

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI
Feng Shui by Maria
September 2016 Column

Nourish the Tree of Knowledge with Feng Shui

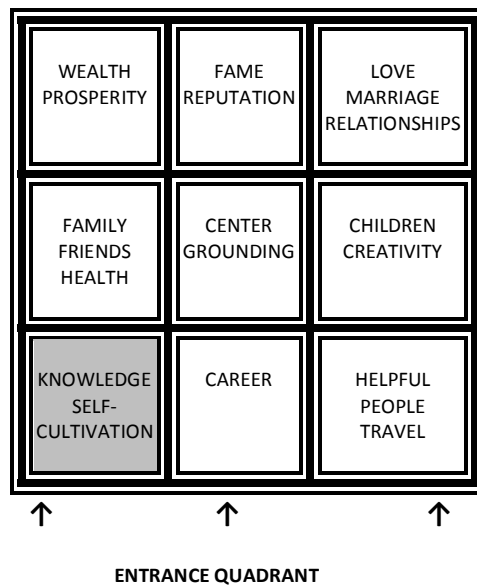
School has started! Many of my friends are posting pictures of their children’s first day back to the classroom. Do you have children going off to school? Are your teens leaving for college? Are you taking classes to learn a new skill or hitting a learning curve at work?

Did you know that you can give yourself and your family an intellectual boost through Feng Shui? Feng Shui teaches us that there is a direct link between a calm mind and an intelligent mind. We assimilate our knowledge best when we cultivate a peaceful mind through meditation, introspection and contemplation.

Although all areas of your home lend themselves to harmony; the left front section of the structure is particularly related to “Stillness and Knowledge.” In Feng Shui, the Bagua (Ba-gua) Map, represented as a grid of nine sectors comes from the Chinese philosophy, “The I Ching,” and literally means “eight trigrams”, with the Center acting as the grounding force. The Knowledge and Self Cultivation Area is located in the front left corner of your home or office. Knowledge is viewed as the seed of wisdom, therefore when we spend time keeping still, our field of knowledge will be lush and productive.

Whatever room your Knowledge and Self Cultivation area resides, applying some basic Feng Shui principles can help you create a peaceful sanctuary.

The Knowledge and Self Cultivation Area of Your Home or Office:



Enhancements in this area are particularly helpful if you are a student of any subject. Whether full time at a university, attending trainings or workshops to advance your career, or taking classes at your local recreation center, enhancing this area will help you achieve your goals. Not just for students per se, this area is also helpful to people in counseling or those engaging in any kind of self-growth activities, or you just want to cultivate a more peaceful mind or lifestyle.

The Bagua and the Elements

The 5 Feng Shui elements are considered the building blocks of everything physical on earth: Water, Wood, Fire, Earth, and Metal. Each is associated with an area in your home related to the Bagua. The element for the Knowledge area is Wood, and the colors are blues and greens. When in balance in your home wood enhances trust, originality, spirituality, new growth and ideas.

Last month we learned that the Career area (front center) is governed by the water element. Since all the elements are interrelated and work to nourish each other, the water then feeds the wood element to the left of the Bagua and makes the tree of knowledge grow. Please visit my website to read last month's column on how to balance the water element to enhance your career.

The Wood Element, represented in nature by the tree, is found in:

Wooden furniture and accessories, wooden paneling and decks, all indoor and outdoor plants (including silk, plastic or dried), plant based cloth and textiles, floral prints, art depicting landscapes, gardens, plants and flowers, columnar shapes and stripes, the green and blue color spectrum, and can be used both inside and outside your home or business.

Enhancements for energizing Knowledge and Self Cultivation inside your home or business:

- * 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

Enhancements for energizing Knowledge and Self Cultivation outside your home or business:

- * This area is best enhanced outside with beautiful lush, healthy plants
- * Statues of spiritual guides, or blue/green gazing balls
- * A wooden or wicker bench or seating area for quiet reflection

Note: If this is where your front door is located, the Ch'i, the vital energy, is invited to flow in through a peaceful, serene entrance.

A Missing Knowledge Area:

If your knowledge area is missing from your floor plan, I recommend anchoring this area by one or a combination of the following: planting a lush meditative garden, adding a bench or quiet seating area, placing a statue or gazing ball in the corner. The key is to complete the space, and simultaneously create a peaceful environment.

Feng Shui at work:

A client was finishing nursing school, but was feeling stuck. The knowledge area was conveniently located in her study which unfortunately was used for storage and very cluttered. Upon my recommendation, she decluttered and organized the room; passing unused and unneeded items on, making room for her new career. She enhanced it with the color sage green, a picture of a forest, an orchid, a wooden bookcase for all her nursing books, inspirational books and small wooden figurines. The room became of calm and soothing. She added a wooden desk where she could peacefully study, and a vision board with pictures of nurses and hospitals. She has since graduated and is enjoying her new career as a health care professional.

Another client was concerned that her daughter was struggling with school. Her room happened to be located in the front left corner, but was painted a bright purple and decorated with loud rock posters and busy curtains and bedding. We discussed the need to calm the room down to help her succeed at school. Her daughter chose a light blue wall tone, wooden furniture and a beautiful floral bedspread and curtains. We wanted to ensure that her bedroom still spoke to her as an individual, while helping her to decompress, energize and thrive. She organized all her school supplies on her shelves, hung pictures of calming landscapes as well as pictures of her school achievements. (She still has a few rock posters hanging up in her fame and creativity areas – she is a teenager after all). Her mother called me at the start of school this year to tell me that she's off to a successful start.

In my home, I am missing part of the Knowledge area, as it is outside of the Bagua, while the rest is in my master bedroom. To anchor it I placed a blue/green glass gazing ball at the exact location of the missing corner, and have a flower garden completing the space outside of the bedroom window. The bedroom was a challenge, because blues and greens are too cool for a bedroom (not enough fire). Ideal colors for bedroom walls are the entire spectrum of skin tones from light cream to dark browns. I had the challenge of bringing in the cool wood element, and yet keeping the fiery passion of the bedroom. To keep the serenity of the Knowledge area I brought in many wood pieces and kept the lights dim. My favorite meditative spot in the house is a brown wicker chair and ottoman in the corner. This is where I love to sit, read and "be still". I brought in more wood through a large artificial ficus tree, and a few floral arrangements. The walls are a light mushroom color. To maintain the fire element needed in a bedroom, I hung a red tone picture of a pair of Georgia O'Keefe poppies, pictures of my husband and I, and added pairs of items such as candles, figurines and accents of red.

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 Knowledge and Self Cultivation area:

"I am peaceful and calm, and share knowledge with others," "My children are succeeding in their classes," "I feel confident with my new skills at work."

Feng Shui on a Shoestring:

Feng Shui enhancements do not have to cost a great deal. Declutter your Knowledge area, and then begin enhancing by placing a book representing your course of study and a healthy plant. Watch the energy begin to shift.

I wish you and your family a calm and productive school year, with many opportunities to celebrate your successes and accomplishments.

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".

* **I have a BLOG** – Just go to the website and click on "Blog": I will respond to your questions quickly.

I will be teaching a series of 4 Tuesday classes through Acalanes Adult Education in Walnut Creek beginning on Sept. 20, from 1-3 pm. To register go to: acalanes.k12.ca.us/adulted or call 925-280-3980 (ext. 8001)

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."