

Annual Clowning & Caring in Costa Rica - August 23-30, 2015

with Patch Adams' Gesundheit! Institute and the School for Designing a Society

Info Pack 1 - "Join us!"

Dear Clowns!

Welcome to Clowning & Caring in Costa Rica 2015

Here are some thoughts about how Gesundheit! Institute intends the art of clowning and some suggestions and invitations for all of us in order to be ready to go to San José!

Clowning

If you come to this tour with a sense of joy and generosity, **there is no “right” or “wrong” way to be a clown**, below, however, are some tips to prepare for success.

When you embark onto a clown tour with Gesundheit! Institute the experience begins from the very moment you register!

→ *Take some time before thinking about your clown character(s) and methods*

How can your particular personal traits be best used in play? Experiment with being publicly happy, to be cheerful and engaging in public spaces. Practice making eye contact with strangers, smiling, singing, making goofy faces, wearing the clown nose. Practice joyful vulnerability. Practice playing with the flow of events in life not as problems, but as opportunities.

REMEMBER: *You don't have to be funny (seriously)*

Clowning is a way to connect to people and share love, don't worry about getting laughs, they will come naturally!

→ *Take some time putting together your costume.*

Make sure your clown costumes and shoes are comfortable, even if you feel silly. Thrift stores and yard sales abound with inexpensive clown wear. *Don't over-pack*, but bring enough costumes and clothes for the trip. Keep in mind temperatures in San José in September may vary from a minimum of 18/20 °C (63/68 °F) to a maximum of 26/28 °C (78/83 °F) and with a high relative humidity percentage, expect beautiful nice rain to come down regularly, especially in the afternoon (it won't affect our clowning that much anyway). You will also find endless use for *many pockets*. Remember, a clown can be anything you imagine it to be!!!

→ *Take some time getting toys together.*

Lots of experienced clowns like to **carry a bag full of props and goodies**. There are certain clown tools that never run out of uses, here is a quick list of props or toys you might want to stock up on. Bring enough to share and give away!

BALLOONS BALLOONS!, (an amazing joyful tool especially if it's your 1st time clowning!),

Puppets

Stickers

Bubbles

Face paints

Musical instruments

Sound makers

Woopie cushion

Magic tricks

A personal photo album about your life at home, and where you are from

Don't stop there, find anything that is funny or interesting to you, lots of folks like abstract props like big pieces of fabric, funnels, or string. Get creative!!!!*

YOU WILL BE HAPPY YOU HAVE A FEW PROPS!

→ *Gifts when Clowning*

Gift giving is a wonderful and beautiful thing, but can also be challenging as a clown.

Often, if you begin giving out gifts in a *group* of kids you will be transformed in their eyes from a "funny loving clown" to "vending machine." If you want to give presents away it is a good idea to do it with *individual* kids with whom you are having a personal and intimate clowning connection!

A serious note about clowning

While clowning can be wild and full of energy, it is **very important** to remember that we are guests, both in the country and the institution where we are clowning, **DON'T BE TOO NAUGHTY, IT CAN JEPORDIZE CHANCES TO RETURN IN FUTURE YEARS.**

This means while we encourage you to be wildly experimental, that **we need to be respectful** of any rules or requests about behavior. Generally, "potty" humor is unwelcome by institutions directors including, fake poop, pants dropping, and over the top farting. Please come with an open mind, and if someone from the team makes a request about your clowning, be open to the suggestions. The hospitals are filled with sick people and we often clown in terminal wards.

When I enter a room, until I know it is safe to go crazy, I enter with awe and wonder, and **MAKE NO ASSUMPTIONS** about the space I am entering. It might be a utility closet, a family at a death bed, a staff break room filled with nurses, a classroom for hospitalized children, or an individual patient.

I have found that the more I establish a relationship with people when clowning the more I can get away with. Being a clown is about connecting with people, alleviating pain and suffering, and creating loving relationships with strangers.

Advisory

This is a drug-free trip. If you are under 18 years of age, there is no alcohol and no exceptions. Violators will be sent home. We are here to serve and befriend the local

communities. All our activities will be consistent with this policy.

This is a violence-free trip. Anyone who commits any act of violence will be immediately sent home.

Change money ONLY in designated facilities. We will advise during orientation the location of the safe exchange facilities.

San Jose is relatively safe, but we advise that after dark, be in groups.

Do not bring anything to Costa Rica that you cannot afford to live without (i.e. jewellery, a family heirloom, etc.)

The extra copy of your passport is a MUST!!!! You can leave your passport in the hotel safe.

Next steps

Join us! Please fill out the Registration Form and proceed with the payment of the non-refundable deposit or full tuition in order to reserve your spot in the event.

Follow the links on the webpage: <http://www.patchadams.org/event/costa-rica/>

Once you'll be registered, we'll contact you with more information to get ready for our clown adventure together!

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