



# When Humor Is NOT the Answer

Humor is a wonderful tool for setting people at ease and reducing stress. But humor can sometimes do serious damage. Unacceptable forms of humor include the following:

## 1. Ethnic humor.

Making fun of people's ethnic, racial, religious or cultural background is insulting.

## 2. Cruel humor.

Practical jokes can be dangerous and almost always result in hurt feelings on some level. People who laugh at others are often trying to boost themselves at someone else's expense. Even when you're laughing because you did the exact same thing once, it can hurt someone's feelings.

## 3. Sarcastic humor.

This often involves putting others down. Even when it's directed at yourself, it's a joyless form of humor.

## 4. Nonstop humor.

Humor is a matter of balance. People who make a joke out of everything are tiresome and hard to get to know.

## 5. Humor as distraction.

It's not OK to use humor to avoid facing a serious issue.

List some acceptable and unacceptable uses of humor that you've seen or heard recently. What made the unacceptable incidents unacceptable?

### Acceptable

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### Unacceptable

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If everyone can join the laughter—or would if they were present—then it's probably “good humor.”