

For Immediate Use

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Improv comedy workshop at UCLA to help military and veteran families deal with effects of war

Class teaches families to use humor to strengthen communication skills

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The [UCLA Nathanson Family Resilience Center](#) and the nonprofit [Rx Laughter](#) are teaming up with the legendary [Second City Training Center](#) to offer an innovative, humor-based project that uses improvisational comedy techniques to help military and veteran families deal with the traumatic effects of war.

During the free two-hour workshop, which will be held at UCLA for military and veteran parents and their children on April 22, participants will learn the basic principles of improvisation to enhance family communication, reduce stress and promote family togetherness. Through the use of humor, families will be given the opportunity to not only laugh as a family but to take home valuable skills for family fun nights. The organizers hope to plan additional workshops if there is interest from military families.

"When Sherry Hilber of Rx Laughter contacted us with her idea to use improvisational comedy to help our military and veteran families, I was immediately intrigued," said Catherine Mogil, an assistant clinical professor at the Nathanson Center, which is part of the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior at UCLA. "Humor is so important for emotional healing for military families who can get worn down by years of our country being at war. We hope this afternoon of fun will offer them a chance to reconnect as a family."

The Second City Training Center is bringing their experienced faculty to lead the improv workshop and to help plan the curriculum.

(more)

"There is a great need for our military and veteran families to have a place where they can feel free to express their emotions in an emotionally safe environment, learning how to use humor to see the positive side of a situation to help reduce conflict and stress," said Sherry Hilber, founder and president of Rx Laughter and a veteran primetime network comedy executive. "We hope this workshop is the first of many more uplifting sessions for families in need."

For information on upcoming dates and to sign up, please contact Julie D'Amico at the UCLA Nathanson Family Resilience Center by phone at 310-267-0622 or by email at jdamico@mednet.ucla.edu.

Rx Laughter is a humor research, therapeutic and educational nonprofit charity that creates and implements projects that advance the emotional and physical health of children and adults who are battling serious illnesses and trauma.

The Second City Training Center, founded more than 50 years ago, is the world's premier school of improvisational training for children and adults.

The UCLA Nathanson Family Resilience Center promotes family resilience through service programs, provider training and research.

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