

Astrology and Experience

Kurt Dressler adds:

For an experienced astrologer it wouldn't even be necessary to search for five-minute differences between birth charts to arrive at quite different interpretations of one and the same chart. I know enough about the rules applied by them to enable me to correlate any one and the same arbitrarily chosen birth chart with any number of different sets of character traits. To gain more flexibility in doing this astrologers have over the centuries incorporated more and more elements into their charts, starting with the newly discovered outer planets Uranus, Neptune, Pluto, knots of the lunar orbit, variety of systems defining the limits of houses and of angular tolerances applied to aspects and other features. The more honest astrologers admit that results depend on intuition rather than on rational analysis, and intuition apparently doesn't work in double blind tests.

From: Rudolf H. Smit, rudolf.h.smit@hccnet.nl

I read your brief opinion on astrology in the latest issue of the Network Review (page 35). Although I have been a successful astrologer myself, I can only agree with your assessment. Since 2000 I am running a website: www.astrology-and-science.com which has been named the best site on the subject by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific. You will find lots and lots of material that will corroborate your findings. In any case, you can read my life story on this site: Astrology, my passion, my life, my personal disaster.

From: Phoebe Wyss, astrophoebe@btinternet.com

In an extract from a letter, published under Correspondence in the Network Review Winter 2009/10, Kurt Dressler describes how his experience as the father of identical twins whose personalities are 'as different as is imaginable', has led him to question the validity of astrology.

He says astrologers explain this by stressing the time differences between twins' births. Although, he says, in a minority of cases the divergence in birth times produces different rising signs and house cusps, that cause different personality traits, Kurt argues rightly that these variations are mostly too minute to make a noticeable difference.

I believe Kurt has raised a very important issue here, as it takes us deep into the mystery of how astrology works. And it does work, otherwise I would not have spent thirty years of my life studying it, and working as a consulting astrologer. During this time I've had many opportunities to compare the patterns in twins' horoscopes with their manifestation in personalities and life stories. Also my grandmother was a twin and, as she was very unlike her sister, from early on I was intrigued by the question of how the same birth chart could apply to both. That led me on the quest to understand how astrology works, which led me to join the SMN, and out of my current

understanding, which is a work in progress, I would like to offer the following explanation.

In the majority of cases the birth charts of twins are closely alike, as they are born on an average of fifteen minutes apart. Exceptions are when the ascendant changes signs between the births of the first and second twin. The contiguous signs in the zodiac are very dissimilar, so a different ascendant, also giving different house cusps, will result in different personality traits. I remember one client with a Sagittarius sun and Aquarius rising. She was outgoing, sociable and had many friends. Her twin, however, who had Pisces rising, was introverted and led a retired life devoted to her spiritual path. The two twins thus appeared as different as imaginable. I have other similar cases on my files. More generally, it seems that we are not separate from others as we believe, but each individual person is part of the greater human field. For further details see: www.astrophoebe.com. A longer version of this letter with other examples and an explanation of archetypal astrology can be found under Members' Articles.

From: Sue Lewis, suelewis7@tiscali.co.uk, www.api-uk.org

In response to Kurt Dressler's dismissal of astrology based on his experience of bringing up twins born within five minutes of each other, I would like to make the following points:

Professor Dressler states that as his twins were born five minutes apart they have identical charts and denigrates the suggestion made by astrologers that five minutes can make a difference, e.g. change of Ascendant, change of Moon sign etc., but he does not make it clear whether or not their charts have been drawn up and whether any such differences exist.

Research has found that twins brought up in separate environments can show more similarities than twins brought up together who may develop complementary characteristics to stimulate each other.

Birth chart interpretations are sensitive to minute details and individuals can be operating at different levels of awareness.

Although people have been observing skies and recording the interaction between macrocosm and microcosm since time immemorial astrology does not usually perform well in scientific tests. Nevertheless significant results concerning athletes, scientists and politicians were obtained from statistical research undertaken by Michel and Françoise Gauquelin.

The Astrological Psychology developed by the Swiss astrologers Bruno and Louise Huber was founded on research and contact with the psychosynthesis clients of Roberto Assagioli.

Insofar as the astrological chart provides not only a guide to self-understanding but also a framework of reference that opens a way to understanding the wider world beyond immediate consciousness it is a worthy topic for consideration by Scientific and Medical Network.

Fostering the Process of Change

From: George Henson, George_Henson@hotmail.com

The Review 100 and Manifesto for Change I found most stimulating – particularly the emphasis on practicalities. The whole process of change in world views, values and our attitudes to working more closely together is quite complex. As one instance, individuals and whole organisations often resist changes of such depth, without acknowledging the fears and resentments arising from the proposed changes. Pressures and publicity aggravate, but deeply sincere wishes to help and skilful means can heal. Then logical discussions become possible. Building these skills involves learning from experience, informed by neuroscience, management models, proven codes of practice and of course empathy.

A start could be in small groups of SMN members sharing understandings of the change processes. Then local groups could share experiences and research results before suggesting guidelines for a handbook to be published eventually. It might be called 'Wisdom in Practice: guide-lines for people and organisations'! An

example may be useful. Members in Australia might look at the work done by their International Centre for Vocational Education and Training. Some years ago the Centre assisted a national programme aimed to assist 'development of professional people in the knowledge era'. It emphasised 'wisdom leadership at all levels'. Published 'think pieces' explored the relationships between wisdom and spirituality as affected by defined alternative organisational cultures. I encountered this work via www.icvet.tafensw.edu.au/ezone/year_2006/nov_dec/thinkpiece_business_wisdom

The researcher was Maret Staren with links to an executive summary of the whole work and to Miller & Miller on wisdom & spirituality. Via these materials I sketched guidelines for fostering deep changes as sketched above. I am still studying the validity of those sketches. Others may wish to do the same. I am working in Lancaster University on related matters and might form a small group of nearby Members, if needed.