

Stepping Into a Chart

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Synthesizing all of the disparate elements that appear in a chart, any chart, seems to be the 'hard part' for many students of astrology. But the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. And the central meaning of a chart is, after all, what we are after. Let's tap into Saturn's energy and develop a plan.

Step 1:

We, the people analyzing the chart, need to be in the most relaxed and centered state that we can achieve. In addition, keeping in mind the guidelines of gentleness-with-self and also maintaining a somewhat playful attitude are immensely helpful.

Step 2:

With the chart in front of you just look at it without thinking about anything in particular. Does anything in the chart jump out at you? If so it may be touching off something in your own makeup, and therefore becomes the perfect place to begin. If nothing jumps out then begin by proceeding to step 3.

Step 3:

As you face the chart is there more happening above the horizon (the line connecting the cusps of house #1 and house #7), or is there more activity below the horizon? If most of the action is above the horizon then there is a more extroverted attitude towards life. This means that the person (or organization, ...) habitually tries to figure out how they can fit into their environment. If the main action is below the horizon then the subject of the chart (the person or organization, ..) habitually tries to figure out how to merge interaction with various parts of their environment with their personal efforts and goals. As it is being used here an introverted stance sees the outside world relative to the self and an extroverted stance sees the self relative to the outside world.

Step 4:

As you face the chart, if more is happening on the left hand side (houses 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12) then the person is more prone to do things based on their own private thoughts and feelings, although they may be very social in their everyday activities. If the majority of the action is on the right hand side then the person will be more prone to seriously consider inputs from the people around them when making personal decisions.

Step 5:

What is the balance in the chart among Earth, Air, Fire, Water? Are any of these elements missing (or nearly missing), or clearly dominant? Earth brings an acuteness of perception through the five senses (touch, taste, seeing, hearing, smelling). Earth also brings a practical streak into that person's life. Air brings the strength of the mind to bear on whatever is happening. Air also brings nuances of different ways of socially interacting into play. Fire brings an impulse (and the energy) to do something -- make something happen in physical reality. Fire brings what we commonly call 'high energy'. Water brings psychic perceptions and information coming through emotional channels. Water brings access into parts of ourselves, and into our environment, that we are barely aware of.

Step 6:

What is the balance among cardinal (Υ , Θ , Ω , Υ), fixed (\Scorpio , Ω , Υ , Υ), and mutable (Π , Υ , Υ , Υ) energies in the chart? Cardinal energy is 'take charge' energy. Fixed energy perservers and sees the task

through to completion. Mutable energy goes with the flow. You may already have a sense of the energy that you are getting to know in the chart being considered. But let's continue.

Step 7:

This step is about looking at the balance among the polarities in the chart. Each axis has core issues associated with it. The energies at the two ends of an axis handle the core issues in diametrically opposed ways.

Axis	Core Issues
♈ / ♏	Me / We. Relationship issues.
♈ / ♏	My resources & security / Our resources & security. Identifying reality. Personal survival issues.
♈ / ♏	Curiosity & exploration / Establishing systems. Communication issues.
♈ / ♏	The power to BE / The power to USE. Balancing being and doing.
♈ / ♏	The King (benevolent & competent) / The People (self actualized). Taming the inner animal nature.
♈ / ♏	Incisive thought (analytical ability) / Incisive feeling (intuition). Navigating life's pathways.

Is there a dominant axis in the chart? Either by planetary concentration or by very busy houses. For example, suppose there are four planets in Scorpio in the 7th house opposing the Ascendant conjunct Mars in Taurus in the 1st house. Houses 1 and 7 are cardinal houses associated with Aries and Libra. So the quest to identify what is real, as well as the quest to zero in on working survival techniques, take on a very cardinal nature. 'Go-get-em' is a reasonable description. Note: Taurus focuses on identifying reality through the use of the five senses. If more than the five senses have been developed in an individual, then Taurus uses all available developed senses. Scorpio focuses on identifying what comes to be known as 'real' through processes of transformation personally experienced.

How would you rate the relative strength of each axis in the chart you are looking at? Sometimes core issues are most active on an unconscious level. (Because they are always churning around in us, we stop noticing them. It's a little like hiding something in plain sight.)

Step 8:

We are now ready to look at the Sun and Moon and Ascendant. Of course, we had a quick preview since all three belong to some axis. (Stelliums also would have been noticed in step 7.)

Step 9:

Are there any planets that stand alone, either because of the shape of the chart (ex. The handle of a bucket formation) or because they are unaspected (perigrine)? In my experience unaspected planets often seem to run away with the chart. (I use the original aspects presented by Ptolemy.)

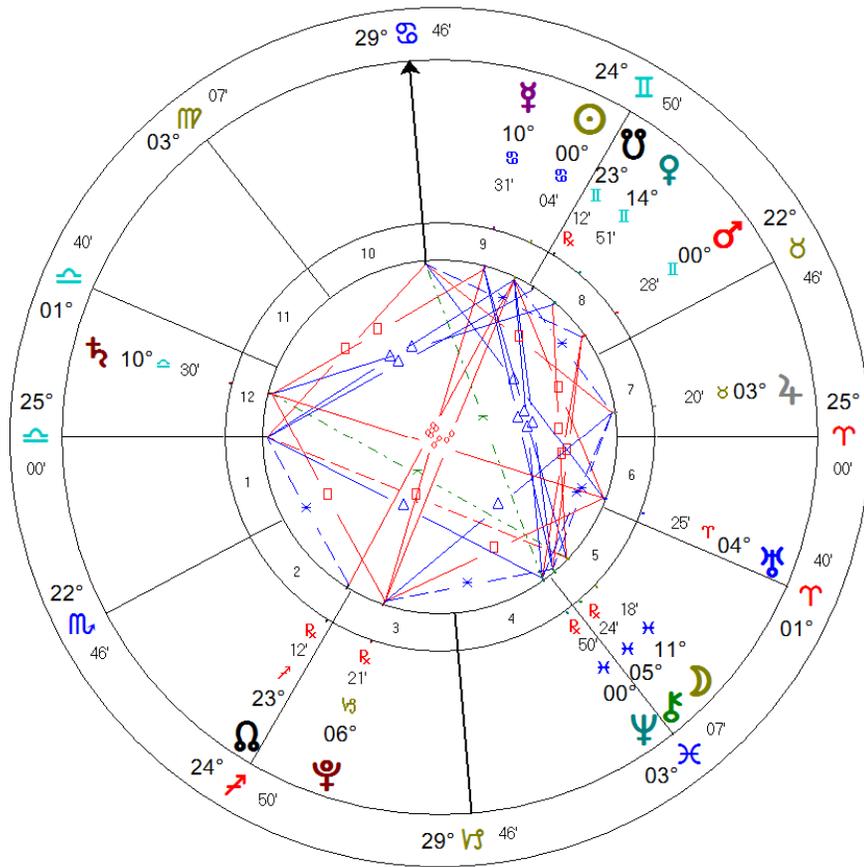
Step 10:

It is now time to look at the chart house by house, planet by planet, aspect by aspect. But not until now. Our conditioning is to start with the specific -- to break a problem down into as many pieces as possible, analyze each piece separately, and finally string together some kind of conclusion. But the saying 'we do not see the forest for the trees' becomes too real. For me it is always easier to come to terms with context first, and then fill in as many blanks as possible.

I am writing this article as the cardinal season beginning in June 2011 approaches. Consider a chart for a baby born in Hartford, CT just as the Sun goes into the sign of Cancer. Let's agree on June 21, 2011 at 3:00 pm in Hartford. OK. Who is this person? If you choose you may send your comments, using the

above steps, to me at finizior@yahoo.com. Please put 'ASC article' in the subject line. If I am not inundated I will try and respond to your comments.

1



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