

# What Is My Element?

## A Self-Assessment Questionnaire



Special thanks to Harriet Beinfield, L.Ac. and Efrem Korngold, L. Ac., O.M.D. for their kind permission to reproduce this questionnaire, which appears in their book, "Between Heaven and Earth, A Guide to Chinese Medicine". Please refer to this book for more in-depth explanation of the Five -Element (or Five-Phase)system, as well as to the others which will be listed at the end of this questionnaire. This assessment is not intended to replace the services of a licensed health care provider in the diagnosis or treatment of illness or disease. Any application of the material set forth as a result of taking this assessment is at the reader's discretion and sole responsibility.

The following questionnaire is designed to help you map how the **Five Phases** act and interact within you. The letters (A-E) at the end of each statement refer to each of the **Five Phases**. Mark the space at the beginning of each statement according to the strength of your response. If it strongly typifies you, place a "3" in the space; if it characterizes you somewhat, put a "1"; if you feel ambivalent or indifferent toward it, put a "0". If you have a definite negative response ("I'm not at all like this!"), put a "-2".

When you are finished, total up the number of positive (+) and negative (-) responses for each section according to the letter code: total score for "A", "B", and so on. Do this before you look at the code key so that you are not biased in your responses. Record the number of positive and negative responses on the **Five-Phase** Diagram at the end of the questionnaire to plot your particular patterns.

Look at the **Phases** with the highest positive scores and see whether they are opposite or adjacent to each other: **Wood** and **Fire** and **Earth** are adjacent, whereas, **Wood** and **Metal**, **Fire** and **Water**, are opposite. Adjacent **Phases** with high scores reflect a strong supporting ("**sheng** sequence") relationship. Opposite **Phases** with high scores reflect a strong conflicting ("**ke** sequence") relationship. Negative scores also suggest conflict with an opposing **Phase**. In this context, conflict is not necessarily good or bad -- it represents the potential for movement and change as well as instability.

If all the scores on the diagram look pretty much the same -- that is, if they differ by a value of only 1-3, you may need to go back to the questionnaire, review your responses, and eliminate those that are only a "+1". This will help to accentuate the numerical contrast between **Phases**. If there are still no significant differences, refer to the charts at the end of each chapter on the 5 types to determine the set of characteristics with which you identify most strongly. How do these reactions compare with your responses to the questionnaire? Also, answer the questions at the end of the questionnaire and see if you can classify your answers as belonging more to one **Phase** than another.

Whether or not the pattern that emerges now reflects your primary type is a question that you may need to answer upon further consideration. Eventually a pattern will reveal itself so that you feel you have a sense of who you are within this paradigm.

### Psychological

It is typical of me (+) or unlike me (-) to:

- \_\_\_ be honest, even blunt, though not necessarily tactful or diplomatic A
- \_\_\_ be cautious and sensible A
- \_\_\_ enjoy frequent periods of solitude and introspection A
- \_\_\_ enjoy indulging my imagination and curiosity A
- \_\_\_ keep my feelings to myself A
- \_\_\_ be content being anonymous or on the periphery of social events A
- \_\_\_ be considered unusual or eccentric A
- \_\_\_ be involved in intellectual pursuits A
- \_\_\_ be content with a few good friends and minimal social activities A
- \_\_\_ be content figuring things out for myself A
- \_\_\_ be careful about what I reveal to other people A
- \_\_\_ be a stubborn defender of the truth as I see it A
- \_\_\_ be patient and persevering in spite of defeats or dead ends A
- \_\_\_ be objective or dispassionate A

- \_\_\_ feel self-sufficient in or out of a relationship A
- \_\_\_ choose privacy over intimacy, solitude over socializing A
- \_\_\_ be critical and skeptical while observing people and events from a distance A
- \_\_\_ pursue my own interests regardless of what others consider important A
- \_\_\_ enjoy projects that don't involve other people A
- \_\_\_ remove myself from everyday affairs and turn inward to quietly reflect upon the place of my life in the grand scheme of things A
  
- \_\_\_ feel confident and act assertively B
- \_\_\_ enjoy being competitive and ambitious B
- \_\_\_ feel powerful and invulnerable B
- \_\_\_ reluctantly acknowledge other people as my equals
- \_\_\_ openly discuss my abilities and achievements with others B
- \_\_\_ be comfortable with conflict or pressure B
- \_\_\_ enjoy being first, best, unique, or even outlandish B
- \_\_\_ act with confidence and assurance regardless of what others may think or feel B
- \_\_\_ make quick decisions and commit myself to a course of action even if the odds aren't in my favor B
- \_\_\_ be comfortable with difficult tasks or emergencies that demand "thinking on my feet" B
- \_\_\_ feel that I'm right even if others strongly disagree with or disapprove of me B
- \_\_\_ feel good about following my instincts and satisfying my impulses B
- \_\_\_ be direct or provocative even if it causes discomfort or embarrassment to others B
- \_\_\_ take pleasure in public recognition and admiration of my talents and achievements B
- \_\_\_ be comfortable leading or directing others B
- \_\_\_ follow my own hunches about what is right or wrong B
- \_\_\_ to take the lead when it is necessary to get things done quickly and effectively B
- \_\_\_ act boldly and decisively even if I don't have all the expertise or information that I need B
- \_\_\_ enjoy the process of striving against the odds for its own sake B
- \_\_\_ to want to reject or argue with other people's appraisals of me B
  
- \_\_\_ be animated and enthusiastic C
- \_\_\_ enjoy the pleasure of my senses C
- \_\_\_ easily know what another thinks and feels C
- \_\_\_ enjoy physical contact and emotional intimacy C
- \_\_\_ be comfortable in a very stimulating environment C
- \_\_\_ openly share my innermost feelings and desires C
- \_\_\_ live in the here and now and not worry about the future or dwell on the past C
- \_\_\_ see the humorous side of life C
- \_\_\_ thoroughly enjoy getting what I want and need C
- \_\_\_ be tender, intimate, and vulnerable with another person C
- \_\_\_ be comfortable receiving and showing affection and pleasure C
- \_\_\_ enjoy being moved emotionally C
- \_\_\_ easily become completely involved in the events going on around me C
- \_\_\_ become deeply identified with the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of another C
- \_\_\_ be emotionally sensitive, responsive, and intuitive C
- \_\_\_ remain optimistic and hopeful in spite of what others may say or believe C
- \_\_\_ be completely open and exposed
- \_\_\_ identify and empathize with another's joy or pain C
- \_\_\_ be unabashed in showing enthusiasm and excitement C
- \_\_\_ enjoy being attractive and magnetic C

- \_\_\_\_\_ be nurturing and supportive D
- \_\_\_\_\_ put the needs of others before my own D
- \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy frequent socializing with friends and family D
- \_\_\_\_\_ care for others and try to satisfy their needs D
- \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy being relied upon for reassurance and help D
- \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy being the hub of my social and family network D
- \_\_\_\_\_ be agreeable and accomodating D
- \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy settling disputes so that all apties are satisfied D
- \_\_\_\_\_ help people work together in a harmonious manner D
- \_\_\_\_\_ create a relaxed and comfortable environment in which very different people can enjoy being together D
- \_\_\_\_\_ be loyal and accessible to the people who are my friends, relations, or in some important way involved in my life and work D
- \_\_\_\_\_ get involved in other people's lives D
- \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy maintaining many diverse, even conflicting relationships D
- \_\_\_\_\_ be diplomatic and tactful D
- \_\_\_\_\_ rely on the skill and intelligence of others D
- \_\_\_\_\_ accept other people's characterizations of who I am D
- \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy just being in the company of other people D
- \_\_\_\_\_ sympathize with the circumstances of others D
- \_\_\_\_\_ find ways to resolve conflict and bring about agreement D
- \_\_\_\_\_ get close enough to need another person D
- \_\_\_\_\_ be comfortable and sociable with people I don't know well D
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ maintain a neat and orderly personal life-style E
- \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy a convivial but undemanding social life E
- \_\_\_\_\_ be in control of my environment and the way I do things E
- \_\_\_\_\_ be strongly committed to my moral principles and standards of conduct E
- \_\_\_\_\_ feel secure and confident in my work when I know that everyone is following proper procedures E
- \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy tasks that require logical, analytical, and systematic approaches to problem-solving E
- \_\_\_\_\_ appreciate being thought of as meticulous and discriminating E
- \_\_\_\_\_ think of myself as being impeccable and above reproach E
- \_\_\_\_\_ be self-contained and not overly-involved in otehr people's affairs E
- \_\_\_\_\_ work easily and efficiently in situations where goals and guidelines are well defined E
- \_\_\_\_\_ be appreciated or admired for my skill and expertise rather than my personality and emotional enthusiasm E
- \_\_\_\_\_ be judged or evaluated according to objective criteria rather than personal biases or intuitions E
- \_\_\_\_\_ accept the authority of those with more competence E
- \_\_\_\_\_ be systematic and methodical in my work E
- \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy the process of solving puzzles and mysteries E
- \_\_\_\_\_ be content with few close attachments or demanding relationships E
- \_\_\_\_\_ put virtue and principles before pleasure and fulfillment E
- \_\_\_\_\_ restrain myself in expressing feelings or opinions E
- \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy temperance and moderation E
- \_\_\_\_\_ be tasteful and discriminating E

## Physiological

I am frequently (+) or rarely (-) bothered by:

- lack of semen or other sexual secretions A
- infertility, impotence, or lack of libido A
- depression or weariness following sex A
- diminished recall of recent information or events A
- diminished acuity of vision or hearing A
- swelling or pain at the inner corners of the eyes A
- pain in the arches, heels or soles of the feet A
- hypersensitive vision or hearing A
- stiffness or aching of joints or spine A
- unusual or painful bony protuberances A
- frequent, slow, or suppressed urination A
- incontinence of semen, urine or stool A
- loss of pubic or head hair A
- pimples on the chin or between the nose and upper lip A
- fatigue or listlessness following prolonged mental effort A
- stiffness or pain when bending over or standing up A
- aching in the bones from fatigue, standing or overwork A
- tenderness and hardness of prostate, testes, ovaries, or cervix A
  
- pain at the temples, sides, back or top of head B
- vertigo and nausea B
- sudden blurring of vision or ringing in the ears B
- dry eyes B
- headache, earache, or eye ache from exposure to wind B
- difficulty swallowing or tightness of the throat B
- sharp pain in the eyes, ears, nose, or throat, especially during the night B
- a feeling of fullness or soreness beneath the ribs B
- sudden sharp or sticking pains in the breasts, between the ribs, in the armpits or in any of the internal or genital organs B
- frequent sensitivity to bright light or loud noise B
- split, hardened or thickened nails B
- oily skin, especially of the face, nose and scalp B
- frequent tension in the neck and across the shoulders B
- premenstrual grouchiness and depression B
- irritability following sex B
- excessive libido or frequent, uncomfortable sexual arousal B
- boils or painful nodes in the armpits or groin B
- severe cramps at the start of menstruation B
- cramping or twitching of the muscles in the eyes, face, ears, calves, or feet B
- eyes that tear a lot B
  
- excessive perspiration C
- being flushed or overheated C
- craving or thirst for cold liquids and food C
- rapid or irregular heartbeat C

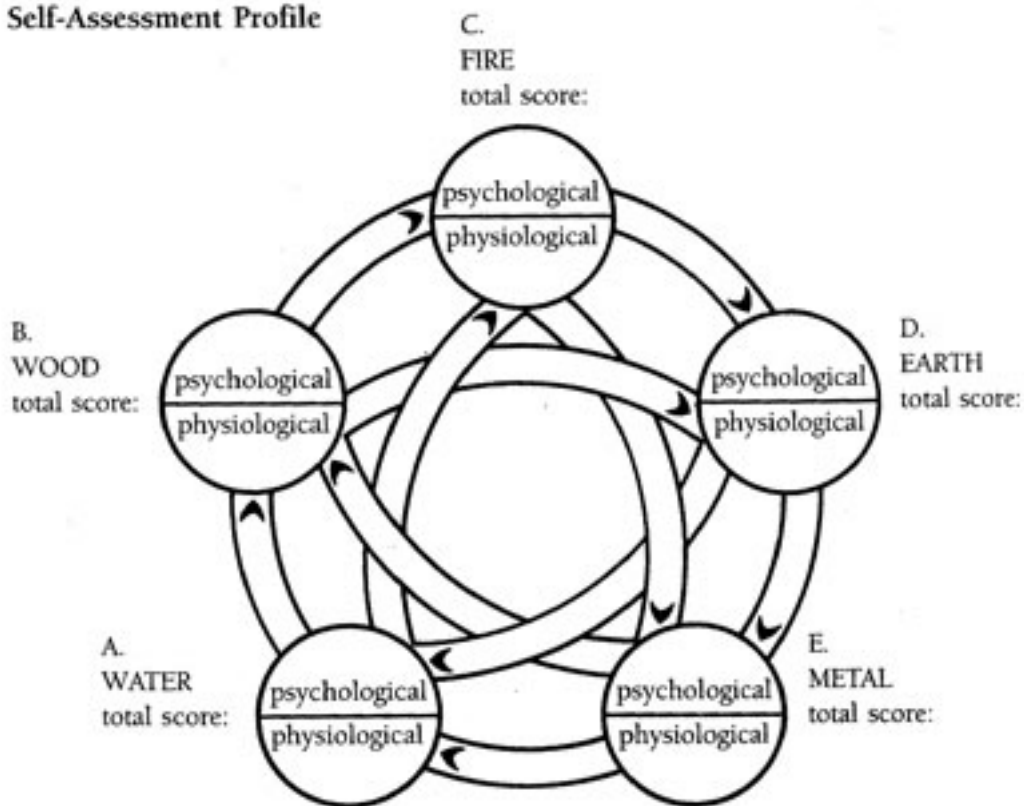
- \_\_\_ sores in the mouth or tongue C
- \_\_\_ burning sensation in the mouth urethra, rectum, or vagina C
- \_\_\_ easy or uncontrollable excitability C
- \_\_\_ feeling faint, dizzy or disoriented when startled or excited C
- \_\_\_ diminished long-term memory C
- \_\_\_ stuttering or talking too fast C
- \_\_\_ nervous giggling or talkativeness C
- \_\_\_ premature ejaculation or orgasm C
- \_\_\_ insomnia when anxious or excited C
- \_\_\_ anxiety or dread at dusk C
- \_\_\_ disturbing or very vivid dreams C
- \_\_\_ awakening anxious or with a racing heart C
- \_\_\_ blushing when startled, nervous or upset C
- \_\_\_ dry, itchy rashes or exzema, especially in the hollows of the elbows, behind the knees or on the palms or soles of the feet C
- \_\_\_ distorted perceptions or mental images C
- \_\_\_ inflammation of the blood vessels, outer ears, or corners of the eyes C
  
- \_\_\_ rapid weight gain and difficulty losing weight D
- \_\_\_ obsessive desire for or avoidance of food D
- \_\_\_ frequent blaoting of the abdomen, especially in the evening D
- \_\_\_ fleshy and tneder muscles, especially of the upper arms and thighs D
- \_\_\_ weakness of the neck, wrists, ankles and low back D
- \_\_\_ inflamed eyelids taht tend to stick together D
- \_\_\_ frequent cravings for sweet, glutinous, starchy foods D
- \_\_\_ swollen, sore, or bleeding gums D
- \_\_\_ misshapen nails that tear easily D
- \_\_\_ cuticles that erode or become inflamed easily D
- \_\_\_ swollen muscles and joints D
- \_\_\_ generalized puffiness or edema D
- \_\_\_ easy or frequent bruising D
- \_\_\_ feeling full, heavy and lethargic D
- \_\_\_ feeling dry but not thirsty D
- \_\_\_ lack of stamina D
- \_\_\_ premenstrual lethargy, bloating and water retention D
- \_\_\_ pimples on the scalp, eyelids (sties), nose, or around the mouth D
- \_\_\_ headaches from prolonged thinking, excessive worrying, conflict, or disappointment D
- \_\_\_ prolapse of the veins in the rectum (hemorrhoids) or legs (varicosities) D
  
- \_\_\_ dryness of the nose, throat, skin, or hair E
- \_\_\_ dry, scaly pimples, especially on the cheeks, beside the nose or on the upper back E
- \_\_\_ lack of perspiration, even when hot E
- \_\_\_ itching from dryness E
- \_\_\_ scanty urine E
- \_\_\_ lack of mucous secretions E
- \_\_\_ many enlarged or hard lymph nodes, especially along the sides of the neck or upper jaw E
- \_\_\_ large pores on the face, nose and upper back E
- \_\_\_ many moles or warts E
- \_\_\_ frequent sneezing or coughing due to changes in air temperature or moisture E
- \_\_\_ wrinkling or shrinking of the skin or mucous membranes E

- \_\_\_\_\_ skin that feels tight or cracks easily E
- \_\_\_\_\_ congestion of the nose, sinuses or larynx E
- \_\_\_\_\_ frontal headaches due to dryness or congestion with mucus E
- \_\_\_\_\_ pain in the head or chest due to disappointment or loss E
- \_\_\_\_\_ shallow breathing E
- \_\_\_\_\_ many small varicose veins E
- \_\_\_\_\_ nasal or intestinal polyps E
- \_\_\_\_\_ thin, delicate skin E
- \_\_\_\_\_ dry, painful fissures or cracks of the nostrils, lips, or corners of the mouth E

Use these questions and/or the statements on the questionnaire to make five statements about yourself that you feel are accurate in describing who you are. These statements, along with the map, can be used to identify yourself according to the **Five-Phase** model.

- 1) What concept, metaphor or principle is at the center of your life, and how does it motivate you?
  
- 2) What do you desire from life, and what are you seeking to accomplish, create, assist and support?
  
- 3) What circumstances would provide you with the optimum conditions for satisfying your needs and fulfilling your expectations?
  
- 4) What values and virtues do you admire and strive to engender in yourself and others?
  
- 5) What are the fundamental activities and behaviors that express your deepest intentions?
  
- 6) What do you feel is the particular talent and perspective that you bring to any relationship or endeavor?
  
- 7) What do you want from other people and from yourself?
  
- 8) What is it about your work or job that is most satisfying, most frustrating, most difficult, most easy?
  
- 9) What are among your most trying dilemmas, conflicts, and contradictions?

## Self-Assessment Profile



So, there you have it. For more in-depth information about the tendencies, strengths, weaknesses, and typical problems with your particular element, please feel free to email me at [gina@embodygrace.com](mailto:gina@embodygrace.com), or please refer to:

"Between Heaven and Earth, A Guide to Chinese Medicine" by Harriet Beinfield, L AC. and Efrem Korngold, L. Ac, O.M.D.

For a solid introduction to Traditional Chinese Medicine, you might enjoy:

"The Web That Has No Weaver", by Ted J Kaptchuk

Both of these books can be found in my Amazon bookstore at:

<http://astore.amazon.com/touchlifespri-20>