



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



**Carol M. Olmstead, FSII**

**Happy Holidays!**  
**I wish you a season full of health, happiness, love, and peace!**

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**If you haven't refreshed your browser lately, do it now so you can see what's new on my website.**

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**Feng Shui Tip: Five Gifts Not To Give**

I received an e-mail from a participant in one of my workshops asking if it was OK to give her mother a gift of a high-quality knife, since she knew her mother would never buy it for herself. Gifts of knives or anything with a cutting edge are considered Feng Shui "no-no's" because they symbolically cut the relationship. Instead, I recommended that she give her mother a gift certificate and enclose a picture of the knife she wanted her to buy. She should also place the gift certificate in a red envelope, since in Feng Shui these represent honoring the recipient.

Here are my top 5 gifts to avoid during this holiday gift-giving season or on any occasion:

1. **Sharp Objects.** Never give knives, scissors, letter openers, or can openers as gifts since they could "cut" a relationship; if you are the recipient of any of these as a gift, hand over a coin to the giver to restore the bond between you.

2. **Empty Wallet.** Avoid giving an empty wallet, purse, or briefcase; instead, fill it with dollar 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 stem; if you receive roses, be sure to remove the thorns to symbolize a smooth romance.
4. **Stunted Trees.** Avoid giving Bonsai trees or other miniature plants, since they represent stunted growth. Instead, choose full, healthy plants with rounded leaves that symbolize prosperity and long life.
5. **Clocks and Timepieces.** Gifts that show the time symbolize stealing it from others. But because watches make such a good gift, the modern Feng Shui application is to give a gift certificate and a picture of a watch so the recipient can choose their own timepiece.

### **A Word About Re-Gifting:**

I am a fan of re-gifting because it removes things you don't want from your home and sends them into an environment 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.

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### **In The News: Is Your Purse Making Your Sick?**

Anyone who has heard one of my presentations knows I encourage the women in the audience to get their purses off the floor. In Feng Shui, putting your purse on the floor represents disregard for your wealth. Now, there is also scientific evidence that keeping your purse on the floor can make you sick:

*ABC News reports that microbiologist Chuck Gerba found fecal bacteria normally found on the floor of public restrooms on the bottom of women's purses (<http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/OnCall/story?id=2283311&page=1>. Each time ABC News and Gerba ran an instant field test and later a lab test on swabs from the outside bottom of 10 women's purses, they found some bacteria. Most purses had tens of thousands, a few were saturated with millions of bacteria, and one purse had 6.7 million bacteria. Half of the bags tested positive for coliform bacteria, which indicated the possible presence of human or animal waste. "The purses are really becoming subways for micro organisms," Gerba said. "They're being transferred from one location to another. So it's just like germ 'public transportation.' I'm afraid to touch them."*

At last, I have found a solution that is Feng Shui friendly: a [Purse Hanger](http://www.fengshuiforrealife.com/pursehanger.htm) to keep your purse off the floor. After much searching, I have found a line of attractive hangers that you can use where there is no hook or extra chair to rest your purse. To [order](http://www.fengshuiforrealife.com/pursehanger.htm) for yourself and your friends, please go to my website:  
<http://www.fengshuiforrealife.com/pursehanger.htm>.

**Purse hangers make terrific stocking stuffers.**

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### **Clutter Clinic: Got Peanuts?**

By the end of the month, you will surely have more than enough peanuts—the Styrofoam kind that kept all of your holiday gifts safe and sound during shipping. Although you might have a tendency to save them for next year, I recommend against keeping them around. They clutter your closets and take up room that could be kept open for other, better things to flow into your life. (And I am convinced that, like wire hangers, when kept in dark closets Styrofoam peanuts breed and double in volume!). The *Peanut Hotline* is a nationwide reuse program for plastic packing peanuts. You can drop off your packing peanuts at more than 1,500 collection sites in the US. Call the Hotline (800-828-2214) or visit the website (<http://www.loosefillpackaging.com>) to find a center near you.

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### **Success Story: Finally Getting A Good Night's Sleep**

Karen's success story is for all of you insomniacs out there. Her bedroom, an alcove off the living room, has no door. Here is what she wrote:

For almost 30 years, I have suffered from serious bouts with insomnia and tried every remedy with no luck. It wasn't until you assessed my bedroom that I found some relief. I followed your recommendations to change the wall, bedding, and carpet palette away from stimulating greens to soft flesh tones, replaced the existing art with images that sooth or represent pairings, cleared the clutter, hung a prism from the ceiling fan to cure the cutting action of the fan blades over my bed, and placed a nightstand and lamp on each side of the bed. The main change was following your recommendation to curtain off the entrance to the bedroom. The result? My bedroom, and my ability to sleep, has been transformed! I now sleep deeply and through the entire night, almost every night. And when I have people over, no one sets foot in my bedroom, even when the curtains are only partially closed. I can't thank you enough for your great advice. Getting a good night's sleep on a regular basis truly is life-altering, as every insomniac knows, and I would still be tossing and turning were it not for you and your Feng Shui expertise!

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### **Feng Shui Q & A**

**Q: I love to cook, but I have too many cookbooks cluttering my kitchen counter. Any ideas?**

**A:** No matter how many cookbooks you have, you probably only use a few recipes from each book, especially from the older books. Scan the recipes you use frequently and store them on your computer or print them out and place them in a three-ring binder. That way you can donate some of your books but still have access to your favorite recipes while you release the clutter you are storing in your kitchen.

**Q: My home is adjacent to a storm drain that I think might be affecting my prosperity. I'd like to retain more of my income and thought you might have a "cure" for me. I also have a street light above the storm drain so at least I feel like I am en"light"ened!**

**A:** You are right to be concerned that a storm drain near your home might be draining your wealth. And if the street light is directly in front of your door it could be having an additional negative effect. Water represents wealth and abundance in

Feng Shui, but the storm drain represents “negative water,” since it carries dirt and refuse. Since you can’t move the drain (or the street light), the best cure is to plant some soft, bushy shrubs between the storm drain and your home to symbolically create a barrier. Plants represent the Wood Element, which is the element needed to balance the over-abundance of negative water. Also, you can attract more income by placing water in the correct location; that is, by adding actual water (fountain or fish bowl) or symbolic water (artwork that shows a river, stream, waterfall, ocean) in the foyer near your front door.

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## **Consultations and Workshops**

### **Home and Office Consultations**

I offer consultations on a regular basis for homes and offices 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.

Do you want a consultation or workshop in your city? Please e-mail me ([carol@FengShuiForRealLife.com](mailto:carol@FengShuiForRealLife.com)) for details about setting up a session or consultation in your location.

**Here is my current planned travel for January:**

**DC/Maryland/Virginia: January 15-20**

**Santa Fe/Albuquerque: January 8-12; January 22-31**

I welcome your referrals in these and other locations nationwide.

### **Upcoming Workshops**

**The following workshops are open to the public:**

**January 13, 2007: Resolutions to Reality: Feng Shui for the New Year**

**Alta Mae Heritage Inn**

**Edgewood, NM**

Come enjoy a Feng Shui Getaway at [Alta Mae's Heritage Inn](#) in the foothills of the Sandia Mountains in Edgewood, New Mexico. I will be conducting a full-day workshop that includes a morning session on the practical applications of Feng Shui, a gourmet lunch, and a hands-on afternoon session where I will analyze your floor plan or room layout. You can register for the Feng Shui workshop alone, or choose to add a stay at this cozy inn and enjoy a gourmet dinner and room package.

**NEW PRICING:** For details, go to [www.altamae-nm.com/feng\\_shui.html](http://www.altamae-nm.com/feng_shui.html).

**Other scheduled workshop topics and dates at the Alta Mae, which you can reserve with or without room packages, are:**

**April 14, 2007:** Spring Clearing with Feng Shui

**May 19, 2007:** Feng Shui and Love

**October 6, 2007:** Introduction to Feng Shui

**January 23, 2007: The Feng Shui of Relationships  
Capitol City Business and Professional Women (BPW)  
Santa Fe, NM**

Join me at the BPW meeting to learn the basics of Feng Shui and how you can use them to sustain and nurture the relationships in your life. This is a great opportunity to hear more about Feng Shui and meet the terrific women and men who belong to this BPW chapter. Members: \$20, Guests: \$23. To register, contact me directly at 505-690-1814 or [carol@FengShuiForRealLife.com](mailto:carol@FengShuiForRealLife.com).

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**CUSTOM WORKSHOPS FOR YOUR GROUP**

Feng Shui is a popular topic for luncheon and dinner meetings, special events, and fund-raisers, college and university training sessions. 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 a big hit!

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**Beyond Feng Shui: How We Spend**

While you are holiday shopping, give some thought to these intriguing statistics about the average daily purchases of Americans. I will let you draw your own conclusions:

125,000 Barbie dolls  
150,000 Hot Wheels toy cars  
4,760 tubes of Cover Girl Very Black mascara  
24,657 bags of Whiskas cat food  
66,665 bags of Pedigree dog-bone treats  
50,051,507 12 oz cans of Pepsi  
35,079,448 12oz servings of Bud Light  
8.179,726 20 oz bottles of Aquafina water  
234,586 cartons of 64 oz Tropicana Pure Premium orange juice  
153,424 lbs of Starbucks coffee  
500,000 Hostess Twinkies

Read more about our spending habits at:

<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1549403,00.html>

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**MarketPlace: Business to Business Services to Help You Grow Your Business.**

This section highlights business-to-business services that can help you grow your entrepreneurial ventures. I welcome contributions from readers of business services that have been useful to you. *When you access these companies via the web address listed, you will be eligible for any special discounted services.*

**Art.com**

Looking for prints, posters, and other artwork to use to make Feng Shui adjustments and improvements in your home or office? Art.com is the leading online print and poster retailer and they also provide framing services. You can search through the collection by artist and by subject. Use this link to find any special offers:

<http://www.art.com/?Aff=CONF&RFID=918327&TKID=15045900&CTID=321694113>.

**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:

[http://www.expertclick.com/referral/Carol\\_M\\_Olmstead](http://www.expertclick.com/referral/Carol_M_Olmstead).

**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:

<http://www.marketerschoice.com/app/?af=374705>.

**The Sussman Company, Virtual Office Assistant**

Administrative services for small businesses that need desktop publishing, general administrative tasks, with a specialty in real estate support services.

<http://www.SussmanCompany.com> to learn more about how a Virtual Office Assistant can help you.

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*My Client-Centered Approach to Feng Shui: When I recommend cures for a home or office, I consider each client's goals. 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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Don't miss an issue of the Feng Shui For Real Life e-newsletter. To ensure receipt, please add this e-mail address ([carol@FengShuiForRealLife.com](mailto:carol@FengShuiForRealLife.com)) to your Address Book or Approved Sender's list. Thank you!