

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria

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The Wood Element Nourishes the Soul

Hiking in nature always nourishes me. I breathe well and feel energized. Why is that? Knowing Feng Shui, I am aware that I am surrounded by the Wood element, which helps to nourish my soul. Observing the spectacle, I am reminded of the representation of the Feng Shui Wood Element with its calming and healing power. For centuries plants have been used topically and internally for medicinal purposes, but in Feng Shui just the act of surrounding yourself with the Wood Element through healthy plants and beautiful flowers is known to calm your body and improve your health.

Wood is one of the elements that make up the five-element system used in Feng Shui. The other elements are water, fire, earth, and metal.

What Is the Wood Element?

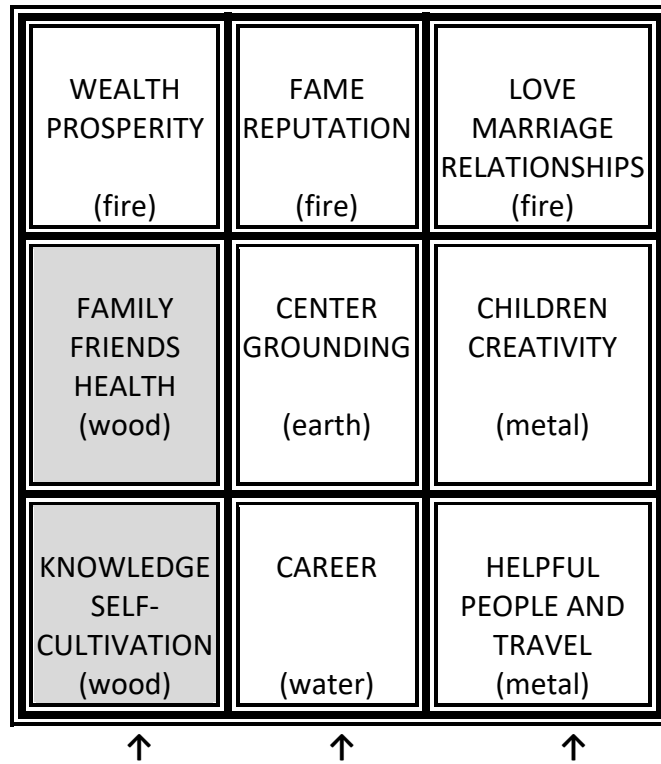
The Wood element represents vitality, growth, and kindness. Wood energy is also related to flexibility and human-heartedness. When in balance Wood enhances trust, originality, spirituality, stillness, new growth, and ideas. This element is not just outside in nature, it can be brought into your home for the same nourishing effect. It is not just literally represented by a piece of wood; colors, shapes, art, and textiles represent this element as well. Below you will find many of the various items that can be used to represent the wood element in your environment.

The Wood Element is found in:

- Anything made of wood, such as wooden furniture, accessories, wooden paneling, and decks
- All indoor and outdoor plants (including artificial plants)
- Plant based cloth and textiles, floral prints
- Art depicting wooded landscapes, gardens, plants, and flowers
- Columnar shapes and stripes
- The green and blue color spectrum

The Wood Element and the Bagua

Although all areas of your Feng Shui home lend themselves to harmony, there are two Bagua areas that are specifically represented by the Wood element; the left front section of the structure is particularly related to stillness, and the left middle section is related to health, family, and friend relationships. In the Feng Shui Bagua Map, which comes from the Chinese philosophy “The I Ching,” and literally means “eight trigrams”, with the center as the grounding area, the two Wood areas are referred to as the “Knowledge and Self Cultivation,” and the “Health, Family and Friends” areas. They operate 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. This level of stillness and introspection helps to keep you balanced and in good health. For good harmony and balance a little of the Wood element should also be placed in every other area of your home or business.



ENTRANCE QUADRANT

Wood Element Enhancements for the Knowledge and Self Cultivation Area:

- Keep this area clutter free, since clutter does not act to soothe the mind
- Colors – any hue of blues, greens and black
- Items made of wood and/or in the shape of columns or stripes
- Art representing calm landscapes such as mountains, woods, or pictures of mentors, spiritual guides, and/or representations of your field of study
- Wooden tables or bookcases holding books, or material being studied
- Healthy plants with rounded soft leaves

Wood Element Enhancements for your Health, Family, Friends Area – Improving Health

The energy in your home can help you achieve better health. The Health, Family, Friends area is particularly associated with “strength and good health.” The healthier we are, the more options we have to enjoy life. Enhancements in this area are particularly helpful if your health needs a boost, or if you’re planning or recovering from surgery. This is a very powerful area, and flowers are especially helpful.

- Fresh cut flowers or flowering plants in all colors
- Art, photos and/or collages of ideal body images in a healthy state (such as people exercising or being active), healthy plants and flowers, gardens and landscapes
- Items in the colors of blues, greens
- All floral prints, such as floral linens, upholstery, and wallpaper
- All things made from wood, including furniture and decorations
- Quotes, affirmations, and sayings pertaining to ideal health and family

Creating Vision Boards Areas to Enhance Health

If someone in your home is having health challenges, and/or is going through or recovering from surgery, activating the energy in the Health area of your home is very important. You can do this easily by:

- Decluttering the area
- Placing a healthy flowering plant, or a bouquet of flowers (remember vibrant artificial flowers work just as well)
- Placing pictures of the person in a healthy state enjoying sports or exhibiting health and joy
- Burning blue or green candles
- Writing or stating affirmations of the positive outcome (If you have a two-story house do this in the Health area of both stories; for a more powerful cure you can also place flowers in the Health area of every room.)

Remember that plants are the quintessential Ch'i enhancers for our homes. They provide us with the beauty and wonder of nature and help us stay connected and grounded to the natural world. Surround yourself with the Wood element to help you embrace stillness which leads to a calm body, good health and nourishes your soul.

Affirmations and Inner Work:

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 and written or stated as if they already happened. Examples or affirmations for the Wood Element: *"I am a vibrantly healthy person", "My medical procedures have been successful, and I am now pain free and thriving", "I am feeling calm and relishing in stillness."*

Feng Shui at Work:

A student in one of my classes was concerned about her health issues and lack of energy. Once applying the Bagua to her home discovered that her Health area was in her master bedroom closet. She was horrified to discover that her cluttered, messy closet was keeping her from achieving the vibrant health she desperately needed. She began a cleaning and decluttering regimen, donating many items (thereby giving them new life) and allowed herself the luxury of an empty shelf. She placed a lovely bouquet of silk flowers on the shelf (wood), hung a green 30mm round faceted crystal (to help circulate the Ch'i), and added a floral wallpaper strip (wood) at the top of the closet. All along she stated positive affirmations. She loves the change this had made; she is nourishing her energy each time she steps into her closet. While decluttering she found renewed energy and is now walking daily, eating better, is feeling much healthier, and is planning on nurturing other areas of her home.

A client had her Health area in her garage. Each time she pulled in with her car the first thing she saw was her hot water heater, furnace, and cat box. This was draining her daily. I recommended placing a bamboo screen (wood) in front of the hot water heater and furnace, attaching posters of healthy flowers and medicinal herbs (wood), moving the cat box, and placing a large flowering orchid plant (wood) on the workbench. She did all this and decluttered the garage. Now each time she drives in, her energy is nourished rather than drained. I see her

at the gym on a regular basis and see pictures of her hiking with her friends on Facebook, and she looks so much happier.

Our master bathroom is entirely in our Health area so as we remodeled it I knew it would be important to bring in the Wood element. We did this through cherry wood cabinets, sage green walls, bamboo print wallpaper, pictures of Georgia O'Keefe flowers framed in wood, and of course a silk orchid or two. While in process we created a vision board to express our successful final product. It feels so good now! It's one of my favorite rooms in the house and our health is thriving.

Feng Shui on a Shoestring:

Feng Shui enhancements do not have to cost a great deal. Clearing your entrance of dead or diseased plants will halt negative energy from coming into your life. Bring in the Wood element with just one beautiful, healthy, blooming plant to your home and make you affirmations and watch the shift occur.

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."