

How To Evaluate & Solve Emotional Problems *by Dane Rudhyar*

In the article entitled **Find Yourself in Your Horoscope**, published in the September issue of this magazine, I stated what I regard as the fundamental principles of a constructive, spiritually valid and growth-stimulating approach toward astrology, especially toward the study of the birth-chart of an individual person. I described the birth-chart — any birth-chart — as Life's plan for a successful process of individualization of the human spirit. This individualization of the spirit in the person is expressed in **potentiality** in the act of the first breath of the newborn — thus, in the birth-chart. It is actually made **manifest** in and through the individual's responses to a series of basic life experiences and especially to various crises of personal growth indicated in progressions and transits.

By responding successfully to the challenges inherent in the crises of growth, the spirit of the individual becomes progressively more fully active and "incorporated". At the same time, the concrete personality (body, soul and mind) grows ever richer and more integrated — and, if all goes well, more consecrated to and identified with the purpose for which the birth occurred.

The essential aim of any spiritually and psychologically valid type of astrology is to help individuals (and, in the case of "mundane" astrology, groups or nations) to respond ever more successfully to the challenges presented by everyday life, by crises of growth. The true aim of astrology is to help the individual in seeing his or her "crises", small or big, as phases of growth — and not as either senseless and chaotic occurrences or steps on the road to personal frustration, defeat and disintegration.

These principles need to be constantly repeated, in one form or another, because so much of astrology fails to embody them in the manner in which it is used. Theoretically, every sound astrological interpretation of a person's chart should not stress what a life situation is or will be but, instead, what the person will require in order to meet successfully this situation or crisis. The birth-chart and its progressions and transits reveal the celestial way to meet bio-psychic crises and solve personal problems — the way of divine intelligence and cosmic order.

In order to understand such a way, the first thing demanded of the student of astrology is that he or she grasp the idea that in all activities two principles (or forces), opposite in essence yet complementary in their effects, are always operating. This is often called, in astrological books, the principle of "polarity". Two opposite signs of the zodiac are polar opposites; likewise, the "two Lights" (Sun and Moon) are polar opposites. The planets are

also paired in an attempt to understand the meaning of the activities and functions they represent.

There are several ways of pairing the planets. In one of the ancient methods which has left its mark, for instance, upon the sequence of the days of the week — the Sun is not coupled with any planet. The Sun is the sacred "seventh" — the alpha and the omega — while the Moon (Monday) and Saturn (Saturday), Mars (Tuesday) and Venus (Friday), Mercury (Wednesday) and Jupiter (Thursday) are paired. These three pairs represent three basic levels of being or three kinds of substantial basis for the operations of life: the biological (Moon-Saturn, Mother-Father substances), the emotional (Mars-Venus) and the mental (Mercury-Jupiter).

In such a clarification, a very ancient one, the Sun, as the spirit-self, is seen operating through three "vehicles" or "planes of manifestation". The three pairs of planets constitute the cosmic agencies or energies which build and sustain these three types of manifestation (or, as the Theosophists say, "bodies") — physical, astral and mental.

In another kind of classification, which I am adopting here, the planets are paired according to levels of activity. The Sun is paired with the Moon; the number of levels is theoretically left undefined, as there is always the possibility for an individual to be active at some higher level. Nevertheless, the Sun-Moon pair remains the foundation (and reveals the essential purpose) of the organic processes from which ever higher "overtones" of conscious activity may arise.

I have dealt already with the Sun-Moon pair (cf. the forementioned September, 1950, article and previous ones on the [lunation cycle](#)); I am now to study in sequence the other pairs: Mars-Venus, Jupiter-Saturn, Uranus-Neptune, Mercury-Pluto.

We saw that the Sun-Moon pair refers to the basic character, rhythm and quality of the life-force, the basic energy (or "fuel") used by the entire organism in its complex biological and psychological operations (Sun) and also to the mode of distribution and circulation (Moon) of this power of life. All life-power comes from the Sun; it is distributed by the Moon, which makes available at every moment (if all goes well!) the kind of energy needed to meet the constantly changing demands of earthly organic existence.

With Venus and Mars, we enter the realm of planets as such. Planets modify and differentiate the solar life-force. They provide the specialized types of energy (which the Moon will then distribute) to fill the requirements of any particular situation, of any organic (physical or psychological) need of the personality.

Because Venus and Mars are the planets closest to our globe, they refer in astrology to the most intimate factors in the personality, to the most immediate and spontaneous expressions of human life. This "intimacy of living" operates first of all at the generic level of biological instincts; there we find Venus and Mars related to the sexual functions — that is, to the transfer of the biological characteristics of the parents to a progeny.

These biological characteristics become at the level of the conscious and individual personality the essential feature of the "I", of the personal ego which feels itself unique and

different from all other personal egos. In every person, there is an element of personal freedom and pure spontaneity of being, however weak and ineffective it may be. There is a realm in which one feels "I am I, myself" and from which one strives to act in pure self-expression toward objects, situations and people that appear to him good, valuable and fulfilling. It is to this realm that Venus and Mars refer.

Venus symbolizes the feeling or intuition of individual selfhood, the sense of value. In its highest expression, it stands for the divine archetype of man, the spiritual flame that is the permanent identity of the individual person, the "Luciferian Spirit" or Kumara of occult lore. But, generally speaking, Venus establishes the character and essential quality of the intimate and direct realization which any individualized person has of his (or her) self and of what is "good" or "bad" for this self (sense of value).

Mars, on the other hand, represents the desire and ability to act out this feeling of being a self; to act it out, not in terms of whether it fits social or traditional patterns, rules or laws (these belong to the Jupiter-Saturn realm), but simply out of the sheer joy of being "I". Mars is also the power of "desire", which means the pull toward whatever the Venus function has declared to be valuable to the personality — or the instinct to fight or to run away from whatever is declared dangerous or inimical to the organism as a whole.

What one should call the "emotional life" is a twofold manifestation of this immediate sense of individual being (Venus) and of the desire and effort to express it in acts (Mars).

The Emotional Life and Its Problems

Following the pattern set by the lunation cycle, from New Moon to New Moon (a New Moon being a conjunction of the Moon and the Sun), it is possible to study the constantly changing relationship of the planets Mars and Venus. Both revolve around the zodiac at different speeds; the astrologer can watch the cyclic recurrence of their conjunctions, squares and oppositions.

However, because these planets actually revolve around the Sun and not around the Earth (which also revolves around the Sun), the geocentric motions of Mars and Venus (their motions as seen from the Earth) are not even. Most of the time, these motions have the same direction as those of the Sun and the Moon; but part of the time, Mars and Venus appear to move in an opposite direction (that is, backward in the zodiac); they are then said to be "retrograde". This fact is the first to take into account in studying the problems related to the emotional life of a person and in trying to decipher "celestial solution" to these problems.

Because of their proximity to the Earth, Venus and Mars pass less time moving in a sense opposite to that of the two "Lights" than any other planet; this is logical because these two planets deal with the most spontaneous and direct expression of personality. The feeling of being "I, myself" is rooted in the very fact of being alive and for conscious man is hardly separable from this fact. If "I" is represented by Venus (the pattern of selfhood), then "am" is an expression of the solar life-force; there is no "I" where there is no "am".

Nevertheless, there are psychological conditions in which the conscious "I" is actually working against the instinctual flow of the vital forces of the human organism. There are personalities whose "sense of value" (Venus) runs counter to their natural instincts (ascetics, for instance) and who seek to overcome and transcend, for one reason or another, the feeling of being separate and independent "individual souls" and the Martian desires of the individual soul; people also whose emotional nature is stamped from birth by a process of disintegration and fighting against the healthy rhythm of the organic "will to be".

When these and similar conditions prevail as innate tendencies, one may expect to find Venus and Mars, or both, "retrograde" at birth. But, and this is an essential point, this does not mean that the negative meaning of these tendencies must exist in the life of the person. There is, most definitely, a positive meaning to a natal Mars or Venus retrograde. Wherever these planets are retrograde, this does not mean that the person has to have negative or defective emotional lives but that there is a need to use the Venusian or Martian functions in a manner that brings their development in contrast to the natural flow of the life-force in the body.

This may mean personal-emotional conflicts; but conflicts of themselves can be most valuable. They imply, or lead to, a dynamic state of consciousness and at least latent creativity. One of the typical and often-mentioned cases is that of the leader of the Theosophical Society and of a number of other reform movements, Annie Besant, whose Mars and Venus were both retrograde. She crusaded for birth control (i. e., a procedure inhibiting the natural process of the life-force) as well as for the occultist's path of ascetic or quasi-ascetic self-control.

In other instances, Mars and Venus, or one of them, retrograde may indicate disturbances and blockages in the endocrine glands' system, particularly the sex glands and perhaps the thyroid. This may provide deep emotional frustrations; but these, in turn, can lead to a more introspective, subjective and mystical approach to life and thus become factors of the most positive value, spiritually speaking. These retrograde planets serve, thus, the divine purpose of the incarnation of the spirit in this particular human being. All that is required is for the individual to recognize this to be true and to stop fighting against, and resenting, this damming-up of the biological-psychic energies of human nature.

Spirit (and indeed the Mind symbolized by Mercury) develops, at first, on earth in counterpoint to Nature's instincts — which are represented by the Sun-Moon pair. Even a definite and prolonged illness may, for this reason, serve in some cases the purpose of the spirit. A person who lives the spiritual life is one who lives in accordance with the purpose and direction of the spirit in him. The main value of astrology is that it can be a powerful help in making us recognize, then accept, the purpose of the spirit as it seeks to demonstrate itself in and through both our congenital setup (natal chart) and the sequence of our life experiences after birth (progressions and transits).

In considering whether Mars or Venus is "direct" or "retrograde", we are studying actually the phases of their cycles of revolution around the Sun, as seen by an observer on the Earth. Without getting into the details of the phases of these Venus-Sun and Mars-Sun cycles, I shall simply state that Venus is retrograde around the time of its "inferior" conjunctions to the Sun — that is, when it passes between the Sun and the Earth — it is then most brilliant and nearest to us. There is a "superior" conjunction of Venus to the Sun when the Sun is found between the Earth and Venus.

Venus, because of its proximity to the Earth in the solar system, can never be seen more than 47° away from the Sun in the zodiac. It is seen, therefore, close to the Sun in the sky and only either just before sunrise or just after sunset. It is, therefore, either "morning star" or "evening star"; because Venus can make only very few aspects to the Sun (semi-sextile, semi-quintile, novile and semi-square), the all-important Venus-to-Sun relationship can best be analyzed in terms of these two positions of Venus.

As Morning Star, Venus rises before the Sun" — its zodiacal longitude is less than that of the Sun — and it is called Venus Lucifer (the bearer of light). As evening star, Venus "sets after the Sun" — its longitude is greater than that of the Sun — and is called Venus Hesperus (of the West).

Venus as morning star in a birth-chart indicates a type of emotional activity which, symbolically, seems ahead of the self. The person goes out to meet the world (and especially other persons) with an eager expectancy, as if life itself depended upon the results of the meeting. Yet if the meeting proves disappointing, the result may be a psychological attitude of compensatory coldness and blockage a mask of self-protection. Typical of this emotional attitude is the adolescent — eager and yet ready to recoil if hurt, over-impulsive and oversensitive and, at a higher emotional level, the man or woman with a contagious "warmth of feeling" and with creative enthusiasm (Walt Whitman, F. D. Roosevelt, etc.)

Venus as evening star in a birth-chart indicates, on the other hand, a person whose main emotional tendency is to feel after the act. The feeling-emotion results from, rather than anticipates, the experience; it has the character of a moral or esthetic judgment upon the experience. This judgment is usually conditioned by some traditional, social or religious value. The emotional life tends to be more "cultured" or "aristocratic" — or else it may be beset by fears, inhibitions and the kind of objectivity which destroys any spontaneous warmth of feelings (George Washington, Woodrow Wilson, Eisenhower, Einstein, etc.)

Obviously, these characteristics are very general and may be modified by the exact distance of Venus to the Sun, by Venus's relationship to Mars (and other planets) and by Mars's character — for, if the Mars function is frustrated or deviated, even a spontaneous and warm Venus function can see its avenue of expression (Mars) blocked.

Mars can make any geocentric aspect to the Sun, as it moves outside of the Earth's orbit. It is retrograde when it is in opposition to the Sun — the Earth stands then between the Sun and Mars and is, as it were, subject to the opposite pulls of solar vitality and

Martian activity. In such a condition, Mars is closest to the Earth and fully illuminated by solar light — as is a Full Moon. This "Full Mars" phase is, therefore, a symbol of objectivity in action. The individual born with Mars retrograde is usually forced to gain a new perspective on his Martian power of desires and initiative; this, in most cases, can only be gained as a result of some frustration and damming-up of libido — to use a Freudian term, coined by a man who had a most prominent and insistent Mars retrograde!

The time before (and especially after) an opposition of Mars to the Sun is, thus, a time for a reorientation of the person's power to act and to express himself in a personal, spontaneous (often blatant and egocentric) manner. It implies the need for a revision of attitude toward one's usual behavior, probably because the results of previous actions have proven destructive or perilous. If one resists and resents this celestial demand made upon him that he mend his ways and that he acquire greater maturity, then the Mars function may turn vindictive and aggressive. Man hits hither and yon, just to prove that he can act "as he pleases!" — or he keeps moaning over his fate and gives vent to bitterness and complaints, thus defeating the celestial purpose.

Besides considering whether Mars is retrograde or not (thus, close to its opposition to the Sun), the astrologer should pay special attention to any aspect between the Sun and Mars, for Mars is, by nature, that which exteriorizes in acts the power of solar vitality. Mars releases power for sheer self-expression or for deliberate use; the use may be constructive or destructive, indicating a building-up or a tearing-down process — both of which are necessary if there is to be the fullness of personal development. A quintile (72° aspect) of Mars to the Sun is a particularly significant aspect, inasmuch as it suggests at least the strong possibility of creative acts — i. e., of acts through which the self in man makes his mark upon his environment.

The square and particularly the semi-square of Mars to the Sun at birth indicates the ability to mobilize readily and effectively one's vital forces under the spur of strong emotional desires. It depends upon other factors in the chart, and upon Mars's position in the zodiac and in the natal houses, what this quick mobilization of energy will aim at — it may even have no aim at all, except the need to "let go of steam"!

In studying the emotional life of a person and its problems, the zodiacal and house positions of Mars and Venus are obviously of great significance, but not of such exclusively important significance as the average astrologer believes — a convenient belief, which makes interpretation easier and quicker. The position of Mars in the natal houses is, nevertheless, an essential indication of the field of experience in which the individual should best focus his personal activities if he is to fulfill the spiritual purpose of his existence as an individual, while zodiacal position will confirm (what is usually evident) the main characteristics of the way a person goes at things and seeks to act upon people.

Likewise, the natal house in which Venus is placed indicates the best department of personal development in which the individual ought to focus his sense of value and his efforts at realizing the basic quality of his individual selfhood — the field in which he can be

himself most spontaneously and purely. The zodiacal sign which contains Venus represents the essential quality of selfhood (among twelve basic qualities) which best identifies the nature of the individual's ideal of emotional fulfillment and self-realization.

The symbols of the zodiacal degrees on which the two planets are located (and the Sabian series of such symbols has proven to me to be by far the most valid) are also most revealing keys to the ideal according to which a person seeks naturally and immediately to evaluate life situations and relationships with people (Venus) — and to act out his real self (Mars), regardless of traditions and socio-ethical patterns or pressures.

One should never forget, however, that Mars and Venus are to be studied and understood as a pair. The one can not really be understood without the other, no more than it is possible to evaluate a person's vitality and power to be a functioning organism, able to live in a particular environment, if the Sun and the Moon (and the phases of the lunation cycle) are not studied as a complex, dynamic whole.

The cycle of conjunctions of Mars and Venus may not be as important as the lunation cycle; nevertheless, it is assuredly worth considering as a key to the Mars-Venus relationship. With Mars, personality goes out into experience; with Venus, it draws a (positive or negative) harvest from experience. It is the balance between the out-goings and the in-goings which reveals what the emotional life of the person actually is.

Emotional confusion and a quality of over-subjectivity and perhaps egocentricity are often found where Mars and Venus are conjunct in the birth-chart. Such a natal conjunction is rather frequent in the charts of individuals seeking to tread the "occult path". In a sense, these individuals often **short circuit their emotions**.

The opposition between Mars and Venus at birth gives emotional objectivity but also, at times, emotional stalemate, indecision or inner conflict between desire and will. The square often conduces to great emotional activity and may be an important element in a particularly "creative" kind of temperament. The semi-square tends to stress emotional conflicts and "wear and tear" or worry; but it also often accents a powerful emotional dynamism and self-projection. The sextile and trine are supposedly "harmonious" configurations but may reveal an easygoing nature which builds well but in a rather narrow or traditional manner.

In an article published in this magazine (April, 1947), I made a special study of the Venus-Mars cycle and of the "Parts" which can be deduced from the natal positions of these two planets when the moment of birth is at least approximately known. I showed how, in every fifth conjunction of Mars and Venus, Venus is retrograde (about every 77 months) and how, moreover, these special conjunctions recur (with a lag of about 7 degrees) every 32 years, with a great cycle of around 50 times 32 (50x32) years.

The years in which these "fifth conjunctions" occur offer particularly important opportunities for emotional repolarization and reevaluation. The places where they fall in a natal chart are likewise significant. The last one occurred November 7, 1946, on the first degree of Sagittarius; the next will take place in 1953. It may also be quite worthwhile to

find out where the Mars-Venus conjunction which preceded birth occurred. This zodiacal degree symbolizes the ancestral or "Karmic" source of the emotional nature of a person; but if the conjunction occurred before the time of conception, special attention should be given also to the points of opposition between the two planets.

What is particularly important is to differentiate between aspects which follow a conjunction ("waxing" square or trine, etc.) and those which follow an opposition ("waning"). This is a general principle which, in my opinion, could never be stressed too much in a truly psychological and psychotherapeutic type of astrology; I discussed it at length when studying the lunation cycle and the **"Lunation Birthday"**.