

# TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE & YOUR ORIGINAL NATURE

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So you feel different, do you? You've never been able to \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank) quite like everyone else. Your vision is unique and yet it never seems to flow with the status quo. Sound familiar?

According to the principles of Traditional Chinese Medicine, *you are different* and you are meant to be that way. What would we think about an oak tree that spends its life striving to become an aspen? In fact, denying what is true for you is the very thing that sets you on the fast track to imbalance. Anxiety, digestive challenges, feeling tired but wired—all signs and symptoms of being off track with our original nature.

We humans were never meant to be mirror images of each other. Each of us has a unique energetic imprint that is referred to as *your constitution* in Traditional Chinese Medicine (and in Ayurveda it is referred to as your dosha). Your constitution is based on the five elements: Earth, Metal, Water, Wood, and Fire, which are found not only in human nature but also in the natural world.

This theory of "constitution" has roots in Taoist texts somewhere between eight and nine thousand years old. Basically, it is described as *both your virtue and your Achilles' heel*.

When life is pretty balanced and you are getting your needs met, your dominant element will thrive and propel you into the world with the energy to do what you came here to do. A Fire-dominant person who is thriving, for example, will

find ways to infuse each day with a sense of adventure and always seek heart-connection with those with whom they cross paths.

However, when you fall under a giant mound of stress brought on by living a life misaligned with your desires and needs, you will likely experience a decrease in the energy of your constitutional element. For example, a Fire-dominant person who is on the struggle bus may feel flat, sad, and have difficulty connecting to others.

## HERE IS A QUICK BREAKDOWN OF THE ELEMENTS IN HUMAN NATURE AND IN THE NATURAL WORLD:

### WATER

This refers to the water on our planet—oceans, rivers, lakes, precipitation, and so on, as well as the will to live and strength to seek out truth, even in the muck. This is the energy of deep winter, the quietest and most introverted time of the year. We need people in the world who are Water-dominant, as that's how we learn to have good boundaries, self-reflect, and balance the activity of our lives.

**WE MUST LEARN TO  
LISTEN TO OURSELVES  
MORE DEEPLY SO  
WE CAN BETTER  
UNDERSTAND OUR  
ELEMENTAL MAKEUP.**

### FIRE

This literally refers to the element of fire, the sun, and that which creates heat. Fire gives us the drive to open our hearts and to make space for play and adventure. It is found in the classic summertime vibe. We need people in the world who are Fire-dominant, as that's how connection is created and how love is made.

### EARTH

Earth refers to the soil that holds nutrients, plants, and trees in the ground and the drive within us to nurture others and to contain our energy (versus spilling it out everywhere). It is the energy of late summer, that sweet spot between the end of summer and the beginning of autumn.

We need people in the world who are Earth-dominant, as that's how we learn to nurture each other, find compassion, and become stewards of the Earth and all its beings.

### METAL

Rocks, minerals, and compost are all considered part of the Metal element, along with the drive to harness the silver lining of our lives. This energy is most palpable in the autumn season. We need people in the world who are Metal-dominant, as that's how we maintain perspective and are reminded of our inherent connection to something larger than ourselves.

### WOOD

This refers not only to the wood found in trees but also to the sturdy, fibrous structure of all plant life and the drive to birth and grow our vision for our lives. This is also aligned with the energy of springtime. We need people in the world who are Wood-dominant, as they are often holding the blueprint for our world. When balanced, they hold the vision for what's possible and have the courage to create the change that is so needed in our world.

Mindi Counts is a holistic medical practitioner, herbalist, and acupuncturist who uses Traditional Chinese Medicine to support clients in living their best lives, both in her clinic and abroad.