Essentials of Relationship Astrology

UNITED ASTROLOGY CONFERENCE
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Key

Never lose sight of the birth chart. The birth charts of the partners show relationship potential, the individual’s needs and possible challenges to relationships.

Fast and Dirty

★ Look at the elements of the Sun/Moon/rising sign in both charts. A similar mix of elements in both individual’s primary triad points to a similarity in approaches to life and basic needs. Very different mixes of elements can point to complimentary approaches or irritation.

★ If both charts have strong Water/Earth elements, they share a need for security and stability.
★ Air/Fire elements emphasized in both charts indicate a need for exploration, movement and change.
★ Water/Air emphasized shows a shared love of interaction and interdependence. Water/Air people need others.
★ Earth/Fire indicates a mutual appreciation of autonomy, self-interest and self-dominion.

★ Look for similar themes in the individual charts. It points to a resonance: similar experiences, values, and approaches to life. (Ex: Rosalynn Carter’s Saturn conjoins the IC while Jimmy Carter’s Saturn conjoins the Moon.)

★ Is either person missing an element that the other provides? The person with the missing element compliments the partner and helps them access/process the missing element. The person with the element is admired for those qualities that come to him/her naturally and feels appreciated and validated.

★ Are there repeating aspects in the chart? For instance, Person A’s Sun sextile Person B’s Venus and Person B’s Sun square Person A’s Venus. These repeating aspects become major themes for the relationship.

★ What aspect patterns does Partner A trigger in Partner B’s chart? Are they challenging or supportive patterns? (Someone who activates your grand trine in water will have a qualitatively different impact on you than someone who highlights your T-square.) Also, does any planet in Partner A’s chart create a new aspect pattern with Partner B’s chart (and vice versa) when you combine the charts?

★ What are their Mercuries doing? Can they communicate? Do they share an element or are they both in yang or yin signs? Are they in aspect? You can do a lot for a couple by walking them through each other’s communication styles.

★ What houses are activated and are any houses emphasized? Use whole sign houses for this exercise.

★ Whole sign: the sign equals the house. Example: If Cancer is the 1st house, then ALL of Capricorn is the 7th house, even if the planet is on the the 6th house side of the descendant.

★ Then evaluate where in Person A’s chart fall in Person’s B’s planets fall (and vice versa). Example: If one person has Aries Rising and the other person’s Sun falls in Libra, the Libra person activates the Aries Rising person’s 7th house of relationships. Is there an emphasis? For instance, if your partner has four planets in the first house and that house/sign falls in your 5th house, that house is emphasized and will take on vital importance in the relationship.
Chiron connections between the charts indicate a deep connection. If I see your wounds and blind spots, I can either have your back or I can turn the knife.

The nodes provide an immediate sense of familiarity—It’s like I’ve known you forever!—and inevitability. Partner planets supporting our North Node help us develop latent skills. If the nodal axis is reverse in the two charts (in opposite signs or houses from each other), the individuals model the skills of the south node and encourage the north node partner to step into the skill set. However, problems ensue if both find themselves stuck in south node “roles” and not developing their north node skills. (Example: Rita Coolidge’s south node in Capricorn versus Kris Kristofferson’s north node in Capricorn.)

Pay attention to Saturn. Easy aspects to/from Saturn promote longevity, a mature and responsible approach to the partnership, and an ability to tough it out when things get rocky. Hard aspects—squares, oppositions, and some conjunctions—can point to difficulties, where we are defensive, fearful or censorious, where we limit, control, and inhibit. When we help our clients to become more mindful of their individual Satums, we help them recognize where they have the highest expectations, are rule-bound and less flexible. With that recognition, they can choose to be more generous, tolerant and forgiving in the partner dynamics that involve their Saturn. Saturn encourages personally responsible approaches, so help them own their Satums!

Juno aspecting key players in the chart—Sun, Moon, Venus, Mars, Juno, 7th house ruler, 4th house ruler, the angles—ties people together. She’s the asteroid connected to the path of committed partnership and power-sharing, so both partners need to feel equal, to have skin in the game. Negatively, she can indicate power struggles, relationship pathologies, and squabbles around children.

Evaluate the Composite chart. You usually read this as a standalone chart, but I also like to see if it fills any holes in the synastry. For instance, perhaps a nice Mercury/Venus conjunction help offset tricky communication glitches found in the synastry. Conversely, perhaps a worrisome problem comes into sharper focus. Other considerations: What are the strongest aspects (become themes for the couple)? Is there a house that is emphasized? What is angular in the composite?

Basic Intra-aspect Principles

Sun: The Sun activates, illuminates, energizes, enlivens, vitalizes, spotlights or clashes egos, dominates, acts at cross-purposes/has different agenda than the other person’s planet.

Moon: The Moon nurtures, makes tender or soulful, softens and deepens, increases the vulnerability/depth of the other person’s planet or can make it defensive, moody, childish or irrational as needs, timing, or unconscious patterns are triggered.

Mercury: Mercury stimulates, cross-pollinates, excites, informs, and spurs speaking/listening/questioning/thinking in whatever planet it touches or it misses signals/cues, argues, insists on agreement, digs in its heels, overstimulates/floods.

Venus: Venus finds common ground, shares pleasures, builds friendship, plays and enjoys, attracts/magnetizes/seduces, infuses with warmth and affection, increases trust, forgiveness and understanding in the other person’s planet or it reveals differences in tastes, styles, chemistry and personal approaches that trip up intimacy.
★ Mars: Mars acts, asserts, increases passion/heat/fire/adrenaline, sexualizes, demands honesty and fearless interaction to keep the relationship vital or he fans the flame so sparks turn to conflagration, every interaction become battle to win, and irritation, prickliness, anger and even violence gain the upper hand.

★ Jupiter: Jupiter cheers, uplifts, buoys, creates possibilities and encourages confidence, as well as bestows generosity, humor and goodwill to planets it touches in the companion chart or he foolishly pushes a planet toward exaggeration, overreach, and demands only to deal in “positives” (no real talk allowed).

★ Saturn: Saturn is a heavy in the chart, for good or ill. At best, he brings commitment, maturity, discipline, perseverance, encourages us to be our best self and to do the thing with integrity (in the realm of the planet he touches in the companion’s chart). He helps us stay together, weather the inevitable storms. At worst, the planet he touches is under nonstop scrutiny, held to impossible standards and ultimately controlled via rules and censure. As a result it wilts (Moon/Venus/Neptune), rebels (Sun/Uranus), deflates (Jupiter), goes mute (Mercury), or finds itself raging battles for its dominion (Mars/Pluto).

★ Uranus: Uranus excites, innovates, revolutionizes, liberates, awakens and pushes any planet it touches to individuate, to move beyond conventionality and become authentic or it pushes it so far so fast that it destabilizes, becomes unpredictable, or acts irresponsibly.

★ Neptune: Neptune enchants, inspires, sensitizes, idealizes, and infuses a bit of magic and spirit into any planet it touches or distorts, dissolves/weakens, or misunderstands/blinds/deceives.

★ Pluto: Pluto perceives deeply and seeks to uncover anything which blocks intimacy; it empowers the planets it touches to face its shadow, reclaim unconscious aspects and to reintegrate into greater wholeness. At worst, Pluto invades without compassion and pulls back the veils, Kali-like, before another is ready or able to make use of its insights, so misusing its power and destroying intimacy and trust. (Playing guru or therapist when the partner might need a simple hug.)

★ Ascendant: When the ascendant touches a planet by supportive aspect, it helps that planet feel at ease, more self-accepting and confident or, if by hard aspect, less at ease, awkward, or potentially misunderstood.

Charts:

★ Jimmy Carter, Oct 1 1924, Plains GA, 7am - Rodden AA / Rosalynn Carter, August 18 1927, Plains GA, 6am - Rodden A

★ Rita Coolidge, May 1 1945, Nashville TN, 12:17am - Rodden AA / Kris Kristofferson, June 22 1936, Brownsville TX, 3:30pm

★ Alec Baldwin, April 3 1958, Amityville NY (time unknown) / Kim Basinger, Dec 8 1953, Athens GA (time in question)