

Feel right at home

Incorporate ancient feng shui concepts for a happier life

By **MAGGI WHITE**
BOOMER & SENIOR NEWS

If you wake up feeling fatigued and out of sorts, it may be that your home has negative energy flow.

It's a concept that affects your mood and vitality, according to feng shui experts.

Miyoko Fuse works to educate others, especially the aging population, about energy or "chi," and how to turn the negative flow into something positive, using the feng shui concepts.

Feng shui has a long history. It originated in China, and its concepts are widely practiced in Japan and other countries. The idea was to seek the best location for a person's living environment. It was the fundamental basis of living and living spaces.

"Chi is with us no matter what cultural background you have," Fuse says. "The basis of feng shui is that chi is flowing everywhere from nature to our minds. In short, chi in nature is collected by rain, and rain flows as rivers. Chi in our emotions flows from one event



Courtesy photo

Feng shui is flexible in its approach, and uses everyday things, including size, materials and color, to create a positive energy.

of joy to another event of unhappiness. When a body does not function well, it means the chi in the body system is blocked. Often acupuncture treatment is used to describe the flow of chi in the body. When chi is balanced, nature or our emotions are harmonized."

Chi can affect mood, health, sleep, safety and other aspects

of everyday living. Positive chi can motivate older Americans to be more active and engaged in life, says Fuse, who moved to the United States from Japan 30 years ago.

"Americans are more interested in creating their homes around convenience or beauty, whereas feng shui is practiced to benefit the mind and body," Fuse says. "I believe something is missing in American homes and that's why I educate people."

Through her business and workshops, Fuse consults with individuals to tailor changes from their point of view.

"We buy or build our homes when we are younger but when we age our physical, mental or psychological selves change, but the home is still the same,"

she says. "Most people cannot afford to remodel when they age. However, making interior design changes by moving furniture around, adding more daylight — small things — we can create positive chi. It is not costly."

We are affected by our environment, she adds. "We call this 'design psychology' or 'environmental psychology.' It affects feelings. You go out more, you invite people to visit more often. You just feel the difference."

Over the years, she has slowly made changes in her home with her American husband.

"My husband loves it," Fuse says. "I didn't force. It was gradual change. Chi is not visible, but emotions change. Eventually, he felt the difference. You feel vigor, you feel uplifted, and you start going to a community center."

When taking a feng shui perspective, she looks at everyday things in the home, including size, materials, wood, vinyl, fabric and color. "Everything affects the environment," she says.

Feng shui is flexible in its approach. If a person wants their bed to face the door, the direction of the bed can be slightly altered.

"We are not rigid," Fuse says.

In her new book, "Healthy Home for Healthy Aging with Feng Shui," she elaborates on many of these principles and provides tips with illustrations for adjusting a home to fit changing realities, including space planning, lighting, air quality, cleaning, safety and accessibility.

Just looking up "feng shui" online does not offer enough information, she says. "You can't put over 3,000 years of such a complex concept on a page. It has taken a lot of learn-



MIYOKO FUSE

ing and training."

Fuse studied feng shui at the Emerald Feng Shui Institute in Seattle, and trained with Gisela Stehr, a former architect who now works as a professional consultant in intuitive feng shui. Fuse is now certified and a member of the International Feng Shui Guild. She has associate of applied science degrees in gerontology and interior design, and advocates for sustainable and environmentally-friendly building principles.

She provides workshops and presentations about Aging in Place for Portland Community College, the American Institute of Home Builders, Oregon State University, and many other public and private sector organizations.

She consults using the principles of feng shui interior design for individuals and homeowners of different generations. ■

Of note

Home Esteem is a certified women, minority and emerging small business from the state of Oregon. Contact Miyoko Fuse at 503-236-3393. Learn more about her book at healthyhomehandbook.com.