



ALIGNING LIGHT ASTROLOGY

Beginner Astrology Cheat Sheet

Last Updated 2.17.2024

WELCOME!

What is Astrology?

Astrology is the study of correlations between the movement of the planets and events taking place on Earth.

Context of this document:

Western Tropical Hellenistic-Era Astrology developed in Southwest Asia and Northern Africa, namely Egypt and Mesopotamia (and surrounding regions like the Mediterranean), from approximately the 1st Century BCE to the 7-8th centuries CE. Northern-Hemisphere-centric.

(The tables of significations below are not all-inclusive and were written from memory based on what I personally find important.)

I have cited direct quote or influence to the best of my ability. However please also visit my [About](#) section to read about my astrology influences.

This is a "living document" and will be updated as needed. Updates can be found on my [website](#).











Thank you for learning astrology and please don't hesitate to email me if you have questions!

Love,

Claire

aligninglightastro@gmail.com

Planets

Glyph	Name	Significations
	Moon	Emotions, physical body, needs, subjective perception, feelings, thought-feelings, the mind, goddess, priestess, short distance travel, cycles, movement, regularly occurring experiences
	Mercury	Communication, travel, exchange, labeling, judgement, information, sorting, discerning, thinking, patterns, music, commerce, technology, language, dexterity, wit, speech, messages, double, multiple, duality, logic, jokes, trickery
	Venus	Connection, relationship, cohesion, creativity, (pro)creation, art, joy, desire, delights, preferences, values, gifts, giving, receiving, fun, play, fairness, justice, attachments, vices
	Sun	Identity, soul, spirit, the Will, autonomy, sovereignty, centeredness, vitality, visibility, concept of self, leadership
	Mars	Action, ambition, drive, motivation, motives, self-advocacy, assertion, conflict, separation, piercing, cutting, competition, aversions, hate, anger, resentment, bravery, courage, energy
	Jupiter	Expansion, growth, abundance, parties/groups, teacher, student, understanding, belief, free-flowing, friendship, good will, allies, opportunities, wisdom, learning, seeking knowledge, meaning, purpose
	Saturn	Boundaries, structure, discipline, limitations, slow/cold/old/hard things, mastery, authority, renunciation, isolation, solitude, reality, order, transcendence, doubt, analysis, disillusion, deception, secrets, objectivity
	Uranus	Innovation, disruption, interruption, sudden or unexpected events, technology, novelty, change, revolution, intellectual rigidity
	Neptune	Imagination, uncertainty, confusion, boundless, acceptance, lack of clear boundaries, illusions, fantasy, spirituality
	Pluto	Creation and destruction, transformation, clinging, attachment and letting go of attachment, impermanence, control, manipulation, corruption, power, abuse of power, power dynamics, intensity, depth, complexity

Sign Components

Glyph	Sign Name	Ruler	Diurnal/ Nocturnal	Modality	Element	Quality
♈	Aries	Mars	Day	Cardinal/ Movable	Fire	Hot
♉	Taurus	Venus	Night	Fixed/ Solid	Earth	Dry
♊	Gemini	Mercury	Day	Mutable/ Double-bodied	Air	Cold
♋	Cancer	Moon	Night	Cardinal/ Movable	Water	Wet
♌	Leo	Sun	Day	Fixed/ Solid	Fire	Hot
♍	Virgo	Mercury	Night	Mutable/ Double-bodied	Earth	Dry
♎	Libra	Venus	Day	Cardinal/ Movable	Air	Cold
♏	Scorpio	Mars	Night	Fixed/ Solid	Water	Wet
♐	Sagittarius	Jupiter	Day	Mutable/ Double-bodied	Fire	Hot
♑	Capricorn	Saturn	Night	Cardinal/ Movable	Earth	Dry
♒	Aquarius	Saturn	Day	Fixed/Solid	Air	Cold
♓	Pisces	Jupiter	Night	Mutable/ Double-bodied	Water	Wet

Signs

Glyph	Sign Name	Significations
♈	Aries	Initiation of action, autonomy/agency, self-advocacy, assertion, conflict, war, immediate, impulsive, cutting, separate-ness, individuality, risk-taking, fast/short term, athletic or active (sometimes), youthful in essence, part of the year where we start gaining light, offense (instead of defense), instinct, hellyes/hellno
♉	Taurus	Stability, sensuality (taste, touch, smell, etc), values/valuables, preferences, peace, consistency, routine, stubbornness, creative (esp. with tangible things like fabric, earth, clay, plants, paints etc), change and risk-averse, planning/maintenance of material stability, simplicity, anabolism
♊	Gemini	Intellectual, information, words, speaking, wit, adaptable, multiplicative, duality/contrariness, multitudinous, curious, talkative, renaissance person, changeable in thought
♋	Cancer	Growth, initiation of nourishment, care, concern, memory, emotions, subjective perception, the physical body, needs, food (because nourishment), protecting what is growing/grown, material or physical abundance, close-knit or small group, cyclic, ebbing and flowing
♌	Leo	Consistent action, dependable, warmth, playful, paragon, leadership, leading by example, engagement, affirmation, spirited, soulful, emitting light, subjective experience, most sunlight of the whole year, abundance of spirit
♍	Virgo	Discernment, details, intricate or ornate, writing, words, organization (at least to them), algorithmic, practical, materially adaptable, craftsmanship, perfectionism, shame, fault-finding, process and tedium, sorting, wordsmithing, editing
♎	Libra	Social, socially-minded, justice, fairness, inter-personal analysis, ethics, part of the year when we loss light, composition, cooperation, networking, connection, design, creative (from interior decorating to architecture), law, dispensing of mercy and justice

Signs

♏	Scorpio	Depth of feeling/experiencing, getting to the bottom of it, investigative, precision, stealth, waiting for the time to act, strategy, piercing, penetrating, focused, complexity, privacy, control over disclosure, resilient, courageous, intimacy, defense (instead of offense), vulnerability (hence the defense), corrosive, corrupt, power, pressure, consistent emotion/stuck in emotion, intuitive instinct, editing out, catabolism, grudges
♐	Sagittarius	Fast and far, changeability in actions, jovial, fun, large gatherings/parties, clapping/cheering, coach/teacher, student/teacher, zealotry, belief, theory, cohesive understandings (versus the little bits of info in Gemini), faith, optimism, aspiration, meaning-making, story-telling, purpose, seeking knowledge, wide perspective
♑	Capricorn	Initiation of material structures or systems, management of resources, slow, delayed gratification, delays, foundations, long term things, old/elders, death, decrease, loss, high standards, organizing civilizations without forgetting the needs of humanity (Jason Holley), loneliness, limitations, barriers, constriction, physical order, least light all year
♒	Aquarius	Intellectual/air, cost/benefit analysis, concerned with large groups of people, the systems that are woven throughout society, invisible systems like block chain (vs. brick and mortar things like Capricorn), innovation, Consistency of idea/system/thoughts (much needed for revolution), eccentric, unique, outlier, observant, objective, rationale, distance, exile, resourcefulness, doubt, investigation, doubt leading to investigation, intellectually stubborn
♓	Pisces	Acceptance, dissolution, illusion, artistry, erotic, romanticism, unrealistic, emotionally changeable/flexible, large ebbing and flowing, expansive, imaginative, insight, understanding, spirit of the law, priest/priestess work, spirituality, boundlessness, metta/emptiness/openness, kindness, belief, faith, hope, the subtle, sensitive (all the senses +- emotional sensitivity), intuition, divination, The Collective TM, cynicism or over-optimism, delusion, meaning-making, wide visions, wide perspective, porousness

Houses

House	Joys	Angularity	Config. to the Asc.	Significations (1,3)
1	Mercury	Angular	Conjunct	The hour marker, the Helm, the joy of Mercury who can travel in both the upper and lower worlds which the rising sign straddles, Self, Concept of Self, the Mind, Body, and Spirit. General life circumstances. Physical appearance or presentation, Identity
2	-	Succedent	Aversion	The Gate of Hades, where planets exit the underworld and begin to rise, money, assets, possessions, needs, resources (financial, material, emotional, intellectual, skills and talents that could be monetized)
3	Moon	Cadent	Sextile	Place of the Goddess/Priestess, Joy of the Moon, the mind, regular communications, communication style, short distance travel, familiar and local people/places/things/activities, smaller regular rituals, foundational/primary education (at any age), siblings, cousins/extended family, neighbors/neighborhoods
4		Angular	Square	Home(s), dwelling, land, real estate, rented spaces, parents, parent relationships, the family unit who lives in your home with you, the End of the Matter, private life, origins, ancestry, conditioning from our upbringing
5	Venus	Succedent	Trine	Place of Good Fortune, ReCreation of the self in the form of procreation or just creations. The creative process (no matter if it's water colors or creating the design for a jet engine – all creativity-requiring things, children, pregnancy, childbirth, delights, pleasures, rest, rejuvenation, gifts, fun, sex, sexuality, romance, casual dating.
6	Mars	Cadent	Aversion	House of Bad Fortune, the Joy of Mars, Illness, recovery from illness, conflict, toil/labor/bill-paying jobs, service (if by choice, it's called service. If by force, it is exploitation), small pets, anything requiring daily maintenance, daily chores/upkeep, regular obligations, subordinates, health routines, health maintenance

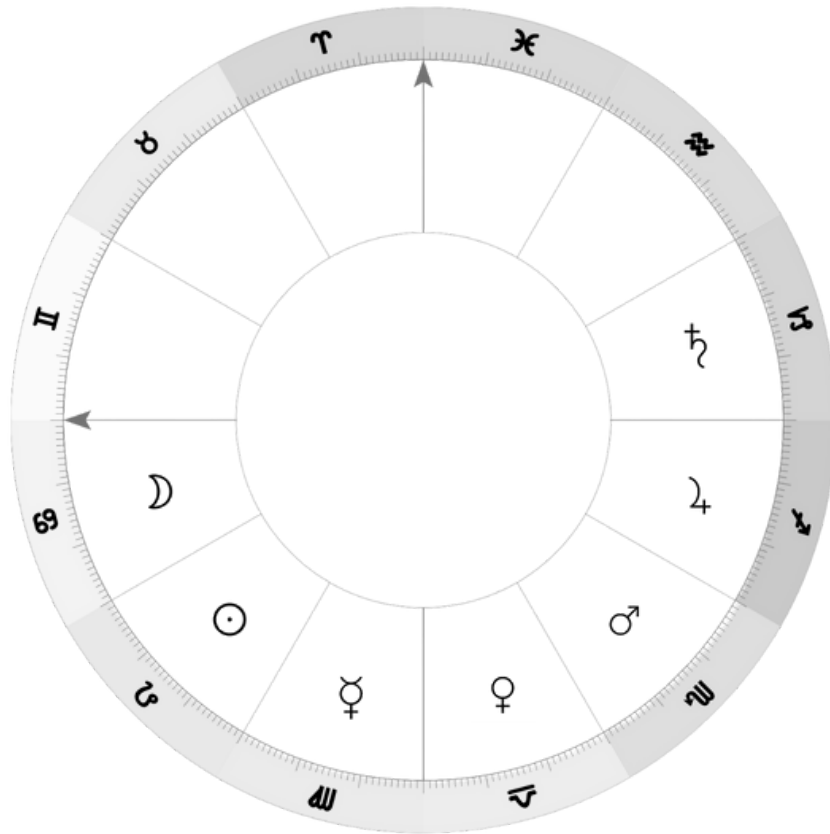
Houses

7	-	Angular	Opposition	Partners (romantic, platonic, business), important 1:1 relationships, 1:1 client practices, audiences, open/known adversaries
8	-	Succedent	Aversion	The opposite of the 2 nd house – other people's things and stuff. Other people's/partner's resources (financial, material, emotional labor, time, effort, anything you can give away or exchange with others), complex financial products, debts, taxes, mortgages, death, inheritance, existential crisis because this is where planets realize they are setting, the Idle Place
9	Sun	Cadent	Trine	Place of God, Joy of the Sun, religion, publishing, university, Politics, mainstream institutions (2000 yrs ago, church, state, and university were all in the same building), advanced or continuing education (at any age), long distance travel, pilgrimage, travel visas, certifications, belief, worldview, divination, astrology, expanding ones horizons, mass communication
10	-	Angular	Square	Life path, career, public image, what you are known for publicly, visible life (as opposed to private life in the 4 th), legacy
11	Jupiter	Succedent	Sextile	Place of Good Spirit, aspirations, hopes, allies, friends, larger networks of people/interacting on the internet, good will, the Joy of Jupiter
12	Saturn	Cadent	Aversion	Place of Bad Spirit, suffering, isolation, loneliness, toil, loss of agency or autonomy, limited or constricted circumstances, and for these reasons – hospitals/prisons and the people in them, the houseless, those in exile or who are treated like foreigners, (but if by choice) monasteries/ashrams, retreat, solitude, spirituality, secrets, transitional/liminal places and relationships, self-undoing, the time right before birth [Note: Placements here can describe the person who has the chart, AND can represent other people the chart-owner is helping/interacting with/witnessing.

Aspects

Glyph	Aspect	Degrees	Characteristics
♂	Conjunction *	0°	*Not truly an aspect, but a copresence or mixing of influences, <i>of the nature of Mercury</i>
♁	Opposition	180°	Delay, impasse, difficulty resolving opposing influences, <i>of the nature of Saturn</i>
△	Trine	120°	Supportive, expansive, friendly, free-flowing, <i>of the nature of Jupiter</i>
□	Square	90°	Tense, challenging, requiring effort, adjustment, change, <i>of the nature of Mars</i>
✳	Sextile	60°	Half as good as a trine, friendly, supportive, <i>of the nature of Venus</i>

The Thema Mundi



The Thema Mundi is a hypothetical birth chart for the cosmos, steeped in myth, **used in conceptual frameworks of western astrology**, and used by ancient astrologers as a teaching tool to explain **why** planets rule which signs, and **why** the aspects mean what they do.

Cancer is rising because this is the sign that contains the star **Sirius**, who was found to be helically rising in tandem with the annual flooding of the marshes around the Nile Delta. **This was a signal of the beginning of the Egyptian calendar. (1)**

Introduction

This is an example of a **circle chart**, and the style most western astrologers use:

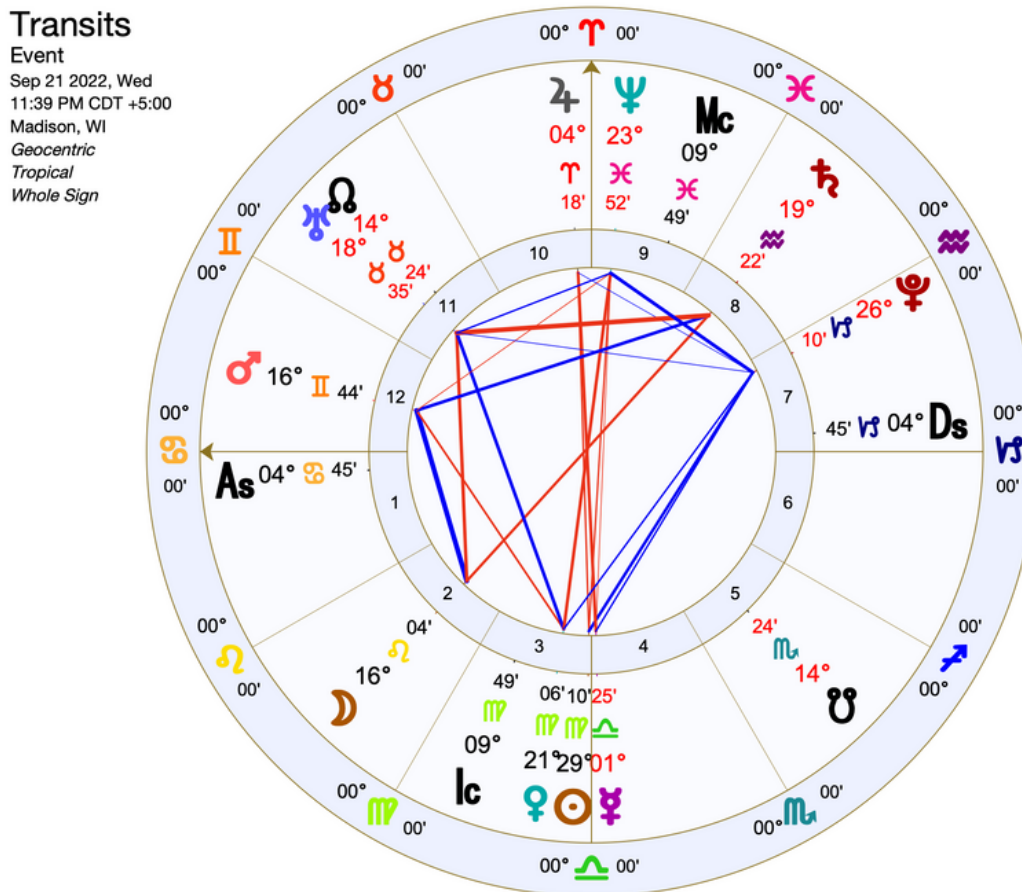


Figure 1: (from Astro Gold), each planet is shown as a planet glyph, the degree, the sign glyph, and the arc minutes. In the above example, Venus is in Virgo at 21 degrees, 6 arc minutes. (2)

- In the Persian, Medieval, Renaissance, and Indian Jyotish tradition, they use **square charts**.
- In many ancient astrological texts, charts were presented as a **simple list** of planets and their signs (and sometimes degrees). Today, many apps and websites present the chart as a list in a similar fashion.
- Whatever is easiest for you to work with is the “right” chart for you!

Fun fact: Ancient people noticed certain fixed configurations of stars were rising, reaching the top of the sky, and setting in a consistent pattern. This pattern became a way of tracking time, seasons, and important events and rituals.

Planets

- Also called “**wandering stars**” the planets are the primary agents of this system.
- The planets gained some of their symbolism directly from how they appear in the night sky.
 - Venus is the brightest planet, Jupiter is also very sparkly/larger.
 - Mars is red, and Saturn is a dim brown.
- This simple dichotomy between light and dark has symbolic importance woven throughout the conceptual framework of astrology.
- Over millennia, various cultural myths have also strongly influenced how we understand the planets as well.

An important note on visibility of the planets:

- Up until the last ~250 years, (~%10 of the tradition) the system relied on only the visible planets, developing techniques we still use today using only the visible planets.
- The Thema Mundi sets up an **elegant and symmetrical planetary rulership scheme** that was interrupted with the addition of the outer planets as rulers.
- While I use the outer planets **Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto** in my own traditional/modern synthesis (they are fantastic and VERY important!), I do hold the traditional rulership scheme in place.

Signs

- Each sign collects its meaning from combining the influences of:
 - element (earth, water, fire, air),
 - modality (cardinal, mutable, fixed),
 - day/night polarity,
 - and planetary ruler
- On top of these four primary influences, myth was also important to the significations of the signs.
- Ancient people realized that particular stars were wandering through the same part of the sky predictably every month, year. They also noticed that these movements happened during specific kinds of events on Earth in patterns that repeated.
- This narrow range of sky the planets travel through is called **the ecliptic**. The ecliptic is a range of sky that contains the 12 zodiac signs the planets travel through.
 - **Ophiuchus is not the 13th sign, because** he sits above the zodiac. The planets do not move through the stars of Ophiuchus.
- The Greek work for zodiac or zōidion can be translated into approximately “living being”, or “animal”, as well as “image”. (1,3)

***Fun fact:** All planets and signs have skillful and unskillful manifestations. It depends on the context, the nature/nurture, the person, and experiences in their life.*

Astrology is a fourfold system of planets, signs, houses, and aspects. (1)

Houses

- **Sometimes called 'Places'**, each house collects its meaning from combining the concepts of:
 - Angular Triads,
 - its configuration to the Ascendant ,
 - and the Planetary Joys
- Derived house meanings also play a role in the significations of the houses.
- The houses never move. The 1st house is always where planets rise, and the 7th house is always where planets set.
- There are many ways to calculate the houses. Hellenistic astrologers primarily used whole sign houses and developed the four-part system using the whole sign framework.
- But they also used quadrant-based calculations. **Both are helpful** and have different uses. The default setting on most websites/apps is Placidus (quadrant-based).
- People who were born at more extreme latitudes (rare, but very North or South, like Tromsø, Norway) may want to consider using whole sign calculations due to extreme house distortion.

Note: Modern astrology uses a framework called the "Natural Houses" that equate the meanings of the signs and the meanings of the houses. This is a relatively recent change in the tradition. **Western Astrology was developed using separate frameworks for assigning meaning to the signs versus the houses.**

Aspects

- Traditional (or Ptolemaic) aspects (sextile, square, trine, opposition) are based on the notion that the planets are **able to relate with each other** due to sharing things in common between the signs they inhabit. The conjunction is technically not an aspect, but a co-presence of planets in the same sign.
 - For instance, Mars in Cancer and the Sun in Scorpio would **share affinity** in terms of element (water) and polarity (nocturnal). This strengthens their relationship and makes the planets in the aspect more sympathetic to each other.
 - There are many other types of aspects that are based on numerical degrees, and other metaphysical concepts that are also valid.
 - **There are sign-based aspects and degree-based aspects.**
 - Sometimes both can happen at once, requiring a layering of interpretations to consider them both.
 - Ancient astrology uses both sign-based and degree-based aspects in their interpretations.
-
- When none of the above aspects are made, **the non-aspect is called an Aversion**
 - Signs in Aversion share little/nothing in common and thus have a harder time communicating/sharing resources

Astrology Practice

HOT TIPS

If we use the analogy of the theater stage

- planets are like actors in a play
- signs are like their costumes/personalities
- houses are the specific topics and themes involved in the story
- aspects are the relationships between actors

Important notes on sourcing info to create a chart

- Read about the **Rodden Rating System (4)**
- Confirm the source and accuracy of birth/event data every time you cast a chart to the best of your ability
- The rising sign changes ~every couple hours, with refined details of the chart change every minute. **One minute can entirely change the interpretation of some charts.**
 - It is imperative we understand the source of birth data, to know the limits to the specificity of insight we can provide.
- Many circumstances can surround chart data and its reliability:
 - Not all official records of birth have the time, and even if they do, theoretically, the medical staff could have been wrong or the clock on the wall could have been wrong.
 - Sometimes, family or parent historians are extremely accurate (e.g. Virgo parent/accountant who recorded everything in detail),
 - other times parents are *inaccurate* but extremely confident at their memory, to find out they were wrong.
 - Ask for more detail if the source is coming from someone's memory alone.

Astrology Practice

HOT TIPS

Astrology is endlessly diverse

If we look at a chart using different house calculations or different astrological traditions, we can get a wider, more nuanced view of the life and the person. It's like looking at a single object from several different angles or points of view. **It's all valuable and paints a fuller picture.**

With so many techniques and traditions to explore, it's a good idea to Choose One to start with, master some foundational knowledge and techniques. Less is more in my opinion. Like a pot of soup with too many spices, **we don't want to use too many different traditions and techniques at the same time. IMO less is more.**

***Fun fact:** If you don't have access to your birth time, we still have 75% of the system to use! **All is not lost.** Additionally, there is a technique in astrology called **Rectification** in which we reverse engineer the birth time down to at least a rising sign.*

Many people throughout the history of time haven't had their birth times. Not only is it not a deal breaker, it's very common depending on who you are and where you are from. Having a timed birth was historically, and still is, a privilege.

PRO TIPS:

Reading for others

I recommend spending years studying before you try reading for others, but I know there are people who will forego that advice, and so:

- The astrologer–client relationship has an inherent power dynamic built in. Be aware of it.
 - **Learn more about the ethics of practicing astrology from the IAEA [HERE](#). (5)**
- **The client knows themselves best.** We are here to interpret a symbolic language for them, and to help them find what info is most helpful to them. We only have the map, and they've been living on that territory their whole life, so they know it best regardless of their astrology knowledge.
 - In my own practice, I **avoid absolutist language like “this will be, this is, you are”** and instead give them a few options of delineations to choose from. “this may, can, could be this”.
 - We then co-create meaning together, as a team.
- **Birth charts are very personal**, containing info of the entire life of the person. Read for people in private if you can, or make sure they know what they are getting into before doing readings in public (like at a party/event).
 - I like to call a natal chart “the cosmic underwear drawer” to get the point across for people – feel free to use this.

PRO TIPS:

Reading for others

- **Watch out for projecting** your experience onto the other.
 - **Be aware of** and avoid **personal biases** against certain placements or signs (e.g. I had a bad experience with [insert sign], so I assume others must also have a bad experience with [insert sign]). This is not astrology.
 - If someone has similar placement(s) to you, it can be extra difficult to not project your experience of it, so be even more vigilant.
- Avoid leading questions, trying to **use open-ended questions** when discussing things.
- **Don't answer questions not asked**; you don't have to say everything you see.
- Concepts like astrology are helpful starting points in exploring the self and the life, but **it is not the destination**.
 - Don't get stuck on just the interpretations and labels that astrology provides.
 - The label helps inform us of our tendencies, strengths, and challenges, so we can create a higher quality of life for ourselves/others.
- Compassion comes easier when we **stop simplifying** each other and our lived experiences.
 - Complexity allows for nuance allows for wider understanding allows for compassion.
 - **It is rarely about one thing**, and we must hold space for the complexity of the entire chart when working with others.

If you have any questions at all, or are looking for where to go next,
email me: aligninglightastro@gmail.com

Thank you for
learning astrology!
I extend to you a
warm welcome into
this ancient tradition.

Citations

1. Brennan, C., Hellenistic Astrology The Study of Fate and Fortune. Amor Fati Publications, 2017.
2. Astro Gold (R) Software, developed by Ajnaware Pty Ltd, Cosmic Apps Pty Ltd
3. George D., Ancient Astrology in Theory and Practice Volume I, 2nd ed. Rubedo Press, 2019.
4. Rodden, Lois M. Rodden Rating System.
https://www.astro.com/astrowiki/en/Rodden_Rating_System
5. International Association of Ethics in Astrology, Ethics Guidelines.
<https://ethicalastrologers.org/ethics-guidelines/>
6. Holley, Jason. Capricorn in Myth and Psyche.
<https://www.astrologyuniversity.com/shop/search-by-astrologer/jason-holley/webinar-capricorn-in-myth-and-psyche/>

Influences/Acknowledgements

A huge thanks to the above teachers and authors. My learning and teaching would not be possible without them. Within the citations above, I have linked their works, so feel free to click forward to learn from them directly.

Significations for planets, signs, houses, and aspects were in part gleaned from the above sources, but have also been influenced by years of listening to and learning from:

Austin Coppock, Kelly Surtees, Adam Elenbaas, Robert Hand, as well as the lineage of ancient authors like Valens, Rhettorius, Paulus, and Dorotheus, and more who informed the works of some of the above citations. I am forever reading backward into this lineage and am but a magpie squawking from the shoulders of those before me.

Special Thanks to Hugh Tran for the astrological font, *Physis*.

Aligning Light Astrology
Madison, WI, 53704
www.aligninglightastrology.com
aligninglightastro@gmail.com