

# Author says: Make life the best game — by trusting yourself

STORY: SHIRLEE IDEN  
PHOTOS: MINDY SAUNDERS

Though he's lived in Wisconsin more than five years, he doesn't like beer or cheese.

What Tony Larson does like is working and interacting with people.

Since he is a Unitarian minister, that's no problem.

"It's great. You get to be with people. You marry them, bury them and are with them at different stages of their life."

"A social worker or psychologist can't do that," said Larson in a Southfield interview. "It's work I'd willingly do free."

Larson came to Southfield to talk about his book, "Trust Yourself," published in August by Impact Publishers.

His trip was a two-day "media blitz" of this area, masterminded by the publishers who contend the Detroit area would open its heart (collective) to a first-time author.

Larson is already a media veteran in Wisconsin where his advocacy of human rights and freedoms have translated into happenings such as male beauty contests and hunger vigils.

He admits that when writing or staging a hunger hike or other "stunt," he is trying to grab audience attention.

"I WRITE to be conversational," he explained. "So I try to be entertaining and keep the reader awake by saying things that will grab them."

Larson's message in "Trust Yourself" is that people shape their own destinies.

"Part of the trick of living is not to cave in when things don't go well, to learn to depend upon yourself," he said.

"It's like people who complain about the weather. I can't change what cannot be changed, but I can try to be effective where I can."

Larson's book begins by telling the reader "this book won't help you do anything."

"There's no magic," he contends. "The magic is within the person themselves."

The book grew out of a class Larson was teaching called "The Psychology of Becoming an Effective Person."

"It occurred to me that there was a vital theme running through the course material about shaping our destinies. I decided it could be a book."

AS A MINISTER Larson expresses himself in writing weekly his sermons, and says he wasn't cowed by the writing of the book.

"You can't write the same for print as you do for a sermon, but in both

areas I've tried to stay conversational," he said.

"If you want to do something badly enough, you find out how to do and how to make time for it."

Larson took two years to write the book which includes chapters on "What is, is," "The Lost Coin; What do You Want?," "Stop Being Manipulated," and "Liking Yourself."

Though "Trust Yourself" won't help you do anything, it does discuss overcoming guilt feelings, who you are, "How to Have your own Soap Opera," and "Making Life the Best Possible Game."

In an acknowledgment, Larson affirms the basis of the philosophy of his book comes from his family experience, transactional analysis, gestalt therapy, behavior modification, impulsive therapy, EST, buddhism, taoism and the ethical teachings of Jesus.

"I don't believe in the Bible literally, but try to give it historical perspective," he explained.

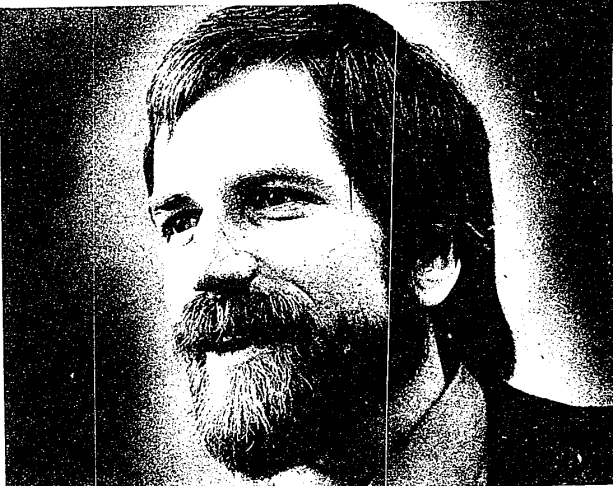
Larson grew up in south San Francisco, the youngest of six children in a non-affluent Catholic family. Three of these children are now in religious orders.

"SINCE I was in second grade I thought I wanted to be a priest," he said.

"But as my beliefs changed I came to see I needed to be in a freer kind of atmosphere with more room for social action so I turned to the Unitarian church."

Larson earned a BA in psychology, then did graduate study at the liberal Meadville-Lombard Theological School. He was granted a doctorate there in 1975.

For the past five years he has been minister of the Unitarian-Universalist



Tony Larson, Unitarian minister, keeps his own wants minimal while fighting for the rights of women and gays and to alleviate world hunger.

## American Artists series to give concert Sunday

At 3 p.m. Sunday, the American Artist Series will give a chamber concert at Kingswood Auditorium. The program will include "La Bonne Chanson," Faure's sensuous song cycle for soprano, string quartet and piano followed by Schubert's masterpiece, the Trout Quintet.

Performing artists include: Roma Riddell, soprano; Joann Freeman, piano; and Detroit Symphony Orchestra musicians Frank D'Antonio, violin; David Ireland, viola; Maxim Janowsky, double bass; Linda Sneed Smith, violin; and John Thurman, cello.

The program opens with the fanfare by Michigan composer James Hartway, commissioned to celebrate the series' 10th anniversary season.

Two French works follow — the "Chanson Perpetuelle" by Ernest Chausson and Faure's song cycle, both for soprano, strings and piano.

FOLLOWING INTERMISSION, Schubert's Trout Quintet will be pre-

ceded by a performance of the song "The Trout," upon which Schubert based the theme and variation for the quintet. Salsom are both performed on the same program.

The three other concerts comprising the 10th anniversary season of the American Artists series are: 3 p.m. March 16, Bella Davidovich, piano. One of the world's great classical artists, she will perform in Bloomfield Hills on her first American tour in a concert of Mozart, Beethoven and Chopin; 3 p.m. April 13, "The Courty Concert Royal," Baroque instrumental ensemble of winds, strings and harpsichord with the New York Baroque Dance Company; 7 p.m. May 18, New World Quartet, Michigan's official quartet in residence and 1979 winner of the Naumburg Chamber Music contest, they will be joined by pianist Joann Freeman.

Single ticket price is \$7. For information, call 647-2230 or write, Ticket Chairman, AAAS, 31950 Mountaintop, Franklin 48025.

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