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The Feng Shui of— The ENERGY of SPRING

Spring is coming... No, it's still snowing! Spring is coming... Wait, wait, spring is here! It's in our nature to know that this is a great time to get up, get moving, and clean things up. Cleaning and decluttering our environments have been favorite subjects of many Feng Shui practitioners and writers. Since we already know that this is the clearing season (ever heard the phrase *spring cleaning*?), I won't give you the traditional de-cluttering advice!

But *why* is spring the time to clean and clear? From winter solstice onward, the days progress towards Spring Equinox—this year it's on March 20. Yin energy decreases and yang energy begins to increase; the days begin to get longer and warmer once again and there is movement stirring at every level in the earth. This amazingly beautiful process begins deep in the earth, long before we see the first green shoots popping up!

In Feng Shui, spring is associated with the east and the family sector of the bagua, as well as with the *I Ching* trigram, *chen*. The energy of the east is characterized by new beginnings and the rising sun of a new day. The energy of *chen* is active movement and its ability to stir things up. The east and *chen* combined compel us to clean up all aspects of our lives—not just our living environment.

The elemental attribute of the trigram *chen* is thunder. Its influence on the family area of the bagua urges us to build strong ties with family and close friends that will see us through the “thunderstorms”—the ups and downs of life. It is important to clean up misunderstandings or strife in our close relationships so that we can depend on that strength to support us in difficult times. In Feng Shui practice, you can enhance and strengthen the family area of the bagua (the left-central portion of your house) with blue and green colors and also with the element of wood, which enhances both strength and flexibility.

The energy of *chen* also has the unique ability to arouse dormant, but potent energy. This is the active, moving *qi* that we experience in the spring. The most beautiful example of this is the emerging of new life from

the earth. Have you ever tired of seeing a baby sprout popping up through the dirt or tiny buds beginning to emerge on branches? I haven't!

Just as spring's young yang energy begins deep in the earth, this energy is also rising from deep in our bodies. Think of your body like a tree: the trunk is its visible foundation, just as your feet and legs are your foundation. The rising energy moves up and out, like the branches and leaves. As we start to experience some days of warmth, it is important to protect our rising, “baby” yang energy by keeping our lower body protected and warm.

It's a little too early to break out the shorts and sandals! It's also still important and beneficial to get some extra sleep; although, not quite so much as during the winter. You may find yourself naturally waking a littler earlier; that is rising yang energy!

The major organ associated with spring is the liver, so this is the best time to cleanse and detoxify it. You can get good-quality liver-cleanse kits at any health-food store. A little lemon juice in some

warm water in the morning is great for helping the liver to release toxins; sour is the taste associated with the liver. Dandelion tea is also an easy way to assist the liver to release toxins. The liver greatly benefits from movement—it's time to get exercising! Better yet, practice forms of healing movement such as Qigong, which go beyond just physical cleansing, to get to the core of liver imbalance and toxicity: the holding within of irritation and anger!

Spring is the time to clean things up and get things moving: our bodies, our relationships, and our environments! It's a time of renewal and a great opportunity to begin again. ■

Trained in China and the US, Michele Lewis is a Certified Feng Shui Consultant and has been a Feng Shui professional since 1998 and is available for consultations on-site or via phone. By using the timeless principles of the art and science of Feng Shui, Michele can help you bring balance and beauty to every aspect of your life. She is also a Certified Qigong Instructor of Ling Gui Healing Qigong School, Liu Dong's Method. Michele can be reached at (406) 582-5724 or taodesigns@ymail.com.

