



4 COMING TO TERMS WITH THAT UBIQUITOUS LETTER WORD #@!&!

#@!&!

From the city to the suburbs, this one word casts a large shadow. Is it a bird, is it a plane, or is it an emotion? It defies a single definition.

Listen... you can hear it being whispered but clearly embraced in the conversations of chic diners in trendy eateries, it is the style de rigueur of the young set, the après gym latte sippers and the "Let's go to the mall" crowd. Have you ever lost your car in a parking garage? It makes me want to scream #@!&!, because that's all I can see.

My design colleagues, no longer nonplussed by their clients' use of this word, take it in stride and simply say "#@!&!, of course – a popular choice."

In a world so vibrant and full of options, what's with this 4-letter word? Would our mothers have called it a clean word? Our grandmothers a dirty word? It's a choice word among realtors and even some of my dearest friends use it with dramatic results. I simply struggle with it. Ok, I'm saying it, **G - R - A - Y**.

Like David Hockney, I prefer living in color. Bill Blass famously said, "When in doubt, wear red." Myra Jean

(an old family friend) recommended, "When traveling, don't bring your diamonds, bring your emeralds – they go with everything." The iconic Audrey Hepburn advised, "Believe in pink," and The Rolling Stones paid tribute to Marilyn Monroe with "...she comes in colours everywhere...she's like a rainbow..." Lastly, it was the final days of Oscar Wilde, spent in a lackluster room in Paris that prompted him to say, "Either that wallpaper goes, or I do."

The word GRAY does not fall easily either from my lips or in my hair. Glorious colors are what excite me; their vibration energizes and inspires all kinds of emotions. Nature gives us an infinite palette. Let's open our doors wide and invite it in.

In full disclosure, my portfolio features some lovely rooms in this soft neutral, but as a supporting role for the overall design. Once adorned and fortified with the colorful expression of the client's personality through art, fabric, and furnishings – *voilà* – a star (ok, a room) is born.

Love where you live and embrace color!
It is an essential element of a healthy life.

—Tess Giuliani



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