

Stocking the shelves for the purists

By LORRAINE McCLISH

Home sewing remains a popular pastime. Sewing classes are the first to be filled when community centers and adult education departments issue their fall brochures.

Young boys are starting to make their own vests or neckties. If you receive free instructions along with your new sewing machine, it is likely that you will find yourself on a waiting list before you can take your first class.

But along with that first class you could also find yourself overwhelmed with the numerous trade names attached to fabric bolts; or the meaning of a tag that lists the contents of a fabric as part silk and part synthetic. In turn, the problem becomes what is



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that information going to mean for the finished product.

Irving Heiman, owner and operator

of Irving's Fabrics in Farmington Hills, said that short of taking a course in thread count, or the lack of it, "Your best bet is to trust your merchant, who in turn trusts the mills and manufacturers he buys from."

HEIMAN, who started his career in fabrics with Botany Woolens, said that any merchant who is interested in giving his customers quality, fashion and a good price, doesn't want unmarked fabrics in his shop that he is going to have to watch himself for flaws or bad dye jobs.

"I can test a fabric by putting a match to it, or counting threads, or applying a little fingernail polish remover and know what I've got, but I don't expect my customers are going to have to do this," he said.

He added that cleaning instructions come with fabric-by-the-yard now, which is an insurance of quality for the customer. All reputable stores hire only persons who sew and know the fabrics they sell to aid the shopper.

Heiman works in his Clapham Mall shop with his daughter, Debbie Marienthal. She does "about 99 per cent of the buying now," he said; "and is stocking more and more for the purists."

Ms. Marienthal said she began selling 100 per cent silk in greater amounts last year. Those who have started sewing for fall are buying pure wools.

The big demand for double knit polyester has by the wayside," she said. "I think it must be the feel of the pure fabrics that people like."

HEIMAN called the fabric that is made of 65 per cent polyester and 35 per cent cotton "the perfect marriage." The wash-and-wear combination carries a longer life, doesn't wrinkle, and breathes so it can be worn all year round.

One of the biggest sellers in the store is challis, and the biggest demand in color is for the dusty roses, running from lilac through burgundy. The trend for the extantier and those who buy designer fabrics is texturing or jacquarding (design on design) silks.

The designers and high-fashion minded seamstresses have always stayed away from the synthetics," Heiman said, "and now when I hear someone ask for 100 per cent camel hair, I guess the rest of us are finally following along."

His philosophy is that one puts as much time into making a garment out of an inferior piece of fabric as is put into a good piece, so it would behoove the seamstress to keep quality in mind when shopping.

"If you don't, it can turn out to be very expensive in the long run," he said.

On the subject of cost, Ms. Marienthal added that she is sure a great many of her customers duplicate some of the clothes they've seen in the area's most fashionable stores.

"ULTRA SUEDE," she said, "is one of the most expensive fabrics in the store. A suit will cost about \$300 in the shops ready-made, and our custom courses can do about the same thing for one-third of that."



Linda Hamel, who works at Irving's Fabrics, is surrounded by a sea of colorful bolts of cloth.

A pair of slacks, selling for \$35, she has seen duplicated for \$10, and that included the pattern and all of the necessary notions.

"Now that designers are designing patterns, I don't think it is at all out of line to say you could make a \$400 piece from the House of Dior for about

\$125," she said.

"And now we carry the Folkwear Patterns, mostly for the kids."

"The kids are coming back from vacations abroad and making everything from boatman's shirts to Chinese kimonos, and they are making them in pure fabrics," she said.



Irving Heiman, owner of Irving's Fabrics, says that if you don't know much about fabric, you must rely on your merchant. He refuses to stock unmarked fabrics in his shop.

Assertive behavior eases guilt when expressing self

By SUSAN TAUBER

Can you say no to a person's request when you want to? Can you tell a waiter, without insulting him, that he brought you the wrong bottle of wine? Can you admit to a person criticizing you that he is right and not become defensive?

If you can answer yes to these questions, and can do these things without lowering your own self-respect or that of the other person's, then you may not want to read this article. However, if you can't do these things without offending the other person, or if you answered no to the questions, then read on.

This is an article about assertiveness training and about being an assertive person.

Since people tend to confuse being assertive with being aggressive, let's clear that up. The two aren't the same.

These differences, and how to be assertive, are what assertiveness training classes, sponsored by Oakland University Continuum Center, are trying to teach people.

IN A RECENTLY COMPLETED class at the Avon Township center Jeff Dailey and Judy Hopkin spent 16 hours teaching the concept of assertiveness and devising in-class practice sessions for 40 students.

On the first day, the teachers spent the first hour explaining assertiveness to the class of mother-daughter sets, two men, and women of various ages.

"There are four goals of assertiveness," Mrs. Dailey started out. "The first goal is not to win. It's not to get what you want but it's how you feel about yourself after the situation."

A bonus of being assertive, she added, is sometimes you do win.

"Being assertive is exercising your

'Assertiveness training has helped me in situations where I would normally feel defensive. I now have skills to call on to use. That's what we try to teach the students.'

—Jeff Dailey,

assertiveness training teacher

own rights while maintaining your own and the other person's self respect. It's overcoming feelings of personal powerlessness in situations where you feel you have no control, and it is exercising your honest feelings appropriately," Mrs. Dailey continued.

Although the concept sounds easy, the whole process of being assertive is difficult, "especially when emotions are involved," the counselor said.

To many, the efforts of learning are worthwhile.

"THE MOST important thing I got from the class is that I handle situations with my family better. The situations that are important to me are the ones that have improved," said Susan Plowman, a former student of an assertiveness training class given through Continuum Center.

Since she took the class in October, 1977, Mrs. Plowman, of Lake Orion, has continued her efforts to be assertive.

"I'm still working on it," she said. "I was surprised when I found being assertive worked."

Another one of Mrs. Dailey's students, John Holden of Berkley, said being assertive is more natural for him since he took the class in March.

"I'll say something now and afterwards realize I was assertive," he said.

Holden sees assertive behavior as a communication skill—a way of expressing himself.

"I'm assertive with my children who are in the first and third grades. Instead of yelling at them, I talk assertively to them."

Being in control of a situation has been taught by instructors of Dale Carnegie self improvement classes since the Carnegie philosophy was developed in 1912. Pat Connor, general manager of Ralph Nichols Corp. in Southfield, which is licensed to present Dale Carnegie courses in southeastern Michigan, personally supports the idea of assertiveness training.

"I THINK ASSERTIVENESS training is good and has tremendous advantages. It teaches people to be more in control of situations rather than letting situations control them. It teaches people to work with other people. However, it's a temporary thing in many cases. It has to permeate a person's life at home and at work to make a change."

Although attempting to be assertive is what teachers like Mrs. Dailey and Mrs. Hopkin try to teach the class, they don't encourage a student to rush out and be assertive after one lesson. It takes practice to know how to be assertive and not cross the narrow line between being passive and being aggressive. A person's first few attempts at being assertive may also be shocking to his or her family and friends.

"Warn someone if you're going to try to be assertive," Mrs. Dailey told her new students after the first class.

There is also more than one type of assertive behavior.

"There is basic assertiveness: positive, negative, escalating, confronting, and even eye language assertiveness," Mrs. Dailey explained.

"Positive assertiveness is when you agree with a person when a true statement is said about you without becoming defensive. It's when you say, 'You're right. I am always late.'"

MRS. DAILEY, a staff member at the continuum center on Butler Road just west of Adams Road, has been teaching assertiveness training since the class began a few years ago. It's offered through the center each school term. She has strong positive feelings about assertiveness training since, she said, we have basic assertive rights.

"These rights are affected by: socialization messages we got when we were



Admitting to her students she isn't assertive all of the time, Jeff Dailey said it is difficult to do, especially when emotions are involved. (Photos by Randy Bors)

kids—like being taught not to take the last cookie on the plate.

"Assertiveness training has helped me in situations where I would normally feel defensive. I now have skills to call on to use. That's what we try to teach the students."

To introduce students to the idea of making thoughts, words and actions be congruent, an essential aspect of assertive behavior, Mrs. Dailey and Mrs. Hopkin gave the class exercises to perform that first day. They had to list adjectives for passive, aggressive and assertive behavior. Then they discussed if being agreeable really meant being passive and if being charming is part of being aggressive. Mrs. Hopkin explained why both are correct.

The students had to walk up to each other and say, "I am never right"; "I am always right"; and "I'm important and so are you." After each statement, they discussed how they felt while they were saying each sentence.

ASSERTIVENESS training is taught like any other class. Each teacher has her own techniques of teaching each type of assertive behavior.

The classes are not limited to adults. For the first time, the Continuum Center offered a pilot class, this summer for teenagers 13-17. Mrs. Dailey has also taught the concept in clubs in hospital emergency rooms.

"People are even paid by their employers to take this class. The can

get CEU (continuing education unit) credit too," Mrs. Dailey added.

Taking an assertiveness training class isn't the same as taking a class where students are encouraged to use the class as an emotional catharsis. There is an openness among the students, but not anything that would produce therapeutic-like situations.

"Some people come in a time of crisis, others come because they think it's a good skill to learn," according to Mrs. Dailey. But whatever the reason, students leave with more confidence in the way they handle their lives.

Whether they choose to use their newly-acquired skills or not is a decision they have to make on their own.



Instructor Judy Hopkin gave the class exercises that required listing adjectives for passive, aggressive and assertive behavior. Later discussion revealed if being agreeable really means being passive and if being charming is part of being aggressive.