

The Houses in Our Charts

Years ago I started to think about the experience of living in each of the 12 houses depicted in our charts. Since all 12 houses are in everyone's chart, we all live in every house to some extent. How deeply do we embrace what each house has to offer? What are the possibilities?

Imagine each house having a basement, a kitchen, bedrooms, general living spaces, an attic, and even a possible observatory on the roof. Also imagine a single door opening into the basement; there are no other entrances into the house. The realtor showing us the house wants to make a sale, but does not want to hang around longer than necessary. We follow the realtor into the house. Perhaps we encounter a Pluto Saturn conjunction on the other side of the threshold, and run out the entrance door screaming. Oh hum. The realtor turns to us suggesting we view another house.

Where do you live in your chart?

The 1st house

House #1 is where we discover who we are and what makes us tick. As we learn more about ourselves, our self-image becomes more nuanced. Consequently, how we present ourselves to the outside world becomes more defined. Often-times noticing something un-pleasing about ourselves prompts us to halt and start building a mask, in order to hide unwanted aspects of ourselves from the outside world. We become hesitant about adding to our store of self-knowledge. We not only want to hide what we found from everyone else, we do not want to look at it ourselves. It requires courage to explore all of the rooms in our house.

The realtor beckons, and we step into the basement. When we are confined to this space, the universe (the basement with locked doors) seems very small and we feel very big. All things revolve around US (or ME). It is just about impossible to recognize 'other' in this place, except as a potential personal possession. In this space natural law means 'whatever I want is proper and justifiable, just because I want it'. Collateral damage (someone else's needs and feelings) remains unappreciated, in the rare event that it is even noticed. What will it take for us to notice the exit door on the far wall, opening into other parts of the house? What will it take for us to push that door open and continue our search of self-discovery?

Some of us are attracted by the aromas and warmth and comfort of the kitchen on the next level above. Once ensconced in the kitchen we question why we should ever leave this oasis? We have shelter and food and an internet hook-up. Other beings pass through our world -- often calling themselves family and friends. That's nice. We begin to recognize the needs of others here. ex: You need chicken soup, and I will make some for you. That is, until you say the wrong thing, or look at me funny. And then all bets are off. Here our focus is still on ourselves, and only incidentally on others. We are, as yet, unwilling to look at our own reactions and limitations. That seems just too threatening.

The realtor is getting impatient. Do we want to view the rest of the house or not. The masks we are building are getting too bulky and heavy to fit through the next doorway. Hacking bits and pieces off of the mask might work. But that mask is ME -- the parts I want others to see! It is time to make a choice. Only when we begin to feel closed-in, and think there must be more to life than what is currently happening (and we need to find it), can we take a more honest look at ourselves, lighten our masks, and pass through the next doorway.

As we climb our way through the house, we keep chipping away at our unwillingness to see ourselves as we really are. It takes a lot of work. We are flying in the face of our favorite illusions. Neptune is a tremendously strong ally in this process if we can accept its guidance.

Let's take a look at the remaining houses on view.

The 2nd house

House #2 is where we learn what we must have, what is nice to have but is not essential, and what we hold onto out of familiarity and habit.

Basement: Without possessions I feel lost. Each separate possession is an extension of me. My possessions are my strongest supports -- my slippers will never turn against me. My personal beliefs are sacrosanct -- mine are correct, yours might be suspect.

Kitchen: The closets are packed to overflowing. You never know when something might become useful. My children don't even want what I've been saving so carefully for them. But I'm still afraid of coming up short in a time of need.

Upper levels: The meaning of ownership varies from society to society. I am not my things. I am not even my thoughts or feelings. I am simply the one who does the thinking and feeling.

3rd House

House #3 is where we learn how to initiate contact with others.

Basement: I will tell you what's important and what you should think and do, so follow my directions.

Kitchen: Let's have a conversation. What do you think of my idea? (The process of learning HOW to listen, and WHEN to speak begins here.)

Upper levels: I am listening to your voice, and to your body language, and to your emotional energy. I am not pretending to know you better than you know yourself. I am real, and I am here for you.

4th House

House #4 is where we learn how to orient ourselves in time and space. Who are my ancestors? Where do I belong in the social fabric of my family, on the globe, in the galaxy, in spiritual reality? What are the values and beliefs held in safe-keeping for me? Without reference systems I don't know who I am.

Basement: Family is held together by blood and emotion and duty. Are you one of US?

Kitchen: You are a welcome guest in my home. I will accept some inconvenience in the attempt to make your visit enjoyable and meaningful.

Upper levels: HOME is a state of being, and not really a physical place. We are all connected.

5th House

House #5 is where we learn how to release and share creative energy flowing through us.

Basement: I'm more talented than you are. I want your appreciation -- or do I mean adoration?

Kitchen: I truly want to share what is inside of me with the world. I wonder if anyone is capable of understanding me.

Upper levels: I must give form to what needs to be expressed. This is where work and play meet -- and I have no choice.

6th House

House #6 is where we learn the practicalities of life. What is the effect of not eating breakfast, or of not washing the breakfast dishes? Is it really necessary to perform these actions every day?

Basement: I will diet and never cheat in order to lose 30 pounds, feel absolutely amazing walking down the aisle in my wedding dress, and then never, ever, diet again. Each goal seems to be in a vacuum, disconnected from every other goal in my life.

Kitchen: There are not enough hours in the day. If I don't do something myself it doesn't get done, or doesn't get done properly. Isn't there anyone else working in this office, or living in this house? Too often I feel exhausted and trapped -- and people have the nerve to call ME demanding.

Upper levels: I need to accept what is truly my personal responsibility, and let go of those things beyond my capabilities. I need to build up my resources, including stronger will-power and greater perseverance.

7th House

House #7 is where we begin to test out a new point of view, different from our own. YOU have distinct thoughts and feelings. And WE have a distinct point of view, different from mine or yours. What if

Basement: You have a lot of rough edges. I will smooth them out.

Kitchen: We are a team, and we both want it to work. Chances are we both feel that 'I' am doing most of the compromising. But we wish each other well.

Upper levels: I am there for you when you really need me, without reservation.

8th House

House #8 is where we learn how to surrender non-essentials.

Basement: Did I travel down that birth canal kicking and screaming, or was I anxious to visit planet Earth? For those trapped in the basement, it was major resistance every inch of the way. The lesson to be learned is about conserving energy for what we can and should do, and not wasting energy on everything else.

Kitchen: If it hasn't been used for the last few years, let's donate it to charity. At least someone who needs it can use it. The bigger challenge is relinquishing emotional scenarios that no longer work for us.

Upper levels: The list of essentials is quite small. Other things (non-essentials) may be enjoyed, so long as there is no pretending that something is more important than it is. And so long as there is no misuse of our resources.

9th House

House #9 is where we learn how to create community, and create the codes that guide human interactions.

Basement: Here we learn, and generally mimic, our family's speech patterns, rituals of religious observance, political leanings, and ways of processing anger and fear and confusion. We learn how to define US and how to define THEM. We use the letter of the law, where possible, to remove power from THEM.

Kitchen: While here, we work on defining a broader US that includes a lot of THEM. We, at least theoretically, want happiness and prosperity for everyone. But when it comes to paying a price for making it happen, we want THEM to foot the bill.

Upper levels: The codes are simple. Do no harm in ordinary life -- do not create pain and suffering for any other being. Circumstances quickly become complicated. When is war justified? When is war necessary? How do we discern between levels of good and levels of evil when it is obvious that someone will be hurt, no matter what?

10th House

House #10 is where we learn how to transfer our personal identification from the birth family to the greater community, and also learn how to commit to our adjusted role in this new environment.

Basement: If it was good enough for my daddy it's good enough for me, and there is no reason why it shouldn't be good enough for you. So shape up.

Kitchen: There are so many attitudes and traditions, it makes my head spin. Let's build our own town, and our own neighborhood, with our own values. We wish THEM peace in their own building process.

Upper levels: The internet has turned all problems into global problems. So we might as well begin working on solutions.

11th House

House #11 is where we join with others to produce something greater than what came before.

Basement: I am more important than you in the hierarchy of this organization. So listen, and learn, and stand to the side when the press photographers arrive. Thank you for your support.

Kitchen: It was hard, but we accomplished our goal. And now it's time to party. It's all about the rewards.

Upper levels: Our efforts give others better health, better living conditions, better opportunities to help themselves, better peace of mind, and more willingness to join with us.

12th House

House #12 is where we make efforts to dissolve non-functional boundaries and illusions.

Basement: I 'believe' whatever you believe, because I want you to want me. What I believe depends (exclusively) on what the group tells me to believe; else I will be an outsider, alone, and vulnerable.

Kitchen: Identification with a group (a charity, a political party, an ethnic heritage,) gives my life structure and purpose. I do my part, and too often some of yours. I don't see you volunteering at the soup kitchen or teaching English to newcomers or raising money for Doctors Without Borders. Why are you so lazy?

Upper levels: Vocabularies and voices and symbol systems show lots of variation -- but the underlying realities remain the same. God is God is God, no matter the liturgy or rituals. Political common sense helps us all, no matter who the speaker is, or where the speaker comes from. The boundaries that separate us can seem very compelling (painted in the colors of righteousness). Spin and glitz is a poor substitute for reality.

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