

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria

October 2013 Column for Benicia Herald

Feng Shui – Pass it On With Love

“My house is so cluttered... I know I have to do something about it but it’s so overwhelming. I just can’t get started. All my stuff has so many memories...Where to begin?”

I began writing Feng Shui columns, with the concept of decluttering because overall, decluttering is the foundation in beginning Feng Shui; clearing the path for positive energy to flow in. An organized home can have a calming effect on you, your family and guests.

Feng Shui, which has been practiced for over 3,000 years in China, is the enhancement of health, prosperity, and happiness. It is a dance between empowerment and environment. Essential Feng Shui® observes that your vitality, resources, and loving connections flourish and grow best in harmonious, uncluttered environments.

Unfortunately, through years of experience I have come to the conclusion the “decluttering” carries with it a negative connotation for people. It sounds like work; and it’s easy to put aside things that feel like work. So what to do?

Passing on What You Love:

I find that instead of calling it decluttering, I call it passing it on and giving items a new life, and an opportunity to be loved once again. In the past few years I have experienced retirement from the business world, a kitchen remodel and the transitioning of my mother to nursing facilities up to her recent passing. Each of these experiences challenged me to organize more items in my house; items that carried many loving memories, yet worked to block the Chi flow in my peaceful home. So what happens when the time comes to let go of things we love?

In a recent newsletter, Terah Collins, who was moving to a smaller environment, offered three suggestions for passing items on in a loving way: 1) Soft Landing, 2) Start Early, 3) Be Kind with Time.

I have found these strategies to be very successful as I wade through my excess stuff.

Soft Landing - This has been the most important for me. Remember that one of the Feng Shui principles is that everything in your home is alive. So why not give them a new lease on life vs having them boxed up in a closet. I began by going through my closet and donating 2/3 of my professional clothes. Some I donated to charities and some I sold at the upscale consignment store Rags to Riches. www.ragstoriches.com I had more room in my closet, others were enjoying my clothes, and more business was coming my way.

I surveyed mom’s items and thought about friends, and family who would love the memories. Many were thrilled to have some of her jewelry, clothes, small memorabilia, art and furniture. I sent some of her photo books to family members pictured in them, and sold some of her antiques to antique dealers. As Terah said, “The right things found their way to the right friends with ease and grace.” Let others have the items in their home and enjoy them. The items were once again useful and loved.

Start Early - You can start earlier than you think. Begin by dedicating time by 'picking the low fruit' in closets and storage areas and handling what you immediately know you want to throw away, give to charity, or pass on to friends. Decluttering can boggle the mind, so an early start helps abate chaos, feeling overwhelmed, and exhaustion. Knowing that you are passing some items on for a new lease on life makes you feel better about the process. Don’t put it off - Begin today!

Be Kind with Time - Each day, chip away at all that needs to be done a little at a time. What works is balance. You can begin to transform your home from chaos to paradise with the “few minutes a day technique”. I call it the “Salami Method of Time Management”, taking one slice at a time. By getting rid of the things you no longer want or need, passing them on to people that can use them, you revitalize your home and make room for what you really DO want to flow into your life; you enhance your happiness, clarity and peace of mind. In Feng Shui everything counts, so your storage areas are as important as the most lived-in areas. In other words, if your room is orderly because everything is stuffed into a closet, you are not practicing Feng Shui.

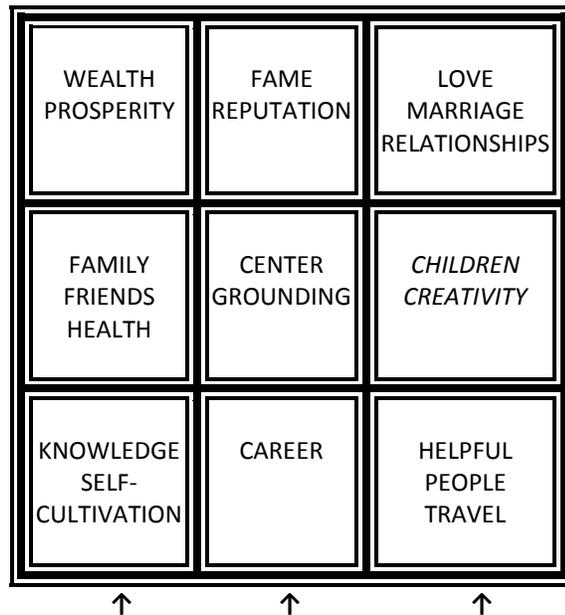
Begin by choosing a space you don’t feel good about, such as a closet, storeroom, cabinet, desk drawer, table top, or kitchen cupboard, and then follow these simple steps:

- 1) As you're organizing and letting go, ask yourself these questions:
 "Do I love it? Do I need it? Does it represent or support who I am now? What pleasant or unpleasant memories does it hold? Does it need repair, and am I willing to restore it right now? If I'm letting go, will I sell, lend, or give it away?"
- 2) Label 3 boxes or bags: Throwaway, Pass On to Others, and Stowaway. When you have separated all items into 3 categories, put the throwaways in the trash immediately, prepare and label the giving away to go to their new homes (family, friends, and charities) and make sure you remove them from the space and pass them on within a week. Stowaway the items you are keeping to their proper places with love and gratitude. This does not have to be difficult; in just minutes you can begin to make changes that can turn your home into a comfortable, peaceful haven.

You'll know that you've succeeded in reinstating balance when you respond positively to every part of your home, and can easily find and put your hand on everything you need at any time. Congratulations! Now watch for the helpful people, opportunities, and things that flow into your life because you have let go of the old and made room for the new.

How Clutter Affects the Bagua:

In the Feng Shui Bagua (Ba-gua) Map, represented as a grid of nine sectors. The Bagua comes from the Chinese philosophy, "The I Ching," and literally means "eight trigrams", with the 9th area being the ever important Center, or hub. It is known as an environmental treasure map helping you locate specific energies in your home. There can easily be a correlation to storing an excess of items in a certain Bagua area and negative effects in that area in your life. For example a cluttered desk or closet in the Wealth area can lead to feeling stuck with finances. Look at your home with Feng Shui eyes. What areas of your life could use enhancement? Where are you storing items that need to be lovingly passed on?



↑ ↑ ↑
ENTRANCE QUADRANT

Feng Shui at Work:

A client was concerned that her love life was not moving forward; she was lonely and not meeting men. She was also trying to lose weight and had a few large pieces of exercise equipment in her house that were remnants of a past relationship. During a consultation I noticed that they dominated her living room, and one was even stored behind her front door, blocking the entrance of Chi. She found that she was not using the equipment, and it not only cluttered her home, but acted as a constant reminder of her past love and the fact that she was not exercising. She decided to pass the equipment on by selling it to someone excited about using it. She used the money to buy a membership in a gym where she met her new love; they now exercise regularly together.

I was saving an American Girl doll with a trunk filled with clothes for my granddaughter. My daughter is 35 and has just had a son. The doll sat unused and her clothes were fading. I decided to pass her on with love to a friend's 7 year old granddaughter. I redressed her in a new outfit and felt the doll becoming beautiful once again. The little girl loved the doll and clothes so much she wrote me a beautiful thank you note.

Our kitchen remodel has been a blessed opportunity to lovingly pass on appliances, cabinets and countertops to friends and family. My sister in law posted pictures of how beautiful our microwave looks in her kitchen. We made a number of people happy while we're enjoying the lightness of our new kitchen. As we begin putting things back into the cabinets, we will try to pass on at least a third of what we have.

Affirmations:

Remember that in Feng Shui, intent plays a significant role in enhancing any area of your home or business. That's why all enhancements need to be made with intentionality; written or stated affirmations are very important. It is also important for them to be expressed as if they are already happening. Examples while you're in the process of clearing your home and passing things on: *"Wonderful new opportunities are coming my way."* *"Our home is alive with a positive energy flow, peace and harmony."*

Feng Shui on a Shoestring:

Feng Shui enhancements do not have to cost a great deal. When I visit my mom's friends I bring something of hers for them to remember her by. They love the memories and I know that the items are going to good homes.

For questions or home consultations email at mtmccull@aol.com and put "Feng Shui" on the subject line, or visit my website at www.fengshuibymaria.com, (where you can read past columns), or Facebook "Feng Shui by Maria", where I post pictures as examples to enhancements.

* **Check out my BLOG** – Just go to the website and click on "Blog": You can view many pictures and, I will respond to your questions quickly.

COME TO MY NEXT CLASS and Receive \$40 Off a Home Consultation

My next two classes will be a series of 2 - Sign up for each separately through Parks and Recreation. You can take just one or both.

Saturday October 19 - 9:00-12:00 am - Essential Feng Shui for Beginners

Saturday November 19 - 9:00-12:00 am - Balancing the Elements (for those having taken the Essentials class or wis knowledge of the Bagua)

The Parks and Recreation Guide is now available, if you'd like to register. (Participants will receive \$40 off a home consultation.) - Mark your calendars and invite friends.

Until then...Blessings!

Maria McCullough – Bio

Maria McCullough, a Benicia resident, is the owner / founder of ***Feng Shui by Maria*** (www.fengshuibymaria.com) and is a speaker and educator with over 15 years of experience. She specializes in residential, landscape and business consultations. She is a graduate of the Western School of Feng Shui and has personally trained with Terah Kathryn Collins, founder of the Western School of Feng Shui, specializing in Essential Feng Shui® and author of numerous books including "The Western Guide to Feng Shui."