

Flashing a Smile ~ from Shobi

On a flight across country I was, I thought, minding my own business as Shobhana flying alone in pedestrian clothing, when the stewardess tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Are you a clown?" I was a bit startled. "Why, yes, but . . . but . . . ah," I stammered, looking down at my clothing to see if I were truly in my pedestrian clothing, "How did you know?" I asked. She answered with a big grin, "You just flashed me the biggest smile and somehow I just knew you were a clown." She then went on serving tea.

Well, how is that for wearing the clown on your sleeve? I've thought about this and then watched myself walking around airports, on buses sitting at Starbucks, etc. And I do . . . I do . . . I must admit . . . I just flash people smiles. I catch someone's eye and I flash them a smile. And they smile back. It has just become as natural for me to do as walking down the street. I know Shobi Dobi does this in the hospital, but it certainly has carried over to my pedestrian life.

And of course the best part of it is people will flash a smile back. It is a real, REAL connection. Right through the eyes to the heart and that's all there is. It's just some part of me that wants to share my joy all the time. And that joy has come to me in great part by being a clown! It is one of the side effects of being a clown - and more specifically a volunteer caring clown. Anyone else have this experience?

Moonlighting . . . in clown . . .

I always go to and from jobs "in clown" ("in Motley" for you Brits). I do this not only because there is no place to change at most gigs and at the hospital, but it has become my habit since 9/11. It was in September 2001 when I was going to the hospital to visit a friend in intensive care. He was asleep and I was told to come back in two hours. So what does a clown do to "spend" two hours? I went shopping. People were saying to me, "Oh I see you are here to cheer us up." So now it is a habit. Sometime I get into clown just for the fun of it and go shopping. It is a great way to fight the "Blahs." And I always carry a feather duster just for the gas stations when getting gas "in clown." While the gas is pumping, I am dusting off cars. I must say I do have fun.

Guerilla Clowning

The other day in the grocery store while shopping "in clown" on the way home from a gig, someone said. "Oh I see you are a guerrilla clown" I must have looked a little startled because the woman laughed and said. "I don't mean you look like a guerilla, I mean it is like guerilla warfare." Well, that really put a confused look on little Shobi. The woman laughed again and said "I mean you are here fighting the blues and the blahs in all of us." Then I too laughed.

Here's a SMILE gift for you all...From the clowns of the UPliftment Programme of Cape Town, South Africa.

A Smile

It creates happiness in the home, fosters good will in a business, and is the countersign of friends.

It is rest to the weary, daylight to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad, and nature's best antidote for trouble.

Yet it cannot be bought, begged, borrowed, or stolen, for it is something that is no earthly good to anybody till it is given away!

If someone is too tired to give you a smile, leave one of yours.

For, nobody needs a smile so much as those