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INTRODUCTION TO AYURVEDA

The Five Great Elements: Space, Air, Fire, Water, Earth

By Pamela Quinn
Introduction to Ayurveda

This Introduction to Ayurveda is in support of the Lifestyle ecourse series. Please read this as a background for the journey you are about to embark. The discussion below can also be found in Pamela’s book, “The Elemental Cleanse.” The Elemental Cleanse book also includes recipes and other great Ayurvedic tricks of the trade. It is highly recommended as supplemental reading. You can purchase “The Elemental Cleanse” at www.elementalom.com.

What is Ayurveda?

Ayurveda is a system of holistic living and medicine that originated in India many thousands of years ago. The word Ayurveda translates to “the knowledge of life.” It is a systematic science that utilizes the natural rhythms of nature to prevent, diagnose and treat disease. It is a philosophy and spiritual tradition honoring that the human experience is one of body, mind and spirit. This spiritual tradition is the Vedic Religion. A sage called Veda Vyasa in texts that date to 3,000 BC captures this Spiritual tradition. The texts are called the Vedas. The Vedas are written in a language called Sanskrit. Sanskrit is the oldest Indo-European language and is a seed language for our modern languages. You will learn a little bit of this sacred language during your Cleanse. Your first word is Ayurveda.

There are four books of the Vedas covering all topics of living including health, spirituality, self-realization, astrology, herbal therapy, gem therapy, color therapy, yoga, mantra, surgery, business, government and even the art of war. One book, the Rig Veda, is the basis for modern day Ayurveda and Yoga. Other books have birthed from the Vedas. The oldest medical book in the world is called the Atreya Samhita. It is a compilation of all the Vedic scriptures that directly speak to the practice of Ayurveda.

The influence of Ayurveda can be seen in all the world’s holistic medicine. Scholars from all over the world including China, Greece, Italy, Egypt and Persia came to India to study this Spiritual medicine. The father of Western medicine, Paracelsus, studied Ayurveda in the 16th century.

Two brilliant Ayurvedic physicians, Charak and Sushrut, condensed the original and complete knowledge of Ayurveda. There are now three main Ayurvedic texts that are believed to be over 1,200 years old, the Charak Samhita, the Sushrut Samhita and the Ashtangha Hridaya Samhita.

Currently, Ayurveda is the most widely embraced preventative holistic medicine in the West, thanks to the fact that Ayurveda embraces new medicines and technologies. The Ayurvedic view is “if it is working for you, then stay with it.” If you are controlling sleep
disorders, depression, high blood pressure or any other ailment with Western drugs, you should take the advice of your physician. Once you embrace the preventative and healing nature of this lifestyle, however, you will discover that you have no need for many of your prescriptive medications. If you want to stop taking any of your medications, do so with the guidance of your physician as many do have side affects. It is an eye-opening experience to have your blood work taken before and after the Cleanse. In fact, I’ve had one participant lower their cholesterol by 40 points! You and your doctor will both be amazed by the 28-day transformation.

Ayurveda is a simple science for life that teaches and empowers the individual to reconnect with the rhythms of nature. Ayurveda honors that you are naturally affected by the rotation of the planets, the pull of the tide, the changing seasons and the movement occurring throughout your day in each minute. It honors that you are unique. It honors that you are a creature of this earth as well as of the divine.

It is profound what was known 5,000 years ago. It was known that the earth is round and rotates on an axis. It was known that the earth traveled around the sun. Ayurvedic physicians knew how to diagnose and “treat” diabetes. The Indian physician, Charaka described the disease of Diabetes as “madhumeha”. This translates to “honey urine”. Ants and other insects were used to diagnose the disease. The bugs would be attracted to the sweet of the urine. Both Susruta and Charaka identified two types of diabetes noting that the first appeared in younger people and the second appeared in heavier patients.

Ayurvedic Physicians also knew how to deliver complicated births. They even performed surgeries. More fundamentally, a plan for living that prevents disease, aging, and needless suffering was devised.

How did they know all of this without the use of telescopes, microscopes and modern technology? The legend of Ayurveda is that great seers and sages of India known as Rishis received the teachings of the Vedas from the universe. Rishis are legendary yogis thought to have magical powers known as Siddhis and believed to live for hundreds of years. Imagine an aging man sitting in a loincloth on the top of a mountain in the snow meditating in perfect peace and physical comfort. These men sat in meditation and asked God, the Universe, the Cosmic Mind or their Higher Selves many of the same questions that we ask ourselves today. Why am I here? What is my life’s purpose? How do I stay healthy, vibrant and young? It is believed that through the meditation process the Rishis received from cosmic consciousness, the formula for living a healthy and happy life. This formula was passed down for generations in prose and finally captured in the Vedas and around 500 BCE in two medical texts called Susruta Samhita and Carkaka Samhita. This formula identifies the building blocks of nature, and indeed the whole universe, as five great elements, space, air, fire, water & earth. This formula explains how to use the elements to prevent, diagnose and treat disease.

I don’t know if it is true that the Rishis received this information in meditation or not. I guess it seems kind of far out. Perhaps these Rishis of 5,000 years ago were simply great observers of nature. Perhaps they simply sat by their fires and noticed that when a log is tossed on a fire it transforms to ash. Maybe they then had the thought, “Wow, that’s just like when I eat, it goes in one way and comes out another. Perhaps I have fire in my belly.”
Maybe they watched a dry dead leaf blowing on a fall breeze and observed that the leaf would quickly dart one way, then another and finally come to an abrupt halt only to fly up again. Perhaps they had the thought, “Wow, that’s just like my mind. My thoughts go this way and that and suddenly stop. I must have wind in my mind.”

Perhaps they observed the mountains and noticed that the mountains never changed. Maybe they were surprised by the consistency of the trees and plants to return to flower each spring. They paused to think that the bones, the muscle and the fat of their body appeared slow to change just like the mountains. They could count on this consistency. Perhaps their bodies were made of the same earth as the mountains. It’s really a very elegant and assessable way to identify with our bodies and minds.

Ayurveda teaches that all disease stems from poor digestion, poor digestion of food and of thoughts. Your liver is the foundation for your physical digestion because it is a vital part of the digestive process. It has more than 500,000 functions and can largely be thought of as an “oil filter” for your body. It filters up to 2 quarts of blood each minute.

The liver transforms food into nutrients that feed your cells. It builds metabolic enzymes. It breaks down hormones, converts vitamins and minerals and produces bile, cholesterol, estrogen and immune substances. It stores blood and glycogen and regulates blood sugar.

It is believed that due to poorly functioning livers, we suffer from arthritis, heart disease, cancer, hormonal imbalances, depression, anxiety, suppressed immune function and weight gain. Thyroid function is directly linked to the liver.

The liver’s job is to analyze every single thing that you put in your body. It decides if the substance is toxic or nontoxic. This includes analyzing, not just food, but also atmospheric toxins such as cigarette smoke and other chemicals. It also includes viruses, parasites, fungi, allergens and unhealthy bacteria.

If your liver is overworked because of the pollution you are consuming, it will not filter as efficiently and you may suffer from high cholesterol, aches and pains, acne, psoriasis, allergies, fibromyalgia, PMS, mood swings, sluggishness, depression, bloating, weight gain, high blood pressure, constipation and much more. The Elemental Cleanse focuses on nourishing the liver and getting it back to maximum functionality. All the cells of your liver are replaced every 90 days. That means that you receive a new liver every 90 days.

The next 28 days are going to begin a new growth process for a healthy and healed liver.

If you are unable to appropriately discern your thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs, you will suffer from poor digestion in your mind. You will struggle in your relationships, in your job and during your times alone. Drama and unhealthy habits will rule your life. You will never realize the life of your dreams; the life that you know is waiting for you to begin.

I believe you are here to live a healthy, happy, enriching life full of love. The Cleanse will give you the toolkit and the fresh start that you need to achieve it. Let’s begin by understanding the foundation for all of creation, the five Great Elements.
The Five Great Elements

All things existing on the material level are made from some combination of the five elements. They are the building blocks of creation.

The five great elements are:

- Space
- Air
- Fire
- Water
- Earth

In Ayurvedic terms, Space is the element that contains everything. Space, unlike the other elements, does not change. It is the one constant in your body and your environment. Space in your body does not go out of balance. It is a consistent aspect of your nature; it is your spirit.

Space is holding material existence together. Its job is to “contain or limit expansion.” You cannot affect Space through your thoughts, words or deeds.

It is cold, light and dry.

The sense of sound or hearing is associated with this element.

In the body, it is the empty space between your molecules and your thoughts.

On a quantum level, we are empty space.

Space (Ether or Akasha) is the foundation of the other elements. Perhaps it’s the vastness of the night sky when looking up that makes me think that there is something around us that is holding all of this together. In science they call the space between dark matter or dark energy. This is because our scientific measurements use the speed of light as a constant. Because there is no light, science hasn’t quite figured out this energy.

It’s a bit of an argument in Ayurveda what element was first. Some will argue that it was the Earth element, others Space. I believe it was Space because Space to me seems like the most intimately connected to Spirit. When you look to the properties of Space and Spirit, they are similar. Both are holding you together. Both cannot be changed by you, both are simply a consistent presence regardless of what you are going through or choosing. This makes me think of the non-judgmental and ever-present nature of Spirit.

I also think it is fascinating that Space is associated with sound. The Bible tells us that the universe was created with a “word.”

*By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.* ~ (Psalm 33:6,9)
Yogis will tell you that the Universe was created with a “sound” called the vibration aum or om. OM or AUM is a Sanskrit letter. It is deemed to be the most powerful sound of the Sanskrit alphabet.

OM,
The imperishable sound, is the seed of
All that exists
The past, the present, the future -
All are but the unfolding of OM
And whatever transcends the three realms of time,
That indeed is the flowering of OM
- Upanishads

You do not need to know much about this element other than its properties, which are cold, light and dry. You were born with a certain amount of Space in your body and mind and there isn’t anything you can do that can change or affect it. Space in your body is simply the empty space between allowing for flow and communication. Space is the inside of your mouth, your nose, your lungs, your gastrointestinal tract and your abdomen.

To deepen your intellectual, physical and emotional attachment to space, plan to go outside tonight and stare at the moon and the stars. Notice the space between and imagine what it would be like to be floating in space just like an astronaut. I’m sure you would imagine that it is very cold, light and dry. I’m sure you would be stunned by the vastness of space.

“To look out at this kind of creation and not believe in God is to me impossible.”

~ Astronaut John Glenn
Air

Air or “Vayu” is moving everything.
Its job is to expand.
It is moving, unpredictable, cool, light and dry.
The sense of sound or hearing is associated with this element.
In the body and mind, it is any moving function like thinking, speaking, breathing and eliminating.

When I think of the Air element I always think of a fall breeze. It brings with it a sense of excitement. It energizes you, it’s fresh and makes you want to try something new. Think back when you were a child starting school. It was a time of excitement as you embarked on a new year of education. The rhythms of your family life changed as new routines were established.

The breeze is unpredictable. It gets strong and then softens. It blows up and then down. It suddenly stops and just as suddenly starts again. The breeze brings a chill and makes you want to snuggle and dress warm. Standing in the breeze for a long time can exhaust you especially if it begins to blow hard.

In your body, the Air is all that is moving. It is the movement of the lungs in respiration, the act of thinking, of swallowing, of eliminating and nerve impulses.

Sit quietly with your thoughts for a few minutes and notice how they move like the Wind.

Fire

Fire or “Tejes” is transforming.
Its job is to create change.
It is hot, bright, intense, and abrupt.
The sense of seeing is associated with this element.

In your body and mind, it is your ability to discern and decide.
It is transformation in your body; digestion and fighting infection.

When I think of Fire, I always think of a bonfire. It is hot, intense and bright. It snaps and crackles and in a way talks back to you. It is abrupt, suddenly flaring up and then calming again. Fire holds your attention. Its intensity is mesmerizing and you find yourself staring into its light. You are drawn to the flames.

When the Fire has done its job on wood, the wood is left transformed. In your body, Fire regulates the body’s temperature, digests food, absorbs and assimilates hormones, enzymes, nutrition as well as your thoughts. The light of the world is taken in through the Fire of your eyes.

Sit quietly for a minute and imagine yourself in your last moment of anger. Did you suddenly erupt? Did your body become hot? Did you begin to sweat? Now let that thought go as well as the stressful situation.
Water

Water is the element of love. Its job is to nourish. Water is very difficult to affect. It is stable. It is cool, smooth, nourishing, moist and oily. The sense of taste is associated with this element. In the body it is the plasma, blood, mucus and saliva.

Water (Jala or Apa) is the element of love. It is nourishing, soothing and calming. Without adequate water supply, the human body starts to die within three days. Without the sensory stimulation of taste, touch, movement and smell to stimulate the release of serotonin in the developing brain of an infant, a baby may grow to be a person that has depression, or violent and anti-social behaviors.

Water is a very stable element. There isn’t too much that you can do to personally affect this element in your body other than to drink too much or too little. Salt intake directly affects this element. Maybe you have had the experience of bloating after you have indulged in salty snacks like French fries or potato chips? The bloat is a response to balancing the water content of your body. Water in your body is the liquid plasma, urine, sweat and saliva.
Earth or “prithivi” is grounding
Its job is to “create stability”
Properties: Cold, dense, heavy, and slow
The sense of smell is associated with this element
In your body and mind, it is your larger mass; bones, muscle, fat and cartilage. It is your memories, your compassion and your love.

When I think of the Earth, I always think of a boulder sitting in a shaded forest. The boulder has a little bit of moist moss growing on it. The boulder is heavy and dense. You push, but it won’t budge. You touch it and it is cool.

If you were to sit down on the boulder, you would feel very secure and grounded. It never appears to change. You could walk by it every single day for 20 years and it would appear the same. All changes are happening so slowly you wouldn’t even notice. In your body, the Earth gives you the same structure, stability and strength. It is also what gives you stamina. You would imagine if you got the boulder rolling down a hill, it would be very hard to stop. In your body it is your bones, teeth, muscles, fat and skin.

Go outside and pick up a stone or better yet, sit on a boulder! Notice how it makes you feel very connected to the Earth. Notice its soothing and nurturing energy. In Greek mythology, the Earth goddess is called Gaia. She is mother earth. Mother earth was born from what the Greeks call chaos and what yogis call space. Mother earth gave birth to all the other gods and goddesses.

You are now familiar with all five great elements, space, air, fire, water and earth. Spend some time this week in nature. Go for a nice leisurely walk and simply observe the quality of your surroundings. Stare into the vastness of the night sky. Experience a sense of wonder in your mind. Sit by a stream or pond and appreciate the calm that settles in your body and mind. Smell the breeze. Does a feeling of anticipation percolate inside of you? Light a candle and stare into its flame. Notice how you relax and don’t want to stop staring. Is effort required to break your gaze? Take your shoes off and sink your toes into the grass or dirt. Close your eyes and feel the nourishing coolness. Lie down in the grass, close your eyes and feel the support of the earth beneath you.

Now its time to find out what proportion of these elements are found in your body and mind. We will take two simple quizzes, one for the body and one for the mind.
The Element Quiz

On the day of conception the way you think, the way you look and the way you metabolize were determined. This is your constitution or in Sanskrit your “prakruti”. You are as unique as the pattern on a snowflake. Just as all snowflakes are made from water, so too are all humans made from the elements of nature, space, air, fire, water and earth. Just as no two snowflakes are alike, so too no two humans are alike. In fact, you could meet all seven billion people currently residing on this planet and you would never truly find your twin.

Because of your unique constitution, you respond and react to situations, events, food, drink and medications in a special way. For example, many people eat tomatoes or pasta sauce and experience heartburn or indigestion. Why? Many people will take prescription drugs with no side effects, but one in one thousand end up emergently at the hospital. Why? Many people simply go with the flow and suffer little from stress. Others respond with anger or anxiety over the smallest of things. Why?

The reason is that they have different amounts of the elements in their mind and body. You may be a person who has a predominance of space and air and just a touch of fire, water and earth. Or you could be a person with a predominance of fire, a touch of water and very little space, air and earth. You may have more earth, a little bit of water and very little space, air and fire. Each of these people will display different characteristics that make up their personality and physical structure. Each person will respond differently in similar situations and each will digest their food differently. All contain all the elements, just in a different proportion.

The quiz you are about to take is designed to help you understand what elements are predominant in your mind and in your body. We test for the elemental composition by testing for the actions or forces of the elements. Each element, alone, does nothing. It simply exists. The elements combined, however, create forces or tensions. There are three forces in your body, Vata, Pitta and Kapha. These forces are called “doshas”.

Let’s think about the properties of the elements for a moment and reflect on how they differ. Let’s take space and air. Space has the job of containing everything. Air has the job of expanding. If you have a person with a lot of space and air, then you have a person who contains two elements that are polar opposites in action. Space wants to tightly hold and air wants to expand. A tension exists between the two called Vata and this keeps them playing nicely. A person containing a lot of fire and water also has two elements that oppose. Fire wants to transform and water wants to soothe. Too much fire will evaporate water. Too much water will put out fire. A tension called Pitta builds to keep the two from destroying each other. A person with a lot of earth and water has two elements that contradict. Earth is stable and inert. Water is fluid and mutable. Earth wants to stabilize water and water wants to move the earth. The tension of Kapha keeps them in harmony.

These forces affect thought, speech, sleep, hunger, emotions and your metabolism. Living in harmony with these forces creates a balanced and peaceful existence. Thoughts are clear, intentions are known and your body is healthy, vital and free of disease. When these forces take over your mind or body, however, you become unbalanced. You may begin to suffer sleepless nights, racing thoughts, depression, lethargy, anger, anxiety, weight gain and even serious illness.

Depending on the predominance of the elements in your body and mind, one or more forces will exhibit most strongly. This is your “dosha” or your first response in any given situation.
Vata or The Wind (the elements of space and air are abundant): When you think of Vata in your body or mind, you have only to think of the fall breeze. The breeze is cool, crisp and light. It is erratic with no apparent reason for blowing or routine. It brings freshness, energy and a feeling of something exciting to come. Vata in your mind is your thoughts. It is the gift of creativity and inspiration. Vata in your body is the force of movement, talking, swallowing and eliminating. Vata creates a person with a thin frame, irregular eating habits & quick speech. It creates a creative person with invigorating speech and an energetic and adaptable mind.

Pitta or The Fire (the elements of fire and water are abundant): When you think of Pitta in your body or mind, you have only to think again of the bonfire. The bonfire is hot, bright and pungent. The fire can flare up quickly to amazing intensity and then settle abruptly. The fire transforms all that it consumes. It radiates power, force and energy. Pitta in your mind is your ability to process emotions and ideas. It is the gift of discernment. Pitta in your body is the force of transformation; digestion, fighting infection and sight. Pitta creates a person with a strong build, strong digestion & precise speech. It creates a bright and warm person full of charm with high intelligence and good discrimination.

Kapha or The Earth (the elements of earth and water are abundant): When you think of Kapha in your body or mind, you have only to think again of the boulder sitting in a cool forest covered in moss. The boulder is heavy, dense and cool. It is strong, stable and inert. The boulder does not change quickly. It sits calmly through the shifting of the forest. Kapha in your mind is your ability to remember and feelings of compassion and understanding. It is the gift of love. Kapha in your body is stable, lubricating and predictable. Kapha creates a person who is heavyset with smooth skin. It creates an easygoing, thoughtful and caring person that is devoted and loving.

Who you are, your constitution or “prakruti” does not change. You will take the test and discover your dosha. This is your dosha for life. This is who you are. It is your first response.

The word “dosha” translates to “that which goes out of balance.” This means that you always have to maintain the balance of your doshas because the balance changes minute to minute. Think about how quickly anger can flare up. Anger is an out of balance expression of Pitta (The Fire). Think about the last time you couldn’t fall asleep because your thoughts were racing or you were worried. This is an expression of Vata (The Wind) running wild. Think about your last day as a couch potato. That is Kapha (The Earth) sucking you into the mind-numbing escape of TV.

To live a harmonious balanced life, you must become aware of your first response in your body and mind and how to maintain balance.
Taking the Quizzes

Take the Body Element Quiz and the Mind Element Quiz to find out what your first response or “dosha” is. This will give you insight into the way that your mind and body behaves.

Take your time filling out the tests, but don’t dwell on the answers. If you struggle to answer any question, the first thought is usually correct. If you are still uncertain, ask a friend to give you the answer. If you are STILL uncertain, choose The Wind (Vata). People who change a lot, change quickly and have much unpredictability in body and mind tend to be The Wind. Also, people who have a hard time deciding tend to be The Wind.

When you take the quizzes, imagine a time of your life when you felt good, felt vibrant and felt healthy. I find that many people have been living out of balance for so long that they don’t know how they feel anymore. They can’t even remember feeling good. Don’t worry. At the end of your immersion into a Yogic you will be back in balance and then you will have a much clearer picture as to what dosha you are.

You will notice that the quizzes are separated between your mind and your body. It is very common to have one predominant dosha in your mind and another in your body. Sometimes they are the same, but not always. The purpose of my programs is to help you to feel the energies of the doshas in both mind and body. I separate mind and body to simplify the teachings of Ayurveda. Many other Ayurvedic books you read or websites you visit do not. I find that this confuses people when they are first introduced to Ayurveda and makes living an Ayurvedic lifestyle harder to understand. Simply allow this ecourse to be an experience of the doshas.

Most people will take the quiz and find they have two predominant doshas in their body or mind. This is the norm. This is actually a very good thing because it gives you more stability and less chance of going out of balance. Don’t let this confuse you. We are going to have a tangible experience of the doshas and by the end of your journey you will know what is “in play” in body and mind.

Have fun and don’t judge yourself while taking the quizzes. I find that we instinctively want to resonate with what is perceived as a “more favorable” quality. Remember that you like the entire Universe are a broad spectrum of all emotions and. This includes admirable qualities like compassion, generosity and understanding. It also includes troubling qualities like lack of follow through, criticism and laziness. I promise you, if you were only the positive qualities on that spectrum, you would be the most boring person on the planet. The combination of all qualities creates a dynamic personality.
### The Mind Element Test

**Your Mind: What is your dosha?**

What dosha rules your mind? This quiz determines the predominant element or “dosha” in your mind. Place an “x” next to the sentence that best describes you. If you simply can’t decide, choose The Wind (Vata). The column with the highest number of x’s is your predominant dosha.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Wind (Vata)</th>
<th>The Fire (Pitta)</th>
<th>The Earth (Kapha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sleeping Patterns</strong></td>
<td>air + space</td>
<td>I sleep very lightly and awaken easily.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a hard time falling asleep.</td>
<td>My biggest worry that keeps me from sleeping is work related.</td>
<td>I have very few sleep problems other than sleeping too much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dreams</strong></td>
<td>fire + water</td>
<td>I dream a lot. My dreams are vivid and active. I do not remember my dreams well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I speak with precision and I love a good debate.</td>
<td>My speech is slow and deliberate. I think before I speak.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shopping</strong></td>
<td>I'm an impulse shopper. I love to buy little gifts for people.</td>
<td>I tend to indulge in very expensive high-quality items when I do spend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Climate</strong></td>
<td>I love it sunny and warm. I do not like to be cold. I hate drafts.</td>
<td>I prefer cooler weather. I can become irritable when it is hot and humid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movement</strong></td>
<td>I’m like a butterfly flitting from activity to activity.</td>
<td>I move with purpose. People notice when I enter a room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>My home or office may appear messy to others, but I know where everything is.</td>
<td>I like a well-organized environment. I have a place for everything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Preference</strong></td>
<td>I love the activities of creation such as brainstorming and conceptualizing.</td>
<td>I like to be in a leadership position. I do not liking working under someone. I am a visionary and strategic planner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moods</strong></td>
<td>I’m moody.</td>
<td>I have a very strong, determined and stubborn nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total your “x”s.</strong></td>
<td>The Wind (Vata)</td>
<td>The Fire (Pitta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>air + space</td>
<td>fire + water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don’t be surprised if two or more columns are just about even with each other. All of the elements live in your mind and it’s quite common to have an even split.
**The Body Element Test**

### Your Body: What is your dosha?

What dosha rules your body? This quiz determines the predominant element or “dosha” in your body. Place an “x” next to the sentence that best describes you. If you simply can’t decide, choose The Wind (Vata). The column with the highest number of x’s is your predominant dosha.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Wind (Vata) air + space</th>
<th>The Fire (Pitta) fire + water</th>
<th>The Earth (Kapha) earth + water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frame</strong></td>
<td>I tend to be thin.</td>
<td>I have a medium build and tend to have a more athletic structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weight Gain</strong></td>
<td>When I gain weight, which is hard to do, it tends to settle on my belly.</td>
<td>I can gain and lose weight easily.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bones</strong></td>
<td>If you were to hug me, you would feel my skeletal structure. My bones are brittle and fragile.</td>
<td>I am well-proportioned and tend toward an athletic build.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skin Condition</strong></td>
<td>My skin tends to be thin, dry, rough and cool.</td>
<td>My skin is fair and tends to have issues; rashes, acne, blackheads, whiteheads or blotching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nails</strong></td>
<td>My nails tend to be dry, brittle or flaky.</td>
<td>My nails are strong and flexible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Menstrual Cycle</strong></td>
<td>My periods tend to be irregular. I don’t bleed a lot and it tends to be dark red. I get really bad cramps and sometimes constipation.</td>
<td>I have regular periods, with a heavy flow that is bright red. I feel like my periods last an extended time and I may experience mild cramping and loose bowels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(for women in child-bearing years. All others simply skip.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>My periods are regular with a light, average flow. I experience bloating and mild cramps during my period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appetite</strong></td>
<td>My appetite is irregular. I may go all day without eating and not realize it.</td>
<td>My digestion is very strong as well as my appetite. I like routine meals and get grumpy if I don’t eat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cravings</strong></td>
<td>I love salty crunchy snacks.</td>
<td>I crave iced beverages and cold food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digestion</strong></td>
<td>My digestion is unpredictable. I can be normal, constipated, have diarrhea or gas and bloating from day to day.</td>
<td>I have strong digestion. When I do have issues it tends to be heartburn, indigestion or loose bowels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temperature</strong></td>
<td>My hands and feet tend to be cold. I tend to be cold overall.</td>
<td>I tend to be hot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total your “x”s.</strong></td>
<td>The Wind (Vata) air + space</td>
<td>The Fire (Pitta) fire + water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many people struggle with the body portion of the dosha quiz because they have been living out of balance for a very long time and don’t really know the answers anymore. Just like with the mind, you may find that two or more elements describe you almost equally. All of the doshas are present in you body and it’s quite common to have an even split between two. Less common is to have the doshas split almost equally between all three, but it does happen.
Interpreting Your Element or Dosha Quiz

Now that you have completed your quiz, you are aware of the predominant elements in your body and mind. The combination of the five elements in a person’s body and mind establish as “Doshas” or “energies” of the body and mind. An abundance of one or more elements in comparison to the other elements gives a person a predominant dosha or way that the body or mind responds or reacts. The doshas express the qualities and characteristics of the elements. Each person’s dosha is unique and every individual has a personal formula for balance.

It is interesting that the Sanskrit term “dosha” translates to “that which goes out of balance.” Living with a balanced dosha creates health.

You may be surprised now that you have taken your quiz that the predominant doshas in your body and mind do not match. You might be surprised that some of the doshas were very close in score. You may find that you have a Wind (Vata) mind and an Earth (Kapha) body. You may have a Fire (Pitta) mind and a Wind (Vata) body. You may have both a Fire (Pitta) mind and Fire (Pitta) body.

The table below shows nine different dosha combinations. But wait! You are very unique. Once you connect with and begin to understand your mind, you might find that this table becomes even more complex and unlimited.

It gets confusing fast.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mind</th>
<th>Body</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wind</td>
<td>Wind</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
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<td>Earth</td>
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<td>Wind</td>
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<td>Earth</td>
<td>Wind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Fire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most confusing outcome is to have two columns on either the mind or the body test that are almost matching in score. You are looking at the test and you are thinking, “My body has the most Wind, but it sure has a lot of Fire in it too. Which one am I really?” The same can be true for the mind as well.

In Ayurveda, this is known as duo-dosha or two doshas. This is actually more the norm than not. Regardless of your predominant dosha, you have all three doshas in your mind and body. If you strongly relate to two doshas, it simply means that both sets of characteristics are present. This actually gives you a much more stable structure that is harder to go out of balance. The challenge is to figure out which one you more strongly resonate with to maintain balance.

Some people will have the experience of having three doshas. This is called “tri” dosha and is not very common. These people have a very stable constitution, but when they do go out of balance it is harder to come back to balance.
If you are confused, simply pick the digestive system that you most strongly relate to and create consciousness around that. Other body characteristics such as the hair, nails and skin can be explored later.

The Wind has delicate and variable digestion. You may find that you do not experience intense hunger and you often skip meals. You crave salty snacks. You may experience lots of allergies and sensitivities to food. Your digestion tends to run dry toward constipation, but it is also erratic. One day you may be loose, one day dry and one day normal. The Wind has a hard time gaining weight and when they do it settles on the midsection and is mostly due to poor routine and impulse eating.

The Fire has strong digestion. You experience intense hunger for breakfast, lunch and dinner and find that you become grumpy if you skip a meal. You like to eat at the same times each day. You find that you can eat almost anything. If anything does bother you, it tends to be spicy or sour foods. When your belly is upset, you tend to become loose during elimination, have heartburn, indigestion or an acid belly. You can easily gain and lose weight. When you do gain weight, it is because of overindulgence and settles easily on your body.

The Earth has stable digestion. If anything, The Earth may become a little bit sluggish at elimination. You love food, but can skip meals with little effect. You crave sweets and really have to watch yourself to not eat too much of them. You have probably been fighting your weight since childhood and easily gain weight while struggling to lose.

After completion of this ecourse, you may be able to identify with and notice the following:

- Your digestion is strong like FIRE
- Your thoughts are unpredictable like WIND
- Your skin is creamy, smooth and free of pores like the EARTH

I could go on endlessly naming all parts and functions of your mind and body. That’s how incredibly complex you are! You can see that this can easily become confusing. I recommend you simply accept your dosha. For the next 28 - 90 days, learn about the doshas.
You probably exhibit the following characteristics in your personality:

• We all have Wind in our minds. It is the activity of thinking. Combine that with a predominance of Wind (Vata) and you have a person who does a lot of thinking. Even in a balanced state, your mind tends to go and go and jump from thought to thought. This can be wonderful because The Wind mind is very enthusiastic, lively, energetic and creative. This can be troublesome as you may find that your sleep is interrupted even when you are totally living in balance. You dream a lot of vivid dreams. You are intuitive.

• Because of your active mental state, you are prone to anxiety and worry. You may find that you worry about absolutely everyone and every possible situation including much about life that is completely out of your control. The lesson for The Wind is to surrender to outcome and stay in the present moment.

• You probably love all things new. You are familiar with the top ten books on the bestseller list, you know the latest headline news and you are signed up for a class in the latest trending fad. You know a lot of people and have a large circle of friends. You have excellent short-term memory. You love to shop and spend and pick up lots of small little treats for self and friends. It is a challenge to save money.

• You can be easily distracted. In fact, you may be reading all ten books on the bestseller list at the same time. You may find it hard to finish any one of them and you may not retain the story very well. While you are familiar with the latest headline news, you may not exactly understand the history or geography of the world’s events. You are a big-picture person. You tend to jump from job to job, so while you are a jack-of-all trades, you may not be a master of any one. Your circle of acquaintances is wide, but you may have few close friends. You can appear aloof and you may struggle to listen to others.

• Your imagination and creativity make you an entertaining person. In fact, The Wind is usually the life of the party. Quick-witted and able to outthink most others, you generate laughter and excitement. You are the person that picks others up. In fact, your strong intuition knows when others are a bit down and you are always quick to lend a smile, hug or laugh to shift the energies of others.

• You are fabulous at finding creative solutions to problems. In fact, you would thrive working in a job where you initiate creative solutions. You don’t necessarily want to be in charge of others, but you do like to have freedom of movement and freedom in how you spend your time. You lack follow-through and finishing projects may be difficult. Surround yourself with people who can take your fabulous ideas and see them to fruition.

• You are very sensitive. Others may not realize how deep your feelings truly run and you may find that you are easily hurt. You hate making mistakes and worry that what you do is never good enough. Sometimes you feel scattered. You will find that you need long periods of rest and silence each day to soothe your nerves and nourish your sensitive heart.
The Wind Body

The Wind body is more of an ectomorphic body. You are tall or short with a slender build. You do not exhibit strong muscle development. You have good flexibility. You tend to have low levels of fat and low body temperature that should be monitored. Yoga and gymnastics are wonderful for you because of your light frame.

- You tend to be a cold person and may even wear sweaters in the summertime. You suffer in the cold and wind and should take precautions to always dress warm and cover your throat, face and head.
- You have dry skin, nails and hair. You are probably prone to flakey skin especially around the nose and mouth. Your nails may be brittle and peel or flake. Sesame Oil is your best friend. Use it morning and night rubbing it into your nail beds and soaking your hair weekly overnight.
- You have a delicate digestive system that suffers from dryness. You may find that you are sensitive to foods and do not have a strong appetite. You skip meals and do not notice that you are hungry. You snack on and crave salty crunchy foods. You may suffer from constipation one day, be regular the next day and loose the day after. Your digestion is unpredictable. Routine eating of warm and nourishing foods is key to your digestive health.
- When a person having a Wind body moves, it is quick and unpredictable. You may have a hard time sitting still and find that you talk with your hands and are quite animated. You work in bursts of energy and find that you burn out quickly and must rest.
- The instability of your system also means that you have very unpredictable immunity. You probably get sick often picking up every little bacteria or virus that comes your way. This is due in part to the dryness in your body, but also do to your lack of routine that impairs your digestion. Never forget that the strength of your digestion is directly linked to your ability to fight disease.

Some famous Wind bodies include Nicole Kidman, Kate Hudson, Keira Knightley, Gwyneth Paltrow, Adrien Brody, Orlando Bloom and Jim Carrey.
The Fire or Pitta

The Fire Mind

The Fire is the tension created when the elements Fire and Water combine. This dosha in Ayurveda is known as “Pitta”. You do have the other doshas of Wind (Vata) and Earth (Kapha) in your mind; however, their expression is not your first response.

To understand how your mind behaves, you only have to think of the elements that combine to create Fire; Fire and Water. Fire is hot, bright, intense and abrupt. Water is cool, smooth, nourishing, moist and oily. Your personality exhibits these qualities.

You probably exhibit the following characteristics in your personality:

- The Fire in all minds is the process of discernment. Combine that with a predominance of Fire (Pitta) and you have a person who is very good at making decisions, managing others and leading. In a balanced state, this is a person who is “large and in charge.” You are a dynamic speaker, leader and motivator. Even in balance, this can also be troublesome as you may find that you take on the problems of the world and the responsibility to solve them.
- Because of your determined mental state, you are prone to suffer from work-related stress. You may find that you feel you are the only one who can do things the correct way and that those around you are not as intelligent or capable. The lesson for the Fire is to learn to delegate through leadership and to allow others the freedom to be who they are.
- You stay focused. Fires have incredible follow through. You don’t necessarily want to do the work of completing a project, but you like to see a project from start to finish. Fires have the ability to plan long-term and love goal setting.
- You are fabulous at leading others to do tasks. In fact, you would thrive in a job where you are in charge of others. Fires suffer enormously when working for a company or boss who micro-manages. If working for another, Fires need to be empowered and set free to make decisions and follow through. Only someone that you greatly respect, admire and are learning from will lead you.
- You take care of others. Fires are passionate about family, friends and the world. You see yourself as humanitarian and desire to solve problems for others. You are self-reliant and rarely ask for help from others, but constantly offer it.
- You can be reluctant to share your emotions and fear that the emotional ups and downs in life are a sign of weakness. Others may not realize how badly you are hurting as you are very good at masking your pain. You hate mistakes and perceive that they are the fault of others’ incompetence. You prefer to do everything yourself so that it is done the “right” way. Sometimes you feel very stressed by the heavy load of responsibility you carry. You will find that you need periods of intense physical activity followed by rest to release your stress. You crave nature especially water.
- You probably love your routine, are disciplined and organized. Fires like their offices and homes to be neat and organized. Fires tend to get up and go to bed at the same time each day as well as eat meals in a routine fashion. Fires can be vain and are disciplined in their physical practices gravitating towards energy releasing activities such as running, hiking, biking and lifting weights.
- Fires are good with money. When purchasing, a Fire will go for the big-ticket item that is luxurious.
- Fire minds tend to have very passionate and active dreams.
The Fire Body

The Fire body tends to be more mosomorphic. This means that you have a wedged shaped body (think about the V that a body builder makes with his torso). Arms and legs are muscular, shoulders are broad and hips are narrow. The body appears narrow from front to back, but not side to side. There is a minimum of fat on the body.

- The Fire exhibits a lot of strength, agility and speed. You are athletic and probably love cardio and lifting weights. You see immediate benefits from these sports. It is very easy for you to gain and lose weight.
- You tend to be a hot. That means you are sensitive to heat and sun with skin that tends to burn and freckle. Do use sunscreen and minimize your exposure to the sun and to extreme heat. Your skin tends to feel hot and you may sweat a lot. The heat annoys you.
- Your skin tends to be oily and is prone to outbreaks even in a balanced state. Stress really does a number on your skin. Your hair may be thin and accumulate oil.
- You may have a stronger body odor and breath. When you consume heating foods such as onion, garlic and peppers it is more noticeable than for the other body types.
- You use your life force up more quickly than the other elements. Because of this, you are prone to premature aging and graying. Your hair may thin at an earlier age as well.
- You have very strong digestion and can eat pretty much anything you want to. If you put on a few pounds, it’s easy for you to take it off. The caution for The Fire is not to overindulge. Because you can eat pretty much whatever you want and easily lose weight, you tend to overdo it. No one needs to tell you to eat three meals a day. Your friends could set their watches by your hunger and if you are not fed you may become grumpy and irritable.
- If you have any digestive discomfort, it is in the form of heartburn, indigestion, sour belly and loose elimination. Your emotions strongly affect your digestion as well as any hot or spicy food.
- You tend to have a nice asymmetrical athletic build and you love to exert yourself so it’s no problem for you to exercise vigorously. Be sure to not overindulge in exercise as well. It is very common for the Fire type to want to lift weights and artificially inflate their bodies. Make sure to incorporate a nice cool down after your workouts.

Some famous Fire bodies include Julianne Moore, Debra Messing, Jennifer Aniston, Madonna and Cindy Crawford. Famous men include Tom Cruise, Matt Damon, Denzel Washington, Justin Timberlake and Kobe Bryant.
The Earth
or Kapha

The Earth Mind

The Earth is the tension needed to allow Water and Earth to combine. This dosha Ayurveda is known as “Kapha”. You do have the other doshas Fire (Pitta) and Wind (Vata) in your mind; however, their expression is not your first response.

To understand how your mind behaves, you only have to think of the elements that combine to make the force of the Earth: Earth and Water. Earth and Water are heavy, cold, soft, lubricating, sweet, stable, immunity enhancing and slippery. Envision a boulder covered in a bit of moss sitting in a cool forest. The boulder is a constant and if you were to walk by it every single day, you would not notice that it is changing in any way. If you were to lean against the boulder you would find it to be cool and grounding at the same time. Its solid unmoving presence is calming and nurturing.

You probably exhibit the following characteristics in your personality:

- The Earth in all minds, regardless of the predominant force, is what gives a person stability, compassion and love. Combine that with a predominance of Earth (Kapha) and you have a person who is grounded, nurturing and stable. When I think of my Earth friends, I think of the people that I go to when I simply want a shoulder to cry on or someone to make me feel at home. The Earth is the nurturer in all of us.
- Because of your stable mental state, you are prone to being very laid back. You take things in stride and don’t obsess or worry very much. In fact, you can be a little too laid back and don’t effectively deal with your situations. Many Earth types will shut down or seclude if life gets a little too stressful. You may even seclude on occasion when you feel you simply can’t deal with what life is handing out.
- You may appear stubborn to others. It takes a very long time to come to decisions. You simply do things in your own time and take the time to absorb information and choose. The Earth tends to do everything a bit slower including reading, but has amazing long-term memory.
- You probably love all things that are of family and that have a story. You are the person in the family that creates the photo albums and hangs onto report cards, old records and your grandmother’s recipes. You remember history and love to share all the memories of childhood and family vacations. You are very attached to your family, and will adopt anyone into your family including your friends and co-workers. You like taking care of them and showering them with love and affection.
- You are focused and love routine. The Earth enjoys doing the same things each day. You are a person who loves to have a 9-to-5 job that is stable and predictable. You are a long-term employee. You are attached to your employer and co-workers. You may choose to stay in a job that you have grown out of due to the feeling that the Company needs you. In fact, you love that your desk has been in the same spot for many years and would be unsettled if it were to move. You get attached to objects and may accumulate clutter at work and at home.
- You are fabulous at finishing projects and following through. You take great pride in your work, your dedication and your loyalty. Your friends, family and co-workers know that they can depend on you.
- You are caring. You love to take care of others and give abundantly of yourself. You must be cautious not to give all of yourself away. The Earth has incredible stamina and will suffer greatly in situations that are no longer benefiting them. The deep sense of caring and obligation can be overwhelming to the point that life decisions cannot be effectively made.
The Earth Body

The Earth body is more of an endomorphic body. You may have shorter arms and legs; a larger frame and mass. Your arms and legs tend to accumulate more fat. Your bones are larger and heavier. Your muscles are larger. You are prone to excess weight and weight gain. It is imperative that you have invigorating daily movement or the weight will not stay off. If you cease your daily movement you can easily lose conditioning that you have worked so hard to achieve.

- While you are not a “cold” person, your skin tends to be cool to the touch. It may even feel moist. You probably suffer in cooler weather and should take precautions to stay snuggly warm.
- You are a cuddly, soft person. Your skin is soft, you hair is soft and your body stays soft and pliable. You have very good flexibility with loose joints. The Earth types are easy to identify if you simply touch their smooth, pore less and utterly soft skin.
- You may be prone to excessive mucus and bloating. The recommendation for The Earth is to drink when thirsty, but not to drink excessively or you will suffer from bloat.
- You are sweet. Sweet is one of the six tastes of Ayurveda. We will learn much about this a bit later during the Cleanse. Just know for now that our average American diet contains a lot of this taste. Pasta, breads, meat, dairy, fruits and sweets. You have a lot of this taste in your constitution so you really shouldn’t eat so much of it.
- The Earth is very stable meaning it is slow to change. It probably takes you awhile to get going in the morning. If you fall into an energy slump, it may take awhile to turn that around as well. The good news is that this stability translates into forward momentum once you do get going. An Earth body committed to a movement practice will get into a good routine and stick to it.
- When a person having an Earth body moves, it is slow, steady and graceful. Dancing is one of the most positive activities for an Earth body.
- The stability of your system also means that you have a strong immune system. You probably don’t get sick very often. The caution is that you are so stable that you push yourself even when you are feeling run-down or even sick. The Earth body needs to rest when it is feeling run-down.
- Your digestion tends to be reasonably good and you can skip meals with no problem. Your digestive disorder tends to be that your digestion can become sluggish and it may take time to eliminate. You must stoke the digestive fire with spicy and cooked food.

Some famous Kapha bodies include Marilyn Monroe, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Queen Latifah, Beyonce, Oprah Winfrey and Kate Winslet. Famous men include Antonio Banderas, Shaquille O’Neal, Tom Hanks and Dan Rather.
I still don’t really “Get It.” What is my predominant Element?

I get this comment a lot. You’ve filled out your quiz, but you don’t really feel like the person that the quiz says you are. Let me give you a few anecdotal examples. Please note that these are meant to entertain. Therefore, I take full license to exaggerate, and hopefully, not offend, so that you will remember.

The Dinner Example

The Wind:

If the Wind mind showed up at a dinner party, she would probably be late or early. If she brings a dish to share, it will be a recipe that she has never tried before. Otherwise, she may simply not bring one or quickly grab something at the store on the way. The Wind will quickly charm and delight all of your guests. As the hostess, be sure to seat her strategically around the Earth minds because she will really pull those folks out of their shell. The Wind will lead the conversation with current events, esoteric thoughts and all of the craziness that she has gotten into in the last week.

The Fire:

The Fire type will definitely be at your party if he said he would be. He will likely be on time or strategically arrive glamorously late. The dish that he brings will be hot and spicy and elegantly presented. The Fire type will jump into the kitchen and help you start organizing your dinner. When the dinner bell rings, the Fire will usher the others to the table. The Fire’s warmth and charm will make him a popular person to be seated next to. The Fire is likely to listen to the conversation and fill in the holes with important points and information. The Fire is likely to go back for seconds and will probably organize the clean up for you.

The Earth:

The Earth type will call in advance to offer to help you with your party. You may decline, but she will show up anyway in loving support. When the soufflé burns, call the Earth and she will improvise dessert for your party. The Earth will bring a sweet yummy treat to share. It will probably be from her grandmother’s collection of recipes kept after her grandmother passed on. At dinner, you might find her to be shy and quiet. However, she will surprise you at the end of the meal by making the most profound comment about the evening’s conversation. The Earth will stay in the kitchen after the dinner cleaning and putting everything away while you continue to mingle with your guests. When the party is over, they will still be there to make sure that you had a great time and to see if you needed to talk through any of the events of the evening.
The “Almost” Car Wreck

The Wind:

Imagine that the three different types are almost in a car wreck. “Almost” is the key word here. The wreck never happens.

The Wind takes full blame for the incident. She becomes very anxious and worried. Her racing thoughts will sound something like this, “Oh my Gosh, I can’t believe I almost smashed into the back of the little old lady. What would happen if I hurt her? Does my insurance cover her and me. Did I pay my insurance premium this month? I can’t even remember the name of my agent; I should put that in my phone. What if I would have gotten a ticket? My rates surely would have gone up. I need to shop my insurance. This car is getting old. I should get new tires. Who would I have called to pick up the kids from school if I had to go to the hospital? I wonder what the best hospital is ……blah, blah, blah.” Sadly, the Wind will still be talking about this nonevent to herself and others at day’s end.

The Fire:

The Fire immediately blames the other person. Think road rage here. Colorful language and hand gestures may follow the angry glare. A brief synopsis of how bad every other human on the planet drives may follow. The Fire will let it go after all the steam is blown off.

The Earth:

The Earth is immediately grateful that the accident did not happen. Probably the Earth wasn’t even driving. She was sitting in the back because her “go with the flow” nature doesn’t need to be in charge. The Earth won’t think about the situation again other than to comfort the anxious Wind or the angry Fire that was driving.
The Wind:
The Wind tends to lack routine and that includes eating. Winds frequently skip breakfast and maybe even lunch. It isn’t unusual for The Wind to pause around 2:00 pm and wonder if she has eaten that day. She will actually have to think about it to determine that she did or didn’t. By time she arrives home, The Wind is famished and will snack on salty crackers while preparing dinner. Dinner arrives, and she finds she is full. Late evening snacks of popcorn and chips are normal.

The Fire:
The Fire needs to eat. This person wakes up hungry and has breakfast, lunch and dinner around the same time each day. If you have ever been shopping with a friend who has become irritable as the noon hour comes and passes without food, you were probably shopping with the Fire. Simply feed the Fires in your life. They need to eat. The Fire type craves spicy food. It isn’t unusual to find the Fire standing in the fridge with the door open and eating out of a jar of banana peppers. Of course, this also gives The Fire heartburn and indigestion.

The Earth:
The Earth loves food. She loves the colors, the textures and the smell and is quite colorful in her discussion of food. She is very aware that every single thing she puts in her mouth goes straight to her hips. An Earth friend of mine used to say that she couldn’t walk by a tray of cookies without wearing them home on her backside. You get the point. Earth craves sweet treats and will often turn to food in times of crisis. Emotional eating is a characteristic of The Earth.

Have fun with your Elements. You can see from these anecdotal illustrations that it can be fun and entertaining to learn who you are. As you learn to recognize the doshas in others, you’ll have greater insight as to how they operate. I think the most magical part of knowing a person’s nature is that you can respect and honor who they are and release any desires you have around wanting them to change. The Wind will always be a little messy, a little distracted and a little late. The Fire will always be large and in charge, a little critical and probably more right than wrong. The Earth will always be slow to change, slow to get moving and your best friend.
How do the forces or “doshas” go out of balance?

The Wind (Vata) Leads…

Learning to recognize and manage when the forces or “doshas” in your body are going out of balance is very important for maintaining short-term and long-term health. If you are empowered to quickly respond to the initial onset of imbalance, you will sustain good physical and mental health.

You can take a quick look back at your Element quiz to remind yourself of the predominant force in your mind and in your body. This is your true nature or “first response.” In Ayurveda, this is termed “prakruti.” As a reminder, you have all the elements in your mind and body as well as all the forces (doshas). One is predominant and it is your instinctive nature to behave with its properties. This is important because depending on your predominant element you may be more likely to experience certain disorders. (See table below).

Regardless of your predominant element, the forces behave in the following way: The Wind (Vata) is always the first to go out of balance. The Fire (Pitta) is always the next to become aggravated, and finally The Earth (Kapha) goes out of balance. Everything follows The Wind (Vata). It leads.

Read the following carefully and twice…it’s profound:

10% of our healthcare dollars are spent on 90% of disease. 90% of disease is caused by out of balance Wind (Vata). Examples include the initial onset of cold, headaches, backaches, general aches and pains, constipation and sleep disorders. These are easily treated with routine and nutrition. You don’t have to go to the doctor or pharmacy and spend money to remedy these conditions. Now think about the fact that The Wind always leads the other doshas. If you could stop the imbalance in the Wind, you wouldn’t have to worry about those other diseases. Simply knowing when your Wind is going out of balance and knowing how to ground it would prevent denser diseases like diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis and depression.

90% of our healthcare dollars are spent on 10% of disease. 10% of disease is related to The Earth (Kapha). Examples include diabetes, cancer, heart disease, arthritis and depression. When you experience these types of disorders, you must go to the doctor and the pharmacy. Typically you are in for a long journey through these diseases.
The Balance Quiz

Let’s take the Balance Quiz next to find out if you are in or out of balance. Answer the questions taking into consideration how you have been feeling for the last month or so. Answer how you have been feeling the past 21 days.

Rank each question below on a scale of 1 to 5:
1 = Not at all       2 = A little bit        3 = Somewhat       4 = Moderately       5 = Very much

### The Wind in Your Mind

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<th>Question</th>
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<tr>
<td>I have been having trouble concentrating. I am forgetful.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have been talking a lot and having trouble listening.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I have been having trouble sleeping. I can’t go to sleep or I wake up and can’t fall back to sleep.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I have been very worried lately.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I can’t seem to stick to a routine. I am impulsive.</td>
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**The Wind in Your Mind Total**

### The Wind in Your Body

<table>
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<th>Question</th>
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<tr>
<td>I have no routine. I eat, sleep and perform activities at inconsistent times each day.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I am suffering from gas and bloating.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have constipation. My elimination is hard and dry.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been suffering from a lot of situations; back pain, headaches; nervousness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My skin, nail and hair feel dry.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Wind in Your Body Total**

### The Fire in Your Mind

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have been very impatient lately.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am critical and judgmental.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been very opinionated and forceful in sharing my opinion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel like others simply aren’t doing a good job and I need to be in charge.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been losing my temper.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Fire in Your Mind Total**

### The Fire in Your Body

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My skin is suffering from outbreaks; rashes and inflammation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have heartburn or indigestion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have hot flashes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have loose elimination.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My breath seems bad. My body odor is sour.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Fire in Your Body Total**
The Balance Quiz Cont’d…

Rank each question below on a scale of 1 to 5:
1 = Not at all    2 = A little bit   3 = Somewhat   4 = Moderately   5 = Very much

**The Earth in Your Mind**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have quiet and withdrawn.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My thoughts are dull. I don’t want to try new things.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel jealous, possessive and needy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to make changes, but just can’t.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel depressed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Earth in Your Mind Total*

**The Earth in Your Body**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’ve been gaining weight and holding it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel sluggish in the morning and want to sleep in.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have sinus congestion, nasal allergies or asthma.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am retaining fluids.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have cysts or other growths.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Earth in Your Body Total*

You have completed the balance quiz and now have an understanding of your current state of health. Any score of nine or below indicates that that dosha is in balance. This is an area that needs maintenance and little attention. If you have any scores between 10 and 15, you are suffering an imbalance in that area. You probably have been out of balance for a little while. Any scores over 15 indicate an imbalance that you have probably been experiencing for some time.

It is not uncommon to have multiple categories of imbalance. Vata is usually the first dosha to go out of balance followed by Pitta and then Kapha. If you are experience multiple imbalances, it simply means that you really need this ecourse. Please don’t be hard on yourself for letting yourself go out of balance.

Over the years I have worked with hundreds of people. If you do your work, you will be back in balance.