



*My personal experience with
The ancient Asian art of...*

FENG SHUI

by Vivian Szczepankowski

I first began my love affair with Feng Shui in 1999.

Being of Chinese descent, I had grown up with my parents teaching me that their Chinese ancestors were superstitious and that I shouldn't pay any attention to their funny notions. So I was fascinated when a friend shared with me that his life had been completely transformed by following the principles of feng shui he had learned from a book. I immediately went out and purchased a beginner's book authored by the feng shui icon, Lillian Too, and began experimenting with its teachings.

At first it seemed impossible that changing the color scheme of a room or the arrangement of its contents could change my life for the better. But as I experimented with the things I was reading, my eyes were soon opened.

Since then, I've had many amazing experiences helping people to better their lives by following the simple principles of feng shui.

Take my friend, Kitty. She couldn't understand why everyone was acting very unfriendly to her; at church. I attended the same church and had noticed that she always had a frown on her face—almost a snarl. So of course, I knew that was the problem, but what could I do about it?

Then, one Saturday, as we were walking through her house, I noticed that she had a very unusual painting hanging up in the southern corner or "popularity section," of her house, according to feng shui. This painting depicted a snarling wolverine threatening to attack a young girl. I was convinced that this painting was causing her problems with other people. After some persuasion, I finally convinced her to take the painting down.

The very next day, I saw her at church and she had been completely transformed! She was softly beaming and had a warm smile on her face. Later, she confided to me, "I can't understand it. People who never 'give me the time of day' have been coming up and saying, 'hello' to me." The negative influence of that painting in her popularity section had been undermining her efforts to win friends, and just by taking it down, we had corrected her popularity problem!

This is a very common phenomenon, with lonely single women being drawn to and purchasing paintings of lonely women. They decorate their homes with them and then stay stuck in the very situations these images depict.

Another great example of Feng Shui-in-action, is the case of Brian and his fiancé, Linda. They had moved into a house which had a bathroom in the southeast corner or "wealth and prosperity section." According to feng shui, having a bathroom in this portion of the house can greatly hamper any efforts of a house's occupants, to gain wealth.

Since moving into the house, no matter what they did, Brian and Linda could not seem to bring any money into their lives. In desperation, they had even tried some feng shui "cures" on their own, but to no avail. When Brian described their dilemma to me over the phone, I recommended that instead of trying to energize the bathroom, they should annihilate the "wood energy" of the bathroom by placing metal elements within it. They took my advice, placing metal decorative accessories in the bathroom, and immediately, their financial situation began improving.

Designing with Feng Shui in mind, takes the guesswork out of the design process.

Not only will the energy of a room affect your life, it will also affect the way you perceive the design elements within it.

For instance, a particular paint color will look absolutely stunning in one room, but ghastly in the next. Before I learned about Feng Shui, this used to trouble me. But I learned the reason behind this was that the color was actually energizing the element of the first room, but draining the energy of a different element in the second room.

Likewise, a particular accessory can look fabulous in one part of the house, yet totally unappealing in another section. A case in point is a beautiful bowl of grapes that I used to decorate my dining room table. I absolutely adored that piece. Then we moved to a new home and immediately, I felt I had outgrown that particular accessory. So I placed it in the entry way, ready to be donated to charity. But as soon as I placed it there, I felt that same wonderful sense of rightness and attraction to it. But as soon as I put it back in its accustomed place on my dining room table, it was again, unappealing.

This happened because the element of my new dining room was not conducive to the wood energy symbolized by the bowl of grapes. This same phenomenon can occur with any decorative piece, such as rugs, paintings, furniture, etc. Although it seems to add another layer of complexity, knowing how the energy of the elements affects our whole environment, makes decorating and designing a space much more predictable and rewarding and gives a much better result, in the end.

Today, in my practice as a Residential Designer, Feng Shui plays a significant part in many design decisions, affecting everything from furniture placement to material selections, from lighting, to door, window, and room placement. It also directly affects interior décor and outdoor living decisions such as paint and wall covering colors, fabric selections, and accessories.

Take the time to learn about the fascinating art and practice of Feng Shui.

The ancient Eastern art of Feng Shui can dramatically improve your health, happiness, and personal prosperity by maximizing positive energy and harmony in the home, garden, and office.

The positioning of your house and office in the environment affects you either positively or negatively. The elements within the space can also have a profound impact upon your well-being. Designing with Feng Shui in mind will help you to determine the layout, colors and design features which will support you in every area of your life.

Vivian Szczepankowski, BA Interior Design, has been creating beautiful, innovative and practical custom home designs since 1983. Her sensitivity to the needs of her clients and over 30 years of experience as a designer, illustrator and feng shui consultant, combine to make her unique in her field.

For more ideas about how feng shui can help you get more of what you want out of life, when planning your new home or addition, call and set an appointment with Vivian for a complimentary consultation at (916) 521-3263 or visit her website at www.HouseArte.com.,