

# *Find Yourself In Your Horoscope by Dane Rudhyar*

**Most people, as they look at their birth-chart**, consider it to be the representation of an event which has happened in the past. For them, the birth-chart indicates what has been irrevocably established and set by the birth of the body. A child, once born, is what her birth-chart reveals her to be. The chart is the "signature" of her destiny, the set pattern of her congenital temperament — what she is.

Superficially correct as this point of view may be, it fails nevertheless, in my opinion, to provide a sound basis for a psychologically constructive approach to, and use of, natal astrology. It leads more or less inevitably to a fatalistic attitude toward the "influences" of the planets and stars. Above all, it presents human life under a light which fails basically to show forth its spiritual significance and purpose. It gives a most incomplete meaning to the event of physical birth.

The physical organism does not begin its development then as it is born from the mother's womb. It is, rather, experiencing the end of a process. The child has been slowly forming ever since the moment of conception, when ovum and sperm united to constitute a fecundated ovum, filled with life-potentialities and, biologists would say, with a particular **set** of genes drawn from the heredity of both parent cells. This moment of conception marked the beginning of the bodily organism; and, in my opinion, no astrological chart can or should be made for it — first, because the time itself cannot (in the present condition of our knowledge) be ascertained; then, because the event is not, as it were, open to the "sky" (symbol of spirit in operation) but something which takes place in the depths of matter and of the mother's organism. It is an event **enveloped in the past of the human race**; enveloped in fate or karma.

When the astrologer erects a "prenatal chart", he does not actually cast a chart for the act of fecundation of the ovum. He goes backward from the time of a birth which has already occurred, in an attempt to discover some data concerning the **compulsions** of fate or racial nature which **set the stage** for the birth. The prenatal chart, if it is valid at all, reveals what is **back** of an individual person; what conditioned the formation of his material organism and his "collective unconscious" —but can tell nothing (directly at least) concerning what the individual is **as an individual**.

Even if we could erect a chart for the exact moment of the ovum's fecundation, all that this chart could show would be elements and impulses referring strictly to the physical organism of a man. This physical organism is already formed at the time of birth. I repeat that birth, for it, is a culmination — not a beginning. What is born out of any female body is

an almost finished organism; and in the case of animals, the young is very soon able to live by himself, even if he still needs protection. The animal's brain has attained at birth nearly its full development, and indeed everything in his life is, right then and there, **set**.

With man, the picture is entirely different, even at the biological level. The human baby's brain is only a fraction of what it will become at maturity. It will take years for the baby to become psychologically and mentally independent, self-sustained and creative in a truly "human" way — that is, **as an individual person**.

Why so? Because the emergence from the mother's womb of the human body marks only **the beginning of the long process of formation of the individual person**. Indeed, it is not the actual "emergence" which is significant, but the baby's "first cry" — the first **response** to physical nature, to the fact of starting development **within and through** a human body.

What is starting to develop? A spiritual entity, a "breath", a "flame" or consciousness, that by responding to the unceasing series of experiences derived from life on earth will gradually become more concrete, more steady, more formed, more integrated, more mature and more creative (that is, better able to project itself significantly upon the outer world). This entity is the individual essence, the real identity of the person.

But it is not real all at once in an actual, concrete, operative way! It must pass through long phases of growth. What we call "human life", from birth to death, is the span of its growth. It grows **within and through** the experiences of the body; and its growth reacts upon that of the body itself. This is the reason why the brain and nervous system of the human baby develop greatly after birth in size, strength and complexity of inter-connections they develop in order to meet the needs of the progressive manifestation of the individual "I".

What the astrological birth-chart reveals is the relatively unique way in which this individual identity is to grow to its full stature as an integrated and mature personality. It does not refer to an event which becomes past as the child grows up. It refers to a **continuing dynamic process**: to a "birthing" which occurs through the whole life. The birth-chart reveals the beginning, the source or "seed" of this process. It refers to the dynamic impulse which will remain what it is, but which also will unfold its potentialities and develop new modes or overtones (astrological progressions, etc.) as the process of formation of the individual person goes on, year in and year out.

Astrology has been called "the science of all beginnings" because it deals primarily with the point of departure of any and all cycles. But the body does not have its point of departure at birth! What begins with the "first cry" is the cycle of development of the **individual person**: at first, one might say, a mere "breath" or spirit, and gradually a more concrete, more focused, more mature personality — provided all goes well with its development!

This development can only occur through the variety of experiences which are provided by the interplay of a special kind — of animal organism (the human body) and the

environment of the earth's surface. Through constant life-challenges, problems of survival and growth, pains and pleasurable sensations or feelings, the individual spirit-breath becomes ever more definite. It knows itself as a conscious "I" and as the more or less successful manager of the energies of the body, of instinctual urges and powers. The less able a manager, the more confused the conscious realization, "I am". On the other hand, the less vivid the sense of being a definite, individualized "I" with a purpose to achieve and with maturity as its basic goal, the greater the difficulty of managing the various instincts, drives and desires of the body and of the unconscious, irrational layers of the psyche.

The aim of self-education is, therefore, first to make clearer the essential character, destiny and purpose of the self; then to make the conscious ego acquainted with the nature and scope of the energies which are to be managed. Lastly, it is to draw out and "lead out" (*e-duco*) the central core of this self, so that it becomes a dynamic power forever renewing and purifying both the conscious mind that **knows** and the natural energies that **act**.

This "drawing out" process operates through series of crises. Only crises can arouse the central self into a dynamic revelation and demonstration of itself. Self-education must include the readiness to face crises, and to face them as the only opportunities for spiritual awakening. Such an awakening is required in order that any new step be taken on the difficult road to personal maturity.

The basic value of natal astrology is that it enables us to discover the significance, implications **and purpose** of any important crisis of growth which we are to meet — and, first of all, of those which we have **already** faced, perhaps hesitantly, unconsciously or unsuccessfully. The youth usually cares little about crises and the like. He or she is spurred on by intense vital energies which follow, rather blindly, paths traced by ancestral (karmic) or social-religious compulsions. Later in life, out of sheer confusion or bewilderment the more grown-up person comes to feel acutely the need for clarification and assistance; and it is then that the call to the psychologist or astrologer is made.

When this call for help comes, the first things needed are the development of a new attitude toward the self and the bio-psychological energies of human nature, and a gradually clearer grasp of the meaning and value of crises which have already occurred — and the result of which probably caused distress or confusion, fears and neuroses.

This can be accomplished in some cases on the basis of a powerful devotional experience of religious (or quasi-religious) conversion. A way which is slower but spiritually more valid and permanent (if successful!) is the one which is based on psychological understanding and integration, then "transfiguration". This way can start with work along the lines of analytical psychology (Jung, etc.) or even of yogic or occult training (often very dangerous). Likewise, a sound type of astro-psychological study and self-education (under expert guidance, preferably!) can become a real foundation for psychological understanding and integration. But this can only happen when the birth-chart is considered as being a symbolical solution to the great work of bringing into a concrete operative manifestation in a mature personality the spiritual identity of the individual.

This spiritual identity begins to assert itself in relation to the new-born baby with the "first cry". The birth-chart is the "word of power", the magic formula which expresses symbolically the character of the spirit's **will to incarnation**; which indicates the manner in which this process of incarnation will basically operate through series of experiences and crises. It is a formula which the course of events can be expected to follow, not as a matter of external compulsion or fate, but because certain **types** of events are required to produce the kind of crises which the spiritual identity needs in order to become a concrete, integral, mature and creative personality.

No one has to fear what the birth-chart reveals **if it is read with spiritual discrimination**. What is in the birth-chart is what is required to bring about the fullest possible manifestation of the spirit in and through the personality. It is God's prescription for a spiritually successful incarnation. The point is, however, that what God or spirit expects of the life of a newborn baby may not be at all the type of thing which the mother or father expects! These parental expectations are usually either self-centered or dictated by some average ideal of what a normally successful life should be. God, obviously, is not interested in either alternative, nor is the spiritual identity that seeks to fulfill a definite purpose in becoming involved in the life of a human organism just being born.

How can anyone discover this purpose of the incarnating spirit? How can anyone find in the birth-chart, progressions and transits, "God's prescription" for the fulfillment of such a purpose? It is to these questions that I shall try now to give at least tentative answers. These answers should never be taken too literally. They indicate a way, an approach to the interpretation of the chart and to what can be expected from the interpretation. But they are obviously **not** the way. In the hands of some people they should provide excellent results; others may find them of little practical value. It is so with everything which has spiritual implications; because in such cases, everything depends upon the power of the spirit within, upon the readiness to face crises and self-surrender.

### **Some Practiced Steps**

- 1.** The first step derives from the realization that a birth-chart must be considered and understood as a whole. No chart has any significance except as a whole, exactly as no word can be understood by taking out of it two or three letters and studying them as separate factors. The birth-chart is a formula, a prescription for the development of a mature personality. If any part of it is omitted, the whole meaning may be invalidated. The meaning, the solution of the problem, is in the whole — not in the parts.
- 2.** From the point of view which I am taking here, it is essential for any valid results that the birth-chart be calculated for the exact moment and place of birth. This does not mean that a general or so-called "solar" chart made only for the day of birth has no value. But if one tries to find in a birth-chart the very purpose of the long process of birth as an individual

person, and a solution to the problems and crises of this "birthing", then one must have a precise timing and placing of the **individualizing event**: the birth cry.

The main indicator of that which makes a human being unique and individual, different from all other human beings, is the cross constituted by the natal horizon and meridian, i.e., the four "angles" of the birth-chart. The ascendant is most particularly the symbol of the essential **uniqueness of being** of the individual. And an individual is, relatively at least, a "unique" being because he has a unique purpose to achieve. It is in order to achieve this unique purpose that the individual identity — the spirit-breath — becomes incorporated in a human body.

The fact that the body is "human" is the **general** factor in the life and destiny. The fact that there is a unique purpose for the incorporation of the spiritual identity constitutes the **individual and individualizing factor**. The former is shown by the planets (including Sun and Moon); and the "solar" chart shows what particular type of "human" nature is revealed by the body as a living organism. The individualizing factor — that which makes the individual's pattern of experience unique — is more precisely indicated by the natal cross of horizon and meridian.

It is, indeed, very difficult to know the exact degree of the natal ascendant — thus, the exact minute of the first cry. But it is logical that it should be so: for how few, among the billions of human beings on earth, ever come to realize that they are "individuals", that they are spiritual identities gradually demonstrating their power and fulfilling their selfhood through lives illuminated by a clear and definite sense of purpose?

The exact degrees of the four angles of the birth-chart remain, therefore, in most cases a mystery. It is never too wise to reveal to everybody one's exact ascendant, for it holds the key to the essential individuality of the self in this particular life.

How can this key be used? By integrating the indications revealed by the zodiacal signs and degrees at the four angles, with a stronger emphasis upon the ascendant; by studying the symbols for the degrees represented, according to the Sabian series which, in my opinion, is by far the most significant and reliable set of zodiacal symbols. [Rudhyar's book on the Sabian Symbols, **An Astrological Mandala**, provides a version of the Sabian Symbols].

As the exact time of birth is usually uncertain, "rectification" becomes necessary; but there is no certainty that any set of rules for rectification will always apply, as these rules differ, depending upon various astrological "authorities". The subject, however, cannot be discussed in this article, important as it is.

**3.** Once the approximate degrees of the angles of the birth-chart have been found and the planets have been correctly placed in the houses of the chart, the next thing to do is to mark out clearly, by whatever means seems most convenient, the geometrical pattern made by the planets (including the Sun and Moon). This means calculating the "aspects" between the planets and establishing the way in which these planets are placed in relation to the

natal horizon and meridian — also, in relation to the Moon nodes' axis, and possibly other axes of usually secondary importance.

As a result of these calculations, the pattern of the entire chart will emerge. It can be interpreted most simply by referring it to the sevenfold classification devised by Marc Jones in his **Guide to Horoscope Interpretation**; or in other ways. But in any case, the chart must be made significant as a complete all-inclusive whole. It is a word, a logos. It has a message to tell, as a whole. It is, I repeat, God's prescription for the incorporation of a spiritual identity in and through a series of individual and individualizing life-experiences or crises. [Rudhyar's **Person-Centered Astrology** includes a discussion of planetary gestalt, along with examples of the seven basic gestalt patterns.]

The attempt to visualize the whole chart as a significant word or formula includes evidently a quick perception of the zodiacal positions of the planets; but nothing like the usual practice of tabulating the meanings and "strength" of each planet according to its zodiacal position, as it is taught in most textbooks. This factor of "zodiacal position" can be, and has been, I believe, entirely overestimated in the cases of most planets. It assuredly is meaningless as far as Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are concerned, because these planets remain in the same sign for years. Thus, their presence in any one sign refers to the mere fact that a person belongs to one generation or another. It has an over-all historical meaning. The response of the individual to this meaning can only be found in terms of the house in which the planets are located at birth.

**4.** The factor of zodiacal position has meaning **in itself** mostly where the Sun and the Moon are concerned, because these two "Lights" (as they are called in traditional astrology) represent the two aspects, or polarities, of the life-force, and the zodiac is the field of operation of this life-force. The zodiac is the "electromagnetic field" or vital "aura" of the earth; it is the symbol of the yearly cycle of distribution of the life-force, issuing from the Sun and adapted by the Moon to the everyday use of every living organism on earth. Thus, the exact zodiacal positions of the Sun and the Moon are the main indicators of what types of energies a human organism and personality are using, in order to remain **alive and growing**.

The knowledge of the basic characteristics of these solar and lunar energies at work in a particular person is obviously most valuable, for almost everything else derives from these energies and from the way they operate — both at the biological and the psychological level. The soli-lunar forces condition and define the main instincts or "drives" of a human personality, just as the type of fuel used in running an engine establishes the essential structure and capacity for work of the engine. It is useless to seek to remedy some defect in the operation of a motor if you do not know, at first, whether it operates on steam-power, gasoline, electricity . . . or atomic energy!

The zodiacal position of the Sun represents the type of energy used; that of the Moon, the mode of distribution and circulation of the energy-releasing fuel or power. The relation

between the Sun and the Moon is, therefore, the most basic of all astrological factors dealing with life and with the use, availability, direction and purpose of the life-energies of the total organism of personality. The positions of the planets modify this relationship, help or thwart its workings, but do not change its nature or essential characteristics.

Any significant and truly revealing study of the related positions of the Sun and the Moon at birth requires that these positions be referred to the "lunation cycle" in which the birth occurred; thus, to the **preceding** New Moon.

The "**New Moon before birth**" represents the hidden source of the life-force and of the basic organic impulse within the body and the unconscious aspect of the psyche (or inner life). The **phase** of the lunation cycle at which a person is born constitutes what I have called his or her "lunation birthday" and is of extreme importance in establishing the way in which the personality operates as a functioning organism — a subject I discussed some months ago (**Your Lunation Birthday, Horoscope**, December 1949).

**5.** The study of the Sun's and Moon's positions in the birth-chart takes place at a particular moment of the person's life — whether the person consults an astro-psychological analyst or undertakes the study by himself or herself. This particular moment is of great importance, because a person who studies his chart brings to the study (or to what is told to him by the astrologer) **what he is at the time of the inquiry**. He approaches the birth-chart with the wisdom or ignorance, the relative degree of frustration and fulfillment, the eagerness or weariness of soul and mind, which are his at the time. He has a certain biological age: that is, so many of his birthdays have passed. He has, also, a psychological individual age which is determined by the use he has made of his opportunities and his handicaps.

These ages determine largely what **he will see** in the chart; or how he will accept and understand what the analyst will tell him. Therefore, this age-factor must be carefully considered. And this brings in the need to study what I have called "the progressed lunation cycle". (cf. **Progressed Lunation Charts, Horoscope**, March 1950; and **The Lunation Cycle**).

I cannot repeat here what I have already stated; but I must stress the fact that no valuable psychological assistance can be given to any person unless this person is approached at the level of personal development which he has reached at the time. The study of the progressed lunation cycle and of all planetary progressions subservient to it is necessary, astrologically speaking, to evaluate this level. This evaluation must necessarily include a great amount of intuitive judgment and of "feeling-with" the client. Yet the pattern of the 30-year-long "progressed lunation cycle" provides an objective kind of measuring rod or frame of reference.

An individual who comes for astrological advice just before his "progressed Full Moon" has different needs and a different psychological attitude than the person who comes just before or after a "progressed New Moon". The astro-psychologist must adjust his

interpretations and advice to these attitudes and to the many indications given by other planetary progressions and transits.

The point is that any astrologer advising a client has a personal responsibility toward his client in terms of the way the client responds to, and perhaps follows, his advice. It is not a mere question of "seeing" in the chart something about to happen and of telling "the truth", whatever the consequences may be. That is fortune-telling and not psychological practice based on astrology; and here I am discussing the latter and having no interest whatsoever in any form of the most dangerous art of astrological divination. It is a dangerous art because it takes as a rule no responsibility and has little concern for **what may happen to the client as a result of what he is told.**

Again we come back to the question of the basic attitude one holds toward the **use** to which astrology should be put. At every step of the interpretation of a birth-chart, the main problem is: What can the client do with what I am telling him? And the astrologer can never shirk or avoid this problem. By studying the client's progressions and the transits of the **slower** planets (especially Saturn, Uranus and Neptune), it is possible to "feel" his responsiveness and readiness to accept what one finds in his birth-chart; thus, his psychological ability to reorient his consciousness along the path of individual unfoldment outlined by the birth-chart.

It should be obvious to any astrologer that progressions and transits are potentially contained and implied in the birth-chart. The **Ephemerides** for the weeks and years after birth simply serve to give the exact data; but all these data could — with a great deal of work — be deduced from the birth-chart through the use of planetary, solar, lunar cycles. The birth-chart sets the pattern of the process of that "birth" which begins with the "first cry" and ends with the last gasp of the dying organism. Any spiritually valid astrological interpretation aims at nothing else except to make this process more complete and more rewarding — not only as it unfolds in this earthly life but in its promise of immortal selfhood.