

FENG SHUI

Ancient philosophy called way to energize life

BY ROBYN MEADOWS
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Down in the dumps about your love life?

Maybe it's because your trash can sits in your love-relationship corner.

It may sound silly, but feng shui, an ancient Chinese philosophy, teaches that proper space arranging allows energy to flow freely. And because certain spaces correspond to facets of life, it's vital to rid negative influences from problem areas, advocates say. But feng shui is an ever-changing practice.

"What are your goals?" asked Leslie Jacobson, who led

a feng shui seminar with her brother, Mark, at Fields of Flowers in Davie recently. "You prioritize changes as your life changes. Your home changes, and then your feng shui changes."

Feng shui translates into wind and water. Some believe wind and water are the physical elements of yin and yang and that the philosophy springs from Taoist beliefs about humans' place in the universe. Centuries ago, feng shui was applied to the design of temples, burial grounds and cities in China, later making its way to Korea, Japan and Vietnam.



PHOTOS BY ROBYN MEADOWS/FOR THE HERALD

SHARING KNOWLEDGE: Feng shui experts Mark and Leslie Jacobson, brother and sister, explain a harmonious home.

Feng shui basics center on what's called a *bagua*, an octagonal map. The *bagua* shows the location of the love/relationship corner, fame/reputation, wealth/prosperity, family, health, children/creativity, knowledge/skills/self-cultivation, career and helpful people/travel corners.

For example, the love/relationship corner is in the back right space of the home. Elements correspond to particular spaces to create harmony. Fire belongs in the fame and reputation area, back center, so shades of red do well there.

About 80 people showed up for the seminar, among them was Maureen Lopez of Pembroke Pines, who says the

principles of feng shui have improved her life.

"I have a hectic life," Lopez said. "I need my home to be a calm place to recharge my batteries. I have achieved success. When friends visit, they feel calmness in my home, a positive energy."

Monika Rosales and her daughter, Natasha, also follow feng shui. "You start by uncluttering your house," Monika Rosales said. Natasha, 13, says her friends love to hang out in her room at their Pembroke Pines home. "I have lots of bamboo plants in there, and I never have dead flowers," Natasha said.

But what do you do if your love and relationship area is the laundry room or your



SEEKING TRUTH:

Natasha Rosales, 13, of Pembroke Pines looks over items for sale at Fields of Flowers in Davie after the seminar.

house isn't octagon-shaped? The consultants say the *bagua* applies to the whole home, to individual rooms and even to an office desk. One could choose to add pink to that laundry room or create harmony in the bedroom, no matter where it falls on the *bagua*.

Mark and Leslie Jacobson of Boca Raton have master's degrees in counseling. Just the act of freeing spaces of clutter and focusing on priorities can

result in psychological changes, they said. In other words, feng shui is more than folklore. It's about taking charge of life, they say.

For information on feng shui consulting, call 561-376-4730 or log on to www.geocities.com/BocaFengShui. Field of Flowers, 5101 S. University Dr., Davie, offers seminars on a variety of topics, including flower design. Call 954-680-8888.

FENG SHUI TIPS

Five simple tips for good feng shui, according to Mark and Leslie Jacobson:

- Get rid of clutter. It creates obstacles in your life and makes you feel uncomfortable in your space. Freeing space opens you to healthy new relationships.
- Main entrances to homes attract new, positive energy. When you open the front door, you allow positive energy to flow into the home and your life.
- Fix leaks. Because water represents money, leaks represent wasted money. And they literally cost money, in the form of higher water bills.
- Toilets represent death because they're for waste, so when uncovered, they spread negative energy. They suck up positive energy, especially wealth energy. Close the seat before flushing. It prevents luck and money from getting flushed away.
- Get rid of bedroom mirrors. According to superstition, the soul roams around the room while you are sleeping, so if it sees itself in the mirror, it may be frightened. And if you wake up during the night, your reflection could scare you, and any disturbance during the sleep cycle is bad feng shui. Besides, who wants to see themselves first thing in the morning?