

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria
April Column 2018

Balancing the Elements When Remodeling

Can you feel it?

“Every time I enter your office, I want to stay there and take it all in. It feels peaceful, harmonious, and meetings held there are always productive and pleasant. The positive energy makes it a space where people enjoy gathering.”

On the other hand – have you felt this?

“My bedroom is grey and monochromatic. It feels cold and uninviting. I don’t want to stay there long. Come to think of it my love life feels about the same; not many sparks or fire.”

What makes these two environments so different? ELEMENTAL BALANCE

We are beginning a master bathroom remodel in our Health/Friends/Family area; therefore as we choose items we will keep the qualities of the elements and bagua in mind.

Nature’s Elements:

The elements: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water are considered the building blocks of everything physical on earth. Feng Shui observes that the most harmonious places in nature are where interplay of all five elements occurs.

The first environment listed in the example feels peaceful and productive because the five Feng Shui elements are balanced, while the second environment is imbalanced – dominated by one element, in this case Metal. Human beings are made up of a combination of all five elements and therefore are most comfortable when all five are represented in a home or workplace.

In previous columns I’ve dealt with identifying and enhancing the Bagua areas of your home. To achieve perfect harmony each of these areas also needs to be elementally balanced; and here is your step by step guide.

There are three skills we develop and use when working with the 5 elements:

1. Define the existing elements in the room
2. Assess the needs for elemental additions and corrections
3. Make the necessary changes to establish elemental balance

Defining the Elements:

Elements do not have to be literal. In other words, you do not actually have to have a block of wood to represent the Wood Element. Colors, shapes, art and textiles represent the elements as well. Below you will find many of the various items that can be used to represent specific elements in your environment.

The Wood Element is found in:

- Wooden furniture and accessories, wooden paneling and decks
- All indoor and outdoor plants (including silk)
- Plant based cloth and textiles, floral prints
- Art depicting landscapes, gardens, plants and flowers
- Columnar shapes and stripes
- The green and blue color spectrum

The Fire Element is found in:

- All lighting (electrical, candles and natural)
- Things made from animals (fur, leather, bone, feathers, wool etc.), pets and wildlife
- Art depicting people, animals, sunshine or fire
- Shapes such as triangles, pyramids or cones
- The red color spectrum

The Earth Element is found in:

- Adobe, brick and tile, ceramics or earthenware objects
- Shapes such as squares and rectangles
- Art depicting earthy landscapes of deserts or fields
- The yellow color spectrum,

The Metal Element is found in:

- All types of metals, including stainless steel, copper, brass, iron, silver, aluminum and gold
- All rocks and stones such as marble, granite and flagstone, natural crystals, rocks and gemstones
- The shapes of the circle, oval and arch
- The white, grey and light pastel color spectrum

The Water Element is found in:

- Water features of all kinds (fountains, aquariums, and birdbaths)
- Reflective surfaces such as glass, cut crystal and mirrors
- Flowing asymmetrical shapes
- Art depicting water scenes
- The black and dark tones color spectrum

Assessing the Needs:

The fastest and easiest way to learn the language of “Elemental Combinations” is to evaluate your environment in elemental terms going room by room. On a piece of paper list all the items in the room and what element they represent. Recognize that items can represent combination of elements; a wooden chair (Wood) when painted red represents both Fire and Wood, but if painted black represents Water and Wood. Once you have completed your list, notice what is dominant and what is missing.

Elements actually nurture or control each other. For example, Fire melts Metal. If you have a room dominated by Metal, adding a few touches that represent Fire, such as a red candles, or art depicting people or animals can help bring balance. (In our second opening example art depicting a romantic representation would also spark the person’s love life.) Likewise, if you had a room that was lacking the Wood Element you could add some flowers (Wood) and a fountain, or mirror (Water) to further nurture the wood.

To reduce/control elements use the Controlling Cycle:

Wood controls Earth, Earth controls Water, Water controls Fire, Fire controls Metal and Metal controls Wood.

To strengthen/nurture elements use the Nourishing Cycle:

Water nurtures Wood, Wood nurtures Fire, Fire nurtures Earth, Earth nurtures Metal, and Metal nurtures Water.

Quick Reference to Making the Necessary Changes to Establish Elemental Balance:

Dominant element is Wood: Introduce the controlling element of Metal and highlight with Earth and Fire. Avoid more Water or Wood.

Dominant element is Fire: Introduce the controlling element of Water and highlight with Earth and Metal. Avoid more Wood and Fire.

Dominant element is Earth: Introduce the controlling element of Wood and highlight with Metal and Water. Avoid more Earth or Fire.

Dominant element is Metal: Introduce the controlling element of Fire and highlight with Water and Wood. Avoid more Metal or Earth.

Dominant element is Water: Introduce the controlling element of Earth and highlight with Wood and Fire. Avoid more Water or Metal.

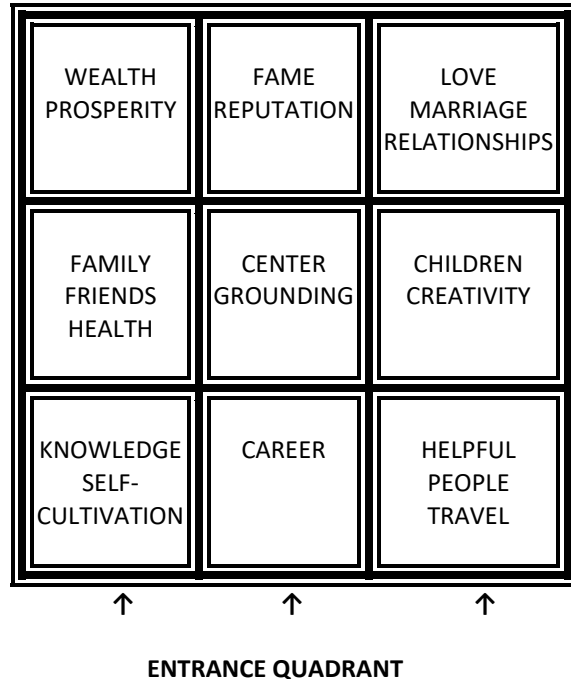
A Quick Fix - 5 Element Arrangements:

Creating a small 5 element arrangement in any room helps to strengthen the Ch’i, and adds power to affirmations and enhancements. It marks the beginning of positive change and invites the Ch’i to move. For example, adding a 5 Element Arrangement to the center of your home can help ground you when you’re feeling overwhelmed or tired. Quick Fixes are also excellent when you need a boost to specific facets of your life, such as when seeking a job, deciding to start a family, or beginning a large remodeling project.

As we experience construction (especially in our health area) I created a small 5 element with an affirmation stating that all facets of the construction are going very smoothly. I placed a metal tray, (Metal) with a glass vase (Water) holding yellow and red silk flowers (Wood, Fire and Earth) in the center of the bathroom each time the contractors left, and moved it to my Helpful People Area in the morning for more support. The project has been going smoothly, our contractors are wonderful, and the bathroom looks spectacular!

Feng Shui at Work - The 5 Elements in Use:

Our master bathroom is in the Health/Friends/Family area of our home, which is governed by the Wood Element; health is vitalized with floral representation. With this in mind we changed the existing white cabinets (White/Metal) with cherry wood ones and hung floral art (Wood), to nurture the wood we have a large mirror (Water), to nurture the water we added a marble countertop (Metal), to nurture the metal we have earth tone tiles on the floor (Earth), to nurture the earth we have triangular shaped lighting, a red orchid and red tone flower art. As we add other items we will keep the balance in mind. It feels wonderful already!



Learning to identify the elements can be a lot of fun. With practice you will see that there are no “random acts of decorating”. Whatever you add to a room should be purposeful to help you create harmony. Think of all the different combinations you can using the things you love. Remember that Feng Shui is about “Living with What You Love.”

Classes:

I will be teaching a series of three classes through Acalanes Adult Ed:

Thursdays April 26 May 10 1:00-3:00

You can register on line at acalanes.k12.ca.us/adulted (Participants will receive \$40 off a home consultation.)

For questions or home consultations email at mtmccull@aol.com and put “Feng Shui” on the subject line, or visit my website at www.fengshuibymaria.com, (where you can read past columns), or Facebook “Feng Shui by Maria”, where I post pictures as examples to enhancements.

* **I have a BLOG** – Just go to the website and click on “Blog”: You can view many pictures and, I will respond to your questions quickly.

Until then...Blessings!

Maria McCullough is the owner / founder of **Feng Shui by Maria** (www.fengshuibymaria.com) and is a speaker and educator with over 20 years of experience. She specializes in residential, landscape and business consultations. She is a graduate of the Western School of Feng Shui and has personally trained with Terah Kathryn Collins, founder of the Western School of Feng Shui, specializing in Essential Feng Shui® and author of numerous books including “The Western Guide to Feng Shui.”

