

Yoga foundation sponsors lecture

The newly organized Yoga Life Foundation is sponsoring a lecture and demonstration by Swami Brahmananda Saraswati on methods of deep meditation using music and mantra at 8 p.m. Friday at the Ferndale Community Center, 400 E. Nine Mile.

The swami is a disciple of Swami Sivananda of the Divine Life Society and for the last nine years has lived in Bandirith in the High Himalayas.

Donation for the session is two dollars.



Robbie Kokko is absorbed by a squeeze sensory game

Class sparks creative ideas

By CAROL HASKIN

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Remember rocketing to Mars underneath the dining room table? Or fighting off a ruthless band of desperados from behind the sofa?

It seems the best childhood games were played not with toys but with wild imaginations. Then, due to the multiple influences of time and social pressures, the older we grew the more our active imaginations went to seed.

Dr. Sue Martin, an assistant professor of dramatic art at the University of Windsor, thinks this creativity should be cultivated rather than dampened.

"A child comes into the world creative, but he loses it through experiences at home and in school."

ADMITTEDLY, she said, "with classes the size they are, it would take a super person to work with 30 children in a creative way. But it can be done by their mothers."

Dr. Martin teaches a course in creative dramatics in which her students learn to be "creative leaders" who can, in turn, encourage creativity in children.

Mothers, Dr. Martin said, can and should also be creative leaders.

Last summer at her Birmingham home Dr. Martin conducted a play group with her own two children, Pamela, 9, and David, 5, and two neighborhood children with whom they regularly play — Chris Wiseman, 7, and Robbie Kokko, 7.

The object of the group was to encourage the children to express themselves, first through sensory games, then through movement, and finally through creative play.

THE FIRST step was to take the children around the backyard blindfolded and have them touch and smell different objects — bark, aluminum, a sponge.

"This gets the child aware that hands do feel and communicate differently than, say, a cheek does," Dr. Martin said.

"We try to get him opened up in all his senses. If he's open to everything, he's aware and if he's aware he can better relate to others. He will be aware of problems, see new solutions and appreciate things more."

All exercises, Dr. Martin said, should begin with discussion which both feeds the children's imaginations and draws forth their ideas.

For example, asking them to imagine a parade and the music that accompanies it can transform a little boy into a parade leader keeping time to the music.

A DISCUSSION of favorite foods can lead to a pantomime of popcorn in the pan getting hotter and hotter until the kernels, played by the children, finally explode.

Creative play is the last step in the process and it involves acting out stories.

"Read stories and have the children act them out," Dr. Martin said. "Then you can change the endings."

"Ask them what would happen if the third little pig wouldn't let the other two in. This teaches the children that there is never just one answer to anything, that no answer you get is absolutely complete."

Dr. Martin said conducting a play group does not take money, only awareness. The children have the energy and the imagination. All the creative leader has to do is stimulate them.

SHE SUGGESTED that a number of mothers get together and rotate as leaders of a group since "mothers sometimes don't work with their own children as well as somebody else might."

With today's early retirements and four-day work weeks, Americans are finding themselves with more leisure time on their hands than ever before. Dr. Martin fears adults are unprepared for their new freedom because their creative life development has been ignored.

Beginning early to educate children in creative expression will add a new dimension to their adult lives, she said.

Play groups are an excellent first step, she said.

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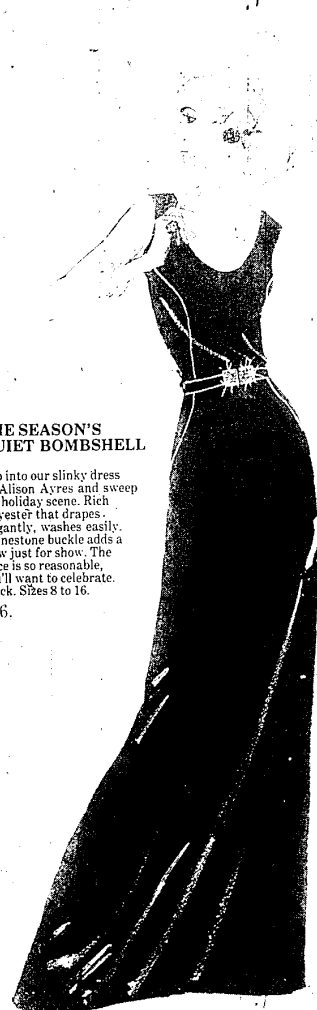
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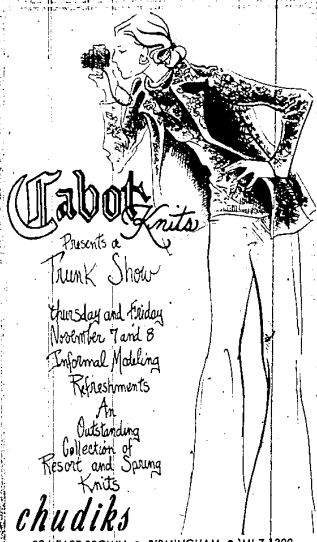
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