

Feng Shui



For Real Life

Feng Shui For Real Life E-zine
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Welcome to *Feng Shui for Real Life*, a monthly e-zine that provides Feng Shui tips and other information that can help you bring simple Feng Shui improvements into your life. This e-zine is available by request. To subscribe or unsubscribe, visit: <http://www.FengShuiForRealLife.com>.



Carol M. Olmstead, FSII

SPECIAL HOLIDAY ISSUE

Happy holidays to all my readers, and best wishes for a prosperous, healthy, and fun New Year. Your kind compliments about this e-zine and your challenging questions have made it another wonderful year. Look for changes to this e-zine and to my website in 2008, and news about the publication of my first Feng Shui book!

Feng Shui Tip: What Not To Give for the Holidays

Looking for those perfect Christmas or Hanukkah gifts for your family and friends? Be careful what you choose, because your gifts may have hidden meaning in Feng Shui terms. For example, when you give gifts that have sharp edges they symbolize cutting a relationship; when your gifts are empty they represent lack of financial resources; and when your gifts show time they symbolize limited life span. Here are my top six gifts to avoid giving, and options for turning around any hidden messages:

1. Sharp Objects. Never give knives, scissors, letter openers, or can openers as gifts since they represent cutting a

relationship. If you are the recipient of any of these as a gift, hand over a coin to the giver to symbolize that you bought the object, and restore the bond between you.

2. Empty Wallet. Avoid giving an empty wallet, purse, or briefcase because it represents the lack of prosperity. Instead, fill it with coins or a \$50 bill (if you can afford it) to send the message that your gift will always be overflowing with wealth for the recipient.

3. Thorny Flowers and Plants. Never give cactus or other spiky plants, and avoid giving roses with the thorns still on the stems because these can pierce a relationship. If you receive roses be sure to remove the thorns to symbolize a smooth romance or relationship.

4. Stunted Trees. Bonsai trees or other miniature plants make poor choices as gifts since they represent stunted growth. Instead, choose full, healthy plants with rounded leaves to symbolize prosperity and long life.

5. Clocks and Timepieces. Gifts that show time symbolize a limited life span or stealing time from others. But watches are often found on holiday wish lists, so the modern Feng Shui application is to give a gift certificate and a picture of a watch so recipients can choose their own timepiece.

6. Handkerchiefs. It is best to avoid giving handkerchiefs because they symbolize wiping away tears and could suggest that you expect the recipient to be doing a lot of crying in the future. But since collecting antique handkerchiefs has become a trend, if you do give one, wrap it around a bar of fragrant soap or an orange and tie it with a red ribbon to balance any negative connotations.

Re-gifting is Feng Shui-friendly because it removes things you do not want from your home and sends them to a place where they are welcome. Just be sure to avoid re-gifting if you have negative feelings about the gift or its original giver, since you might be passing along your negative thoughts to the next recipient.

Holiday Office Re-Gifting Tip: Try this Feng Shui re-gifting tip for your office or organization holiday get-together: **A Re-gifting Raffle.** Participants each bring something they already have in their closets as a raffle item. It can be anything they do not need, do not like, or do not want. Like the beautiful scarf that is the wrong color, the earrings that do not match a thing you own, or a set of coffee mugs that does not have a place in your kitchen. No white elephant gifts are allowed, only items in great condition. Display the gifts on a table and place a small basket or box in front of each gift so participants can deposit their raffle tickets near the gift they would like to win. The proceeds from ticket sales go to the group's charity and participants get a chance to win some unusual gifts. Plus, I recommend giving a special gift to the person who brings the raffle item that gathers the most raffle tickets.



Feng Shui Tip: The Yin and Yang of Holiday Travel

If you are planning to travel this holiday season, you are not alone. The US Department of Transportation estimates that travelers will be away from their home an average of four nights during this holiday season. A full, occupied home represents active, or yang, energy, but a house that is vacant can attract quiet, or yin, energy that can make it more vulnerable to burglary. A few Feng Shui tips can help you retain the yang energy in your home while you are away and keep it safe. Your local police department is probably recommending some of these things, and I bet they do not realize

they are practicing Feng Shui:

Put several lamps on timers and set them to come on and off during the evening to simulate your natural movements around the house during a typical evening at home.

Connect a radio to another timer and set it to come on and off several times during the day so there is sound in your home.

Stop delivery of your newspaper a full day before your trip; that way if it does get delivered while you are still home you have a second chance to stop delivery, rather than let the papers pile up.

Clean your house before you leave, throw out all leftovers and food that will go bad while you are gone, and empty all of the trash cans because garbage becomes stagnant energy that stops the flow of energy in a home.

Change your linens before you leave; whether you stay at a luxury hotel with 600 thread count sheets or at mom's house on the lumpy sofa bed, you will still appreciate the freshness of new sheets when you come home.

When you arrive home, open the windows for a short while (even if it is cold outside), run the water, and use your stove so the fresh chi begins to circulate immediately.

**For Feng Shui tips on Hanukkah and Christmas decorating and entertaining, see my article
Take Feng Shui Home for the Holidays in Southwest Flair Magazine:
www.SouthwestFlair.com.**

Clutter Clinic: Things to Put on Your Will Not Do List

Sometimes, physical clutter goes hand in hand with mental clutter, so as you add projects to your To Do List your energy gets depleted. This year along with your list of New Year's Resolutions, why not consider a *Will Not Do List* for the things that clutter your life? For example:

I will not accumulate credit cards I do not need. If you receive credit card offers in the mail, shred them; if you have cards you rarely use, cancel them.

I will not accumulate magazines that I do not have time to read. Cancel subscriptions to magazines that keep piling up; you can probably read online much of what is in them.

I will not accumulate office supplies that I do not need. Instead, store them in your office's central storage room, donate them to a nonprofit organization, or sell them on Craig's List or Ebay.

I will not accumulate memberships in organizations that no longer match my interest. Cancel your membership if you have not attended a meeting of a group within the past six months.

Feng Shui Q & A

Q: I am a new realtor and it looks like I started my career at a complicated time. What is the most effective way to use Feng Shui in this slow real estate market, especially during the holiday season when sales are typically slower? And I have heard different opinions of where I should place my For Sale signs to assure a quick and profitable sale.

A: Feng Shui improvements can help make a home more appealing to prospective buyers. But even Feng Shui cannot overcome the problem of listing the house at too high a price. So my primary recommendation in this market is to fairly price the homes you list. As for the For Sale sign, place it to the right of the front door as you are facing the home, because that is the side most people naturally look to when they approach a home. Also, place your marketing materials

just inside the front door on the right hand side if possible. And make sure you display them upright in a rack rather than flat on a table, since you do not want them *lying down* on the job.

Q: Our home is a lovely, calm, neat and tidy, beautiful abode where we are very happy. But as organized as we keep our home, I am negligent at my workplace office. I love my job and the people I work with, but try as I might I cannot keep the clutter down. I know I am more productive with fewer things on my desk but the stacks of paper just grow and grow. From now until February is our busy season and I need to get a grip on this, especially since the busy season in itself generates much paper and supplies.

A: Without actually seeing the space and without knowing what kind of work you do it is hard to give you specific advice. But in general office clutter problems typically relate to either having too much stuff or having too little storage space (or both for many of my clients.) What kind of storage options do you have in the office, like shelves, cabinets, etc? If they are filled to capacity, clear out old stuff and make room to store some of the things that are on your desk that you do not use all the time. Is there an option to store some files and supplies in a central location and out of your office? Another issue is the size of your desk. Is it adequate for the work to be done? If your desk is too small for the work that you do, it can make you feel overwhelmed and can lead to accumulation of piles of stuff.

Also, take a look at the *News Tidbit* that follows about too many office trinkets...

In the News: Too Many Office Trinkets

If you have more than five personal items in your office or cubicle you may be viewed as unprofessional, according to research conducted at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business. In the study, 95 managers were given descriptions of workers that characterized them as professional or unprofessional. The managers were then asked to construct the office of each worker by placing stickers of dozens of items typically found in workspaces onto color images of an office. These included items that are work-related (stapler, file folder, calculator, etc.), personal (family photos, posters of movie stars, sports equipment, etc.) and neutral (plant, clock, landscape painting, etc.). The researchers found that the professionalism of each worker was reflected in the proportion of objects that referenced their personal life. Researchers Jeffrey Sanchez-Burks of the Ross School, along with Susan Ashford and Emily Heaphy of McGill University, believe that this is largely an American phenomenon, since Americans are expected to put aside personal matters and focus almost exclusively on work-specific concerns upon entering the office.

You can read the complete article at: <http://www.ns.umich.edu/htdocs/releases/story.php?id=6043>

Did You Like This News Tidbit?

If you want Feng Shui tips and tidbits like this to include in your blog, news article, e-zine/newsletter, or marketing materials, call me at 1-800-652-9038 to discuss the range of topics that I can provide. Feng Shui is also a terrific topic for teleseminars and Internet radio programs.

Feng Shui Gift Ideas: Gift Certificates, Gift Cards, and Purse Hangers

A gift of Feng Shui is the perfect solution for many people on your holiday gift list.

I offer two types of Feng Shui gift certificates:

Gift Certificates cover the entire cost of a home or office consultation. I can e-mail the certificate directly to your recipient, or send the certificate to you in a beautiful presentation folder. Prices vary depending on whether you are interested in purchasing a home or office consultation. Call or [e-mail](#) for cost.

\$25 Gift Cards can be applied toward the purchase of a home or office consultation, or toward any of the products and services offered through my Online Store (http://www.fengshuiforreallife.com/on_line_store.htm). Gift cards can be combined.

Holiday Sale on Gift Cards: Buy 4 Gift Cards and get 1 Gift Card Free!

Please contact me for information by phone (1-800-652-9038) or e-mail (carol@FengShuiForRealLife.com) to order either of these gifts.

Purse Hangers

As a special holiday gift to my newsletter readers, I am holding a **Special Holiday Sale on Purse Hangers** in gold and pewter cloisonné tones. From now through December 15, you can buy purse hangers directly from me at the reduced price of \$10 each, plus \$1.00 shipping and handling. To get this special price, you must order directly from me rather than from the Online Store on my website. To order, send an e-mail to: PurseHanger@FengShuiForRealLife.com and let me know how many of each you want to order.



All requests for purse hangers must be received by December 15 to be eligible for this special price.

Consultations and Workshops

Home and Office Consultations

Nationwide, I schedule consultations for homes and offices on request. On a regular basis I schedule consultations in the **Northeast** (DC Metro Area and Maryland Suburbs, Baltimore, Annapolis, Northern Virginia, New York City, and New Jersey) and the **Southwest** (Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Los Alamos, Denver). Appointments do fill up fast, especially on the weekends, so schedule your appointment now.

Where in the World Is Carol This Month?

Here is my current travel schedule:

Washington, DC/Maryland: December 4-7

Santa Fe/Albuquerque: December 10-15

New York City: December 19-22

South Florida (Boca Area): January 5-7.

Appointments in Florida are filling up, so please call now to schedule!

Do you want to schedule a consultation in a city not on my current schedule? Please e-mail me (carol@FengShuiForRealLife.com) for details about scheduling a consultation in your location.

I welcome your referrals in locations nationwide.

Custom Workshops

Feng Shui is a popular topic for luncheon and dinner meetings, special events, fund-raisers, and college and university training sessions. My Feng Shui workshops are customized to meet the needs of your group or organization. Whether it is a talk at the golf group luncheon, the garden club meeting, office staff development session, or holiday luncheon, my Feng Shui presentations are fun and **always sell out!** Call 1-800-652-9038 to schedule a workshop.

Workshops Open to the Public

In Santa Fe:

January 22, 2008

Feng Shui Tips for Attracting Wealth in the New Year

Capital City Business and Professional Women's (BPW) Meeting

Quail Run, Santa Fe

\$25 for dinner and the program (payable to BPW; profits benefit the BPW Women's Scholarship Fund)

For more information or to register, contact me at 505-690-1814

Beyond Feng Shui: A New Idea for Boxing Day

I have one of those calendars that includes all those international holidays that I know nothing about. Like Boxing Day. So I did a little research and discovered that this decidedly English holiday can have Feng Shui implications. Celebrated on December 26th, Boxing Day started under Queen Victoria as a way for the upper class to give gifts of cash or other goods to those of the lower classes. Merchants would give boxes containing food and fruit, clothing, or money to tradespeople and servants as an expression of gratitude (similar to how we now give holiday bonuses for a job well done, without the class distinction). Since these gifts were given in boxes, that is how the holiday got named. (Was I alone in thinking it had something to do with pugilistic endeavors?) Boxing Day also involved the clergy opening the alms boxes placed in churches over the Christmas season and distributing the contents to the poor on the day after Christmas.

The Feng Shui application was obvious to me: this year, instead of rushing to the mall on December 26 to return unwanted holiday gifts, spend the day donating them to your favorite charity. Many newspapers run campaigns during the holiday season that profile needy families in the community, so you might box up nonperishable canned food, clothing, and other gifts and deliver them to organizations that help the needy. No matter where you live, you can find a way to celebrate an American version of Boxing Day by the simple principle of giving to others less fortunate than yourself.

Feng Shui For Real Life On-Line Store

This section highlights products and services for your home that you can buy on my website,

http://www.fengshuiforrealife.com/on_line_store.htm.

MarketPlace: Services to Help You

This section features business-to-business services that can help you grow your entrepreneurial ventures. When you access these companies via the web address listed, you will be eligible for any available special discounted services.

Artwork by Vera Vandendries

Vera's artwork deals with symbolic images ranging from abstract to suggestive representational forms. Each signed art Giclee print belongs to a small limited edition. The collection can be seen on www.art-and-beyond.com, where you can contact her about purchasing or commissioning a work of art. Vera offers a special discount from her gallery prices so you can use her art to help make Feng Shui adjustments.

Broadcast Interview Source

Broadcast Interview Source is a great way to bring the media to your website and promote your business, product, or services. I issue monthly press releases about my Feng Shui consulting service through this service, and they receive hundreds of "hits" each month. You can save \$100 on your membership if you use this link:

www.expertclick.com/referral/Carol_M_Olmstead.

Designer Fabrications by Anne Sanderoff-Walker

Noted fiber artist and weaver Anne Sanderoff-Walker creates quilted and woven wall art and Judaica Legacy pieces in rich colors and textures you can use to make Feng Shui adjustments in your home. Choose a completed piece from Anne's gallery, or commission a custom, one-of-a-kind design to decorate your home. Anne also crafts wearable art pieces in a range of colors. Check out Anne's gallery for the body, spirit, and home at www.designerfabrications.com.

The Publicity Hound, Joan Stewart

If you want to learn how to generate thousands of dollars in free publicity, check out the website for Joan Stewart, also known as The Publicity Hound. Joan offers a free monthly newsletter of PR tips and advice, and she sells low-cost tools to teach you how to develop relationships with the media. Click here to check out her website and subscribe to her free e-newsletter: www.marketerschoice.com/app/?af=374705.

My Client-Centered Approach to Feng Shui: *When I recommend cures for a home or office, I consider the goals of each client. I try not to recommend anything that you will find unattractive or unacceptable. Rather, I suggest practical, appropriate, and workable cures that are based on solid Feng Shui principles and fit in with the way you live. I try to recommend several practical solutions that are appealing to you and fit your decor and your budget.*

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1-800-652-9038

Make sure you receive every issue of the Feng Shui For Real Life e-newsletter. To ensure receipt, please add this e-mail address (carol@FengShuiForRealLife.com) to your Address Book or Approved Senders list. Thank you!