

Astrology Basics Revisited

In ancient times people everywhere began to study the night sky in order to prevent getting lost while traveling after dark. Individual stars, and constellations of stars, were named, and their positions in the night sky at each season of the year were firmly held in human imagination. Early navigation tools, which measured a ship's position relative to specific stars, were developed for sea travel. During daylight hours the length and direction of shadows cast by the Sun oriented the traveler's path. Storms, which hide both stars and shadows, foretold possible disaster.

As time passed and civilizations began to form, feudal lords and kings emerged. In other words there were leaders, and there were followers, and there was power -- the building blocks of organized groups. A new need emerged: how can the future leadership capabilities of given individuals be known? Gradually, a picture of the night sky at the birth of a possible future king was studied for clues about that person's developing leadership skills; the birth of astrology.

Astrology flourished until quite recently -- approximately 300 years ago, or even less. The turning point was triggered by a growing world-wide dependence on the 'scientific method'. The scientific method is the process of setting up controlled experiments, which can be repeated over and over and over again, until a predicted result is either established or denied. The scientific method is the underpinning of technology -- ex. the development of a new miracle drug, the purity of motor oil, the speed of a microchip, etc.

Astrological information is not adaptable to the scientific method. We cannot set up a series of controlled experiments to ascertain, before the fact, the final outcome of a specific life choice. We can speculate, and we can speculate more intelligently using available astrological information, but we cannot predict with certainty a detailed description of the final outcome of any given life choice.

That said, let's look at what astrology does offer to us, and how it works.

We can investigate an individual human psyche (natal astrology). We can investigate how different people trigger reactions in each other (synestry). We can investigate the effects of geographical location on an individual (astrocartography). We can investigate natural phenomena and world events (mundane astrology). We can investigate questions of timing (transits and progressions). And the list goes on.

Astrology is expressed in the language of Planets, Signs, Houses, and Aspects. Different social groups use symbols meaningful to their own culture, to represent essential insights and truths. For example, a natal chart cast in the Vedic tradition may look different than that same natal chart cast in the Kabbalistic tradition. The symbols may change from group to group, but the realities referenced remain the same. My own personal preference is Western astrology (my own culture) and Ptolomaic aspects (generally, the less cluttered a chart is, the more it speaks to me).

The following tables identify basic themes associated with the planets, the signs, areas of human activity associated with the houses, and energy blending techniques associated with the aspects.

Planets:

Sun	We are each trying to express the cleanest and clearest form of our Sun sign's energy -- it is a life's journey. Moments when we are able to do this successfully are pivotal in our lives.
Moon	Deep emotion. How we respond to both excitement and stress. The creation of our defense mechanisms. Tapping into psychic awareness.
Mercury	The focus is on identifying and utilizing various channels of communication, and on the clarity of rational thought.

Venus	The playful side of love. Fantasy, cajoling, holding hands. Avoiding judgments based on illusion is a continuing effort.
Mars	Heroes and champions. Getting out there and doing something. Making a difference.
Jupiter	Reaching higher, delving deeper, learning more, loving more. Super-size it all.
Saturn	Boundaries and structures have a life of their own. With sensitivity we can utilize useful structures in our lives, and we can renew and replace outworn boundaries and structures.
Uranus	A glimpse into the unknown, followed by a deep breath, and then wishing for a second glimpse. Utilizing the limits of human creativity.
Neptune	Identifying illusions, and then cutting through those illusions to reach the truth beyond. Freedom discovered is the main prize.
Pluto	Truth. Not verification, not platitudes, not distractions, not smoothed edges. Just truth.

Signs:

Aries	Cardinal Fire energy. Exploring self-knowledge, and the nature of relationships with others. This energy works well in conditions of extreme, and often time sensitive, adversity.
Taurus	Fixed Earth energy. Speak up. Do not procrastinate. Sing. Help others to tap into rituals and traditions.
Gemini	Mutable Air energy. We are the keepers of the records (life stories, sacred texts, ...). The challenge is staying open to more subtle 'vocabularies' -- we need to listen carefully, with all of our being.
Cancer	Cardinal Water energy. Identifying and safeguarding true innocence. This is warrior energy. But the surface of the warrior can appear very soft.
Leo	Fixed Fire energy. When a 'king' is necessary, rise to the occasion. In other circumstances avoid micro-managing. Consider leading by teaching others how to play in meaningful ways.
Virgo	Mutable Earth energy. Providing and protecting -- the essence of nurturing. Diana, the goddess of the hunt, is an excellent Virgo role model. Beware of appearances -- i.e. avoid being mistaken for prey.
Libra	Cardinal Air energy. What does everyone else think, and want, and feel? How can we create harmonious outcomes? It's hard work, but compelling. How can we keep our own needs from being over-run?
Scorpio	Fixed Water energy. The world is heavy with fluff (i.e. heavy with platitudes and pretense and superficiality). We feel like human vacuum cleaners, clearing away the fluff so that we can breathe and see clearly. Note: Some of that fluff is psychic debris.
Sagittarius	Mutable Fire energy. Smooth rolling motion, like a dance. It's all about making connections -- among people, among businesses, among institutions, among nations.

Capricorn	Cardinal Earth energy. Father Time / Mother Earth. An ultimate sense of authority (trustworthy leadership) in this physical plane of experience. Where does real authority reside, and how is it accessed?
Aquarius	Fixed Air energy. This is about activating as many mental faculties as possible (rational thinking, incubation, deep meditation, etc.) in the continuous working out of personal life quests.
Pisces	Mutable Water energy. Learning how, and what, to trust. Non-verbal forms of communication, and art forms in particular, play an important part.

Houses:

1 st	Exploring the self. Making something happen in physical reality in order to observe the outcome, its effect upon us, and our reactions. We need to use all of our faculties (mind, body, emotions) in this process.
2 nd	Exploring the illusion of ownership. There is, of course, legal ownership -- the letter of the law. But what do we really own, and why, and how is it to be treated?
3 rd	Exploring communication. Talk, chat, discuss, dialogue, learn. Ask questions. We also try to explore the listening process.
4 th	Exploring what is hidden beneath the surface. Exploring our base. An ideal home holds innocence sacred (innocence is quite different from ignorance), and keeps corruption at bay.
5 th	Exploring play. Some play is serious business. Dance and sing and share. We feel life giving energy coursing through our bodies. This energy is not a personal possession -- resist trying to store it up for a rainy day.
6 th	Exploring the ordinary. Daily habits have consequences. Every moment is a new beginning. But we must use the current moment, and not some future un-reality, as our lens on the world.
7 th	Exploring 'other'. When do we relate with another? When do we merge with another? And when do we simply disappear?
8 th	Exploring the possibility of making an intention, and actually carrying through on it. (Think -- New Year's resolutions.) What gets in the way? How can we carry through on our intention while the obstacles still remain?
9 th	Exploring the needs of community. A police force, a military, a congress, a clergy, a list of chores on the refrigerator door? Who makes up the rules? How can we improve the situation?
10 th	Exploring the process of leadership (accepting community responsibility), and exploring the process of accepting personal responsibility. Both are very demanding tasks.
11 th	Exploring the possibility of freeing ourselves from unwanted constraints, especially from fear and disillusionment and hate (these feelings can be very hidden). Exploring awe and the unknown. Allowing the creative process to be active in us.
12 th	Exploring the invisible universe. Using meditative states of awareness. Helping others to tap into their own psychic and spiritual possibilities.

Aspects:

Conjunction	The complete merging of two energies.
Opposition	One of the two energies usually tips the balance. Until they switch places.
Square	In your face! We are forced to do something about it -- even if it is only a pity party.
Trine	A nice easy place to hang out and regroup.
Sextile	This is fun. Let's get the energy flowing.

Synthesizing all of this information is the key to it all. I suggest taking a look at an earlier article that I wrote for this website called 'Stepping Into a Chart' to help with the synthesizing process. Enjoy the journey.

Ruth Finizio
finizior@yahoo.com
860-680-1860