



Using Feng Shui to Create Health

Andrew and Sally Fretwell

Feng Shui and traditional Chinese medicine are two highly compatible disciplines. Both are based on the same fundamental principles of energy movement. The ancient scholars of China were keen observers of nature and her cycles. From these observations, they created a model of the universe based on two natural energy forces: one dark, passive, and contracting or *yin*, and one light, active, and expanding or *yang*. These two forces produced all known phenomena, which was subsequently divided into the five elements: *earth*, *water*, *wood*, *fire*, and *metal*. Both Oriental medicine and Feng Shui use the yin/yang and the five element principles as diagnostic tools.

Chinese medicine views the physical body as composed of many subtle energy fields. Illness is a result of these fields becoming distorted. These imbalances are due to a wide range of factors: prenatal shock, toxins in the environment, poor lifestyle habits, and inappropriate living spaces are just a few. They distort the “core frequency,”¹ the prime impulse for all life - the deepest energetic part of each individual and of all nature. In Chinese medicine, the doctor determines the underlying energetic imbalance and uses acupuncture, herbs, and lifestyle advice to create health and balance.

Feng Shui works in a similar way. Physical structures influence you on a subtle energetic level. If you have a strong constitution and good health but are living or working in an environment that has a distorted energetic vibration,² that imbalance will eventually weaken your physical state.

¹ Core Frequency is a term that Audrey Ryan, a healer of extraordinary power, uses to describe the unique vibration of the individual and the universe.

² *A distorted energetic vibration of a space, like that of a body, can be caused by many factors, such as an inappropriate layout or a poor site location. Please refer to “Contemporary Architectural Design,” p. 143.*

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Feng Shui principles allow you to identify the source of the imbalance in your environment and suggest cures to bring back balance and harmony. Feng Shui recommendations must be tailored to each individual, addressing their unique core frequency and their specific space or environment.

The link between Health and Your living Space

These two powerful arts, Feng Shui and Oriental medicine, can be used in tandem to create optimum living and health conditions. The following are simple tools you can use to integrate them into your life to achieve balance and harmony.

The Five Elements

The five elements: earth, metal, water, wood, and fire are archetypes or representations of all aspects of life's experiences. Humans and all of life - from the smallest sub-atomic particle to the largest spinning galaxy - go through continuous cycles: birth to death, dawn to dusk, the seasons of the year. These cycles can all be represented by the interaction of the five elements.

Because the elements also identify and highlight which organs or systems are out of balance, they become an incredible diagnostic tool for your health and are also useful for self empowerment. In addition to bodily functions, specific emotions, psychological qualities, and personality traits are associated with these five elements. By using them, you can simultaneously identify body, mind, and spirit issues that need to be resolved.

Below are definitions of each of the elements. The first column shows the effects when that particular element is stressed or when the body and organs are working harder than they are expected to work. The second column shows when they are balanced and function optimally.

Look through the lists and mark off which qualities or health issues apply to you. Use the lists for a general idea of which elements need support. For example, if you are always getting colds, look at the lungs and the metal element and also at earth with its relationship to the immune and lymphatic systems.

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Water - Stressed

Kidney/bladder problems
Fearful/phobias
Low back pain, sciatica
Impotence/frigidity
Holding on to things
Dissatisfaction with life's path
Frequent urination
Dark shadow/bags under the eyes
Aversion to cold
Workaholic
Water retention
Disorders of the central nervous system

Wood - Stressed

Liver/gallbladder problems
Anger/complete absence of it
Impatience/easily frustrated
Always on edge
Eye problems
Problems with equilibrium/coordination
Tendon problems
Lack of flexibility/stiffness
Addicted to doing
Tension cramps, especially in the shoulders
Muscle spasms
Bitter taste in mouth
Irregular menses

Fire - Stressed

Heart/small intestine problems
Cardiovascular diseases
Insomnia
Restlessness, forgetfulness
Hypersensitive
Over excited/craves stimulants
Speech disorders
Exuberant in public/depressed when alone
Hard hearted
Pain in chest region

Water - Balanced

Happy with life's journey
The ability to flow with life
Vitality
Adaptable
Strong will power
Gentleness

Wood - Balanced

Patience
Flexibility mentally
and physically
Good organizer/planner
and decision maker
Perform well under pressure
Clear thinking
Bold and decisive

Fire - Balanced

Feeling fulfilled
Lively
Charismatic
Enthusiastic
Ability to sense rhythm of
any experience
Knows one's limits
Loving and caring

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Earth - Stressed

Stomach/pancreas/spleen problems
Worry, always thinking
Immune system problems
Digestive problems: gas/belching
Lack of absorption
Lymphatic problems
Loose bowels
Anemia
Hemorrhoids
Overweight or under
Always thinking of food
Over nurturing
Inability to receive
Feeling stuck/can not move forward

Earth - Balanced

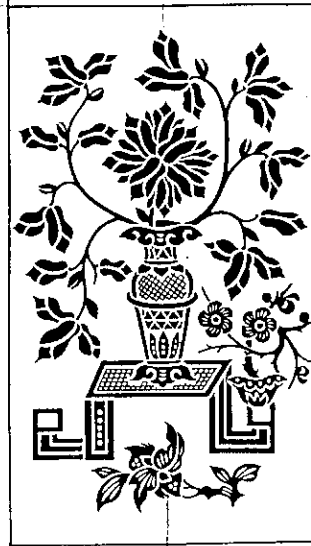
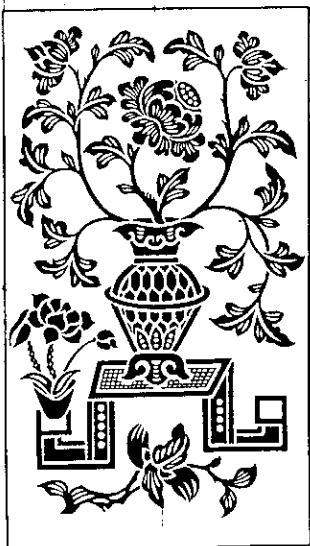
Grounded/peaceful
Good imagination
Deep understanding
and compassion
Able to go a long time
between meals without
craving food.
Able to nurture others
without depleting self
Sympathy
Good digestion
Ability to delegate

Metal - Stressed

Lung/large intestine problems
Sorrow
Isolation
Cynicism
Asthma
Skin allergies/problems
Hay fever
Judgmental/narrow viewpoint

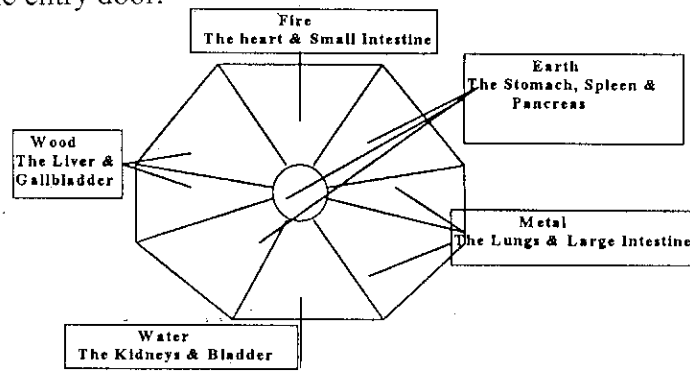
Metal - Balanced

Clarity
Optimism
Organized
The ability to let go
Courage
The ability to create order
out of chaos
Good aerobic ability



Feng Shui Recommendations

Based on the information from the lists, you have now identified which elements are out of balance in your body and life. To bring them back into harmony, you can make inner adjustments based on lifestyle advice and outer adjustments based on Feng Shui recommendations.³ To begin implementing changes, overlay the Bagua diagram on your home or on any individual room. Place the central circle in the center of your room or home. The fire area of the Bagua will always be at 12 o'clock in relation to the entry door.



Look around your home or office for a correlation to the unbalanced element you have found. Sometimes it will not be obvious, but there will always be something. The following example will illustrate how this process works.

Jean was suffering with lower back pain, pain in the ovaries, and a very stressed and hectic life-style. The elemental influence at the time of birth was metal.⁴ Metal people are generally overachievers and find it difficult to relax. Their metal nature creates a more serious outlook, and they tend to neglect the lighter side of life. Using the lists of stressed/balanced elements, we found that the first two symptoms were related to the

³ If you require a more in-depth evaluation, contact a qualified Chinese physician.

⁴ In our work, we also use the birth date of the client to determine their elemental influence at the time of birth. Yakashi Yoshikawa's *The Ki*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1995 is a good reference book for more information.

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water element and the last to fire. We confirmed through Oriental diagnosis that the kidneys/adrenal glands and reproductive organs were all under stress.

In her apartment, the front door was in the water position of the Bagua. From there, our attention was drawn down a long narrow corridor and out a back window that was in the fire position. Her home was channeling excessive Chi along this corridor; her home was being overly charged along the central water/fire area of the Bagua.

Our recommendation was to add a soft fabric over the entry-way or a screen to the corridor to allow Chi to move in a more balanced way. On a physical level, we suggested she change from her very rigid metal-type exercise regime to a fluid, water-type one such as in-line skating. We also suggested that she add more routine to her life and make some dietary changes. Long relaxing baths in the evening were prescribed as well. Two weeks later, she phoned to say that all her physical symptoms had disappeared.

Recommendations for Stressed Water

In the water area of the Bagua, look for stagnation: clutter, broken objects, unfinished business, dirt, stuck doors, and/or leaky or bad plumbing in any area of the home. Look for over-stimulation or over-use of water elements in this area: large fish tanks, fountains, pictures of water, or over-emphasis on the color blue. To help free up water energy, try painting, free-form dancing, or any activity that develops flow and dispels fears.

On the psychological level, evaluate your life path. Are you satisfied with the direction toward which you are moving? Ask for support and practice letting go.

In addition, keep your kidneys and lower back warm. Stay away from coffee; it has a strong effect on the adrenal glands. Avoid excessive salt intake, and drink only when thirsty.

Recommendations for Stressed Wood

In the wood area of the Bagua, look for stagnation. Remove artifacts that give the impression of stiffness and immobility, such as heavy pieces of furniture. Replace them with lighter, more flexible pieces. Bamboo is a good material to use for this area.

Develop a more flexible approach to life and learn to relax. This could mean getting regular massages and gently exercising. Long walks in nature help to balance the wood element. Resolve old feelings of anger.

In addition, limit your intake of animal foods. Increase fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Avoid an excess of greasy foods, fat, cholesterol, and alcohol because they put stress on the liver. Adding the element of silliness and game playing can be very therapeutic.

Recommendations for Stressed Fire

In the fire area of the Bagua, look for over-stimulation: a high concentration of electrical objects in one place: televisions, air conditioners, stereo; many doors; reflected images that are distorted; pictures that are busy and have a lot of activity. Try introducing calm, peaceful images and things that uplift and inspire. Beautiful artwork and paintings work very well here.

Create a rhythm in your life. Make order; focus on one thing until it is completed. Understand that fulfillment comes from a balanced approach to life. Introduce Tai Chi into your schedule for physical as well as spiritual balance. Take time to read and do things that you truly enjoy. In addition, eat at regular times, and always sit to eat. Avoid all stimulants, especially coffee and alcohol.

Recommendations for Stressed Earth

In the earth areas of the Bagua, look for accumulation. Clear out everything that no longer serves you. House cleaning is very good for stressed earth. Create space and allow energy to move. In the bedroom and living room, make sure that the open space in the room balances the

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amount of furniture and objects. If things look full, create more space for movement. Get organized; complete any unfinished paperwork or projects.

Learn how to receive; if someone does you a good turn, accept it graciously without feeling indebted. Commit to completing things. Set easily attainable goals, and once they are achieved, congratulate yourself. Set boundaries and stick to them; learn how to delegate. Nurture yourself the way you nurture others and practice self love.

In addition, practice any sport or exercise that physically challenges you.

Recommendations for Stressed Metal

In the metal area of the Bagua, and in the entire space as well, look for an overly pristine, cold, or an excessively ordered approach to design. Add elements of fun, color, and comfort. Avoid pictures that suggest isolation and aloneness; replace them with warmer, more joyful pieces. Because the metal element relates to contraction and solidity, add the water element to help things become more fluid. Do not over use white; add more terra cotta or earth and water colors.

Understand that life also needs spontaneity and joy. Learn how *not* to do; discover the joy of floating down life's stream. Celebrate life; watch comedies with friends. Spend more time with others, especially children. Allow yourself to be vulnerable and to express deep feelings.

In addition, scrub the skin all over your body everyday with a hot damp cotton wash cloth. Do exercises that allow the lungs and heart to open. (The bridge pose in yoga is very effective.) Eat foods rich in chlorophyll: leafy green vegetables, blue green algae, alfalfa.

While Oriental medicine and Feng Shui give you effective tools to bring your body and environment into balance, the most important evaluation that you can make is *that you are OK right now*. Your true self is perfect. It is admirable to want to improve your physical and emotional life so your perfection shines through, but to love, respect, and accept yourself as you are is the best Feng Shui you can ever practice.

Excerpted from
The Feng Shui Anthology

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In *The Feng Shui Anthology*, when the **Bagua** is discussed, **only the Life-Aspiration Energies are mentioned** (except in Derek Walter's article.). **To work with the Bagua and to maximize your Feng Shui with the information of all the masters, you must include your 8) Best Directions and 9) Flying Star Energies.**

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