

# 2024 Year of the Wood Dragon

Happy New Year! Lunar New Year on February 10th brings us the Year of the Yang Wood Dragon.

## Introduction



The last few years have been challenging for a lot of people. Part of that is due to the end of a 20-year period in Feng Shui. Endings and beginnings of big-time cycles in Chinese metaphysics are often chaotic, and the last few years are a good example.

First, we'll see what the 20-year cycle brings in, and then move on to what to expect in the Year of the Dragon. It's important to consider the 20-year cycle, because it has an over-arching effect on all 20 of the years within the cycle.

## The New 20-Year Cycle: Fire Energy

2024 marks the start of the new 20-year period. During these cycles, we tend to see major changes that affect our lifestyles. During the last time period, from 2004-2023, we saw technology take over our lives, with the internet, cell phones and social media becoming so entwined in people's lives that they often can't step away from their phones for even a few minutes. If you take your phone to the bathroom, you're a prime example of this.

This next 20-year period from 2024-2043 is governed by Fire energy. Fire is associated with passion, innovation and technology. This will bring more technological change. The advent of AI (artificial intelligence) and blockchain technology (mostly used in cryptocurrency right now) look primed to become the technologies that will permeate our lives over the next 20 years. Haven't heard about these things yet? You will.

It's the Wild West in both of those areas of tech right now, but if you think back to 20 years ago, it was the same in the technological landscape of the time. The internet was still young. Facebook was created in 2004, and YouTube in 2005. Despite them being so common in most people's lives now, they didn't even exist in 2004 when the last 20-year period started.

That should give you some idea of how to think about this. AI and blockchain technology already exist and are in their infancy. We don't even know what new technologies will be created next.

AI and automation will replace a lot of jobs currently done by people. Blockchain technology can replace almost all functions of banks and financial institutions, as well as other types of paper-trail-based transactions, without needing the people currently doing those jobs. People in these types of jobs are at the most risk of being replaced and it would be wise to learn new skills that can't be automated.

If you look at the big picture, there are many potential opportunities but also a lot of potential risks, as in any new field of technology. Considering the wealth, power and influence of the current tech giants, there is the potential for more consolidation of wealth and power in their hands. Concentrations of wealth and power historically often lead to abuse of that power.

We also don't know what will happen. Blockchain technology is exactly the opposite. There is no concentrated power. Transactions on the blockchain happen in a specific chain of events validated by different independent computers, with no human interaction. For the transactions to be completed correctly, there is no way to interfere, so it's a diffusion of power.

We'll continue to see the entities with concentrated power fighting to oppose blockchain technology because it threatens their power and control. This is already happening, and we can expect more of it. Financial institutions like banks are fighting the adoption of cryptocurrencies because it's a method of exchanging value that they can't centralize, control, and profit from. This implies that there is a good chance we'll see big changes in the way financial transactions occur in the future. This could sound a bit scary, but if all the middlemen are cut out, what happens to expenses and who makes the profit? Interesting food for thought.

These are examples. People are already creating these new technologies. There are companies building alternate financial applications on the blockchain, and metaverses and virtual reality environments may become the new social media. Maybe 20 years from now, we'll all be wearing virtual reality glasses and interacting with friends and family members in the metaverse.

I don't know how it's going to play out, but I've got an inkling of what's coming. I want to give you an idea of how vast the potential changes could be so you can be informed and prepared.

It's also a given that unless some crazy event knocks out all electronics, social media in some form is here to stay. New technologies present new opportunities to build followings. If you think you've missed the boat on being an influencer, there is still plenty of opportunity. With us being bombarded with more information from every angle, people will look to those they trust to provide them with reliable information.

That means there are opportunities for us to build followings of email lists, social media, etc., where people can get to know you and trust you for reliable natural health information.

Google and YouTube changed their algorithms several months ago to favor Western medical institutions as sources of natural health rather than licensed natural health providers, so Western medical institutions now show up first in searches. This is an example of concentration of power. Haven't heard about it yet? Google "acupuncture" or search on YouTube and see what comes up. (FYI, local search hasn't changed at the time of this writing.)

As bad as that is for the general public, it's a big opportunity for Chinese medicine practitioners to build a following of people who are desperate for reliable information and who will seek us out as patients.

As acupuncturists, we do pretty low-tech medicine. However, there are opportunities for us to use technology to our benefit by getting information to the people who are looking for it. An email list is the best because you own and control it. Nobody can change an algorithm and mess with your list. So, if you don't have an email list, it's time to build one.

Make sure to educate people and give them useful information so they get value from it, and you'll be the one they go to for help.

There will also be opportunities as new social media like metaverses develop. Will we have virtual clinics to screen patients in the metaverse years from now? Who knows, but the first people to adopt these new media may become influencers in those media and gain a new source of patients.

## The Year of the Yang Wood Dragon: 2024

Every year is either Yin or Yang, and they alternate. Since 2023 was a Yin year, 2024 is a Yang year. If we know the natures of Yin and Yang, we know that generally, Yang is faster, brighter, more active, and more powerful than Yin. That already tells us a bit about the year. Big events will be more Yang, so they may be fast and powerful.

Next, let's consider the nature of the Dragon before we discuss the elemental natures involved. The Dragon is strong, ambitious, majestic, and powerful. It is typically associated with the emperor. The Dragon is considered auspicious and wise and is associated with luck and prosperity.

The Dragon year contains those energies, so there may be opportunities to pursue ambitious goals and succeed at them this year.

## Heaven and Earth

According to Chinese philosophy, we have the concepts of Yin and Yang, and Heaven, Earth, and Humanity. The way these energetics combine determines the energy for the year.

Each year, we have Qi, or energy, arriving from Heaven (the universe) and Qi arriving from Earth (the planet).

In the cosmology of "Heaven, Earth and Humanity," we, the people, being "Humanity," live in between Heaven and Earth and are affected by their energies and the energy of the year.

The Heaven energy in 2024 is Wood, and the Earth energy is the Dragon, which is associated with the Earth element (the element, not the planet).

Since the color green is associated with the Wood element, you may see the year referred to as the Green Dragon.



## 5 Element Relationships

Let's first consider the relationship between the Heaven and Earth energies of Wood and Earth.

In the five Elements creation/ production cycle in the diagram above, we see that Wood restrains Earth. This is the normal flow of Qi. Since the Heaven energy of the universe is much bigger and stronger than the energy of earth (the planet), the Wood energy is strong enough to restrain the Earth elemental energy. This is also the correct flow of Qi.

Because the Wood restrains the Earth energy, it means the Dragon's Earth elemental energy is weakened a bit. But the Dragon is a strong character, so it will still have a powerful effect.

## Nature of the Elements

### The Nature of Wood

We've had Wood energy the last two years. It came from the Earth energy (the planet) of those years. This year, the Wood energy comes from Heaven.

The atmospheric nature of Wood is wind and warmth. On earth, it refers to plants. Since this year is Yang Wood, it's like big sturdy trees, as opposed to grasses or small plants.

Yang wind is strong, powerful wind, rather than gentle breezes, although we'll most likely have them, too.

Big trees don't have the ability to bend like smaller plants, so they can fall down, especially if they have shallow roots in strong wind. This implies that people who cannot bend this year are more susceptible to "breaking," and people should be cautious to avoid falling. There is the potential for falls this year to break bones.

Wood is the starting element of the year and refers to Spring, growth, and change. The nature of wind/ Wood is change since wind never stays in one place. Wood energy is growing, spreading, and dispersing. This provides good potential for starting and/ or growing businesses, projects, etc., and sharing it with others.

## Nature of Earth

Earth is associated with dampness. Its atmospheric nature is clouds and rain. Change is also inherent in this energy since clouds and rain are always moving and changing.

On earth (the planet), Earth refers to the actual earth and soil. The damp nature is like mud. Yang earth, though, isn't a small mud puddle, which would be more of a Yin nature. Yang Earth is *big* earth, like mountains and giant boulders. Because of the changing and moving nature of both Wood and Earth this year, there is a strong possibility of earthquakes. Because it's a Yang year, the earthquakes could be big and very damaging. There could also be mudslides and sinkholes that involve moving earth.

We've already seen a few earthquakes, even though the energy "officially" changes in February. We know the date and time that the energy changes, but it's not like somebody flips a switch and suddenly it changes.

The energy starts transitioning before the official new year. Because the Five Elements are always moving and changing, the new energy starts to shift before the official new year date, particularly in powerful Yang years. As of the official new year, the energy will be fully transitioned to the new energy of the Yang Wood Dragon.

## Implications

Wood and Earth are the two strongest elemental energies this year.

Wood represents kindness, compassion, healing, and medicine, especially natural medicine. It should be a good year for businesses in these industries and any other industry related to wood or working with wood, trees, and/ or plants, like farming.

Earth is associated with trust, truth, and the center. It is a harmonizing force. As seasonal energies change within the year, earth comes in and harmonizes the transition from season to season.

People who are perceived as kind, compassionate, and trustworthy have good support from the elements and should do well this year. People and institutions who are not will most likely have a harder time.

Earth industries like real estate, mining, pottery, and others related to earth should have a good year.

Fire and Metal are fairly neutral this year.

Water is the weakest element this year. Water industries like plumbing and shipping could suffer, and there could be big problems from storms.

## Weather

As already mentioned, the atmospheric nature of Wood is wind. The Earth element oversees clouds and rain, and its nature is dampness. When you combine those two elements, that gives a good idea of the weather to expect. Clouds, rain, humidity, and wind. Because it's a Yang year, there is the potential for big and damaging wind and rainstorms this year, as well as flooding and mudslides.

There could be a lot of damage due to wind, earthquakes and/or mudslides.

Temperatures *should* be more normal. Excessive hot weather can be attributed to climate change rather than the energy of the year.

## Emotions

Wood's negative state of mind is anger, and Earth's is overthinking and worrying. People with Liver and Spleen excesses may be more prone to these emotions, while those with deficiencies in these organs should benefit.

It's a Yang year, so the negative emotions could be excessive. It's likely we'll see a continuation of the anger that we've had over the past several years, but with more overthinking and worry rather than fear.

As Water is the weakest element this year, people with Kidney deficiencies could still be fearful.

But Wood and Earth both like harmony, and the Dragon is bold and courageous. People who take leadership roles that are courageous, trustworthy and promote harmony could gain good support this year.

Although people may worry about it, there is the possibility of people starting to trust one another again and do more to get along with each other.

Practices like meditation, Qigong, Yoga, etc., that help calm the mind can help people balance their emotions and be more harmonious. There's so much change energy this year that people who have difficulty adapting to change may struggle. If you teach any of these disciplines, it's another good year to share them and help others. There is strong support for these practices again this year.

## Health

The strongest organs this year will be the Liver (Wood) and Spleen (Earth). Those prone to excess in these organs could have problems, especially when wind and/or dampness are part of the pathology.

There is the possibility of conditions associated with Liver wind this year, especially in people with excess Liver conditions. For those who tend to have a lot of anger, this could be a challenging year. These people will need calming and relaxing herbs and treatments.

Any conditions involving wind could move fast and change quickly. They may require more aggressive treatment to stop them.

According to the *Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen*, the Wood element is associated with falls (think of a tree falling). So, people whose balance is not good should be careful.

Due to the wind and dampness, respiratory colds this year will be the wet kind, with mucus. Any conditions involving wind and/or dampness may be exacerbated this year.

We may see Bi syndromes and joint problems due to wind and damp.

People with poor diets and digestive issues will have more problems due to dampness. Educating patients about proper diet is important this year.

The weakest organ this year will be the Kidneys (Water) because both Wood and Earth weaken the Water element. Wood is associated with falling, and the Kidneys generate the bones. People who fall could be more at risk of broken bones this year, especially if they're older or Kidney deficient. Those with Kidney deficiencies will benefit from tonifying treatments and herbs.

The Heart/ Small Intestine (Fire organs) and the Lungs/ Large Intestine (Metal) are neutral this year, so we shouldn't see anything unusual with those organs.

## Final Thoughts

Overall, there are a lot of potential opportunities this year. The Dragon is considered an auspicious year. There is a lot of opportunity in also knowing what the new 20-year cycle brings.

There is strong movement and change energy this year. The Yang nature of the year implies big dramatic changes. If you want or need to make changes in your life, this is the year to do it.

It is a good year to set and work toward big goals, because the Dragon is a courageous creature. The Wood organs (Liver and Gallbladder) are about analyzing and decision-making. This is a year to consider options, analyze them, and take courageous action. There may be a tendency to overthink because of the strong Earth/Spleen energy. Make sure to avoid getting stuck overthinking. This is a year for action.

Setting goals alone won't do anything. With a Yang year and all the moving and changing energy, big goals *with action specifically toward those goals* is the path to success. Make sure to focus on what you want to achieve rather than blowing around aimlessly like a leaf in the wind.

Remember to stay focused and take focused action.

It could be a wild Dragon ride. Buckle up and be like a Dragon to take charge of your direction in the winds of change to achieve success and big goals.

**Note:** because it's a big misconception: if you were born in a Dragon year, it doesn't necessarily mean it's a good year for you. Or a bad one. How the energy of the year affects each individual depends on their Ba Zi or Chinese Astrology chart. "Ba Zi" means "Eight Characters." Everyone's chart has the energy of the Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches for the year, month, day, and hour you were born. The year is only one of the eight characters. Most years for most people are a mixed bag, with some years good and some not so good.

The energies of Heaven and Earth for the year affect us all. The advantage of forecasts is to know what to expect and how to prepare ourselves and our patients each year so we can take advantage of opportunities in the year and avoid problems.

Happy New Year of the Dragon!

## About the Author



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