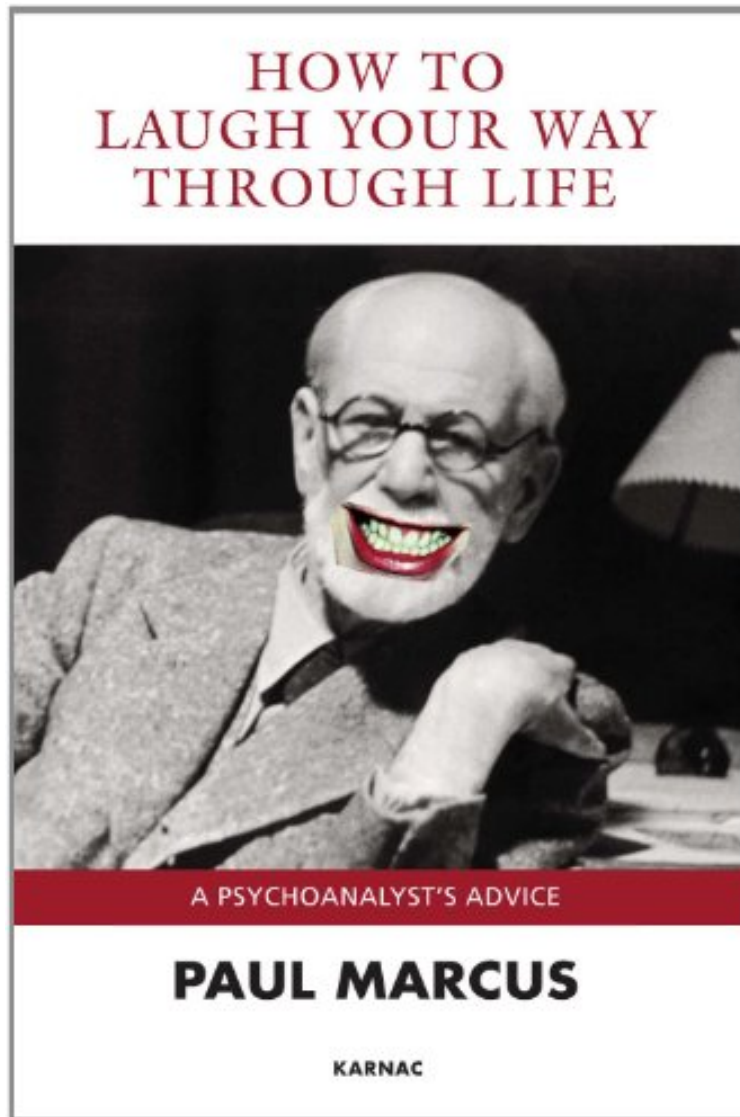


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## How to Laugh Your Way Through Life: A Psychoanalyst's Advice

*Paul Marcus*

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**Paul Marcus : How to Laugh Your Way Through Life: A Psychoanalyst's Advice** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How to Laugh Your Way Through Life: A Psychoanalyst's Advice:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A GREAT CASE FOR LIVING A FULLER LIFEBy RichardDr. Marcus and Ms. Marcus have an excellent knowledge of acting techniques, which they summarize beautifully.The book proposes ways of enhancing our experience of life thru understanding the ways in which actors create

and experience their characters. This teaches us to understand ourselves, our roles, our motivations and the need to execute these with full energy, humor, and all the qualities we expect from a character on the stage. Life is short. There is no room for boredom. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An interesting view on living and life's journey. By CSA wonderful commentary on enjoying life even when things are their worst. The anecdotal stories wonderfully illustrate the author's premise. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Part of the Good Life is a Good Laugh. By Dr. Ronald Freud said that "love and work" are the two fundamental components of a Good Life. In this well-researched book, Dr. Marcus argues that a Good Laugh is also part of the Good Life. We need to appreciate and indeed blend in all aspects of humor, from the black to the silly and to tragicomic, in order to understand fundamental aspects of the human condition. Marcus provides quotes and wisdom from the pros - everyone from Groucho Marx to Nietzsche to the Buddha, to Woody Allen. In addition, he weaves in case histories from his psychoanalytic practice to help demonstrate the profound healing aspects of laughter when used as a tool for insight and personal growth. Highly recommended for anyone interested in understanding more about why "laughter is the best medicine."

While living in anti-Semitic Vienna, Freud wrote in a letter to Ernest Jones, "What progress we are making. In the Middle Ages they would have burned me. Now they are content with burning my books." Tragicomic attunement? seeing the comic in the tragic and the tragic in the comic? is a perspective on life that, following Freud, is one of the best ways to "to ward off possible suffering" and better manage the stressors, anxieties, and worries of everyday life. Moreover, tragicomic attunement and intervention has a meaning-giving, affect-integrating, life-affirming, double structure that is especially pertinent to sensible living in our troubled and troubling post-modern world: "In tragedy", said theologian Harvey Cox, "we weep and are purged. In comedy we laugh and hope." In Monty Python's "Life of Brian", a bunch of crucified criminals happily sing "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life"; in Stephen King's book *The Tommyknockers*, the central character thinks about a joke he heard once. As a man is about to be executed, the firing squad officer in charge offers the man about to be shot a cigarette. He replies, "No thanks, I'm trying to quit." It is precisely this capacity to use one's imaginative resources to create a tragicomic "form of life", a way of thinking, feeling, and acting in the service of aesthetic, epistemological, and ethical deepening, of affirming Beauty, Truth and, especially, Goodness, that mainly constitutes the art of living the "good life". In chapters on love, work, suffering, death, and psychoanalysis, the author shows how the "nuts and bolts" of tragicomic attunement and intervention can be cultivated and used to help people better manage the harshness, if not outrageousness, of life, as well as more deeply engage its beauty and nobility. Unlike most books on the psychology and philosophy of humor, and following Ludwig Wittgenstein's wonderful advice? "A serious and good philosophical work could be written consisting entirely of jokes," this book is replete with jokes, humorous stories, and amusing maxims and quotes making it a lively reading experience that aims to help people fashion the "good life"? a life of deep and expansive love, creative and productive work, that is aesthetically pleasing and in accordance with reason and ethics. As tragicomic master Mel Brooks noted, "Life literally abounds in comedy if you just look around you," and becoming more attuned to its dynamics and applications in everyday life is the art of living the "good life".

"Paul Marcus has hit the nail on the head - or should I say the nerve of the heart, a heart that is ticklish. This is a beautiful book showing the tragicomic richness of humour as part of life, as aid to living, as opener of soul dimensions, and affirming of everyday life touched by transcendence. He takes us on a tour of humour in psychoanalysis, culture, life and death in many modes, adding to our appreciation of who we are and what life is. I laughed and cried and learned through the ways that truth and love and fun can tickle, touch and enlighten." (Michael Eigen, PhD, author of *Kabbalah and Psychoanalysis* and *Contact with the Depths*) "Beautifully blending insights from psychology and sociology, Marcus has convinced me that embracing a 'tragicomic vision', as he calls it, is an essential quality of mind if we are to prevail amidst the many difficulties of everyday life. Filled with poignant and humorous examples, this book was a pleasure to read and learn from." (William B. Helmreich, PhD, author of *The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6,000 Miles to Understand a City* and Professor of Sociology) About the Author Paul Marcus is a supervising and training analyst at the National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis. He is the author of *Being for The Other: Emmanuel Levinas, Ethical Living and Psychoanalysis*; *Autonomy in the Extreme Situation: Bruno Bettelheim, the Nazi Concentration Camps, and Mass Society* and *Ancient Religious Wisdom, Spirituality and Psychoanalysis*, among other books. Dr Marcus is married with two children and lives in Great Neck, New York.