

Interior Design of a Health Education Building

Juanita S. Johnson

PURPOSE

In this unit, the students will create an interior design for a health education center. They will use the existing interior space of a building and redesign its interior space using feng shui. The design must accommodate a number of special health needs and utilize the Feng Shui style. The entire project will incorporate the core subjects – math, science, social studies, and language arts – for as the students create their design, they will be utilizing aspects of these four subjects. This unit is ideal for Career and Technology Education (CATE) for interior design is a career and designing a health center utilizes technology. This unit is also ideal for a Small Learning Community (SLC) for the students will work on this project in the four core subjects as well as in Interior Design.

Although numerous SLCs could benefit from this unit, it is primarily designed for the Health and Human Services SLC, which emphasizes and utilizes concepts from Family and Consumer Science curriculum materials, as well as health courses. Family and Consumer Science (FCS) falls under the umbrella of the Career and Technology Education (CATE) system, which comprises all vocational education courses. FSC, previously Home Economics, includes the following concepts, all of which can be touched upon in this curriculum unit: child development, nutrition and food science, personal and family development, housing, interior design, consumerism, clothing and textiles, family living.

OBJECTIVE

The overall goal of this project is to completely refurbish a structure, utilizing feng shui, to meet the special health needs of specific health problems. The students will determine the health needs common to the community through Internet research, personal interviews, and inquiries of government agencies. The students will conduct a search for an appropriate building through community contacts, media search, and Internet search. They will go through the process of purchasing the building. They will determine the purposes for various aspects of the interior design. They will identify the health needs of the community by conducting research and interviews. After the health issues are determined, researched, and discussed, plans will be put into place to address these needs through a cost-effective, harmoniously designed dwelling in the Feng Shui style. The students must determine the materials that are needed to complete the design. They must determine the correct measurements for the materials and the correct quantities. The students must determine the social, historical, and political ramifications of the structure. They must research the climatic conditions with relevance to the soil and atmosphere.

The project is designed for a period of four years or a complete high school experience. Various phases of the project will be completed each year, with detailed documentation by teachers and participating students. This unit, though, pertains to the interior designing phase, and it focuses on designing the interior space of the health education facility using the Feng Shui style. Consequently, the students will learn about the Feng Shui style of design, and they will use what they have learned to create a model of the interior of a health education facility.

FENG-SHUI BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Houston has undergone numerous changes due to a variety of financial and changes. Its architecture should reflect the diverse heritage of its citizens. High school students should be encouraged to develop awareness as well as appreciation for their rich heritage and the heritage of their fellow citizens. Interior Design and Architecture goes hand and hand with cultural awareness and appreciation. There are many culturally distinct styles of interior design. One of these designs is Feng Shui, which simply means the way of wind and water. This phenomenon has been around for centuries; however, many were unaware of its impact.

According to Jenny Liu, Feng Shui is a philosophy that creates an environment, which is ergonomic; it allows one to work efficiently, comfortably, and successfully by following the patterns of nature. In Feng Shui, a house is designed to fit the body comfortably, oriented to allow the body to take in vital energy or (*qi*) so that it can function effectively. Feng Shui is an ancient Chinese art and science first developed some 6,000 years ago. It is a system based on keen observation and experimentation combining elements of astronomy, astrology, geology, physics, mathematics, philosophy, and intuition. It is the study of the environment, places, people, time, and how the energies (*qi*) of each interact. It is practice of understanding and harnessing these confluent forces of energy to benefit one's well being. Modern Feng Shui is plagued with misconceptions. These misconceptions include the use of mirrors, crystals, and red envelopes. Statements like "wind chimes bring good luck" are not true. These popular assumptions can make the practice seem like a fad reserved for the eccentric. In fact, Feng Shui interior design is a distinguished style of design that incorporates various factors.

INTERIOR DESIGN BACKGROUND

To achieve a physiological level of clarity and performance, one must have an environment away from the demands and chaos of the everyday world where rejuvenation, energy building, and clarity can be experienced. Many are of the opinion that this state of clarity is only imminent on a vacation in Hawaii or some similar place. Unfortunately this state of clarity is only temporary. The highest level of being that one seeks must be nurtured on a daily basis in an environment without stress, tension, and conflict. A successful environment for nurturing one's level of clarity and performance will be calming, uplifting, and healing.

Susan Fruit Draughton suggests that through the centuries, certain scientific principles and elements of design have evolved, through the timeless coexistence of art and the universe. When man learned to co-exist in harmony with nature and the environment, towns developed, commerce was created, and people survived and prospered. Architecture as an art form emerged as early primitive shelters gave way to dignified, permanent structures blending the best of both art and science. Thus arose distinctive design motifs and style characteristics, which would define major architectural style and periods, as well as influence all art, architecture and design for more than 2,000 years.

From the early years of our country's founding through its emergence as a world power, the ultimate benchmark by which a person's intellectual acumen, social status, and professional success was judged has been by one's choice of personal dwelling and the statement made by its architectural style, the graciousness of its interior proportions and the exquisiteness of its detailing and appointments. This "benchmark of success" is still very much with us today.

In twenty-first century design terms, this architectural design statement translates into three categories, or dimensions, of an interior space designer's use today to create beautiful living environments. The three dimensions of interior space are based on the principles and elements of design that the ancient Greeks discovered more than 2,000 years ago. These principles were used to create their magnificent architectural structures, which are universally acknowledged as models of excellence, in classical proportion and scale. These rules of correct proportioning and spatial divisions have guided artists, architects and designers through the centuries and today, form the basis for all well planned and well-executed room designs. They directly influence all furniture arrangements, drapery treatments, fabric selection, color distribution, accessorizing, plus other design components that professional designers use on a daily basis to create rooms of distinction and beauty. The three dimensions of beauty described by Draughton are:

1. The frame of reference: the architectural envelope.
2. Contrived space: the two-thirds/one-third proportional division of space with a room. This is where furniture arrangements are created.
3. Integral space: the intimate space within the two-thirds/one-third spatial division. This is where accessory treatments and room details flourish.

PLANNING

Elizabeth Harger, in her article "Theory of Evolution in Interior Design," states that there are many theories of decorating. The good one always advises having a master plan. Unfortunately there are those who go with the thought "when in doubt – don't." She suggests that these individuals pretend their rooms will simply evolve on their own. There are too many missing links when this type of activity or non-activity takes place.

She further believes in specific intent and in the realm of interior design that means having a master plan. A master plan which takes into consideration the physical attributes and/or challenges, individual personality, lifestyle, and memories and elevates them out of a primordial soup mix to create an interior that is true environment, a wonderfully unique expression of the user.

This curriculum unit is designed to incorporate means of dealing with ways in which interior design is dictated by special health needs of individuals. There is a misconception within the design field that addresses the ultimate design solution. The design does not come first. The operational function and the culture of an organization come first. It is the responsibility of the designer or architect to understand the culture of an organization or individual. It is also necessary to recognize that when an organization or individual has a view of what they would like to have as a culture for their dwelling that this may not be a reality.

Designing for Those with Disabilities in Mind

For most people, a home is more than a building; it is a state of mind, an expression of personality, and the one place where it is possible simply to be. The types of homes in which people live reflect their tastes and priorities. Finding the right house or apartment requires attention to a myriad of details: price range, location, aesthetics, overall floor space, the number of bedrooms, and more. People with disabilities face the same considerations, but as important as they are, they are overshadowed by the need for housing in which to live their lives as independently as possible.

If a house is inadequate for the needs of the people living in it, it never quite becomes a home. For people with disabilities, a dwelling must be fully accessible to become a home. Whether or not a home is accessible depends upon the nature and extent of one's disability. As a practical matter, an accessible home is one which enables an individual to do what he or she needs to do and desires to do as independently as possible. For some, access may be as simple as adding grab bars and a tub seat in the bathroom. For wheelchair users, access may require ramping entrances, widening doorways, lowering counters, adding lever or loop-style hardware to doors and drawers, and modifying storage areas.

Individuals with sensory disabilities also require accessible housing, although their needs are different from those of people with mobility disabilities. Individuals with hearing disabilities require visual adaptations for such items as the telephone ringer, the doorbell, and smoke alarms. People who are blind may require tactile markings or changes in floor level and stair edges and Braille markings on appliances and controls. People with low vision may be accommodated with large print markings and displays, contrasting colors to distinguish changes in level or transition for one area to another, proper lighting, and reduced glare from lighting and windows.

Because the requirements of accessibility vary so widely, several terms have become widely used. Accessible design generally refers to houses or other dwellings that meet specific requirements for accessibility. These requirements are found in state, local, and model building codes, and regulations such as the Fair Housing Amendments of 1988. These laws dictate standards dimensions and characteristics for such features as door widths, clear space for wheelchair mobility, audible and visual signals, grab bars, switch and outlet height and more. The accessibility standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulate the accessibility of public buildings and facilities.

Adaptable design allows some features of a dwelling to be changed to meet the needs of a person with a disability. Essential design elements such as wider doorways and halls and barrier-free entrances are included as integral features, while provisions are made to allow other features to be added as needed. To qualify as “adaptable,” it must be possible for changes to be made quickly, without the use of skilled labor and without changing the inherent structure or materials. Adaptable design allows the house or apartment to meet the specific needs of the user, while maintaining the appearance of the dwelling until more obvious accessibility features are needed.

INTERIOR DESIGN RELATED TO HEALTH PROBLEMS

Recent studies have indicated that the immediate environment has a definite impact on recuperation as well as the overall state of mind of persons suffering from various illnesses. While health providers are preparing ways to cut costs, technological efforts are continuing to search for new methods of healing and preventive care. Some strategies are easily understood and implemented while the complexity of others is astounding. One such example deals with children with serious health problems. When children require hospitalization, a new phenomenon is introduced to the child who creates fear and frustration. In many instances, those providing services as well as service recipients are oblivious of this impact. The new environment (hospital room) can sooth these anxieties by presenting characteristics familiar and conducive to the child while providing health services. Color has proven to affect one’s mood as well as the size of furniture and furnishings. Adults as well as children react to their immediate surroundings. Alexander Stoddard in her book *The Decoration of Houses* indicates symmetry and grace as primary aspects of a dwelling. Although these dwellings may be temporary, one’s state of mind has a definite impact on healing. Stoddard also suggests that the designed space must function well for its purposes and be appropriate to the activities carried out in each area. Space should be arranged and used as individually as planned diets because it will be nourished or malnourished to the degree of care shown or ignored of its importance to space.

Denise Linn in her book *Feng Shui* proposes one’s home has an enormous impact on their state of mind. Persons can feel as though they are plunging into the depths of despair or being lifted to havens of beauty and rejuvenation. Linn also believes that the soul yearns for places of sanctuary and balance, places that provide authentic reminders

of what is truly important in life. It longs for dwellings that are in harmony with the cycles of nature; places of kindness, compassion and wisdom are cherished. These characteristics are important for effective and long lasting healing to take place.

Linn defines *soul* as:

A word used to describe the central or integral part of something; it is the vital core. In its most profound sense, it also describes the essence of every being. It is that place within each of us that is infinite, eternal and universal. The soul is an enigma, a part of what Native Americans call the Great Mystery, which is the creative force underlying the universe. It is a source that gives rise to form; yet it also must be nourished and cared for. We can intuitively understand what its needs are, yet never fathom its depths. It is the substance within us that links our body and spirit to the greater forces of the cosmos.

She further advocates four simple techniques that can be used in a space to connect to the sacred element of one's life. These four requirements are as follows: a sense of belonging, a feeling of security, harmony with nature, and sacred space.

A Sense of Belonging

A sense of belonging indicates that in order for the soul to feel balanced and happy, it is essential to find a place on the planet where one feels truly at home. One's home should give a sense of belonging and provide a context for interpreting life experiences. It should be a reference place that is looked forward to returning to, an anchoring point from which to venture into the world, and a place known where the heart resides. To gain a sense of belonging to a place, it is essential to 'ground' oneself.

A Feeling of Security

When creating a home for your soul, it is vital to make it a place that feels truly safe. It should be a place where safety is as important as emotional security. The soul needs a place to explore what one is and what they might become, a place one can be creative and outrageous or quiet and still. Most people feel secure in an environment that truly reflects who they are. Just as an ill-fitting shoe cripples the ability to walk freely and comfortably, a home that does not express one's true nature will restrict the ability to reach into the deepest corners of oneself to explore one's potential. A secure home specifically provides a firm launching pad from which to leap toward aspirations, while providing a safety net that can always be depended on when things don't turn out exactly the way imagined.

Harmony with Nature

Nature nourished the soul. Homes will either separate from nature or connect to it. A home for the soul will include tangible links to the world of nature – things seen, heard, smelled, tasted, and touched that remind one of the sky above and the earth below. The natural world around us is composed of swirling vortices of energy, which make up the four elements of the natural world – air, water, fire, and earth. There are simple ways of calling these elements into the home. When this is done, the ignition of the power so nature in the home can strengthen and heal.

Natural objects recall ancestral memories of early times when we all lived close to the land. An example of this concept is that although most modern bathrooms are miles from a river, lake or sea; by placing smooth river stones by a basin or bath can invoke memories of ancient times when people bathed in local streams and rivers. Objects such as these stones can serve as affirmations of the connection with nature. These object also honor the Spirit of Water and its powers of purification. When things from nature are brought into the home, they bring with them the feel of the breeze, which once blew around them, the sun that warmed them, the rich scent of the earth, which supported them.

THE ART OF PUTTERING

The way to transform energy at home and recreate one's everyday life, eliminating frustrations and misunderstandings is to understand the joy of puttering. None of us knows our fate; all we know for certain is our aliveness and how we feel now. There is a little of Thomas Jefferson's spirit in all of us. He wanted Monticello to mirror his soul and spent his entire life creating his mountaintop home as the center point of his happiest days. Here he would farm, invent functional furniture and devices, and when not out riding Old Eagle, he would tinker around the house. He was basically a domestic genius.

Puttering is a way of freeing the spirit so that pleasure is taken in every experience. When one putters, things are done in a desultory way, shifting from one thing to another. The rules of puttering are simply to do whatever you wish to do at the moment. Puttering is not superficial; on the contrary, it is a way to soothe, relax, comfort, and make one feel more at home. Puttering improves out mood and improves the living quarters. Puttering is a way of adding little extra grace notes to whatever is done. Expediency is never thought of when puttering because one is not seeking a means of attaining an end; rather, they are finding imaginative ways to increase their enjoyment in the process. Puttering is one of the greatest tools of self-expression. People aren't working hard at working; they lighten up and brighten up as they improve the home while uplifting their spirits. When one putters, everything is made is theirs because they are not driven to anxiously produce efficiency and practically, but they have the inclination to add personal touches to express something. Puttering's greatest benefit to us is the wide range of options we have in spending time helping ones living area. It is a way to fuel the home with loving energy

and healing. Our home is the greatest nourishment for our soul, sustaining our passionate feelings, providing stimulation to our imagination.

ELEMENTS OF EMOTIONAL COMFORT AT HOME

The individual home is a sacred place. We will be happy at home when we are true to ourselves. Home is fertile ground for us to grow into our essence. There are certain essential elements needed for well-being. Beyond the basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, and the need to love and be loved, we should identify basics that make a house our spiritual center, our true home. When we are able to identify and incorporate these components into our physical surroundings, we will be in closer touch with who we are and what our needs are for our well-being. By identifying these essential elements, students will define their ideal home. They will also be able to determine what is the best way to live under current circumstances and how they can better enjoy being at home.

The elements of emotional comforts at home to be discussed are as follows: positive energy, light, color, a view, privacy, fresh air, nature, and order. All of these elements can be found on the exterior portion of the home as well as the interior. In many of the sites visited throughout the Houston area, the exterior or architectural elements dictated the mood of the interior aspects of the dwelling.

Positive Energy

Every house, apartment, or personal dwelling has an energy, a personality, and integrity. Houses have character, not just in the interior and exterior architecture, but in the ways we use the enjoy them day-to-day. Houses are alive; they breathe the life and health of their inhabitants. Even houses with problems can have positive energy. This is especially true with an antique house. All household labors should be done out of love. One's house should never be a work trap, and the problems encountered, some catastrophic, others heartbreaking, are, properly viewed, part of the blessing derived from having a house felt as a true home.

The optimistic thoughts in our minds and the love in our hearts will give off an ambience that becomes the mood of the house. If you are in a bad mood, it will depress the atmosphere. While no one can maintain a happy, positive attitude all the time, the home should be treated with respect and reverence that honors the dignity of its hallowed four walls. For it is better to go for a walk in the beauty of nature than to become discouraged or overwhelmed about the maintenance of the house. One should think of the home as a place of healing. The most important thing is to take personal responsibility for our own feelings. We have the power to redirect, to re-channel our energy by the thoughts in our minds, no matter what setbacks or disappointments we may face. If one keeps their own energy positive, they are encouraging others to do the same. No matter how others act, you are always in charge of your reactions. No one wants to be around someone who drags them down or in a house that has negative energy. We will be

affected, for better or worse, by the energy of our home and we should try, the best we can, to keep it healthy, life affirming, and loving. We animate our inanimate space with our vital energy. No normal, healthy person stays stuck for long.

Light

Why have modern scientists, until relatively recently, largely ignored the connection between our environment and our behavior, even though we have observed the link between optimum health and our surroundings for thousands of years? We evolved as *Homo sapiens* in the sun. Our physiology and behavior can be looked at from the viewpoint of light. As far back as the second century A.D., doctors prescribed putting people in the warm rays of the sun.

Since the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century, when Westerners turned from the rhythms of nature, we haven't focused on the fact that being inside with the lights on gives us less light than being outside in the rain. One-third of most humans suffer from sleep problems. While there has always been a segment of society who suffered from melancholia and lethargy (and while recognizing that light deprivation is not the sole factor that causes depression), we now know for certain the importance of having more light, especially during the winter months. If one is an active outdoors person, they will benefit from twice as much light as would be derived from a person who is stuck in an office or housebound. An office worker experiences only an average of half an hour or less of sun light each day. Understanding how sensitive one is to light deprivation is a significant step toward living in a more ideal atmosphere at home each day – fall, winter, spring, and summer.

Color

Light is important because it also introduces color. We need light to live but we express ourselves through our personal color preferences. Color and light are wavelengths of energy, revitalizing us each day. Scientists have learned a great deal about the effects of color on our behavior; each of us has favorite colors that have happy associations and other colors that we find depressing. What's right for one person could be all wrong for another because of our personalities, chemical makeup, cultural traditions, and environment.

One should surround himself with favorite colors that have happy associations and can greatly lift personal moods. Painting a bedroom hydrangea blue, for example, can make one feel wonderful every time this space is entered, providing emotional comfort and contentment. In general terms, warm colors – reds, oranges, and yellows – are stimulating; because of their energy, they raise the blood pressure and appetite. When used in the wrong atmosphere they can cause aggression. While blue is a cool color, along with green, it can calm the nerves and lower blood pressure, making one feel more meditative.

Usually when we live in a dull atmosphere, we get used to it, not even noticing our immediate surroundings after a while. In much the same way, we don't note the smell of our house, but others do; we aren't always aware how draining our rooms can feel to others. If one lives in an apartment with little natural light, or if the rooms are small, they can lighten up the colors to open up the spaces. Bleaching dark floors does wonders to cheer up a dark room. Using lighter tones is another way to brighten up a space. Color awareness is one of the cheapest and easiest ways to transform energy to a more profoundly content frame of mind. One should use every opportunity to play with colors that are adored.

A View

Windows bring light into our spaces, and we're fortunate when we have some uplifting views from the windows where we live. This is not always possible, but certainly a dream house would have pleasant views to feast our eyes. Views offer us inspiration and vision. Even if windows don't directly look out on something attractive, by experimenting with mirrors one might be pleasantly surprised at the views that can be created. Your view should always be the first consideration when deciding on a floor plan for the furniture. Think of the view as the lifeline to nature and beauty. Having a view of sky, water, a mountain, a lake, a field, a meadow, a canyon, or a garden could make a major contribution to one's life at home. If paradise is a place of ideal beauty and loveliness, having a view of nature from a window could turn one's home into a paradise on earth. Whether your view oversees rooftops or a church, cows grazing in a meadow or pretty trees, having a meaningful view is fundamental to your happiness and well-being at home.

Privacy

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Brandeis believed privacy is the right most valued by civilized men and women. The right to be alone, secluded, uninterrupted, is the greatest luxury. Privacy is ideal at home. Our home is not an open house. All of us should have boundaries. There is a price we pay when we have others come into our home to help us, especially when it is full time. Whether you hire a nanny or a baby-sitter, a cleaning woman or an assistant, these people are human beings with their own needs. They have a presence, a watchful eye, and they move about freely in the space. You are not alone, nor are you all one big extended family. No matter how blessed you are to have their help, it is awkward. When families have tension or friction of just plain lack of privacy at home, survival is to escape. This is sad but true. Some people work late at the office or schedule unnecessary business dinners or even business trips. Other people go to a club or to a pub or a coffee shop on their way home. Whether there are benefits, we can be grateful, but this does not mean we may also be making sacrifices too costly to our sense of well-being at home.

The issue of privacy is central to a healthy marriage. Some married people have a few years alone before they begin their family, therefore they will have experienced personal privacy. Couples should not be too quick to have someone come live with them even if the extra help is needed with the children. Personal privacy is at stake.

Fresh Air

It is dangerous to our health to be completely sealed against the escape or entry of air. We are not meant to have our windows so tightly sealed that we are impervious to outside interference and influence. Windows should be accessed. Air circulation gives us energy. We should be careful not to treat the fabrics on our furniture and at the windows better than we treat our lungs, and none of them deserves old stale air.

Nature

Flowers and flowering plants soften the harsh edges and hard angles of rooms. They add sweetness to a space and bring it to life. We always feel good when a flower arrangement is real and sometimes feel disappointed if we were fooled that the pretty arrangement is artificial. Flowers are important to a family and strongly suggested is that there should be a flower budget just as there is a food budget. While flowers might be an unnecessary expense to some people, a house or apartment may never be a home without the beauty and wonder of nature in all the rooms where we live each day. Flowers nourish the soul in profound ways. Their powerful hold can be absorbed through all the senses and know intuitively they are urging one on their path, helping one to become more sensitive and more caring. Flowers can add to the emotional comfort and well-being at home. When the flowers are alive, the rooms will be also, and one can enjoy time more when it is spent in spaces where there is something blossoming. We all want to make guests feel happy and at home when they come to visit. Flowers, along with food, are one sure way to make people feel welcome.

Order

Organization is the foundation that grounds us every day at home. Until we have a working system in place where all the parts come together into a whole, we will be spinning around, scattered, wasting time and energy, both feeling the satisfaction of being able to accomplish a simple necessary task in a serene way. The way to feel emotionally comfortable at home is to figure out how to bring more order to each of the following categories:

- sorting mail
- sorting newspapers, magazines, and catalogues
- paying bills
- conducting correspondence
- keeping track of telephone messages
- storing household supplies

Our lives are made up of the things we do every day. This is who we are, and what we are doing that matters. We should take care to never cheat ourselves of the most important opportunity – to get in the rhythm of everything we do, becoming one with the activity. Order helps us rise above the ordinary chores of everyday living, providing an atmosphere that lets us experience little epiphanies throughout our day. Putting our house in order enables and encourages us to accomplish necessary tasks as well as fulfill desires.

Sacred Space

A soulful home is one which mirrors and supports the unique essence of the souls who live there. It is a home infused with a feeling of sacred space that allows the tapping into the hallowed places within while discerning the meaning of life. Homes can be so much more than mere boxes in which to live. The soul connects deeply therein, not only with other people, but also with dreams, the environment and the whole universe of reality beyond the home. The weaving of sacred space in your environment creates a web of context that will deepen the sense of relationship to all things.

SUMMARY

Alexander Stoddard summarizes in her book *Feeling At Home* by stating that the home is the stage setting for every other experience we have. Coming home should be a wonderful map, a total summation of who we are. Feeling at home is a way of life, an inspiring journey of discovery as well as a bridge that leads us to greater appreciation, reverence, and beauty where we've transformed our spirit because we've learned how to follow our own heart.

All the love and sacrifices, the pains, the labor, the heartaches, the tenderness and caring that go into transforming a house or an apartment into a place where we feel welcomed at home only deepens our appreciation for what we have. A house is a physical, man-made structure. A home is the spirit, the soul, and our emotional and spiritual center. This is an everyday process of deepening ourselves as we deepen our love of life at home infuses us with a powerful flow of loving energy that is sustaining and transcending.

We should try to make every day special. We can't risk saving us living for anniversaries and holidays in some unknown future we may or may not experience. We can awaken each day full of gratitude for the simple but powerful gift of life. Each day we can plant some seeds – in the garden, in the house, in our minds – that will bear fruit.

When we are open to this freedom and joy at home, we choose to be a resource to others, not a need. When we take care of our own needs at home and bring to our lives the love, caring, and beauty we all seek, we're then free to use all our gifts to express our

unique creative talents in whatever ways we choose. When we affirm and confirm all that is positive, uplifting, light-filled, and loving in our own lives, our affirmation spills over into service to others.

Living well every day in a home that is the most liberating and exuberant is an example of a way to celebrate the earthly journey. We should let our house or apartment be the teacher. We can learn from our garden and intimate spaces at home how to be more caring, and sensitive, more generous spirited, how to make every act a labor of love. We can and should find colorful ways to love every decorating aspect of the home and be glad to do what needs to be done. Once a task is begun, it usually is found to be very satisfying.

One should have faith that being at home can be daily domestic bliss and live each moment in this belief. On days you don't feel well, the home should provide you with comfort, healing, and love. Everyday living is an expression of our creative energy. When we work to improve the quality of each moment, we will be awakened to sudden flashes of profound depth.

CONCLUSION

As students prepare to face the future, these concepts and ideas can serve as a great inspiration in their lives. Through the integration of Interior Design/Architecture concepts into core courses, students will be able to understand the relevance of cross-curricular teaching. Regardless of the profession at hand, the home can and should serve as a refuge or haven from stressors, world difficulties, or problematic experiences. Not only is this housing concept important for a person who is relatively healthy, but most specifically to someone suffering from any given health related issue.

From an architectural standpoint, a home is not always a building originally designed as such. Almost any building can be renovated to meet specific living needs. This seminar provided the visitation of several unusual buildings now used as family dwellings. One such structure was originally a family dwelling, then a business, then back to a family dwelling. We also were made aware of the fact that many original family dwellings are transformed into businesses and vice versa. It will be an interesting and educational challenge for both students and teachers to work through the challenge of designing on a budget.

STUDENT PROJECT: DESIGNING A HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER ON A BUDGET

In this project, the students are going to design a health education center that will remain operative in the community. This project is planned for usage in a small learning community setting. This setting may also be referred to as a small learning academy. High school students choose a field of interest during their ninth grade year that will be

followed throughout their high school career. Each academy or learning community offers basic courses needed for graduation, but in addition, offers a specialized set of classes geared especially to the theme of the community. Our community is Health and Human Services. Our students are afforded the opportunity to take a variety of courses relevant to this topic. These courses may include career related information in the areas of general or specialized medicine, pharmacy, child protective services, dietetics, home health care, family caseworker, etc. All teachers meet together twice per week or coordinate services and plan for student classes. Teachers work cooperatively on a specific project for the entire academy. The project described in this curriculum unit is planned to be completed over a four-year period. Students will plan with teachers to implement specific phases of the project each school year. Teachers will also work cooperatively with a local community college, partner with relevant businesses, and include parents in all aspects of this endeavor. The end product will involve the rewarding of student grades, community service hours for students, internships with various entities, and the production of a health education center that will remain operative in the community.

In their math class, the students will compare health problems to the space available for the building project. They will make sure that all measurements are accurate, that building materials are accurately priced and ordered, and that all building codes are met and followed. They will incorporate information the TAAS as well as other textual information. They will actually contact vendors for bids and compare for price and other standards.

In social studies, students will research the community to gather historical data with regard to housing standards. They will also contact political leaders to request funds and other needs for this project. They will meet with those officials to negotiate needs. Students will also meet with health and human services professionals to secure their services.

In Interior Design class, the students will create the actual inside and outside plans. Students will design the space to meet identified special health needs prevalent in the community. They will plan to modify room arrangement and facilities to meet these needs, make replicas, and do as much of the actual work as possible with the assistance of professional interior designers, family and consumer science teachers, as well as local contractors.

Students who are enrolled in computer science, language arts, science, building trades, and plumbing will become involved in this project. The important thing to remember is that students will not be taught or learning in an isolated environment. Much of their coursework in all subject matter areas will reflect the implementation of this project.

LESSON PLANS

Teacher Planning

Teachers will meet together to determine specific project implementation procedures relative to their individual courses.

- (A.) Language arts teachers will determine reading and writing material relevant to the project. Reading assignments will be made where students read and explain information related to interior design; students will write letters to various organizations requesting their assistance and participation in the project.
- (B.) Math teachers will specifically work on the mathematical aspects of the project. Their students will work on measurements and cost situations for project completion.
- (C.) Interior design teachers will work on the actual planning and implementation of the interior of the building.
- (D.) Social studies teachers will focus on the historical data regarding building codes as well as historical aspects of the community. They will research buildings in the area to determine why they were built as they are, materials used, and what they were primarily used for.

Interior Design Class Lesson

The following lesson plans pertain to my individual class: Interior Design.

Day One

Throughout the year we have been studying the interior design concepts. Before we begin the project of designing a health education facility, we will review design elements, such as color, space, and proportion and learn how to design a room by a hands-on activity.

Students will begin their design exercise by using the E-Z design method. This method provides opportunities for students to use furniture and accessories templates by placing these in a room that has previously been gridded.

Individual Assignment: Create Your Own Room

Using the AutoCAD System, a computerized room arrangement system, the students will design their favorite room. They will place furniture, lamps, and accessories in the room in a design that they think is beautiful or harmonious.

After creating their room, the students will evaluate their design using the design elements. The students will make changes in their design according to their evaluation.

Day Two

Group Assignment: Create a Room of a Specific Style

The students now understand how use the AutoCAD and they have had experience at evaluating their design and making modifications. Now I will put the students in groups. The members of the group will work together to create a room in a specific style, such as Mediterranean, ultra-modern, and English decorating styles. The students, again, will use the AutoCAD and create a room in the specific style. As before, when they are finished, they will evaluate their design using the design elements, and they will make changes in their design to according to the design elements.

Day Three

Class Project: Create a Building

The lesson now will become a class project. Each of the groups will have to design a specific room in a building, such as bedrooms, kitchens, bathrooms, and family rooms. The members of the group will work together to create a harmonious home or apartment. Then they will use the design elements to evaluate their design and make appropriate modifications.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

<http://www.bartlettdesigns.com> (March 2002)

Bartlett, Stanlet. "Feng Shui and the Spirit of Change."

This article explains how Feng Shui is used in the home.

<http://www.burrows.com> (March 2002)

Crane, Walter. "Thoughts on House Decorating."

This article discusses houses from previous centuries.

<http://artofplacement.com> (April 2002)

Czamy, Candace. "Why Feng Shui?" Wind & Water, Inc.

This article explains how Feng Shui is used in the home.

Draughon, Susan Fruit. "Expression through Architecture." In *Houston House and Home*. Vol. 9, no.1. (February 2002).

This magazine gives examples of numerous home interior designs, designers, and their methodologies.

Fox, Stephen. *Houston Architectural Guide*. Houston, Tex.: The American Institute of Architects/Houston Chapter and Herring Press, 1999.

This book has pictures and examples of Houston architecture.

<http://www.burrows.com> (January 2002)

Howells, William Dean. "Building and Old-Fashioned House in the Early 1880s."

Homes from previous centuries and their design elements.

Linn, Denise. *Feng Shui for the Soul*. New York: Hay House, 1998.

This book explains how Feng Shui it used in the home.

Stoddard, Alexandra. *Feeling At Home*. New York: Harper Collins, 1999.

This book explains decoration ideas from the standpoint of the author.

Stoddard, Alexandra. *The Decoration of Houses*. New York: Harper Collins, 1997.

This book explains decoration ideas from the standpoint of the author.

<http://www.interiorecho.com> (February 2002)

"Theory of Evolution in Interior Design."

This article discusses how interior design is related to architecture.

<http://www.burrows.com> (February 2002)

Watson, Rosamund Marriott. "The Art of the House."

This article explains numerous aspects of home decorating.

<http://www.burrows.com> (February 2002)

Wilde, Oscar. "House Decoration."

This article explains numerous aspects of home decorating.