

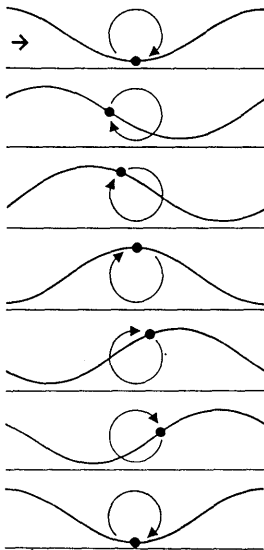


## The Power of Chi

Angel Thompson

In ancient times, people believed the world and everything in it was inhabited by an indefinable quality that infused and animated all life. It was known as breath, air, energy, spirit, soul, *prana* to the Hindus, *spiritus* to Catholics, *pneuma* to the Greeks, *ruah* to the Hebrews, and *Chi* to the Chinese.<sup>1</sup>

Chi is an energetic, formative principle that is spontaneously expressed through life. It gives life to the elements of nature in their various forms, shapes, colors, odors, and tastes. Chi is the unifying principle of energy, linking all things, from a grain of sand to a tear on a baby's cheek.



This life force energy is carried by currents of Feng (wind) and Shui (water). Rain, snow, hurricanes, tornadoes, and sunlight bring Chi to the earth from the cosmos, while the earth releases it in the form of wave action, natural springs, geysers, volcanoes, and earthquakes. The earth gives signals about its supply of Chi. If vegetation is lush, the surface has abundant Chi; where the land is dry and cracked, Chi resides deep within the earth and is harder to access.

<sup>1</sup>

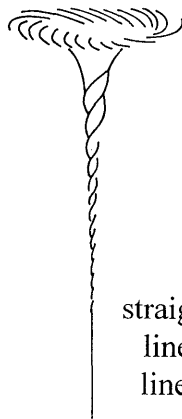
The Chinese philosopher Hsu said that Chi comes from "ling," which are tiny, airborne particles or molecular charges that in circulate the universe and enter the womb at conception. When we are born, ling becomes Chi; when we die, our Chi returns to the limitless universal ling.

## **The Cycle of Chi**

The cycle of Chi can be compared to the act of filling a balloon with air. The first phase is abundant and strong, like breath forcing air into the balloon and giving it form. The second phase or breath is not as strong, but it pushes more air into the balloon. The third strains to complete the task; the balloon is full and has reached its potential. The fourth phase marks the end of the cycle. Having reached its potential, the balloon must eventually deflate or burst; in essence, it must die, thus completing the cycle.

### **Chi in Motion**

Chi flows fast, slow, up, down, in, out, high, low, and deep or shallow. It rises, falls, inflates, deflates, sinks, rises, bends, twists, and curls. It travels along curved, crooked, wavy, winding or straight lines, in spirals, mazes, and labyrinths. It disperses into the wind and pulses through electrical lines.



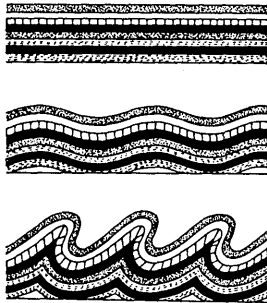
Chi instigates motion, while gravity holds objects to the earth. Thus, Chi and gravity are partners, working together to maintain stability in the midst of motion. The presence of sufficient, balanced, and active Chi promotes a healthy environment and a healthy body. To get a true feeling for this magical energy, draw the following lines and note how you *feel* as you create each shape:

straight ● crooked ● crossing ● meandering lines ● wavy lines,  
lines passing through a point ● lines radiating from a point  
lines converging on a point ● tangent lines creating a circle

### **Negative Chi**

Negative Chi is called *Sha*. It is the carrier of unfavorable currents that adversely affect you. Sha seeps, drips, and oozes through cracks, holes, and broken windows. It accumulates and stagnates in dead corners and sharp angles. It gains speed when it is forced into straight lines. It occurs in places dense with people, animals, or things, like barnyards, overcrowded elevators, trains, planes, and rooms.

Sha is aggravated by bad smells, bright glaring lights, and loud irritating noises. It is the cold wind blowing at night and the aura surrounding dead or dying things. It can be seen, smelled, heard, felt, tasted, and sensed by intuition. It is sharp, rotten, contaminated, polluted, toxic, vile, painful, and dangerous. It is external or internal, apparent or hidden, and it affects physical, mental, spiritual, and social conditions.



Sha is also produced on a grand scale by geographical faults and fissures in the earth. Tension rises to the surface and escapes in the form of earthquakes, shaking, and splitting. These fault lines exist across the globe; no place is immune to Sha.

Known fault lines lie in geographical areas with a specific pattern of human behavior. Tension-filled lives are common to those who live near the fault in New York City. Southern Californians living near the San Andreas fault line are subject to shaky standards; the rich and famous come and go as quickly as the latest trends. San Francisco, located on the same fault, has a dynamic, *ground-breaking* tension. This tension was first expressed by the gold prospectors of 1849, and it still is today by those who lead the way in promoting gay rights.

### Secret Arrows



Chi travels in a curve. When it is forced into a straight line, it acts like a bullet from a gun or an arrow from a bow that threatens to wound anything at the receiving end. Feng Shui strives to protect a space or site from these secret arrows.<sup>2</sup>

Urban environments are filled with secret arrows, as most cities and structures are built on the principles of straight lines. Roads, driveways,

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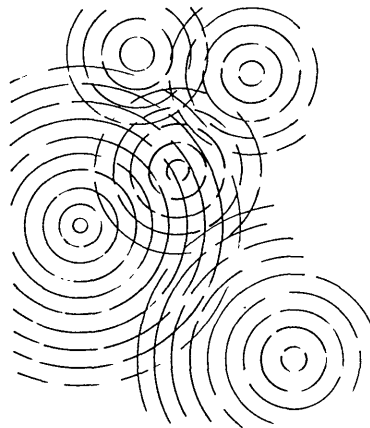
<sup>2</sup> Please refer to "Contemporary Architectural Design," p. 143.

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pathways, walkways, and sidewalks are usually straight. Buildings are crowded together so their roof lines point at each other. There is a profusion of corners, walls, poles, television antennas, billboards, tunnels, railroad tracks, trees, signposts, crosses on churches, and other straight or angular features capable of producing secret arrows.

Any straight line leading towards the front door of a house, directs Sha to the site. Straight lines that lead directly towards a main entry or that come almost to the entry and then turn to make a sharp right angle are especially dangerous as they combine the effects of Sha and secret arrows. The energy becomes confused and congested.<sup>3</sup>

Inside, straight lines come from the corners of other desks, cabinets or tables and can also come from long, narrow corridors or from the corners of hallways. These straight lines or secret arrows stab at anything in their path, creating a feeling of pressure, tension, conflict, and anxiety.



*The manager of a busy bookstore reported that she was under constant pressure. The customers, her friends, and everyone who came into the store seemed to take their complaints to her. Her desk was squeezed into a narrow corner, so she had no maneuvering ability. Even worse were the secret arrows pointing from a half wall on one side and the edge of a copy machine on the other. Both were aimed at her desk and stabbing her in the middle of her back.*

Make sure no straight lines, sharp angles, or points are directed toward your desk, bed, or major sitting area. It is fairly easy to find and protect a space from secret arrows. If you can, remove the arrow. If it is not architecturally or logically possible, create a barrier between you and the arrow. Use artwork, plants, objects, pots, boxes, or anything that is appropriate to the space and is pleasing to you.

<sup>3</sup>

*For solutions to secret arrows, please refer to Earth Design: The Added Dimension.*

You can also neutralize, deflect, and send the arrow back to its source by placing a mirror with the reflective side towards the offending angle. The best shield is an element that controls the element of the arrow.<sup>4</sup> If you cannot move, shield, deflect or cover the arrow, move your body to a less vulnerable space.

### **Factors Affecting Chi**

Chi is affected by the abstract: form, shape, reflection, shadow, color, or pattern, and by the tangible: objects and all forms of matter. Chi is also transmitted through media: sound, light, heat, electricity, and weather conditions such as temperature, moisture, wind, thunder, lightning, rain, and snow.

Things you do not see or seldom notice can cause distortions that affect Chi: a smudge on a window, furniture placed half off a rug, a messy closet, accumulated garbage, a warped mirror that splits images, a broken chair, a blank wall, a cracked ceiling, and an uneven floor.

Chi influences your perception of reality and how you view the world. This influence, in turn, determines how others see and relate to you.

### **Excessive Chi**

Feng Shui advocates moderation over excess, a good maxim for life as well. Too much of anything, including Chi, causes an imbalance.

Did you ever think that having a spectacular view could be a problem? When the view extends 180 degrees or more, excessive, strong Chi floods the space, overpowering the interior. If your home or office has such a view, you may feel bewildered, confused about goals, relationships, your direction in life, or anxious and stressed by too much seeing, doing, going, talking, visiting, gossiping, thinking, reading, processing, or taking

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<sup>4</sup> Please refer to *"The Five Phases of Energy,"* p. 81.

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on too many responsibilities. If the excess is caused by a view of nature, place elements of nature between you and the Chi. If the view is of the city and its buildings, create barriers with layers of glass, crystals, water, lighting, and dark red or black colors.

Excess Chi is often found where the forces of elements meet. Mountain top homes are a good example. The wind, rain, and snow bombard the peaks, and you may feel as if you are being blown away. Active water near your house, such as the crashing surf, a rushing river, or a booming waterfall, can also be problematic. The atmosphere is charged with negative ions, which might throw off the electromagnetic field of the body, making you feel awash and adrift with energy.<sup>5</sup> A lot of glass should not be used in these settings. Wood or earth materials, colors, and shapes will mitigate the force of the Chi.<sup>6</sup>

If there is an excess of Chi from external influences that you cannot change, create layers or barriers between you and the oncoming Chi. Place plants, furniture, statues, baskets, or other decorative objects in three or five rows with larger objects in front of smaller ones to create the illusion of depth. Do this in a subtle, artistic way. Do not stack furniture against the windows as if you were barricading the space. Even if there is a fabulous view, consider covering the window with transparent fabric,<sup>7</sup> paper, or other materials that let in light but block out excessive Chi.

### **Insufficient or Weak Chi**

It is easy to spot where the Chi is weak, unavailable, or inaccessible. The environment is dark, dim, cold, moist, damp, silent, still, vague, diffused, confused, gloomy, irritating, spooky, empty, barren, broken, or dirty. Here you will find isolation, cold wind, clouds covering the sun, barren

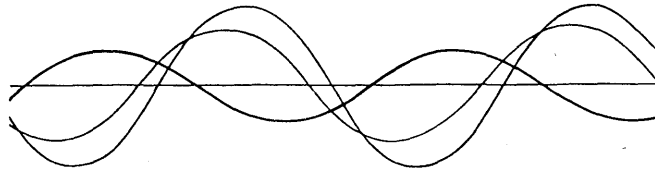
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<sup>5</sup> Please refer to "Energy Fields, Fragrance, and Feng Shui," p. 339 and "The Energetic Basis of Good Health," p. 293.

<sup>6</sup> Please refer to "The Five Phases of Energy," p. 81.

<sup>7</sup> One of my favorite decorative solutions is translucent pleated-shaped shades with a solar back. They control heat and still allow for the vista.

gardens, and sick, depressed people. When there is insufficient or weak Chi, there is no energy for life. Health, business, love, and every area of life is diminished. It is not a good idea to build or live where Chi is weak or inaccessible because there is not enough energy to support life.



### **The Flow of Chi**

In Feng Shui, as in life, the first consideration is Chi. Chi is life and you want healthy, moving Chi in your home. To discover how Chi moves through a space, do this exercise: walk slowly from your driveway or path to your entryway, through your home and out the back door. As you move, be directed by your intuitive flow.

Once you have determined the flow of traffic, you will be able to tell how Chi flows in your home. If there are obstacles of any kind, Chi flow is negatively affected. People adapt immediately to environments, and so they tend to step over boxes, shove bags aside, or leave clothes lying around. All these habits inhibit, obstruct, or block the flow of Chi, causing tension, poor health, or worse for the inhabitants.

Remove obstacles from the flow of Chi or re-direct it by using lights, mirrors, colors, symbols, or other accessories that attract Chi. Then cover, block, deflect, disburse, break-up, or remove any secret arrows caused by corners, angles, straight lines, beams, poles, trees, blank walls, or narrow corridors. Create a traffic pattern natural to Chi.

### **Bringing Chi into Your Space**

When Chi is not accessible, you must invite it into your space and encourage it to stay. Chi is attracted by light, living things, and objects that catch your eye, like a beautiful painting. It is attracted to bold colors, pleasant sounds, running water, plants, and flowers. Whatever pleasantly attracts your attention, attracts Chi.

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Movement stimulates Chi. Anything that moves can be used to stimulate Chi. When Chi gets stuck, it gets heavy and dense. Use something sharp, like a pointed leaf plant or a lamp on a tall, thin pole to stimulate Chi; the concept is similar to acupuncture.<sup>8</sup> Be careful with the placement of this object because the points can also act like secret arrows, attacking anyone who is seated or walking through its vicinity. Mirrors, glass, or shiny objects also stimulate Chi by sending light into dark corners where Chi often gets stuck.

Chi likes plants, water, light, heat, safety, color, reflection, movement, and especially curved spaces where it can circulate and then move on. Straight corridors, walkways, traffic patterns, and straight edges can be coaxied into curves with round occasional tables, round vases, round pillows, circular patterned materials, or round rugs. The maxim to remember is:

**If you are attracted to a space, Chi will be too.**



Free-flowing Chi is like a river stocked with the gifts of long life, prosperity, and health. Make sure there is plentiful Chi that flows freely through your space. It will bring you every rich treasure you deserve.

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<sup>8</sup>

Please refer to "Energy Systems and Feng Shui," p 275.



**Excerpted from  
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