

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria
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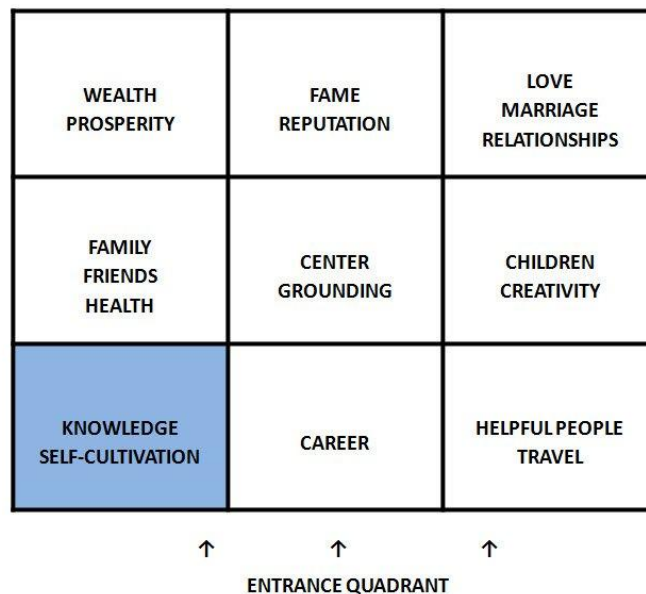
Enjoy the Stillness of Nature through the Knowledge and Self-Cultivation Area

We just returned from a nourishing two week vacation in the mountains, surrounded by the calming benefits of the Wood element. In Feng Shui wood symbolizes growth, vitality, expansion, and resilience. It promotes a smooth flow of energy and helps to support emotional balance.

This section of the Bagua is particularly related to “stillness.” When you spend time being still and calming your mind, you are better equipped to absorb knowledge and develop insight. In the *I Ching*, the Knowledge and Self-Cultivation area is governed by the Wood element and called “still mountain.” Taking time in stillness to cultivate understanding will benefit your entire being.

By learning how your environment affects your ability to balance work, rest, and play, you can make easy changes that will help you to achieve and sustain that balance and quiet your system.

One of the most powerful and important tools in Feng Shui is the Bagua, from the Chinese philosophy, “The I Ching,” represented as a grid of eight sectors, with the center for grounding. In the Bagua, the Knowledge and Self Cultivation Area is located in the front left corner of your home or business.



In whatever room your Knowledge and Self-Cultivation area is located, applying some basic Feng Shui principles can help you create a peaceful sanctuary. By enhancing this area of the Bagua, energy will help lead you to improving your studies that contribute to life enrichment. Enhancing this area is also beneficial if you are on a self-help journey or just want more peace in your life.

The Elements for Knowledge and Self-Cultivation

The elements for the Knowledge and Self-Cultivation area are Wood and Water, since water nourishes wood. While each of the Bagua areas represents one of the elements, the corners of the Bagua will reflect a team of cojoining elements working together in harmony. The Wood element can be represented in anything made of wood or plants (including fabric and paper); representations of flowers, trees, or plants of any kind; columnar shapes and stripes; the color black; and any shade in the blue or green color spectrum. Because Water nourishes Wood (find the Nourishing Cycle of the Elements in Chapter 8 of my book).

Interior Enhancements for the Knowledge and Self-Cultivation Area of Your Home or Business (Choose One or More)

- Begin by decluttering the space.
- Enhance with the colors blue, green, or black, and in the shape of columns and stripes.
- Add art representing still, wooded meditation gardens, forests or calm water scenes.
- Display busts, statues, or pictures of spiritual guides.
- Use wooden furniture and accessories wherever you can and add healthy plants with rounded soft leaves to create a peaceful meditative area.

Exterior Enhancements for the Knowledge and Self-Cultivation Area (Choose One or More)

- Showcase lush plants and trees.
- Create a seating area with wooden or wicker furniture and green or blue cushions for quiet reflection. This is a great place to accentuate with a fountain containing water that flows toward the house.
- Display statues of spiritual guides and blue or green gazing balls.

Note: If this area is where your front door is located, create a peaceful, serene entrance that will invite in the Ch'i.

What to Avoid in the Knowledge and Self-Cultivation Area

- Art that represents the Fire element (red tones), which is very active. Anything white or metal, representing the Metal element which cuts wood.

Ideally, the Knowledge and Self-Cultivation area is where you would begin making enhancements for stillness. But what if your master bedroom, or garage is located in this area? Here are some ideas for enhancing these spaces for stillness and calm.

Master Bedroom in the Knowledge and Self-Cultivation Area

This is a room for rest, health, vitality, and loving relationships. Because sleep has a direct effect on our health and longevity, special attention needs to be paid to calming and beautifying this space. Enhance it with:

- Warm wall colors. Master bedroom walls should be the color of natural human skin tones to create a feeling of warmth. Avoid blue, green, white or grey for walls, which are too cool for a romantic boudoir. Accentuate with plants and wooden furniture.
- Accents in the red spectrum and pairs of items representing romance
- Soft bedding, a chair for quiet reading, soft lighting
- All of these bring in the qualities of the Love, Marriage and Relationship area.

What to Avoid in the Master Bedroom

- Exercise equipment
- Desk and computer
- TVs (can be closed in an armoire or covered with cloth at night)
- Large mirrors

These items all activate energy, detract from a soothing calmness, and rob you of sleep and vitality.

Garage in the Knowledge and Self-Cultivation Area

Many people have their garage in the Knowledge and Self-Cultivation area. Consider the garage a room in your house and enhance it accordingly. Declutter and place items on wooden shelves if possible. Hang art representing peaceful wooded or water scenes. Paint shelves or create accent walls in blues and greens. You can even hang curtains in front of shelves in the same colors. I always recommend hanging a 50 millimeter round faceted glass crystal in the center of the garage to keep the energy flowing. The garage should be a space that makes you feel good as you drive into it.

What to Avoid in the Garage

- Making it a storage area for junk

Affirmations:

In Feng Shui, intent plays a significant role in enhancing any area of your environment. That's why all enhancements need to be made with intentionality; written or stated affirmations which are expressed as if they are already happening are very important. Examples or affirmations for the Knowledge and Self Cultivation area:

- "I feel calm and can think clearly when dealing with stressful situations."
- "I am nourished by the peacefulness of my home."
- "Yahoo! I just passed my exam!"

Feng Shui at work:

A client was a nursing student, studying for an important exam. She was stressed because she could not study and focus on her work at the same time. She was having trouble retaining information and told me her mind felt cluttered. During the consultation we walked into the Knowledge and Self-Cultivation area of her home, and immediately the reason became evident. It was an unused guestroom that had been relegated to storage. Fortunately, it was already a sage green, appropriate for the area. I advised decluttering, removing her schoolbooks and other items she no longer needed. As she did this, she began to regain her energy and focus. I advised bringing in a wooden bookcase to display her most current and important nursing books. She bought a green floral bedspread and pillows and hung a picture of the Tree of Knowledge above the bed. She even found an old picture of Florence Nightingale to display. She brought in some plants and a small fountain. The room was large enough for a wicker chair that she began to use for studying. Across from the chair she hung a vision board with representations of succeeding as a nurse. Guess what? She passed her test with flying colors and soon after began her nursing career at a local hospital.

How to Begin the Calming Process

If you find that you are surrounded by chaos, begin small. Look at the area, which may be inside or outside the house, with the intention of creating a sanctuary. Declutter and enhance the area with soothing colors, art, pictures, flowers, music, and objects that you love. Find a small bit of time daily, or at least a few times per week, for “being present” in this space. Breathe, read, meditate, sleep—anything that calms the body.

By regularly practicing Feng Shui, you eventually will turn your entire home into a calming environment. Create the time and space to regularly go inside yourself and be still. A calm and tranquil mind and heart will maintain your vitality and longevity.

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.

My book (which I call a Feng Shui consultation in a book) is available for purchase on my website, Bookshop Benicia, and Benicia Main Street.

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* **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 locally.