JUPITER
in Virgo

SEPT EQUINOX 2015
Greetings OPA Members

Saturn is now firmly in Sagittarius, and it happens to exactly oppose OPA’s Saturn at 0 Gemini. OPA is officially maturing, ready to take on the next steps and conquer new milestones.

To begin with, the OPA retreat is just around the corner and this will be the most successfully attended retreat with 75 participants, and 6 of the tracks sold out. We are grateful for such warm response and look forward to this special meeting of the minds.

Additionally, as you may know now, OPA is now in full gear to promote the upcoming I-Astrologer event in March 2016, on Astrology Day weekend. This event is the first of its kind, with a direct focus on helping astrologer succeed. OPA is proud to provide such support system. If you want to expand your practice and realize your aspirations to become a full-time astrologer, be sure to be there—your investment will be well worth it!

Hello Hellas – The next milestone is OPA’s incredible program in Greece where it will be the first time that a US organization organizes a conference outside the US. We are delighted to support Greece in this transition time, and support the European astrology community, particularly as we plan to do so sailing the Aegean waters with a glass of Retsina wine tasting the best olives and grapes in the world! Prices for the journey will soon be listed on the website.

Now for the truly meaningful of all milestones, the OPA book: The Professional Astrologer—Building a Successful Astrology Practice is in its final stages of production! We aim at a release at the OPA Retreat (October 22), however, if we do not manage that deadline, it will be out soon after. This book is the perfect manual for every astrologer, covering the financial, legal, ethical, and spiritual aspects of our profession, among many other things—be sure to get your copy as it gets out of the stove.

In the meantime, wishing you all an incredible season, and meaningful transit of Saturn in Sagittarius! To the greater Truth and its teachers.

Maurice Fernandez
President, OPA

Jupiter in Virgo

Jupiter has entered the sign of Virgo on August 11, 2015, and will remain there until September 9, 2016. This 13 month transit will be part of a mutable T-Square configuration involving Neptune in Pisces and Saturn in Sagittarius.

Jupiter in Virgo has already opposed Neptune in Pisces on September 8, 2015 (8 Virgo/Pisces), and will square Saturn on March 20 (16 Virgo/Sagittarius) and May 26, 2016 (13 Virgo/Sagittarius).

Synchronistically, the Nodal Axis moving into the Virgo/Pisces in November axis will conjunct Jupiter during January 2016 (22 Virgo), and then again in June 2016 (15 Virgo), when it will form a loose Mutable Grand-Cross involving the above Saturn, Neptune, along with the Sun, Venus, and then Mercury in Gemini.

We look forward to get bring the heavens down to earth with Jupiter’s transit in Virgo!

On the following pages astrologers share their perspectives...
JUPITER IN VIRGO

by Nancy Beale

Jupiter, the ruler of Pisces, is in detriment in Virgo. As the largest planet in our solar system, Jupiter will have to temper his lofty ideas into the reality of earthy Virgo. For the last 13 months Jupiter has been more comfortable in the fire sign of Leo, expanding our hearts, passions, egos. Now we have to come back to earth and find ways to incorporate what we experienced in Leo into our daily routine.

In looking back at how Jupiter manifested its energy in Virgo in the past, I saw many examples of Jupiter’s expansive, freedom-loving, spiritual, global ideas brought into form through the analytical, detail and service-oriented, patient energies of Virgo.

October 1967-November 1968
1. Pope Paul VI arrived in Bogota, Columbia for the first papal visit to Latin America.
2. Two African-Americans made history – Marine James Anderson, Jr. was the first to receive the Medal of Honor and Tennis Champion Arthur Ashe became the first to win the Men’s US Open Title.
3. USSR’s Zond 5 became the first spacecraft to circle the moon and return to earth.

October 1979-November 1980
1. Whole Foods Market was founded in Austin, Texas with the motto: Whole Foods, Whole People, Whole Planet.
2. CNN became the first 24-hour news station.
3. The Pac-Man arcade game was released in the US.

September 1991-October 1992
1. The creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States from the dissolution of the USSR.
2. The first McDonalds opened in China and Euro Disney opened in France.
3. The nicotine patch was introduced to help people stop smoking.

September 2003-October 2004
1. Ken Jennings won 74 games and $2.5 million on Jeopardy!
2. Morgan Spurlock gained 25 pounds in 30 days eating only at MacDonald's and made a movie about it called “Super Size Me”.
3. David Hempleman-Adams became the first person to cross the Atlantic Ocean in an open-air, wicker-basket hot air balloon.

August 2015-September 2016
For the first time in 165 years, the early transit of Jupiter in Virgo will be opposed to his co-ruler of Pisces - Neptune in Pisces. The last time this occurred was August 1849 with the North Node in the early degrees of Virgo and Neptune in the early degrees of Pisces. Jupiter will be within a 10-degree orb of the North Node in Virgo from November 2015 until July 2016 with conjunctions in January 2016 and June 2016.

There will be three eclipses while Jupiter is in Virgo. On September 13, 2015, a solar eclipse at 20 degrees Virgo will have Jupiter opposing Neptune at 8 degrees. On March 8, 2016 there will be a total solar eclipse at 19 degrees Pisces with Jupiter opposing it in Virgo and Saturn squaring it. Pluto will trine and Uranus quincunx the eclipse. On September 1, 2016, another solar eclipse at 9 degrees Virgo will oppose Neptune and have Jupiter conjunct Mercury retrograde with Saturn squaring the eclipse.

The Nodes and Saturn are considered timing techniques and, in this case, the two eclipses in Virgo will initiate new realities. The eclipse in Pisces is a South nodal eclipse meaning that we may have to take a few steps back and sacrifice some progress before we can move forward again. Jupiter leaves Virgo in September 2016.

As someone with Sun, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and the North Node in Pisces, I wasn’t sure about the opposition of Jupiter to all of this. But in looking back, I see that it wasn’t so bad. My Ascendant and South Node are in Virgo, so there is always an expansion of self when Jupiter enters my first house, thankfully, not physically, but mentally, spiritually and emotionally.

• In August of 1968, I met the man who was to become my first husband.
• In August of 1980, I married my second husband.
• In January of 1992 I realized a dream of attending the couture fashion shows in Paris, my first and only trip there.
• In June 2004, I started studying astrology.

Neptune entering my 7th house, Saturn crossing my IC into the 4th house, and the rest of the emphasis in my 1st/7th houses, this transit of Jupiter in Virgo may involve relationships. Virgo and the 6th house show where you meet your guru or spiritual teachers, according to Stephen Forrest. I have already met two of them right here where I live. Saturn crossing the IC may indicate a move. I like where I live and have no desire to move. But I realize that if I meet someone, whether a guru or a passionate partner, I might be open to moving. My progressed moon will also be changing signs, moving into Pisces. All of this seems to indicate an expansion of my spiritual practices, including astrology. Virgo is the sign of the craftsman and with Jupiter there, my creative ideas become labors of love in making quilts, needlepoint pieces, writing projects and Power Point Presentations.

OPA's Quarterly Magazine
Jupiter in Virgo

by Shannon Jones

http://www.shannonjonesastrology.com/

Jupiter, the largest planet in our solar system, is the planet of expansion, abundance, higher meaning, opportunity, and relates to our deepest understanding of the Universe. It is through Jupiter that we ask the larger questions about reality, and try to make sense of all the intricacies of our lives. It pulls us upward, giving us access to higher knowledge and understanding through our intuitive capacities. It is Jupiter that informs us of our belief systems and what truly gets us out of bed in the morning. When we are under a Jupiter transit, we can expect growth and change for the better, which can come in many forms!

Virgo, the archetype of the “Soul-Mother” is the healer, the weaver, and the servant. Her qualities are discrimination, efficiency, discernment, humility, and detail-oriented focus. She sees the minutia while being in connection to the whole. She rules the mind-body-spirit connection, and creates order out of chaos on all levels. Virgo is here to serve where she is needed. She is the one who holds all the threads behind the scenes, never missing a detail. She gets things done, with integrity and discipline and requires no accolades.

To understand the meaning of Jupiter's transit in Virgo (the 6th house and sign), it is essential to understand the previous journey it has taken through the first five signs of the zodiac. Aries, the first sign of the zodiac, aligns with the beginning of spring, and is the birth of the instinctual ego-self. From there onward through the Taurus, Gemini, and Cancer, the learning is about values, understanding of one's place in the world and how to communicate within, and connection to family and home. When reaching the 5th sign of Leo, the focus becomes one's personal creative actualization. Here the ego is at the pinnacle of its creative genius, shining its light for all to see. Jupiter spent the previous year in Leo, helping us all to come to see and value that which makes us special. Leo is where we stand at the top of the mountain or pyramid, seeking personal recognition for our gifts and uniqueness. Now that Jupiter has shifted into Virgo, the pyramid flips and becomes inverted where the focus is no longer on the Self. Here we are invited to stand at the bottom of the pyramid, and offer up our particular vein of gold, for the greater good.

The fusion of Jupiter and Virgo will be bringing this larger, expansive, higher meaning, down into the daily grind. Are we connecting the dots here? Is the work we are doing, where our focus lies, being informed from something larger and more meaningful than just punching a clock? If this is not the case, Jupiter might need to clear a path for a more meaningful life. It is not uncommon for jobs or people to fall away from our lives in order to create more space for something new and more rewarding.

Remember that Jupiter expands what it touches... when it comes to our mind/body/spirit connections, we have the capacity to make some leaps in our health and our relationships to our bodies. It is a great time to consider bringing more focus to our self-care practices, or perhaps incorporating a spiritual element or practice into our daily life. Knowing that our beliefs (Jupiter) create our realities (Virgo), it is also prime time to clear out any self-sabotaging thoughts or belief surrounding our capacity to heal ourselves and be our most vital selves.

Jupiter is essentially giving us the capacity for true mastery with its transit through Virgo. To take the cultivation of our creative work and service to the next level. To finally heal those parts of ourselves we have been at battle with for too long. To see explosions of generous volunteerism and philanthropy across the globe. To experience leaps and bounds in our awareness as we grow more deeply attuned to our sacred connection to Source and all of life.

While we have the capacity to gain this new level of expanded vision and inspiration from above, and then ground it down in practical reality, we also must be aware of the possibility of Jupiter expanding Virgo in a way that is not productive. While Virgo is the queen of production and efficiency, her unbalanced expression is that of being overly focused on the details and losing sight of the larger picture, being too concerned with health to the point of obsession, and being overly critical of self and others.

When Virgo polarizes in this way, the remedy is always accessing her opposite, Pisces, which reminds her to ‘let go a little bit’, ‘go with the flow’, ultimately trust that it is not all up to her to fix, clean, and heal the whole world in one day! Go for a walk, read a book, take a swim, and do something just for fun and enjoyment are suggestions we may need to remind ourselves of a lot.
JUPITER in VIRGO

by Peggy Lynch

http://www.gemstars.com/

Jupiter ruler of Sagittarius and traditional ruler of Pisces, the polarity of Virgo, will be visiting the sign of the Maiden Aug 11, 2015 – Sept 9, 2016.

PERSONALLY: The function of Jupiter is to provide us with a framework for how we determine what is real, real for us, in our lives. Otherwise known as the truth. Our truth? The Truth? This is right brain stuff. It is the larger abstract of belief, what enlarges our world, lifting us to the Divine.

Virgo is the finite detail of what separates us from the Divine – making us fallibly human and grounded. Virgo can be overly vigilant to find the ‘flaw’. During this transit we may be invited to see that the Divine also contains the flaw. The flaw is Devine.

As Virgo can get bogged down in all the words, engrossed in the detail, Jupiter comes along wanting to take it higher, to where a dream can permeate the mundane.

Jupiter coming from the Leo archetype (over-involvement in ego) is deflated in Virgo as the ego becomes internalized. Jupiter will need to be vigilant and consciously reach out to community, as in Virgo it may want to stay smaller. Virgo takes the shine off of Jupiter (it is in detriment) but it can help bring our philosophies and beliefs into form.

Jupiter wants to take our focus out of the personal and bring the philosopher’s ear to those nagging inner tapes. Jupiter can help Virgo’s limiting perfectionism with a boost of confidence, replacing any martyr tendencies. If we can tap into the magic of Jupiter (values of helping, teaching, sharing) and merge that with the Virgo need to be of service, we can produce practical forms of benefit to both personal and collective needs. How it plays out relies on our vigilance.

COLLECTIVELY: At this time in the world, it is imperative to embrace that which serves the whole. “Zealous Humanitarian” might be an archetype for this combination of energies. We need to not only adopt a worldview, a philosophy that we are stewards of this earth and its people, but we need to act on these beliefs.

We see technology and chemicals increasing in our food production moving us away from nature (Virgo). We need an ‘Organic Movement’ (Jupiter). Ceres, the Goddess of Agriculture will be in the mix during Jupiter’s transit through Virgo. Early March 2016 Jupiter in Virgo will oppose Ceres in Pisces and to complete the T-square Saturn will be in Sagittarius. Global warming, famine, draught, floods – disruptions in the environment, persist. We need to make an analysis of our philosophies and adjust accordingly. Jupiter can integrate the fragments of the Virgo analysis process and Saturn can provide practical form.

Uranus in Aries will trine Saturn in Pisces and to complete the T-square, perhaps offering up discoveries in health related fields that set us on a better path with seriousness and commitment.

With just the right amount of vigilance, we can use this year to be better stewards. Just for fun and enjoyment are suggestions we may need to remind ourselves of a lot this year when we will be amped up to plug in our greatest inspired selves in service to the greater good! Be an instrument of the Divine, but don’t fall into martyrdom!

Whether you have planets in Virgo or not, you have the sign of Virgo somewhere in your chart and are given this once in a 12 year opportunity to harness the power that comes from being aligned and supported by something higher. Infuse it into your everyday reality to create something meaningful and important for our collective healing and evolution. The only requirements are clearing out any negative, debilitating beliefs, having sincere intentions of being in service to the whole, being awake and aware of the doorways that are presented, and then courageously walking through them!
Jupiter in Virgo
by Linea Van Horn

Jupiter in Virgo
by Kate Rusko

Jupiter in Virgo

by the time your eyes read these pages, Jupiter will have already ingressed into Virgo. Here he will remain until September 9, 2016, when he'll make a clean entrance into Libra. In the meantime, the most expansive, tolerant and jovial planet in our panoply will feel somewhat hindered in the snug work uniform now assigned to him by the folks at Virgo. Falstaff, the Shakespearean character of vast proportion, is put on a diet, so to speak. Likewise, Jupiter must make himself small while travelling through this sign. Grand gestures feel awkward; his generous nature is restrained. Jupiter is all about the big picture and the umbrella philosophy, while Virgo dissect and differentiates in rigorous detail. Not a great fit.

By moving into a Mutable sign, Jupiter is triggering the upcoming Saturn-Neptune square. Jupiter opposes Neptune only once, in September 2015 (I personally would never isolate an aspect this important to only one day). Jupiter and Neptune are the mundane indicators of faith and religion and since they are as far apart as they can be, the crisis between Islamic fundamentalists and more moderate forces will reach a crucial peak in September. The usually protective Jupiter is not able to fulfill that function as effectively as usual due to his placement in Virgo. Jupiter squares Saturn three times: in August 2015, March 2016, and again in May 2016. Saturn then squares Neptune three times between November 2015 and September 2016, so the entire event lasts a whole year. Saturn imposes rules while Neptune evades. The roles of Good Guys and Bad Guys reverses depending upon whose side you’re on. These squares will likely result in a stepped-up attempt from each side to isolate and control the other. Very likely the destruction of World Heritage sites will continue, both as a means of wonton destruction and also a way of funding rebel forces (see Jupiter trine Pluto below). I fear that the refugee crisis in Africa, the Middle East and Europe will worsen, increasing the suffering of the poor, defeated and disenfranchised refugees.

On the weather front, Jupiter-Neptune aspects bring heavy rain and the possibility of flooding. This is mixed news in the drought-stressed areas of the western US. Saturn is associated with cold (and is also dry) and its connection with Neptune could bring freezing rains or blizzards.

Jupiter in Virgo

by Kate Rusko

Virgo loves a test, and here it comes. After several years of intense collective transformational change, I see this present cycle of Jupiter in Virgo as a critical and well-deserved opportunity to find the balance between our contribution and effort (Virgo), and the “divine plan” (Pisces). It is our opportunity to recognize that we are being asked to meet the divine half way, to honour not only what we do or give, but all that is given back to us as we live in sync with the greater forces. With the balance of the chart moving into mutable signs, our personal integration into the greater scheme of things is essential.

With the ingress of Jupiter into Virgo, it may seem that the time has come to fine-tune our guiding vision, to develop a clear and functional plan, and to focus on solving the glitches in the system. Jupiter and Virgo are both archetypes that reveal in individual accomplishment. If we take note of the exact Jupiter-Neptune opposition that occurred right after the solar eclipse in Virgo in September, however, and consider the greater Jupiter-Neptune cycle, then the intentions of this current Jupiter in Virgo reveal themselves in a different light.

This Neptune-Jupiter cycle began with a triple conjunction in 2009 in Aquarius, the first exactly conjunct Chiron. The conjunction of such expansive, truth seeking planets in Aquarius would have given us a glimpse into our hoped for future, a revelation of our higher frequency as both social and spiritual beings. With the addition of Chiron, there would have been a masterful yet maverick quality to that vision, as well as an experience of deep frustration and humbling in trying to bring it to fruition. We must carry the wounds of the past with us forward (specifically those related to our collective progress) in order not to forget and repeat them. With Chiron, it is these wounds that will make us true masters of our destiny.

As we move towards manifesting the initial Neptune-Jupiter conjunction, we are now asked to reconcile the pressing energy of our personal and self-conscious guiding vision (Jupiter
in Virgo) with the great mystery (Neptune in Pisces). Virgo and Jupiter are both “doers”: they are active and probably overly so. As Jupiter exaggerates and inflates, there may be a tendency to get stuck in the details and to rely too much on control (Virgo). Neptune in Pisces, however, is a big spiritual perspective. It requires faith and trust, two crucial elements that Virgo must acquire on its road to spiritual evolution.

It is not so much our doing, therefore, but a shift of consciousness that is currently needed during Jupiter in Virgo to manifest our highest goals: our personal effort and intention acknowledging and working in tandem with the divine effort. This is where the real juice and power lie. With Saturn moving into Sagittarius, there will be even more need to release ownership of “the way”. No truly sustainable vision can be single-minded: the mutable signs emphasize holism and interdependence.

Jupiter will oppose Neptune again in the spring of 2016 and although the opposition will not be as tight, it will last for much longer and will also find itself on the nodes. The Virgo-Pisces polarity must be reconciled so that we do not find ourselves spinning our collective wheels.

**Book Review**

*By Arlan Wise*

**The Tenth Planet: Revelations from the Astrological Eris**

By Henry Seltzer

Eris was discovered in 2006. She is named after the Greek goddess of Chaos and Discord and is a sister of Aries. Her archetype is of the female warrior, who sometimes uses violence to achieve her goals. Henry Seltzer has put much time and effort into forming a relationship with her so that she would reveal her secrets to him. This book is the first step in his ongoing research on her and what she means when placed in people’s charts.

Henry and his son, Asa, invented a glyph for her. It is a small circle with a downward arrow, a combination of Mars, Pluto, and Venus. Eris uses Martian energy in a feminine Venusian way to achieve Plutonian transformation. Henry feels she has a potential for violent action and will use it to stand up for herself and the causes she champions. He says, “She indicates a desire to defend the underdog, and to fight for justice over and above self-interest, that is truly representative of the Eris archetype”. He finds this to be seen in the many charts he analyzes in the book. Henry shows how Eris acts in the charts of feminists, makers of violent films with strong female characters, and influential writers.

There is a section with in-depth analysis of Eris in the charts of three literary exemplars: Herman Melville, D H Lawrence, and William Blake. Henry also shows how Eris is connected to depth psychology “with soul intention that has been set aside, and which might exhibit dark tendencies, at least until more consciously acknowledged”. Jung has a prominent Eris.

Henry includes a wide range of topics and uses many charts to show how Eris is influential in their lives of the people he examines. He has a section of Eris in the natal houses and in aspect with natal planets. He delineates charts of feminists and paradigm shifters. He ends the book with a historical survey that shows what happened when Eris was in aspect to the outer planets.

The book lacks an ephemeris of Eris. Even though Eris is on a 556-year orbit and moves slowly, it would be good to know where she is at any given time. Without knowing her rate of motion and the degree she is in a specific year, it is hard to picture her in charts. Hopefully Henry will include an Eris ephemeris in the next edition and also give more technical information.

After reading this book I find that I am including Eris in the conversations I have with clients. There is much more to learn about Eris as we start to bring her into our consultations and I’m sure Henry will continue to be in the forefront of discovering the many facets of our newest planet – Eris.
Do you feel your astrology career is headed in the right direction?

Are you stuck trying to convert a hobby into a viable profession?

Do you want to learn how to successfully market yourself?

In March of 2016, OPA is launching an exciting, and first of its kind, program to help guide emerging and established astrologers to a much higher level in their professional practice.

Spurred by a need for stronger support for astrologers, OPA has designed a three-day program that will be devoted exclusively to the professional and marketing side of astrology. The focus of this event will be on enhancing the client base, quality service, and a wider reach for astrologers, to make their practice more rewarding and successful i.e., turning what is often relegated to a “hobby” into a lucrative and dynamic business. With the mandate of providing guidelines, resources and mentorship to all levels of astrologers, I-Astrologer is a one-of-a-kind program.

The practicalities of your practice

I-Astrologer will focus on practical matters. It will gather experts in the fields of media, publishing, and personal presentations (among others) to help astrologers put together a stellar professional package (pun intended). The aim is to make astrology stronger professionally: too many astrologers settle for less, be it in terms of financial remuneration or public reach.

Day One

The agenda for the three days is packed. Day one features presentations on how to create a successful career in astrology. It covers relevant ethical and legal issues and addresses the all-important issue of financial management. Other topics on the agenda include generating a client base, consulting protocol, and writing and publishing.

- MAURICE FERNANDEZ: The Profession of Astrology Yesterday and Tomorrow
- RICK LEVINE: So you want to be an astrologer?
- ARLAN WISE: Writing and Publishing for Astrologers
- MAURICE FERNANDEZ: Critical Do’s and Don’ts
- ANNE ORTELEE: Financial Management of your Astrology Practice
- RICK LEVINE: Writing well, the Internet Age
- Professional Photoshoot with Michelle Godfrey

Day Two

On Day two, participants will have personal consultations with a web designer and a computer programmer to get up-to-date advice on design, branding, logos and banners. There will also be an astrology software presentation. Writing experts Julian and Arlan Wise will address editing and present a writing workshop to hone your writing skills. The day also includes professional headshot pictures taken by a branding specialist photographer. Participants will come away from I-Astrologer with all the tools necessary to make a significant professional impact.

Day Three

On Day 3, participants break into smaller groups and meet with their mentor. The focus of the day will be on creating a long term plan for success that is specified to individual needs. The day closes with special celebrations marking Astrology Day.

Advice from world-renowned professionals

I-Astrologer is a unique opportunity to have established and world-renowned astrologers share in an intimate setting their expertise on creating a successful and self-sustaining practice. The I-Astrologer mentors, Rick Levine, Kay Taylor, Anne Ortelee, and Maurice Fernandez, each one successful astrologers on their own, will provide personal long-term guidance for participants so that their practice provides satisfaction and higher plateaus of success.

I-Astrologer will be held in Athens, Georgia (Atlanta Airport) March 18-20, 2016. It will be immediately followed by OPA’s signature program “Peer Group Work for Professionals” from March 21st to 23rd. For those with three or more years of professional experience, Peer Group Work is a wonderful chance to get out of the “office” and engage in intimate and supportive exchange with other astrologers. Those who qualify can use these three days of peer group work towards their OPA certification. Both I-Astrologer and Peer Group Work are unique opportunities to boost your practice on all levels. One can register for either segment or for both I-astrologer and Peer Group Work.

To book for I-astrologer, Peer Group Work, or both, please visit http://www.opaastrology.org/certification/i-astrologer. Don’t delay as OPA is offering discounts for bookings made before Nov 1st, 2015. 
An incredible program from OPA to help aspiring and professional astrologers build and propel their practice to new heights.

OPA will provide mentorship, all services, and trainings to catapult your astrology practice.

SERVICES WILL INCLUDE: branding, website design, professional photos, editing and publishing, marketing and social media

TRAININGS INCLUDE: Writing workshops, Software navigation

Answer your calling to become a successful astrologer

Increase the client volume of your existing practice

Expand the reach of your practice to completely new horizons.

JOIN I-ASTROLOGER

Astrology Day 2016

All details at OPAastrology.org
Interview with
Chris Brennan

YOUR ID

Email: astrologue@gmail.com
Website: chrisbrennanastrologer.com

YOUR PRACTICE

Where do you live and practice?
I live and work in Denver, Colorado, USA. Most of my clients are from out of town, and I do consultations either over the phone or through Skype, so I work from home.

How long have you been practicing – How did it start?
I started doing consultations after I had been studying astrology for a few years, at first just for friends and family for free, and then eventually I started charging for them about five years into my studies. At first I didn’t charge much, and I was spending days preparing for the consultations, writing everything out in really elaborate written reports.

I wanted to make sure each person felt like they received something that was really valuable in return for paying me for a consultation, so I kind of overdid it at first. Eventually I started doing consultations over the phone, and started getting my prep time down to a day, and then a few hours, and then eventually an hour. I raised my prices really gradually, and then eventually after I had been studying astrology for about 10 years I made the transition to practicing astrology full-time, as my sole occupation.

Your Astrology teachers?
I read a lot of different books on modern astrology on my own for the first four years of my studies, so I was influenced by a lot of the mainstream astrologers from the late 20th century, like Rob Hand, Alan Oken, Howard Sasportas, Celeste Teal, etc.

Eventually I started attending Kepler College about four years into my studies, and there I had the opportunity to study directly under some great teachers such as Demetra George, Rob Hand, Lee Lehman, Nick Campion, Dennis Harness, Georgia Stathis, and Bruce Scofield. Demetra became my primary mentor, as her work on Hellenistic astrology really spoke to me, and I ended up continuing that line of study after I left Kepler and went to live at Project Hindsight, where I studied under Robert Schmidt.

Your Astrology hero?
There is an astrologer who lived Alexandria, Egypt in the 2nd century CE named Vettius Valens who is kind of like my astrology hero. He wrote a series of introductory textbooks on astrology in Greek for students of his school called the Anthology. You can learn a lot about his life and the world he lived in by reading the books, and occasionally he has some really interesting personal digressions. The most interesting thing though is reading some of the example charts he uses from his client files, and through that you realize that the fundamental aspects of life are still very much the same today as they were back then. Even if our technology or our culture has changed in many ways, there are some things that always stay the same. From that perspective it is really interesting to read the personal account of an astrologer who lived that long ago, and I admire his dedication to astrology. It is also impressive that his books survived for nearly 2,000 years, and that he is still influencing new generations of astrologers to this day. Imagine if a book that you wrote about your life and astrological practice today still survived and influenced people 2,000 years from now, in the year 4000 CE. Wouldn’t that be wild?

3 favorite Astrology books?
1. The Anthology of Vettius Valens, for the reasons stated above.
2. Astrology and the Authentic Self by Demetra George, because I view it as one of the first real attempts to synthesize modern and traditional astrology.
3. The Moment of Astrology by Geoffrey Cornelius, because even though I’m not sure that I agree with all of his conclusions, I think that it is easily the most important book on the philosophy of astrology written in the past century.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement to date in your astrology career? There was this month in May of 2012 where I had a string of major accomplishments that centered on the United Astrology Conference that took place that month. I gave two notable talks at that conference. In the first I presented the results of a discovery I had just made about the origins of how the four classical elements came to be assigned to the signs of the zodiac. Basically the discovery showed how Aries came to be a fire sign, how Taurus came to be an earth sign, Gemini and earth sign, and so on. It turns out that there is an interesting conceptual rationale for this that no one knew about for the past 2,000 years.

In the second lecture I presented the results of a discovery about the conceptual rationale underlying the calculation of the Part of Fortune. Even though lots of astrologers still use the
INTERVIEW - CHRIS BRENNAN

Part of Fortune and know how to calculate it, no one really knew what the rationale for the calculation was until I published a paper on it, and I presented the results of the paper in this talk.

Then at the same conference I gave the commencement speech at the final graduation of Kepler College, and picked up my degree with the last class of graduates from the school before it lost the ability to grant degrees.

Finally, I ended up on the presidential panel at the end of that conference, where we predicted that Obama would be reelected at the end of the year, and this prediction was then covered by a number of major news outlets such as Reuters and USA Today. This topped off some other news coverage that I got earlier in the month when I did an interview with a reporter from ABC News about a prediction that Hillary Clinton would run for President in 2012, which was followed by a live interview on Fox News on the same topic the following day. It was a pretty crazy month, and I don’t really think that I will be able to top that one in the future.

What made it possible for you to become a full time astrologer?
I wouldn’t have been able to make the transition to doing astrology full time if I hadn’t spent a few years writing a blog first and cultivating an audience online. Even though I haven’t published any books yet, I was able to get some exposure by regularly publishing articles online, and eventually I was getting enough clients that I could afford to quit my day job. Now, I should say that the first year or two after I went full time were not easy, and I lived a pretty sparse lifestyle, but ultimately I was just happy to be doing what I loved.

What is the great thing and the hard thing about being an astrologer? The great thing about being an astrologer is that you get to make a living doing what you love, and thus it allows you to do what you enjoy doing all of the time, rather than just in your free time. The hard thing about being an astrologer is that it is not usually seen as a respectable line of work or profession, and so I have some sense of reticence about explaining what I do to strangers. For some reason I sometimes find this aspect of the profession to be particularly difficult to deal with, because I don’t like to be viewed by anyone as a charlatan, and yet it is inevitable that this is the first thing that some people will think the moment you say that you are an astrologer. I guess that all you can do is strive to set a good example for the profession, and in doing so hopefully that will shift the perception of astrologers in some small way in the long-term.

What are your future ambitions in the field of astrology?
My primary focus right now is to finish writing this book on Hellenistic astrology that I’ve been working on for the greater part of the last decade. In this book I’m going to present the history, philosophy, and techniques of the original system of western astrology. I think that the book will be important because it will show people the value of looking into some of the older traditions of astrology, and bring some powerful interpretive principles and techniques back into common usage in modern times. At the same time I’m also interested in training people in how to use some of the older approaches to predictive astrology, and I would like to expand the certification program that I just launched this past year for my course on Hellenistic astrology.

In the long-term part of my focus is to reunite and synthesize the ancient traditions of astrology with the modern ones, in order to create a better astrology for the future. Part of this involves more clearly defining what astrology is and what it is capable of doing, as well as clarifying some longstanding technical issues like with house division or the zodiac controversy.

On a more immediate practical level I’m interested in taking advantage of new technologies in order to further astrological research and discussions. To that end I’m working on a comprehensive online dictionary for astrological terms and concepts at TheAstrologyDictionary.com, and I’m also hosting a weekly podcast at TheAstrologyPodcast.com.

What inspires you to be an OPA member? I think that my goal of improving the public perception of astrology and helping astrologers to be better at what they do by giving them better training are in alignment with OPA’s core values, and it is encouraging to see that there are groups out there who have that as their main focus.

Any advice for those who would like to become professional astrologers? My primary piece of advice for anyone who is contemplating becoming a professional astrologer is just to study as many different forms and traditions of astrology as you can early on in your career, before you get locked in to a particular approach. This is important because most of the time people just end up sticking with whatever approach to astrology they learned when they first started studying the subject. This can be kind of limiting though, and the longer you go without exposing yourself to other forms of astrology, the harder it will be later on in your career to incorporate new or foreign concepts into your existing practice.

My other piece of advice is to start a blog as soon as possible, and start writing. It doesn’t matter whether you are still a student or you are already seeing clients, you need to start writing and generating a body of work. Even if your approach to astrology is still in development or is in transition, you should write out and document whatever your current thoughts on the subject are. This will benefit you in multiple ways. The most important way is that you will start to develop an audience of people who read and follow your writings and know who you are. Building an audience is the first step in eventually getting clients or students. Additionally, as you write more and more you will get better at writing. This important because someday you may want to write a book on astrology or an article in a journal, but you won’t be taken very seriously if you don’t know how to write. So it is good to start practicing now.

Finally, by starting a blog this will force you to start learning some of the things you will need to know in order to start, manage, and promote a website. So, even if you aren’t a technical genius right now, by starting a blog it will force you to start learning some skills that will become very useful for you down the line. So, start a blog, and get to work writing some articles on it now.

Thank you!
OPA, The Organization for Professional Astrology,
is dedicated to promoting excellence for astrologers.
Incorporated on October 4, 2000 at 1:45 pm EDT in Tallahassee, Florida, OPA provides members with tools to establish or improve their astrological practice. Membership is open to aspiring and current astrologers. Benefits include subscription to the Career Astrologer and E-news, free monthly talks by top notch astrologers and members registration fees at OPA retreats and conferences. Annual dues

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OPAastrolgy.com
Enhancing Your Astrology Practice

Column by Kay Taylor

Exploring Satya
Truth and Trust in Astrology

invite you to consider your practice as an astrologer — and your life as a human — through the lens of ‘satya’ or truthfulness. Satya is the second of the restraints called ‘Yamas’ proposed as a spiritual guidepost in the Eight Limbs of Yoga.

Are you honest? Really honest?

Our first interpretation might be that we should tell the truth. That’s simple. We already have ‘thou shalt not lie!’ in the Judeo-Christian rules. But Yamas are not that direct. Yamas invite (perhaps endless) meditation and contemplation to weave into each conscious life choice.

Exploring Satya includes:

• telling the truth as clearly as we know it
• being aware if we have a tendency to avoid conflicts—or create conflicts
• noticing when we lie by omission
• knowing the difference between realistic factual truth and when we call our cherished opinions ‘my truth’ — which may be a crafty way of being judgmental.

Honesty also involves knowing when we don’t know, and being willing to investigate further, study more, or admit we don’t know something.

When we speak truth to others, it is important that we integrate honesty with the first Yama of ‘ahimsa’ or non-harming.

Like the 12-step process of making amends, we are cautioned to consider if telling the truth will cause harm to someone. No absolute rules here, just consider non-harming and honesty together, and come from a conscious, compassionate viewpoint.

Another benefit of applying Satya to your life can be to slow down enough to assess you and your life honestly. You might consider your actual energy levels and what projects and invitations you want to say ‘yes’ to, learning to say no, or I’ll think about it’ before agreeing to commitments you’ll want to back out of later. This might include knowing your best working hours and scheduling your life in a balanced way that works for you before you find yourself pulled in many different directions.

The truth of coffee?

My contemplation of Satya showed me that caffeine fueled my drive to be busy each day, and I could see how much less energy I actually had. I slowed down and wanted to do less work when I drank herbal teas.

So how does this affect you as an astrologer?

When we look at an astrological chart, we believe we know many true things from our years of study. We imagine we understand what a person is like, what their childhood was like, what their challenges are, and what types of events might happen to them at certain periods of time.

Our first rule of Satya might be to tell the truth about the chart as honestly as we are able, aware that what we say could generate fear or self-fulfilling prophecies. On one hand we have people relying on us and perhaps paying us to tell them the truth. On the other, not every transit or progression actually turns out absolutely to create a specific result. Our communications need to be nuanced and allow for possibilities of choice.

Even as we attempt to provide a balanced view of the upcoming cycles of time and our client nods as if they are taking in what we are saying, often they are nervous inside, hearing words and phrases that trigger their fears. I’ve noticed that many clients have read enough on the internet to be dangerous (to their own fear levels). Just saying ‘Pluto’ or ‘Saturn’ will lead to widened eyes. ‘That’s bad isn’t it?!’ Speaking truth involves explaining concepts fully in accessible language so that a client hears what we say and can take it in, resonating with their own intuitive truth. As we offer information openly, we trust that each client has inner wisdom, an intuition that allows them to sense what is true for them from the astrological information offered.

It is also illuminating to consider that astrology has been passed along for centuries with little statistical research to prove what we think is true. Now as astrology is flourishing and we can connect with each other throughout the world, we have an opportunity to re-think truth: question, research, and share. Some astrologers are coming up with new interpretations of planetary influences. Is Venus really the best ruler of Taurus, or should it be Earth? Rob Hand and other dedicated researchers are translating and unearthing ancient techniques that have been lost to us. Have you read that Void of Course Moon interpretation is completely different now than it once was? New/old information is emerging. Truth is changing in our field.

Satya principles are woven into the Ethics codes of our professional astrological organizations. We are asked to:

• Be honest in our marketing materials about our skills and education
• Refer clients to others when their needs are ‘beyond our scope of practice or expertise’
• Not use degree initials with our name unless the degree relates to our astrological work in some way
• Be careful that expressing our ‘truth’ isn’t code for expressing our ‘opinions’. Honor the philosophical beliefs of others while offering astrological expertise.
• Be mindful of the risks of dual relationships (A dual relationship means you have two kinds of relationship with a person, most often in the case of astrologers the person is a client and also a friend).

Many years ago I came to understand the challenges of a dual relationship. Sandra wasn’t really a social friend, but I had worked with her regularly for many years and our connection was quite friendly. You know how easily that can happen. She would ask me questions about my life at the end of a session and we did some trades as well, and soon the boundaries
were no longer clear-cut. She had many planets in Sagittarius, Scorpio and Virgo and was definitely inclined to speak her truth. I found myself at the receiving end of her advice and criticisms. If she had been a regular friend, I would have asked her to stop. But I knew her vulnerability to criticism and felt she would be crushed if I confronted her. Satya sometimes means not speaking if it would create harm. The Satya exploration was for me to look at how I had allowed the relationship boundaries to become blurred. It’s always best to turn the camera inward before deciding to speak out in any event. Before this, I had never understood why therapists were so particular about boundaries with clients. Now I saw the light and I was able to back pedal, gently easing out of the personal conversations with her, and being much more careful in the future.

Can you honestly be yourself in your life?

Satya sometimes challenges us to look at our need to belong versus our need to grow.

Do you feel comfortable telling people that you’re an astrologer? Or, do you feel that you can even become a professional astrologer, following your passion, when it may offend some people close to you. Here again, there is no right answer, but as we shine the light on these issues we might find subtle openings to an authentic expression of our Self.

As we explore, we can release any tendencies to portray ourselves in a way we think is more pleasing to others or ‘how we’re supposed to be’. Satya asks us to simply be ourselves, honest and clear to the best of our ability. We tell ourselves the truth, and then we speak honestly to clients, friends and beloveds. Living in this place of authenticity, we relax into the ground of our Being. We trust ourselves and we are trustworthy. This quality of presence will draw clients to you, and they will stay with you loyally, enhancing your astrology practice.

With love & gratitude, Kay

Kay Taylor

Kay Taylor integrates an evolutionary/spiritual approach to astrology with her refined intuitive skills, psychosynthesis counseling, yoga and hypnotherapy. She teaches all of these disciplines individually and synthesized via classes, workshops and webinars. She leads international retreats, is an ISAR Consulting Skills Trainer, has lectured at various conferences (ISAR, UAC, SOTA), and wrote for Astrology.com for many years. Kay is ISAR CAP and NCGR II certified. Known for her grounded, heart-centered approach, Kay has had a thriving private practice for over thirty years based in the San Francisco Bay Area and available by phone/skype.

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The 12 Signs & YOGA PRACTICE

Aries: I have perfected my phallic stand, all you need is intense concentration and the right hand posture

Taurus: I started practicing yoga, a special type called Food Yoga… never imagined one could eat so much raw Kale. The hardest practice ever.

Gemini: Practicing Yoga has vastly improved my life – now I can use my feet to brush my teeth and wash my hair, and continue to write my blogs uninterrupted.

Cancer: When is it time for baby pose?

Leo: I patented a new yoga pose, you continuously pass your fingers through your hair until your crown chakra materializes in form.

Virgo: And God created Yoga, and Virgos agreed to stay

Libra: Don't interrupt me, I'm balancing my chakras

Scorpio: I feel so tantric today!

Sagittarius: I did tree pose on a galloping horse... and fell

Capricorn: Is there a “Cold Yoga?”

Aquarius: My dog is really into cat stretch

Pisces: Still working on my shavasana, I can safely say that I’m able to hold the pose for more than 15 hours now.
Is Astrology human-made or an objective natural system?

Is there really a goat and a crab up in the sky? We know different cultures have derived different meanings and figures from the constellations, and it worked for them. So is astrology working as a result of our projected thoughts, or can we trust it to be beyond our own minds, to reflect a greater cosmic order?

Chad Woodward

Yes, many cultures have derived different meanings from the constellations, and many cultures have their own systems and approaches to astrology. In western astrology (which I assume the question is referring to) we do not actually use the constellations. We use the tropical zodiac, a division of the sky based on the Sun's seasonal and precessional cycle. In a way, yes, the tropical zodiac exists in the mind, but it doesn't imply that it isn't real beyond the mind alone. The mind is a product of the "cosmic order" just as anything else. As above, so below. The tropical zodiac reflects the inherent archetypes of the natural world. For example, it has been shown scientifically that humans and even many animals have characteristics that correlate with the four elements. So, yes, I think we can trust it as far as we can trust anything in our perceived reality.

Patrick Watson

I think this question is similar to the question of whether we discovered or invented math.

I think this question is similar to the question of whether we discovered or invented math.

Order to work. It has such a degree of explanatory capability that I'm tempted to say it was more of a discovery about the actual nature of reality than just a human invention. Same with astrology. We also have to make assumptions about 'units', that the 'up there' equals the 'down here'. It's a leap of faith, but once taken, the world becomes intelligible, to a degree that suggests a discovery more than an invention. I think the astrological phenomenon exists outside of ourselves, but the various ways of understanding it and interpreting it have been very human, varied and developing. In this sense astrology is also like the phenomenon of language, where people use different languages to understand and describe the same stuff.

David Cochrane

There is increasing evidence that zodiac signs and houses are created out of a geometry of space, that the meanings assigned to zodiac signs are close to their actual meanings but a little bit distorted, and that we are now moving rapidly towards demonstrating measurable astrological effects, thus demonstrating that astrology is not purely a concoction of human imagination. I have made dozens of free tutorial videos on this at YouTube.

Nadine Harris

Personally, I think that no, there is no goat-fish in the sky. Our focus on astrological paradigms gives us access to divinatory space. It's a mystery. There are no "effects" of the stars upon us. Possibly the stars are affected by the same forces that affect us. Perhaps not.

Henry Seltzer

This really is an interesting question. And it leads to others - such as "we know it works" but how? I myself feel that the universe is more complex, amazing and, indeed, spiritual, than our little conventional knowledge, based on a strictly rational approach, gives credit for. We humans at this stage of our development are like eighth-graders that are so happy that they now know something that they make the (understandable) mistake of thinking that they know everything. So to make a stab, rather than providing an answer to the unanswerable, I would say that if astrology is a natural system, run on what we
might call “synchronicity,” and alive through other-dimensionality, it is part of our human condition - also alive through spiritual elements far beyond what we can see and feel in our 3- or 4-dimensional physical surroundings. Meaning that whether what works in this magical way is a projection onto nature from our mysterious minds and psyches – or is truly “out there” in super-reality -- matters very little. In any case it is beyond our present quite limited level of understanding. And I, for one, am Ok with that.

Heiltje le Roux

The ancients observed and made connections between nature, their outside world, and their experiences of their internal feeling world. As each constellation rose in the night sky at regular intervals throughout the year, each sign became an archetype for a particular human experience at that time of the solar cycle. This yearly, rhythmic, external physical phenomenon, over eons of time became an internal psychological mindset of understanding.

Let us place ourselves in the ancient world of the northern hemisphere, and witness the cycles of life, to which we as humanity are all subject, even if we are unaware of this. Ancient man began breeding their domesticated goats at such a time of the year that their young would be born in spring-time in order to survive and grow strong into winter.

Aries, the ram became the beginning of new life, the initiating of new cycles of life, spring. This life needed to survive in order to provide value. Man had to consolidate, feed it and secure their livestock.

Taurus, the bull, became connected with the values of domesticity, rootedness and safety.

Gemini, the twins, is the time of assessing the value thus far; there are various options available, making thinking and communicating necessary. Twin mindsets began to exchange, argue, negotiate, network, buy and sell. Once acquired, man had to nurture his assets. Summer begins and provides plentiful.

Cancer the crab holds on and runs home to hide it. This is motherhood, the hide-away in safety until it is time to emerge again. In high summer the sun is at its zenith.

Leo the lion is at the top of the food chain, everything is growing to its potential. The leader must watch over his children and rule over his subjects benevolently.

Virgo marks the end of summer, the harvest ready for collecting, hard work is needed in order to sort and organize, critically analyzed to make the correct assessments for the next cycle, a renewed virginal state.

Libra the scales, must engage to invite others and attract trade and begin to agree, or else the oncoming winter might bring loss. Endeavors need to be measured, agreements negotiated, contracts respected to ensure partnerships and prevent enemies.

Scorpio brings autumn. If partnerships have been truthful, there will be deep sharing of resources to ensure survival, if not, death will ensue, be it relationships or endeavors. Undercurrents must be sensed to warn who will not survive the winter, the sting. Seeds will go underground to overwinter.

In Sagittarius all people come together around the fire and tell stories, higher mind develops, the guru explaining insight and meaning. Deep winter approaches with the possibility of death, this invites philosophizing. The man-horse as archer aims for higher truths, or in the lower aspect, carnal horse runs, avoiding responsibility.

Capricorn in midwinter confronts responsibility and commitment to build the future and teach accountability for all actions. With meagre winter resources, there is need to compensate to ensure a functional structure for spring and the new cycle. The goat must climb up the mountain to avoid getting stuck in the mud, the skeletal midwinter landscape clear.

Aquarius the man sees the potential vision for the survival of mankind beyond the empty winter landscape, manifesting ideas directly from the universal stream of consciousness, the waters of life being poured into the revolutionary mindset, to innovate the next phase of life.

Pisces dissolves what is no longer viable. The snow is melting, warmth starts, mist rising, obscuring the landscape, blind faith that the seeds are there, out of sight. The unseen world makes itself felt in nature’s mysticism. Two fishes tied swimming in opposite directions, one remains in physical reality, the other in intangible Spiritual essence, reborn in God, in order to find that elusive inner Truth. For Life must be reborn for the cycle to continue in spring.

Richelle Steyn

If the cycles of the moon effect the tides, so too must the cycles of the moon effect beings on earth. If the moon has an impact on earth in this way, then there is no reason not to believe that other cosmic bodies have an impact. I think thousands of years of human observation of cosmic bodies, combined with concurrent observation of phenomenon on earth, established a philosophy of relationship between the two. This knowledge must have grown and evolved with new, ongoing observation/research and further philosophical speculation - to end up with what we have today.

Sandra-Leigh Serio

I think astrology is an objective natural system but affected and influenced by human perception and
This mechanism is clearly more than human strength and intelligence. In bible times, solar and lunar eclipses and other unusual celestial phenomena considered to be signs. Since the ancient times people with great respect only touched the mysteries of the universe. Perhaps then there were people who could influence the course of cosmic events, interact with the power of heaven. But this implies a higher level of consciousness, when a person possesses power which is beyond the earth and going into the depths of cosmic universe.

Jack Hopkins
Being able to come to some idea about the world around us is a fundamental function of all life, not just human life. Children learn how to play games, baby lions learn to hunt, science tells us that even plants can learn and remember. The ancients associated the element of Air with the power to abstract and understand. It's a huge concept and it covers everything. The cells in our body possess it, the history of countries and civilizations reflect it. Making sense out of experience undermines all life.

Now that we've got an idea, we've got to find a means to communicate it. Thus emerged language and all forms of transmitting the information. The written word, art, dance, and all forms of capturing our mental children took form. Tradition and law are high on that list, as well as philosophy and the funny pictures the scribes would assign to different portions of the sky. Is Astrology human-made or an objective natural system? The easy answer is humans are citizens of the objective natural system. The deeper question is “Is Astrology true”? This is like saying “Is gravity true?”, although modern science would have us believe not.

All ideas evolve. When Newton came up with the concept of gravity, he had no idea that gravity comes in waves. We know that now. In a similar way, the ancient sky pictures are a sort of root idea that needs to be examined further. We may replace the Turtle with a Crab, but the concept remains. We may develop a deeper understanding of how Capricorn energy manifests in human life, but unless I'm wrong, the framework has and will stand up to the test of time.

People thousands of years in the future will likely look at Scorpio, perhaps under a different name, and still ponder about its energy and ultimate meaning.

Joan Lainé
The iconic representation of what is seen in the stars is reflected in a people’s culture. However, the interpretation of how the planets and the stars affect behaviours and events would be based on the “elders and wise men” observing said behaviours and events, recording them and making the connections between a timely event and the position of the constellations in sky at that time. Initially it would be fairly simple to make the connections between shorter cycles, like the phases of moon or the passing of the seasons and the events, but over time, it would also begin to occur to the observer, that other stars and planets could presage an event happening or the behaviour patterns of a person born during certain periods of the year.

In addition, there is an energetic connection to the vibration of each planet, that would provide additional information and a more in depth interpretation of what their influence at a given time on a person and event. If this were not so, it would not be possible for the “elders” to have been able to provide detailed and astro-
logical information simply by pure observation, it would also explain why predications could also seem so very obscure until humanity had the right words to describe what the event was. (You may omit this if you wish since I have absolutely no scientific or logical way to explain this, expect that “I know it is so!”)

The different layers of information provided in detailed astrology would not be available to man if there were no cosmic connection i.e. physical, emotional, mental and spiritual.

Justine Zheng

Personally, I trust astrology to be beyond our own minds, and reflect a greater cosmic order. Astrologer, in some way, acts as a medium, to interpret these cosmic order and divine message to the earthly world.

I am teaching astrology classes now, when introducing “Why astrology works” to my students, I give them several theories to refer to. And also stress that: it is not theory that is important, but how we put astrology into everyday use. Astrology is a fantastic practical tool to make our life happy…if we only confine to “why-it-works”, or even try to prove it right or wrong, it will lose its beauty and power.

Last but not the least, we cannot confine our life to an astrological map, we always need to enrich astrological symbolism with the new life experience, new clients, new culture in this new century….

William Sebrans

Perhaps the question could be phrased as: Is planetary/stellar influence on human life real? In looking at it that way, it’s possible to look at whether

1. The correspondences between the planetary movements statistically match certain behaviors, events and attributes,
2. Do the planetary movements exert influence? Are they causal, or only correlative markers for the correspondences, if they exist.

As to #1, my bias is, based upon my own experience and the experience of 1000’s of astrologers, is that there is statistically relevant correlation. Whether the Sun is “in” Leo or Cancer, depending on either tropical or sidereal, or whether Venus is debilitated in Virgo making for difficulty in relationships or exalted in Pisces, and so on… all are up for discussion, clarification and re-imagination. But the overwhelming evidence suggests verifiable correspondences.

As to #2, I do not know, and neither does probably anyone else unless they are a ‘Seer’ in the deepest meaning of the word. As some astrologers say, astrology may not be true, but it works - and may be the operative philosophy.

My bias as to #2 is that it is an utterly connected Cosmos where all things are interacting in complex relationship and that accordingly it is likely that there is some relationship to planets influencing. The mechanism of how, I could not say. The subtleties of where and when again, could not say. My bias comes in part from long experience in the Gurdjieff work, and the writing of Rodney Collin there in “Theory of Celestial Influence”, which proposes in detail how ‘as above, so below’ might actually work. The writing is broad, far-reaching and humble, which makes it believable.

Good question.

Kate Rusko

Yes, I think it is objective. And I also think it is the result of human attunement. It was once understood and accepted that the stars provided direction. They allowed one to navigate not only from point A to point B, but through life’s passages. Why would there have been a cosmic order then and not now?

No one seems to question the validity of looking for answers in subatomic particles or in the outer reaches of space. Ironically, we seem to have lost the subtlety to accept that which is most obvious: the divine plan that shines down us without fail.

Maurice Fernandez

In most immediate ways, we may say that astrology is a projection of the human mind, the one that actually “decides” to see a ram or a crab in the sky, and attribute particular meanings to them. We can also mention that the actual size of constellations is not 30 degrees equal as astrologers use, so this division is again human induced. However, just like a masterful artist painting on a canvas, where does the inspiration come from?

Astrology may be an extraordinary and successful system resulting from human’s natural response and sensitivity to nature and cosmic order—the ability to tune into pure Truth.

Astrology has survived the tests of time and authentication, against strong winds and fierce opposition, so perhaps there is something objectively true to it, something that the human mind TAPPED INTO, rather than projected on. We know that astrology works, whether the person is aware of it or not.

In other words, Astrology may be an extraordinary and successful system resulting from human’s natural response and sensitivity to nature and cosmic order—the ability to tune into pure Truth.

Laurie Ann Naughtin

I believe it to be a natural system. The pictures in the sky have changed over the years, the ancients used them to match the seasons and explain the natural energy at that moment of time. They are a constellation of fixed stars which move on the average of one degree every 70 years or so. I believe it to be time and seasonal based

Lutia Lausane

Hi Forum Friends: It seems to me this question requires an answer
framed in poetic experience. This is how Beatrice responds in Dante's Divine Comedy (Paradise, Canto 2) The heaven whose beauty shines with countless lamps from the deep mind that turns it takes its stamp and of that image makes itself the seal; and as the soul within your living dust diffuses through your body's different parts adapted to its various faculties, just so does the intelligence unfold in bounty which the stars have multiplied while turning ever in its unity. Different virtues mingle differently with each rich stellar body that they quicken Even as the soul within you blends with you.

True to the glad nature from which it flows, this blended virtue shines throughout that body, as happiness shines forth through living eyes, and from this virtue, not from dense and rare, Derive those differences of light we see: this is the formal principle that gives according to its virtue, dark and light. (I think that era’s sense of virtue corresponds with our use of Truth.)

Sue Minahan

This question spells out to me the exact defining element of astrology’s mystery. Astrology is the co-creation of collaborative genius and insightful intuitive manifestation. We could return to the ancient Greek philosophers who queried if a circle existed because we saw it’s form such as the moon, and therefore imagined the perfect circle or, if we knew the concept of a perfect circle and looked to see where in this earth existence that form was represented. The fact I see is that it's two sides of one axis, one spectrum unified in teamwork.

It also reminds me of whether Darwin or literal biblical explains our existence correctly? Why not both? in the sense that all of life evolves and in each of life’s core essence is the source that evolves.

The fact that different cultures determine different pictures in the sky, only relates to my way of thinking, that it’s similar to the myriad of languages existing and even lost since the beginning of voice. Somehow symbols are agreed upon enough to warrant individuals to share their thoughts, their desires, their needs, their stories, their truths, and their fears and loves. Symbolic differences may be the only difference -- not the essential messages transcribed or translated from one soul to the next.

And as in dreams -- it’s the symbols that we individually relate in our psyche that permeate the landscape of that intuitive time. So, while we have a common grassroots of experience and may share certain symbols, none-the-less, many current dream studies say that our own dreams talk directly to us, using the symbols and values that we create and understand.

So, that’s the deal with the crab the horse the lady with the wheat the twins the bull and goat.

Our symbols in Western astrology work for who study the entire system of nuances and detail. It's the working language for us. And it’d be a matter of translating as best as possible the symbolic references of another system, though, they never quite match up.

Relating now directly to: “is astrology working as a result of our projected thoughts, or can we trust it to be beyond our own minds, to reflect a greater cosmic order?”

Yes, we may trust a greater cosmic order. Living as we are a spirit incarnated with a body on this earth plane, our soul connects to all energy in every form or non-form. Whether we are conscious or not, our projected thoughts stem from the cosmic patterns of movement of energetic cycles. To separate from this causes distress and it may be the goal of obtaining conscious clarity through our self-described pains that humanity desires to address, in a manner of making our own identity of importance.

The fluidity of grasping the moment with whatever it offers to create, rather than control for one's own reason, requires leaps, like the syntax of our nervous system as thoughts bounce from one end/dendrites to the next.

Life is not necessarily linear. Even birds hardly fly like the crow. They stop and go. Move and change. That is trust. Trust is not linear. Trust is because we work with it as an experience that teaches us to turn on the light again and go further, or even in the dark because we will have another vision, another path, another light that shows how our thoughts worked, like 20-20-hindsight vision looks clear.

I love the idea of cosmic order. Not that it relates at all to man-made order. The system is so far-reaching and embracing the small to the large. Always new. So, using the blueprint of astrology to guide us along to see the vast possibilities of how life and each person constructs their personal life is fascinating. More so than what people buy in the grocery check out line to cook up or not to cook. Such is life -- to cook up our own recipes or menus.

Perhaps the need here is to know that there are many chefs and cuisines and diets and nutritional methods. So to know that we differ in tastes, possible allergies or toxic foods, times when we prefer to eat our major meal morning or night, or eat multitude small ones, or as a Tonga friend of mine in his 70’s he has a super nutritional drink and one meal at night. The point being, yes, trust our minds. Trust our symbols to speak to our minds. But realize too, that our interpretation and inspiration is through our lens, best as it may be to speak for all.

The point being, yes, trust our minds. Trust our symbols to speak to our minds. But realize too, that our interpretation and inspiration is through our lens, best as it may be to speak for all. So, take advice and feedback from others, with their suggestions or requirements. Maybe their spice is the answer to life.”
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November 2015
interest in astrology was sparked when prominent astrologer, Noel Tyl, gave me a very insightful reading at a spiritual conference in 1999 in Montreal. After the reading was done, I told Noel I would like to study astrology. Smart phones were yet to be invented and Noel took out a pencil and a piece of paper and told me in his deep confident Leo's voice: “This is the number of a friend of mine in Israel, Maurice Fernandez. He will be your good friend and will teach you astrology”.

Noel was right. When I came back to Israel a month later, I invited Maurice for tea on my mother's balcony in Tel Aviv and the rest is history. Ever since that day Maurice has been both an amazing teacher and a close friend. But even though I have been studying astrology since 1999, it was only 6 years ago (in 2009) that I understood I wanted to follow astrology as a vocation, as part of my professional life.

This wasn't by any means a light moment and decision. We all know that being and presenting ourselves as astrologers is subject to tremendous misunderstanding, prejudice, and even scorn.

Therefore, the conviction that this is something I wanted to pursue as a career path had to be strong. For me, it was a sort of an epiphany. Here I was, studying astrology for many years, treating it as a hobby and using this powerful tool mostly to myself, veiling my interest in astrology from most of the people who knew me, certainly so in my professional environment. I understood that my approach to astrology was not serious enough, that my respect of this incredible system was truly lacking and if I have tools to help others, I have a moral obligation to use them. This was a pivotal point that I will further discuss in this article.

All this brought forth a plethora of questions rising from the depth of my being. Questions arose about what is a greater calling and destiny, of how all this fitted into my mission in this life. But those wonderful questions were not the only ones to emerge. Insecurity regarding how my environment will view and respond to my choice, and what will people think of me were also present. Additionally, I had to ask myself if I would be able to make a decent living through the practice, if I am really ready and professional enough to begin seeing clients. These natural questions must be given space, and processed. Fear is essential for our survival in this materialistic world; nevertheless, we should not let it win the battle with our dreams.

1. Dealing with your insecurities

At first, we reveal our astrological petals to those immediately around us, people we feel safe with, such as close friends and loved ones.

It can be difficult, in this modern age overemphasizing the scientific and rational side of things, to counteract the overall cynicism one encounters about astrology. Allowing people to know you are a “beginning Mage”, is often hard for people. It was hard for me personally. I was a news reporter in a big daily newspaper, a very demanding job working with maybe the most cynical people out there. It certainly raised a few eyebrows when I asked for a weekly day of leave from my editor so I could offer consultations. People at my work place would often frown and ask me half honestly in a condescending voice: “So how are the skies today, what are the stars up to?”

a. Are you willing to face prejudice and criticism of astrology?

The best way I found to address the prejudice issue about astrology is to always keep in mind that people are afraid of things they are not familiar with, and that this now is your chance to provide them a positive experience and make them more familiar with the true nature of astrology. Remind yourself you are an honest person, devoted to service, and that you have your references that astrology is truthful and useful. You are an ambassa-
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b. Are you professional enough?
Before beginning to ask for a fee for your consultations, it is not uncommon to have doubts and ponders whether we are worth this price, or in other words, if we are professional enough to start charging? Many of us find it easier to remain an eternal student. But this doesn't really do justice to astrology. Begin with offering pro-bono readings and test your skills; most importantly, ask for feedback. We all have people in our lives that we are more comfortable with who we can ask to be in our "test group".

After "testing the waters" you may feel ready to go knee deep and begin consulting for people you are not necessarily familiar with. You can advertise a special internship price on Facebook, email or through word of mouth, and emphasize how helpful a reading can be. You should not keep giving free readings. This would devalue Astrology, not to mention your effort and time. Pricing your reading is a way to educate people about the value of astrology.

2. Commitment to service: Creating the time & space for consulting

Initially, it is important that you rely on an additional source of income, to allow yourself the time to build a clientele. This does not happen overnight. Dedicate a couple of days a week (or weekend) for your astrology practice.

a. Part time, full time practice

Becoming a full time astrologer with a wide enough clientele, may take years. The practice is undoubtedly very meaningful to us, but we also need to navigate the practicalities. In the first two years of my practice, I was working simultaneously as a news correspondent and took a day off for consultations. I subsequently transitioned to a part time job producing videos for commercial companies and increased my time for astrology to 3 or 4 days a week. This is still my current situation; when I will see that demand for consultations will require more days, I will focus exclusively on astrology. Over the past five years there where quite a few times in which I struggled to make ends meet. I thought of going back to a "regular" job and leave the astrological dream behind for the time being. But in Israel, regular working hours are 09:00 to 18:00, and I knew that with the time that it takes for commuting, I would not be able to do many consultations. Breaking into the field of astrology is not an easy task, and the world is not necessarily waiting for us with open arms. I can only imagine that some will not last. We have to be proactive, resilient, determined and resourceful to make it through. Remember always, it doesn't matter how talented and professional you think you are, you first have to prove what you are worth to the public. Do not expect people to know how good you are if your work in not exposed to them on a regular basis. And when you challenge yourself, place yourself out of your comfort zone, and do what needs to be done, something very important happens in you in the process. You mature and harden; you sharpen your tools and master your craft.

b. Setting up a space for consultations

Make sure you create a private, safe, and comfortable space for your readings. Since you may be mindful of expenses in the early stage of your practice, you could work from home, or rent a part time office space. The way I started was to work from my mother's place, since she is an artist and the atmosphere was conducive to an astrology reading. Your space defines who you are to your client before the first word is even exchanged between you two. For that matter, as well as for the respect of your practice, your place needs to be clean, comfortable, inviting and generally project the atmosphere you aim to create. I choose to always have a candle burning; some incense and quiet spiritual music that is hardly audible in the background. I always make sure that my client and I are both seated at more or less the same height and same seating so neither of us is superior to the other. I offer my clients a drink, and make them feel welcome. It is my privilege that they choose to be here with me. I respect my client's time and will devote my attention solely to them in our meeting. No phones, other chores, people, or other distractions should be in the way. By applying simple changes like these, a client who comes in will feel more comfortable and secure and be able to open up and fully immerse themselves in the consultation.

3. Are you willing to overcome your shyness and market yourself?

This is not about you; it is much bigger than you. You are but a link in the chain. Matthew (5:15-16) nails it: 15"Nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the
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Lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven”. The fact you are lucky enough to hold the lantern, doesn't mean you own the flame. If you decided to become a professional astrologer it means that in this day and age you were given access to sacred knowledge. It is important to shine its light.

Overcoming shyness means you are openly advertising yourself as an astrologer, you are willing to pro-actively promote your services, and at some point, may take on public speaking. You become an active voice for astrology, its contents and value.

a. Setting up your window to the world  Different ways to publicize your work include:

• Blogging: Writing daily, weekly or monthly forecasts. Reacting to and analyzing important national, cultural, or international events from an astrological point of view: When you write remember that your readers are not necessarily astrologically literate. Explain the different influences in accessible ways. Be sure to make it interesting and relevant to people. Be concise, as a person’s attention span is short – extract the meaning you want to convey into fewer words. That will make your message more powerful. Give practical advice; do not overwhelm your audience with information that does not lead to conclusions.

• Social sites: Using social media for promotional purposes. It is mostly free and usually effective advertisement. Set up your online profile and make sure people know how they can contact you. Use a good picture both as your profile picture and in every post you make. The visual appeal will keep people more interested. When using platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Google, Twitter etc., try to be consistent and post your words/videos at the same time every day/week/month. This way you will reach a larger audience, as posting regularly contributes to your visibility. Share your observations and blogs in groups or pages associated with astrology and have your “friends” visit your own page.-You can create short videos and post them on YouTube. People appreciate visual information. I make both daily and weekly forecasts using my own camera (If you don’t have one, you can use your webcam or your smart phone). I post them on my site, my YouTube channel, Facebook page and so on.

• Creating a website: Aside from social media pages, having your own website that presents who you are and what you offer is highly important. There is an assumption that websites are now obsolete because of the social media pages. But I do not agree. It is VERY IMPORTANT to keep your website “alive” and up to date. If someone seeks you out and finds only posts from a while back, it can create a negative impression. Today you can create websites easily and for free by choosing one of many different templates online. I opened up a blog on Word Press and brought a domain and connected it to it. It looks like a site and I regularly post upcoming events, forecasts and other relevant media on it. It is a business generator.

• Email: Mass email programs and newsletters. To keep your clientele informed about your services, special deals, and updates, building a mailing list is important. Most mass email programs come with different templates to choose from; some will charge you a monthly fee, and others are free. At OPA, we chose MailChimp.com and are quite satisfied.

• Joining a mystic hotline: I was offered to join a mystic telephone hotline. At the beginning I was a bit apprehensive. Some callers were strange and the phone was ringing on odd hours. I then found out I could schedule the exact times I would be available for calls. I chose daytime working hours and that changed the kind of people that were calling in too. I am satisfied by the fact that I feel I help callers and by the check I get in the mail, which usually isn’t much, but it all adds up.

• Public speaking opportunities, special events, and psychic fairs: This is an invitation to step outside your comfort zone and contribute to the knowledge pool. Public events help you connect to the astrological community and the greater public. As a result of going to the OPA retreat on April 2014, I got to meet many new friends. I was elected for the OPA board, and then invited to speak at two OPA retreats, one in the US and one in Greece. Being part of a large international community has clear benefits for you as an astrologer. You can be creative and organize yourself some special astrology events. I organized events on astrological subjects I found fascinating and important. The people I met through these events became clients, others students, and some as friends on a joint adventure. You may participate in Psychic fairs, and train yourself to analyze charts on the spot. This will help you diminish reading preparation time.

• Publishing your forecasts and astrological work: Writing a book is one way, writing articles is another. You can write regarding certain astrological issues or about current affairs from an astrological viewpoint in cultural, women, new age, health, news and alternative magazines and publications as well as on many sites and e-zines. Getting a spot on TV and having your own astrological moment in a daily or morning show could be an amazing tool too, making you better known and draw business in. In short – no medium of communication is barred from your efforts to utilize it for advancing.
Teaching: Once you are certified and have counseling practice experience, consider opening a beginner's course. It may sound like a big step. We always compare ourselves to our own teachers and commonly find ourselves lacking. However, preparing your curriculum will bring your level of expertise up a notch. Advertise your course in all the mentioned methods, announce you are starting a course and invite it both verbally and with your actions to manifest in your reality. I'll be opening my own beginner's course shortly. I chose to join up with another astrologer so we can share the workload and back each other up.

Are you intimidated? Think about the aspiration to thrive financially as an astrologer and to help people, even perhaps change their lives. Be available, and the universe will conspire to support your development.

4. Ethics & Professional boundaries

 Stick to professional guidelines and regulations. They are there to keep you and your client safe. Ethic guidelines can be viewed easily on the OPA website at the 'about' section. I will not go in to the long list of do and don'ts, yet I want to emphasize a point I feel is not asserted enough: You will encounter many different kinds of clients, some of them at desperate times of their lives. You need to be extra sensitive and careful with what you say, and how you say it especially when it comes to predictions, relationships, and major life changes. Always remember that our words as astrologers have tremendous impact on some people. If you come across questions you cannot reply, issues you are not well equipped to address - Don't be too proud to refer clients to other astrologers or other types of practitioners.

a. Recording your sessions:
I always record the session. Even if my client says he/she do not need the recording, I keep all the recordings in a safe private place as they contain highly confidential material for the client. Always notify your client you are recording the session. Most smartphones today do a great job recording if you have the right application but having a digital voice recorder is a good option. I always send the recording out to my client up to 48 hours after the session. Do not forget to send the recording, it leaves bad “aftertaste” with your client. Recordings help your client absorb all the information you gave them at a later time and hear your forecast and verify your predictions. Recordings act as a reassurance for you, the astrologer, as well. If a client behaves inappropriately, or says you did - the recording is there to set things straight.

5. Understanding the market and who your clients are

Knowing your market is essential for any successful business. Keep track of who your clients are, their social economic background, their age, gender and geographic location. I found out that most of my clients are 35-55 years old, most of them women, come from the upper middle class, and live in urban areas. There are many tools out there that can assist you with targeting the right audience like: Facebook insights and Google analytics. Having a good idea of your clientele will help you better target your promotional efforts. Put some Virgo into the Piscean ocean and get better results from any dollar you spend on boosting your posts or advertising online. You can ask clients directly after a session if they'd like you to put them on your lists. This way you build your clientele base and keep track about your growing constituency.

6. Defining the services given & Setting your financial goals

Take the time to look at what other astrologers are offering online, their services and how they price them. Be mindful of the time it takes you to prepare for a session. You must offer something you have mastered and make sure your preparation time is cost effective.

Initially, it took me two and a half hours to prepare for readings, and each chart seemed like an endless ocean. I sat with my clients for two and half hours and charged 80US$. Today I am ready in an hour and a half and hope to gradually reduce that to an hour. I now get the themes of the chart much quicker and sit with my clients for an hour and a half, charging 110US$. The reason I share this with you is to highlight how this is a gradual developmental process, and the longer you practice, the better the flow of your practice can become.

Conclusion

The road to becoming a professional astrologer is a personal one and varies from person to person. Yet if you follow these guidelines you are sure to benefit. We are all part of the change that is accruing in the world as we drift in to the new Age of Aquarius. Our role as humans and as astrologers in it, as co- creators really, is an important one. When faced with challenges and setbacks remind yourself of what is important to you and the reasons you chose to follow this way. Keep encouraging and congratulating yourself for everything you accomplish and remind yourself that the road is long but interesting. Having humility and understanding that you will never understand ‘it all’ fully, yet continuing your studies and practice is the surest way to reach your goal and become a professional astrologer and as such, add to the light of knowledge we all aim to carry. Good luck! 😊
The Uranus/Pluto square, officially over but still within orb, is the star of the show for the first half of the season. As the **Sun moves through Libra**, it will not only aspect both of the outer planets, it will also be triggering the degrees of the seven squares they made over the past three years. Combined with a **Pluto station** and a **lunar eclipse on the Aries/Libra axis**, we'll be reminded that the aftershocks of a major aspect can be extremely potent, as we work to incorporate the changes initiated during the square. Later this season, Neptune slips into our collective mindset, offering his own perspective, or lack thereof.

Libra is the sign of the scales, and equinox suggests balance, yet as we reach the **Libra Equinox** on September 23rd, we may feel that we’re a long way from equilibrium. We will be in the midst of eclipses, with a solar eclipse at 20 Virgo behind us and a lunar eclipse and **Pluto station** just ahead.

As we begin the season, hot (and potentially explosive) astrology dominates on September 24th and 25th. **Mercury is retrograde in Libra**, and he will make a tense square to stationing Pluto on September 24th. **Mercury/Pluto aspects** suggest speaking truth to power, and perhaps a bit of cleverness can fell giants. This is a David and Goliath kind of aspect, although Odysseus and the Cyclops may be a more relevant image as a kind of verbal jujitsu helps to challenge power brokers. In the collective, look for this to play out in the courts, but we might also see particularly cutting insights from comedians. In our personal lives, issues with banks, government agencies, and the like may need to be addressed.

As Mercury is retrograde, the issues may be ones we are revisiting from early September, and it could be late December before they are resolved. Also on the 24th, **Mars ingresses into Virgo**. The Cosmic Warrior isn’t known for the kind of patience that detail-oriented Virgo demands, but he can inject some extra energy into Virgoan topics like health care, the environment, and our food supply – topics that are already energized by Jupiter in the sign. **No sooner does Mars enter the sign than he forms a square to Saturn**, throwing some facts at our belief systems, something that should make for interesting political debates.

**Pluto stations to go direct** on the 25th, a powerful change that will color the preceding few days, making everything more intense. Pluto stations are usually more implosive than explosive, although the **Mars/Saturn aspect** and impending **lunar eclipse** could push things towards more external manifestation. It’s a pressure-cooker time, and finding a constructive way to let off some steam is a good strategy. Having a direction is key – you can move mountains with these aspects behind you, but free-floating energy could be a major problem.

Lest you think the excitement is over, we have a **lunar eclipse on the 27th**. Lunar eclipses are powerful full moons, and on the Aries/Libra axis we may act on some of the insights we had during the recent Venus retrograde, although more than relationship matters will come to light.
Transits of the Season

October 6th is a charged day. The Sun squares Pluto, an aspect will trigger Pluto's station (Pluto will have only moved 2 minutes of arc since his station), and may engender power struggles at every level, although conflicts between legislative actions and corporate power might be especially prominent. With Mars opposite to Neptune on the same day, we could be willing to act on facts that may not be accurate or seen in reasonable proportions. Coming just two days after the third quarter moon, we may internalize things more than we otherwise might, but expect an active and potentially tense time.

Venus enters Virgo, or re-enters after her retrograde, on October 8th. With Jupiter already making his way through the sign, two of our more sociable planets are in the sign of the virgin, suggesting a more reserved approach to style and entertainment. While not necessarily minimalist and certainly not Spartan, this Virgo emphasis will tone things down, at the same time helping us to stick to what's really important.

Two days later, Venus squares Saturn in Sagittarius, and our entrenched beliefs about relationship (and our values in general) may be challenged by specific incidents. It will be interesting to see how this affects political contests, especially female candidates. With Mercury's station just a day away and the Mars/Neptune opposition still in the rearview mirror, hyperbole and exaggeration could be in the mix, so do some fact checking before acting.

On October 9th, Mercury stations to go direct at 0 degrees of Libra, ending three weeks of retrograding through the sign. It's right around the stations that we often see the most significant Mercurial mishaps. Astrologers may debate whether Mercury retrograde results in more frequent problems with communication, contracts, transportation, and the like, but it may be that while snafus are not more prevalent, they are more prominent.

The urge for freedom is likely to be strong on the 11th, when the sun opposes Uranus. The dialogue is likely to focus on contrasting social decorum and mores with individual inclinations and drive. While the sun is in rule-oriented Libra, he really leans more towards Aries, so we may find that transgressing rules and social expectations wins the day. We may see some blowhards and braggarts taken down, but if you follow your heart and go your own way you should have the wind at your back.

Also on the 11th, Jupiter trines Pluto. This aspect could see some movement on progressive social issues like health care and genetically modified foods, although it could be that corporate concessions come with strings attached. Charitable donations might be conditional or seem to promote power brokers as much as the cause they support.

The new moon on October 12th may be an introspective time to consider our relationships and social lives, but as the moon waxes over the next two weeks things get very active. Mars squares Pluto on the 15th, a powerful aspect that can get things moving in many areas, but which should be especially relevant to work. Venus opposes Neptune the following day, an aspect that can soften the glare in relationships, but can also lead us to see too much or too little in someone via the process of projection – watch for the tendency to make heroes or demons out of ordinary mortals. On the 17th, Mars meets Jupiter, an aspect that can be expected to invigorate and heat up debates in the Virgoan areas of service and health. The downside would be a tendency to get stuck in the details and thus miss the big picture, as when we reject a sound compromise because it falls short of perfect.

Mercury squares Pluto on the 22nd, the third in the series of squares mentioned above. It's at this time that we're most likely to discover the end result of an issue that's been on the table since early September. Venusian aspects to Pluto and Jupiter on the 23rd and 25th suggest a time when we can get relationship issues on track. Venus and Jupiter met twice in Leo this summer, forming a blazing conjunction in early July, followed by an out-of-sight meeting during Venus' retrograde. This final meeting of

Lunar Eclipse
4 Aries - Libra
September 28, 2015
3:50am
Greenwich, UK
the series in Virgo should be the most toned-down of all, one that shows a new set of emergent values – roughly, less is more. We’re challenged to see how we can express our hearts with less fanfare and extravagance.

Keep your pens and paper (or technological equivalent) handy, as a couple of hours later, *Mars opposes Uranus*. Insights and brilliant ideas will be flying around the ether, ready to be grabbed by alert minds. As this is an opposition, we may do our best thinking with others, so talk your ideas out.

After the *Taurus full moon on October 27th*, the cosmos takes a bit of a break, allowing us to integrate the cavalcade of aspects that we’ve experienced over the past two months. It isn’t that the heavens have stopped revolving and the planets aren’t connecting with each other, but a series of trines, sextiles, and conjunctions over the next few weeks will signal a change in intensity.

**Venus meets Mars on November 2nd**, an opportunity to inject some passion into relationships – as much passion as Virgo will allow. On the 8th, *Venus moves into her second home, Libra*, beginning a four-week stay. If Venus carried Virgo values back into Leo during her retrograde, she will be carrying them forward now. As much as Libra likes things ‘done nicely’, we’ll see a paired-down sense of proper style, neither cold nor flashy. Think: Zen garden.

The fog rolls in for *Neptune’s station to go direct on November 18th*. Neptune stations are great for firing the imagination and generating possibilities, but the results could be difficult to translate into Saturnian reality. At best, Neptune stations can offer dreamy escapes, times away from the demand to be productive, which are paradoxically the times when we can be most inspired for future actions. At worst, we can go overboard, investing our emotional or financial wherewithal in fanciful projects that have little hope of success. In a more toxic environment, there’s also the potential to become paranoid as the mind generates dark possibilities amid uncertain data.

**Venus squares Pluto and opposes Neptune** on the 20th and 23rd, creating a period of time when relationships are challenged. Strong partnerships can be moved to a new level, and can break away from entrenched patterns and so become refreshed and reinvigorated. Those partnerships under stress could reach the breaking point.

Activity is back in full swing a week later. On the 25th, with the *moon full in Gemini, Mercury meets Saturn then squares Neptune*. Facts and beliefs are potentially at odds, but the facts themselves may be way off base. Mercury/Neptune aspects often provide the same sort of snafus that are attributed to Mercury retrograde, although deception (intentional or otherwise) is potentially added to the mix. The Gemini moon can place the emphasis on communication and getting the facts, just at the time they are most elusive. The Sun in Sagittarius can step in and offer belief systems that have little concern for details, helping us to gloss over conflicts, perhaps to our detriment. Once again, political and social debates can spin out of control around this time, an interesting if melancholy process for astrologers to observe.

**Saturn squares Neptune at 7 degrees Sagittarius and Pisces on the 29th**, an aspect further amped up by the sun meeting with Saturn. Saturn/Neptune aspects present a challenge to the structures of society. With *Saturn in Sagittarius*, we may see this play out with our belief systems – religious and political – more than anywhere else. In particular, we may start to see grassroots movements quietly emerging to challenge the existing dichotomies between political parties and religious factions. Debates about immigration, already hot in the United States and Europe, could reach new heights as entrenched beliefs are challenged by images of individual suffering.

**Mars squares Pluto on December 6th.** Always a tense and potentially explosive combination, this Mars/Pluto aspect is *tempered by Mars’ position in Libra*. Most folks will probably be more inclined to dash off a terse memo than throw a punch, but violence could look acceptable if all other alternatives have been exhausted. Expect a less controlled attitude on the 10th, when *Mars opposes Uranus*. Although Mars is still in Libra, his opponent is in his home sign of Aries. Mars and Uranus share an impulsive quality that may be guided, but not controlled, by Libran values. Expect the 6th through the 10th to have a strongly active quality, despite the new moon on the 11th.

Finishing off this busy season, *Mercury aspects Pluto and Uranus* on December 19th and 20th. These high-powered aspects suggest verbal contests, although Mercury isn’t nearly as confined to the intellectual realm as we often think but also acts as a trigger for major configurations. These aspects suggest innovation through struggle, putting cards on the table, and calling out untruths.

**As 2015 draws to its conclusion, we have a very busy season between the Libra equinox and Capricorn solstice.** Social and political issues will be prominent, but in many ways this going to be a time when individuals incorporate macro-level changes into their lives, and these changes are then projected up into the collective level. We’re likely to see familiar arm-wrestling among factions and perspectives during the charged first half of the season, while *Neptune’s influence* in the second half suggests that many of the assumptions we entered with will be revised or relativized – a difficult but necessary process if we’re going to move beyond the stalemates that hold us in place.

A Preview of the 2016 Free Monthly Talks for OPA Members!

Call from wherever you are and join these presentations: It's enlightening, it's fun, it's free!
One hour lectures for OPA members only.

JANUARY 17
Robert Corre
Topic To Be Announced

FEBRUARY 7
Georgia Stathis
www.starcycles.com
The Importance of Phases

MARCH 20
Aleksandar Imsiragic
www.keplerunited.org
Hermetic Astrology and Strings Between Incarnations
Everyone lives through three incarnations simultaneously at any moment. They are represented as three different lives that are most crucial for our development. Finding a way to unite them means liberation and represents the final goal of Hermetic Astrology. In this lecture we will define those three different incarnations we live all the time and also we’ll describe a way to unite those different lives in order to create one real Cosmic Life, that represents our True Being.

APRIL 3
Sol Johansen
www.sol-with.com
Virgo, Scorpio and Capricorn, the Birth of the Human
In spiritually oriented astrology, humans’ ability to reach for the stars are reflected through the initiations into a higher expression of one’s potential, not necessarily in a material sense, but more in a spiritual sense, yielding a deep sense of purpose.

MAY 1
Linea VanHorne
www.astrologeratlarge.com
Before the Client Arrives
Make the best use of your client preparation time! In this talk, Linea will show you how to design a Client Intake Form to facilitate client interaction and build your business. She will share her method of Chart Analysis, which guides you through the process of gathering, sorting and prioritizing all that information. In this way, you will learn to identify important themes and details that emerge from the chart. By carefully and consistently following a structured approach before the client arrives, you will free yourself during the session to have a more direct and genuine interaction with the client.

JUNE 12
Grace Morris
www.astroeconomics.com
Economic, real estate and business cycles

JULY 10
Adam Gainsburg
www.soulsign.com
Sky Phases of the Planets
The Sky Phases of the planets represent the very origin of the astrological tradition. The living sky was in fact the very first astrological “chart.” Through 3D software and explanatory graphics, this lecture will introduce the missing celestial ingredients from every round chart wheel such as speed, brightness and Earth proximity. Learn why there are such differences between one conjunction and another (between the same planets)! Tangible meanings for each sky factor are emphasized along with best practices for delineation.

AUGUST 7
Michael Bergen
The Astrology Code
“Michael will discuss the key findings from his research and show you how to apply them to your readings. You will get a detailed look at his purpose and process for investigating the validity of many astrological techniques, including: the zodiac signs, aspects, the diurnal cycle (houses), and the 9th harmonic.”

SEPTEMBER 11
Rick Levine
www.stariq.com
Topic To Be Announced

October 2
Laurie Naughtin
www.sublunar.co.za
Horary Astrology: The Important Keys to Analysis

Get updates and learn more at
OPAastrology.org
Mark your calendars for May 2016 - for the OPA conference in Athens, Greece’s capital.

For the first time, an American astrology organization is organizing a conference in Europe and unifying astrology communities internationally! Following the conference, we embark on a nine-day sacred site guided journey to learn more about the myths and heroes which have been so tightly woven into our astrological tradition. Enjoy famous Greek hospitality and its celebrated cuisine and culture. You will get to know this fascinating country where east meets west. Join us for what promises to be a special adventure in this magnificent and ancestral land!!

The conference begins on Friday, May 27 and ends on Monday May 30, 2016. The two main days will include presentations from a diverse faculty, coming from all over Europe and the United States. Roy Gillett from England, an expert on mundane astrology and will discuss the astrological trends of the global economy and the position of Greece in the European Union. Greek Astrologer Smaro Sotiraki will take us on the zodiacal correlation of Homer’s journey. Additionally, Aleksandar Imsiragic from Serbia, Maurice Fernandez from Hawaii, Sol Jonassen from Norway, Boaz Fyler from Israel, Alexandra Karacostas from California, and 4 more prominent Greek astrologers will make this program absolutely compelling (see list of topics and speakers below). The presentations will be offered primarily in English, as most Greeks speak English. On Monday, we will offer OPA’s signature Peer Group as a post conference intensive. This will be another opportunity to take part in what is a rich, fun and rewarding way to expand your personal and astrological horizons.

It all begins on Friday night with a welcome gathering at the Royal Olympic Hotel where we will be spending the next several days. This property is a classic, elegant, five-star hotel with all amenities in a superb location opposite Zeus’s temple, and near the Acropolis.

While in Athens, explore some of the ancient sites, including the Acropolis, one of the most sacred archaeological monuments in the world, the ancient agora and the new, impressive Acropolis Archaeological Museum, a few minutes around the corner from our hotel. Much of the fun is in experiencing old Athens, its narrow streets, small shops, delicious food and ancient ruins, both Byzantine and classical throughout. Lose yourself in the tangled and enchanting streets of the Plaka area beneath the Acropolis and enjoy coffee in one of the many street side cafes.

Mythical Journey to the Islands and Beyond

After the conference, the tour will depart Athens on Tuesday, May 31, for island and country adventures with a local twist. Imagine yourself sailing on the mythical Aegean waters overlooking the Santorini volcano, visiting the striking islands of Paros, Delos and Mykonos while watching the most colorful sunsets as the sun dips into the deep blue and turquoise sea. You can be assured of a memorable, educational and transformative experience.

During our time together, we will travel to the charming seaside town of Nafplion, one of Greece’s older capitals. It is a lovely historic port with its medieval fort, cobblestone streets, quaint shops and restaurants. En route we will visit Mycenae which was a major center of the Minoan civilization in the second millennium BC, and the ancient theater at Epidaurus. This

Hotel Royal Olympic, hub for the conference.

Delos birthplace of Apollo and Artemis
was the birthplace of Apollo’s son, Asclepius, an eminent healer in the pantheon of the gods and goddesses. Today the theatre continues to be admired for its exceptional acoustics and for its capacity to hold up to 14,000 spectators.

We will visit scenic Delphi, where Apollo was worshipped in ancient times and remains a very special and sacred place. Nearby, we will go to the Tholos, the picturesque sanctuary honoring the goddess Athena. We will learn about the myths of Pythia and their mysterious and powerful influence during times of war and peace at the site of the Delphic Oracle. This area has been a vital and important region since 1400BC, both in the ancient and modern worlds. Delphi is located on beautiful Mount Parnassus where the village is boldly situated on its hillside.

After our mountain ventures, we board an inter-island ferry to the sunny, traditional and rocky island of Paros which we will use as a base for our visits to the islands of Mykonos and nearby smaller Delos, where no one is allowed to spend the night as to preserve its spiritual integrity. Paros is known for its whitewashed cubic houses and impressive neoclassical mansions. In the middle of the village stands a well preserved 13th century Venetian castle offering an amazing view of Parikia, its main town. Delos, the birthplace of Apollo and Artemis continues to be one of the most splendid archaeological, mythological and historical sites dating back to the third millennium BC. We will also explore the artsy, glamorous streets of Mykonos, with its sand side bars, famous town and windmills.

Spectacular Santorini, legendary home of Atlantis with its dramatic cliffs plunging hundreds of feet into the sea, is our last stop. We will visit the site of Akrotiri, the Minoan Age settlement which was destroyed in the Theran eruption about 1627 BC. It is a stunning sight as we walk through an entire town with remarkable multiple story houses, even domestic plumbing, excavated from the ashes of the great explosion. You can envision the civilization of ancient Atlantis on Santorini’s majestic cliffs and shores. We will also sail to the caldera on a private tour boat, hike and explore the surrounding area. Our day will end on board our vessel with a special catered farewell dinner on the unforgettable waters of the Mediterranean Sea.

Look for details about the conference on our web-site coming soon! You will be able to sign up for both the conference and the tour on-line shortly. The exclusive post conference tour has limited attendance. Please let us know if you have any questions. You can contact Alexandra at AlexandraKaracostas @ yahoo.com for more information. This is an experience not to be missed. We hope you can join us!

Conference Presentations

- Maurice Fernandez (USA) A New Understanding of the 12th house
- Sol Jonassen (NORWAY) Eros & Psyche – Sexuality, Sensuality, and Vitality
- Thanassi Matsotas (GREECE) Eclipses, Portals of Space Time
- Aleksandar Ismirajic (SERBIA) Reincarnation in Astrology
- Alexandra Karacostas (USA) Relationships: Keep it simple!
- Smaro Sotiraki (GREECE) Astrological Interpretation of Homer’s Odyssey
- Roy Gillett (UK) How Can the Global Economy Survive? - An in-depth study of its astrology inspired by the Greek situation
- Roy Gillett (UK) Principles before rules: Planetary regeneration
- Angela Tiki (GREECE) Mars Retrograde
- Ioannis Rizopoulos (GREECE) The Synthesis of Tropical and Sidereal zodiac: Theory and Practice
- Boaz Fyler (ISRAEL) Sex, Lust, Gender and Sexual Orientation in the Chart
- Angelika Panoussi (GREECE) The Archetype of Chiron

UPCOMING ASTROLOGY CONFERENCES

OCTOBER 2015
Oct. 22-25 – OPA ASTROLOGERS RETREAT
Pacific Grove, CA www.opaastrology.org
Oct. 22-25 – SOTA – Niagara Falls, Canada www.donnavantoen.com

FEBRUARY 2016
Feb. 26-27 – ISRAEL ASTROLOGY CONFERENCE with Bernadette Brady
Contact: healingstar11@gmail.com

MARCH 2016
March 18-20 & March 21-23
I-ASTROLOGER, Athens, Georgia www.OPAastrology.com

MAY 2016
May 27-29 - NORWAC
May 27-30 - OPA CONFERENCE IN GREECE, Athens, Greece www.OPAastrology.com
May 31-June 9 - OPA SACRED SITE TOUR Greek Islands www.OPAastrology.com

OCTOBER 2016
October 13-17 - ISARCONFERENCE
Costa Mesa, CA

FEBRUARY 2017
February 16-18 - NCGR CONFERENCE
OPA WORLD

OPA gathering in Tel Aviv, Israel

Boaz Fyler – (Israel Satellite)

Boaz Fyler (Israel Satellite), Maurice Fernandez, Shelley Rom

OPA meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa

Malcom Ross, Maurice Fernandez, Joan Laine, Heiltje Leroux (South Africa Satellite) and Richelle Steyn

OPA Tribal: Kate Rusko (OPA secretary), Malcom Ross, Heiltje LeRoux (South Africa Satellite), Maurice Fernandez, and Innessa Wuzyk
The Astrology of SPIRITUAL IMPACT
Notable People Who Speak from Beyond the Waking Dream

Column by William Sebrans

Introduction

What do Ramana Maharshi, Krishnamurti, Ram Dass, Rudolph Steiner, George Gurdjieff, Osho, Deepak Chopra, Byron Katie, Ranier M Rilke, Eckhart Tolle, Nisargadatt, Ken Wilber, Alan Watts, Ammachi, Gangaji, Walt Whitman, Amma, Rumi, Yogananda – all have in common?

They have, to a greater or lesser degree, awakened from the dream of mechanical unconscious life and, in their way of being in the world, imparted an energy of pure presence that raises us up.

As astrologers and eager students of the Mystery in action, we might inquire:

~ What predisposes a person to awaken to their true nature beyond the mechanical inclinations of personality and the conditioning patterns by the outside influences of the world that secure them? And, if such a transformation in someone takes place by whatever force, what creates the inner and outer environment that allows his or her awakening to significantly impact the world?

~ How will the impact manifest according to their unique dispositions and role, as a teacher, artist, or as a collective leader?

~ Can astrology with its masterful, archetypal language identify patterns that suggest an awakening spirit and one who will further impact the collective?

This series of articles will take a friendly and deeply curious look at these lively questions. In so doing, perhaps we will further enlighten ourselves as to the myriad flavors of awakening that are available in a human life. This investigation may also instruct us how the various elements of our astrological language can manifest at increasingly higher levels of expression or frequency, ~ similar to the 3 Gunas in Vedic lore corresponding to Tamas, Rajas, Sattva; where each of the planetary and sign archetypes are available for interpretation and impact at a spectrum of levels from dense shadow to everyday gift to divine gift.

As we go about our terrestrial business, it is salutary for us to note our biases. The Cosmos responds benignly to these kinds of good manners. In regard to our subject here, I offer 5 personal biases in regard to the overarching theme of awakening and spiritual impact:

1. It is not possible to know the evolutionary state of a soul from a chart! Maybe someone can do it, perhaps with intuitive wizardry, but I cannot, and everyone I know cannot. If such is your expertise, contact me immediately– because we have business for you! Whatever the configurations, all ‘charts’ (aka people) are available for evolution and profound transformation.

2. Given the just mentioned bias, then it must be true that two infants born with exactly the same birth chart will manifest their lives in utterly unique ways. And that said, it is also true there are in fact predispositions that incline one to be a seeker of higher truth and a longer for transcendent connection, or, at least to be the ready if unwitting recipient of illuminating Divine Whacks. That is, whatever the configurations, all ‘charts’ and therefore people are available for evolution and profound transformation.

3. The predispositions to ‘seeking’ and to being transformed can often, but not always, be seen in a chart.

4. Anyone with major spiritual impact –who raises the consciousness of many individuals to increasing higher level of consciousness – nearly always has astrological factors that are observable as being the influence of the transpersonal planets on personal planets and key angles.

5. There is no standard behavioral code or standard of personality that fits for the awakened condition! Being nice, communicative, powerful, have high endurance, artful, of pointed intelligence, competent are not required! The consistent theme, independent of these virtues that exists among the awakened, is that of the witnessing Presence dictating their response to Life, rather than the body functions or the discursive mind. Outside of that...it is all fair game.

Concluding this section, let the congregation please rise to the following fertile musings from Sri Yukteswar, Yogananda’s guru and noted Vedic astrologer and See-er.

“A child is born on that day and at that hour when the celestial rays are in mathematical harmony with his individual karma. His horoscope is a challenging portrait, revealing his unalterable past and its probable future results. But, the natal chart can be rightly interpreted only by men of intuitive wisdom: these are few.”

PART THREE: GANGAJI

“Just Like Us”

...
culations, because in so doing we get a sneak preview and retrospective of the Mystery at work in its - 'As above, so below' magic' - revealed to us in geometric still shots.

It is not the full feature film we can see, nor is it exactly mirroring real life unfolding, but we do get a passing empowerment in spying successfully on Creation's intent, however fleeting our mastery.

In studying the Astrology of Spiritual Impact, we get clues on the myriad forms that evolution and liberation take. Starting with Ramana Maharshi in the first article, we moved closer into our own milieu with Ram Dass/Richard Alpert in the 2nd and now come to Gangaji who is really “just like us.”*

Gangaji, born as Merle Antoinette (Toni) Roberson, has a story not unlike our own. She went through family pain, neuroses, striving, seeking, and in her case—through Grace and pluck, finally finding—or perhaps more accurately said, realizing what had already always been present.

Her astrological profile suggests her latent gifts and challenges, and also how her awakening might show up in the world in a particular style, form and substance. The unique cocktail of circumstances, soul, will, surrender, and Grace that precipitated her realization must remain something of a mystery. Still, the astrology points to a latent imperative in the nature to seek and resolve the conundrum of existence, which in an evolved soul will look for finality only in what is always present and beyond circumstances.

I will explore her core nature here first, and then look at three defining time windows: her movement towards freedom at her Saturn return in 1971-2, physical breakdown in 1988, and her series of awakenings in 1990.

Gangaji was born June 11, 1942, in El Paso, Texas, as Merle Antoinette Roberson, one week before Paul McCartney, Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys, and noted film critic Roger Ebert. I’ll make reference to later to a key aspect of the 1942 crop.

I am glad I checked with Gangaji.org on her birthtime/place. Before my contacting the fine folks there, I had it on reliable authority that she appeared at 7 am and in Jackson, Miss. That birthtime gave her a Cancer Ascendant with several 12th house placements, including the Sun, all of which seemed plausible enough, given her warmth, emotionally sensitive nature, mysterious neurological maladies, and mystical orientation.

Still, as plausible as the 7 am/Cancer Asc seemed, the 23:00/Aquarius Asc time showed up as more a ringer, given her tumultuous challenges in relationship (7th house Pluto on Descendant & Chiron), her Uber-lively and expressive mind, the early troubles/alienation in the home with mother (Saturn/Moon/4th), and the auto-immune, difficult to diagnose maladies throughout her life (Uranus/Saturn/Moon & Mars/Cancer in 6th).

Adding to that obscuring effect of those afflictions, she has Neptune in Virgo in the 8th house, ruler of her South Node/1st, suggesting that she came into this life with a persistent dilemma between spirit and flesh, with the attending challenge of being in her body.

As a personality, Gangaji is mentally astute, superbly articulated, emotionally connected, aesthetically well-presented, and blends an authoritative presence with a ready, playful smile. Her incisive mind coupled with subtle emotional intelligence allows her message to be received by a wide swath of people, from simple to accomplished, from those who readily believe to those who are of a doubting disposition.

I spent 2 years intermittently in her company during the 90’s where I found her presence something of a clean shower, after numerous sullied scraps in the patriarchal shadows of the Gurdieff world. For me, I would say that it was her full presence, as with Byron Katie, more than the method of inquiry which was most compelling.

Here I will explore her basic nature and also the time period of her shift from the personal story of the sufferer to one

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*title adapted from her biography "Just Like You - A Biography"
Gangaji/Toni is the poster girl for the Gemini archetype. If anyone imagines that an incessantly active, curious and potentially loopy mind is a final deterrent to an unshakable depth found in peace and liberation, then Gangaji’s example dispels that myth. She has Sun/Mercury conjunct in Gemini in the 5th house of creative expression (no surprise she has been an inveterate dancer during her life) and the Moon in Gemini, tightly sandwiched between Saturn/Uranus, all conjunct in the 4th house of the home and the emotional development.

All told, it couldn’t have been easy with Mom, Mind or e-Motions. The astrology is precise there, and corroborated by her own account.

I thank and give credit to her excellent biography: Just Like You, which points in authentic detail to the challenges of her early life which were marked, among other things, by the harsh influence, or lack thereof, from a disinterested, self-absorbed, unpredictable alcoholic mother—suggested astrologically as Saturn/Moon/Uranus conjunct in 4th house and the South Node in Pisces, related to the mother. (She later came to terms with the influence of her mother, who defied the suffocating conventionality of the American South’s prescription for women).

Here, with this stellium, we also find the distinct possibility of neurological challenges of a mysterious nature, given the Uranus/Mercury/Moon/Saturn interplays. This persistent physical trial led her on many paths of healing, including her period as an acupuncture professional in the SF Bay Area. To this day, she takes care to be in environments that do not exacerbate the condition, and demonstrates through that example that an awakened life need not be predicated upon a perfectly balanced physical vehicle, nor on any spiritual bypass around the issue.

Related to her ongoing need to accommodate her condition, she tells a revealing anecdote that took place in the presence of her guru Papaji, with whom she quickly cycled through many student/devotee ‘acts’, until soon arriving to a place of no act or persona at all. It goes:

“A seeker came to Papaji, suffering from perpetual noise from a noisy auto shop below his apartment and solicited an answer to the urgent question of what to do about the brash interference to his meditation. Gangaji, new to the role of teaching, purported to suggest that the sufferer find what lies beneath the noise, what is untouched by the arising and passing of sound - what is forever still. Her teacher had a more pragmatic response declaring to the inquirer: “You should move, ...move to a different place! What's the question here!”

It seems that Papaji modeled for her awakening as embodied in everyday life.

Back to astrology. As with life as we experience it, astrological inquiry shows that where there is a detriment in one area, there may be a corresponding blessing in another. The challenging Moon/Saturn/Uranus stellium referred to above also makes a precise, enabling trine to the Aquarius Ascendant. This is someone with a very powerful mental body, and the native ability to detach for greater perspective. The Saturn/Ascendant trine lends authority and some gravitas to her stature.

Here is a good place to re-introduce an idea has been stressed in the previous articles: that the lives of all people of a highly impactful spiritual nature seem to always have a strong influence of the outer transpersonal planets.

In Gangaji’s case, given her Aquarius Ascendant at 3-4 degrees and Uranus/Gemini trines it from the 4th, Pluto/Leo opposes directly from the 7th house cusp, and Neptune/Virgo trines, out of sign from the 8th. That is, there is a Grand air trine involving the transpersonal planets aspecting the Ascendant, including Saturn and Moon.

On these bases, it was unlikely that hers was going to be an trivial life, or an unnoticed one in its gifts, challenges and impact. Back to Paul McCartney and crew, the people born in this 1942 window have the Neptune/Uranus trine, and their lives are characterized by a visionary and innovative, unconventional genius.

The Aquarius Ascendant is impacted again by a Mars in Cancer opposition in an out of sign conjunction to Pluto in Leo. She refers in her biography to the different sides of her nature; one emotionally sensitive, and another yang—more male driven. The opposition was reflected externally in the familial house of origin, but also in her inner drive to accomplish, to push herself (Ascendant) forward.

Gangaji has no personal fire in the chart other than Pluto, which is generational, but the conjunction to Mars, and opposition to the Ascendant definitely gives her a lively spark, and contributes to what she has referred to as her Type A personality.

While, astrologically speaking, Gangaji has a decidedly Uranian/Mercurial nature (rulers of the chart), another facet of her expression is coming from the feminine influence of Venus/Taurus in the 3rd. Her elegant and relaxed style of dress and presentation is part of her signature, and she refers in her biography to the imperative of beauty in her life. In the 3rd, we experience her communication, while lively and playful from the strong Gemini influence, can also be relaxing, pleasing and grounding.

She speaks frequently to her challenge in life to get grounded, even referring to episodes in early childhood of detaching/dissociating from the body. With so much air influence and tra-
ma it is understandable. The Venus/Taurus, only aspected by trine to the Virgo N Node in the 7th relationship house, is a saving grace to her constitution. Neptune/Virgo doesn’t cut it for grounding. Once again, we can refer to the Pisces-1st/Virgo-7th axis as an underlying source of the ungrounded sense that had her parents refer her out to a ‘medical intervention’ facility.

Jupiter is within the first degree of Cancer and well placed there, though his ruler, the Moon, is stressed by the Uranus/Saturn squeeze in the 4th. The squeeze reflects the evolutionary crucible in her life where in her formative years there was a tendency for the emotional body to get hijacked by the active and conflicted mental disposition, despite its inherent capacity to help her understand her emotions.

The Jupiter placement becomes significant in the meeting with her guru Papaji in April 1990, described shortly in a few paragraphs.

The nodal axis of Pisces South Node in 1st and Virgo N Node in the 7th suggests the possibility of a soul incarnating with considerable previous default to surrender to the unknown and to merging, for better to or worse, to ‘the other’. And, it follows that the shadow side of undiscriminating merging might well set her up for betrayal.

In this incarnation, it would seem her evolutionary crucible lies in the practical day to day business of relationship—getting tethered and particularized within the field of personal connection. The laundry, the shared bills, and who’s sleeping with whom become part of the matrix of her evolution. Her role as a teacher and conduit is well served by the Virgo N Node. Mercury in Gemini in the 5th house, rules the nodal axis and the chart. At its most evolved expression, she is here to communicate intimately the realization that has arisen within her.

The relationship dynamics are further stressed by Pluto smack on the descendant and a wide square to Venus/Taurus. In October 2005, Gangaji’s husband, Eli Jaxon-Bear, admitted to Gangaji that he had a three-year affair with an adult female student who was later employed as the executive director of his organization, the Leela Foundation.

After a brief separation, Gangaji and her husband reconciled their marriage in December 2005. At the student’s request, the information about the affair was not made public at that time. In January 2006, Gangaji and her husband merged their foundations, continuing to teach together and separately. The evolutionary lesson would seem to be that when Pluto is involved with one’s relationship life, there is no permanent ‘time-off’ from the grill. Gangaji has emphasized in her story how seeking the ideal relationship was the crucible of her personal existence for much of her adult life, and through the shift in awakening, its expression went to the higher level of serving that realization by sharing it with others.

Gangaji has met, through Grace and grit, her evolutionary challenges of embodying in herself, while discovering what is beyond embodiment; she has tamed an active mind and a longing heart into realizing what is beyond the mind and what is lies at the final conclusion of longing.

Below are descriptions of key events with charts.

KEY EVENTS/SHIFTS

1. 1971-1972: MISSISSIPPI HOMECOMING QUEEN comes to San Francisco; leaves 1st husband, counterculture awakenings, LSD revelations.
2. Saturn return, along with long-standing Pluto trine, Neptune opposition to stellium.
3. Spring, 1988: PHYSICAL COLLAPSE.
4. Pluto/Venus opposition.
5. 3. April 8, 1990, India: MEETING WITH TEACHER PAPAJI; May 28-31, 1990. REALIZATIONS.

1971 - Mississippi Homecoming Queen, Separates from husband, begins exploring counterculture. Move to San Francisco. Saturn return, Pluto con-
The Gangaji/Toni’s 1971’s *Saturn return* shows Saturn on the early Gemini stellium. Pluto conjunct her Neptune, and Neptune in opposition to her Gemini Stellium and to Saturn during 1971-72. During that window, the seeker Toni sought answers in new kinds of relationship, cultural experiments, and a limited number of life-altering drug experiences, well beyond anything she was conditioned for in Mississippi. With her Saturn, the Nodes and her Ascendant so directly activated, the further activated influence of the transpersonal planets of Uranus, Neptune & Pluto in the mix would render her life radically altered—beyond the influence of a Saturn return alone.

**Spring 1988 – Physical collapse from over-achieving mode. Pluto opposing Venus. Sets the stage for 1990 meeting with Papaji.**


Most significant in her life, relative to the awakening, are her initial and subsequent meetings with Papaji in 1990. Also, the precursor to her final call for a teacher, something she had not wanted before, was her physical breakdown two years prior in spring, 1988, which quickly put a stop to a successful professional rise in the SF Bay Area.

The Gangaji foundation and her biography report that her transformative meeting with Papaji occurred in the first 2 weeks of April. The chart of April 8th reveals a *Jupiter Return in early Cancer* (meeting of a great teacher), but not much else. The progressed chart for the period, however, reveals the progressed Moon in Pisces conjunct her South node in Pisces. One might say, astrologically, that the shift she experienced was a final surrender at the highest octave of Pisces, and a completion from past efforts, ‘karmically’. In Papaji’s words, and then her own, she was willing to ‘stop’ everything, - all stories, all explanations, all resistances.

She speaks to surrendering to ‘That,’ and to the end of identification of herself as ‘the sufferer’ – *an apt evolutionary finale to a Pisces South Node*. The process of her awakening throughout her life went through many stages, from neurosis to relative confidence, from seeking to relative finding, and then to the final meeting of anything that arose in consciousness. Her early days with Papaji in spring 1990, even after her full surrender to the Guru within and without (Jupiter meets Jupiter), was also a process, and not a final event.

She reports that it was in the end of May, 1990 while at Esalen in California, that the essential shift fully consolidated, and where the entire scaffolding supporting her story as sufferer collapsed. *In her own words, it was a laughing matter*. During the 1990-91 timeframe, subtle identifications of herself as being prized student, emerg-
Spiritual Impact

ing teacher, the object of positive and negative projections were met and dropped in stages following her first encounter with Papaji.

In the final days of May 1990, the transiting SN in Leo was conjunct Chiron in her 7th house, the place of ancient wounds of rejection and betrayal, and up for healing and transformation. Mercury was conjunct Venus in Taurus, while natal Venus was in a long-standing opposition of Pluto in mid Scorpio.

By her report, it was at this time 6 weeks after her meeting with Papaji that the entire story of Toni became a laughing matter. Now, that is something to laugh about, long and wide.

William Sebrans is a practicing astrologer and 'Duende' Coach living near Grass Valley, California. He integrates the Human Design System and the Gurdjieffian Enneagram based on planetary types into his approach of distilling out the best version of oneself.

He ran a high technology executive search firm in the San Francisco Bay Area, and was among the first wave of coaches trained in the 1990s. He is an accomplished classical and improvisatory guitarist. William loves raspberries, art, beauty, ridgewalking, extreme ping pong, and golden retrievers. He finds people pretty entertaining most of the time as well.

Web: www.otherwiseworld.com, Email: wsebrans@otherwiseworld.com

Donate Items for the Silent Auction at the OPA Retreat

Whether or not you are attending the retreat, we ask you to look in your closets, drawers, bookshelves, and around the home and office for items to donate.

POSSIBLE ITEMS

New Age and Astrology Books, Jewelry, Accessories, Astrology readings, Recordings of workshops

Please send items to Alexandra Karacostas at the address below; she will bring them to the Retreat.

Alexandra Karacostas 12682 Quail Run Dr Chico, CA 95928

Please note that Alexandra will need to receive your donations no later than October 15, 2015.

Thank you for your donations and for supporting OPA!