

## The Five Element Correspondences

Element	Wood (space)	Fire	Earth	Metal (Air)	Water
Organ	Liver	Heart	Pancreas	Lungs	Kidneys
Season	Spring	Summer	Late Summer	Fall	Winter
Color	Green	Red	Yellow	White	Blue/Black
Sound	Shouting	Laughing	Singing	Weeping	Groaning
Taste/Flavor	Sour	Bitter	Sweet	Pungent	Salty
Sense Organ	Eyes	Tongue	Mouth	Skin	Ears
Positive Emotion	Anger, Kindness, Decisiveness	Joy, Honor, Sincerity	Equanimity, Thoughtfulness, Openness	Compassion, Righteousness, Courage	Cautious, Strength, Gentleness
Negative Emotion	Hatred/Anger, Ignorance	Anxiety, Over Joy	Worry, Pride, Pensiveness	Grief, Sadness, Jealousy	Fear, Hatred
Resolving Quality	Forgiveness	Acceptance	Trust	Inner Strength	Will, Creativity
Energy Pattern	Expansiveness	Culmination, Completion	Balance	Contraction, Accumulation	Conservation
Life Quality	Wisdom, Freedom	Happiness, Creativity	Abundance, Beauty	Virtue, Morality	Healthy Feeling
Virtue	Kindness	Honor	Honesty	Responsible	Gentleness

# The Theory of Five Elements

***Things in nature can be classified in 5 types: metal, wood, earth, water, fire (金 木 土 水 火) . These 5 elements are not just the materials that the names refer to, but also metaphors and symbols for describing how things interact and relate to each other.***

## **Yin-Qi & Yang-Qi Give Birth to the Five Elements:**

According to Taoist cosmology, Yin-Qi and Yang-Qi – the primordial feminine and masculine energies – produce what are known as the “Five Elements.” The Five Elements, in turn, give birth to the “ten-thousand things,” i.e. all of manifest existence. Similar to the theory of yin-yang, the theory of five elements - wood, fire, earth, metal and water - was an ancient philosophical concept used to explain the composition and phenomena of the physical universe. In traditional Chinese medicine the theory of five elements is used to interpret the relationship between the physiology and pathology of the human body and the natural environment.

## **The Five Elements are Fluid Categories:**

To understand the use of the Five Element system in Qigong, Chinese Medicine and other Taoist practices, it's important to know that the elements – like Yin and Yang – are fluid rather than static categories. According to the theory, the five elements are in constant move and change, and the interdependence and mutual restraint of the Five Elements explain the complex connection between material objects as well as the unity between the human body and the natural world.

## **The Five Elements Support and Control Each Other:**

Everything we find in our external or internal terrain belongs to one of the Five Elements, each of which has supporting and controlling relationships with the other elements. When the Five Elements – within our bodies or external environments – are balanced, we experience health and prosperity. When they're out of balance – overacting, counteracting, or failing to properly support one another – we experience dis-ease of one sort or another.

The Five Element system shows up in various ways within qigong practice. One simple, powerful practice is to direct our attention into the five major organs, in a sequence which follows the Five-Element supporting cycle: Liver to Heart to Pancreas to Lungs to Kidneys, then back to Liver again.

Just becoming familiar with the Five Element Correspondences is a great way to enter into this terrain, and – with time – your intuition will reveal all kinds of ways to benefit from this perceptual framework.

The order of mutual promoting among the five elements is that wood promotes fire, fire promotes earth, earth promotes metal, metal promotes water, and water promotes wood.

In this way each of the five elements has this type of mutual promoting relationship with the other, thus promoting is circular and endless.

According to the order of mutual restraining, however, wood restrains earth, metal restrains wood, etc. Each of the five elements also shares this restraining relationship with the other. Mutual promoting and mutual restraining are two aspects that cannot be separated. If there is no promoting, then there is no birth and growth. If there is no restraining, then there is no change and development for maintaining normal harmonious relations.

Thus the movement and change of all things exists through their mutual promoting and restraining relationships. These relationships are the basis of the circulation of natural elements.

