

The Basics of Astrology: How It Can Impact Your Life

Topics Covered:

The Basics of Astrology

The History of Astrology

The Importance of Astrology

Why Astrology Is Important For You

Astrology Is For Everyone!

How Astrology Can Be Helpful In Your Life

How to Find Reliable Information About Astrology

Astrology And Its Influences

Astrology And The New-Age Movement

Uses for Astrology

The New Popularity of Astrology

Differing Views on Astrology

Common Misconceptions About Astrology

Astrology In America And Other Parts Of The World

The Basics of Astrology: How It Can Impact Your Life

The Basics of Astrology

To be put quite simply, astrology is the study of the stars. The stars as referred to in astrology refer to the planets, the sun, and the moon. Astrology has been used throughout history as a form of entertainment, a part of religion, and a part of daily life.

Astrology begins with the mapping of the planets, including the sun and the moon. This map is called an astrological chart. Most often an astrological chart is designed for someone at birth. To determine the position of the planets, sun, and moon for an astrological chart the astrologist needs to know the exact location of the birth, the exact time, and the date of the birth.

The planets found on the astrological chart are the Sun, the moon, Saturn, Venus, Jupiter, Mars, Neptune, Uranus, Mercury, and Pluto. The earth is not considered because it is the point in the universe from which we view the other planets. The sun and moon are considered planets in astrology, which is hard for some people to remember.

The astrological chart consists of twelve houses. Each house represents an aspect of life, such as romance, career, family, etc. Since there are only ten planets, each astrological chart will have two vacant houses. Vacant houses represent aspects of life which, for whatever reason, the cosmos do not feel you need to work on. In other words, you may have mastered this aspect of life in another life or realm.

The position of the sun also determines your sun sign. This is the first aspect of astrology studied on the astrological chart. Next, the positions of the planets are studied in relation to their influence on the sun sign. Finally, the moon sign and position is studied in relation to the rest of the astrological chart.

The interpretation of an astrological birth chart as a whole will paint the picture of the original personality of the individual. The birth chart found through astrology later in life may not appear accurate. This is due to the fact that other astrological phenomena in conjunction with life events alter the personality over time.

Astrology is the study of this astrological chart, as well as the prediction of the future based on how other astrological phenomena might influence the original readings. The interpretation of the astrological chart is also a large part of the art of astrology, and is necessary for accurate predictions.

The use of astrology in predictions is considered an art for a reason. Not only must the astrology expert interpret the birth chart and the current astrological phenomena, but the astrology expert must also interpret any astrological phenomena that may have altered the personality of the individual over time. Amazingly, life changing events can often be seen using astrology readings from the time of the event.

Many major events in history can also be marked by astrology readings. For example, the fall of the Roman Empire was marked by astrological phenomena. The horror of 9/11 and the destruction of the twin towers was also awaited by those who study astrology. Even the birth of Christ was marked by astrological phenomena.

Aspects of Astrology

There are many aspects of astrology that are not often considered by those who do not actually study the subject. Most people think that astrology consists of sun signs. However, there are many other aspects of astrology that must be considered for the art to be truly accurate and useful.

The Planets

There are ten planets studied in astrology. The number ten is arrived by adding the sun and the moon. The earth is not counted, because our perspective is from the earth. Each planet influences both the sun sign and the house in which it resides in the astrological chart.

Each planet represents the influence that it holds over the sun sign and the house in which it rules. Saturn, for example, represents the limitations of man. Jupiter represents leadership and prosperity. The other planets have their own representations and influences.

Planetary movements and alignments are also very important in astrology. Various planetary alignments and movements can indicate extreme influences over all aspects of our lives. For example, when Mars is in retrograde, conflicts will be more dominant in our lives.

The Houses

There are twelve houses in the Zodiac, or astrological chart. Each house represents an aspect of our lives such as romance, career, or family. The houses are very important in the interpretation of astrology. The house in which a planet resides shows what influences will be held over that aspect of our life.

Because there are twelve houses but only ten planets, each astrological chart will have two vacant houses. These vacant houses represent areas of the life that are unimportant in this life. It is believed that either you have been successful in that aspect of your life in another life, or other aspects of life are in more immediate need of attention than those represented by the vacant houses.

The Signs

The Zodiac sun signs are the most common aspect of astrology. There are twelve sun signs, based, roughly, on the months of the year. Each sun sign rules for approximately twenty eight days.

The twelve signs of the Zodiac are well known to most people. They include Capricorn, Sagittarius, Aquarius, Scorpio, Gemini, Libra, Leo, and Ares, among others. The sun signs are most often used to create typical horoscopes.

The Moon Signs

The moon also has twelve signs that are used in the interpretation of astrology, as well as the phases of the moon that are commonly known. The twelve signs of the moon are named after the twelve signs of the sun. However, these signs do not meet often.

The twelve signs of the moon circulate monthly rather than yearly. Therefore, each sign of the Zodiac occurs within its own sign of the moon one time each month. This may occur for one to three days. It is when the sun sign and moon sign are the same that the individual's mental clarity is at its peak.

When the sign of the moon is the opposite of the sun sign of the individual in question, conflict will ensue. Some phases of the moon are detrimental to decision making regardless of the sun sign held by the individual. In any case, the moon's energies and emotions influence the overall readings of the rest of the aspects of astrology.

The History of Astrology

The history of astrology is actually quite interesting. Astrology has been a major part of many cultures going back to pre-historic times. Some of the history of astrology is masked in controversy and mystery, because astrology was used before tools were developed to see planets that cannot be seen without the naked eye.

Astrology made its first appearance in pre-historic times. Maps of the heavens were found on cave walls, much the same as other cave drawings. These are the most controversial and mysterious of all evidences of the history of astrology. These cave dwellers could not possibly have had the tools necessary to see the planets. How did they know where they were?

The next appearance of astrology was in ancient Mesopotamia and other ancient cultures. These cultures also had extensive astrology charts that cannot be explained. However, the study of astrology was likely passed to Greece through trade with these ancient civilizations.

Astrology in Greece expanded to the form that we recognize in the western world today. Astrology was a daily part of life in Greece, and the Roman Empire to follow. The names of the planets, the constellations, and the sun and moon signs are all named for Roman deities and other names.

Greek and Roman scholars were often guaranteed positions in the court of the current king or emperor. Their knowledge of the stars was regarded as a necessary part of royal decisions, battle planning, and other aspects of royal life. However, astrology experts of these times often found their lives ending abruptly when the current government did not like what they had to say.

For these and other reasons the art of astrology was lost. However, it made a nice come back in Western Europe during the time of the Renaissance. Astrology was once more a revered art form, and those who studied astrology were thought to be some of the greatest minds of the period. However, when the age of enlightenment ended, astrology once more became an obscure and little discussed topic.

In the late eighteen hundreds astrology once more came to light. A few brave souls formed a foundation for the study of astrology. The interest in the study of the stars became wide spread throughout Western Europe, and spread to America in the early nineteen hundreds.

In the 1930's, the art of astrology became very common place. In the middle of that decade, Gerald Gardner formed the religion now known as Gardnerian Wicca. Wicca, like pagan religions before it, focused on astrology for the use of divination. Astrology was also brought to popularity in America through the publication of American Astrology, a magazine credited for the first horoscopes.

Astrology became a form of entertainment for many in America as horoscopes became commonly found in major newspapers and other popular print media. However, astrology as an art has once again begun to fade in the Western world. Christian groups still rile against the study of the stars, and many "reasonable" people refuse to see any truth in the astrological predictions. Still, astrology remains a popular study in many cultures today.

The Importance of Astrology

Many people do not recognize the importance of astrology. Astrology is an important part of history, as well as our daily lives. Astrology can also predict future events to some degree. It influences our moods, the moods of others, and the reactions that we have to everyday occurrences.

The importance of astrology was well known to people of ancient history. Maps of the stars and evidences of the use of astrology in daily life have been found in pre-historic cave drawings, ancient manuscripts, and Egyptian pyramids. The most recent, and possibly the most astounding, discovery about astrology in history involves the birth of Christ according to the Christian bible.

It has been determined that the star of Bethlehem was actually an astrological event, consisting of many stars and astrological meanings. Scientists and astrologists now believe that it was not a star at all. The wise men from the east understood that the major event would happen in Judah based on the alignment of planets within the constellation of the Lion. In other words, the wise men used astrology to discern the event of the birth, not a star.

The importance of astrology is still well known to many cultures. The people of India and China put great stock in astrology even today. They practice the art of astrology in their daily lives, and base major decisions on the science.

In the Western world, astrology has become more of a form of entertainment. Horoscopes based on sun signs are published in every major newspaper and magazine across the United States. Horoscope scrolls and booklets can be purchased in most supermarket checkout lanes. And so-called astrologists charge \$1.99 per minute to get your astrological reading over the phone.

But many people do not understand that astrology in its truest form is actually of the utmost importance. Astrology is quite simply the study of the planets and stars and their influence on our lives. These influences are quite real.

Have you ever noticed that around the time of the new moon you have difficulty making decisions? The phases of the moon actually affect our minds and emotions much more than many people realize. This is only a small part of the importance of astrology.

Perhaps you have noticed that your moods change drastically during stretches of time that seem to have no pattern at all. A study of the planetary movements or alignments during those times might reveal that a pattern actually does exist. The position of the planets in your astrological chart at any given time can be viewed in relation to their position in your birth chart. These comparisons can show reasons for changes in mood and daily reactions to events.

In short, the importance of astrology lies in the direct influence that the moon, sun, and stars play in our lives. Our lives are affected by many people and events. These people and events are influenced by astrology as much as you are.

When you understand how astrology affects others and yourself, you can begin to use the knowledge of those influences to your benefit. When your astrological chart shows that your emotions will be unsteady for a few days, you can put off major decisions until that time has passed. In reality, the importance of astrology is really the importance of your life.

Why Astrology Is Important For You

There are many facets of astrology which add up to it being interesting and important. Do you have the desire to learn how to understand yourself better, and to understand how aspects of the universe are significant to your own life, your relationships, your personality?

Do you wish to know in advance what you can expect to happen in your life as well as how you have the ability to affect changes which are more desirable to you than to merely "go with the flow"? If so, gaining a deeper understanding of astrology can lead to all of these benefits, and more and you will likely decide that it is a very good thing indeed to know that your life, everything your life consists of, and your future, are not simply random happenings over which you have no control.

"Know yourself." Many religions teach this, philosophers spoke of this, even popular books tell of it to know yourself is the number one, basic, most fundamental factor in having a good, successful, happy life. Knowing yourself who you are, why you are as you are, your motivations and your purposes is the first step in learning to develop your positive qualities and

characteristics, as well as learning to overcome and defeat those which are negative, or to channel them into forms which will be more constructive.

A main point in astrology is learning how all of these factors coincide with Time when such developments and changes will affect you and your life in the most positive manner. There is a proper or best time for each and every action and learning about astrology will help you to better understand this sense of timing and put it to the best use.

Whether you choose to begin your journey into astrology by means of the generalized horoscopes in your daily newspaper, or by consulting with a professional astrologer for a reading which is personalized solely for you, this is the best way to look at the subject that whatever the readings say for you, it is not a matter of future events which are carved in stone, but rather like a map which beckons you to navigate it with your own personal abilities.

Your own personal astrologer can greatly assist you in discovering your strengths and how to best use them to affect the course of your life. This is a part of this subject, which too few people are aware that astrology is not about resigning yourself to a ready-made destiny or fate, but a deeper understanding of your own potential.

What a wonderful feeling it will be to not only know what is ahead of you tomorrow, next month, and years from now, but to also come to understand that the actions you take and when you take them can play a large role in the eventual outcome!

Many people believe that astrology is about predicting the future; this is unfortunate, for such a simplistic view leaves out the most relevant factor how each individual reacts and responds to each event in his or her life. To look at predictions for your future, and to become aware of your own ability to affect positive changes, is an amazing blessing and source of strength!

Astrology Is For Everyone!

Granted, the largest number of people who put the most focus into astrology are adult-aged women. Most women see themselves in terms of being both the "keeper" the one who is responsible for all of the other people in her life and her relationships with them; as well as having the generally-female characteristic of feeling that whether her life is good or bad, that it is her place to be in the position of affecting positive changes.

It is primarily for these reasons that women make up the majority of astrology-seekers. Through astrology, women can learn more about themselves, their lives, their associates, and their futures; and, in gaining such knowledge, can be in the very beneficial position of assessing their personal strengths and weaknesses, which in turn will provide many opportunities for taking control of one's life.

Fewer men gain a serious interest in astrology. When they do, it is usually less a matter of wanting a general overview of their lives than of needing specific details and answers for specific questions or problems. Men are more likely to focus their interest in astrology on such

topics as how to get a particular job, how to make business decisions, and questions about whether or not to relocate to a different area.

All of these subjects can be brought up in an astrological reading, and he can find the answers or solutions which he needs in order to be better informed and make decisions which are most likely to have the best outcome for him.

Teenagers and young adults are often curious about astrology. Unfortunately, if they are not properly informed, they may hold the standard belief that astrology is basically about predicting the future and little more.

Teens can be best aided by astrology by understanding that the scope of astrology goes far beyond simple predictions; and, even more important, that even predictions themselves are only a matter of what is "likely" to occur--that the person himself or herself has a great ability to influence what actually does occur, by his or her own responses to the events which happen each day. Astrology works best when viewed as a map of possibility, over which the individual has much influence.

This can be a wonderful asset for any teenager or young adult who is at the stage in life where he or she wishes to make solid decisions and plans for the future. The first part is in seeing one's future predictions in terms of what is likely to occur, and to gain an understanding on how to affect changes to one's course of action in order to result in a positive outcome. Learning that one is not helpless, nor bound to a predetermined destiny, is a wonderful feeling for all but most especially for young people!

The second part of astrology which is very important to youth is being able to gain a deeper understanding into themselves their specific character traits and personalities. It can be a good feeling to learn that many others share similar qualities!

And, for a young person who is not entirely comfortable with various aspects of his or her personality, realizing that it is within his or her own power to change the less desirable traits and strengthen those traits which appeal to him or her the most, will go a long way in granting a teenager or young adult the appreciated state of knowing it is within themselves to improve what they wish to improve and rely more heavily on the traits which give them the most potential for a happy, well-adjusted life.

How Astrology Can Be Helpful In Your Life

Astrology can be much more than an entertainment, it can also be very helpful to you in many situations and many areas of your life. Astrology can be beneficial when you are confronted with difficulties, dilemmas, and questions; and it will also serve a good purpose in your average, everyday life. If you have either specific problems or merely general, basic concerns, gaining insight into astrology will help provide you with the answers you may be searching for.

Many people first develop an interest in astrology because they wish to know about their futures what is on their particular horizon, what to expect in the day ahead or the coming weeks, months, or even longer.

But while this surely is one of the most interesting aspects of astrology, it becomes even better when you are advised that the wealth of information which is presented to you in your readings is not solid, unchangeable fact, but rather more like a map which, with assistance and determination, you can learn to navigate.

Your readings will tell you what is likely to occur but it is your responses to each set of circumstances in your everyday life which will determine the ultimate outcome. Being able to know the "possible future" in advance can be a great help when you are making your daily choices and decisions.

The subject of relationships is a topic-of-interest to many people who consult astrology for information and advice. Regardless of your relationship-status, astrology can be helpful. If you are in a longterm, committed relationship, such as marriage, astrology can assist you in better understanding your mate, and better communication.

If you are considering a special person as a "potential," astrology can help you to determine whether you and your special person are compatible. If you are, as many who become astrology-curious are, wishing for there to be a significant person in your life, it can help you gain a better view to what type of person you are looking for, and what kind of person would be best for you.

Whether you opt for the generalized horoscopes in your daily newspaper or to consult with a professional astrologer, astrology will give you a much clearer view into your own personality and its workings. While it may sound odd, or even impossible, that being born under a certain sign almost universally points toward specific personality traits and characteristics, if you do a bit of investigating into what your sign states about you, you may be surprised at how accurate this information is!

In addition, when this information is directly in front of you to look at, you will then have the opportunity to decide if there are traits and characteristics which you wish to affect some degree of change upon, as well as seeing all of the positive aspects of your personality and focus on them to make choices for such factors as what type of career you are best suited for.

Astrology is also handy when it comes to relating to other people. Upon learning the personality characteristics of your own sign, and following that with the traits of those with whom you interact in your everyday life, you can achieve a better grasp on the dynamics of interacting.

Learning about how each person's sign-determined personality traits affect their interactions with others will be a great asset in understanding your family members, coworkers, and others in your daily life. It will help you to appreciate each person's strengths; and it will also help you in avoiding possible friction; therefore creating better relationships and better communication.

How to Find Reliable Information About Astrology

Finding information about astrology can be very easy to do. However, not all of the information about astrology found on the internet, in books, and from phone lines is entirely accurate. There are many inaccurate or inadequate sources of information about astrology.

For the beginning astrologist especially it can be very difficult to determine what sources of information about astrology are the best sources to learn from. Doing a simple internet search or picking up the random book from your local bookstore may teach you the basics. However, for a more in depth study of astrology you really want to have accurate and detailed information.

There are several places that you can find excellent information about astrology. The internet is a veritable gold mine when it comes to finding information on any topic. Finding accurate information, however, can be a little more tricky.

The best place to start your search on the internet for information about astrology is with a Google search for "astrology 101" or "what is astrology." These searches will bring up websites that explain astrology rather than websites that are simply trying to sell you your astrological birth chart or astrological software. However, not all websites you will find through this search will be good sources of information about astrology.

When you start sifting through the undoubtedly massive list of search results, you will want to watch for a few things at each website. The website should provide information about all aspects of astrology. In other words, the websites you trust for information about astrology should list at least basic information about houses, ascendants, sun signs, moon influences, and planets or planetary movements.

Some websites will provide very general information about these topics. Generally these websites are trying to sell you something such as your astrological birth chart or astrology related software. However, these websites can be a good place to get an overview of astrology.

The best websites for information about astrology will be those that do not sell any products or services, but only provide useful and reliable information. These websites will give you much more reliable information about astrology. They will provide in depth explanations, and may even provide charts of dates and houses so that you can develop your own astrological chart.

You can also find reliable information about astrology in some very good books. These books are typically found in New Age or occult book shops. Avoid books on astrology that provide horoscopes or relationship advice based on sun signs. The zodiac is helpful, but astrology encompasses all planets and stars, not just the sun.

The best information about astrology will be found in books that outline the various houses, planets, and ascendants, just as you will look for in web sites. If you are not sure what books hold the most reliable information about astrology you can ask the book store staff.

In any case, you should check into several sources of information about astrology rather than relying on one single source. The variety of information about astrology that you find will give

you a broader understanding of both the truths and the misconceptions involved with the study of astrology. It will also better prepare you for a life long study of the ancient art.

Astrology And Its Influences

Taking much of the country by surprise, and causing a great number of negative reactions, was when it became publicly-known that then-president Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy not only frequently consulted an astrologer, but based numerous important decisions on astrology, such as Reagan's chances in the 1976 presidential election, and his eventual choice of George Bush as his vice-president.

While governor of California, Ronald Reagan signed into law a new chapter and section of the government code, which granted astrologers the right to practice astrology for compensation. Even more surprising was learning that a number of previous presidents had also followed this practice as well as such famous world-leaders as Winston Churchill.

Celebrities are also known to believe in and follow the paths of astrology when deciding the course of their careers, often being quite outspoken about their beliefs. David Coverdale, of the popular group Whitesnake, has commented that he and his wife rigorously follow astrology; actor Robert Downey, Jr., and singer Britney Spears are also amongst those who consult astrologers on a regular basis.

J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter books series, liberally sprinkles astrological symbolism in her material. "Astrologers to the stars" occasionally become as much in the spotlight of the public eye as the stars who consult them.

If world-renowned politicians and stars in the entertainment industry have been placing so much value on the subject of astrology, is it any wonder that many average Americans are doing likewise? A recent Harris Poll has concluded that at least thirty-one percent of Americans have some degree of belief in astrology nearly half of these being in the twenty-five to twenty-nine-year old age group, with the belief in this practice falling to fourteen percent for those over sixty-five years of age.

The highest percentages of American adults who believe in astrology as being a valid and significant influence in one's life are women, democrats, and those who have a high school or less education-- yet even Benjamin Franklin professed and wrote about his own personal belief in astrology, which illustrates that this subject is by no means limited to any certain categories of individuals, and that its popularity is most definitely not new, as it has long been embraced by well-known, respected people in all fields.

Astrology is described as studying the celestial bodies in relation to their influence on natural events and human experiences. It is called pseudoscience, proven science, superstition, anti-Christian, and a host of other descriptions based primarily on individual viewpoints on the subject. But for celebrities, politicians, world leaders, and a large segment of the population of average citizens alike, it is frequently a very strong influencing factor in people's lives.

Astrology And The New-Age Movement

Learning about astrology is absolutely essential for anyone who is interested in the New Age movement! As the New Age movement is based on the belief that everything and everyone in the universe is spiritually interconnected, that concept lends itself to a wide range of beliefs which promote it, such as the connection of everything in the cosmos, mystical power known as "energy" or "energy fields," and, of course, astrology.

One particular form of astrology, quite different from the usual types which are more well-known, is very much aligned to the New Age movement and its beliefs; it is called Karmic astrology.

Founded by Martin Shulman, belief in karmic astrology is based on the concept of karma what one specific individual sees and perceives is different from what another specific individual sees or experiences in the same situation, due to each having his or her own life lessons to process, lessons which were not satisfactorily processed in one's past lives.

Instead of assessing the differences of individual persons as being due to each having his or her own unique personality, mind and emotions, karmic astrology stresses that it is a matter of one having not properly fulfilled his karmic role in his previous lives. Karmic astrology is the only form of astrology which bases its conclusions on reincarnation; and that one's true influence, which covers everything from one's opinions to one's means of experience, is not coming from one's present-day life, it's coming from one's past.

The forms of astrology which most people are familiar with Western astrology, Chinese astrology, Indian or Vedic astrology emphasizes the events in a person's life and how to affect positive direction. Karmic astrology, however, views the individual's life as that which has been reincarnated for the purpose of completing that which had not been completed in his previous life aspects of himself and his life which he should improve, change, and grow.

In tune with this concept are New Age practices such as "alternative" medicine, which take numerous non-medical angles such as herbs and massage in the treatment of medical conditions, and, even more strongly stressed, and even in the absence of any such diseases or conditions, focusing on the individual person's need to "heal."

Although it has not been categorically explained, it seems that placing such a strong emphasis on a person's need to heal is based on the New Age movement's view of reincarnation that simply being in this life coincides with the Karmic belief that a person has not gained closure from whatever came before.

Consequently, karmic astrology differs from the more widely-accepted forms of astrology in that while the focus of the latter is on charting the course of a person's life and guiding direction for a person's best possible potential, the focus of karmic astrology is essentially on "fixing what is wrong with" a person.

As such, those who claim to be professionals in the scope of karmic astrology are far different from the more standard astrologers, preferring terminology such as "healing" and the misuse of other esoteric language, frequently referred to as "psychobabble." In other words, karmic

astrology bears very little resemblance to the concepts and practices which most people know as Astrology.

Uses for Astrology

Many people feel that astrology is for entertainment only or is frivolous with no uses whatsoever. However, there are actually many reasonable and accurate uses for astrology. These uses can be for daily life, or for special occasions or decisions.

One of the uses for astrology is as old as civilization. Astrology has long been used to determine the best times for planting and harvest in farming and other agriculture. Astrology has also been used to determine the best time for slaughter for cattle and other breeding practices.

Another use for astrology is planning the future. You can easily plan for the future when you have some idea of what that future holds. While astrology is far from specific in the nature of its predictions, astrology can indeed predict certain variables or sentiments that you will need to deal with in the future.

For example, many astrologists were aware that something terrible was about to happen in September of 2001. While astrology was not specific enough to tell exactly what would happen, it was clear that death and destruction were near at hand. These astrologists urged everyone they knew to take heed of their warnings, stop all travel, and stay in their homes. Those that listened are still alive today.

Another use for astrology is in planning daily activities. Certain astrological phenomena, planetary alignments, and moon signs are good for particular activities. Some of these phenomena influence our lives to the point where no activity is best. Knowing the difference can greatly improve your life.

For example, if you know that the moon sign is making you overly emotional for a few days, you can actively choose not to make major decisions during that time. In this way, you will avoid making costly decisions that are hard to reverse later. Additionally, certain planetary alignments can influence your career for prosperity. When you are aware of these times you can know when to ask for a raise or try for a promotion.

You can also use these astrological influences to help you in your relationships and dealings with others. When you understand how astrology influences your life and the life of others it will become clear when to fight your battles and when to stand by and wait to resolve the issue. You will also be better able to determine when emotions are running high versus when a real issue in the relationship exists.

Finally, you can use astrology to plan events. Certain astrological phenomena may influence events toward success or disaster. When you plan a wedding, birth, or other event you can easily ensure success by checking your planned date against astrological phenomena for that time frame. This will help you determine if your date is feasible, or if another date would be more appropriate.

Astrology can also be used to help you enhance the lives of your children. When you interpret astrological birth charts you can gain knowledge of what your child's strengths and weaknesses will likely be as they grow. This will enable you to expose the child to their strengths while helping them overcome their potential weaknesses. This will help the child to grow in ways that you may not be able to help them accomplish without this astrological data.

The New Popularity of Astrology

Astrology has been a part of daily life in America for some time, but it was not always so. The popularity of astrology has ebbed and waned for the last several thousands of years in the Western World. Only in the last hundred years has astrology actually become popular once more in the Western World. Furthermore, it has only been in the last twenty years that serious study of astrology has surfaced in America.

Astrology actually made its debut in the Western world thousands of years ago in Mesopotamia. The art of astrology traveled to Greece around 600 BC. The practice further spread throughout the Roman world, then abruptly disappeared.

With the European "age of enlightenment," also known as the Renaissance period, astrology once more made an appearance in the western world. The study of astrology and its use in daily life became commonplace. However, Christianity and the early leaders of the religion drove out astrology once more.

Astrology did not reappear on the scene until the late eighteen hundreds. During this time, two prominent astrologists came forward and began publishing information about their art. This practice reached America in the early nineteen hundreds, and then continued to spread.

In the late 1930's, the study of astrology became even more commonplace in America with the publication of *American Astrology*, a magazine which offered the first detailed horoscopes. While the magazine itself did not remain in print for long, the study of astrology and American interest in the art continued to prosper for some time. Horoscopes have appeared in major newspapers and later other print media since that time.

However, the actual art of astrology and the serious study of the stars was once again lost. In the sixties and seventies serious astrologists once more came to light, and more people began to take the study of astrology seriously. This was the beginning of what is known as the New Age movement.

Throughout the last several decades the New Age movement has continued to evolve. The study of occult religions such as Wicca further encouraged the study and use of astrology in America. Today, astrology is a very controversial topic in America for some, and a way of life for others.

The popularity of astrology has grown significantly over the last twenty years. More and more people have turned to Wicca and the occult for answers that they feel have not been found in

Christianity. In these religions people feel that they have more control over their lives. Astrology is one part of that control. It is used to plan for the future and make decisions in the present.

Books on the topic have also become very commonplace in America over the last twenty years. Books no longer cover simple horoscopes and zodiac signs. Books on astrology that actually teach the art of divination and astrological charting have become very common and popular. Even though some Christian groups still rile against the art, astrology is alive and well in America today.

Differing Views on Astrology

Astrology is practiced differently throughout the world. Some parts of the world utilize the study of all of the "stars" including the planets, the moon, and the sun. America has been leaning toward use of strictly sun signs over the last several decades as horoscopes have invaded virtually all print media. Other areas of the world, such as China, utilize only the moon cycles in their studies of astrology.

Astrology is also viewed differently throughout the world. Astrology can be a very controversial subject in America. You will find people that think that astrology is completely fake, entertainment only, or absolutely real and reliable. You may even find people who think that astrology is the work of the devil. But in many other parts of the world, astrology is viewed quite differently.

In America, astrology is sometimes used to decide the best time for a wedding or other event. Astrology is sometimes used in daily life by some Americans, although many Americans only regard astrology as entertainment and religiously read their horoscope every week, just to see if it will be right or not. Other Americans disregard astrology all together, and give the art little or no thought whatsoever.

However, in China and India astrology is used on a daily basis to determine what activities should be pursued each day. Certain moon cycles are found to be best for certain types of activities or decisions in China and India. This is not unlike the way that farmers once used the cycles of the moon to determine the best time to plant or harvest. The concept is simply taken beyond the fields and into everyday life.

Astrology is also viewed differently based on religion. Astrology is a large part of religious life in the Eastern world. Paganism, a word that describes all "occult" religions such as Wicca, Druidism, and the Kabala oriented religion started by Alister Crowley, also embrace astrology as a part of religious life. These religions are found in America and throughout Western Europe.

These religions use astrology in every day decision-making. They also use astrology to determine times of "power" or celebration. Many Wiccan and Druidic rites are based on various astrological phenomena, such as the phases of the moon. Kabalistic magicians, practitioners of Alister Crowley's Golden Dawn, also use astrology to determine the best time for rites and rituals.

However, some religions view astrology as evil, or the work of the devil. Both Judaism and some denominations of Christianity have this view of astrology. There are many scriptures in both the old and new testaments of the bible that warn against the study of the stars and divination.

On the other hand, some Christian groups either embrace astrology or fail to regard the study of the skies entirely in their teachings. There are also scriptures in the bible that refer to watching the stars and the skies for signs of the first and second comings of Jesus Christ. Due to these scriptures, some faiths tend to believe that astrology for the use of divination is against the will of God, while the actual study of the stars is actually a good thing.

Common Misconceptions About Astrology

There are many common misconceptions about astrology in the Western world. Astrology in America has been turned into a form of entertainment and is not taken seriously by many people. However, the truth is that there is a lot of truth and usefulness in the art of astrology. Here are the three most common misconceptions about astrology, and the truth behind the myth.

Common Misconception about Astrology Number One: Horoscopes do not work because astrology is bunk.

The Truth: Horoscopes are entertainment created based on limited aspects of the true study of astrology. Horoscopes are created using the basic sun signs and the influences on them from planetary movements and alignments. Since not every person with a particular sun sign have the same astrological chart, horoscopes are rarely accurate for more than a handful of people.

Real astrology predictions are made by using individual astrological information combined with current astrological influences. These in depth astrology readings are very difficult and complex, and cannot be created reliably on a mass basis. Therefore, horoscopes serve as a basis for entertainment and what may happen based on sun sign alone.

Common Misconception about Astrology Number Two: Astrology is an ancient practice that holds no place in reality, such as Greek and Roman tales of Hercules and gods and goddesses.

The Truth: Astrology has been practiced since pre-historic times. There have been maps of the stars and other evidences found that astrology was practiced by the Egyptians, the Incans, and the Aztecs. Additionally, China and India have long practiced astrology and used its predictions in their daily lives for millennia, and continue to do so.

It is even recently understood that astrology played a large role in the Christian story of the birth of Jesus Christ. The three wise men used astrological phenomena rather than an actual star to discern the events that were about to occur and the fact that they would occur in the land of Judah. Based on this new found information, it is becoming more difficult for people to dismiss astrology as myth and legend.

Common Misconception about Astrology Number Three: Real astrology is not practiced in the United States.

The Truth: Much of the astrology practiced in the United States is not a real study of astrology and is for entertainment purposes only, such as horoscopes. However, there are still real astrology experts in America. While they are few compared to the general consensus of astrologists, and may be difficult to find, there are many of them out there.

The best places to find real astrologists in the United States are in communities where diversity has not driven out the New Age population. True astrologists and New Agers can be found in small communities of large cities and at what is sometimes called "enlightenment festivals." There are also New Age and occult book stores and other shops where you may find real astrology experts. Additionally, you can find real astrologists at pagan festivals and psychic fairs held throughout America at various times of the year.

Astrology In America And Other Parts Of The World

It is interesting to note that while only approximately thirty-one percent of adults in the United States believe in astrology, research studies show that fifty-two percent of Europeans consider astrology to be a science.

The main forms of astrology which are predominantly in current practice are Indian astrology, Western astrology, and Chinese astrology. In the United States, Western astrology is the most popular. The most well-known aspect of Western astrology is the zodiac sign; based on the belt of constellations, each of which was interpreted as resembling various figures, the zodiac signs (or, also referred to as the astrological signs) are called Aries (the ram), Taurus (the bull), Gemini (the twins), Cancer (the crab), Leo (the lion), Virgo (the virgin), Libra (the scales), Scorpio (the scorpion), Sagittarius (the archer), Capricorn (the goat), Aquarius (the water-bearer), Pisces (the fishes).

Horoscopes, which are the most basic interpretations, are based on which sign was in effect when a person was born; and whether a person was born on the "cusp," which means the very beginning or very end of the particular sign. In addition to utilizing a sign to determine life events and predict one's future, a sign is also thought to be relevant to learning about specific characteristics of one's personality and even predisposition toward various potential health conditions, as one's sign is believed to govern certain parts of one's body.

Odd as it may sound, many who have carefully studied this type of information have found it to be quite accurate. For example, while every Virgo is not "practical," "fastidious," and "strong-minded," this trait is indeed a common factor amongst many who were born under this sign; and while all who were born under the sign of Virgo do not develop stomach, intestinal, or reproductive difficulties, many Virgos are indeed more prone to these problems than other people.

Another form of astrology is Indian astrology, which is also called Jyotisa, or Vedic astrology. Its foundation is the belief of connection between the microcosm and the macrocosm the

smaller parts and the universal. Although interest in Vedic astrology is widespread, as it is currently practiced in India it is a significant part of their culture, as people rely on it for all of the important decisions in their lives, from business to marriage.

During the last few decades, Indian astrology has become internationally popular, but it has been a part of India's culture for centuries. Vedic astrology is said to have first been revealed more than 7000 years ago.

Thus, what is said to have originated with the Brahma has spread in popularity to such places as Arizona, which is the home of the American College of Vedic Astrology, currently offering online courses for those interested in learning how to become certified astrologers. Most astrologers offering Vedic astrology readings, however, are located in India.

Chinese astrology is based on the calendar cycle, rather than on constellations. In this form of astrology, the zodiac signs are named after animals the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig. Going by the Chinese calendar, each of these animals are assigned to the lunar months. The animals are also assigned to the time of day during which the individual person was born.

In addition to the animals, there are five elements wood, fire, earth, metal, water which are believed to modify the characteristics of the animals signs. One of the main purposes and functions is to achieve balance, and to affect whatever changes are necessary in order to achieve that balance. Chinese astrology, also, has begun to attain widespread popularity in America.