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The Romance of Feng Shui

by Patt Schwab, Ph.D.

Several years ago I was given a book on Feng Shui, the Ancient Taoist art / discipline / mystery / weirdness (take your pick) of Placement. Serious practitioners of FS get into things like the flow of Chi, the Chinese astrological systems of ba tzu and jyo hsing, the 5 elements, compass points, lucky stars and more. Not me.

After discovering that my birth star was a 4 Wood (and I don't even play golf!), I found myself embracing the Eight Point Method. In this method you place an imaginary grid over your home, and then over each room. By the location of furniture, windows, doors, certain colors, elements, etc. one enhances the positive energy of Chi to Career, Family, Wisdom, Creativity/Children, Travel/Helpful people, and, what most interested me, Fame, Wealth, and Romance.

Sexy, sensual, single baby boomer that I am, I immediately looked at the Romance corner of my house. It was the utility room. (Not a good sign.) I rushed to it, placed the grid over it and (I am NOT making this up) found that the Love and Romance corner of this most highly focused Love and Romance section of my home, was (I am REALLY NOT making this up) the kitty litter box!

It was at this point that I decided there might be more to this Feng Shui stuff than met the eye. I mean, to be honest, it was a pretty good symbol of where my love life was.

I moved the litter box, replaced it with some bright colored wooden tulips from one of my trips to Holland and bingo! I started dating Bill. A Dutchman. Admittedly he was a little stiff and formal, but they were, after all, WOODEN tulips!

Time went on, as it does if we are lucky, but the relationship did not. Again I found myself dateless in Seattle and, as luck would have it, attending another lecture on Feng Shui.

Reinspired, I rushed home to "Feng Shui" my office and swiftly discovered that the Romance corner was where I kept Rejection Letters from clients, magazines, etc. (Are you picking up a trend here?) With an eye-rolling sigh, I moved the letters to the Creativity section of the room, and, as the lecturer had suggested, replaced them with a plant. I chose an African violet because, a.) it was a dark corner, b.) for some reason African violets grow forever for me. The one I used was at least 15 years old.

And what happened? Bill who had not called for 9 months, suddenly called - twice. Then I start

a long, fun, soul cleansing, series of e-mails with Mike, clearing up the residue of a 15 year on and off relationship from my grad school days. Next Tucker, who I last dated in 1977, called to ask if I would fly to Toronto to speak at his wedding. All this in one week!

I told a friend about it. She said, slower than she needed to, “You put one of your African violets in that corner didn’t you?”

“Well, yes,” says I.

“Patt,” she yelled, “It’s an OLD plant! That’s why OLD boyfriends are calling! Buy a new plant!”

I just did.

I’ll keep you posted.



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Author's bio: When not immersed in the mysteries of Feng Shui, Dr. Patt Schwab speaks internationally on the topics of coping with change and using humor to enhance the workplace environment. Reach her at www/FUNDamentallySpeaking.com