

Foreword

It began when I was at upper secondary school. I would make a note of something I thought was a witty comment or thought. Anything at all. An A5 notebook was filled with witty remarks under various headings listed from A to Z. It just continued from there. The PC made it easier to compile things worth thinking about and mulling over.

In this book you will find various gems recorded by yours truly. About this and that, mainly ... about ... and! I have focused on stories and anecdotes that have to do with life in terms of relationships. What is the meaning of life without relationships? Or anything else for that matter? Consider the rabbi who fell into temptation and played a round of golf on the Sabbath. And managed the unthinkable: a *hole in one*. But the sad thing was that he couldn't buy anyone a drink at the club nor could he share his unforgettable experience with anyone at the synagogue.

Wisdom can sometimes be imparted with a sense of humour. Being humorous and being serious go hand in hand. Taking things seriously and taking things lightly are roommates. When they go their separate ways, humour becomes ironic and seriousness becomes dangerous. As Carl Zetterström said, people who lack humour rarely appreciate seriousness. Some take themselves so seriously that it is impossible for anyone else to take them seriously. C S Lewis wrote that "Joy is taken seriously in heaven". This inspired the title of his autobiography *Surprised by Joy*.

An audience will remember something best if it's illustrated in a story. It is also important to remember these stories. But it really helps if you remember the anecdote correctly! Otherwise you might run into trouble like this bishop, after hearing the youth pastor, Johansson, captivate his audience as follows:

– I have a confession to make. I was caught in the arms of two women: One was my wife and the other was ... my mother!

The bishop noticed how well the story worked. To a packed congregation in the cathedral, he began by proudly announcing:

– I have a confession to make. I was caught in the arms of two women: One was, of course, my wife and the other was ...

Suddenly he blacked out. No matter how well the brain works under extreme pressure he could not recall how the story continued. So he came up with this:

– And the other was chaplain Johansson's mother!

Of course, more than one association may come to mind when we hear a witty joke or a funny story. Humour and playfulness go together along with creative freedom. And it is pretty hard to get angry with someone who makes us laugh. The idea is to offer this and that as an afterthought in terms of what we can all relate to – life. They are not exclusively my own items of food for thought in this book. I may have lost the sources of those which are not mine over the years. The sources given do not need to be so original either. People who can apply their own inimitable writing skills to some quote may well have taken that quote from someone else.

Some of the quotes are originally in English. I have tried to find their sources. Some are in English after being published intermittently in Swedish. I would like to mention J John & Mark Stibbes' books and Robert Johansson's *Humour i helgade hyddor* (*Humour in Holy Places*) as sources of inspiration.

My hope is that something thought-provoking in words and pictures will provide you with some food for thought.