

ALIGN YOUR LIFE

The Perfect Living Room

I HAVE RECEIVED many emails requesting tips on how to furnish a living room through Feng Shui. And so the focus of today's column will be on how can you invite good energy into your living room. Nothing is more relaxing than coming home from work and unwinding in the calm oasis of your living room. Specific designs in your personal space will influence your wellbeing and health in a positive way. But wrong layouts may also result in imbalance and disharmony.

Your living room is a centrifugal point in your family's life. It's the most used part of home; you gather as a family for meals, watch television or entertain friends. So let's start with some basics. Unwanted items, clutter and mess should be avoided. This will allow positive energy to circulate through the room. It is very important to pick your living room furniture in proportion to the size of the room. Maintain open areas and do not block the windows with oversized cabinets or dark curtains. If your living room is square shaped, then keep the layout simple and open. If your living room is L shaped, then symbolically separate the living room in two square sections by using plants, divider screens or colours.

Lights play a very important role in Feng Shui. Invite as much natural light as possible, to help create yang or active energy. Your light fixtures need to be simple yet powerful. Display plants in corners of the living room and by the entrance. It will harmonise the energy flow. Always buy plants that grow upwards to depict growth. Pick a yang or active colour for your living room walls to enhance positive energy. Colours such as red, violet, green and blue are highly recommended for the living room. However it is advisable to paint only a section of the living room with bright colours or else the your living room will have excess energy leading to imbalance. Do not display rows of shoes at the entrance of your living room.

The living room is an ideal place to display the television or music system. Ensure the size of the television is in proportion to your living room. Place a small water fountain or fish aquarium by an open window to create positive energy. If you have a beautiful view from your living room, display a mirror opposite the window to attract the view in your home. Display paintings of beautiful scenery or hang happy family photographs. Light scented candles or incense from time to time to clean the energy. Having a Feng Shui friendly living room is the key to happy family gatherings all year round. Look around your living room and start rearranging now...

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Minimal exercise a big boost

EVEN A BIT of exercise can deliver a mental health boost to obese teenagers, says a new study.

"The first thing I tell teenagers and parents struggling with their weight in my practice is to throw away the scale," said Gary Goldfield, researcher at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) Research Institute. "These kids face enough challenges with bullying and peer pressure today! This new study is proof positive that even a modest dose of exercise is prescriptive for a mental health boost," Goldfield was quoted in the Journal of Paediatric Psychology.

Being obese at any age is tied with diabetes and chronic fatigue to heart complications. Overweight adolescents are also at an increased risk of body dissatisfaction, social

alienation and low self esteem, according to a Children's Hospital statement.

Goldfield, also associate professor of paediatrics at University of Ottawa, conducted the study with a group of adolescents aged 12-17 years who were required to undertake lab based sessions of stationary cycling twice weekly to music of their own choice or to an interactive video game for a 10-week trial. All exercise was supervised and performed at light to moderate intensity. The music or interactive video game was used as a form of distraction from any perceived discomfort during the exercise, but participants could stop at their own choice at any time during a 60-minute session.

Although few physical differences emerged between the exercise groups over time,



the teenagers did self-report improvements in perceived

scholastic competence, social competence, and several markers of body image including appearance esteem and weight esteem. "We're talking about psychological benefits derived from improved fitness resulting from modest amount of aerobic exercise - not a change in weight or body fat," continued Goldfield.

"If you can improve your physical activity and fitness even minimally, it can help improve your mental health. By teaching kids to focus on healthy active lifestyle behaviours, they are focusing on something they can control," concluded Goldfield.



Supta-Vajrasana (Reclining Vajrasana)

"SUPTA" MEANS "ASLEEP" in Sanskrit. "Supta-Vajrasana" is lying down supine in Vajrasana. Supta Vajrasana is another posture of Vajrasana. The literal meaning of word Supta is lying down or resting. Begin with simple Vajrasana posture and then bend backward.

TECHNIQUE

- Sit in Vajrasana.
- Lean back slowly from the waist with the support of your elbows till your head, shoulders and back touch the ground in easy stages without raising your knees from the floor or changing the position of the legs.
- Allow your back to come close to the ground and lie supine.
- Cross the arms and place the palms beneath the opposite shoulders so that the crossed wrists serve as a cushion for the head.
- Keep the knees together and touching the ground.
- Close your eyes.
- Catch holds of the ankles and



return slowly to the starting position in the reverse order with the help of the elbows.

BENEFITS

- All the benefits of Vajrasana accrue from this asana also.
- The importance of Supta-Vajrasana lies in the fact that it exerts pressure on the uterine-abdominal and genitourinary organs. This gives a better muscular tone and brings in a fresh supply of blood to the abdominal viscera, particularly

to the kidneys, liver, pancreas and bowels.

- It stimulates the adrenal glands through pressure in the small of the back.
- In the final position, the muscles of the spine, abdomen, pelvis, thighs and legs are stretched fully which tones them up.
- It improves circulation of blood in the thighs, backside, knees and neck.
- The asana expands the chest and increases the mobility of

the thorax.

CAUTION

- People with knee, hip or shoulder injury should avoid this pose.
 - There should never be more than normal pressure on the back, arms, and the ankle joints while doing this exercise.
 - Avoid this Asana if you have asthma.
- Sumit Manav, Lifestyle Yoga (info@lifestyleyoga.ae)*

