

The World Laughter Tour, Inc, including USA Laughter Clubs (also known as North American Laughter Clubs), bases its aims, objectives, and guidelines so they are consistent with Laughter Club International

### **Guidelines For laughter Clubs and Basic Requirements for Registration**

(Revised, May 2001)

**Laughter Club International (LCI)** is a Worldwide organization, founded by Dr. Madan Kataria, registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860. It also has a Public Trust exemption from tax under section 80G. The LCI was formed in 1997 with the help of our visionary Senior Vice President J.K. Kapur and dynamic leader, Vice President Mohit Kapoor from the World Laughter Club. We are also grateful to G.P.Shethia, B.P. Hirani and Kamini Bathija for making our dream come true.

**World Laughter Tour, Inc.** is a non-profit corporation chartered in the state of Ohio, with Steve Wilson (Ohio) as President, Karyn Buxman as vice-president, and Pamela Stile as Secretary-Treasurer. Steve Wilson and Karyn Buxman (Missouri) are the founders of The World Laughter Tour (WLT). USA Laughter Clubs (USALC) is a function of World Laughter Tour. Until USALC is established as a separate entity, all laughter clubs in North America will be registered with, coordinated by, and leaders will be trained by WLT.



### **Aims and Objectives**

- To create awareness of new techniques of therapeutic laughter all over the world, by setting up Laughter Clubs and imparting practical training in various techniques of laughter. Thus, we can help to cultivate the spirit of laughter by understanding ways and means of sensible living and putting them into practice through laughter.
- To set up a Professional Advisory Committee from various specialties and systems of medicine, science, business, education, other professions & occupations, and public life to advise and guide the initiatives of WLT and to advise as to the validity of scientific studies and research work as to how laughter can affect the physical, mental, social and spiritual well being of the participants.
- To maintain a website as the international clearinghouse for information, ideas, and activities of interest and importance to the laughter movement.
- To understand how laughter therapy methods may have to be modified in order to be effective in various cultures, and to share that information.
- To recognize the websites of other individuals and organizations that support the aims and philosophies of WLT and LCI. We will do this through creation of a website award to be bestowed on deserving honorees.
- To publish books, manuals, newsletters, videocassettes, CDs and other information on Laughter Therapy.
- To bring people of various countries together and promote events that bring everlasting peace through laughter.
- To create a membership-based organization for the support of WLT as a self-sustaining organization.

- To disseminate accredited training around the world, and to develop models for advance training using traditional educational methods as well as modern technological innovations, such as distance learning.
- To develop a cadre of competent, accredited trainers who will train and certify Laughter Leaders.
- To promote Laughter Clubs in public places that can be free and open to everyone.
- To promote the adoption of Laughter Clubs in every long-term care facility in the United States, as well as in schools, government, and workplaces, as an effective, reputable, professional program, on a fee-for-service basis wherever it is appropriate.
- To create a professional association for accredited Laughter Leaders and providers of therapeutic laughter programs, to enhance credibility, and spread the access to these methods around the world.
- To foster international conferences, meetings, and symposia on the therapeutic benefits of laughter, laughter methods, and to foster research and the sharing of research findings.

#### **Affiliation to Laughter Club International**

With the popularity of laughter therapy many people have started so-called laughter clubs on their own. They are conducting laughter sessions without proper training. Within the WLT & LCI format, Laughter Therapy training is supervised by a team of health professionals and other experts who are availed of the current research so as to bring the maximum benefits of Laughter Therapy to participants. If done in a wrong manner, or without proper training, it may not be effective or may even be harmful, for example, if there is forceful laughter and exercise.

**REQUIRED:** Every affiliated USA Laughter Club and therapeutic laughter program must be under the direction of a trained person who holds at least the designation of Certified Laughter Leader.

**Registered Clubs** receive support services from World Laughter Tour, Inc., which includes:

1. A listing on WLT website as an authorized club.
2. Permission to use logos and the phrases “Authorized Affiliate of World Laughter Tour” and “Authorized Affiliate of USA Laughter Clubs.”
3. Public Relations and publicity assistance.
4. Permission to use signage (provided by WLT or otherwise) for Laughter Club meeting announcements and to identify Laughter Club members.
5. Opportunities to attend basic and advanced training workshops, conferences, and symposia.
6. Subscription to electronic and mailed newsletters.
7. Opportunity to access in-depth consultation (on a fee-for-service basis for extensive issues).

**General Methodology:** Under the Laughter Club concept, we laugh in a group without the help of any jokes. To make it more spontaneous, keep the sessions interesting and avoid boredom, laughter techniques need to be more stimulating. Our panel of experts will keep your therapeutic laughter program updated from time to time. WLT will coordinate the sharing of ideas between NALC and other clubs worldwide.

World Laughter Tour, Inc. is an authorized affiliate of Laughter Club International, which in turn is a worldwide organization and by affiliation you will get the privilege of being a part of a big laughter family. For example, there may be inter-club exchange programs, where members of one Laughter Club could visit other clubs in all cities of the country and abroad. A few member delegates would visit other cities with prior invitation and may be provided home stay with the members of Laughter Clubs. The host club would arrange to visit various clubs in that particular city, along with sightseeing.

LCI is planning to start extensive research on various aspects of physical, mental and spiritual health. WLT will support and join in these efforts wherever feasible. We are expecting funding of these research projects by national and international organizations and the benefit of medical research will be passed on to all the affiliated clubs. We are also planning a computerized health file for all Laughter Club members in the near future.

### **Medical Information**

All the individual and club affiliates will get the latest information about club activities all over the world, as well as regular newsletters and other research material on laughter therapy, yoga and health building activities.

WLT, consistent with LCI, will conduct regular training programs on laughter therapies including exercise physiology, meditation, yoga, personality development, healthy eating and sensible living. These workshops and seminars will be organized periodically and all the affiliated clubs will get information.

Laughter Clubs are no more a laughing matter. Social organizations, corporations, and other industries recognize them. In India, hotels are offering massive discounts on picnics organized by Laughter Clubs and many companies are offering discounts to Laughter Club members. The clubs in India are planning to issue a "Laughter Card" to members of affiliated clubs. At present more than 500 establishments in India are willing to offer a discount to holders of Laughter Cards.

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## **GUIDELINES FOR AFFILIATED CLUBS**

### Download Guidelines

1. Registration types. To obtain recognition and the benefits of affiliation, you must register one or more clubs that meet on a regular basis and have a steering committee and qualified leadership. Here are some examples of the types of clubs that must register.
  - ✓ Clubs that are open to the public and meet in parks or other facilities such as YMCA, health club, or yoga centers.
  - ✓ Clubs that are part of employee morale or wellness programs in a workplace setting.
  - ✓ Clubs that are part of a therapeutic programming agenda, such as in long-term care, hospice, or hospital.
  - ✓ Clubs that are part of an education program, whether in the curriculum or extra-curricular.
  - ✓ Individual Certified Laughter Leaders are automatically registered at the completion of their training.
2. Either way, the appropriate contact information will be posted to our website ([www.worldlaughterstour.com](http://www.worldlaughterstour.com)) so that others in your community or with your same interests can locate and contact you for mutual sharing of ideas and inspiration. We keep

each other motivated and creative.

3. Registration fees. For affiliation with the World Laughter Tour and USA Laughter Clubs (and indirectly to Laughter Club International (LCI), you register the name of your club on an annual basis by paying the appropriate fees (see [Registration Form](#)). Please remit fees at the time of registration. A club registration number along with receipt and affiliation certificate will be issued. When appropriate, the registration fee can be collected from voluntary contributions of the Organizing Committee or other members who wish to start the club.
4. One person can organize a laughter club. However, in order that the one person alone not be burdened with all of the administration and arrangements for the laughter club, we encourage the forming of an Organizing or Steering Committee, to be a group rather than an individual, probably 5-9 members is best. When necessary, guidelines should be established to overcome some cultural imbalances, e.g., in India the guidelines emphasize the inclusion of women on such a committee. One person can be designated as group leader, nominated by consensus, who will be known as the Chairperson and others will be known as Members or Laughter Leaders. Bureaucracy is minimized. Don't create any posts or levels, as there will be no elections for the committee members.
5. In India, Laughter Club members should not undertake any social work that needs collection of funds from club members or outside the club. This may be modified in the USA Clubs, some of which may form around purposes or missions that are based in social service, environmental, etc.
6. We plan for all the affiliated clubs to get information through a newsletter, e-mail, and web site, from the LCI and NALC. A nominal subscription amount would probably be needed to cover costs. The LCI & NALC will also hold workshops, seminars, national and international conferences from time to time. The Governing Councils of the LCI and WLT will decide the costs of registrations and materials to be supplied to the club members and Certified laughter Leaders.
7. Affiliated clubs may print letterhead, signage, or other materials carrying the LCI & WLT logos with standard color and design. When the LCI logo is displayed it should be in conjunction with the name of Dr. Madan Kataria as founder. Any and all certificates, badges, awards and mementos should have the logo of the LCI or WLT.
8. Affiliated clubs shall not open any new branch without approval and proper registration with the LCI & WLT.
9. The club shall not make any major changes in the format of standard laughter and exercises, which are periodically fixed by the central body. The core format is outlined in the booklet, "Laughter Therapy," and in "Laugh For No Reason," referred to as "The Standard Format for a Laughter Therapy Session." The goal here is to attain some minimal standards and uniformity while leaving adequate room for creativity and originality. A person attending an LCI-WLT affiliated laughter club anywhere in the world should find essential similar formats and standards.
10. The club should function on a non-religious, non-parochial and non-political basis. No prayers relating to a particular religion should be introduced in Laughter Clubs.
11. Laughter is free to all the citizens on this earth. Anybody may attend a Laughter Club anywhere in the world, provided the person is not hampering the smooth functioning of

the club. Membership fees may be charged for World laughter Tour and for national clubs, such as the USA Laughter Clubs, Laughter Clubs of Canada, Laughter Clubs of Mexico. Local clubs do not charge memberships fees but may assess an attendance fee to help cover costs. Members are required to fill the entrance form and to maintain records.

12. Affiliated clubs may decide to engage in promotion, such as for membership or education, and fundraising. For example, events might take the form of public speaking, picnics, or other outings, or even just the laughter club sessions. During such events, the affiliated clubs should display banners, placards and other materials. Individuals who speak on behalf of Laughter Clubs should identify their affiliation with WLT & LCI, for example in their introductions or in printed programs.
13. At least one or two Certified Laughter Leaders from each club or organization should make every effort to attend local, regional, or national meetings, to keep up with training and new developments.