

THE THIRD AGE TRUST



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Humour

Ginette Dayan

Humour Group Start-up Leaflet

Setting up a Humour Group is not difficult.

At the first session people come to see what you have on offer as they are not quite sure what is meant by 'humour'.

When we started in South Shields, I came ready with a CD/ tape player, information about a humorist, jokes, songs, and a funny toy. I explained that this was my show this time, but in the future we decide as a group which humorist we do the next time; we all arrive with information gleaned on the humorist as well as a choice of CDs/ tapes, songs, jokes, comic poems, stories (our own or someone else's), and/ or anything amusing. This is not compulsory. **The aim of the group is to relax, have fun but not at anyone's expense.**

My suggestions for forming a new group are the following:

1. People differ in the humour they appreciate, so the group has to be democratically run, and be aware of people's sensibilities.
2. The group members suggest a humorist to tackle at the next meeting and are encouraged to bring information, cartoons, CDs/ tapes, songs, poems and stories and anything else amusing.
3. The leader has to come prepared with a lot of information about the humorist and the rest as well. But only volunteer it after the group have had their say or as part of a discussion. The leader's role is to encourage, facilitate participation and keep the sessions buoyant and interesting and, of course, amusing. However, the Leader is also a member of the group.
4. I have found that a two-hour session once a month is sufficient: one hour for the chosen humorist followed by coffee and business (what the group wants, what is laughter, the choice of the next humorist), then jokes etc. It is convenient to have facilities to show DVDs. I don't have that at present at the Community Association where we meet.
5. INFORMATION: can be obtained from the Internet, the local library (books, CDs, DVDs) and contacts. You may need to buy something sometimes. A small contribution from the group is useful. We pay 50p. each session. We started with local humorists and songwriters, and then we moved on to national and international ones. Examples are Wendy Cope, Victoria Wood, Tony Hancock, Ogden Nash and others.
6. We meet in a room in a Community Association, not in anyone's house.

For Christmas we watched a funny film, 'A Private Function', in my house because I have the facilities. Members brought things to nosh. Last year we watched BORAT after much discussion about whether anyone would feel offended.

Let me know if I can be of further help and whether you have set up a Humour Group. Good luck.

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