

**EVERYDAY FENG SHUI**  
Feng Shui by Maria  
July Column for Benicia Herald

**Getting Centered and Grounded**

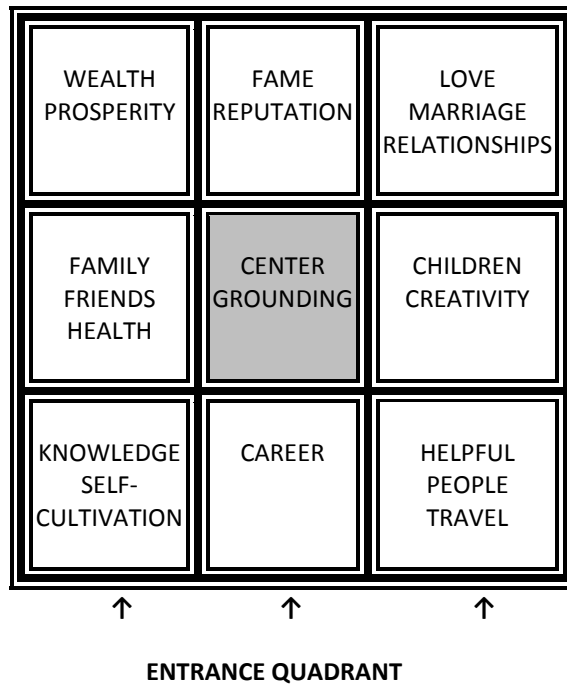
“Flow with whatever may happen and let your mind be free. Stay centered by accepting whatever you are doing. This is the ultimate.” Chang Tzu

How grounded and connected to your center are you feeling right now? Are you at peace with your decisions and comfortable with you life’s flow? If not, what can you do to improve that? Feng Shui can help!

A year has passed quickly since I began writing this column; the more I delve into the world of Feng Shui the more grounded I feel. This year I’ve had the pleasure of helping many clients enhance their homes, have met many enthusiastic learners in my classes and have enjoyed sharing the knowledge with you through my columns. Together we have learned to balance the elements and the importance of the eight trigrams of the Bagua in our lives.

Now it’s time to address the “hub” of the wheel – the core of the Bagua. Not one of the eight trigrams but what’s known as “The Center”. This is the most powerful area because it grounds and energizes the rest of your life’s treasures. You can nurture your ability to remain centered through life’s many changes by directly connecting with the earth every day.

In the Feng Shui Bagua (Ba-gua) Map, represented as a grid of nine sectors, the Center area is located in the center of your home/office/business. The Bagua comes from the Chinese philosophy, “The I Ching,” and literally means “eight trigrams.” In the “I Ching” the Center area of your home or business is a neutral place; a perfect balance of yin and yang – a place of peace. There is no trigram or any single facet of life associated with it. Life flows and circles around the center. This is a perfect place for an atrium, a meditation area, a beautiful piece of art which reminds you to stay centered throughout all your activities.



The element for the Center is Earth, suggesting the importance of arranging your life around a solid base. It is related to the color yellow and symbolized by the shape of the square or rectangle. Enhance this area when you want to cultivate the experience of being grounded and centered, or when you want to harmonize and balance different parts of life such as Love and Career, or Wealth and Creativity.

Enhancements for enriching the interior Center of your home or business:

- \* Art, photos, collages representing the earth, landscapes in the color yellow, (fields, sunflowers, deserts etc.)
- \* Items in the yellow color spectrum
- \* Things made of ceramics or pottery
- \* Ceramic tiles or bricks
- \* Items in the shape of rectangles or squares
- \* Quotes, affirmations and sayings pertaining to feeling grounded and centered

Enhancements for enriching the Center area outside your home or business:

- \* This is an ideal area for a courtyard, patio or atrium
- \* Garden art and statuary in ceramics
- \* Ceramic tiles, fountains, pots and benches
- \* Items, flowers, plants in the yellow spectrum
- \* Square or rectangular shapes

The Element of the Center:

The element for this area is Earth. Archetypally Earth is represented by the soil. When in balance in your home it enhances a feeling of being grounded, balanced, organized, and stable. Too much earth makes you overly disciplined and conservative, while too little brings on feelings of spacyness and chaos. In my September column I stated that the Fire Element creates Earth, therefore adding representations of Fire, such as the color red help stabilize your Earth. Avoid too much of the Wood element in this area, (plants or colors of green or blue) as it consumes Earth and will work against grounding.

Feng Shui at Work:

This is a perfect area for a courtyard. I was just at City Hall yesterday and enjoyed viewing their beautiful courtyard with the large ceramic bubbling fountain in the center of their office complex. The Chi flow was flowing!

A client recently had me help create a landscape for their back yard. They felt that this yard with a gorgeous view was not inviting to their guests. Ideally this area fell in the Center and Fame areas of their property. I recommended beautiful ceramic pavers for the patio ground, and a small retaining wall with some bricks. They wanted to create a welcoming area in the center by building a fire pit in the middle of the patio. To further enhance the Fame area and feed the Earth with Fire I recommend comfortable chairs with red tone cushions, and ceramic pots all around with yellow and red plants. I can't wait to see how inviting and centering this area will become. I anticipate it will become the "hub" of their entertaining.

Many people have the kitchen in the center of their home. This is an extremely auspicious location because the kitchen is known as the "hearth" of a home and in itself can feed the soul and act as a grounding force. My daughter has her kitchen in this location and painted it a saffron color, enhancing it with ceramic tiles, yellow candles and art in the gold spectrum. It feels cheery and is the heart of her home.

Oftentimes a stairwell or bathroom will occupy this space. Although neither are optimum, enhancements can be made to offset negative energy. Stairwells tend to pull the Chi down, or flow the Chi out. Therefore mirrors or a round faceted crystal can be placed the bottom of the stairs to send the flow of energy back up and circulating throughout the home. Bathroom drains should be kept closed at all times when not in use, a crystal in the center

of the bathroom also helps circulate the Chi. Both of these areas benefit from ceramics, art and wall colors in the yellow spectrum and rectangular and square shapes.

The Center is strengthened when we create personal paradises to live and work in, and when we cultivate a sense of being grounded and centered with ourselves.

Affirmations:

Remember that in Feng Shui, intent plays a significant role in enhancing any area of your home or business. That's why all enhancements need to be made with intentionality; written or stated affirmations are very important. It is also important for them to be expressed as if they are already happening.

Examples or affirmations for the Center area:

*"I feel centered and grounded at all times", "I am safe and secure in the loving embrace of Mother Earth", "I am at peace with myself and my decisions."*

We now have completed the Bagua. You can review any of the areas in past columns on my website:

<http://www.fengshuibymaria.com/newspaper-columns.html>

With this anniversary column its time for a change:

Here are some ways that Everyday Feng Shui is going to be shaking things up in future columns:

I will be delving deeper into the Feng Shui principles for specific rooms in your home, and will feature a section called "Feng Shui on a Shoestring" demonstrating that creating a personal paradise doesn't have to sap your pocketbook. Feel free to ask questions at any time.

Another change – I now have a new photograph. Take a look here and soon on my website. I would love to get your feedback!

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

\* **I NOW 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.

I will be teaching one more 3 hour classe through the Benicia Parks and Recreation this summer:

Sat. July 21<sup>st</sup> – 9:00 am

The Parks and Recreation Guide is now available, if you'd like to register. (Participants will receive \$40 off a home consultation.) I will also be teaching classes on Sept. 15 and Nov. 3 - Mark your calendars and invite friends.

Until then...Blessings!

**Maria McCullough - Bio**

Maria McCullough, a Benicia resident, is the owner / founder of **Feng Shui by Maria** ([www.fengshuibymaria.com](http://www.fengshuibymaria.com)) and is a speaker and educator with over 15 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."