

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria
December Column 2018

Enjoy Calm and Self-Cultivation During the Holidays

In the hustle and bustle of Black Friday leading into the whirlwind of the holiday activities let's remind ourselves to take a moment to marvel at how beautiful and simply majestic the world is around us, take time to breathe, be calm and give gratitude for all our blessings.

The holiday season can be a time of great joy or a time of stress, a time of renewal or a time of frantic preparation, a time of happy gathering with friends or a time of exhaustion. The serenity you create in your home has a great deal of influence on your outlook.

Although all areas of your home lend themselves to harmony; the left front section of the structure is particularly related to "Calm and Self Cultivation." In the Feng Shui Bagua (Ba-gua) Map, represented as a grid of nine sectors, this area is referred to as the "Knowledge and Self Cultivation Area". It operates under the premise that we assimilate knowledge best when we also cultivate a peaceful mind by practicing some form of regular "keeping still." This can be accomplished through meditation, contemplation, and introspection. With the New Year upon us, now is a good time to build quietude into your daily routine and honor the full rhythm of life.

One of the most powerful and important tools in Feng Shui is the Bagua (Ba-gua) Map, represented as a grid of nine sectors. The Bagua comes from the Chinese philosophy, "The I Ching," and literally means "eight trigrams" with the Center for grounding. In the "I Ching" the Knowledge and Self Cultivation area of your home or business is called "still mountain" as it refers to taking the time to climb the peaceful inner space where you can integrate and assimilate your daily experiences. This is especially important during the holiday season.

Whatever room your Knowledge and Self Cultivation area resides, applying some basic Feng Shui principles can help you create a peaceful sanctuary.

The Knowledge and Self Cultivation area is located in the left front corner of your home/office/business.

Enhancements in this area are particularly helpful if you are a student of any subject, are in counseling, engaging in any kind of self-growth activities, or you just want to cultivate a more peaceful mind or lifestyle.

The element for the Knowledge area is Wood, and the colors are black, blues and greens, therefore representations of this element can be used inside and outside of your home or business.

Christmas Trees as Ch'i Enhancers

During the holidays many bring live or artificial trees into the home. Christmas trees represent the wood element, growth, and add to the energy of Knowledge Area or any other location in the home. With all the bright colors, lights, garlands, and traditional objects of various shapes these become 5 element displays making the home's energy flow easily and create an environment for cultivating joyous family gatherings.

WEALTH AND PROSPERITY	FAME AND REPUTATION	LOVE AND RELATIONSHIP
HEALTH, FAMILY AND FRIENDS	CENTER AND GROUNDING	CHILDREN AND CREATIVITY
KNOWLEDGE AND SELF- CULTIVATION	CAREER	HELPFUL PEOPLE AND TRAVEL
↑	↑	↑
ENTRANCE QUADRANT		

Enhancements for energizing Knowledge and Self Cultivation inside your home or business:

- * Keep this area clutter free, since clutter does not act to soothe the mind.
- * Items in the colors of blues, greens, or black
- * Items in the shape of columns or stripes
- * Posters, paintings, collages and/or photos of mountains, woods, or anything that depicts a quiet outdoor space or meditation gardens, pictures or collages of figures such as teachers and wise people in your life
- * Wooden tables or bookcases holding books, tapes or material being studied
- * Healthy plants with rounded soft leaves

Enhancements for energizing Knowledge and Self Cultivation outside your home or business:

- * This area is best enhanced outside with beautiful lush, healthy plants
- * Figurines of people you consider wise, or blue/green gazing balls
- * A wooden or wicker bench or seating area for quiet reflection

Note: If this is where your front door is located, the Ch'i, the vital energy, is invited to flow in through a peaceful, serene entrance.

A Missing Knowledge Area:

If your knowledge area is missing from your floor plan, I recommend anchoring this area by doing one or a combination of the following: planting a lush meditative garden, adding a bench or quiet seating area, or placing a statue or gazing ball in the corner. The key is to complete the space, and simultaneously create a peaceful environment.

Feng Shui at Work:

A friend's living room is in the Knowledge/Self Cultivation Area. She has decorated it with rich green tones, including a green couch, floral chairs and numerous pictures of lush landscapes in wooden frames. As luck would have it this is where she places the Christmas tree which she cut down at a traditional family "Tree Day" event. This room becomes a sanctuary for cultivating family unity and growth. When one is alone in the room it acts as a peaceful place for reflection.

In my home, part of the Knowledge area is outside of the Bagua. To anchor it I placed a blue/green glass gazing ball at the exact location of the missing corner and have a flower garden completing the space outside of the bedroom window. I

recently added a small bench which I recovered in a blue floral (waterproof fabric) print near the gazing ball. I find myself sitting there often, reading or waiting for friends to arrive. I find it very calming.

A client who was also missing this area decided to anchor it in her garden with two wooden Adirondack chairs facing a statue of St. Francis surrounded by a round flower garden. Again – perfect for stillness. She meditates there and has since located the meditation classes she was looking for.

My daughter likes to begin her days with a few minutes of guided meditation and pulling a Tarot Card for the day. Doing this in her calm sage colored guest room would aid in the peaceful energy.

Master bedrooms in the Knowledge Area can be a challenge, because blues and greens are too cool for a bedroom (not enough fire). Ideal colors for bedroom walls are the entire spectrum of skin tones from light cream to dark browns. I had the challenge of bringing in the cool wood element, and yet keeping the fiery passion of the bedroom. To keep the serenity of the Knowledge area I brought in many wood pieces and kept the lights dim. My favorite meditative spot in the house is a brown wicker chair and ottoman in the corner. This is where I love to sit, look out onto my garden, read and “be still”. I brought in more wood through a large artificial ficus tree, and a few floral arrangements. The walls are a light mushroom color. To maintain the fire element needed in a bedroom, I hung photos of my husband and I, added pairs of items such as candles and figurines, and added accents of burgundy.

Affirmations:

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 which are expressed as if they are already happening are very important. Examples of affirmations for the Knowledge and Self Cultivation area:

“I enjoy the holidays more when I remain calm reflect on all my blessings.” “I am peaceful and calm, and share knowledge with others.” “In stillness, I deepen my inner peace and wisdom.”

The holiday season is a perfect time for giving of oneself. Give YOURSELF the daily gift of self-reflection and self cultivation. By taking a time out from being active every waking minute, you deepen the peace and wisdom within you.

Wishing you peaceful holidays!

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. She specializes in residential, landscape and business consultations. 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 including “The Western Guide to Feng Shui.”