

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria
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Feel Grounded in Nature with the Feng Shui Earth Element

Practicing mindfulness is staying present with your surroundings, being aware of the beauty that surrounds you, breathing, and feeling connected and grounded to the earth.

We just returned from a nourishing two weeks in the mountains, staying in a cabin in the woods near a creek. We practiced mindfulness, did not listen to news for the entire time, and enjoyed feeling the grounding force of the earth beneath our feet while taking in the beauty all around us.

As a Native American Medicine Woman said, “We are not protecting nature. We ARE nature, protecting ourselves.”

Last month, my column was on the Feng Shui Fire element. In the natural cycle of the five Feng Shui elements Fire creates Earth. If your area of greatest need is to live a balanced life that is grounded, centered, focused, and in harmony with your life goals, this is where you want to begin. Earth represents the mother archetype and is the sustainer of unconditional support and physical nourishment. This makes sense since everywhere we went, we were surrounded by the beauty of nature.

How can we apply the lessons from nature to your home? How grounded and connected to your center are you feeling? Are you at peace with your decisions and comfortable with your life's flow? If not, Feng Shui can help!

The Earth element is represented by the soil. It suggests the importance of stabilizing your life. It is represented by adobe, brick, tile, ceramic, or earthenware objects; the shapes are rectangles and squares; art and colors in yellow and brown rust tones.

Feng Shui is governed by five elements found in nature: Water, Wood, Fire, Earth, and Metal. Each has its own attributes and purpose, whether in nature or within your home.

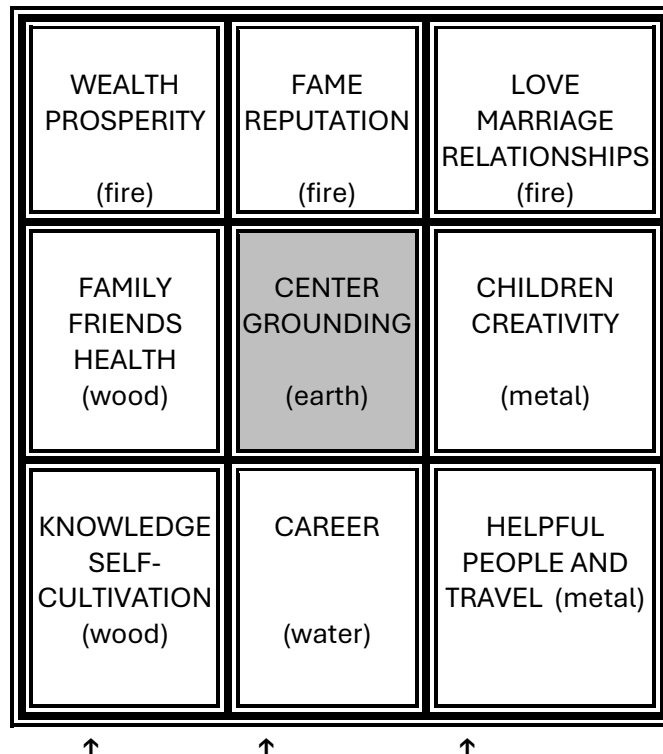
Of all of these, the Earth Element positioned in the center of your home suggests the importance of arranging your life around a solid base. When in balance in your home it enhances a feeling of being grounded, balanced, organized, and stable. This balance helps to create a sense of peace and alignment.

In the *I Ching*, the Earth element is located primarily in the Center area of your home or business, which is meant to be the core where all other areas connect. It is a peaceful area, to help you stay centered and grounded.

The Earth Element and the Bagua

The Earth element is the “hub” or the core of the Bagua. This is the most powerful area because it grounds and energizes the rest of your life’s treasures. You can nurture your ability to remain centered through life’s many changes by directly connecting with the earth every day.

The Bagua comes from the Chinese philosophy, “The I Ching,” and literally means “eight trigrams.” In the “I Ching” the Center area of your home or business is a neutral place; a perfect balance of Yin and Yang – a place of peace. Life flows and circles around the center. This is a perfect place for an atrium, a meditation area, a beautiful piece of art which reminds you to stay centered throughout all your activities.



ENTRANCE QUADRANT

Interior Enhancements for the Center Area of Your Home or Business (Choose One or More)

- Items in yellow and earth tones and in square or rectangular shapes
- Art or photos representing landscapes, people, or subjects in the color yellow
- A gallery wall of family pictures in rectangular frames
- Ceramics or pottery
- Quotes, affirmations, and sayings pertaining to feeling grounded and centered

Exterior Enhancements for the Center Area of Your Home or Business (Choose One or More)

- A courtyard, patio, or atrium
- Items, flowers, plants in the yellow spectrum
- Ceramic garden art such as tiles, statuary, fountains, pots, and benches
- Square or rectangular shapes

What to Avoid in the Center Area

- Too much of the Water element, which creates a muddied effect when combined with the Earth element

Feng Shui at Work:

Often a stairwell or bathroom will occupy the Center space. Although neither are optimum, enhancements can be made to offset negative energy. Stairwells tend to draw the Ch'i down or pull the Ch'i out. Therefore, mirrors or a round faceted crystal can be placed at the bottom of the stairs to send the flow of energy back up to circulate throughout the home. The walls can be enhanced with earth-tone pictures hung horizontally, not stair-stepped down. We have this situation in our home. To enhance the area, we painted it a soft yellow, decorated the landing with earth-tone vases, and hung earth-tone art along the stairwell in a horizontal line. (Art that is hung in a descending or stair-stepped fashion increases the energy draw downward.) We also hung a mirror at the bottom of the stairs to slow the flow of energy. This beautifully enhanced stairwell at the back of our entrance foyer has become one of my favorite areas in the home. It helps to center me every time I enter it.

Bathroom drains should be kept always closed when not in use, a crystal in the center of the bathroom also helps circulate the Ch'i. Bathrooms in this area benefit from ceramics, art and wall colors in the yellow spectrum and rectangular and square shapes. Make this a lovely grounding space.

Many people have a kitchen in the center of their home. This is an extremely auspicious location because the kitchen is known as the "hearth" of a home and can feed the soul, and act as a grounding force. My daughter had her kitchen in this location and painted it a saffron color, enhancing it with ceramic tiles, yellow candles, and art in the gold spectrum. It felt cheery and was the heart of her home.

A client recently had me help create a landscape for their back yard. They felt that this yard with a gorgeous view was not inviting to their guests. The house happened to be U-shaped and ideally this area fell in the Center and Fame areas of their property. I recommended beautiful ceramic pavers for the patio ground, and a small retaining wall with some bricks. They wanted to create a welcoming area in the center by building a fire pit in the middle of the patio. To further enhance the Fame area and feed the Earth with Fire I recommend comfortable chairs with red tone cushions, and ceramic pots all around with yellow and red plants. It became the "hub" of their entertaining, a totally inviting and centering area for themselves and their guests.

The Center is strengthened when you connect with the earth, creating a harmonious environment to live and work, and when you cultivate a sense of being grounded and centered with yourself. Adopt the practice of mindfulness and stay connected to the earth. Make your home work for you – it can be a vehicle for transformation.

Affirmations and Inner Work:

In Feng Shui, intent plays a significant role in enhancing your home or business. All enhancements need to be made with intentionality, with written or stated affirmations as if they have already happened. *Sample Affirmations for the Center Area*

- “I feel centered and grounded at all times.”
- “I am at peace with myself and my decisions.”
- “I am safe and comfortable on the earth.”
- “My body moves with balance and ease.”

My book is now available for purchase on my website. For immediate delivery order from the Book Baby link.

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 locally.