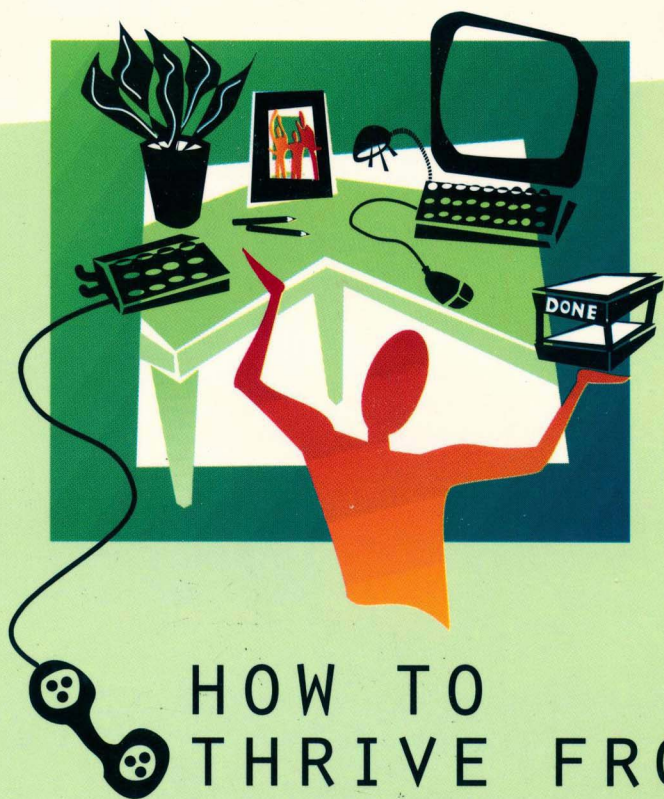


FENG SHUI

GOES TO THE OFFICE



HOW TO
THRIVE FROM
9 TO 5

NANCILEE WYDRA

BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF
FENG SHUI: THE BOOK OF CURES

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CONTEMPORARY BOOKS

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Wydra, Nancilee.

Feng shui goes to the office : how to thrive from 9 to 5 / Nancilee Wydra.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-8092-2872-6

1. Feng-shui. 2. Work environment—Psychological aspects.

3. Job satisfaction. I. Title.

BF1779.F4W935 2000

133.3'337—dc21

99-33451

CIP

Cover design by Jennifer Locke

Back cover photograph by Molly E. Freilicher

Interior design by Scott Rattray

Cover and interior illustrations by Ginny Piech Street

Published by Contemporary Books

A division of NTC/Contemporary Publishing Group, Inc.

4255 West Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood (Chicago), Illinois 60712-1975 U.S.A.

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Printed in the United States of America

International Standard Book Number: 0-8092-2872-6

03 04 LB 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4

TO ALL MY loved ones who have ever worked in an office, especially Sol Goodman, Gay Urso, Debra and Stuart Segal, Wendy, Michael, and Jonathan Sacks, Julie and Scott Kroll, Sandy and Tuv Vidan, Ben and Zac Wydra, and Sandy Sharrock, I wish each minute spent in your office as fruitful and happy as our times together outside work.

And to my team at NTC/Contemporary Books, Kara Leverte, Kim Bartko, John Nolan, Tina Chapman, and Chris Benton, who have worked with me on this our fourth book together, my gratitude for your support, hard work, and good nature.

And to all my students, who are on this journey of discovery with me, I cherish your intelligence, input, and dedication to the field of person/place.

Everything that relates, whether closely or more distantly, to psychic phenomena and to the action of psychic forces in general, should be studied just like any other science. There is nothing miraculous or supernatural in them, nothing that should engender or keep alive superstition. Psychic training, rationally and scientifically conducted, can lead to desirable results. That is why the information gained about such training—even though it is prac-

ticed empirically and based on theories to which we cannot always give assent—constitutes useful documentary evidence worthy of our attention.

—From the introduction of *Magic and Mystery in Tibet* by Alexandra David-Neel, a maverick who was the first western woman to enter the forbidden city of Lhasa in Tibet

And to you, my readers, may every day be filled with the joy of discovering and uncovering all the best in yourselves.

INTRODUCTION

If what you do at work feels like play, don't bother to read this book. But if bringing these disparate realities closer together is a goal, *Feng Shui Goes to the Office* can help. This book is designed to make work feel as satisfying as play.

I remember the last walk I took through my old neighborhood in Summit, New Jersey, before I drove away, never to return. The sloping terraces had been planted by Italian immigrants, who had flocked to this area to tend gardens on the estates of the elite. A railroad connecting this remote region with New York made Summit accessible for businesspeople who plied their trades in Manhattan's financial district.

My daily walk along this path had always been a window to the seasons' unfolding. This time the joy of viewing lilac bushes cascading over wooden slatted fences along with dogwoods and azaleas brightening this day was marred by an ache in my heart. Unlike these blossoms, I found myself in an environment that did not support my thriving. I yearned to be unfolding like spring. While work provided much in the way of comfort and conveniences, it didn't afford me the opportunity to jump into the pool of self-discovery and become my authentic self. At that moment, I decided to step aside from the known and to begin a journey, one that ultimately led me home, into my true self.

The personal journey each of us takes includes the experiences we have at work. A job ought to fill each day with joy, not just assignments to be completed. When the experience of work is aligned to one's inner being, work provides a vast forum where attitude, talent, and intelligence are expressed. Many of us expend monumental efforts trying to translate our innate gifts into marketable vehicles. Our life's progress is often measured by work's achievements; the workplace defines our worth. Character, genius, and vision are often measured by the successful interactions within the boundaries of work. Very few of us can exist without having to support survival. The form we choose becomes our profession, and its engagement becomes our calling.

The purpose of this book is to help you identify what parts of work are blissful and what parts need other supports.

To be blissful is to be in the zone, that amorphous place where time evaporates and expression joyfully consumes us. The fact that a job consumes the majority of our waking hours does not mean the workday need feel endless. The discipline of feng shui is based on the fact that an environment can alter your experiences in life. Even unpleasant tasks can be made reasonably enjoyable.

An understanding of the factors in a workplace that can add to your contentment will unfold as you comprehend feng shui's wisdom. It is my task to extricate from each of you the parts of life that you find satisfying and show you the way to incorporate them into your work life. This process can stimulate you to take quantum leaps from the status quo or aid in adjusting your work environment to support the different experiences.

By knowing which parts of a job dovetail with the highest and best parts of you, you can make any job more fulfilling. By understanding how an environment talks to you and

affects experience, you can unleash untapped environmental assets that are available. Any work experience can be made more joyous by following this book's recommendations.

When J. C. Penney reached a ripe old age, he said that although his eyesight was dimming his vision had never been greater. By substantiating your intuitive vision, the ideas in this book will probably feel deeply comforting when put into practice.

Use this book as a pathfinder to self-discovery and full contentment. When work and play are equally satisfying, you have won the pot of gold waiting for you on the other side of the arched spectrum of light, the rainbow.

May you uncover your bliss.

Nancilee Wydra

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PART I

THE BASICS



WHAT IS FENG SHUI?

F*eng shui* means “wind” and “water” in Chinese, wind being the overhead physical manifestation of the fluid mutable state of all things, water representing the fluid state of living on earth. Though this eloquently formulated discipline goes back six thousand years, the concept predates the Chinese culture. Feng shui explains how place affects the human condition, how what we see, hear, smell, and touch influences our experiences in life. The practice of examining how the physical world influences human life so as to augment the human experience goes all the way back to the earliest agrarian societies, as long ago as 8000 B.C. While hunting/gathering societies certainly had to pay attention to nature, it was agricultural societies that made an in-depth knowledge of the physical environment mandatory. To harness the physical surroundings for personal advantage required exploration of soil, sunlight, water, and topography and its influence on food production. Thus as human beings began their scramble up the ladder of knowledge, one of the first steps taken was the awareness of the place as a mandatory tool for survival.

Humans began paying attention to nature in a fresh way to determine the best conditions for growing their food. Spring floods became allies because they infused the soil with rich nutrients. Sunlight was observed to have a naturally beneficial

effect on growth, while topographical conditions began to be understood in terms of their ability to advance or hinder cultivation techniques. As a body of knowledge about how the physical world influenced human life slowly grew, learning to modify the less-than-ideal factors became a natural next step. The environment became a tool not only for human survival, but also for elevating personal experience. Managing hunger birthed a sense of accomplishment and was understood to be one benefit of understanding the environment.

This is the underlying precept of the pyramid school of feng shui; an offshoot of traditional Chinese schools of feng shui. Pyramid feng shui focuses on the person and considers place a tool. Unlike traditional feng shui, pyramid feng shui suggests that we cannot create perfect feng shui until we know about the people who will occupy the space. No one person experiences his or her surroundings in exactly the same way; therefore, good feng shui can be achieved only when the individual who will occupy the place is considered. This book is based on the pyramid school of feng shui, which uses all information systems to uncover answers about why things work the way they do. I believe the pyramid school's ideas catapult feng shui into the modern world.

FORM SCHOOL

The form school, the oldest school of feng shui (still in existence since 2500 B.C.), predates any of today's civilizations. Concerned with recognizing how physical conditions influenced existence, form school practitioners were masters of observation. By studying the natural world, they could determine which side of a stream's bank would likely deteriorate and which would build up, predict the fertility of soil by locating healthy native



Form School Feng Shui

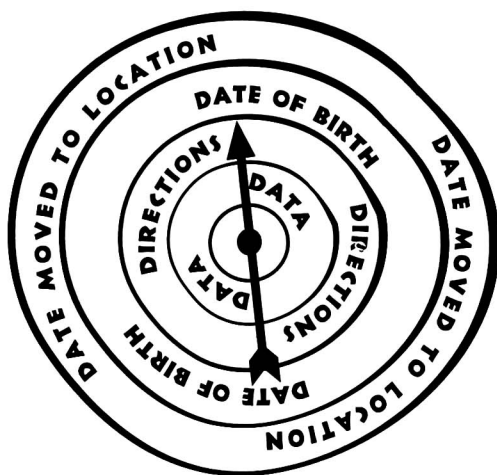
vegetation, could identify underground veins of water, could decide whether a dwelling would be cradled or stressed by the contour of a mountain, and could determine thin topsoil by the position and silhouette of stone outcroppings. During the times that human beings were initially forming stationary groups, knowledge of the best places to put down roots was essential. Agriculture gave rise to a multi-tasked community life, and culture in the arts, music, and literature began to bubble into existence.

Agriculture, of course, by allowing a society to sustain greater numbers of people, took civilization beyond that basic level of survival. With greater numbers of people living side by side, the shape of society was altered. Cities appeared, and structures became more important to life's experiences than nature. Thus, the form school's importance slowly was eroded, and the next branch of feng shui, the compass school, was born (3000 B.C.).

COMPASS SCHOOL

When fewer and fewer people were needed to take care of more and more of the arable land, civilizations became less focused on landscape and more on human-made structures, and the compass school emerged, overshadowing the original form school.

Materialism was born when nature was no longer seen as an extension of self. A sharp decline in intimate contact with nature led to increasingly self-serving behavior. When hills were flattened or carved to support agriculture, water was transported and stored, and a network capable of transporting goods emerged, human beings lost their direct experience with natural conditions. Personal information therefore superseded natural



Compass Feng Shui

phenomenon and in this way, the compass school was the first feng shui system to consider the uniqueness of the individual.

The compass school originated a system to plot tangential arches around a magnetic needle. The compass school practitioner was part mathematician, part seer, and used specific formulas based on information located in up to thirty-six different rings around the center.

Living in large groups ruptures a society's intimacy as well as control. Within the framework of being known and knowing others, large groups become conceptual groups rather than contact groups. Cities are places of conceptual rather than actual intimacy. Visual symbols like flags, verbal credos like pledges and songs, and formal complex government structures are needed to enforce the group's cohesiveness and loyalty. When an individual's actions do not have immediate personal consequences, groups find it necessary to enforce written or codified rules.

BLACK SECT

After Siddhārtha Gautama (Buddha) became enlightened, his teachings were embraced by many. Ideas traveled the footpaths of itinerate preachers and trade routes. When Buddhism crossed the Himalayas, its ideas seeped into many other cultures. In Tibet, Buddhism merged with the existing religion, Bön, and the mixture became known as Tibetan Buddhism.

To understand this form of Buddhism, it is helpful to picture life on the windswept, icy steppes of the Himalayas, where flora and fauna struggled to exist. Great expanses of barren terrain made life harsh. Ideas, the only luxury, transcended the brutal existence, and it is not difficult to understand how fan-