



## **Nine Tips to Build Your Emotional Home**

Our homes – the sacred space that houses our body – the temple of our souls. How important it is for us to pay attention to this environment that so richly influences our soul's journey. No two homes are the same and no two people are the same, so how can we expect a "one-size-fits-all" solution to create the perfect place to enrich our lives, house our dreams, and feed body, mind and spirit?

Through the many years of interior design, I've worked with thousands of individuals in their homes, and there are a few guidelines that help each to develop a place that "feels like home" – giving shelter, security, and safety to the body while nurturing the soul.

Please always use your common sense and trust your intuition to guide you through the process.

Our homes first need to be functional for all who live there, otherwise there will be discord in our daily lives.

Second, orderliness plays a major role. The frustration of trying to find something upsets the energy of the individual looking for it as well as the other people's energy that are near. Plus this frustration is dispersed throughout the building as this disconcerting energy perpetuates itself and permeates the rooms. It doesn't have to be "white-glove clean," just try to have a place for everything and everything in its place as much of the time as you can.

Third, make it beautiful. Remember, beauty lies in the eye of the beholder. Don't rely on your neighbor's suggestions, or a relative's opinion. Their tastes and lifestyle may not necessarily be right for you. That doesn't mean they are right or wrong. It's just their perspective, experience, or education. Sometimes we don't personally have a "good eye" for "how-to-do" something, since we have not been trained in that way. Or maybe we haven't had the opportunity to develop a discerning eye. AND, do start trusting the coincidences of life to draw your attention to the right object at the right price at the right time.

## **Nine Powerful Tips for Creating Your Emotional Home**

**1. Create a beautiful "Ming Tang."** The front exterior of your dwelling is one of the most important areas around your home. It greets you, your family and friends, and attracts energy to your home. We want to have an open space without seeing dead plants, broken toys & furniture, or broken pots, or weeds. Since there is a Universal Law that says, "Like energy attracts like energy," we want to make sure the energy coming to us is fun, loving, peaceful and prosperous. We can attract those qualities in many ways – lovely gardens with beautiful plants, special lighting (we want to attract energy even at night), the sounds of birds at a bird feeder or birdbath, the sight & sound of water from a fountain, waterfall or pond, fragrances of lavender or citrus, a clean or freshly painted front door with a great handle, a "welcome" mat, and possibly a statue of your favorite animal or spiritual icon.

**2. Enter through the front door and embrace the energy that greets you.** As soon as you walk into your home, you start to absorb the energy of your house. What greets you inside the door is just as important as what greeted you outside your house. Things like piles of shoes, overloaded coat racks, the last week's worth of mail and "free" newspapers all drain your energy. And don't think if you don't use your front door since you enter via the garage that you are immune from this situation. In fact, both the front entrance and your garage entrance will have a negative effect on your psyche. Walking through the toxic energy created by cars, cleaning products, clutter, or clothes washers & dryers, all weigh on our health and emotional well-being.

**3. Sit at the back of your house and "feel" if you are supported.** Our homes support our hopes and dreams, but what is supporting your home? When you become aware of the deeper meaning of your homes and how they are very much like our bodies, we realize the building needs back support. Having a solid wall rather than a wall of glass along the backyard section of your house will create a greater sense of security. If you have a lot of glass, place potted plants or pieces of furniture along the wall wherever possible. Designing a raised flowerbed along the back fence or placing decorative boulders in the center of the back portion of your yard will also strengthen your "backing."

**4. Acknowledge the active areas in your surroundings.** We want and need a sense of life in our lives – a sense of active growth. Seeing nature growing and blossoming gives us hope for a better life. There is a vitality present in the strength of evergreen trees, outdoor kitchens and eating areas, and play areas for children or pets. Watching wildlife, if you are lucky enough to live in an area that has wildlife, can be both stimulating and soothing.

**5. Create a haven for the spirit.** Just as we want to have the sense of "activity" around us, we need restful spaces and areas to contemplate life. If you are

fortunate to have a separate bedroom to use as your “haven,” consider yourself a lucky person. If not, here are a few thoughts. Is there a secluded location in your yard to sit or in which to create a “secret garden?” Could you place a chair in a corner and hide it from view with a screen or curtain? Maybe there is a shelf in a bookcase that could be cleared to place objects that have special meaning to you. If even that is challenging for you, find a wall and at least one picture that “nurtures your soul.”

**6. Develop a “heart” in your home.** I find many homes are missing the feeling of warmth, caring, love, and nurturing – qualities we associate with the meaning of home. It used to be the hearth of the home was the “heart “ of the home – a place to get warm, get food, and get clear about life through sharing and talking. Now we often look at the kitchen to “house” these needs, but there is still more we want to achieve through the creation of “heart.” We want a location in the home that is special – quiet, cared for, sacred. Not a place where knives are sharpened and mail dropped and piled high. Can you find a location toward the center of your home where you can place a bowl, a vase, or some kind object that you feel is beautiful and commands respect? Those are the qualities of the object and the space we want. Often it is a shrine, altar, niche, or shelf in a china cabinet with an item you found in “that little shop when I was in \_\_\_\_\_” that adds this soulful vibration to your home.

**7. Explore the colors to enrich your life.** There is a whole psychology in the use of colors. Blue is cooling, while red is warm. Colors that are cheerful, stimulating and promote activity (and productivity) are your “sunshine” colors of orange, yellow and combinations of these with more red in them. They are the colors that make people feel “grounded” or more “down-to-earth,” that’s why they are often good for areas in which to study. Blues and blue-greens (teal, turquoise) have a calming effect plus are associated with learning and knowledge. Purples tend to make people lean toward the spiritual side of life and bring in the “riches of life.” Greens have to do with growth of all kinds – great for growing businesses and family; pink can be a great color to nurture and promote healing, as it is a color of compassion and love.

**8. Wizardry on walls** – what magic is hidden in your artwork? I have found a correlation between empty walls and an emptiness in the emotional connection to our homes. We don’t have to have every wall filled with pictures and artwork; in fact, those homes have no “breathing room” – no breath of fresh air, so to speak. We have this incredible opportunity to place meaningful items all around us, and our walls afford us a large palette on which to convey our hopes, dreams, and express our deeper inner-self. Placing the picture of an eagle soaring high in the sky allows us to soar to new heights, a koala bear suggests hugs, and whales mean wisdom, while dolphins exude joy and the breath of life. Flowers and plants have symbolic meaning as well. Peonies represent love, yet the walnut tree represents “taking the road less traveled.”

**9. Water as Life** – Since our body's content is mainly water, we have a great affinity for it. We need it to live – drinking it, bathing with it, and growing our food with it. It soothes us when we see, hear or touch it. Having it in the form of pictures of lakes, oceans, streams, or waterfalls gives us a sense of serenity. Actually seeing the movement of it relaxes us. When we see fish in an aquarium, they have both a soothing and hypnotic effect on our spirit. Having a water feature on desks in offices has been documented to reduce stress levels. The anxiety often associated with any medical or health related issue is often minimized through the strategic placement of a fountain, fishbowl, or aquarium. To promote health, wealth and sense of well-being, judiciously integrate water pictures and features throughout your home so you can experience a happy, long, and prosperous life.

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