

The Five Elements

The Law of the Five Elements explains how everything in the natural world works. The Ancient Taoists discovered these laws by careful observation and contemplation of how the seasons change and how the elements of Fire, Earth, Metal, Water and Wood are always in a dynamic interaction. The same laws that apply to nature and the world around us also apply to our internal world and the forces that maintain our individual lives.

The natal chart shows the strengths and weaknesses of each of your internal organs depending on the configuration of the Five Elements at the time of your birth. It also indicates how your energy flows between the organs and their functions. Generally speaking when all five elements are present in the chart, the individual has good potential for health. If someone with all five elements experiences energy imbalance due to poor health or stress, it is much easier to restore balance. However, only a small minority of the population is fortunate enough to have all the elements in their chart. The more elements that are missing, the greater the imbalance among the internal organs. This can affect your physical health or emotional health, or both.

The elements flow in a specific order throughout nature and provide support, nourishment and balance in a definite pattern. This dynamic is constantly at work and can be seen in the changing of the seasons in nature as well as in the functioning of the organs in the body. For each element to have ideal balance, it should receive sufficient strength from its nourishing element (the element that precedes it in the creation cycle) and be well balanced with the element that controls it (the element before it in the control cycle) as well as the element it controls (the element after it in the control cycle). If it is much stronger or much weaker than the other elements there will not be good balance and your health can suffer.

The following explains how this energy moves between each of the organ systems and describes specific characteristics of each element both physically and emotionally. The chart, on the third page, gives a visual summary of the relationship between the elements and the functioning of the organs in the body.

Wood Element

Wood is the energy of spring. It correlates with the organs of the liver and gallbladder. Wood is nourished by water, controlled by metal and controls earth. Wood can be compared to the energy of trees, which need water to survive and be strong. In the same way the liver is nourished by the kidneys. When the liver energy is weak, too strong or has poor functioning this can cause the related emotion, anger, to easily arise. When the liver is strong and well balanced this produces compassion and tolerance.

Liver and Gallbladder

Fire Element

Fire is the energy of summer. The heart, small intestine and the circulation of blood are the expression of the fire element. Fire is nourished by wood, controlled by water and controls metal. This energy can be compared to the sun, which provides warmth and vitality to all of life. If the fire energy is too cold it can fail to warm the body adequately and lead to a lack of vitality and enthusiasm. If it is too hot it can cause impatience and irritability. When the fire is healthy and balanced one is active, warm-hearted, and confident.

Heart and Small Intestine

Earth Element**Spleen, Stomach & Pancreas**

Earth is the energy of late summer and the transition time between the seasons. The energy of the stomach, spleen and pancreas is represented by the earth element. The earth element is nourished by fire, controlled by wood and controls water. This earth energy can be compared to the soil in nature. The emotions related to the stomach, spleen and pancreas are anxiety, worry, and excessive thinking. These can arise easily when the stomach and spleen are out of balance. When the stomach/spleen is strong and well balanced this produces feelings of contentment.

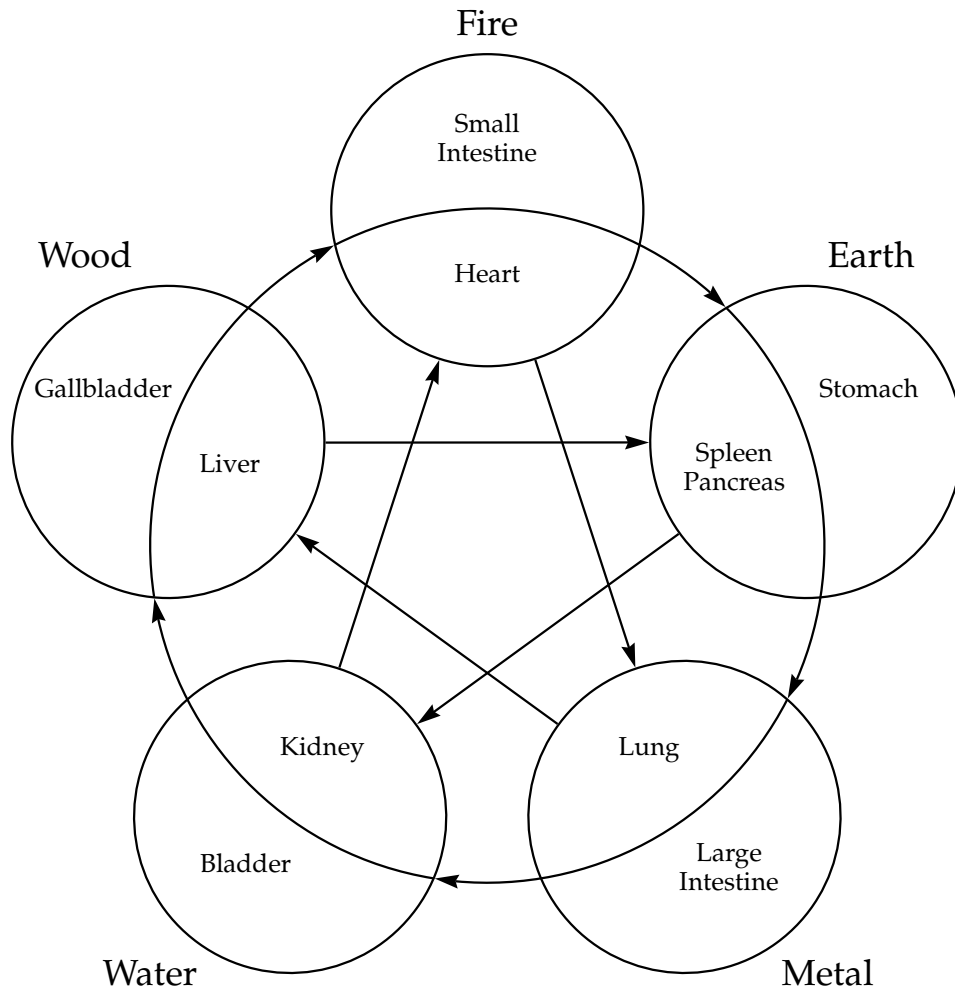
Metal Element**Lungs and Large Intestine**

Metal is the energy of autumn when the trees lose their leaves. It is also the energy of the lungs, respiratory system, skin and large intestine. Metal is nourished by earth, controlled by fire and controls wood. When the lung energy is very weak, or excessively strong, causing imbalance, the related emotion of grief can easily arise. When the lungs are well balanced this will produce feelings of courage.

Water Element**Kidneys & Bladder**

Water is the energy of winter when most of life is dormant and in the seed state. It also represents the energy of the kidneys, bladder, urinary system, lower back, lower abdomen and reproductive organs. The water element is nourished by metal, controlled by earth and controls fire. When the kidney energy is weak or has poor functioning this can cause the related emotion, fear, to easily arise. When the kidneys are strong and well balanced this produces wisdom.

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 Creative Cycle

 Control Cycle

Adapted from chart by J.R. Worsley