



April Scott



Comedy Improv

South Bay Adult School

STORIES

Betty Calame is a psychotherapist in Redondo Beach who spends her Monday nights doing improvisational theater in South Bay Adult School's Comedy Improv class. A student in the class for more than ten years, Betty loves having a place to restore perspective, release stress and "put my feelings out there." She's one of the advanced students who will participate in the showcase, "A Magical Night of Comedy Improv" on Tuesday, May 27th from 7-9:30 at Mira Costa High School.

Unlike traditional theater where performers act from memorized scripts, improvisation is spontaneous, relying on ideas tossed out from the audience. Sometimes a whole scene is fabricated out of the slimmest thread (a janitor and a manicurist are on a desert island). This might sound like an actor's nightmare—being on stage and not knowing your lines—but the class has been running for twenty years and has a devoted following of otherwise sane adults.

April Scott was a student in the class and took over as instructor when former teacher Gloria Policare retired. Describing the class is not easy. Part acting, part therapy, part laugh-yourself-silly, it teaches students the rules of comedy and the skills of character development. The essence of the class, according to April: "We are completely in the moment in here."

"This isn't a class, it's an addiction," commented Kathleen Schafer of Torrance. Kathleen said she used to be a shy, self-conscious, socially awkward person who kept her head down at work. But that was before enrolling in Comedy Improv. She credits the class with building her confidence and enlivening her social life. "If I could, I'd do this for a living," she said as she bounced up to join the class in a warm-up exercise called "Emotional Current."

Information about the Comedy Improv class and the student showcase are on the South Bay Adult School website at www.southbayadult.org.