

Classes accent personal growth

By Jim Faddis

Classes on physical, mental and spiritual growth will be offered this fall at the People's Night School, according to an instructor at the school.

The People's Night School offers subjects that are an alternative to university classes and are of interest, said Miguel Tristani.

The classes will include "Terrific New Talk," "Vegetarian Cooking and Nutrition," "Beginning Meditation" and "Women's Health Awareness."

Tristani said each of the classes deals with an aspect of personal growth. For example, "Terrific New Talk" is on using language in non-punishing ways, he said.

The class on vegetarian cooking deals with nutrition, a subject most people don't know about, Tristani noted.

"The kind of food we eat is the cause of many of our health problems," Tristani said. "The class on vegetarian cooking and nutrition will make people aware of nutritional needs. This class will help people become healthier."

"The Women's Health Awareness" class also will deal with health, he said. The class will look at different physical, mental and spiritual factors and how they affect a person's health.

Tristani said the meditation class will help people's spiritual growth.

"Meditation is a discipline that helps you grow closer to God and changes the way you relate to others," he said.

Classes begin Sept. 18 at Wesley House, 640 N. 16th St., or Commonplace, 333 N. 14th St. The classes will meet one night a week for six weeks. There will be a \$4 fee for each class, except the meditation class which will be free.

Tristani said arrangements will be made for those who can't afford the classes.

The school is not affiliated with any university and is in its first year of operation, he explained.

The school is sponsored by Ananda Marga, a worldwide spiritual and social service organization, Tristani said.

Ananda Marga was founded in 1955 in India by Shrii Anandamurti and is interested in helping people reach physical, mental and spiritual personal fulfillment, Tristani said.

"Everyone has the right to expand his limits and to strive for perfection. Ananda Marga helps people grow and reach fulfillment by offering things to help them grow," he explained.

The organization also has service programs. Tristani said the group has sponsored relief projects, adult literacy schools, food collection programs and childrens' homes throughout the world.

Poisoning...

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"What we're dealing with are very low levels of detection," he said. "If we find five parts per trillion, it really has no meaning because no one knows if dioxin affects humans at such low levels."

"Even if we find dioxin in the samples, we don't know the minimum level at which dioxin is toxic."

According to Dr. Mota the only known effect of dioxin on humans is a skin rash known as chloracne.

Dioxin has been known to kill some test animals at levels as low as 50 parts per trillion over a period of time, according to news reports.

Dioxin was known to be present in some of the Agent Orange supplies at levels of 40 parts per million; other supplies showed no traces, according to the VA.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL Protection Agency has temporarily banned the use of defoliants. This includes the commercial defoliant, 2,4,5-T, a primary ingredient of Agent Orange.

The agency cited "a high miscarriage rate (about 130 spontaneous abortions within three months) following the spraying of 2,4,5-T in forests around Alsea, Ore."

Gross said UNL investigators analyzed samples taken from the Alsea, Ore. area and detected dioxin in human mother's milk.

The present UNL dioxin study is part of a six-year study which was initiated by the VA after long-term effects of dioxin were suspected, according to Jess Johnson, Chief Adjudication Officer of Lincoln's VA regional office.

A similar study will begin in October when the Air Force will monitor the health of 1,200 persons who were exposed to Agent Orange during Operation Ranch Hand. Ranch Hand was the code name for the defoliation spraying in Vietnam by Air Force Cargo planes, according to an Air Force spokesman.

According to a spokesman for the Department of Defense, the most heavily exposed group of servicemen were the air crews and ground crews who handled the Agent Orange missions.

OFTEN PILOTS were forced to fly into clouds of defoliant to evade enemy ground fire, an Air Force spokesman said. Ground crews were frequently drenched by Agent Orange and other defoliants as they tried to load the spray planes, he said.

Army Capt. Lee Jenkins, spokesman for the 101st Airborne Division, now located at Ft. Campbell, Ken., said that Agent Orange was sprayed from helicopters.

"Yes, Agent Orange was used, along with other defoliants," Jenkins said. "At the time, we didn't know that Agent Orange was toxic. It was nothing special."

Another 101st Airborne Division helicopter pilot who sprayed Agent Orange was James Strong. Until recently, Strong was the assistant director for UNL's operations analysis office.

"I remember that the odor from the spraying was so bad that we had to wash our flight suits after every spray mission," Strong said. "I guess I was pretty heavily exposed."

Strong said he became concerned about dioxin poisoning after he read several articles on Agent Orange.

"I was relieved that I didn't have any of the symptoms," he said.

CURRENTLY MEDICAL authorities are disagreeing as to what dioxin does to human beings. The effects of the chemical varies from test animal to test animal, Gross said.

Gross said the university will be involved in an EPA-sponsored study to detect dioxins in diesel exhausts.

Gross added that the Midwest Center for Mass Spectrometry is involved with a study measuring dioxin levels found in coal-burning power plants with the University of California at Davis. The results of the tests on low-sulfur coal are expected to be announced at a meeting of the American Chemical Society in Washington, D.C. Sept. 14.

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