

Clarity in Feng Shui

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LITCHFIELD — Diane Hiller has spent her lifetime in service to others, but in recent years, her service has taken a new direction by helping others through mediumship and practicing the far Eastern art of Feng Shui.

She has formed a new business, Elemental Empowerments LLC, headquartered at 82B Meadow St. in Litchfield, where she maintains a cozy, welcoming office. Here, she meets and greets her clients, offering a cup of tea and sage advice for enhancing one's living space or connecting with a departed family member or friend.

Hiller started off as a licensed practical nurse. After 13 years, she decided to pursue a different path, graduating from UConn with a B.A. in psychology and later, an M.A. in social work. She found herself in the Waterbury school system as a crisis intervention specialist, then worked in the judicial system as a family intervention specialist. That job led to her stint in the state Department of Children and Families, where she remained for 15 years.

In 2005, Hiller decided to foster her interest in all things spiritual. In her childhood, she recalls seeing spirits and having precognitive dreams, an ability she says was inherited from her mother. In particular, she remembers having a premonition of President John F. Kennedy's funeral.

However, with the constraints of religion, and the judgment of peers, she suppressed the expression of her abilities until well into adulthood.

"I found myself looking for the deeper meaning of life," she said.

Hiller began that quest soon after, when she bought a home in Litchfield, and an acquaintance gave her a book on Feng Shui, the practice of correcting and optimizing the energy of a home.

This sparked Hiller's interest in eastern and western philosophies and led her to a west-coast conference featuring Yogi Bajan, whose mantra, "See God in all," further spurred her to follow this path.

While at the conference, Hiller had a Kundalini experience, which opened her to mediumship and left her with an insatiable curiosity for metaphysical topics, she said. She embraced the abilities she had suppressed as a child, and began doing readings part-time. She also decided to delve deeply into Feng Shui, enrolling in a program given by His Holiness Thomas Lin Yun, a Tibetan Buddhist Feng Shui master, and graduated as a Feng Shui master herself, in 2007.

Feng Shui is a traditional Chinese system for obtaining and correcting for optimal energy or the flow of chi in a



Photo by Catherine Guarnieri

Diane Hiller opened a new business practicing the art of feng shui.

building, or any piece of real estate. In Asia, Feng Shui masters are regularly consulted before purchasing property, and after purchase, for directing the placement of buildings, and the configuration of a building's interior. The practice has, in recent years, made its way to the western world, with clients such as Disneyworld and Donald Trump utilizing the services of a Feng Shui specialist.

There are two schools of Feng Shui: the Compass School, which uses the cardinal directions as a starting point for correcting the energy of a location, and the Chi School, which relies on the characteristics of nine areas in the home and correcting the flow of energy in each of those areas so that they work harmoniously.

Despite the difference in methodology, Hiller says that both ultimately make the same conclusions. The Chi School, however, is much more detailed. Hiller is of the Chi School and has a remedy for nearly every poorly planned and flawed area of a home.

"The only areas that can't be corrected are homes built on top of burial grounds, or where some catastrophic event or mass death has occurred," Hiller said. "For instance, Sandy Hook. That will never be right."

When Hiller examines a home for areas that need correction, she looks at its nine energy centers, or baguas, an arrangement of eight divisions around a ninth central space. These coincide with different aspects of a person's life,

and include: career, knowledge or spirit, family, wealth, reputation, female relations or marriage/relationships, children and creativity, male benefactors, and at the center, tai chi, or health, balance and vitality.

Each bagua also has an associated color and element that can either be enhanced or destroyed by what happens to be in it. For instance, a fireplace on the wall to the right of a home's entrance is something that needs correction, as this area is the creativity area, and associated with metal. Fire destroys metal and will destroy creative abilities.

A better place, in Feng Shui cosmology, would be across from the entrance, on the far wall, which is a fire area, and appropriate for a fireplace, according to Hiller.

When asked if interior designers ever utilized her services, Hiller quickly replied, "No, but they probably should!"

In order to correct the energy flow of a space, Hiller has a variety of tools and methodologies at her disposal. She may recommend changing the function of a room, or if that is not possible in the case of a kitchen or bathroom, she will utilize mirrors, crystals, stones, plants and color to correct a wayward energy flow.

She then "empowers" the corrections, meaning she gives the correction a blessing to restart the flow of chi in the right direction, akin to a reset button. The empowerments are done on

auspicious days significant to the inhabitant of the dwelling, based on Chinese astrology.

Once the corrections and empowerments are done, significant improvements are rapid and often life-changing, Hiller said. She points to herself as an example.

"Once I completed the empowerments in my own house, everything changed," she said. "It was quick. We're talking a matter of weeks."

That change spurred her to quit her job at DCF, embrace her new endeavor wholeheartedly and pursue a spiritual mode of business full-time.

"The external pressure of my work environment, and the internal pressure of a conflicting directive became so great that I was forced to make a decision — stay or go," she explained. "I left and never looked back. No regrets."

These days, Hiller spends her days improving her spiritual awareness with meditation and other methods, collaborating with like-minded people, and putting her talents into action. Her services include Feng Shui consultations and drawing up floor plans, Feng Shui classes, energy clearings and blessings of homes, spirit circles and group readings, mediumship readings and life coaching.

She also is trying her hand at writing, composing a meditational poem for "365 Days of Angel Prayers," and writing an article and poem published in BelleSprit magazine. She has also garnered several honors, voted one of America's top mediums (No. 16) by The American Federation of Certified Psychics, Mediums and Healers, and featured in "The 100 Top Psychics and Astrologers in America," by Paulette Cooper and Paul Noble, accolades she is both humbled and delighted with.

Asked about her mediumship services, Hiller says she is merely a vessel for departed spirits to communicate with loved ones. She hosts small groups for this special connection and says "smaller is better." She says she does not want it to become "entertainment," though she greatly respects mediums such as John Edward and James van Praagh.

For the future, Hiller says she would like to continue to write, develop her business and continue expanding her spirituality.

"I'd really like to make the profession more credible and valuable to people," she said. "Maybe even work with scientists. Everything is energy, and energy can be measured. So why not?"

For more information on Elemental Empowerments and Diane Hiller's services, visit www.elementalempowerments.com.



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