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Fab Fridays: Feng Shui Expert Alex Stark

by robin October 21, 2011

Each Friday Simplifying Fabulous! presents Fab Fridays, an up-close-and-personal look at how one of our community members simplifies fabulous in their own life. Is there someone you'd like to see featured? Email your submission to info@simplifyingfabulous.com.

Simplifying Fabulous! with Feng Shui Expert Alex Stark

ABOUT ALEX STARK is an internationally recognized consultant, advisor, and teacher on issues of creativity, efficiency, and design. A graduate of the Yale University School of Architecture, he is a practitioner of feng shui and European Geomancy. Alex is married and has one daughter. He currently resides in Berkeley, California. I've worked with Alex many times for clients and in my personal life. He really changes lives! See his full bio, [here](#).



Robin Baron: *What are a few simple feng shui changes that people can make in their home that would be the most impactful?*

Alex Stark: Clutter is the single most detrimental factor to success in finances, relationships and health. Keeping a home tidy and clean is a sure way to improve opportunity, increase a sense of self-worth, and promote harmonious relationships.

Flow within a home is also important, so you should try to keep critical areas free of obstructions: the front door, the entry foyer, and all hallways should feel open and bright. If these are narrow or dark, you can improve them by adding mirrors and brighter lights, or by painting them in light colors, avoiding blues, dark grays, or dark browns. Lighter colors in warmer tones (reds, oranges, yellows, light greens) help to open up space and make it feel more bright and welcoming.

Another important thing is to make sure that your home reflects who you are. Since your home is like an engine that supports your goals, all items should reflect your aspirations: images should speak of prosperity, health, wholesomeness, and harmony. Try to avoid images that feel lonely, are too dark, or which are hard to understand. Images of single people or of vast empty landscapes, for example, tend to emphasize loneliness and are not recommended for individuals who are looking for a relationship. Landscapes with health trees or vegetation could symbolize the abundance of nature and are therefore used in feng shui as symbolic of prosperity and good fortune.

RB: *What about feng shui should people keep in mind when shopping for new items for the home?*

Alex Stark: The first thing to consider when shopping for new items is, "Do I really need this item?" Most people tend to buy home items on impulse, and are easily seduced by charming or beautiful objects. Over time, however, homes become cluttered, and this slowly undermines the potential of the home, as well as the good fortune of its occupants.



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Good feng shui, furthermore, requires that every object in a home have a purpose, whether practical or aesthetic. A useful mantra you can use when considering something new for your home is, "Use it, love it, or loose it!" Objects belong in your home only if they have true practical use (vacuum cleaners, linens, light fixtures), or if you really, really love them (your mother's china, the most beautiful chair you ever saw). If an object does not conform to either of these two criteria, it most likely will be superfluous, and should be avoided.

RB: Tell me a story about how your practices have significantly changed someone's life.

Alex Stark: One example that comes to mind is the story of a very humble Mexican immigrant who came to me at a point in his life when everything seemed to be against him. Although educated as an engineer in Mexico, he was working as a gravedigger in New Jersey, living in a flop house with seven other illegal immigrants and without any prospects for improvement or even marriage. I am not even sure how he managed to gather enough money to pay my fee.

After working with him for about seven months, during which time I often felt that his situation would never improve, his employer at the graveyard noticed his dedication to his job, and during a very short conversation discovered about his university training. As a result, he offered him a job as a foreman on another company he owned, launching my client into a successful career (and legal status) as a construction manager.

At the same time, an old friend of his died, and his friend's widow decided to move to the US. In the process of trying to help her, they fell in love and now have two healthy children.

All of this could have happened on its own, but my client credits feng shui with providing him with enough opportunity and "good luck" to position him in the right place at the right time. Feng shui did not provide him with intelligence or a university education, nor did it provide the discipline or dedication that he obviously already have, but it did help to compensate for circumstances that could have broken another man.

RB: If someone is interested in feng shui, what is the best way for them to learn more?

Alex Stark: It is very difficult to learn about feng shui on your own. This has to do with the fact that feng shui practice, as its name implies, is a practice, and requires that you live with it in order to understand it. Also, feng shui knowledge is very complicated, and there are competing schools of thought that could sound contradictory to the layperson. Some techniques require strong mathematical backgrounds, or may not be easily understood if you don't already know eastern philosophy. Furthermore, there are levels of understanding in feng shui that go beyond words, and which are impossible to discuss in books or articles.

That means that the best way to learn is to hire a competent consultant and have them analyze your space and guide you through the changes that will bring improvement to your career, finances, relationships, and health. Doing this will bring you into direct contact with feng shui practice, which is the only real way to understand it.

Once you have done that, however, it is possible to expand your knowledge of feng shui by reading selected writings. My website has a **short bibliography** that only includes books I would recommend to the general public.



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