

Create patios for “downtime”

No matter where you live, summer, patio living and relaxation all require energy that provides peace, quiet and the opportunity to rest, read a book and step out of the fast lane. Life changes for many of you when summer arrives. The children are out of school so there are fewer scheduling conflicts. Shopping and running errands take less time because they can be run at times when fewer people are at the store so more time is gratefully spent on your patios, around your pools and in your sunrooms.

Summer graciously provides you more daylight so you can enjoy the slower pace of life that comes with the heat. In order to make sure you maximize the relaxation time you spend in your backyard with family and friends there are a few things you can do to ensure that your patio area is filled with a very slow paced meandering energy rather than zooming through reminding you of all of the things you have left undone.

Begin by surrounding yourself with the sounds of cool refreshing water. Even if you have a pool in your backyard, the sound of a waterfall is extremely relaxing, refreshing and cooling. You can use anything from a simple small tabletop self contained waterfall to a large elaborate structured waterfall made of rocks with beautiful flowering tropical plants where the water cascades down several drops dancing and singing over the rocks. The size is not as important as the sound. If you have neither the budget nor the space, invest in a couple of waterfall or bubbling stream CDs or tapes and play them whenever you are in your relaxation zone. You can even play the sounds of the surf or waves breaking on the beach which is guaranteed to lull you to sleep on a lazy weekend.

Next, invest in a couple of cool and very comfortable sets of clothing that you wear only on those days when you want to ignore the world and you really want the world to ignore you. Because you will wear this clothing only on the days you will be completely relaxing your body, the mind will immediately drop into a stress free relaxation mode as it will associate the clothing with the warm weather, the soothing sounds of the water and self absorbing leisure. Some days you may wish to relax but your brain has a mind of its

own and wants to keep pulling you back to reality. In such situations, the clothing you have dedicated for wearing only at times of significant relaxation will help bridge the gap from reality to “downtime”.

The third thing to do when creating a relaxing patio, lanai, pool or sunroom is the use of color. We are all tempted to use really bright cheerful summery colors but for the most part those are all really high energy colors, not quiet restful peaceful ones. The best colors to use for a relaxing leisure area are the cool colors like blues, greens and teals. Think of the cool colors of a lake or the ocean and the wonderful array of lush greens, aqua and a variety of blues. These colors are calming as well as cooling on those hot lazy days of summer. Try purchase the majority of your patio furniture cushions in a range of these colors to maintain that cool relaxed feeling. I know earth tones and natural colors are very contemporary so if that is what you like then accessorize with the cool colors to reinforce the very reason you wish to spend time in your “downtime” zone.

It doesn't take a lot of work and not even much money if you simply organize your thinking around the idea that your patio, lanai, pool or sunroom are to be used for relaxing, getting rid of stress and “downtime”. All you need to do is plan ahead; as you replace cushions and accessories think cool, comfortable and relaxing. Be sure to include beverage service and outdoor dinner ware when purchasing cool color accessories. “Downtime” is important for all of us as we live in a world that is high pressure, stressful and invasive. Forget the television, replace the noise pollution with the relaxing sounds of a waterfall and kick back in a stress free environment right in your own backyard.

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To sign up for the June class, “Why do women over spend, over eat and over commit, how Feng Shui helps”, call 561 799-3443. Pat Heydlauff is the “energy specialist” and proprietor of Energy Design, an upscale gift and fine art store located in Crystal Tree Center, 1201 U.S. Hwy 1, Ste. 31, North Palm Beach. Keeping the principles of energy design and Feng Shui in mind, Pat has created and painted all of the artwork and home

décor and Feng Shui gifts featured in her store. For Feng Shui consultations, classes and energy design work in the home or office call her now at (561) 799-3443 or email her, balancingenergy@bellsouth.net or visit her website, www.energy-by-design.com . She regularly makes public presentations on Feng Shui; “Energy by Design” and has a corporate program on “Substance vs. conditional acceptance”. Have a peace filled day.

Pat Heydlauff

Speaker, Author, Artist

"Everything you say, think and do matters."

Energy Design

1201 US Hwy. 1, Ste. 31

North Palm Beach, FL 33408

561 799-3443 - telephone

561 799-3360 - fax