

## Polarities in an Astrological Chart

There are 6 axes in any astrological chart. Each axis is concerned with a unique set of core issues. The opposite ends of the axis describe opposite ways of dealing with those core issues. An axis may connect two opposing houses (ex: house 1 and house 7, or house 2 and house 8), or the axis may connect two opposing signs (ex: planets in Aires opposing planets in Libra, or planets in Taurus opposing planets in Scorpio).

An axis is active in a particular chart if either end of that axis has concentrated energy associated with it. For example. Suppose we are looking at a natal chart that has the Sun and North Node in the 3<sup>rd</sup> house. This alone, regardless of the sign that the Sun or North Node might be in, tells us that the Communication axis (which connects the 3<sup>rd</sup> house and the 9<sup>th</sup> house) is active in that person's life. If there are also planets in the 9<sup>th</sup> house, then issues about how to communicate are even more important in that person's life.

Suppose that in this same chart there are planets in both Gemini and Sagittarius. It doesn't matter which houses contain these planets. The fact that there is concentrated energy in these signs, independent of where it appears in the chart, tells us that the Communication axis is active for this person. If the houses and the signs coincide (Gemini in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> house, and Sagittarius in the opposing house) then the Communication axis is truly central in the dynamic of this chart.

Let's take a closer look at each of these polarities.

### Axis #1 Relationship Dynamics.

The axis connecting the 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> houses, and / or Aires and Libra planets, is about learning life's lessons through interpersonal relationships. If most of the chart's energy is in the 1<sup>st</sup> house, or in Aires, then we learn most easily by observing the effects of our actions on others. If most of the energy is in the 7<sup>th</sup> house, or Libra, then we learn most easily by observing our reactions to other people, and the things that they do. This is a subtle difference, since the interaction keeps going back and forth.

1<sup>st</sup> house / Aires energy uses confrontation as a favorite technique to investigate what will happen next. If I kick you in the shin (or shock you enough), then you will lose your cool, and I will see who you really are (you are just too busy losing control to keep a mask in place). Kicking you does not mean that you are my enemy. This is just a way of getting to know you. 7<sup>th</sup> house / Libra energy, the opposite end of the axis, builds a team (we, not me vs. you) as a favorite technique to investigate whatever might come next. The assumption here is that since we are on the same team, I can trust you to never hurt me. Both methods seem to work, and both are extremely frustrating to their partner at the opposite end of the axis.

### Axis #2 Dealing with Underlying Fears -- Insuring Security.

A bottom line in everyone's life (on planet Earth) is recognizing our own deep-down fears, and all of the consequences dependent on these fears. This axis connects the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> house, and also Taurus and Scorpio energy. Access to my possessions (2<sup>nd</sup> house), keeps me safe -- says Taurus. Aligning myself with processes of transformation, and not with static possessions (8<sup>th</sup> house), keeps me safe -- says Scorpio. Not allowing anyone to push me this way or that, keeps me safe -- says Taurus. Pushing other people's buttons with complete certainty (knowing what each push of a button produces), keeps me safe -- says Scorpio. These are the opposing stances at the ends of axis #2.

This is probably one of the most difficult axes to work with because no one (that I know) wants to dredge up what, at first glance, looks like painful hard work. It's much easier to think about the 2<sup>nd</sup> house as personal possessions, Taurus as classic beauty, the 8<sup>th</sup> house as family money (perhaps), and Scorpio as a need for intensity. Yes. But more is possible. And more is available in the chart.

### Axis #3 Communication Skills.

This axis (3<sup>rd</sup> house / 9<sup>th</sup> house and Gemini / Sagittarius) is about developing effective communication. Do we say what needs to be said (when it needs to be said)? Do we say it in a way that is clear, concise, compassionate, and that invites listening? Do we try to find out what others actually hear and understand? Do we, ourselves, listen? Or do we prefer what feels like the emotional high of 'being right', and shut out any counter ideas? Do we know ourselves well enough to recognize our strongest modes of expression -- talking, singing, the written word, photography, .....?

Air (Gemini) below the horizon (the line connecting the ascendant and descendant) and fire (Sagittarius) above the horizon. Below the horizon we are gathering thoughts, ideas, information, and putting the pieces together. Above the

horizon we need to do something with the pieces gathered (building a code for civilized living, for example) -- and hopefully make a positive change in our world.

When considering personal questions about communicating with others, we need to reference both the 3<sup>rd</sup> / 9<sup>th</sup> house axis, and also the Gemini / Sagittarius axis, no matter where it appears in our chart.

#### Axis #4 Balancing Being and Doing.

We live in a society where we are encouraged (often pushed) to DO something, to produce a result. Success is measured by tangible accomplishments -- money, credentials earned, books published, heroic actions taken, etc. While all of these can be very important, we are frequently out of balance. As very young children (often as preschoolers) we are applauded for learning the alphabet and recognizing basic words. If we (these same children) simply act in a calm and independent manner, no applause are generated. BEING is not recognized as a valid activity, or as a strength. People, in general, do not perceive, and rarely become conscious of any underlying process that results in inner calm and a quality of being centered. That is an unfortunate consequence of our conditioning.

4<sup>th</sup> house / Cancer energy is about BEING as opposed to DOING. 10<sup>th</sup> house / Capricorn energy is about DOING in the world at large. The DOING end of this axis is easier to understand. We all know how successful Capricorn is at strategizing, drawing up detailed plans, and making it happen. The BEING end of this axis is much more difficult for us to grasp. Do we have integrity? Do we feel able to face and deal with whatever life sends our way? Can we feel negative emotions, threatening body sensations, horrific thoughts, without trying to 'pass it on', at least in part, in an attempt to alleviate our suffering?

Over the years as an astrologer, I have seen a lot of people struggle with the Cancer energy in their own charts, as well as with difficult expressions of Cancer energy in people close to them. I would like to offer a couple of suggestions.

- When someone near you demonstrates strong Cancer energy, do not immediately go into fix-it mode. Demonstrations of water energy, in general, are a reaching out for human contact, for personal recognition as a viable human being. The moment we go into fix-it mode, we are in our own head space, working on a problem, and not particularly focused on recognizing the essence of the other person. The Cancer person is asking for contact, and not for an 'answer'.
- Cancer energy, including our own Cancer energy, can easily overwhelm and exhaust many of us. Take time outs. Drink lots of water. Do something frivolous, just for fun. And then return to what seems immediate, real, and important.

#### Axis #5 Creativity and the Role of Leadership.

Who is it that needs to be led? And who is it who can lead? What is their style of leadership? And how long must it last? Leo energy is about using power responsibly -- in other words, leadership. Using power responsibly is a life-long quest, requiring great strength to accomplish. Temptations to abuse power are legendary -- just look at the world around us. The Leo assumption is that there are two distinct groups of people -- leaders and followers. Followers do not want the responsibility of leading others, nor do they have the strength of being to accomplish the goal of pursuing responsible leadership in the face of the many temptations along the way. It is further assumed that there are naturally many, many followers, and few leaders.

The Aquarius ideal is that each individual has an inborn capacity to ascend to a level of consciousness where the responsible use of power is simply what happens -- business as usual. There can be no possible mob, or mob psychology, if each member of the group achieves a state of self-actualization. For this same reason, there can be no human interaction devoid of compassion. Thus, no outside leadership would be required.

As is true with every axis, the polar points of view are extreme and opposite. But what of the 5<sup>th</sup> house and the 11<sup>th</sup> house?

The 5<sup>th</sup> house is about expressing, on the outside, whatever it is inside of me (the individual), that is bursting to get out. How it (this content) gets expressed may take a wide variety of different forms. It may take the form of an artistic expression such as composing music, conducting an orchestra, creating sculpture, etc. The expression on the outside may take the form of a new solution dealing with a social or economic issue. Or it may take the form of working on a cure for a known disease. The variety of forms are endless. Whenever a person is living what they are passionate about, the 5<sup>th</sup> house is engaged. The two great 5<sup>th</sup> house challenges are:

- Insuring that whatever is expressed does no harm to anyone. (This is, again, the responsible use of power.)

- Dealing with the experience of feeling that there is nothing on the inside that needs to be expressed on the outside.

The 11<sup>th</sup> house is about joining in and participating in an already ongoing creative process. Here the creative action is greater than any single individual's contribution. (ie. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.) For example, consider an expedition setting out to climb Mount Everest. It's not about a single ego adding another notch to its belt when it reaches the top, but rather it's about a human (regardless of who reaches the top) scaling Mount Everest.

Axis #6 Service – to the self, to the community, to the cosmos.

6<sup>th</sup> house / Virgo energy is about learning, and putting into place, whatever is absolutely necessary in the structure of the day. It is centered in the concrete -- ie. That which is available to the 5 senses. Do we really need to eat breakfast every day? What is the effect of irregular sleeping patterns? Is it necessary to arrive 10 minutes before a class begins? How many trips to Good Will are actually necessary? (Every 22<sup>nd</sup> day, perhaps? An attempt at Virgo humor?) Etc. The 6<sup>th</sup> house is often called the house of daily routines.

12<sup>th</sup> house / Pisces energy is also about putting into place whatever is absolutely necessary in the structure of the day. However, this time it is centered in the invisible world (not perceptible via the 5 senses) -- ie. the psychic realm and the spiritual realm. How much meditation or prayer time (or sometimes plain old down-time) is needed each day to rest and revivify us? How can we protect ourselves against being emotionally drained by other people's needs, and still be present to these others? And how do we work this in to our daily routine?

Note: Here 'spiritual' means relationship with God, or relationship with divine energy (or relationship with that which is beyond human comprehension, if the word God is an obstacle). Spirits of the dead, and other spirit beings, are part of the psychic world -- ie: humans have more or less conscious contact with this realm via human psychic faculties such as clairvoyance, telepathy, etc. A spiritual awareness (which is pure gift) may be a moment of direct knowing and home-base. An example of a psychic awareness (somewhat dependant upon conditioning) may be an awareness of something happening at a distant location, while it is happening.

To summarize this, let's take a quick look at the house rulers associated with each axis.

Mars, ruler of the 1<sup>st</sup> house, cries 'I want to do SOMETHING. NOW!!' Venus, ruler of the 7<sup>th</sup> house, tries to gently tease Mars into a more congenial attitude -- ie. the adoration of herself, Venus.

Venus, ruler of the 2<sup>nd</sup> house, is the energy of the desire nature -- I like it / I don't like it; I want it / I don't want it. Venus cries 'I want my favorite things -- forever. All of them! Especially my favorite daydreams and illusions.'  
Pluto, ruler of the 8<sup>th</sup> house, demands 'Too bad. If it's not real then it's not essential. And If it's not essential then 'IT GOES!!'

Mercury, ruler of the 3<sup>rd</sup> house, runs the postal service on Mount Olympus. (Nicknamed Hermes.) Neither sleet, nor hail, nor ..... The flow of information is everlasting. Sagittarius, ruler of the 9<sup>th</sup> house, has been procrastinating about picking up all those sacks of 'who knows what' at the local post office. Perhaps when we return from the other side of the Moon. But the publication date for submitting the new judicial code is fast approaching.

The Moon, ruler of the 4<sup>th</sup> house, is vacationing in the vastness of the unconscious -- and experiencing essential being. The very best way to escape from crazy rules. Aren't people aware of how transient everything is? Saturn, ruler of the 10<sup>th</sup> house, can't sit still. An administrator, par excellence: the list of chores is ever increasing.

The Sun, ruler of the 5<sup>th</sup> house, is energizing the troops. Warrior energy is follower energy. The troops receive their orders from their leader (the Sun King). Across the pond Uranus, ruler of the 11<sup>th</sup> house, is beside herself. Won't these hordes ever get it? Loyal subjects 2. Temptations 12!!

Mercury, ruler of the 6<sup>th</sup> house, is itemizing her day -- scouts at 9 am, hospital service at 10:35 am, political rally at 1:50 pm, compulsory monthly visit to aunt Harriet at 7 pm. Maybe a nice tomato, jelly, and anchovy sandwich would relieve the stress. Neptune, ruler of the 12<sup>th</sup> house, has been tuning in to aunt Harriet for over an hour now. She really doesn't like tomatoes.

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