

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria
June Column

Dealing With Life's Challenges the Feng Shui Way

We had just spent a lovely weekend with our daughter and grandchildren only to arrive home to our upstairs toilet overflowing. We arrived to find an inch of standing water in our upstairs bathroom and water pouring down the closet of our downstairs bedroom. Everything was wet and destroyed! The restoration company was here until 2:30 am and we have industrial fans drying our walls everywhere.

Has an unexpected life challenge ever happened to you?

We practice all the Feng Shui principles and our house feels like our "personal paradise," so why do these challenges happen and how can we deal with them?

Just practicing Feng Shui does not automatically absolve you from life's challenges, but it certainly helps you navigate through them easier.

There are three parts to Feng Shui:

- 1) The enhancement you make with the 5 Feng Shui elements in the nine Bagua areas of your home
- 2) The affirmations and visualizations you state and/or write declaring your intent
- 3) The lessons you need in life to help you through your journey

The first two are what Feng Shui is all about; how you create the positive energy flow and harmony to help you achieve your life's goals. The third is what some people may refer to as karma or destiny. Yet, even though these lessons, or challenges, seem painful and inconvenient they can also be blessings in disguise if you use Feng Shui and a positive attitude to help overcome and learn from them.

With the right mental attitude we can completely reframe the way we experience challenges, and can come to view them as some of our most valuable life experiences.

When faced with a challenge ask yourself:

- 1) What can I learn from this?
- 2) How can this strengthen me?
- 3) How can I use this to my advantage?
- 4) How can I use this to help others?
- 5) What would make this a worthwhile experience?
- 6) What Feng Shui technique could I use to help move the energy?

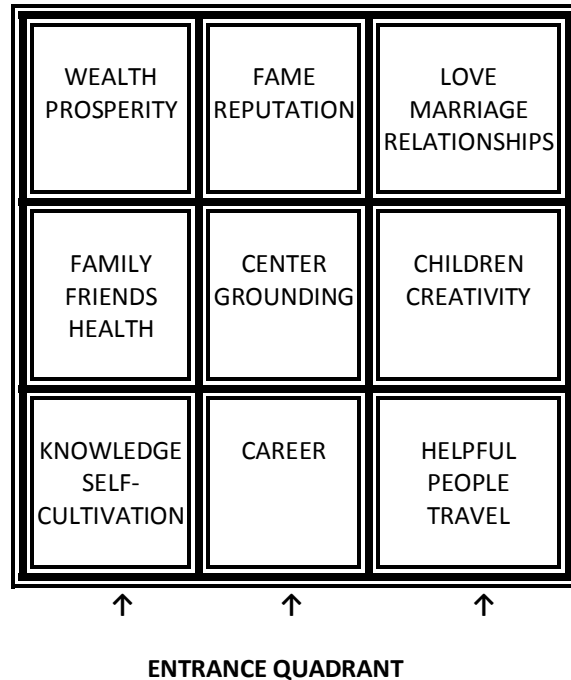
Challenging circumstances are part of life, that's not going to change. Accept the fact that challenges happened to teach you something, to push you to grow, and to encourage you to change. Use this as an opportunity to successfully change yourself for the better. Your attitude and perception are something that you create. They are not dictated by your circumstances. You always have a choice! So, the real question here is this, will you choose to look for a blessing in every challenge?

At this point my husband and I chose to be Zen about this latest crisis. We dealt with the insurance company and contractors and realized that this will take some time to repair. We accepted patience; we began to breathe, counted our blessings and asked ourselves the questions. We learned that we have too much stuff stored in the bedroom and closet and that this is a perfect time to cull and either donate or throw away our excess clutter. It has strengthened the bond between my husband and I as we make this journey together. We can take advantage of the situation by applying what I know about Feng Shui and attitude, buying a new toilet and possibly redecorating the bathroom. I can help others by sharing how Feng Shui and attitude can help overcome a challenge, and it will be a worthwhile experience once the rooms are replaced and redesigned.

Using Feng Shui to help overcome a challenge:

Wherever the challenge is in your house or what part of your life it affects, look to the Feng Shui Bagua and the 5 elements to enhance the area.

In the Feng Shui the Bagua comes from the Chinese philosophy, "The I Ching," and literally means "eight trigrams with the center for grounding."



In our case the damage was in the Family, Friends and Health area so we placed our enhancement there. If your challenge is with the other areas such as love, children, travel etc. you would refer to the diagram and place your enhancements accordingly.

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 the interplay of all five elements occurs; therefore wherever the challenge occurs I immediately create a beautiful display using a representation of all five elements.

The Wood Element:

- Wooden furniture and accessories, wooden paneling and decks
- Plants (including silk, plastic or dried) or art depicting landscapes, gardens, flowers or floral prints
- Art Columnar shapes and stripes
- Green and blue color spectrum

The Fire Element:

- All lighting (electrical, candles and natural)
- Art that depicts people, animals, sunshine or fire
- Shapes such as triangles, pyramids or cones
- Red color spectrum

The Earth Element:

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

The Metal Element:

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

The Water Element:

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

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. 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.

For our personal water challenge, I immediately placed one 5 element display on the broken toilet, and another in front of the demolished closet. (I removed them each time contractors were here, and then replaced when they left until the work is done.)

My display:

- Large yellow orchid (Yellow color and earthenware pot- **Earth**, the plant – **Wood**)
- White circular candle in metal candle holder (White, circular and metal – **Metal**)
- Red Candle (red color and fire – **Fire**)
- Set it all on a black cloth (black color – **Water**)

Affirmations:

I then wrote the following affirmation and placed it under both pots. *"Our water issue is repaired quickly, efficiently and at little cost to us. We are able to cull, replace and feel renewed energy and opportunities."*

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 as well as for them to be expressed as if they are already happening.

The energy shifted almost immediately and we have already set up a schedule for repair. We took a break from the chaos and enjoyed a trip to visit family in Italy, feeling comfortable that the work will be handled upon our return.

Feng Shui at Work:

I advised a client who was having major reconstruction to her home to place a small table displaying all 5 elements in her Helpful People area, with an affirmation. She called me stating that after doing this, all facets of the construction went very smoothly. A few years ago my husband and I were having our deck redone –so taking my own advice, I placed a metal tray, (Metal) with a glass vase (Glass) holding a yellow flower (Wood and Earth) and a red fan (Fire) in my Helpful People area for more support. The project was completed smoothly, our contractors were wonderful, and the deck looks beautiful.

Sometimes the uncomfortable things in life are there to teach us lessons because to go through a change of habit, we need to feel uncomfortable. You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control your attitude toward what happens to you and you can use Feng Shui to support your energy, and in that, you will be mastering change rather than allowing it to master you.

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, or Facebook "Feng Shui by Maria".

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."