

How to get the most out of an Astrological Reading

Expectations about what an astrological reading is, and what benefit it might provide, vary widely. To some it seems like great fun. (Should I take that snow-boarding lesson, or have a Swedish massage, or sign up for an astrological reading?) For some it seems like an excellent way to get necessary information, so that better choices are possible. (Why do I always date the same type, and live to regret it? Over and over again.) To yet others an astrological reading seems very threatening. (I don't want to know when I will die, or have some dread disease -- or any other bad stuff. Is that what I will hear?)

Let's take a closer look at some of the reasons prompting a person to call and set up an appointment for a reading:

1. I don't really know anything about astrology but it sounds fascinating. So tell me all.

Perhaps a gift certificate for a reading is the reason for the call. Or maybe a conversation with a friend, or an article read, prompted the call to set up the reading. Happy to have you aboard -- says we the astrologers. But beware of expectations that are too vague ('tell me all'). Deep in your soul there must be something that you really, really want. Any hint that you give us about your inner yearnings can make the difference between a ho-hum and wow reading. If you are not ready to share any inner thoughts and feelings, then it may be best to start the reading by asking the astrologer what astrology is, what astrology is not, generally how it works, and how all of this impacts you personally.

2. I want to treat myself to an hour of emotional and psychological pampering. I want the attention focused steadily on ME. Tell me all the good stuff. But I'm embarrassed to say any of this out loud. You, astrologer, should know all this already just because I'm sitting here.

Again, give us a hint about what you really want. And then we can jointly focus on using the chart to bring hidden talents out into the light of day -- a real gift. Without any hints at all given about your true wishes, it's possible for the reading to focus on things that you already know, or are not concerned about. There is so much information available, and only a finite time for the reading. So be selective.

3. Should I leave Hartford and move to Atlanta? Should I marry Bob (here's his picture and date of birth)? Should I start divorce proceedings? Should I

How you word your concern makes a difference. Instead of saying "should I", which implies you are passing responsibility for the final outcome onto the astrologer, ask the astrologer for whatever information is available in the chart so that you can make your own, more informed, and hopefully more effective, decision.

It is generally unsafe to ask someone else to make your decisions for you. Their life experiences are different from yours, leading them to make choices comfortable to themselves, but not necessarily comfortable to yourself. You and they might simply use the same available energies in different ways, with positive results for both of you.

Also note that an astrologer is not a fortune teller. Blended energies may play out in a variety of ways. A precise outcome (for example: you will have a sprained ankle on Dec 3, 2014) is not available in the chart.

4. When should I move to Atlanta? When should I ask her to marry me -- tell me the date? When

There is a branch of astrology called electional astrology. Generally a person will ask an astrologer to choose the best date for something, from among a set of possible dates. (It can be a very large, or very small, set of possible dates.) For example, I might want to set up a big family reunion sometime this coming summer. Suppose I am able to rent a nearby community hall on the 2nd or 3rd Sunday in June, July, or August. I could then ask the astrologer which specific date, from among these 6 possible dates, would provide the best energy environment for my family reunion.

If your question is too open-ended (next month, a year and a half from now, should I ever move to Atlanta), we are back to the quandary of your asking someone else (the astrologer in this case) to make your decision for you. You can ask for some general indications about when various energies are especially active. But keep in mind that myriad life events happen when they happen -- and not necessarily when the stars are in perfect

alignment -- and life goes on.

5. My chart is AWFUL. I was born when the Moon was void of course. Mercury is retrograde and square to Saturn and Pluto. And this is not even a part of my grand cross. How can I survive? What should I do?

You are not a prisoner of your chart. The idea, for all of us, is to outgrow prisoner status. We do this by first understanding whatever the chart has to tell us, and second by activating free-will in concert with what we have learned from the astrological information we receive. Activating free-will generally implies leaving our comfort zone, at least for a little while. If we remain on automatic pilot (the path of least resistance) too long and too consistently, we become stuck in our current way of being, and seem unable to grow.

Also, energy itself is neutral – it is not good or bad. Whatever we are labeling good or bad in the chart is, in fact, just energy to be used by us. It is what we do with the energy offered to us that makes the difference. I do agree that some charts make more direct demands on our determination to activate free-will than others charts might.

6. I'm feeling stressed out. Please help me cope more effectively.

Every energy cycle has a beginning and an end. Just knowing that alone can help. And then the various 'details' (current situations, repeating scenarios, daily habit patterns, ...) can be explored more fully. This means that we can delineate active energies in the universe and track their impact on the specific chart we are studying -- which means their impact on you.

7. I want to see the parts of myself that others might see, but that I never notice. I want to feel more fully alive. And I am willing to take personal responsibility for my own well-being.

Think of astrology super-charged. The requirement here is a pretty healthy acceptance of all of myself (the things I like and also the things I try to hide, at least from my own view) -- and complete honesty. There is an almost continuous series of experiments suggested by the chart to support both outer growth and inner growth. The intensity of the basic need to grow must at least match the intensity of the feeling of doing 'work'.

The appointment for the reading is now on the calendar. What comes next?

The mental preparation consists primarily in articulating, to myself, what it is that I really want. Writing a few sentences might help. At a busy-work level, the preparation might include obtaining my correct time of birth (if available). I can generally get this with a phone call to town hall requesting a long-form of my birth certificate. At a logistical level I should be sure to arrive on time (or certainly call if there is any delay in my getting to the reading), come prepared to make a voice recording of the session, and insure that my cell phone will not become intrusive. (Most astrologers that I know would be happy to make the voice recording if it is discussed ahead of time.) Paying the astrologer for the reading at the beginning of the session instead of at the end of the session presents you in a very positive, considerate light.

The time of the reading has arrived.

1. Share your hopes and goals with the astrologer. It can be as simple as 'I want to learn about the basic universal energies and how they affect me'. Or it can be a statement of my inner strivings. Keep it clear and brief. Time is limited and there is a lot to learn.
2. If words or ideas are used during the reading that do not make sense to you, then politely ask for clarification. Then, not later. (You are not holding up the rest of the class just because you need to go over something -- just in case you ever had those feelings.)
3. If you are asked a question that you do not want to answer, then politely, and definitely, refuse to answer it.
4. If the astrologer mentions a characteristic in your chart that you know you have, and that you also assume no one else ever notices in you, this can easily (in my experience as an astrologer) lead to a long discussion about this single insight. You need to make a choice. Do you want to use the remaining time of the reading to go more deeply into this particular area, or do you want to move onto other things that come up in the chart. Either way, if this caused you to stop and choose, be sure to ask the astrologer how you can work with this

characteristic to your best advantage, given the energies that are active at the present time.

5. Always be courteous, and definite. The more questions you ask during the session, the more information you will receive that is relevant to what you really want to know about, and the more the session will be guided by you.

I wish everyone a wonderful, and insightful, reading. Ruth Finizio, June 2012

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