

Stay Happily Married

A resource for married couples.

Creating a happy marriage is possible and this site is dedicated to providing resources to help couples who want to stay together. By providing information about qualified marriage counseling, we hope to encourage couples to get the help they need. The site also features articles, other websites, books, and workshops which offer the tools needed to create happy, lasting marriages.



Love Shack: Creating a Bedroom Oasis for Romance

This is Episode number 52 of Stay Happily Married, "Love Shack: Creating a Bedroom Oasis for Romance."

Welcome to Stay Happily Married, your source for weekly updates on the latest tips and advice to build a happy and healthy marriage.

Today's episode of Stay Happily Married is brought to you by the Rosen Law Firm. For more information, visit us at Rosen.com.

Lee Rosen: I'm Lee Rosen. I'm your host today. Welcome to the show. I'm here in the studio with Jenna Boyd, a feng shui and organization consultant. Jenna is a graduate and certified practitioner from the Western School of Feng Shui in Solana Beach, California. She's a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers. Jenna has been creating balanced living and working environments through practical and simple feng shui, organization and color solutions, since 2003.

Welcome back to the show, Jenna. I'm so glad you could be with us today.

Jenna Boyd: Thanks a lot, Lee. It's great to be here.

Lee Rosen: The last time you were with us we talked about some general advice for making your home more conducive to a better relationship with your spouse. But today I really want to dig into the bedroom. Is that good with you?

Jenna Boyd: I think that's great because a lot of people tend to neglect the bedroom.

Lee Rosen: So what is going on in most people's bedrooms now? When you walk in -- I guess you visit a lot of people's homes so you get a real feel for that. What's the state of affairs in America's bedrooms?

Jenna Boyd: That's a great question. You know, there's several different things going on. It seems like they're either really chaotic, like they're full of clutter, they're collecting toys, they've got the TV, they have clothes everywhere, they've got books -- they've got the library -- tons of pictures of family and children around; or it's the other extreme where it's like the museum where it's so highly decorated that you can kind of like bounce a penny on the bed and it's not comfortable. So there's kind of the extremes.

Lee Rosen: Do you get called in to consult about the bedroom, or is the bedroom just there and you're there to look at the whole house typically?

Jenna Boyd: Typically I'm there to look at the whole house. And then when we start figuring out kind of what people's main intentions are then we figure out, okay, we want to work on the relationship, we want to work on career or prosperity, and then we start looking through the house. But I always pay attention to what's going on on the bedroom.

Lee Rosen: Is it usually one of the biggest problems?

Jenna Boyd: Probably so. It definitely is an area -- because a lot of times people, when they renovate or they move into a new house, they get the kids' rooms set up, they'll do the living room, the other living areas, and they'll say, "Well, we'll get all the other areas set up and then we'll come back to the bedroom." Or if they've lived in the house for a while they might have started working on the bedroom but then it's just been this catch-all for everything else.

Lee Rosen: Well, how important is the bedroom? You know, in a way -- like in my house, we use the bedroom. But it's mostly used for sleeping.

Jenna Boyd: That's great. See, a lot of people tend to -- they don't just use their bedroom for sleeping. It becomes the home office, they have their bills there, they have their laptop; the kids are playing in there. Not that all these things are bad, it's just that from a feng shui standpoint you need to have one space that's like a sacred space. Like, we say it's nice when the bedroom can be reserved for two things, sleep and passion, and everything else becomes a distraction.

Lee Rosen: Right. Well, I do see what you're describing in a lot of -- I'll be at a friend's house or something and for whatever reason end up in the bedroom -- that they are using it not just for -- it's not just a bedroom. Like my brother's house, he works from home and his bedroom has really become his office. They've got a whole unit off to the side with a computer on it and a printer and all that stuff. And you're seeing that a lot?

Jenna Boyd: I see that a lot. And that's actually a problem from a pure EMF standpoint. So we've got like the computer, the monitor, the TV, all of that has a lot of electromagnetic energy coming from it and so that creates a disruptive environment. And so when people are talking about, "Well, I don't sleep well," or "I feel like I'm thinking about work all the time," well, all that energy is around you. It's like you can never just relax and turn it off.

Lee Rosen: Right. You have nowhere to escape.

Jenna Boyd: To escape. Exactly.

Lee Rosen: So you do you end up helping people pull all that stuff out? What do you do when you find that situation?

Jenna Boyd: Absolutely. I recently worked with a family where the husband had been out of work for like 20 months, or he was trying to work on his business. And he was working at a desk in his bedroom and he was working downstairs on the dining room table. And what we did was we took the small table that he had set up in the corner of his bedroom, we pulled that out and we re-designated one of the guest rooms to be his office. And it was like amazing results started happening with his business once we just anchored him and then took it out of the bedroom.

Lee Rosen: Are there other things in the -- I'm sitting here thinking about what's in my bedroom. And the computer does not live in there but --

Jenna Boyd: that's a good thing.

Lee Rosen: Well, it's a laptop so it temporarily resides in there sometimes. But what about the -- you're anti the TV in the bedroom?

Jenna Boyd: Well, the TV is sometimes a nice thing. What we really say is that it can be closed off, like in a cabinet with doors or sometimes even putting just a pretty piece of material over it just to turn it off so that it's not the focal point of the room and not -- the energy from the TV is not coming into the space so much.

- Lee Rosen: Because I would really miss my TV.
- Jenna Boyd: Right. And a lot of people do and a lot of people like to coze up and watch TV at night and that's perfectly fine. I think it's the point that when it's so much of a distraction, when it's taking away from intimacy or sleeping, that you're not able to just relax when the TV's always going.
- Lee Rosen: The other thing that is -- my wife has a Ph.D. in literature. So you can imagine there are piles and piles of books everywhere. Yeah. I mean, I contribute to that but not nearly the way that she does. Is that a -- some people, I think, think of books as being kind of a warm -- what do you think about that?
- Jenna Boyd: I think books are wonderful. I mean, I myself have a lot of books but I try not to keep books in the bedroom. I mean, I have them in my office or keep them in a study or in a library. I mean, maybe keeping a couple, but when you think about a book, I mean, a book has a lot of energy. I mean, think about the hours and the time and the thought that goes into just one book. And so you have all that energy.
- Because remember, in feng shui we think about everything as energy. So you have all that energy around you talking to you all the time. So you kind of want to honor those books. It's great. They're all important but just put them in a different area of the house.
- Lee Rosen: So if you go into the room what's left? Really I think if you took the TV and the computer and the books out of my bedroom I'm not sure that there would be a whole heck of a lot left in there.
- Jenna Boyd: Well, the TV can stay. We just want to put it in a cabinet with doors.
- Lee Rosen: Close it up. Right.
- Jenna Boyd: Yeah.
- Lee Rosen: It's like you're locking away my little friend.
- Jenna Boyd: Right. But then you're actually being able to sleep and you're focusing and it's creating a more comfortable environment.
- Lee Rosen: Right. You can get rid of my alarm clock.
- Jenna Boyd: Right. Right. And actually, that's a good thing. We really want to have the alarm clock on the other side of the room. We really don't

want, again, the EMFs from that around your head. So putting that on the other side of the room is good.

But what's left in the bedroom becomes your bed, two nightstands, and two lamps that honor both people in the relationship ideally above the bed. Now, the artwork becomes very important because often times we have artwork in there that is not -- you know, it could be anything. What's your artwork in your bedroom?

Lee Rosen: There are -- see, this is just going to get me into trouble, I'm sure. I'd like to be doing the right thing. But we have -- in our bedroom there are two pictures of our children, I believe; one on each side of that room. And there is some sort of little series of cards -- they're little tiny things that somehow relate to my wife's interest in English and I don't really know what they are. But the kid things are kind of arts -- they were taking by a -- they're kind of artistic kid pictures. But nonetheless they're kid pictures. And then there's a giant mirror so I can look at me.

Jenna Boyd: That's what's important. What we really want to see in the bedroom is artwork that is inspiring that feels inspired of the relationship. So maybe it's a piece that you and your wife purchased together on a vacation or picked out especially for the bedroom, or something that represents duality or partnership or that feels very comfortable or relaxing.

All of these things that we're wanting to convey to create -- remember, the idea of the master bedroom is to create a sacred space. So when you start thinking about it from that purpose, from that intention, then it's kind of easier to see the things that need to kind of maybe move out.

Lee Rosen: Now, see, for me -- like you go out and you buy art, which is expensive, and we have tended to put the nicest artsy kinds of things down in more -- like in the living room.

Jenna Boyd: Well, that's like what were talking about in the beginning. People tend to neglect the master. And definitely put those expensive pieces down there but make sure that you're honoring the relationship. Because it's kind of like you guys are centered and grounded and good then that's going to spread out to the other areas, to your kids, to your career, to the other areas of your life.

Lee Rosen: So you don't suggest a heart-shaped bed with a mirror.

Jenna Boyd: No. Unless you're really into that.

Lee Rosen: The heart-shaped waterbed with the vibrating--

Jenna Boyd: Right.

Lee Rosen: Right. I'm just checking. I don't want to miss anything.

Jenna Boyd: Yeah. It's really about personal style. I mean, feng shui is -- a lot of people think it's about Chinese architecture or artwork or dragons and tassels, and it's really not. It's about finding your own personal style and authenticity and making that work with just a few guidelines that create a nice space.

Lee Rosen: Well, now you said that your typical bedroom when you walk in it's either I guess sort of filled with stuff -- gives me sort of that cluttered impression -- or you said it's like a museum. Now, what's that? I mean, I'm so far away from it being a museum that -- clearly. Yeah.

Jenna Boyd: Well, it's kind of like the idea where you have a space that has -- you can tell that everything is so perfectly put together and the room is very beautiful but it feels almost very rigid and cold rather than comfortable and cozy. You know, like you don't want to mess up the bed type of thing.

Lee Rosen: Right. It's so decorated.

Jenna Boyd: It's so decorated or it's just so tight. And some of that is very nice. And I'm all for making things designer and -- you know, I have partners I work with that are interior designers. I'm all for that. It's just that we also want to make sure that it's comfortable and that you're able to get into the room and actually feel at ease.

Lee Rosen: Right. So what do you do as a practical matter -- I'm kind of going back to this whole get the computer out of the room. I think one reason my brother's got the computer in the room is that they have a three-bedroom house with two kids and so as a practical matter I would assume in a lot of families the computer's there because that's where it fits.

Jenna Boyd: It's an easy space.

Lee Rosen: Yeah.

Jenna Boyd: Right. Well, and in some cases -- I mean, can you put it in a guest room? Is there already an office or in the kitchen or can it live in the living room? If it has to live in the bedroom then I really recommend trying to put some kind of a screen up that would kind

of designate that area as office space so that it's not coming in -- I mean, when you're laying in bed, imagine, and you're looking at that desk or you're looking at the computer and you're seeing bills, you're seeing other work, what is restful about that?

It's like constantly -- you know, even like in the bedroom when you're picking out artwork. It's not only what's above your bed, but what's in front of you? When you're sitting in bed are you looking into the bathroom into the toilet? Are you looking into like a beautiful piece of artwork or are you looking at the home office? What's your visual field? Because that's the kind of thing that we're trying to create.

Lee Rosen: Right. Yeah. I suspect you must face some real challenges in certain situations where just as a practical matter it's tough to -- people have limited space. I know you've worked not only in the Triangle but you've also worked in some other cities. I would assume if you go into a large city you're really presented with challenges. I mean, I hear people talk about like apartments in New York and stuff where they're so tiny. Because we have huge space compared to some of those places.

Jenna Boyd: Right. When I worked in Atlanta some of my clients had high-rise condos and we had more limited space. But you can still create a sacred space and it's just about being smart. And in that case it's usually about living with less and really paring down to your favorites, which in some ways is better.

Lee Rosen: Well, yeah. Except that I live with more.

Jenna Boyd: Right. And most people that's their comfort zone to live with more.

Lee Rosen: Right. Give me gadgets.

Jenna Boyd: Right.

Lee Rosen: Okay. So I get a feel for where you're coming from on the what ought to be in the room and what ought to be out of the room. And I'm getting a sense of -- it just makes sense. I mean, if you're looking at your computer and your work, that is not very -- it just isn't going to help. It's in your head all the time and nothing good ever happens.

Jenna Boyd: It's like you wake up and you're thinking about it. You go to bed and you're thinking about it. I mean, there's no ever separation from the thing.

Lee Rosen: So okay. We lock the TV in the cabinet and -- which if you're playing it all the time you end up with a great cabinet that's open. But I buy not having the TV on all the time. And we get rid of the computer. What else is important in that room? I mean, I get a feel for the art and I like the idea of it being something that has to do with the two of you doing it together, acquiring it together or whatever. What else is important in that -- in the love shack there?

Jenna Boyd: Color is really, really big. Often times -- like, for instance, my teacher Terah Kathryn Collins from the Western School always says do the face test. So if you're laying on -- like, a lot of times it's better to get soft colored sheets, maybe like apricot, like ivory, some soft color that really feels better next to your face.

A lot of times people are like, "I love my white sheets," and it's great and there's not anything wrong with that and white sheets are classic and it's all fine. But if you think about it, like white is kind of the color that gets things done. Like businessmen wear white. Businessmen never wear the color ivory into the office.

So stand in front of the mirror and see how it looks next to you. Your white sheet versus your ivory sheet; which looks more appealing? Which looks softer? Which feels more restful, more intimate, that kind of thing?

Lee Rosen: Do you ever -- and I want to go back to this, but do you ever go into a home and, like, the wife has called you in and the husband is listening and they're just shaking their head going, "What are you doing with me with the chocolate sheets?"

Jenna Boyd: Well, not chocolate sheets but --

Lee Rosen: Do you get a lot of skeptical --

Jenna Boyd: No. I mean, because once we start really kind of talking -- and it's not like we're trying to do a major renovation. It's usually working with what they already have and then just adding in accents. Like I wouldn't necessarily recommend chocolate sheets, but maybe accents. Do you know what I'm saying? We could just bring in -- and you could bring in chocolate with the furniture. You could bring it in just with accents, maybe with a throw pillow or with a blanket, or maybe just piece in the artwork. It's just trying to create a softer, warmer colors.

The other thing that I see a lot is people love their green and blue bedrooms. And that again is really, really great, but green and blue are kind of like healing colors. And so we want to -- again, they're

cool colors. Just like white; it's a very cool, crisp color and so we want to bring those warmer tones into the bedroom -- earth tones, skin tones.

Lee Rosen: Right. So the things that you teach and like the colors that you're looking at and all that, does that change over -- you know how like style changes all the time? But yours are -- like earth tones in the bedroom, is that sort of a constant?

Jenna Boyd: Pretty much a constant. Absolutely. But you could pick out the trendier earth tones if you really want to go that way. See, feng shui I think is a little bit different because we look at what's really going to help people feel energetically better in the space rather than what's the latest trend. But you could always incorporate the latest trend in.

Lee Rosen: Right. That makes sense. So, okay, we've talked a little bit about color and we've talked about things that should or shouldn't be in the room. What about -- I have the sense from my limited reading about feng shui that the way things are positioned matters. Is that the case in the bedroom?

Jenna Boyd: It absolutely is the case. I mean, where the bed is located is really important. If there's an adjoining bathroom where the windows -- you know how the chi is actually flowing into the space.

Lee Rosen: And so is it possible -- like, do you have to see it to know or are there principles that --

Jenna Boyd: Yeah, there's principles. For instance, like we always want to make sure that the bed is on the most supported wall furthest away from the door and ideally not under a window. Because the door represents the mouth of the chi, like where the chi comes in. So if you've got the bed directly in line with the door then it's like that chi of life -- so it could be all the stuff that's going on in other parts of your life and house are coming into your bed. So you want to have the bed kind of kitty-corner of the door.

Lee Rosen: Right.

Jenna Boyd: Or if you're underneath a window then it's like unsupported energy. And ideally -- I mean, it's not a have-to-have but it's nice if you have a headboard because you want to create a supportive -- so that you feel totally supported in the space.

Lee Rosen: See, I'm just totally screwed. I don't have the right art and I don't have a headboard.

- Jenna Boyd: It's all right. Not everybody does. I'm still working on getting a headboard, too, so no --
- Lee Rosen: Yeah. If you don't have a headboard, I'm golden.
- Jenna Boyd: Right. But I'm just trying to outline a couple of the things that make it nice. But the bed placement is really important.
- Lee Rosen: So really there's not a whole heck of a lot else. I mean, really once you have the bed done you're talking about nightstands and lamps.
- Jenna Boyd: Nightstands, lamps -- I mean, you want to have furniture in there --
- Lee Rosen: They're obviously where --
- Jenna Boyd: -- I mean, the color. I mean, it's pretty simple. I think it's mostly -- in today's society what I see is that we're mostly taking things out.
- Lee Rosen: That's what you end up doing.
- Jenna Boyd: Yeah. Recommending we need to -- a lot of times it's taking out the clutter, taking out the books, taking out the 20 million pictures of the kids, taking out the home office.
- Lee Rosen: You have to get a rag in at my house too.
- Jenna Boyd: Yeah. And you're not the only one. And it's not that it's bad; it's just that we tend to just pile stuff everywhere. And just think about all that stuff around you and it's like you wonder why you don't sleep well, why your relationship's not working well. You know, if you have a lot of clutter in your space you can bet that there's going to be arguments.
- Lee Rosen: Right. Every time you and I talk I just think I've got to play this for my wife.
- Jenna Boyd: She should listen to it.
- Lee Rosen: So what's happening when you finish with your clients and you've changed the bedroom? What's the feedback you're getting from people?
- Jenna Boyd: The feedback is that their relationship -- I mean, and it takes time. Feng shui is one piece of the pie, right? But they tend to feel more at ease, they sleep better, the dynamics of their relationship tend to

improve, because there's not as much stuff in there conflicting with the relationship so they're able to focus on each other.

Lee Rosen: Yeah. It's pretty amazing really that -- I think when relationships are in turmoil I think people think it's got to be hard to work on fixing it. And this just seems like if things aren't going as well as you'd like them to go, this seems like a no-brainer, no barriers here. It's pretty easy. Hey, get your place reorganized and see how that goes.

Jenna Boyd: Yeah. I mean, and again, it's one piece of the pie. Like I definitely recommend that once you get your environment together you need to be doing other things. I mean, it could be working with a therapist or getting plenty of exercise, healthy diet; I mean, all of these things work together. But feng shui I definitely -- from my own personal experience and six years of doing this and seeing the benefits show up in my clients' lives, the environment definitely plays a role.

Plus you can add intention in there. So let's say you are working on your environment. Okay. Then from a feng shui standpoint we're going to work on your bedroom but then we're also going to work on the relationship corner in your space. We're going to look at how the chi is flowing through the space because there could be other areas of the space that are creating conflict and we can make improvements there as well.

Lee Rosen: Well, it sounds to me like it's a go for it kind of thing. What do you have to lose? Let's say somebody is living in a suburb around here and they're listening and they want to do what they can to straighten things out in their home. What are they going to spend to have you come in and tell them what to do?

Jenna Boyd: An initial consultation is \$295 and we spend two hours in the space and we basically start at your front door and walk through the space working on key areas. Now, I always recommend doing a follow-up somewhere between two to nine months later, just depending on how -- because you're going to get a report. After the initial consultation we're going to put together a list of very detailed recommendations that you need to put into your space.

Once you have time to implement those then we'd like to come back and do a follow-up where we focus then on the five elements, which is another key part of feng shui where we really fine-tune a space, we see what's working, we see what you've been able to work on so far. And so it's a process. Feng shui is a process, not a one-time event. The clients that I've worked with over the years that have

experienced the most positive change are the ones that I've seen over and over and over again.

Lee Rosen: Right. Well, I will say a consultation with you is pretty reasonable compared to, say, hiring a divorce lawyer. Small investment; save you a lot of money in the long run.

Jenna Boyd: But even if you can't find the right way to work in your environment, and let's say you do decide to get divorced -- and sometimes maybe that is the best thing, right? But then when you are starting in your own space after the divorce, working with feng shui to set up your space and your new intentions and your new life is a wonderful way to create a supportive environment too.

Lee Rosen: Right. But hopefully we don't get to that point.

Jenna Boyd: Hopefully we stay. That's right.

Lee Rosen: Keep your fingers crossed.

Jenna Boyd: Absolutely.

Lee Rosen: Well, Jenna, thank you. I appreciate you giving us the insight into this whole issue. It really is very interesting. Thanks so much.

Jenna Boyd: Thanks a lot.

Lee Rosen: And I appreciate you joining us, listening in. I hope that you got something from this. Jenna has a lot of information about the organization and feng shui services not just for homes and apartments but for -- they work with commercial buildings, offices, that sort of thing. She does a lot of workshops on the topic, so lots of good stuff. You can find out more about her and her practice at her website ElementsOfHarmony.com. And I will put a link to her website in the show notes so you can check that out. You can also just give her a call, (919) 757-2732, and she can help you out. Really good stuff.

Thank you so much for listening today. I hope you will join us again next week. If you have comments about this show or any of our shows we'd love to hear about it.

Give us a call on our comment line at (919) 256-3083 or send us an e-mail at comments@stayhappilymarried.com.

Until next time, stay happily married.

March 9, 2009 - Love Shack: Creating a Bedroom Oasis for Romance

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