

Painless Astrology

Painless Astrology: A Simple and Fun Guide to Natal Chart Interpretation

Introduction

"With your chart in your hand and this book..."

Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a map to life? Everything would be much easier if we could anticipate the joys and opportunities and be better prepared for the lessons and pains. We could step around the pitfalls and see through our delusions. And then, consider those periods of hell. We all go through them - no one is exempt and, typically, we waste untold hours in the "why me?" stages, blaming ourselves for imagined failings when this is just "one of those" periods which everyone experiences now and then. Imagine how much further you would get in life if someone alerted you to a coming six month period of difficulty and trial so you would prepare yourself, meet the challenge, grow and prosper. This, my friend, is the goal of this book.

When I was young I believed that at some miraculous age life would bring me inner calm. Further, I believed when I reached that magic number I would be fully integrated, happy, know myself and have control over where I was going. My career would be developed (although I had little concept of discipline and commitment). When I was quite young I expected this miracle to take place, possibly, when I turned 18 (isn't that what I had been led to believe by society?). But when I turned 18 the magic age became 21. Later I hoped for it to take place *at least* in my twenties! Obviously, I finally learned that life simply does not work that way. Hopefully, we all outgrow those socially-ingrained myths. Growing up is very complex. It takes a lifetime (or more) to achieve these self-perfections and ideals to any reasonable satisfaction. Certainly there were some wonderful changes which took place (some wonderful only in hindsight once I outgrew that difficult period) between 27 and 30. Now in my mid-forties and closer to my goals, I find it remains necessary to continue working on my self-improvement. There is a moral in this. *We never stop growing up.* Those who are in their senior years and who live with wisdom will attest that they continue to meet lessons which push and stretch their lives into growthful experiences. I am not about to claim that I have arrived at (or even near) perfection. I have gained some very useful skills in my twenty years of spiritual study. A great many of these skills come from my working knowledge of astrology.

How did I come to be an astrologer? In 1976 I took a self-improvement course - a two weekend intensive seminar which taught improved self-control, meditation and visualization techniques, and methods of making life more positive and tolerable. One of the facilitators was a woman who I found to be absolutely delightful. She made learning fun. When I learned that she was soon to begin teaching a six week course, I was eager to take it. I asked her what she would be teaching and she said it was a beginning astrology course. Obviously, I took it anyway!

Did I believe in astrology at the time? Well, I didn't *not* believe in it and I knew the information found on bar napkins, in newspapers and on matchbooks about Virgos was fairly relevant to many aspects of my behavior and personality (although I also knew that much of me was not that way at all). In fact, I had often referred to myself as "very Virgo." I

also found that the horoscopes in the daily paper had proven useless to me.

Several years prior to meeting my first professional astrologer, I had begun to undergo a philosophical conversion. During these years I had been reading and studying many aspects of metaphysics, religious studies and working on personal disciplines. I knew that astrology to be an established discipline in the Asian cultures and that it had been esteemed two thousand years ago by the three magi, using astrological knowledge to locate the child who would so change the course of human events. I knew it was just possible (and highly likely) that I might learn something important so I brought a notebook and an open mind to my first astrology class.

One of the early lessons we learned was the complex mathematical formula for chart casting. In early 1976, the computer programs were not particularly prevalent nor were they all that accurate. Being "very Virgo" by nature meant that I took copious notes and was eager to be a good and serious student. In addition, I had a teacher who was an absolute delight. I promptly went home and put the formula to work. Three hours later I had calculated my own natal chart but I still knew too little to determine whether or not it was accurate. The few hours of class I had been in thus far were not adequate for me to interpret all the symbols and numbers. I called my teacher and Judy did what any astrologer would do: she began to interpret the chart from my data to see if it really described me as the person I was.

The interpretation left me *almost* speechless and the experience of listening to her changed the course of my life. This was the first time in my then thirty years I had heard *any* person explain my thought processes, my emotional responses and numerous other aspects of my reality and relationship with life. Not only was this information presented to me in a non-judgmental manner, but it was accompanied with suggestions and techniques I could use to make further improvements and adjustments. In addition, this knowledge would make life easier and allow me to become happier with the person I was becoming. It could guide me past barriers I perceived to exist between myself and success as a person. How could I go wrong?

When the beginning class reached its end I took the next, advanced course. Waiting until Judy was to teach another beginning class, there was nothing to do but begin "casting" and struggling to interpret charts. The first year I spent an average of two hours with the mathematics alone painfully struggling to become an astrologer. It is relatively easy to learn what all the separate parts of astrology are - each of the signs of the zodiac is distinct in personality, the planets are easy to distinguish from each other, but taking an accurate natal chart and presenting a stranger with a complete, holistic analysis of their behavior patterns proved to be immensely difficult.

After working with over more than two thousand different clients I have gained the ability to not only sit down with a complete stranger and discuss their natal chart in intimate detail but I also teach them a great deal about astrology. Indeed, clients of several years' standing easily develop a fair amount of astrological skill in "reading" their own charts easily learned from their annual interpretations and from listening to the tapes of those sessions. In 1990 I "tested" my approach, teaching a six hour workshop to a group of people, most of whom knew nothing about astrology, By the end of the day all but one were able to not only "read" their own charts but could also look at another's chart and make good sense out of it.

For the past twenty years, my students have urged me to write a book but I did not want to write for the astrologer nor for the student. I wanted to write this book for my clients. I wanted to write for the person who has access to a natal chart. I wanted to help the average person learn to be her/his own astrologer. These days any person interested in astrology can get a copy of his or her own natal chart from a computerized service for a few dollars with reassurance that it is acceptably accurate. You need not learn the painfully

intricate mathematical formulas and logarithms which were part of my early training.

In 1993 I began writing this book. It was a fascinating process, for one cannot write about a topic - even as an expert - without learning a great deal. I completed what I thought was an outstanding book and contracted with a publisher who agreed to market both paperbound and hardcover editions. That agreement proved fruitless and, encouraged by the largest distributors in the U.S., the contract was terminated in 1996. This provided me with a great opportunity to do what the Universe had been encouraging me for many years: to put this text in print myself. This is the first book published by The Hermit's Grove, and this new, completely revised edition is being prepared as Saturn moves in direct opposition to my natal Jupiter. I would hope that, upon finishing using this book as a valued tool for learning astrology, you will understand just how appropriate is this timing.

We ask your understanding with some aspects of this book. We are a non-profit organization. Those who know me recognize that my priority is providing astrologers with quality information rather than making a personal profit. My primary concern is the content rather than the cover. I believe deeply in this book. My experience as an educator assures me that this approach will truly make learning more about astrology a pleasurable and painless process. I thank you for participating in this work.

Astrology can be learned easily, if it is taught simply. I believe deeply in painless astrology! With your chart in your hand and this book, you will be able to understand and use astrology to help you with your life.

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