THE FIVE ELEMENT THEORY

TCM stands for Traditional Chinese Medicine. The five-element theory is rooted in TCM along with emotions, seasons, food, temperature and body function. The five elements are fire, earth, metal, water and wood. When we wear certain colors, it has the ability to express or suppress emotions that we are feeling at that particular time.

I woke up one morning completely "on the other side of the bed." Meaning, I woke up in an emotional, fired up mood. When I was getting dressed, I noticed that I had changed blouses five times and had the sixth one on. Spread across the bed were five different blouses all in the shade of red, including the blouse I had on. I started laughing and said, "Woo girl, put that fire out." It changed my whole attitude for the day and I decided to wear a color that would extinguish a fire. Then I had to figure out the source of my emotion.

FIRE ELEMENT

The fire element represents the color red, the emotions of sweat, joy-panic, hysteria and laughter. These are emotions that use a lot of energy to generate over-reaction. We use phases like - "the heat of the moment, all fired up and blood boiling."

Sometimes a little fire energy is a good thing to lift us from the depths of procrastination. Wearing red would serve a great purpose in this instance.

EARTH ELEMENT

The earth element represents the color yellow/tan/gold, and the emotions of worry or obsession. These are emotions that can easily turn into a catch 22 cycle of getting nowhere fast. Yellow represents the colors in the body of lymph and fat. When we worry or obsess over a situation, we typically overeat.

Sometimes our body needs to be more grounded and rooted. Therefore, wearing yellow would be a good thing to stimulate groundedness and practicality.

METAL ELEMENT

The metal element represents the color white, and the emotions of weeping, crying and grief. These emotions can drain our energy. We turn "white as a ghost" when our energy is depleted.

It can also represent purity. Wearing white can bring to the mind clarity and purging of depleting energies.

WATER ELEMENT
The water element represents the color black or navy blue signifying the depths of the ocean. Where do we find the U.S. Navy? We find them in the middle of the ocean. These emotions represent fear and the sounds of groaning. It also shows a chronic condition that can show up in many different forms. Wearing all black shows our need to cover-up the things we don’t want others to see.

When I was all fired up, I chose to wear a navy blue top in order to assist with the consciousness of putting the fire out. Then again, wearing the navy blue called to mind that which I needed to recognize. The navy blue blouse served a two-fold purpose for me.

**WOOD ELEMENT**

The wood element represents the color green or a lighter blue. This element signifies the emotion of anger and the sounds of shouting. We often use the term "green with envy" which can represent insecurities that move our emotions.

The colors associated with the wood element can also represent growth and development, which is always a good thing.

**BALANCE YOUR COLORS**

Balancing your colors can assist you in harmonizing your emotions. Here's an example: Gold jewelry represents both the earth and metal element. Wearing red underwear and a red stone in your jewelry is the fire element. Black slacks, shoes and socks represent the water element. And a green or light blue blouse/shirt is the wood element. Get creative and pay attention to your emotions that are coupled with your choice of colors.
Five Element Theory

In addition to dividing energy (the base element of all things) into Yin and Yang, The Chinese further divided it into five basic elements. This page covers certain attributes associated with these elements that may be of use in the martial arts.

- **Hours of Activity**
- **Yang Organs**
- **Behavior Patterns**
- **Animals**
- **Yin Organs**
- **Emotions**
- **Physical Attributes**
- **XingYiQuan Fists**

### Hours of Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Activity Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>11:00 pm - 3:00 am, 3:00 am - 7:00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>7:00 am - 11:00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>11:00 am - 3:00 pm, 7:00 pm - 11:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>3:00 pm - 7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Creation Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Cycle Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Water nourishes Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>Earth creates Metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Fire nourishes Earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Wood nourishes Fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Metal creates Water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Destructive Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Cycle Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Metal cuts Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>Wood covers Earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Earth dams Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Water extinguishes Fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Fire melts Metal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Yin Organs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Organ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Liver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>Lung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Spleen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Heart Pericardium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Kidney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Yang Organs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Organ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Physical Attributes

These attributes and behaviors are used to determine which elements a person favors which is used in diagnosis and treatment.

### Wood
- Pale complexion with smooth and clear skin. Angular, well-defined features. Broad chest and shoulders. Abundant body hair. Tends to walk slowly.

### Metal
- Brownish or sallow complexion with a large head. Tends to be pear-shaped, carrying weight in the hips. Muscular or fat with heavy legs. Does not lift feet high when walking.

### Earth
- Red complexion. Head often smallish and pointed, or may have a pointed chin. Hair is often curly, in men a tendency to baldness. Hands and feet tend to be small and graceful. Walks quickly.

### Fire
- High forehead and abundant head hair. Long, strong bone structure with spine proportionately longer than normal. Fluid movement.

Behavior Patterns

### Wood
- Creative, hard working, decisive, and directing. Likes to be in control and to keep busy.

### Metal
- Well-organized, neat, methodical, and meticulous. Tends to be very self-contained and does not express emotion much.

### Earth
- Sympathetic, considerate, and supportive. Tends to be an "Earth Mother" type, with focus on caring for others.

### Fire
- Emotional, communicative, and articulate. Tends to be very sociable, loving, and can be quite spiritual in outlook.

### Water
- Flexible, well-motivated, ambitious. Can also tend to be lazy and "go with the flow" too much.

Animals
### XingYiQuan Fists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wood</th>
<th>Metal</th>
<th>Earth</th>
<th>Fire</th>
<th>Water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crushing Fist</td>
<td>Chopping or Splitting Fist</td>
<td>Crossing Fist</td>
<td>Pounding Fist</td>
<td>Drilling Fist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Wood**
- Snake

**Metal**
- Crane

**Earth**
- Dragon

**Fire**
- Tiger

**Water**
- Leopard
## Five-Element Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Metal</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Wood</th>
<th>Fire</th>
<th>Earth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Branch</td>
<td>Monkey</td>
<td>Rat</td>
<td>Tiger</td>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>Dragon, Dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Branch</td>
<td>Hen</td>
<td>Hog</td>
<td>Rabbit</td>
<td>Snake</td>
<td>Cow, Sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color</td>
<td>White (Golden)</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasons</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Between Seasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours</td>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>21-01</td>
<td>3-7</td>
<td>9-13</td>
<td>1-3,7,9,13-15,19-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directions</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>North (cold)</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>South (hot)</td>
<td>Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavor</td>
<td>Spicy</td>
<td>Salty</td>
<td>Sour</td>
<td>Bitter</td>
<td>Sweet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>Peach</td>
<td>Chestnut</td>
<td>Palm</td>
<td>Almond</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organs</td>
<td>Lungs</td>
<td>Kidneys</td>
<td>Liver</td>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>Spleen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System</td>
<td>Respiratory</td>
<td>Excretory</td>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td>Circulatory</td>
<td>Digestive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body</td>
<td>Skin</td>
<td>Bone</td>
<td>Nerve</td>
<td>Blood</td>
<td>Muscle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face</td>
<td>Nose</td>
<td>Ears</td>
<td>Eyes</td>
<td>Tongue</td>
<td>Mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>Worry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disease</td>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>Wind</td>
<td>Hot</td>
<td>Wet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Renown</td>
<td>Gentle</td>
<td>Upright Honest</td>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>keep Promises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planet</td>
<td>Venus</td>
<td>Mercury</td>
<td>Jupiter</td>
<td>Mars</td>
<td>Saturn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You need to find out your Five Elements first from Chinese Fortune Calendar. Usually, the elements with a lower score (weight) are your lucky elements. The elements with too much weight are your unlucky elements. Anything in your lucky element's column in the chart will bring you luck. Anything in your unlucky element's column's will give you trouble.

- If your five-elements is lack of Water, you will be lucky in the winter (cold weather). You will have better luck if you wear black. You will have more luck at night than during the day. You will be lucky in the Years of Pig and Rat, the Months of Pig and Rat (November and December), and the Days of of Pig and Rat. You should go to beach or ski often. You should drink more water or other cold drinks...
• If your five-elements is too much Fire, you will be less lucky in the summer. You shouldn't wear red. You won't be lucky in the Years of Horse or Snake. You should avoid hot and spicy food.
• Good luck means wedding, engagement, new job, promotion, easy money, new baby, new house...
• Bad luck means divorce, separation, traffic tickets, accidents, lawsuits, news of family death, money losses, bad health...
• To find your good/bad years look for the five element's weight of years. If there is a year with your lucky element which has more than 30 score, it can be considered as a good year. If a year shows your unlucky element, it might be a bad year.
金 木 土 水 火
Interactions of Five Chinese Elements - Cycles of Balance and Cycles of Imbalance
Chinese Five Elements

Balance is always the Key to achieving Health and Happiness in Life. Chinese philosophy views all of Life as movement, always changing, ever-shifting, ebbing and flowing in waves of Yin/Yang. As we learn to observe this natural rhythm and attune ourselves to it, much like learning to ride a bicycle, the Dance of Life begins to embue us with energy, enthusiasm and joy, increasing the substance and meaning of our lives. Further refinement of the Yin/Yang polarity is revealed in the Chinese theory of the Five Elements: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, Water.

Wood Personality
Color = GREEN
Wood subdues Earth
Wood is subdued by Metal
Wood supports Fire, which subdues Metal

High morality, inner confidence
Recognize value and 'count their blessings'
Tend toward popularity due to varied interests and life-style
Systematic thinkers, natural executives
Cooperative, optimistic, diversified
Bent on propagation and renewal
Community-minded, easily share the limelight
Highly-esteemed and loyally supported

Don’t know when to say "No"
Overzealous beginnings can lead to unfinished projects
Passivity can lead to non-action, lacks assertiveness
Inconstant, ineffective, dependent

Spring, East, Trees, Buildings, Tangibles

Fire Personality
Color = RED
Fire subdues Metal
Fire is subdued by Water
Fire supports Earth, which subdues Fire
Which subdues water

Natural leaders, impressive gestures, magnanimous
Decisive, confident, self-starters
Deep sense of adventure and innovation
Restless, always on the go, high energy
Personable, intelligent and warm
Original thinking, dynamic speech, clever action

Dominant, uses brains to gain advantage
Can be insensitive or lacking in compassion
Forceful, emotional, dramatic
Impatient, impulsive

South, summer, sun, fire, heat, light

Earth Personality

Color = brown
Earth subdues water
Earth is subdued by wood
Earth supports metal,
which subdues wood

Grounded, rational, methodical, disciplined
Logical, good deductive reasoning, objective
Far-seeing, intelligent, resourceful
Organized, responsible, good administrators
Wise planners, financially prudent, reliable
Goal-oriented, productive, conservative

Tend to get stuck in ruts of their own interests
Lacks sense of adventure, fears the unknown
Distrusts imagination or intuition

Center, wheel of seasons, soil, dust, ground, property, sand, clay

Metal Personality

Color = white
Metal subdues wood
Metal is subdued by fire
Metal supports water,
which subdues fire

Ambitious, hard-driving, confident
Self-reliant, relentless, determined
Autonomous, pioneering
Strong, energetic, private
Sharp financial acumen

Unreasonable, inflexible
Impulsive, aggressive
Thirst for power and luxurious living
Water Personality

Color = BLACK
Water subdues Fire
Water is subdued by Earth
Water supports Wood,
which subdues Earth

Charm, persuasive powers, good public relations
Expert communicators, persistent in uncovering facts
Flexible, intuitive, diplomatic and unimposing
Excellent eye for value, flair for expression
Natural healers
Good instigators and promoters
Capitalizes on talents and resources

Can to be too subjective, self-immersed and insular
Unpredictable, moody, dependent

NORTH, WINTER, LIQUIDS, WATER, COLD, FLOW
Chinese Five Elements

Fire, Earth, Wood, Water, and Metal

Apr 9, 2007 Debbie DeSpirt

Feng Shui elements that neutralize, enhance, or weaken the chi in a physical environment.

Fire, Earth, Metal, Water and Wood are known as the Chinese elements utilized in Feng Shui. The five Feng Shui elements produce and destroy each others energies in a continual cycle. Balance and harmony is created in the home when the elements are correctly placed in the home according to their attributes. If the elements are placed inaccurately it can destroy or lessen the chi.

Each element has a colour, direction and number associated with it.

Element--Colour--Number--Direction

• Fire Element--Red/Purple--9--South
• Earth Element--Brown/Beige--2,5,8--Southwest
• Metal Element--Grey/Reflective--6,7--West

• Water Element--Blue/Black--1--North
• Wood Element--Green--3,4--East

The elements have a productive and destructive cycle. You must utilize the five elements with caution.

Productive Cycle

Water--Wood--Fire--Earth--Metal

Water feeds wood for it to grow. Wood feeds fire which produces Earth. Earth creates metal and Metal holds Water. The cycle continues.

To use the productive cycle you are able to use the element before and after the main element you are bringing into the room. For example, if you are to bring wood into the home you may add water
because it feeds the wood and/or add fire because it is created by fire. The destructive cycle will show which elements do not work well together.

**Destructive Cycle**

**Water—Fire—Metal—Wood—Earth**

Water douses fire. Fire melts metal. Metal cuts down the wood. Wood clogs the earth. Earth muddies the waters. The destructive cycle is used in Feng Shui to lessen energy.

For example, if a room is filled with a great deal of new age metallic objects and streamlined furniture, you would add some fire like a fireplace or some red throw pillows on the couch to cut down the metal energies.

**Five Elements Sketch**

1. Sketch the interior perimeter of your home. Use a scaled drawing if possible. Photocopy a minimum of 10 sketches for future use.

2. Design a simple symbol for each of the five elements.

**Chinese Five Element Symbol Options**

Fire Element: red flames

Water Element: blue wavy lines

Wood Element: green tree

Metal Element: silver/white bucket

Earth Element: brown oval

3. Go to each room and place a symbol on the scaled drawing for each object. The couch may be 4 fires while the red pillow is a 1 fire... Try and make everything to scale to get a true picture of the five elements in the home.

4. Are the Feng Shui five elements balanced or are their irregularities.

Look at each individual room and the home as a whole.

5. Three options are available to balance the five elements. Bring in the missing element. Remove an element or bring in an element that will lessen a dominant element...

6. Try and memorize the five elements destructive and productive cycle or place the diagram on a small piece of paper for easy reference.
The Chinese five elements are often overlooked in Feng Shui practices. Try and incorporate them to find balance and give the chi the ability to flow effortlessly through your home or office space.

Each of the five Feng Shui elements are important to bring balance to the home. The finest way to bring one of the elements in to the home is in their natural state. For example if you need more wood, a tree would be the best cure. Second best would be a wood table or artwork with a forest scene. Try to buy things native to your community as they will bring you better quality chi.
Ancient Chinese people were greatly interested in the relationships and patterns that occurred in nature. Instead of studying isolated things, they viewed the world as a harmonious and holistic entity. In their eyes, no single being or form could exist unless it was seen in relation to its surrounding environment. By simplifying these relationships, they tried to explain complicated phenomena in the universe.

What is the Yin Yang Theory?

Yin yang theory is a kind of logic, which views things in relation to its whole. The theory is based on two basic components: yin and yang, which are neither materials nor energy. They combine in a complementary manner and form a method for explaining relationships between objects. Gradually, this logic was developed into a system of thought that was applied to other areas. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is an example of one area where the yin yang theory is used to understand complicated relationships in the body.

The Origin of the Yin Yang Theory

The original concept of yin and yang came from the observation of nature and the environment. "Yin" originally referred to the shady side of a slope while "yang" referred to the sunny side. Later, this thinking was used in understanding other occurrences, which occurred in pairs and had complementary and opposing characteristics in nature. Some examples include: sky and earth, day and night, water and fire, active and passive, male and female and so on. Working with these ideas, ancient people recognized nearly all things could have yin and yang properties. Yin and yang can describe two relative aspects of the same phenomena such as the example of the slope, or they can describe two different objects like sky and earth.

Usually, yang is associated with energetic qualities. For example, movement, outward and upward direction, heat, brightness, stimulation, activity and excitement are all yang qualities. Yin, on the other hand, is associated with the physical form of an object and has less energetic qualities such as rest, inward and downward direction, cold, darkness, condensation, inhibition, and nourishment. See Table 1 for a description of yin and yang characteristics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yang</th>
<th>Yin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Bright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperature</td>
<td>Hot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Upper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction</td>
<td>Outward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiological functions</td>
<td>Excitatory</td>
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</tbody>
</table>