

JCC Fall Classes

Adult Classes

Reconsidering Commitment

By Miriam Herin

Judith Jackson and Sherman Burns want to share their relationship. No, they're not talking about some kind of kinky communal life style. They're talking love and commitment and marriages that work creatively instead of limping along for painful, long-suffering years.

"In the grocery store, in the shopping malls, driving my car around Charlotte," Judith says with conviction, "I look at people's faces and they look sad or bored or angry. I don't see couples enjoying each other and laughing and having fun together or kicking up their heels and displaying zest and vitality."

Divorce statistics, she adds, will back up her observations. So she and Sherman are sharing their marriage and their professional training and research in a workshop entitled "Reconsidering Commitment — From Surviving to Thriving in the Marriage Game," to be held at the JCC on Thursday night, September 30.

Judith is the mother of two, a 19-year-old daughter and a 16-year-old son by a previous marriage. She is a clinical social worker who specializes in adolescent and family counseling.

Sherman is a teacher, counselor and writer, author of *From the Heart*, a book he describes as notes and poems on relationship and parenting.

"We've both been married and divorced," Sherman states. "So we both came into our relationship with a lot of pain and a lot of fear and yet with the intention to build a relationship again."

They feel their workshop has value not only for those who want a more vital marriage, but also for those between marriages to help them think more clearly about what they want from a committed relationship before "hopping into just another comfortable situation."

Fear of failure can be a major stumbling block to a second marriage. Sherman cites his own feelings when he and Judith were beginning their relationship three years ago. "After a few weeks, I said look, this is taking a big chance for me because of my fear of this ending. And Judith said something that was very helpful and I put it in my book, which was that all relationships end, either one person leaves or somebody dies. It isn't that we have nothing to lose. But understanding that inevitability gives us more freedom to risk love."

And what does a thriving marriage look like? According to Judith, "a thriving



Sherman Burns and Judith Jackson

Photo/Watson Burts

ing relationship is one where both partners are displaying a lot of energy and finding ways to express themselves more fully. There will be joy, though not necessarily the absence of pain because life is painful at times. And I think that in a relationship which is thriving there is a great reservoir for each person, of strength and wisdom and forgiveness."

She explains that "these are personal qualities that are developed as a result of a lot of intentional work and attention being paid to one's self and one's deeper instincts and purposes. It is a quality of maturity which people come to. Thriving is something that people achieve. It's not automatic."

What will the workshop offer? "An examination of commitment and a look at the institution of marriage as it has evolved to this point in history," Judith states. "We want to look at the structure of marriage — what are the components that can make it or break it?"

They will share their theories, the things that have worked well for them. They will also share their professional expertise, providing tools for improved communication between couples and for helping participants clarify their personal goals and discover their hidden potential for creative relationships.

"A lot of people can't imagine that a marriage can become more than survival," notes Sherman. "Their parents stuck it out. That stiff upper lip thing." He shakes his head in dismay. "How long is it going to take? In our grandparents' generation, they had to wait until one of the spouses died to get free, to enjoy life. My grandmother got loose when my grandfather died and had more fun than she'd ever had in her life. And I think that's a shame, a real shame, because I believe a relationship can be enjoyed very nearly from the beginning."

Joy. And how to find it in a committed relationship.

That's what this enthusiastic couple want to share with others. From their training. And their lives.

"Commitment," says Sherman, "is powerful adult business."

"And hard work," adds Judith.

But from the sparkle in their words, it is obviously worth it.

See page 11 for workshop description and fee.



Monday Is "CHAI" Day

The Chai Group has had a very busy summer and are busy making plans now for the fall. Sara Schreiber, Director of Adult Programming at the JCC, is working with the group and helping them plan their future events.

Judy Tager has just completed the Summer Quarter with the Chai members. She taught "The History of American Folk Music," a CPCC class. The Chai Group is looking forward to their next quarter with Judy when they will be taking her "Human Relations" course beginning September 30.

On some Mondays after Judy's morning class, the Chai Group had special activities. One Monday it was a surprise visit from Elizabeth Albert (Lou & Susan's new baby) followed by several games of Pokino. Another Monday found the group out to lunch at Southpark followed by the movies. They all enjoyed "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas."

Sunday, August 15 was a special day for the members of the Chai Group as they were off to enjoy "Pippin" at CPCC's theater and then out to dinner at Anderson's.

After class on August 16 Sundeep Walsekar, a graduate student at St. John's College, Oxford, England, was the guest

speaker. He was in North Carolina to speak to and meet with political leaders (locally and statewide), community leaders, educators, business people and many more. Cy Hastings arranged for him to visit with and speak to the Chai Group.

On Labor Day the Chai Group will stay for lunch after Judy's class and will hold the raffle drawing for a handmade afghan and pillow made by Sylvia Sadoff and an original framed Serigraphy by Florence Jaffa. They have worked very hard on the Chai Raffle and it was very successful once again this year.

On September 13th the Chai Group will go to the Mint Museum of History. Stu Schwartz will talk with the group and will be their guide through the Museum. A special traveling exhibit entitled "Images of Old Age in America: 1790-1977," focusing on the changing image of older people in American Society is on view at the museum.

The invaluable help of the carpool drivers have made all these special trips as well as each Monday's classes and programs possible for the members of "Chai." Carpool drivers are needed. If you would like to help and at the same time have some fun with the Chai Group, call Sara at the JCC (366-0357).

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

This catalogue of activities presents information on programs for the period beginning September 1982.

HOW TO REGISTER

1. Review these pages with your family and decide which activities you and your children wish to participate in.
2. Since registration begins immediately, complete and mail the form below, or bring it to the Center office, with the specified fee.
3. Registration must be accompanied by the FULL FEE and NO telephone registration will be accepted for fee activities, except by charging to your Master Card or Visa.
4. Classes begin as each is indicated.
5. Registration closes SEVEN DAYS PRIOR to the starting date of each class or when the maximum number of participants for each class is reached.
6. All adult classes are also open to high school students.

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

All activities are scheduled on a minimum number of 8 participants, except where noted. We regret that should a class not register sufficient numbers, it will be cancelled and all fees will be refunded.

Because classes are based on a limited enrollment, activity fees are not refundable upon cancellation by a participant unless the place can be filled.

YOUR SUGGESTIONS ARE ENCOURAGED

The Center's activities are based upon the interests and concerns of our members. We hope to be flexible enough to change and expand services where physically and financially possible. Therefore, your suggestions and ideas are appreciated.

You are cordially invited to serve on any of the numerous or administrative committees of the Center, and to thereby assist in its growth and development.

CHANGES OF SCHEDULE

Our Center is a growing and exciting place. New programs and schedules are constantly being introduced. Sometimes this causes inconvenience to members accustomed to a previous schedule. We try to provide adequate notice for all major changes in schedule, but sometimes we "goof." We are as unhappy as you are when you are inconvenienced, and try to adjust to the situation.

COMPLAINTS & SUGGESTIONS

Our Center is only as good as our knowledge of the growing and changing needs of our members. We know that we make mistakes, and we want to correct them as quickly as possible. Please communicate your complaint to any member of the Center's program staff, Board of Directors, the Executive Director, or the President.

Registration Form is on Page 13.