

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI
Feng Shui by Maria
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Inner Feng Shui - Giving Thanks During Times of Stress

“Thank you for this day. Thank you for the air I breathe. Thank you for the gift of life.” This is the mantra I begin with each day. Daily meditation, no matter what time you choose, is a wonderful way to tap into your inner Feng Shui and release stress.

Blessings come in many forms and expressing gratitude and enthusiasm for even the smallest blessings has been found to lead to a happier, more fulfilling life. Every morning when I wake up, I can choose joy, happiness, negativity, or pain. Which do you think will lead you to a more rewarding and harmonious day? What if you began each day expressing gratitude for one thing in your life, big or small?

This year, with the pandemic, Thanksgiving celebrations may take on a different tone. This would normally be a time where people gather with friends and families to share love and feelings of gratitude. This year you may be on Zoom with your family, sharing a meal outdoors while socially distancing, or having a small gathering just with your immediate family. The staging may be different but the opportunity to express gratitude still exists. What if you commit to Thanksgiving every day, giving thanks every day of the year? The simple act of a phone call, sending a note card, or a simple thank you can enliven another as well as yourself, and begin a karmic chain of events. Magic can be felt in expressing gratitude.

Many of the Thanksgiving celebrations take place in the dining room around a bounty of food, blessings, and laughter. This year the location of your gathering may be different; outdoors, around a computer, around a kitchen table, but because nourishment is so vital to our health and wellbeing, Feng Shui encourages us to design a pleasant and serene dining environment; turn off the telephone and TV, play soft music, set the table, light candles and dine at a leisurely pace. Arrange furniture, plants, rugs and other Ch'i enhancers to slow the body down, aiding digestion and stimulating conversation. Creating an atmosphere of “Thanksgiving Everyday” will help you create everyday positive dining experiences where you can share your gratitude with loved ones.

Whether you have a formal dining room, a breakfast nook, an outdoor patio, or a kitchen counter there are a few enhancements that help make your dining experience a pleasant one and make us more aware of the Ch'i qualities in our food. There are also a few things that are NOT recommended for enjoyable dining.

Here are a few general Dos and Don'ts to ensure your dining area is following the Feng Shui guides of Comfort and Safety:

- Comfort is inherent in the positive flow of Ch'i. Make sure your furniture is comfortable, if not, replace or pad the chairs.
- Ensure safety by making sure that there are no sharp edges on the table or chairs. Soften sharp edged glass tables with cloths or table runners. Round and oval tables are more Feng Shui friendly.
- Make sure your dining area is defined enough to have its own identity and personality; screens, plants, flowers, lighting, area rugs and furniture placement can help define the space.
- Choose art that relaxes and inspires you. Surround yourself with color.
- Give each chair a pleasant view and minimize the noise level.
- Keep your décor casual.
- If possible, set up a sideboard so people can serve themselves.

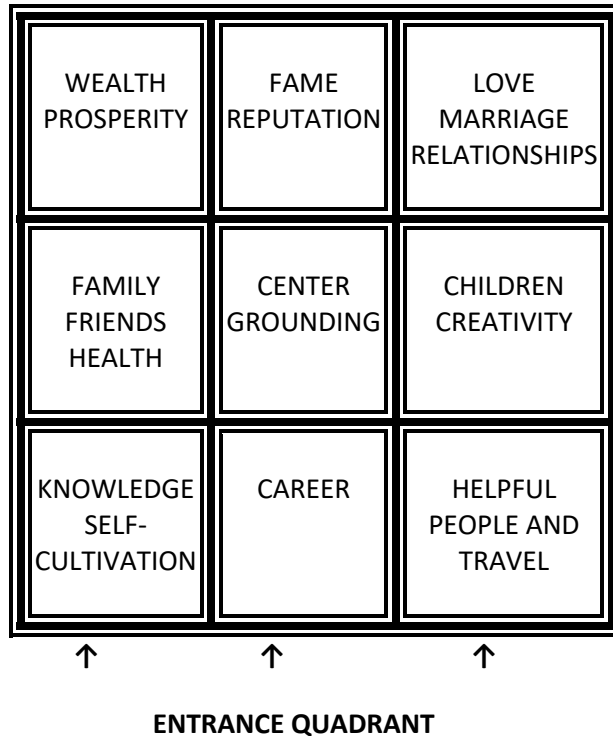
Dining Area Don'ts:

- Mirrors, especially when large, can over activate a room meant to be tranquil, and make your guests uncomfortable. If possible, avoid mirrors in dining areas, or break the reflection with plants, screens, candles, vases etc.

Dining Areas and the Bagua

The Feng Shui Bagua (Ba-gua) Map, from the Chinese philosophy, "The I Ching," meaning "eight trigrams," is represented as a grid of nine sectors with the center being for grounding.

For more successful enhancements, dining areas should take on the qualities of the Bagua area they reside in. Here are some examples:



Dining in the Career Area

- * Items in items in black or very dark colors, glass/crystal items
- * Water features, (fountains, waterfalls, or aquariums)
- * Art depicting water scenes

Dining in the Knowledge and Self Cultivation Area

- * Items in wood, the colors of blues, greens, or black and in the shape of columns or stripes
- * Healthy plants with rounded soft leaves
- * Art depicting nature scenes

Dining in the Friends/Family/Health Area

- * Healthy floral arrangements or art depicting vibrant flowers
- * Photos of family, friends or representing perfect health
- * Items in wood and the colors of blues, greens, or black

Dining in the Wealth Area

- * Opulent items in the purple color spectrum
- * Art representing wealth such as luxurious vacation spots, stunning architectural homes etc.
- * Healthy, round leaf plants

Dining in the Fame Area

- * Photos or art representing achievements or inspiration
- * Items in the colors red
- * Items representing the fire element with candles and lighting

Dining in the Love and Marriage Area

- * Pairs of items (candles, love birds, vases)
- * Art or photos depicting romance
- * Colors of reds, pinks and white

Dining in the Children and Creativity Area

- * Photos of children or items made by children
- * Items in metal and the colors of white and pastels
- * Whimsical art

Dining in the Helpful People and Travel Area

- * Art or figures pertaining to spiritual guides, and/or mentors, helpful people, or places where you have traveled or want to travel
- * Items in metal and colors of white, black, or grey

Dining in the Center Area

- * This is an auspicious location for the dining room because food is associated with the Earth Element.
- * Items in ceramics, the colors yellow, earth tones, and rectangle shapes
- * Art depicting earth tone scenes such as fields, deserts, sunflowers etc.

Feng Shui at Work

“The Thankfulness Pumpkin” - So much of Feng Shui has to do with expressing gratitude. My husband and I bought a pumpkin early in October and have it sitting on our dining table. Each evening at dinner, beginning at the top of the pumpkin, we each wrote one thing we were thankful for with a permanent marker. The pumpkin is now covered with thankfulness statements and will be the centerpiece for our holiday table reminding us of all our many blessings, even during these more stressful times.

“Making a Gratitude Jar” – This is another great way to acknowledge the things and people we are grateful for, which can bring contentment and healing.

For individuals: Each day, jot down something that you are thankful for on a slip of paper and drop it into the jar. This practice will increase your happiness and make you more satisfied with life.

For families: Make a gratitude jar accessible for everyone in the family. At intervals, perhaps during a holiday like Thanksgiving, pull out the slips of paper and celebrate the things you are thankful for together.

For couples: Telling your beloved what you appreciate about him/her can strengthen your bond. Reviewing your notes can put you in a more positive mindset during difficult times.

Affirmations and Inner Work:

Remember that in Feng Shui, intent plays a significant role in enhancing any area of your home or business. Intent is the inner work that leads you to a more harmonious life, nurturing your body, heart, and spirit. Consider how you nourish not only your body, but your emotional and spiritual aspirations as well. If you are hungry on any level, decide how you can create a nurturing atmosphere that feeds that part of you.

LIFE IS A FEAST! Make sure you are grateful for every bite, because all the situations in our lives, from the insignificant to the major teach us exactly what we need to be learning.

Once you have enhanced the space, enjoy a great meal and express your gratitude for all your blessings. Think of yourself enjoying a saying, "Today I choose life, I choose to embrace it and be grateful for my blessings."

HAPPY THANKSGIVING EVERYDAY!

Classes:

I will be teaching a series of **three online classes** through Acalanes Adult Ed:

"Feng Shui for Prosperity"

Thursdays, Jan. 14 - Jan. 20 1:00-3:00 pm

You can register online at acalanes.k12.ca.us/adulted (Participants will receive \$40 off a home consultation.) and I'll see you on Zoom!!

* **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."