

Stressed out? 'Fred' is here to save the day

Stress-relieving methods number many. They run the gamut from such old standbys as nail biting, Scotch drinking and punching a life-size inflatable Mr. T doll to more New Age-y techniques like lighting aromatherapy candles and listening to whale-mating calls on CD.

But saying "Fred"?

Author David L. Mocknick says the name Fred — derived from Frederick, a German moniker that means "peace

ruler" — has curative powers. And he's developed a whole system to prove it that he explains in his recent book, "Who's Fred, Ha!: Silly, but Fun Stress Relief" (Clear Brook, \$17.95).

Fredding begins when someone "baits" another person by getting him or her to say a word that rhymes with Fred. When the target — a waitress in a diner who suggests bread when asked for an alternative to rolls, for example — falls into the trap, the Fredder calls out,

"Bread! Fred! Who's Fred, ha!"

Going overboard is not difficult with the Fred variations Mocknick details in his book and its accompanying CD. These include double Freds (when someone says two words that rhyme with Fred), musical/cinematic Freds (Fredding in Britney Spears' or Humphrey Bogart's voice, for example) and Fred clues ("What's thermometer liquid called?" "Mercury." "Freddie Mercury! Who's Fred, ha!"). — *Newsday*