

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria

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Dealing with Stress the Feng Shui Way

These politically charged times are creating so much division and stress. How are you handling it?

We practice all the Feng Shui principles, and our house feels peaceful and harmonious, but stressful situations happen, so how can we deal with them? Just practicing Feng Shui does not automatically absolve you from life's challenges, but it certainly helps you navigate through them more easily. A calm environment leads to a more peaceful mind.

There are three parts to Feng Shui:

- 1) The enhancement you make with the 5 Feng Shui elements in the nine Bagua areas of your home
- 2) The affirmations and visualizations you state and/or write declaring your intent
- 3) The lessons you need in life to help you through your journey (These you can't control but you can definitely learn from them.)

The first two are what Feng Shui is all about; how you create positive energy flow, and harmony to help you achieve your life's goals and reduce your stress. The third is what some people may refer to as karma or destiny. Yet, even though these lessons, or challenges, seem painful and inconvenient, they can also be blessings in disguise if you use Feng Shui, and a positive attitude to help overcome and learn from them.

With the right mental attitude, we can completely reframe the way we experience challenges and can come to view them as some of our most valuable life experiences.

When faced with a stressful challenge ask yourself:

- 1) What can I learn from this?
- 2) How can this strengthen me?
- 3) How can I use this to my advantage?
- 4) How can I use this to help others?
- 5) What would make this a worthwhile experience?
- 6) What Feng Shui technique could I use to help move the energy?

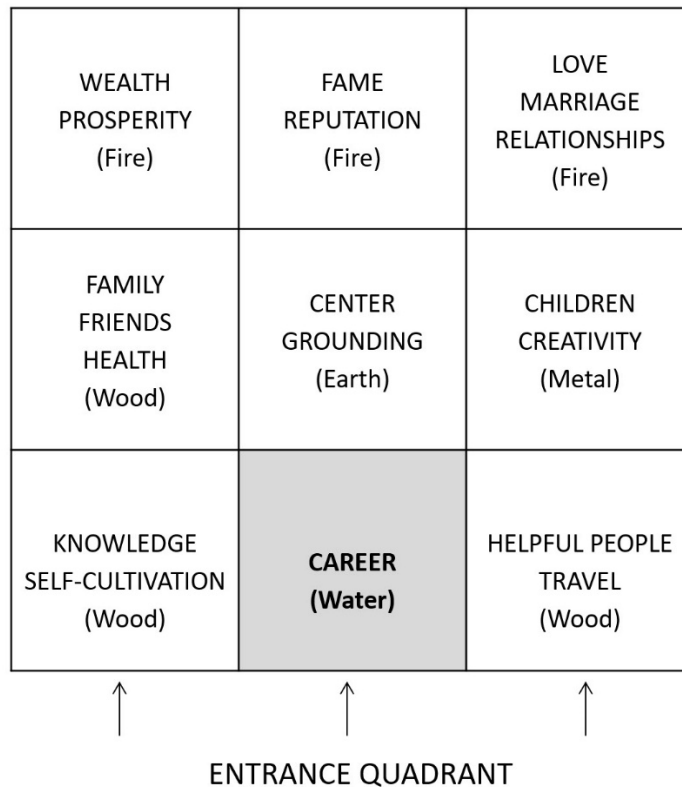
Stressful situations are part of life, that's not going to change. Accept the fact that challenges happen to teach you something, to push you to grow, and to encourage you to change. Use this as an opportunity to successfully change yourself for the better. Your attitude and perception are something that you create. They are not dictated by your circumstances. You always have a choice! So, the real question here is this, will you choose to look for a blessing in every challenge?

During stressful times it's important to focus on what you can control. Turning our attention to yourself, friends, families and local communities can help you be empowered and productive. Take action appropriately, when, and where you can. Focus on your personal wellbeing by engaging in things you enjoy such as hobbies, exercise, and time with friends. If you enjoy being politically active, find one or two meaningful causes to which you can donate your time or money. Live your values. One way to impact politics and decrease stress is to make sure our daily lives are closely aligned with our values. Values are fundamental beliefs that guide behaviors. With a clear sense of our own values, it is easier to maintain focus on what we find important and what we can control.

At this point my husband and I are choosing to be mindful about this stressful political turmoil. We're watching the news sparingly, reading valuable articles, taking action where we can, sharing thoughts and ideas with our friends, supporting each other. We are also taking time for morning practice; upon waking we don't go directly to the news or our phones, instead, we stretch, practice breathing, meditating, enjoy some tea or coffee and journaling our gratitude before tackling the day.

How to use Feng Shui to deal with stress:

Wherever the challenge is in your house, or what part of your life it affects, look to the Feng Shui Bagua and the 5 elements to enhance the area. In the Feng Shui the Bagua comes from the Chinese philosophy, "The I Ching," and literally means "eight trigrams with the center for grounding."



For example, in the case of political stress you can look to the Helpful People area, declutter, organize, and place your enhancements and affirmations there. If your challenge is with the other areas such as love, children, travel etc. you would refer to the diagram and place your enhancements accordingly.

Nature's Elements:

The elements: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water are considered the building blocks of everything physical on earth. Feng Shui observes that the most harmonious places in nature are where the interplay of all five elements occurs; therefore, wherever the challenge occurs I immediately create a beautiful display using a representation of all five elements.

The Wood Element:

- Wooden furniture and accessories, wooden paneling and decks
- Plants (including artificial) or art depicting landscapes, gardens, flowers or floral prints
- Columnar shapes and stripes
- Green and blue color spectrum

The Fire Element:

- All lighting (electrical, candles and natural)
- Art that depicts people, animals, sunshine or fire
- Shapes such as triangles, pyramids or cones
- Red color spectrum

The Earth Element:

- Adobe, brick and tile, ceramics or earthenware objects
- Shapes such as squares and rectangles
- Yellow color spectrum
- Art depicting earthy landscapes of deserts or fields

The Metal Element:

- All types of metals, including stainless steel, copper, brass iron, silver, aluminum and gold
- Natural rocks and stones such as marble, granite and flagstone, natural crystals, rocks and gemstones
- White and grey color spectrum
- Shapes of the circle, oval and arch

The Water Element:

- Water features of all kinds (fountains, aquariums, and birdbaths)
- Reflective surfaces such as glass, cut crystal and mirrors
- Flowing asymmetrical shapes and black and dark tones color spectrum
- Art depicting water scenes

A Quick Fix - 5 Element Arrangements:

Creating a small 5 element arrangement in any room helps to strengthen the Ch'i and adds power to affirmations and enhancements. It marks the beginning of positive change and invites the Ch'i to move. Adding a 5 Element Arrangement to the center of your home can help ground you when you're feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or tired. Quick Fixes are also excellent when you need a boost to specific facets of your life, such as when seeking a job, deciding to start a family, or beginning a large project.

Example of a 5 Element Display:

- Large yellow orchid (Yellow color and earthenware pot- Earth, the plant – Wood)
- White circular candle in metal candle holder (White, circular and metal – Metal)
- Red Candle (red color and fire – Fire)
- Set it all on a black cloth (black color – Water)

A painting, or cloth containing all the colors, shapes and figures of the elements can also be considered a 5-element display. Imagine entering your home each day and seeing something so beautiful and powerful.

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 expressed as if they have already happened are very important. Examples of affirmations to help reduce stress: "Everything has turned out well." "I am happy with the outcome and am at peace." "My morning practice relaxes me and sets me up for success."

Feng Shui at Work:

I advised a client who was having difficulty dealing with the stress in her life to place a small table displaying all 5 elements in her Knowledge and Self Cultivation area, with an affirmation. She decluttered and organized the area, set up her display, with a round, crystal vase (metal, water), holding an arrangement of yellow, and red flowers (fire, earth, wood). She practiced Inner Feng Shui, through breath work, meditation, long walks and seeking the solace of friends. She called me stating that after doing this, life became easier for her to handle, and she has a beautiful display to remind her that everything will work out.

Sometimes the uncomfortable things in life are there to teach us lessons because to go through a change of habit, we need to feel uncomfortable. You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control your attitude, and you can use Feng Shui to support your energy, and master change rather than allowing it to master you.

My book is now available for purchase on my website, and at Bookshop Benicia.

Books will also be on sale, and I will be personally signing them at the Benicia Library Local Authors Book Festival - Come see me at the Benicia Public Library April 5 from 1-4pm

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.

* **Check out my 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, and now author of the book, ***“Empower Your Life Through Feng Shui – An Easy Eight Step Guide to achieving Your Goals.”*** 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. Maria specializes in residential, landscape and business consultations. She offers virtual consultations nationally and internationally, as well as in person local