

Finding Balance with the Five Elements

by Deborah Redfern



The past few months it seems I have been jumping from one deadline to the next, editing courses, doing website updates...and so on. Working on deadline can be exciting. It can give you an incredible sense of vitality and purpose. The only problem is that deadlines tend to distort reality and take us off track and further

away from our true priorities in life.

For example, spending quality time with my husband is high on my list of priorities but this Sunday I knew he had some important paperwork to catch up on. I decided to work as well. But we also wanted to spend some time together and planned to go for a walk later in the afternoon. By 4:30 he was willing to take a break but I was so deep into my work that I wanted to keep working...just a little longer.

It soon became obvious we were not going for our walk. At 7:30 we decided to get take-out for dinner and at 8:30 we ate and watched a DVD. I was exhausted, but what a sense of accomplishment -- what a great day of work! And, there would be other days to go for a walk, wouldn't there?

There are, of course, times of real urgency and things that can't wait until tomorrow – but my work wasn't one of those times. I just got caught up in the 'it must be done now' syndrome brought on previous weeks of working hard. Whenever we fall into a pace of life so fast that it becomes our continual way of being, we forget our true priorities. We forgot to stop and smell the roses – and we get out of balance. I wonder what feng shui has to teach us about the over-busy/over-working pattern?

The issue of balance is addressed by observing the five elements of feng shui. From the five element perspective (wood, water, fire, earth and metal), mental processing is governed by the element of metal. The element of fire also plays a role in over-working because fire

represents our drive to get things done. Of course one of the reasons for being busy might be an imbalance in an element which manifests as procrastination. Perhaps this is a topic for another day.

In the meantime, I imagine a dialogue between the five elements of an over-busy person who is has an unbalanced expression of metal would go something like this:

Metal: "I'm in charge here. You see how sharp and shiny I am? I know what is best! Pay attention to me and we'll get this done and everyone will look up to us and see how brilliant we are."

Fire: "You wouldn't get far without me buddy. I'm your drive and your fuel. I fan the flames of your ambition. Woo Hoo---go fire! Pour me some coffee. Let's get this adrenaline pumped up a notch!"

Wood: "Come on metal and fire, we can be flexible and reasonable about this – we can stop anytime we want. Let's take just a half an hour break and we'll be able to concentrate even better than before!"

Water: "I feel that a walk by the ocean would be greatly beneficial. It is so calming and peaceful, and all the negative ions would surely improve our ability to focus. Whatever we decide, I know that all will be well. We'll work together as a team."

Earth: "Trust me...the earth will not stop spinning if you take a break. And ask yourself if what you are doing is going to matter in six months? Remember that this moment comes only once...consider your real priorities."

Which element are you most dominant in -- which one 'wins'? The choice is yours to make.

Copyright 2007. Deborah Redfern is a feng shui master who specializes in feng shui for emotional well being. This article may be distributed freely, provided that this resource box is included in its entirety. <http://www.estel.ca>.