

15th Humor Research Conference

2025

February 14-16, 2025

East Texas A&M University

Pre-Conference Workshops



A GENTLE INTRODUCTION TO THE GENERAL THEORY OF VERBAL HUMOR

Salvatore Attardo

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

In this workshop the General Theory of Verbal Humor, introduced by Attardo and Raskin (1991) is introduced in a step-by-step format, that assumes no prior knowledge. The various Knowledge Resources are explained, along with the more general scope and aims of the theory. Some attention will also be dedicated to recent developments of the GTVH (such as multimodality) and to applications outside of a strict linguistic domain (e.g., memes). The workshop is suitable for beginning and intermediate learners.

FROM SERIOUS TO SMILES, HUMOR-USE IN COACHING

Adélka Vendl

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Extensive research has shown that humor can have positive effects on mental well-being and personal growth, particularly in therapeutic settings. However, limited research exists on how humor can be utilized as a powerful intervention in coaching. Our research focuses on the use and effects of spontaneous humor in professional dialogues, offering valuable insights for coaching theory and practice.

In provocative coaching, humor is a dynamic tool to challenge clients' beliefs through paradoxes, exaggeration, and playful confrontation. It acts as a catalyst for transformation, reshaping coaching conversations, fostering breakthrough moments, and deepening the coach-client connection.

In this engaging workshop, we'll dive into the latest research on humor in coaching, including its potential to transform conversations and relationships. But this is not just a lecture—this workshop will also allow you to take the first steps in practicing your humor in (provocative) coaching.

**TICKLE ME, TEACH ME, TOUCH ME:
THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS IMPACT OF HUMOR**

Steven Sultanof

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

We “know” that humor is great medicine, but do you know why? Can you explain how humor promotes health and wellness? Most humor professionals discuss the physiological benefits of humor associated with the physical act of laughter. These benefits include stress reduction, pain reduction, lower blood pressure, an increase in specific antibodies, and some other physiological changes. However, these changes are fleeting and may or may not have long-term benefits. Beyond these physiological benefits of humor are the psychological benefits that are often overlooked. These benefits include the long-term effects which include emotional management, cognitive management, and social bonding.

In this lively workshop filled with anecdotes, videos, and clinical illustrations, we will explore the theoretical underpinnings, research, clinical rationale, and practical application of the conscious and purposeful use of humor to promote health and wellness.

Integrating humor into one’s fabric is more than simply sharing humor with others. Humor can be consciously and intentionally utilized to improve health outcomes for oneself and others. It can create healthy changes in emotions, cognitions, social relationships, and physiology.

The benefits of humor include “mirth” (the emotional experience of humor); “wit” (the cognitive experience of humor); “laughter” (the physical experience of humor), and relational fusion (the social/interpersonal experience of humor).

This workshop will include a model that provides a solid rationale and guide for the use of healthful humor as well as practical strategies on how to expand one’s “sense of humor” so that it might be integrated to the fabric of one’s being.