ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

SELF-HELP

Never Stop Laughing!
William Goodman
978-1-4389-2904-0
Four Stars (out of Five)

"I'm no comedian in the usual sense" author William Goodman writes "but one of my greatest pleasures since childhood has been making people laugh." He succeeds in that endeavor with his first book. With plenty of guffaw-worthy personal anecdotes the goal of this book is to underscore the importance of laughter smiling and humor in everyday life.

At first glance this book gives the impression that it will deliver a *Chicken Soup for the Soul* approach to humor with multiple individual stories. Instead each chapter is a general discussion of a humor-related topic and is filled with short anecdotes quotes and musings on the nature of humor. The author's tales and personal yarns imbue each chapter with warmth and readers will identify with Goodman's quirky revelations.

The author has been giving motivational speeches about the benefits of laughter and levity for fifteen years. He mines these talks for funny and relevant material for his book. Chapter titles like "Laughter Grows on Trees" "Let's get Physical" and "This Joke's on Me" typify his style and approach to a subject that can be tricky to discuss. As E.B. White said "Analyzing humor is like dissecting a frog. Few people are interested and the frog dies of it." But the frog is alive and well in *Never Stop Laughing*.

A little over half the chapters are devoted to general laughter and humor—joke telling the way people laugh comedians how to make people laugh. The remaining chapters extrapolate on related feel-good topics such as the importance of physical contact the therapeutic value of music and the pleasure of pets. Although these chapters don't necessarily relate to humor per se they fit the author's overall purpose of exploring how to maintain a balanced perspective on life. Laughter and humor are foremost in the roster but Goodman prefers not to leave other worthy methods out of the lineup.

Although there are a couple typos and a bland cover design leaves something to be desired Goodman gets his message across effectively. The author capably utilizes a stockpile of quotes from famous people to emphasize his points. His conversational writing style complements the subject matter. Even the corny wisecracks sprinkled throughout the book are

forgivable. (“If the reader should perchance happen to run across any unnecessary or inadvertently redundant words in this book which is highly highly unlikely please be so kind as to ignore them or whatever. You know what I mean?”) Readers will chuckle in spite of themselves.