

HEALING COMPASS TREATMENT STRATEGIES

WOOD STRATEGIES

Let go and set free restless energies with playful activities especially jumping, climbing, running and all sorts of physical movement. Stretching games and exercises or programs like yoga release tension through the tendons. Play that uses visual attention like ball games, Frisbees, I Spy, word search, hidden pictures also channels *Wood* energy. Shouting while outdoors or into a pillow releases pent-up wood energies. Video games work marvelously to focus and contain *Wood* energy, but beware, when we take the electronics away all the pent-up needs for physical activity may come rushing out as anger at losing access to their device.

To Balance *Wood* energy: *Water* strategies provide calming nourishment – like water feeds a seedling. Be careful not to use too much and drown a struggling plant. *Earth* strategies nourish and also call *Wood* energy into constructive activities – like roots hold onto dirt. *Metal* strategies help contain excess – like fences and pruning contain run-away plants. Be careful not to cut too much when they start learning to fly. *Fire* strategies can nourish *Wood* energy as sunlight feeds a plant – but beware *Wood* also feeds *Fire*.

WATER Strategies

Calm and cool fears with creative work, music, drawing, painting, dancing and pretend play. Warm baths, stomping through puddles, playing with water, washing dishes, swimming, fishing, and boating also serve to soothe aches, pains, and troubles away.

To Balance *Water* energy: *Wood* strategies can grow fears into imaginative possibilities – like trees draw on water for growth. *Earth* strategies keep overactive imaginations and fears grounded – like soil soaks up rain. *Fire* strategies demand attention on something other than the self – like a forest fire calls out to rainclouds. *Metal* energies provide basic structure and organization – like a glass holds water.

EARTH STRATEGIES

Ground and center energy through balance activities, and games involving strength, like building forts, moving furniture, playing with clay, or digging in the dirt and sand. Singing activates Earth energies so singing and clapping games work well to calm anxieties, and ease transitions. Cooking, gardening, food and kitchen center play also activates Earth energy.

To Balance *Earth* energy: Use *Wood* strategies to channel perfectionism into movement and growth – like roots break through hard packed dirt to hold and nourish an oak. *Water* strategies pull anxieties into action – like dirt acts to dam and channel a river or stream. Be careful not to wash or erode *Earth* energies with too much fast-moving *Water*. *Metal* strategies cultivate starting and stopping points – like a trowel prepares earth for planting, or pulls out wild weeds. *Fire* strategies provide distraction from anxieties and obsessions – like the sun warms the ground to stimulate plant growth.

METAL STRATEGIES

Organize and structure energy into constructive work. Learning and developing skills through repetition and practice. Games that involve complex rules and memory like chess, nuanced card games like Bridge or Poker, and complicated board games like Monopoly or Mahjong captivate Metal energies. Projects with multiple steps and a final product like LEGOs, puzzles, and building models draw out Metal energy.

To Balance Metal energy: *Wood* strategies focus skills in the world – like a knife whittles a stick into a tool or piece of art. *Water* strategies provide a calming time and space to develop – like the waves and moving water polish a piece of glass. *Earth* strategies provide a supportive respite from ideas that take the mind too far from reality – like earth contains and holds precious metals safe until needed. *Fire* strategies move one from isolation into like-minded social communities – like fire smelts and transforms metal into tools and jewelry.

FIRE STRATEGIES

Encourage and energize through interactive and communication-focused games that involve lots of social connection and laughter. Board games, card games, Mother May I, Simon Says and Telephone all require interaction with others. Lightly supervised playground time gives children a chance to learn how *to make rules, break rules, and go along to get along* – the three social skills that get us farthest in life. Tickling and telling jokes keeps them laughing and coming back for more.

To Balance Fire energy: Use structured active *Wood* energy to motivate and energize – like kindling builds a fire. Keep the fire burning, don't let it get out of control! Use *Water* strategies to bring down the energy levels – like water cools a fire. Ground some of the energy into *Earth* activities that focus on centering and maintaining balance – like an earth berm contains a campfire. Use *Metal* energies to temper *Fire's* energy with structure – but remember *Fire* can melt *Metal* when it's too hot, so cool *Fire* down first with some *Water* strategies.