

A SHOW OF HANDS

Fall 2020

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Clearing the Clutter

The Psychology of Place Inside and Out

Shirley Vanderbilt

What's cluttering your life? Is it the stuff in the corner of the bedroom, or the stuff in the corner of your mind? What are you tolerating that keeps you from expressing your true self? Authors Bruce and Lou Stewart say that clutter--both in our environment and our mind--is stagnating, blocking the free-flow of energy, or chi, in our homes and lives. Whether we're detouring around a box in the living room or repeating a negative pattern in our head, it's time to clear the path.

In their new book, "Your Way Home--The Psychology of Place Inside and Out," the Stewarts present a unique approach to clutter-clearing by combining Lou's expertise in feng shui

bring balance between the inner and outer sanctums by clarifying our core, or essential self, and allowing our environment to reflect and support our core values.

Making the Connection

When the Stewarts first blended their feng shui and NLP skills together in workshop presentations, they noticed it was easier for people to clear their environment when they were connected to their core.

"It really is a cycle," Lou says. "The environment and our core are reflections of one another. When we know our core, it's much easier to

*Perseverance is
stubbornness
with a
purpose.*

-Josh Shipp



Clearing space--inside and out--can help us get in touch with our core selves.

with Bruce's mastery of neurolinguistic programming (NLP). While feng shui has to do with external placement and structure, NLP is a psychological approach that addresses our internal structure of mind, body, emotion, and spirit. With feng shui, we can free energy flow by rearranging the room; with NLP tools, we can do the same thing with our mind. The goal is to

understand our environment." But it's a chicken and egg thing, actually. Either one can work as a start.

Also a bodyworker, Lou says, "What feng shui and NLP do for the body's environment is so similar to what a massage will do for the body, flushing

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Office Hours and Contact

HAND & HAND Mobile Massage
Tom Saulnier - CMT, ZBT
805-501-2011
handnhand5@yahoo.com
www.handnhand.biz
Mon. - Sat., By Appointment

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the system of blockages. When I go through a person's home or office, what I'm doing is very similar to when I first put my hands on a client." In the process of combing through to find blockages in the environment, she will ask the client about particular objects. "Nine out of 10 times it is incongruent with who they want to be right now. They've gotten numb to it, and it sticks out just like a knot in a muscle. The energy is different."

NLP recognizes that each of us has developed our own individual style of communicating and processing information which results in the patterning in our brain and the ways in which we express ourselves through language and body movement. Sometimes our set patterns do not support who we are at our essential core, but we can change that. Through the core work of NLP exercises, Bruce says, you can discover what you truly identify with and have a better understanding of yourself. At that point, you may find that your goals for your life have changed. It's this clarity of sense of self that is essential to creating an environment that supports and nourishes who you are and what you value in life.

You don't have to be trained in feng shui or have a personal consultant to implement the concepts of this ancient art, nor is an NLP practitioner required to help you find your core. Throughout their book, the Stewarts offer practical exercises for applying the principles of NLP and feng shui to begin the clearing process. "In feng shui, when the chi of an environment is balanced, it allows the movement of the occupant to be well supported, just like when circulation is pumping well and is unclogged," Lou says. "With NLP, it's the same thing -- running through patterns in the mind, flushing out old phobias and patterns that are either negative or destructive."

Ready to Start?

If you're ready to start clearing out the clutter, there are some simple ways to begin. The Stewarts define clutter as "anything you no longer use, love, or need." So if you don't use it, but still love it, keep it. Keep your target areas small, and limit the time you spend at the task to avoid feeling overwhelmed. And as you examine your "stuff,"

consider how it fits with your core, your essential self. Does it support who you are at this moment, or is it a reflection of something in the past you're ready to release? Is the item pleasing to your senses? What fits with your individual way of experiencing the world?

"If you're particularly visual and like arts and crafts, you feel more comfortable with that around," Bruce says. "Someone who is very kinesthetic may not care how it looks but will want the chair to be comfortable."

Once the path is cleared, you can use the principles of feng shui to further enhance harmony and positive flow in your life. But the process involves more than hanging a mirror or installing a water fountain. As with NLP, it has to do with our core self and our intention. "Where attention goes, the energy flows. That's what it boils down to," Lou says.

"As we focus our intentions, then our conscious and subconscious mind can connect, and when they connect with our body and our emotions and our spiritual core, then the intention is strengthened significantly." Think of it as a vinyl record with no grooves. "There's no music," she adds. "What our intentions do is they create that pathway on the record. So then we have the choice: Are we going to make it a smooth groove or a bumpy groove? Intention is our tool."

Bodywork is the perfect complement for this process, helping to center, ground, and clear the body and mind. Clearing the clutter helps you excavate your true self and the person you want to become.

For more information on clearing the clutter, contact Lou and Bruce Stewart at info@louandbruce.com or visit their website at www.louandbruce.com.



Using feng shui in your home can facilitate a tranquil environment and a calm mind.

Healthy Energy Boosters

Tips to Staying Energized and Alert

Rebecca Jones

Here are some tips for keeping your energy levels up.

Snack Smart

Strategic snacking can be a good way to smooth out dips in your energy level and avoid hunger cravings that can lead you to overeat. Go ahead and snack---just be as choosy in your snack selection as you are in meal planning.

Grab an Energy Bar

Don't fall for the fiction that all so-called "energy bars" are unpalatable but good for you. A lot of energy bars are filled with chemicals and with sugar, so read labels, and look for high fiber, high protein, and limited carbs.

Pick-Me-Up Snacks

Nuts such as almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, and hazelnuts are among the best choices for healthy, pick-me-up snacks, nutritionists say.

Stay Hydrated

Even slight dehydration can leave you

tired and lethargic. The answer is, of course, to drink plenty of water. If the taste of plain water doesn't excite you, consider some of the flavored varieties, keeping in mind that loads of extra sugar should be avoided.

Get Your Beauty Sleep

The number one myth about sleep is that you can get by on six hours a night, but the further away you deviate from getting eight hours sleep a night---and some people get too much, not too little---the greater the risk of cardiovascular disease, depression, obesity, and a host of other maladies.

Avoid Caffeine, Get to Sleep

Caffeine is a great pick-me-up first thing in the morning, but it has a six- to seven-hour "half-life," meaning that half the caffeine in that cup of coffee you consumed to ward off the 3:00 p.m. doldrums will still be lingering in your bloodstream after the 10:00 p.m. news.

Rebecca Jones is a Denver-based freelance writer.



Stay hydrated to keep energy up.

Easing Holiday Angst

Five Stress Busters for a Joyous Season

You enter the holiday season with the best of intentions -- looking forward to time spent with family and friends, decorating, shopping, baking. But as soon as you pile holiday activities on top of an already busy life, you're likely to find yourself relating more to Ebenezer Scrooge than Martha Stewart.

Consider these five suggestions to keep holiday stress at bay:

1. DETERMINE A SHOPPING BUDGET

For many, gift giving is an important part of the holidays, serving as a way to express love and appreciation for friends and family. But when the credit card bills arrive in January, you may discover you've extended your holiday stress well into the New Year. Plan your budget in advance, determine what you can spend, and stick to the plan.

2. CREATE A TIME BUDGET

Many will make a shopping budget, but what about making a time budget? Before accepting every invitation this year, decide ahead how many parties you can and want to attend while maintaining your sanity. Make choices about your time commitments based on what you'd really like to do this year, rather than what you think you should do or what you've always done. Don't forget to leave time for yourself.

3. SET FOOD-INTAKE BOUNDARIES

You'll likely be tempted to eat in excess, and don't be too hard on yourself if you don't stick to your pre-holiday eating standards. But do decide ahead of time just how much you'll deviate from your eating routine.

4. STICK TO YOUR EXERCISE REGIMEN

Regular exercise is a powerful stress buster. You'll feel better, sleep better, avoid weight gain, boost your immune system, and maintain a positive outlook about yourself. While it may seem like an easy time concession to make, don't give in to the idea. Stick to exercise, and you'll thank yourself for it.

5. TAKE TIME TO REST

Take time from your schedule to honor the cycles of the season. The holidays fall during winter solstice -- the shortest day of the year. Learn from nature, and get plenty of rest.

*If you are going
through hell,
keep going.*

-Winston Churchill

Welcome to "MASSAGE U."

Today's Subject: A Brave New World - Pt 2: The New Face of Massage

As communities (again) begin to re-open, the landscape for massage will look different. New protocols, implemented to keep all of us safe, are:

* Updates to Health/Consent Forms relating to COVID-19

* Use of No-Touch Thermal screening

* Use of Face Masks/Hand Sanitizer

Unfortunately, Outcall Massage is still prohibited as long as Covid is in our communities. Until then, continue with your mental and physical well-being at home and work and stay safe. I look forward to seeing you soon!

Note: The preceding information is not medical advice. Please check with your doctor prior to starting any new health, exercise or nutrition plan - especially if currently under a doctor's care or if you have any pre-existing medical condition(s).

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1464 Madera Road N-251

Simi Valley, CA 93065



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