

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria
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Creating Balance in Your Home and Your Life

While shopping on our cruise last month, our grandson purchased a Yin Yang sign bracelet. He is fascinated by the design, and the concept. I took this great opportunity to explain the powerful significance of this symbol.

I told him that our universe is made up of opposing forces which the ancient Chinese called Yin and Yang. They can be seen in the examples of night and day, dark and light, large and small, hot and cold. Yin is represented by the earth and the moon and is associated with feminine qualities. Yang is represented by the sky and sun and is associated with masculine qualities. Neither is better nor more important than the other, but a balance of both qualities makes for nurturing environments that help us feel comfortable and helps us thrive. The Ch'i that nourishes you, which Feng Shui concentrates on enhancing, is always striking a balance between these two extreme forces.

Usually, different rooms serve different purposes in our lives, and for this reason may inherently be more Yin or Yang, depending on what we intend to draw from them. I have a large great room, which is very Yang, with a lot of natural light and high ceilings. Because of the dark rounded furniture, plants, and numerous personal pictures and items I've displayed around the room, it feels balanced and is a source of renewing energy for me. It is the central hub of my home, and where I do most of my entertaining. I love being in this room. My bedroom, however, is more Yin, which feels cozy to me. With its lower ceiling, lower lighting, dark wooden furniture, and burgundy accents, this is the room I spend every evening relaxing, decompressing, and feeling nurtured. I balanced the Yin by painting the walls a light mushroom color, hanging a large piece of art, and bringing in a tall Ficus tree. The armoire is also a very large angular piece of furniture.

The more extreme Yin or Yang an environment is the more uncomfortable you will feel there. An extreme Yin room is one that is dark and cave like, with dark furniture, dim lighting, and a low ceiling. A very Yang room would be quite large, with a high ceiling and windows that lets in a great deal of light, and a living space that is furnished sparingly with angular furniture and tables.

There is no right or wrong. Balancing Yin and Yang is not about changing the whole room; sometimes you just need to add or subtract a few items to create the effect you want. Small changes can make a big difference. There are those of us who know how to strike a balance naturally, but if you're not sure you do, use the chart as a guide to recognizing the Yin and Yang qualities in your spaces and to determine what adjustments you might make to balance them. If you already have a balanced room, enjoy it! Only make changes if you do not feel comfortable.

The ancient art of Feng Shui is never about focusing too much energy on extreme or another; it's always about BALANCE. The harmonious interplay between opposite forces is the key to creating happiness.

To balance the Yin room - add Yang components, such as brighter lighting, and lighter pastel colors with angular shapes. You can also add large pieces of art or large plants.

To balance the Yang room – add Yin components such as soft upholstered furniture rounded, and/or window treatments in dark, rich colors or prints. You can also bring in numerous pieces of small art, pictures or small plants and flower arrangements.

The following chart of descriptors from The Western School of Feng Shui will help you assess each room in your home for its balance of Yin and Yang. I teach this list of descriptors in my Feng Shui classes and find that it helps students, as well as clients recognize the balance or imbalance of these forces in their environments. Use this chart to identify the Yin and Yang qualities in a room and determine whether they need balancing. Remember that the key to assessing Yin Yang balance is how comfortable you feel in the room.

Feng Shui Yin/Yang Associations	Yin	Yang
Room size	Small	Large
Location in House	Quiet/Private	Noisy/Busy
Room's View	Intimate/Private	Grand
Room's View	Natural	Houses/Buildings/Street
Ceiling	Low	High
Natural Light	Low	Bright
Electrical Light	Dim	Bright
Open Floor Space	Small Amounts	Large Expanses
Floors	Carpeting/Rugs	Tile/Cement/Stone
Wall Colors	Medium/Dark/Muted	Light/Bright
Furniture	Many Pieces	Few Pieces
Furniture Colors	Medium/Dark/Muted	Light/Bright
Furniture and Décor	Small/Low	Large/High
Seating	Soft/Padded	Hard/Unpadded
Furniture Shapes	Curved/Rounded	Straight//Angular
Patterns	Floral	Geometric
Fabrics	Textured	Smooth/Shiny
Design	Elaborate/Ornate	Plain/Uncomplicated
Display Collections	Many	Few/None
Art	Many Pieces	Few
Art	Small	Large
Pillows	Many	Few
Books	Many	Few
Mirrors	Small	Large
Plants	Many	Few
Storage Areas/Closets	Organized	Chaotic/Disorganized

Feng Shui is all about finding balance in your environment, and your life. You will be rewarded with more peace and harmony, which will in turn lead to greater opportunities to achieve your life goals. Enjoy the journey!

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. Examples of affirmations for balance: “I feel well rested and am enjoying doing the things I love.” “My house nourishes me. I have a good balance of Yin and Yang.”

Feng Shui at Work:

For the most part, we humans are lovers of a balance of Yin and Yang, and we will instinctively place ourselves where things are “just right.” We had an interior room as a home office. Although it had been elementally balanced to control all the wood, it had no windows, and low lighting, and consequently left us tired and stressed by the end of the day. The solution came by adding a Yang feature in the form of a “Light Tube” in the ceiling of the room. This is an inexpensive form of skylight, which lets in a great deal of natural light. We love the look, have more energy now that natural light brings more Yang to the room. Working in our home office is now a pleasure.

Finding balance comes from enhancing your home with the correct Yin and Yang representations for you, but also for giving time and energy to the things that build you up and make you feel good about your life. Therefore, it’s important to take a moment to breathe, and to list what is most important to you in your life. Then attempt to spend your time and energy doing more of the things you love and letting go of things that add stress.

Balance will not look the same for everyone. Finding YOUR unique life balance will simplify your life in a way that brings freedom and peace of mind. Depending on your Yin and Yang preferences here are a few examples:

FOOD. Hot foods are associated with Yang energy, so those who are Yang deficient should eat spicy food or hot food like soups and stews and teas. Those who are Yin deficient should lean toward cooler foods like fruit, salads and cold drinks like ice water.

EXERCISE. Daily gentle forms of exercise are encouraged to support both Yin and Yang energies to help bring them into balance. This can be Yoga, Walking or Swimming. Just 15 minutes a day will contribute to rebalancing your Ch’i.

SLEEP. Restful sleep is KEY to creating balance in the body. Make sure your room is well ventilated and carries calming energy and be sure not to eat foods that are too heavy before you sleep in case the digestive system works late into the night and disrupts your sleep.

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

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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 local