Personality Elements and Clutter Habits by Kathryn Wilking

**Learning how to maintain balance in your life will certainly help keep the clutter bugs away! The balance in your life will depend on your personal characteristics, which can be related to one or more properties: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water.**

**~ If you can relate to many statements in one section only, chances are this is your dominant personal element. If more than one section feels strong, you may be more flexible and better-rounded than others; your ability to get along with others gives you personal strength.**

**~ If you relate to the statements in several elements, you have flexibility. You may have several ways to disguise clutter; and, may be unaware of self-sabotage in your own space! Your strength can rebound while learning more about these set backs; developing relationships, teamwork and success.**

**Now that you have done the Personality Element Profile, let’s look at what it means in terms of your clutter-busting, productive and fulfilling ambitions:**

**WOOD -** Wood-people are extraverts with the ability to attract many people to help with their ideas and projects. An adventurous person, you thrive on expanding ideas and new projects. You rarely say ‘no’ to a challenge!

Thus, your desk is usually a mess. You have high hopes; too many projects and things to read, and not planning enough time. It is time you discipline yourself to ‘say no’, and delegate some of the projects. Set aside a few hours in your non-scheduled day …just to catch up, and deal with the mountain of paperwork, in-boxes, and desk-drawers. Then purge! Spread everything out on the floor to see the magnitude of your problem. Sort out the projects into coloured folders (you love colours) and prioritize the ones that need attention daily, monthly, annually and the special project files.

One of the downfalls of being a wood-person is that you can burn out easily- literally! Wood-people can be impatient and ‘feed fuel to the fire’ working with drama-prone individuals. By cutting down on this action, and the projects related to fire-people, you’ll take one step towards looking after your health, and two steps towards containing the chaos on your desk.

**FIRE-** Fire-people are consumers…literally! You like to shop and collect dramatic, attention-getting things. Much of your clutter is related to not only work, but unpacked items, things that don’t have a place or stuff you need to return. Your motivation is to stay on top of your game, and yet, you somehow expect people to pick up after you. It will be tough for you to muster the discipline to clean up your work area. As an extravert, you are passionate about life: you’d be missing all the fun if you stay inside to do this by yourself! 1/3

The clutter on your desk is related to clutter in the closet, drawers and under the bed. Fire-people are consumers who not only consume material items, but also the energy of others around them. Take the time to look at your entire house: clean, purge, and recycle. Paying for help is suggested.

If you ever burn out, which you will, you want to have a few friends left for you to hang out with, before the next fire (opportunity) comes along. You’ll feel better with a clean slate, so try to imprint an image in your head of ‘tidiness’, so you’ll be motivated to keep it that way.

**EARTH -** Earth-people are well grounded and well-liked for their arbitration skills.

You like to collect things and ‘nest’ for future needs. You are a reliable source for any and all, misc stuff. With all these organization skills and knowledge, you may be overwhelmed hanging onto other people’s projects, files and baggage.

While protective of these items, only you know the filing system or whereabouts of all these nests. Therefore, your clutter is defining yourself worth.

Earth-people tend to have hoarder qualities; not something you’d expect from a successful individual. Piles and piles of stuff tend to become stale and stagnant… resulting in a musty, dead space.

Take the initiate to purge the piles. Make time to re-file necessary items in a logical spot for others to fend for themselves. Remove everything that is not supporting you out of your space; and surround yourself with things you love.

You’ll still have clutter issues, as you love to collect things, and you are very sentimental. But, try not to take over other people’s space; the clutter is yours and yours alone.

**METAL -** Metal-people tend to be well organized and meticulous about details.

You file most of your thoughts in black-or-white, resisting the pull to be flexible. Regarding clutter; you have that taken care of too: paid, filed, out-of-sight. As the back bone of a corporation, you generally will not have clutter issues, but you do need to share information with others. The introvert in you helps to keep things organized: You have personal papers in order, licenses up to date, safety issues looked after; as well as live by policy, rules and procedures. You are very organized, with everything in its place.

Your weakness can be social; your pride is sustained by assurance that you know more than others. You don’t have a clutter problem, but, others do! You may have to be patient and flexible trying to extract documents or information from others; it’s all about cooperation and working towards the same objective. 2/3

**WATER -** Water-people are pontifical and like to sit back and watch things happening around them. Brilliant, and meticulous, they can be very critical towards others. Oddly combined with a cynical sense of humour, water-people are rarely social.

You tend to delegate tasks to others rather than put out an effort yourself. You resist self-promotion, and harbour your successes in storage; never to be looked at and never to be disposed of…sort of locked in time. You may have collected memories, documents and files from a lifetime of exciting casework; therefore, you may not have a messy clutter-type problem, but more of a storage problem.

Your priorities are not as simple as cleaning up the desk; as reading, or gathering information gives you your edge. You relish the fact that you have the key answers –and others don’t.

To keep all your clutter and storage issues under control, you may need to invest in reliable help; someone who can understand your brilliance and anti-social behavior.

*~ Need more expansion about your Personal Element Profile? Ask:* *kathryn@kathrynwilking.com*

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 As an active Professional Member of the International Feng Shui Guild, Kathryn is available for private consultations, innovative talks and workshops. Check out her book [‘Practical Feng Shui for the Office’](http://www.practicalfengshuifortheoffice.com) (2013) and connect with her through [www.kathrynwilking.com](http://www.kathrynwilking.com)

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