



Fred MacMurray (seen here in the film *Singapore* with Ava Gardner) may be part of a trend.

# Remedy may make you see Fred

Author suggests you'll feel better if you can lure an unwary victim into a rhyming game

BY NICOLE FREHSEE

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

But saying "Fred"?

Author David L. Mocknick says the name Fred has curative powers. And he's developed a whole system to prove it, which he explains in his recent book, *Who's Fred, Ha!: Silly, but Fun Stress Relief*.

Fredding (which can be done

alone but works best in a group setting) 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!"

"I'm no psychologist and I don't have a medical background," says the 47-year-old Philadelphia-based literary agent. "But I've seen it work firsthand."

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's or Humphrey Bogart's voice, for example) and Fred clues ("What's thermometer liquid called?" "Mercury." "Freddie Mercury! Who's Fred, ha!"). The last example refers, of course, to the late lead singer of Queen.

Fredders are subject to strange looks, allegations of insanity, and even, as Mocknick knows, restaurant eviction. "One time the owner of a diner threw me out," he says. "But I was stress-free when he did it."

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