

## **Zen Feng Shui** **Finding Place of Mind at Home**

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“The most important thing for us in building our new house is to have it face southwest<sup>1</sup> because our relationship is our number one concern,” said a couple as they considered site orientation of their house. “Of course,” they added, “If we don’t make enough money, it will damage our marriage, so we should face the house to the southeast to optimize our wealth. Then again, if our careers aren’t highly visible, we won’t make enough money to ensure that our marriage lasts, so of course we will construct the house with a red, double door to the south. That should make our goals very clear.” After listening to my clients, I knew exactly what I had to do next: organize their scattered energies and determine their *real* needs.

The hardest part of Feng Shui is deciding what part of your life to improve first. Your house, office, or neighborhood are essentially mirrors of what you have chosen to do with your life. You may ignore these reflected images, thinking that they are something apart from yourself, when in fact your rooms and possessions are the most intimate reflection of your connection to the universe.

Modern Feng Shui practices are a collection of strategies to guide you on your life’s path toward better health and longer life, greater riches, and happiness. The three Chinese gods: Wealth, Longevity and Happiness, are represented by statues or pictures in many Chinese homes because they collectively reflect the main aspirations in Chinese culture. A great deal of Feng Shui has been devised and tested specifically to help attain the treasures of the Wealth, Longevity, and Happiness triad.

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<sup>1</sup> Within a space, specific compass points have corresponding life energies. Cures are implemented when that energy is not in balance. *For additional information, please refer to “The Bagua,” p. 35.*

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The Chinese place strong emphasis on the family: not only children, parents, and grandparents, but the extended clan as well. In China and all of East Asia, the value of the collective group is held in higher esteem than the individual. In Western culture, individual achievement has been pushed into the forefront. Romance, relationships, travel, career success, and having few or no children have become the most important life goals.

Whether these common societal values have an Eastern or Western flavor, each culture strives for something higher, something more transcendental, and Feng Shui is a bridge to get there. There are many types of Feng Shui inspired by Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist teachings. Over the course of the last 3,000 years, Feng Shui has helped people reach higher goals: scholarly service to society, human heartedness, excellence in the arts, oneness with nature, radiant compassion, supreme enlightenment, and immortality.

There is a Feng Shui system, born of the union of Taoism and Buddhism, called Zen Feng Shui. In China, Korea, and Japan, Zen concepts were at the center of transforming music, art, and literature. Naturally, Feng Shui as an essential art of harmonious living was also transformed into a practice that uses forms, symbols, and energies to unmask the subtlest force of place, the mind.

Zen Feng Shui encourages everyone to elevate the goals they have chosen so that their aspirations are wiser, wider, more compassionate, more inclusive, and more aware. This can be accomplished by Zen meditation. It teaches you to look into your mind and watch it with fresh eyes. If you do not have direct instruction in this meditation, you may use the following Feng Shui contemplation:

*Become aware of your surroundings. Explore each room in your home in detail. Make a descriptive list of what you find there, wall by wall. When you review this list, you will see patterns of what you are pursuing in your life. As you examine what you surround yourself with, you can discover just what parts of yourself you are cultivating: the common, the lofty, or the supreme. Once you see where you are headed, ask your parents, mentors, or friends to frankly deny or confirm what you have found. That is the beginning of honesty. The beginning of wisdom is when you decide to enlarge your aims to the next larger circle.*

This book has many insightful ways to improve your life through various Feng Shui techniques. You will find that some of the techniques may seem contradictory. However, if you experimentally apply them to your life you will verify that they work.

**All Feng Shui techniques have their root in the  
spirit of continually discovering where you are headed  
and adjusting your path.**

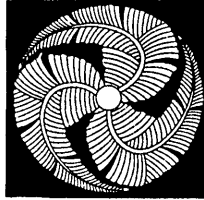
Zen Feng Shui is the moment-by-moment practice of making that journey more aware and more delightful. The following are six aspects to Zen Feng Shui, all of which are directions that can be used with any Feng Shui tradition, school, or technique:



**1. Clarifying Your Aims:**

This is simply the task of selecting the one tone to which you will tune your home or office. If you do not make this step, then anything you do from a Feng Shui point of view will only cause more scattered energies. Write down eight things you want to accomplish in your lifetime. Review the list, and select the top three that have had the most meaning to you now and for the next two years. Next, select one goal from this group that needs the most work over the next six months.

**That is your Feng Shui focus.  
Everything that you do must advance this one noble aim.**



## **2. Emptying Yourself and Your Space:**

Discarding everything in your life that you no longer need can further clarify your aims. Chinese philosophy and art point out that emptying your life is the prerequisite for filling it more swiftly with what you really do want. This means simplifying your life. Get rid of 90% of the objects that you have not used in the last two years. Emptying also means purifying your space by cleaning the accumulated dirt of the past. Before you apply any Feng Shui technique, you should give your house a good spring cleaning. Do not hire someone to do it for you in order to shield yourself from what you may find. Do it yourself; it is *your* space and your mind you are purifying, not your maid's.



## **3. Energizing Yourself and Your Space:**

This is rooted in the practices of Qi Gong. It means slowing down and systematically eliminating energy leaks. Examine whether water, heated or cooled, is being wasted. Are plants dying inside or in the yard? Is there anything broken or not working properly? Discover the reason and fix it.

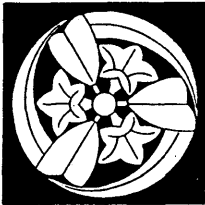
On a personal health level, check that your own *Qi* or vital life energy is healthy and strong.<sup>2</sup> If it needs improvement, consult a health care practitioner, personal trainer, or dietitian to help you change negative, energy draining habits. Enhancing your Qi daily suggests that you be as straight forward as beginning or returning to a practice of Qi Gong, Tai Chi, Yoga, Gong Fu, or Zen meditation.

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<sup>2</sup> Please refer to "Using Feng Shui to Create Health," p. 285, "The Energetic Basis of Good Health," p. 293, and "Five Elements for Better Health," p. 303.

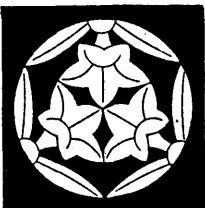
**You will know when you are making the right progress because  
your vessels,<sup>3</sup> both your house and body, will have  
the tranquil feeling and power of a sitting mountain.**

The last three characteristics of Zen Feng Shui are more difficult to practice, but they are indispensable if your aim is enlightenment or a well-balanced life.



#### **4. Cultivating Daily Living as an Art Form:**

As you move through life, regard each situation as an opportunity to express yourself artistically. Cultivate your daily life as an art form. When you serve tea, fruit, and cookies to a loved one or guest, arrange the food with as much presence as if you were painting a landscape scroll. Placing teacups purposefully on a tray, then onto a table is the prelude for properly placing everything in your house. As you begin to approach each situation and moment with this awareness, you will begin to rearrange furniture, rooms, yards, and walls with the same carefulness and attention. This practice will lead you on a path of discovering for yourself what is favorable and unfavorable Feng Shui because your own experience will be the judge.



#### **5. Cultivate the Depths of Your Intuition:**

The deeper you cultivate your intuition, the more effortlessly you will arrange things as they need be: be it an impromptu dinner party, a kitchen remodeling, or pruning the cedar in the side yard. Certainly all the fine arts are meant to cultivate accurate intuition. If you pursue oil painting, ikebana flower arranging, or bonsai, you will develop your artistic talents and train your intuition.

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<sup>3</sup> *Please note the description of the Anthology's cover in the opening pages.*

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How well your intuition operates depends on how aware you are of all that surrounds you, however obvious or subtle. As your circular awareness widens, you will discover more interconnections between the universe and you. When pure intuition operates, any Feng Shui art you perform will be perfectly suited for you or anyone else you wish to help.

**Great Feng Shui will arise spontaneously.**



### **6. Resting Your Mind in its Original Place:**

At the most subtle level, through meditative practice, you will encounter what is really your mind. You will encounter your original nature and how to rest your mind in its natural place without effort. As you practice, the enlightened mind will show itself as having been present from the beginning: completely, dynamically, and joyfully. At this stage of awareness, the conditioning of the specific places where you live and work dramatically diminish in their power to influence you in any negative manner. Everywhere you go, the places through which you travel, all serve to empower you with wisdom and compassion. This is the state of Feng Shui-less Feng Shui, and this is the aim of Zen Feng Shui as an art form.<sup>4</sup>



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<sup>4</sup> This calligraphy by Johndennis, pronounced “Hon Sho” in Japanese and means “Original Place.”

**Excerpted from  
*The Feng Shui Anthology***

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