

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria
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The Wood Element: Create Stillness and Healing

The brief rains gave life to my garden, and my roses have exploded. I am surrounded by their beauty and fragrance. Observing the spectacle, I am also reminded of their representation of the Feng Shui Wood Element with its calming and healing power. For centuries plants have been used topically and internally for medicinal purposes, but in Feng Shui just the act of surrounding yourself with the Wood Element through healthy plants and beautiful flowers is known to calm your body and improve your health.

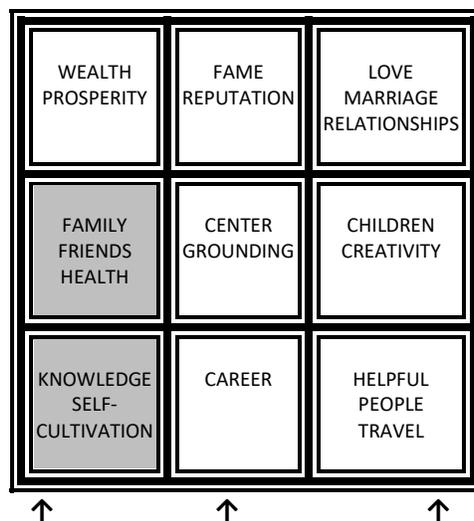
The Wood Element is one of the five important Feng Shui elements, along with Water, Fire, Metal and Earth. When in balance Wood enhances trust, originality, spirituality, stillness, new growth and ideas. Think of a peaceful wooded area and a tree of knowledge. This element is not just represented literally by a piece of wood; 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 the wood element in your environment.

The Wood Element is found in:

- Anything made of wood; wooden furniture, 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 Wood Element and the Bagua

Although all areas of your Feng Shui home lend themselves to harmony, there are two Bagua areas that are specifically represented by this element; the left front section of the structure is particularly related to stillness, and the left middle section is related to health. In the Feng Shui Bagua (Ba-gua) Map, which comes from the Chinese philosophy “The I Ching,” and literally means “eight trigrams”, with the center as the grounding area these areas are referred to as the “Knowledge and Self Cultivation,” and the “Health, Family and Friends” areas. They operate under the premise that we assimilate knowledge best when we also cultivate a peaceful mind by practicing some form of regular “keeping still.” This can be accomplished through meditation, contemplation, and introspection. This level of stillness and introspection helps to keep you balanced and in good health. For good harmony and balance a little of the wood element should also be placed in every other area of your home or business.



ENTRANCE QUADRANT

Wood Element Enhancements for the Knowledge and Self Cultivation Area:

- * Keep this area clutter free, since clutter does not act to soothe the mind
- * Colors – any hue of blues and greens
- * Items in the shape of columns or stripes
- * Art representing calm landscapes such as mountains, woods, or pictures of mentors or wise people, and/or representations of your field of study
- * Wooden tables or bookcases holding books, tapes or material being studied
- * Healthy plants with rounded soft leaves

Wood Element Enhancements for your Health/Family/Friends Area – Improving Health

The energy in your home can help you achieve better health. The Health/ Family/Friends area is particularly associated with “strength and good health.” The healthier we are, the more options we have to enjoy life. Enhancements in this area are particularly helpful if your health needs a boost, or if you’re planning or recovering from surgery. This is a very powerful area, and flowers are especially helpful.

- * Fresh cut flowers or flowering plants in all colors
- * Posters, paintings, photos and/or collages of ideal body images in a healthy state (such as people exercising or being active), healthy plants and flowers, gardens and landscapes
- * Items in the colors of blues, greens
- * All floral prints, such as floral linens, upholstery, and wallpaper
- * All things made from wood, including furniture and decorations
- * Quotes, affirmations and sayings pertaining to ideal health and family

Creating Vision Boards Areas to Enhance Health

If someone in your home is having health challenges, and is going through or recovering from surgery, activating the energy in the Health Area of your home is very important. You can do this easily by:

- * Decluttering the area
- * Placing a healthy flowering plant, or a bouquet of flowers (remember vibrant artificial flowers work just as well)
- * Placing pictures of the person in a healthy state enjoying sports or exhibiting health and joy
- * Burning blue or green candles
- * Writing or stating affirmations of the positive outcome

(If you have a two story house do this in the Health Area of both stories; for a more powerful cure you can also place flowers in the Health Area of every room.)

Remember that plants are the quintessential Ch'i enhancers for our homes. They provide us with the beauty and wonder of nature and help us stay connected and grounded to the natural world. Surround yourself with the Wood Element to help you embrace stillness which leads to a calm body and good health, “One cannot see one’s reflection in running water, but only in still water.” Chung Tzu

Affirmations and Inner Work:

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. Write or state affirmations as if they have already happened. Examples or affirmations for the Wood Element: *“I am a vibrantly healthy person”, “My medical procedures have been successful and I am now pain free and thriving”, “I am feeling calm and relishing in stillness.”*

Feng Shui at Work:

A student in one of my classes was concerned about her health issues and lack of energy. Once applying the Bagua to her home discovered that her Health Area was in her master bedroom closet. She was horrified to discover that her cluttered, messy closet was keeping her from achieving the vibrant health she desperately needed. She began a cleaning and decluttering regimen, donating many items (thereby giving them new life) and allowed herself the luxury of an empty shelf. She placed a lovely bouquet of silk flowers on the shelf (wood), hung a green 30mm round faceted crystal, and added a floral wallpaper strip (wood) at the top of the closet. All along she stated positive affirmations. She loves the change this had made; she is nourishing her energy each time she steps into her closet. While decluttering she found renewed energy and is now walking on a daily basis, eating better, is feeling much healthier, and is planning on nurturing other areas of her home.

A client had her health area in her garage. Each time she pulled in with her car the first thing she saw was her hot water heater, furnace and cat box. This was draining her on a daily basis. I recommended placing a bamboo screen (wood) in front of the hot water heater and furnace, attaching posters of healthy flowers and medicinal herbs (wood), moving the cat box and placing a large flowering orchid plant (wood) on the workbench. She did all this and also decluttered the garage. Now each time she drives in, her energy is nourished rather than drained. I see her at the gym on a regular basis and she looks great.

Our master bathroom is entirely in our Health area so as we design it I know it will be important to bring in the Wood Element. We're doing this through cherry wood cabinets, sage green walls, bamboo print wallpaper, pictures of Georgia O'Keefe flowers framed in wood, and of course an orchid or two. Our Vision Board expresses our successful final product. It feels good as we design it and I know it will feel better when we finish. I'll keep you posted!

Feng Shui on a Shoestring:

Feng Shui enhancements do not have to cost a great deal. Clearing your entrance of dead or diseased plants will halt negative energy from coming into your life. Bring in the Wood Element with just one beautiful, healthy, blooming plant to your home and make you affirmations and watch the shift occur.

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."