

The name of the building is Magnolia. A client suggested magnolia that was also the name of a powerful movie about personal transformation, “Magnolia”. The magnolia represents purity, candor and openness (Gardiner, 2000). Magnolias have existed for millions of years and grow all over the world. Buddhist monks cultivated magnolias for over 1000 years. The magnolia’s symbolism can be traced back to the T’ang dynasty (A.D. 618-907). The medicinal use of magnolia has been primarily for headaches and nasal disorders. For the Aztecs, the magnolia was known as “yolloxochitl” which means “heart flower”. As a representation of purity, candor and openness, the “heart flower” is a perfect choice for the building that will be the center for personal growth and transformation.

Flowers have a feminine association. The choice of a flower as a name also represents feminine consciousness. This is an integral way of processing information inherent to the work I do and alternative healing modalities. Much like Eastern thought feminine consciousness operates in a holistic manner, paying more attention to context and relationships. The thinking process tends to be circular and relies on experience based knowledge. This is in contrast to traditional Western thought that is based on abstract logic, analytical, logical reasoning, categorization and understanding in terms of linear cause and effect. The body-oriented psychotherapy I practice is fundamentally experienced-based knowledge that attends to an ever-deepening awareness of the interconnections within self and others. On the doors, cabinets and some of the furniture are spiral knobs. “Spirals inform us of the pattern of our own growth process: we often come around and around again to the same issue each time, touching it repeatedly at a higher level, bringing more wisdom to the process” (Medicine Eagle, 2000, p.214). The spirals represent the “dance of life” and our spiraling journey toward the inner Self, the Mystery and the Divine.

The building was designed according to some basic Feng Shui principles. Feng Shui is a practice of manipulating the environment to enhance, empower and attract our needs and desires through ritual actions and “environmental affirmations” (Medicine Eagle, 2000, p.161). According to Brown (1998) “Feng Shui translates literally as “wind-water”, which refers to the ways energy or chi flows through the universe” (p.4). Chi moves like wind and water that flows faster in a straight line and slower in confined

obstructed spaces. Chi energy also carries the thoughts, emotions and ideas of human consciousness. How well this energy flows is determined by the Feng Shui of the building. In other words people “determine what the chi energy is and the building defines how it circulates” (p.9). Ultimately “according to the principles of feng shui, our surroundings influence how we feel” (Wydra, 1997, p.80). According to Brooke Medicine Eagle (2000) “the vibrational energy in our surroundings affects us tremendously” (p. 161).

The building is built around a courtyard in the shape of the octagon that represents the ba-gua. “Each area of the ba-gua defines a different area of our life. Acknowledging these different areas helps bring into focus the parts that, when fulfilled, contribute to a satisfying life” (Wydra, 1997, p.83). The center of the ba-gua is represented by the soil or earth (one of the Five Elements) and the color yellow. The center chi energy is powerful, changeable and extreme with capabilities of “great productivity or immense destruction” (Brown, 1998, p.23). The center energy mingles and gathers the energies of all the eight directions and areas of the ba-gua. The center is empty to give the chi space and stability. As the center is represented by Earth, it is a good placement for the “power garden”. The “power garden” is in the shape of an octagon to represent the ba-gua. A power garden has associations with endowment, authority and strength that is designed to invite the energies of empowerment, success and unobstructed freedom towards “life’s highest and best path”. Within the garden each area of the ba-gua is represented by the plantings in the same layout as the building.

The main entrance of the building is in the Career or Self area represented by water and the color black. The career area is aligned with the center position at the threshold. The best area to enter a building is in the Career section of the ba-gua. There is a black wrought iron table covered in slate and two chairs. The floor is gray slate. The entryway has a gate with Hopi symbols. The sun represents happiness. The mountains are associated with abundance. The broken arrow represents peace. The full arrow stands for protection. The diamond shape in the lower right corner is the Medicine Man’s eye reflecting wisdom, watchfulness. The two “teepee’s” in the lower left corner are thunderbird tracks representing bright prospects. The two half moons in the upper left represent friendship and brotherhood.

To the right of the entrance is the Helpful People/travel/compassion area represented by the colors white/gray/black. This area invites the energies of assistance from the world in achieving our desires. “What we put forth for others will be returned” (Wydra, 1997, p.52). Therefore this area supports whoever enters. This area requires something familiar, soothing, and comfortable to show concern for others. The waiting room door is in the helpful people area. The waiting room has a dynamic welcoming atmosphere expressed through the yellow walls and the fountain that is towards the southeast corner of the room for best placement. This activates the flow of energy. The bathroom is in the Southwest corner with gray slate floors. The walls are painted a color called Barrister White.

Next is the Children/descendants/creativity area represented by metal and white. This area is about the influence on the future through children or creativity, imagination and ideas. The energies that resonate here are strength, growth and consistency that carry into and influence the future. Marriage/relationships is in the South east corner of the building represented by red/pink/white. This is the right-handed area of the building that tends to be dominant for most people (right-handed) and thus associated with communication and relationships. This invites the facilitation and flow of conversation, ideas, and feelings between people. The group/workshop room is located in the Children and Marriage areas, which supports the energy of group gatherings. The color of the room is called Thin Pink. The second bathroom which is in the Children area is painted Barrister White. There is a small fountain that is placed in the Southeast corner of the room and the building that invites the energy of prosperity.

Directly facing the entrance is the Fame/Rank/future (recognition) area represented by fire and the color red. The future encompasses what lies ahead and the actualization of goals. The bougainvillea planted on each side of the wall represent the Fame area through the color red. Purple blooms invite the higher consciousness to be a guide.

In the Northeast corner is the Wealth/self-empowerment area represented by blue/purple/red. This area invites the energies of personal growth, self-improvement “because it combines the power with the left side” (Wydra, 1997, p.53). Because generally the left side is non-dominant and less likely to be utilized, this requires a

concentration of focus that is empowering. My office is the Northeast corner, which is painted violet. The decor is essentially multicolored with a balance of all Five Element colors to help maintain rationality and balance that is necessary for the work that I do.

Next is the Family/Health/community area that is represented by wood and the color green. “In order to thrive, we require that an ever-broadening support system be in place” (Wydra, 1997, p.55). This area invites the energies of the skills, talents of others and the community as a resource to support our lives. This is a smaller office that is painted green.

Finally to the left of the entrance is the Knowledge/self cultivation/wisdom area represented by black/blue/green. Wisdom is a resource to help us navigate through life. This is the insight and knowledge that helps us cope with the range of life’s experiences. Because this area is on the left hand side that is non-dominant for most people, to focus on these energies requires a concentrated effort to go inside. This is another large office that is painted blue.

Feng shui uses a system of Five Elements: tree, fire, soil or earth, metal and water. Each of the elements affects the other by moving in a clockwise manner supporting the following element and calming the preceding one. The Five Elements are represented throughout the building also in architectural details. The Tree Element is associated with creating and growth. Tall, rectangular features including tall windows, high ceilings, vertical lines and columns represent the Tree Element. Each room has ten-foot ceilings. There are two columns in front and of course the tall palms that are in the courtyard reflect the Tree Element. Fire is associated with growing, blooming, promotion and awareness of one’s existence. The Fire Element is represented by triangles, pointed shapes, stars and pyramids. There are triangles in the slate flooring around the courtyard. There are pointed shapes in the lower left and right hand corners of the entry gate. The Soil or Earth Element is associated with fruiting and ripening development. This Element is represented by low wide rectangular features such as wide windows and horizontal lines. There are horizontal green bands beneath each window. The Metal Element is associated with harvest and is represented by round, spherical, domed or arched features, including round windows and arched doorways. There are arched windows above the doors and windows around the building. The Water Element is

associated with regeneration and flexibility. All the wavy, irregular patterns, shapes and curved features such as bay windows support water chi. There is a wave feature in the entry gate. The light fixtures in the courtyard are curved. The group room also has a small bay window facing the courtyard. “To further nourish water chi energy” slate is used throughout the courtyard and bathrooms. This adds “metal chi energy which is supportive to water chi” (Brown, 1998, p.108). The use of metal blinds and wooden furniture also enhances this energy.

The four directions are also important factors in Feng Shui. Because of the limitation of the property there was little choice in the actual positioning of the building which faces West. The energy of the west is associated with evening and autumn sunset. This is the energy that brings everything together and is good for completing projects. The west energy is helpful for better focusing on the end result and becoming more financially aware with a focus on profitability. Western chi is also playful energy.

“You are at the epicenter of all experiences. Therefore, where you enter a space is critical to how you experience it” (Wydra, 1997, p.51). The entrance is important because it is the way chi flows most easily into the building. A larger entrance means it is easier for chi to move in and out. The entrance is situated west of center and faces west. The material of the gate is shiny metal to support this energy.

However for businesses of health and healing which is the use of the building, the north is the most auspicious direction. The energy of the north is most conducive and helpful to this type of business. The energy of the north is “associated with water a flowing energy that is motionless on the surface but has powerful currents below. It is also linked with winter and regeneration, making it suitable for health products, healing and therapeutic processes” (Brown, 1998, p.108). Northern chi may appear calm on the surface but carries power deep inside associated with regeneration and internal development. “Northern energy has a strong relationship with night” (Brown, 1998, p.108). Although because the building faces west and northern windows are not available to draw northern chi, the energy may be enhanced through other means. For example, the main offices are located north of center for “health, healing, counseling and deeper, more introverted creative processes” (Brown, 1998, p.108). The name of the building, Magnolia, a white flower also increases the energy of the northeast.

The waterfall is in the favorable location of east. Water brings in fresh chi that is beneficial for health and destiny. “Fountains clean the air and make it feel fresh, and create an upward flow of exciting, stimulating chi energy. This upward movement can be used to deflect cutting chi or slow down fast moving horizontal chi” (Brown, 1998, p. 11). “Waterfalls move chi energy downwards, bringing a calming influence to an area” (Brown, 1998, p. 11). The placement of the waterfall thus also settles the energy from the electrical power lines behind the building.

Behind the building to the left is a small garden that is a “healing garden” (Wydra, 1997). This is an area with just enough space to feel safe, womblike and private. The healing garden “reestablishes an alliance with optimal physical, emotional, and spiritual health and allows us to tap into the best and highest sources both universally and humanly available” (Wydra, 1997, p.104). The intent of the healing garden is to support the journey to renewal through hope, clarity and resolve for our healing process. The opening to the sky above the swing invites optimism and hopefulness by experiencing the sunlight on our body. “This opening to the sky is a metaphor for the light at the end of the tunnel or a ray of hope” or as the path to healing (Wydra, 1997, p.107).

The colors throughout the building were chosen to reflect Feng shui and optimally enhance the chi energy (Rossbach & Yun, 1994). The exterior of the building has dark green trim that is favorably associated with the use of the building. Green is also auspicious for the entryway. The fence or wall on the north side of the property includes dark green along the top. Green is recommended for fencing. It represents life force and growth. The neighboring house is white, the color of metal, that is created by earth. Earth colors are yellow which is the main color of the building. These are good neighbor colors that have a mutually positive effect and good fortune for both buildings.

As much as possible due to the limitation of code requirements the building was constructed with awareness for the environment and toxicity. The interior walls between the three offices are actually built as exterior walls for soundproofing. The interior paint is non-toxic. The carpet is a natural fiber, wool. The pesticide requirement for the foundation was met by using non-toxic citronella. The building is well insulated with foam block construction and reinforced concrete. Because there is steel framing throughout the building this provides some electromagnetic protection like a Faraday

“cage”. All electrical equipment, wiring and lighting generates electromagnetic fields. According to Feng Shui EMF exposure may contribute to reduced concentration, physical tiredness and lack of clarity. The use of plants, natural materials and natural light all help reduce EMF. All of the wiring in the building is contained in metal tubes providing additional protection from EMF.

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