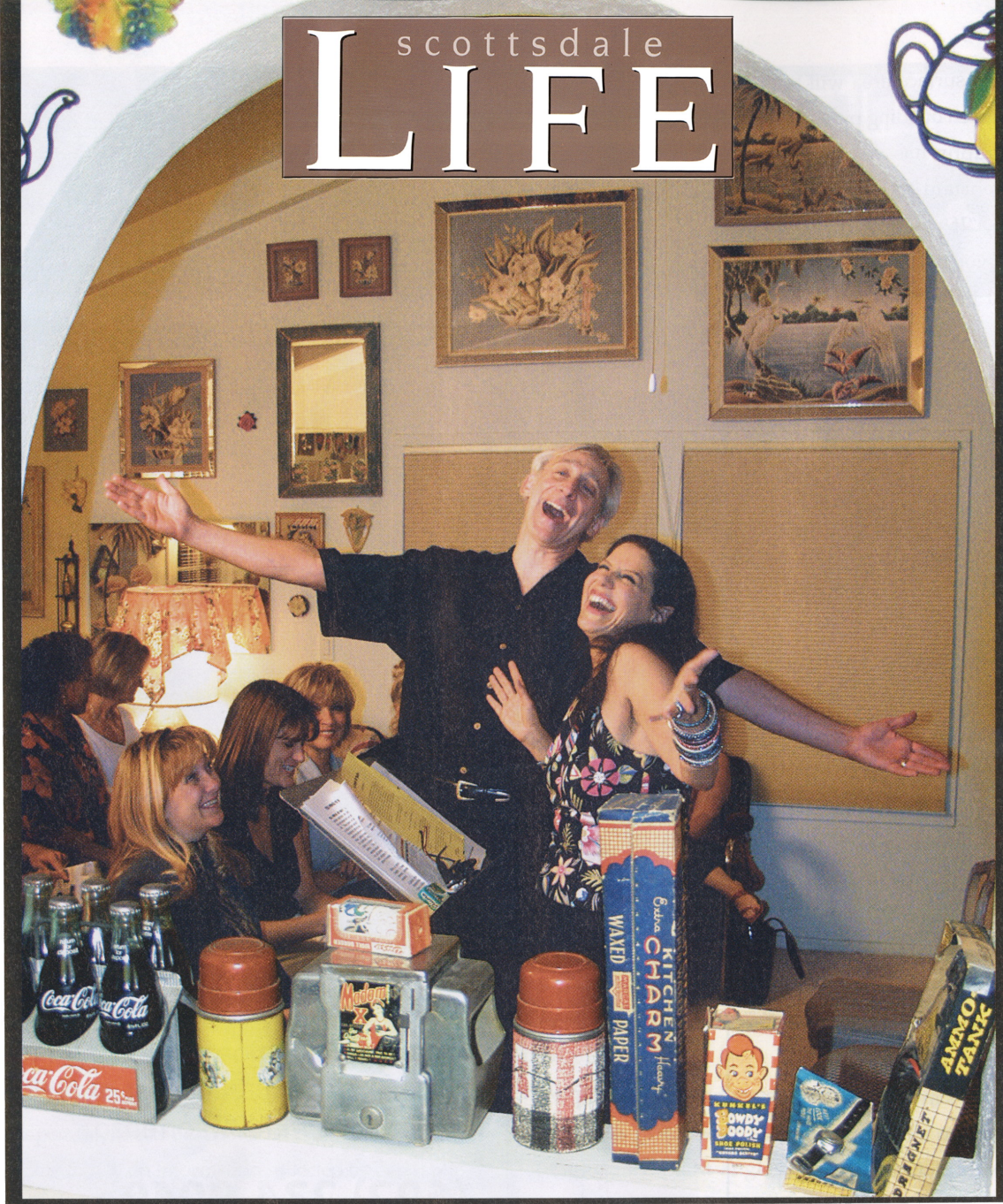


# scottsdale LIFE



## laughing with life

BY JENNIFER CUSHMAN

Seeing the husband-and-wife comedy team of Rahla Kahn and Richard Rossner in action is akin to watching real-life reruns of *I Love Lucy*. The couple tackles daily life with a lot of laughter, spunk and silliness.

Kahn and Rossner are “entertrainers,” a sound bite coined by Kahn to describe their humor-consulting business. *The Power of Play* teaches individuals how to be their most authentic selves while living fun and fulfilling lives. If it sounds like another standard self-help seminar, it’s not.

*Rahla Kahn and Richard Rossner teach the importance of having fun in life at The Power of Play seminar.*

“If you distill down what we do with *The Power of Play*, you’ll see that we teach the art of playfulness and the technology to sustain it in your daily life,” explains Rossner.

Kahn developed the program 18 years ago while living and working as an actress in Los Angeles. To supplement acting jobs, she began working with mentally ill and homeless adults at a California mental-health center. Believing in the old adage that laughter is the best medicine, she used her training in improvisational theater as a way to con-

nect with people who had disengaged from life. Her work, which developed into *The Power of Play*, allowed Kahn to bring together two of her great loves, theater arts and psychology.

Kahn met Rossner when she was performing with *The Groundlings*, L.A.'s famed comedy troupe, prior to conducting her weekly classes at the mental hospital. Rossner, a television writer best known for his work on the show *Full House*, was immediately attracted to the vivacious dark-haired beauty with a wicked sense of comedic timing. The two married and had a son, Chase, who is now 11.

After living through one too many earthquakes, the couple moved to Scottsdale in the mid-1990s, bringing their fresh and lively consulting business to corporate clients across the Valley in daylong and weeklong "playshops" and seminars. Business grew with clients like American

Express, Arizona State University, City of Scottsdale, Arizona Kidney Foundation, Scottsdale Community College, Harlem Globetrotters and Jewish Family and Children's Service.

"Then September 11 hit. I looked at Richard, tears streaming down my face, and said, 'This is it. We're out of business.' We are humor consultants. Who's going to want to laugh again after today? We sure didn't feel like laughing," says Kahn.

Like most Americans, they were glued to the television set for the next week. The couple who gained a reputation for laughing through life could do nothing but cry. Kahn, in particular, experienced a hollowness in her work for the first time.

"Then clients and friends started calling. They told us, 'Don't you dare give up. We need you now more than ever.' That's when we sat down and decided it was time to make an addition to *The Power of Play* and begin six-week intensive work-

shops dedicated to teaching people how to rediscover their path and see the possibilities," she explains.

The workshop material is comprised of "little gems" that have been gleaned from more than 105 improvisational games used in *The Power of Play* programs. The entertaining games offer more than play, as people's answers often shed light on their deepest needs and desires.

Participants have written in their evaluations that they have learned to find their creativity and their humor, laugh at life's adversities, live more fully in the present and experience their lives as an adventure. It's heady stuff for Kahn and Rossner, who say they are more passionate now about their business than ever before. "We are talking transformative stuff here. We are teaching people how to be the best, most authentic, radically alive, juiciest person they can be," Kahn says. ❶