$100/\$75. For more information on Exhibitor Opportunities, click [here](#).



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On December 27th, 2015, AATH member and Senior Pastor of the historic Madison Avenue Baptist Church in New York City, Rev. Susan Sparks joined president-elect, Maia Aziz on her radio show, *Morning Moments With Maia* for a conversation about Fresh Starts and New Beginnings. Susan is also a professional comedian who tours nationally with Rabbi Bob Alper and Muslim Comedian Azhar Usman in the Laugh in Peace Tour and has been featured in O Magazine, the New York Times, on CBS, CNN and ABC.

A blogger for Good Morning America, Huffington Post, Psychology Today and Day 1, Susan's book, *Laugh Your Way to Grace: Reclaiming the Spiritual Power of Humor* was named one of the best spiritual books of 2010. Known for her humorous, down-to-earth sermons, Rev. Sparks reminds us that to find our true selves, we need to let go of others expectations and take a leap of faith.

Start your New Year off with a moment of reflection about the new directions you might be looking to head into by taking a listen to this funny and insightful conversation [here](#).

Share the Mission of AATH

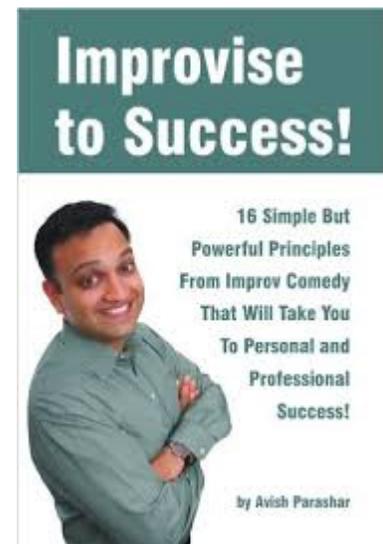
member each year who exemplifies that motto. **Kelly Epperson** was named the Chicago Over 40 Females 2015 Female of the Year. Kelly also received another award called the Shining Light. A critical component of Over 40 Females is providing support to women in transition, both professionally and personally. Kelly Epperson was chosen by the members of the Chicago Chapter as the 2015 Female of the Year for being a model of what the organization is all about connecting, encouraging and inspiring. Kelly was nominated and voted by the members for being an inspiration in her profession and how she leads her personal life.

SEND YOUR MEMBER NEWS:
info@aath.org

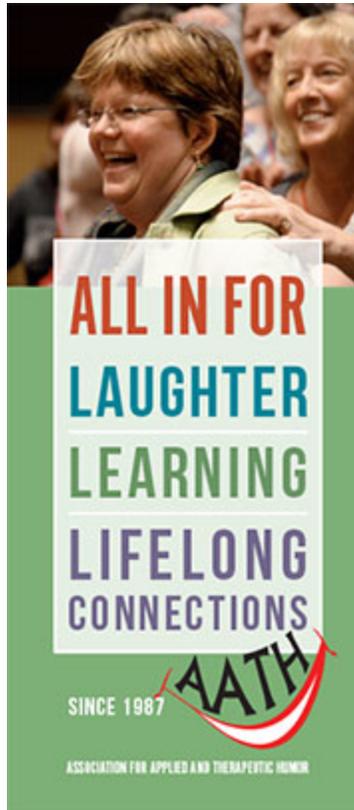
Book Review

Thank you, *DIANE ROOSTH*, for the Book Reviews every month!!

Avish Parashar,
Improvise to Success



Our AATH 2015 Keynote Speaker, author, teacher and student of Improv Comedy demonstrates how to apply Improv skills in all aspects of life, including the workplace. Avish Parashar reminds us that we all improvise every second of every day!



We are proud of our new AATH and Humor Academy brochures. We also have conference postcards available for distribution. If you want to share the mission of AATH with your friends and colleagues, let us know and we will send you copies of brochures and postcards. We also can send you AATH business cards. Just let Kathy from our management company know. kathy@aath.org

REGIONAL GROUPS - Since our last article about AATH Local Chapters, we are getting many requests to start chapters. We invite you form a leadership team and apply. The goal of these chapters is to share the mission of AATH, to network and have fun. Heidi Hanna is the leadership facilitator of the first chapter in Southern California. Your team can apply to begin your own AATH chapter. Guidelines and the short application are available by contacting Kathy Velasco from our management company. kathy@aath.org

He teaches us that successful improv involves risk taking to create interesting ideas with nothing prepared, self-understanding how to tap into our individual creativity, and the ability to listen and work well with others.

Our author encourages us to be willing to fail, make mistakes, be rejected, and be wrong which can all lead to personal growth. He identifies sixteen principles for success he learned teaching Improv. These include: Having Fun, Getting Out There and Fail, Stay in the Moment, Trust Yourself, Get Your Body into It, Teamwork, and Communicate Clearly. He tells us how when you put yourself out there to learn and grow you also open yourself up to uncertainty.

Mr. Parashar speaks about the importance of self-confidence in ones ability to succeed, and the importance of commitment to follow through. He offers with his book free access to over 25 exercises and improv games to help practice his principles on his website. He shares one of his favorite sayings when teaching Improv Comedy: The audience will appreciate you more if you confidently mess up than if you tentatively succeed.

This expert promotes the attitude of gratitude for self and others when he discusses the importance of relationships and communication in Improv comedy. With over 15 years experience as a teacher, director and performer of Improv Comedy, he reminds us that success is unpredictable. He encourages us to be willing to play, laugh, and let go of stress while tapping into our creativity to become better problem solvers. He believes that the key to achieving success is the benefit of learning how to Improvise and flow with whatever life sends our way.

Members who would like their book to be considered for an upcoming Humor Connection book review, should contact info@aath.org. Please use Book Review Submission in the

subject line.

Dear AATHY:

I would like to join AATH, but I think I have a humor deficit. I hate to admit this to anyone, but I cannot tell a joke. I always forget the punch line. Can you help me?

Your question brings up a familiar challenge that those of us in the field of humor studies frequently encounter. Although jokes and funny stories generate laughter, most laughter happens during normal everyday interactions. Our sense of humor comes from the ability to put a humorous spin on challenging everyday events. Robert Provine actually researched the topic of what makes people laugh. Phrases that make people laugh are often not very funny when the actual words are examined (Provine, 2000).

So mirth, stories, wit, comedy and joking are all part of the experience of laughing with others who share an experience with you. Jokes are only a small segment of the shared experience of humor and laughter.

A sense of humor is the capacity of a human being to respond to life challenges with optimistic enjoyment (Morrison, 2005). AATH is an organization with the mission to study, practice and promote healthy humor and laughter. One of main goals is to find humor in the everyday challenges of life. We invite you to explore the research with us at our [conference in Phoenix](#), April 7-10th in Phoenix. You will laugh a lot and may learn some joke-telling skills in the process.

DONATIONS TO AATH ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE: Thank you for your continued support of AATH!

You can write a check to AATH and send to the office or you can:

1. **[AATH 2016 CONFERENCE SPONSORSHIP](#):** There are many ways that you can be a sponsor for our AATH conference for as little as \$50.

2. **SCHOLARSHIP DONATION:** You can designate your gift to the Patty Wooten or Ed Dunkelblau scholarship fund.

To make a tax-deductible gift to AATH, you may send check donations to the AATH office at: *220 East State St., Floor G Rockford, IL 61104*

MEMBER ASSISTANCE: If you need help with renewing your membership, or if you forget your member website log-in information, reach out to Michele St. Clair and her team at **815-708-6587**.

REMINDER: AATH is officially recognized as a 501c3 and has been vetted by UNITED WAY. If you or anyone you know

makes donations through United Way, please consider designating a portion of your generous gift to AATH and please let others know of this opportunity.