

The Spiritual Feng Shui newsletter
Issue 35
November 2009

Lounging Around

Q&A Title

Also:

Feng Shui Tip
Inspirational Quotes

Dear Friend,

Welcome to The Spiritual Feng Shui newsletter for November 2009; we hope you've been making the most of the warm weather! This month we are looking at Feng Shui for apartments. Apartments have their own particular problems, and if you are renting, the solutions are limited. But that doesn't mean you should leave your Feng Shui practice to another time! We show you how to start now. We also look at how you can find a good base for your Feng Shui practice if you are searching for a new apartment - a base which could make all the difference to your success. There is a quick Feng Shui tip for the time-challenged, and inspirational quotes. May peace and harmony reign for you in November!

- 0x Feature Article: A World Apart - Feng Shui for Apartments
- They may be small, but they can be mighty Feng Shui weapons!

- 0x Q&A: Apartment Hunting Techniques
- What to look for if you are moving into a new apartment

- 0x Feng Shui Tip
- Send It Into Space!

- 0x Inspirational Quotes

Enjoy!

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Main article: Lounging Around

Although you spend a third of your life in your bedroom, for a great deal of that you aren't even aware of your surroundings! Your lounge room is actually the place where most of us spend the bulk of our home hours. Talking with our family, watching TV, reading, doing craft, playing an instrument - there are many happy times to be had in your living room! No matter what Gua in your home your living room occupies, the fact that it is communal space means that it touches upon just about every Chi area in your life. Today we are looking at the special challenges and potential that your humble living room has within a Feng Shui practice!

It always seems to occur that the greatest rewards come along with the greatest tests. This is true of your lounge room just as it is of marriage, children, studying, starting a business ... bet your living room would be proud!

The unique challenges that living rooms present within a Feng Shui practice include:

- Trying to balance the needs of all the different Guas that the living room touches on
- The plastic factor from toys, televisions, etc. Lounge rooms often have plenty of non-natural materials in them
- The electrical factor, from televisions, stereos, DVD players, game console... the electrical energy can be disruptive to harmonious Chi.
- The fact that living rooms are often furniture dense and present many edges and corners to try and soften.

Offsetting these challenges, though, are some unique opportunities!

- You must balance the needs of different Guas - but any small changes here have the potential to enhance so many Guas
- The stereo usually lives in the lounge room, and having music playing is a great enhancement to most Guas
- Emptiness is one of the major spoilers of Chi, but your living room almost certainly doesn't suffer from this!
- It is easy to remember to open the curtains and windows because you are constantly passing through it.

You can see that just like the two sides of a yin-yang symbol, some of these challenges and opportunities are actually two sides of the same coin. So how do you make that critical balance and enhance your living room for the benefit of your entire life?

Balancing the needs of different Guas

The living room is a communal space, and as well as physically occupying one of the nine squares in your home's Bagua map, it also touches on the following Guas:

- Family Gua
- Children and Creativity Gua
- Love and Relationships Gua
- Reputation and Fame Gua

Earth is the uniting element in all of these Guas, so if you focus on colors like beige, yellow, and tan tones this will support a myriad of different Feng Shui goals. Other than this, try to have a gentler mix of other colors throughout the living room. The Love and Relationships Gua is related to fire, the Family Gua is related to metal, the Reputation Gua is related to metal, and the Creativity and Children Gua is related to wood. These different elements will exhaust or destroy the energy of some Guas while supporting others, so moderation is the key.

Clutter, clutter everywhere

One of the downsides of having a room that is constantly in use is that it constantly needs to be picked up and tidied. Why not support your Family Gua even further by making the tidy-up family time? If parents never badmouth the idea of chores to their kids, then kids just never learn that chores are bad. This can also be learned retrospectively, luckily! Teach your kids that cleaning up is fun by having races, by chasing them to their rooms with an armful of toys or singing as you work. With just a partner, use the time to catch up on your days while doing something productive.

Edges and corners

Edges and corners are rife in most lounge rooms, from armoires, to desks, to coffee table, to entertainment units, to toy boxes ... the list goes on. These edges and corners can make you feel vaguely uncomfortable and never really at rest. Cover what you can with fabrics, and see if you can place plants or ornaments in front of others.

Reconsider the gadgets

Think about getting rid of any electrical items in your lounge room that are rarely used. Game consoles are one of the most common examples of these, but spare DVD or video players, cassette players ...anything with wiring that isn't frequently used should be either stored, recycled or given away. This will help calm the Chi in the living room.

Making the most of what you've got

The living room has so many opportunities - all you have to do is remember to take advantage of them. Remember to:

- Open the curtains and windows in the morning, and when you arrive home after work.
- Make use of all the ambient light to support some green plants
- Pop some soft music on occasionally rather than always working in a quiet space
- Your family is always in the living room- make the most of them! Make it an inviting place to be and reap the rewards of the natural Chi they bring to all of the Guas relating to the living room.

If you have a large lounge room, here is a little bonus tip. Don't be afraid to use your furniture to create separate areas in your lounge room. Couches don't necessarily have to be against walls, and neither do drawer sets. Make a play area, a reading area AND a music area, if you can!

Your lounge room is the heart of your home in so many ways. Put your attention on it in your Feng Shui practice and reap the rewards!

Q&A: We spend so much time in the living room that it is always cluttered. How can I deal with everyone's mess in the living room?!

We touched on this briefly in the main article, but it is certainly worth getting out the backpacks, the hiking boots and water bottles and exploring a little further! Clutter is one of the main challenges in any Feng Shui practice. In your living room, it is likely to be an even bigger problem than in the rest of the house. Here are some tips on making being un-cluttered easy for yourself.

Don't aim for perfection

There is nothing stimulating in teetering on the edge of a pristine sofa, picking up your coffee without touching the table for fear of leaving fingerprints on the spotless surface and reading magazines while trying not to crease the spines! Being *lived in* is the point of having a *living* room. A toy here and there and the odd cushion on the floor will actually help your Feng Shui practice along.

Make the tidying regular

Make two set times a day (in a multi-member household), or one set time a day in a single member house to tidy the living room. It only takes two weeks to create a strong habit - use this peculiarity of your brain in your favor!

Ensure there is somewhere to put the clutter

Buying items like magazine racks, toy-tidies, CD racks and even cupboards are an essential part of de-cluttering your home. Even if these places are temporary homes (for example, in the magazine rack until it is recycled or donated), they will help you remove clutter quickly and easily. These boxes and cupboard can also support your Feng Shui practice, by painting them the appropriate colors, or making sure they are constructed of elements that support the aims of the Gua you are trying to support. Earth is the common factor in the living room's associated Guas, so look for marble, granite, clay or even pebbles in your storage items.

Make it easy for yourself

If there are items in your living room which take up space but don't add any value, either practical or esthetic, then get rid of them. They'll be one less thing to pick up and put away, dust, wipe and re-arrange. They will also give you an inexplicable sense of being able to breathe and spread out again ...

Enlist the troops

Anybody that contributes to the clutter in the living room should be helping tidy it up (with the notable exception of any household members 2 and under!). As well as the tips in the main article, make clutter-clearing a chore that pays pocket money, or something that needs to be done before the TV is turned on. Hold yourself to the same high standards - lead by example. This strategy can even be a gentle one to use with a chaotic partner that often clutters the living room.

Don't forget...

To recycle what you can, donate to charity where possible and appropriate, repair what is repairable, store what you want to keep but aren't using right now ... and just plain get rid of toxic clutter!

Feng Shui Tip: Curtain Call

There will often be spaces in your home that you wish were quieter, calmer and more private. You might want to separate a work area from the bed area, the kid's playspace from your knitting corner, or just about anything. An easy way to divide up your home is with curtains hung from the ceiling. They are also a fabulous non-permanent way to add color, correct imbalances of yin and yang energy, and put your own personal mark on rented homes without breaking your lease contract. They are easy to make yourself and look different but stunning. Our new favorite item!

Inspirational Quotes

The family. We were a strange little band of characters trudging through life sharing diseases and toothpaste, coveting one another's desserts, hiding shampoo, borrowing money, locking each other out of our rooms, inflicting pain and kissing to heal it in the same instant, loving, laughing, defending, and trying to figure out the common thread that bound us all together. ~Erma Bombeck

There is no cure for laziness but a large family helps. ~Herbert Prochnov

Family life is a bit like a runny peach pie - not perfect but who's complaining?
~Robert Brault