



## Cultural Phenomena

Laughing – crying (22)

14:15 minutes

Two-track audio

**00:00** People laugh for a wide variety of reasons: joyfully, maliciously or in embarrassment. We laugh more often in company than when we are alone.

**01:39** Laughing used to be considered unseemly. Today, we know that laughing is healthy. People even attend laughing clubs to laugh together in public.

**02:56** At the children’s hospital in Zurich, the young patients receive a weekly visit from the clown doctors. There is a good reason for that: laughing has a curative effect and can help ease pain.

**04:11** Laughter scientists have identified 25 different kinds of laughter. Five are genuine; the others are all put on. People who laugh a lot can tolerate more pain.

**05:59** Laughter can also be malicious. It can be hurtful when people ridicule you and laugh at your misfortunes.

**06:33** People’s sense of humour says a great deal about their personality. Even apes respond by laughing when they are tickled.

**08:20** But apes cannot cry. Only people shed tears – be they of delight or despair. Boys and girls cry roughly the same amount until puberty. Men cry much less often than women.

**10:32** Attitudes to crying have changed over the years. In the 18th century, men could still cry whenever they wanted. In the last century, however, men who cried were considered crybabies. These days, crying is regarded as a sign of emotional intelligence.

**13:04** Crying is commonest between 7 and 10 o’clock in the evening. People seem to cry more readily when they are tired. Crying is an emotional reaction.