

*Symbols, Soul and the Imagination:
An Astrological Retreat
Handbook*



Behind each astrological interpretation is an act of imagination, since interpretation depends on the active manipulation of mental constructs, imagery and association, fitting then to the worldly situation before us. It is this interpretive capacity that is the 'astrological imagination', fully comparable in its own way with the imagination of the artist and poet.

- Geoffrey Cornelius

*Avrajita Retreat
Kangaroo Valley
New South Wales*

October 16, 2015 to October 18, 2015-09-17

with Brian Clark

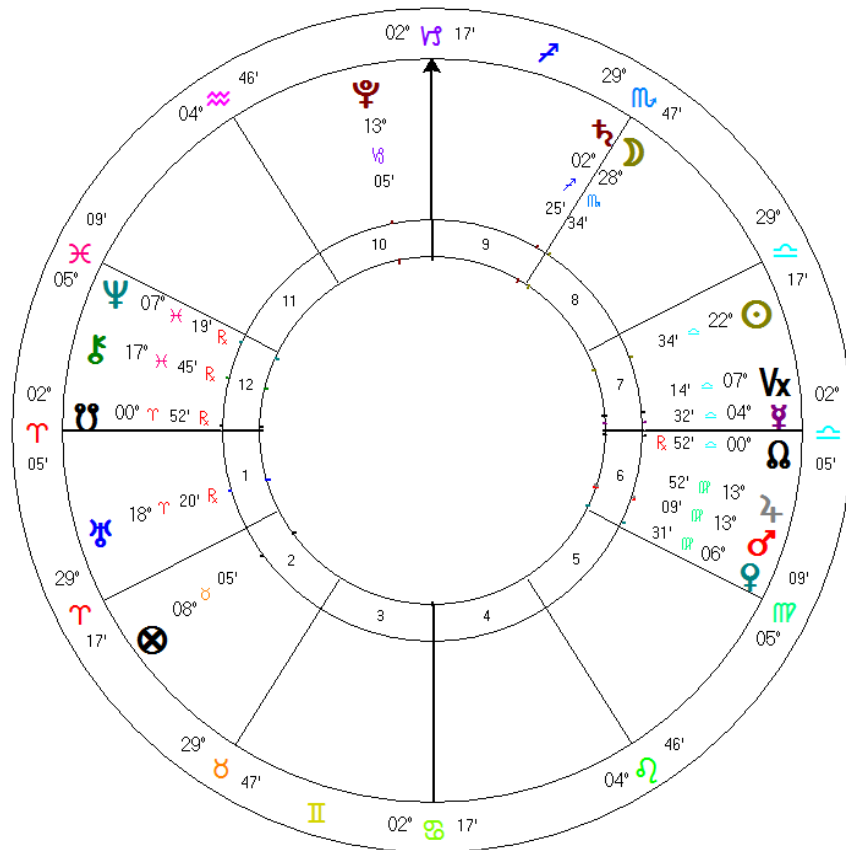
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Our intention this weekend will be to focus on the imagination through symbols and images to deepen our understanding of astrology and the way it works. As astrologers we are involved with symbols every time we look at a horoscope. While the symbols may have become conceptualised and literalised over time, images of the horoscope evoke a psychic response each time we are engaged with them. These reactions can be complex, complicated, and confusing, not only for us but those we read for.

The powerful imagery of astrology can be explored through myth, archetype, symbol, story, poetry, feeling etc. As part of our weekend exploration we will use experiential and group processes to loosen the imagination. As part of this exploration we will begin each day with a dream group to explore the compelling images of the dream and their relationship to the images of the horoscope.

The following notes are for your interest only but there are also suggestions about how you might prepare for the weekend. By preparing I feel you will get more from our sessions and from working with your horoscope. These notes are for participants only; I would ask you to respect these notes as some are from a manuscript I am working on.

It is important to bring at least three copies of your horoscope therefore please print out three copies of your horoscope. An exercise book or journal will also be important as our weekend is one of contemplation and reflective learning. You can already begin your journal with some of the following reflective exercises. Note the dates and times you are writing in your journal.



This is the opening Chart set for 5.30 pm October 16, 2015 for Kangaroo Valley, NSW. These are also the transits to your chart: what are the images that stand out for you?

SCHEDULE: *SYMBOLS, SOUL & THE IMAGINATION*

Friday, 16 October

- 5.30 pm Opening Ceremony
 Introduction: *Symbols, Soul and the Imagination*
- 7.30 Dinner

Saturday, 17 October

- 7.30 am Breakfast
- 8.15 Meditation (optional)
- 8.30 The Dream and the Horoscope: *An Experiential Group*
- 10.15 Morning Tea
- 10.45 Session 1 Working with Astrological Images: *Stories from the Starry Night*
- 12.30 pm Lunch
- 2.00 Session 2 *As If: Thinking Metaphorically*
- 3.15 Afternoon Tea
- 3.45 Session 3 Myths of the Horoscope: *The Horoscope as Myth*
- 7.30 Dinner

Sunday, 18 October

- 7.30 am Breakfast
- 8.15 Meditation (optional)
- 8.30 The Dream and the Horoscope: *An Experiential Group*
- 10.00 Morning Tea
- 10.30 Session 4 *Apollo and Hecate: Methods and Madness, Light and Lunacy, Day and Night, Signs and Symbols*
- 12.15 pm Lunch
- 1.45 Session 5 *Psychic Tasks: Sorting through the Seeds*
- 3.00 Afternoon Tea
- 3.30 Session 6 *Re-membering: Re-collecting some Fragments*
- 5.00 Adieu

The Dream and the Horoscope Group

The Dream & the Horoscope

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Each morning at 8.30 after breakfast we will have a dream group for an hour. One member will share their dream which will be amplified by the group; then we view the horoscope and the dream chart in context of the dream that has been shared looking at both the dream chart and the natal chart with its transit and progressions.

Hopefully the dream that is shared will be from the weekend or from a few days before the weekend while in preparation for the seminar. To share the dream, the dream must be written down in your journal. Also please note the date and approximate time of the dream. If more than one individual would like to share a dream then lots will be chosen to decide; in other work the gods will. Following are some notes on preparing for the dream.



*Trust in dreams, for in them
is the hidden gate to eternity*

- Kahlil Gibran

Recalling Your Dreams

Soul is down; therefore we descend into a dream. Like all mythic descents, how we approach the underworld and how we journey down into its landscape is critical. In order to prepare for the journey into the dream, reflect on the following points to enhance your ability to recall the dream.

1. Keep a diary for your dreams. Use an attractive journal or diary, one dedicated solely to your dream work, although you might also use this diary to record moods, impressions and feelings during the day
2. Be receptive to incubating the dream. Hold the intention to recall your dreams inwardly asking for guidance. Remind yourself that you want to dream and are interested in reflecting on them
3. Keep a pen, pencil or a voice-activated recorder as well as your dream book nearby the bed, so when you awaken from a dream and you are recalling it, you can jot down the dream narrative and any thoughts, feelings or associations that come to mind as you are writing
4. Relax as you awake. Lie still, reflecting. Wait and be receptive to allowing the dream images to return to you
5. When you write down your dream, suspend your critical faculties. The ego often judges the dream as silly, weird, over the top, horrible, irrelevant or not a good dream. All these judgements are imposed onto the dream; they are not indicative of the psychic quality of the dream, nor are they helpful in any way. The dream itself is image and does not make judgements

6. If you are having difficulty recalling dreams, then alter your sleep pattern. Go to bed earlier or wake up earlier. Use an alarm clock to awake you one hour before you need to. Note that during busy and hectic periods you may not recall dreams
7. Going to bed emotionally charged, after drinking or eating heavily, hinders the receptivity to dreams and your inner life. Try to relax when going to sleep. Invite the dream to come to you
8. Read novels, poetry or biography to simulate your imagination

Receptivity is the key.

The first point suggests your intention to dream; therefore I encourage you to purchase or ask for the gift of a dream journal to start to record your dreams. Find your own way of presenting your journal. For instance the left pages of your journal could be where you record your dreams, while the opposite pages may be to write down comments and associations. I also encourage you to write the date and time of each dream and also note in your diary both the Moon sign and its phase. It is important to record the time of the dream as later we can construct the dream chart which is an exceptional tool for amplifying the dream and its psychic images and messages.

Creating your dream journal is an intention to begin a more reflective approach to your inner world and work; it also helps to re-member what has been forgotten, neglected, repressed or overlooked. Dreamwork re-collects aspects of the soul that support a more holistic self. What is recollected is found in the more confronting, emotive and 'negative' aspects of the dream. You will find your own style of recording your dreams but at the beginning you might want to consider:

1. Write your dreams in the first person transcribing them as fully as you can recall. Try not to judge or edit as you are recording them
2. Create a title for your dream. You may also want to number the dream; save some pages at the beginning or end of your journal to create an index of your dreams which may be by date, title, theme etc.
3. After recording the dream, write notes on your feelings as you awoke, and later when you were reflecting on the dream.
4. Write a few sentences about the theme of the dream

When reflecting on your dreams, be aware of the emotional properties in the dream and your responses and feelings. Like a detective, explore the unusual, what is out of place, what does not fit. Ask many questions about the nature of the characters, the action and the scenes of the dream. Let yourself be open to all your associations. And take your time. Rushing towards a conclusion or a prognosis may be more immediately gratifying, but this will not be in service of the dream or soul-satisfying. Some points you might want to consider are:

1. What is the setting of the dream
2. Note the characters in the dream, any dates, times, objects or places
3. Are there any unusual words, puns, puzzles etc?
4. Note the symbols in the dream and your association with them
5. What action takes place

When you feel you have explored the dream in this way then add the detail of the dream and natal chart to see how the astrological images continue to open up and confirm your impressions of the dream.

Dreamwork

In sleep we live in another world, one closer akin to the soul. In this world a phantasmagoria of images, shadows, colours, shades, feelings, visions, desires and fantasies play upon the stage of our inner theatre.

Dreamwork is an act of soul making. When we dream, worldly images of our life are absorbed and processed. Through the consistent working of the dream, events and stories of our life are converted into felt experiences, hence become more subjective and interior. The dream asks us to be reflective and consider the meaning of the outer world. From this introspective and imaginative perspective, a deeper relationship with our inner life is stimulated.

Imagine your dreams take place in the theatre of your inner world. Some are grand productions with many characters, many scenes and much action. Some are one act, maybe one syllable, plays. Do not judge the production of your dreams by their length, Technicolor or intricate and interesting plots, as dreams are subtle and ambiguous. Generally it is your feeling response to the dream and inner sense of its intensity and importance that is significant; however, we can also be deceived by this.

Let's begin in the theatre of your dreams. You, the dreamer, are the Playwright. We might imagine that the Producer of the dream is the Soul. The setting is important to note; where is the dream located? Where do the scenes take place? This suggests where the dream may be situated in the psyche and in a symbolic sense may lead us to a meaningful locale of our life? Therefore reflect on the setting of your dream and its meaning for you. The characters in the dream are important to not only analyse, but question. Who is involved and what do they mean to us? What inner parts of our self might they represent? The dream plot tells us what is going on in the inner world. What is the dream revealing about what may be unfelt or unnoticed? How does the dream end? The conclusion might suggest to us how the dream situation is resolved or perhaps it is not.

When reflecting on your dreams take note of your feeling responses, your associations and your amplifications. All these are important as they help to clarify the symbols. It is important not to judge or edit the dream and its associations; take a spontaneous and unknowing approach to the content of your dreams.

Astrology and the Dream

One way I think about dreams and astrology is: *astrology is telescopic* whereas *the dream is microscopic*; therefore the combination of these two ways of seeing into the soul can be unusually revealing. Astrologically these two points of view can be observed through two horoscopes: the natal horoscope and the dream chart. The natal chart might be likened to the *dream of our life*, the big dream or our personal story of the dreamtime, while the dream chart represent a record of the soul's voice during the night. The natal chart includes broader cycles while the dream chart captures the daily cycle.

The dream chart is a horoscope cast for the approximate time of the dream; this is generally when you awaken from the dream or your best estimation of the time of the dream. For experienced dreamers the time is often noted in their dream journal as they record the time on their bedside clocks or watch. Modern digital recorders may have the time embedded. The dream is a snapshot, a present concern or something that interests the soul. The dream chart is read from the perspective of the dream and therefore the astrological symbols help amplify, identify and give voice to the dream symbols. Since the dream chart is the transits to the natal chart, referencing the dream chart to the natal horoscope identifies the areas of concern and interest in the night world (the unconscious) to the day world of consciousness. The dream chart can also be read separately, as astrological symbols, like dream images, are archetypal.

There are patterns to our dreaming. Dreams may start about 20 minutes after falling asleep and recur through the night in cycles. The first dream may be only 5 - 10 minutes long, but as the night progresses they may last up to 40 minutes. As sleep becomes deeper dreams so do the dreams. Between 3 - 4 am the innermost dreams may be excavated. Dreams also occur on waking; however, the nature of waking dreams is often distinguishable from the earlier deeper dreams. Astrology offers us a way to think about the timing of the dream.

Day and Night

Hours of the day represent the Sun's approximate movement through houses. Approximately every two hours the Sun occupies another house of the horoscope. House size is just about equal at the Equator, but as we move north or south of the equator the houses vary in size. Seasons also affect this as the Sun sets later in the summer than the winter. However astrology offers us a way of thinking about the archetypal journey of the Sun through the houses below the horizon and what dream images might be excavated during its passage through this area.

Dreams belong to the night; therefore they occur while the Sun travels below the horizon, the imaginary line that separates sky and underworld. This nocturnal solar journey is the hero's descent into the underworld, which astrology maps through the six houses underfoot. The setting place is the western horizon, the Descendant, where we descend into the night and the dream. From setting to approximately two hours after sunset, the Sun inhabits the 6th house, where the rituals of life are focused on the change from the day world to the night and the preparation for eventide. It is the place where we clear the day, let go and reorient ourselves to the dark. From approximately 8 to 10 pm the Sun transits the 5th house where the ego self struggles to remain awake yet finally succumbs to the other world and the descent into sleep. From approximately 10 pm to midnight the Sun resides in the 4th house, anchored in all that is past and familial. At midnight the Sun reaches the nadir of its journey and crosses the meridian that astrologically separates self and other. As it enters the 3rd house the Sun turns away from otherness to face its self and prepare for its ascent through the shady world of the dreamtime.

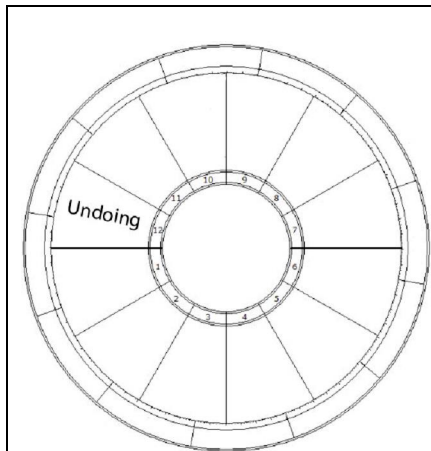
Dreams between midnight and 2 pm occur while the Sun is in the 3rd house; between 2 am and 4 am while the Sun is in the 2nd house and between roughly 4 am and sunrise while the Sun is in the 1st house. This is the quadrant of the natal chart that focuses on infancy; therefore the Sun's ascent through this area is likely to connect with phantoms of the past. Waking dreams occur while the Sun is near the Ascendant. Having reached the horizon once again, the Sun rises into view dispelling the shades of night. As it crosses over the horizon, the night world cedes to the day as Eos, the dawn goddess brings the first light. As the Sun passes into the 12th, dawning heralds the day world. Stirring from sleep we are more likely to bring to mind our dreams while we linger for a moment on the threshold between these two worlds. The dream stays behind momentarily available to consciousness as the Sun enters the 12th house.

The 12th House

Ancients knew the 12th house as the house of 'undoing', an apt description of the process of disengaging from the night world. As the house that marks the entry to the day out of the night, it is where the planets rise to offer us a mindful and reflective expression for what they have exhumed during their underworld journey. Hence the 12th house is similar to the dream in that it offers metaphoric images of the other world. It is the house of asylum, where disenfranchised and disconnected images seek refuge from the day.

Considering the Sun's passage below the horizon allows us to reflect on the difference between a diurnal Sun and a nocturnal one in the horoscope. While the Sun is above the horizon it shines, is central to life, dictates the bios and aligns with the waking ego. At night, it is unseen, yet still there. Its essence is the same yet is no longer directed by the conscious ego which now has fallen

asleep. A more reflective and subtle solar energy promotes soul consciousness through dream. When the Sun descends under the horizon it encounters the shades and phantoms of the night world which become ensouled through the dream. Early astrological thought embraced the demarcation between the night and day worlds.



In the 12th house we undo the 'night' experience, whether that is in terms of the dream, the family shadow or karma. As the transitional zone between sleeping and waking, this is a powerful time for seeing through, before inner negatives become exposed by the sunlight. Dream researchers point out that we spend 1/3 of our lives sleeping and 1/4 of this time is spent dreaming. Therefore 1/12 of life is spent dreaming. Being above the horizon, the 12th house is an environment to re-member the dream and be as cognisant of the inner reality of the dreamscape as possible. Since the 12th house is the place where planets awaken out of their night journey into the day world, astrologers often see the natal 12th house planets as carriers of the soulful and inner life.

From the Hellenistic astrological perspective the distinction between nocturnal and diurnal horoscopes was respected in a tradition called 'sect'. Etymologically the word has developed to mean a distinctive system of beliefs or observances, like a religious group. From the Latin *secta*, the word suggests a school of thought. Implied in the technique of sect is that the planetary alliances or archetypal arrangements during the day differ from the night; in other words, day and night energies arise from different schools of thought. When the Sun is above the horizon it pursues a different mode of being than when it is below.

Early astrologers also *sectioned* the luminaries and planets into these two schools of thought. The Sun of course was diurnal, along with Jupiter and Saturn, the social planets. Queen of the night, the Moon partnered with the faster moving and personal planets Venus and Mars. Mercury, whose mythological nature had always given him permission to move between the worlds, had two memberships: diurnal when the morning star and nocturnal as the evening star, connected with both but aligned with neither.

As social planets, Jupiter and Saturn are concerned with the functioning of society; hence are given rulership of the morals, ethics, beliefs, conventions, traditions, ambitions and laws of the group. These are the societal codes of conduct that are upheld and expected. During the day these energies support the solar impulse. But when the Sun is no longer visible, its reflective companion the Moon and its allies, Venus and Mars, become dominant. Here in the night world the more personal feelings, senses, impressions, values, pleasures, likes, desires, drives and urges are made known to the Sun through the dream. As it rises into the day world again the Sun shines, but now is aware of an inner world. Since the dream chart is usually nocturnal we might be more inclined to the placements of the Moon, Venus and Mars.

Working with the Dream and the Chart

To begin working with the dream and the horoscope I listen to dream first. I find that it is best when the dreamer has written down the dream, as it is often necessary to have multiple readings of the dream. Even with the written account each reading of the dream reveals something new. Without the written account each telling of the dream can be unconsciously edited and modified by the dreamer, aligning itself with the day world rather than the night where it originated. During our experiential dream group I will only work with a dream that has been written down. Amplifying the dream images, looking for personal associations, honouring spontaneous feelings

or memories that arise will be helpful in amplifying the dream. However, on listening to the dream an astrologer hears the inner images of the dream astrologically. Remember dreams are part of the mystery of life, not the solution to your problems.

I find it useful to examine the dream chart first for themes and images that are consistent with the dream images, as this allows amplification of the dream using astrological imagery. Since the dream belongs to the night world, dreamwork is never as ordered and straightforward as we might like. It invites a lunar approach. Even though dream images are often nonsensical in a literal way, they are embedded with meaning imaginatively; hence the intuitive amplification of the dream along with the dream horoscope symbols become an awesome team.

First impressions of the dream chart are important: the angles, angular planets, stelliums, house placements and aspects. To begin I am interested in the faster moving planets, especially the Moon, along with the angles that highlight aspects of the natal chart relevant to the dream. The inner planets and angles often repeat themes and direct the astrologer to examine certain environs. In the context of the dream the inner planetary constellation are microcosmic of a larger soulful picture. Inner planetary movements often escape the wakeful eye as they move quickly and are taken for granted. Yet the soul knows their voice and this is confirmed in the dialogue of the dream. Since they are faster-moving they form more specific aspects.

Because dreams are part of our nightly life, the angles and houses are very important in the dream chart, as they are very fluid. Hence planets in houses can be highlighted and compared to the natal chart, while angular planets become a central theme to consider. Each dream chart is unique. I often find the social planets are indicative of the morals and truths that might be stirred during the news of the day. The dream chart gives us an inner view of how the outer life impresses the soul, what it senses and how it feels.

Within the pantheon of the planets, the outer planets' transits may amplify and confirm the context of the dream. Outer planet imagery can be differentiated; therefore in reference to the dream can help confirm the nature of the dream. Since the outer planets in the dream chart are transits to the natal chart, they reveal the larger background context and framework of the dream.

Transits to the natal chart of the outer planets are reflected in dreams through analogous symbols and images. But their importance in both the dream and by astrological transit is that their character is trans-Saturnian or beyond the visible boundary of human experience. Symbolically speaking the outer planets lie outside the orbit of order, the system or the dominance of the ego. This in itself arouses soul; therefore the unconscious would be alert to the energies of these planets. Dane Rudhyar referred to the outer planets in his later work as the 'ambassadors of the galaxy'.

Astrology may add another dimension to our analysis of the dream process by making us differentiate dreams, perhaps into categories such as Uranian, Neptunian or Plutonian. In contemporary astrology the outer planets are beyond tradition. Invisible to the ancients they reveal themselves in the modern era and symbolise agents of what is beyond the human capacity to control or civilise. In this way they are 'agents of the soul' and to a modern astrologer, like Rudhyar, they help differentiate three ways of being open to these unfamiliar energies that are predominantly at odds with the ego, since each represents a state beyond the ego's control.

This is only an introduction to marrying dreams and astrology, which in my work and experience have been immensely valuable and rich in helping me understand and give voice to inner narratives, which are also present in the horoscope, but difficult to articulate. Dreams and astrology speak the soul's language through images and symbols, both facilitating a more imaginative and soulful perspective. We might say that the only equivalent of the universe within is the universe without, the two regions that dreams and astrology chart. Dreamwork and the craft of astrology are powerful allies in exploring the soul.

Session 1 Working with Astrological Images: Stories from the Starry Night

To participate with astrological images it is of great importance to recognise their archetypal dimension. The planets are profound personifications of archetypes, uniquely placed in the horoscope and in varying degrees of relationship with the other planetary archetypes. Therefore as archetypal symbols, planets are metaphoric and best expressed through images.

Astrology's archetypal nature allows the astrologer to imagine the nature of the psyche, not conceptually or literally, but symbolically. It also allows an organisation of various behaviours, feelings and experiences through the planet's archetypal perspective. Astrological knowledge can differentiate archetypal nuances and allow a more specific representation of the image. Because astrology is archetypal, it is everlasting; even though astrology is maligned and denigrated it remains timeless due to its archetypal dimension.

Astrological symbols begin to find meaning when the astrologer utilises the archetypal resonances and organises these through their own understanding and imagination. Astrological training helps to differentiate and deepen the archetypal terrain of astrology, but it is the individual's participation, imagination and engagement with the symbols that constellates awareness.

Dane Rudhyar wrote that 'to cast an astrological chart in the way it is done today is just as symbolic a process as painting an oil painting.'¹ For like an artist, when an astrologer is immersed in the psychic waters of the horoscope, something precious and productive is created.

Like dreams, the horoscope is a language of the soul that also speak in images and symbols, yet unlike the horoscope dreams are projected onto the inner chambers of the psyche, not the outer arc of the heavens. Yet both are daughters of the night; therefore astrological handicraft has much in common with dream work as its symbols and images are neither literal nor quantifiable, yet they reveal unknown and deeper part of the soul.

Having reflected on your horoscope, choose one planet that you would like to have a conversation with (*do not include the Nodes here as they are not planets*). First, astrologically outline the planet's position in your horoscope: its sign, house position, the houses it rules, its aspects as well as any other astrological information, i.e. essential dignities, strengths, weaknesses, observations etc. While summarising this information what feelings, impressions or sensations did you have - note these. Now personify the planet: give it a 'nickname'; humanise the planet: who does it remind you of, who does it symbolise, give the planet a human face. What images can you use to represent the planet - what stories, myths, vignettes, anecdotes spring to mind? Using active imagination, begin your planetary conversation.

Session 2 As If: Thinking Metaphorically

Metaphor combines two ancient Greek words: *meta* - over and above or across and *pherein* - to carry or to bear; combining these suggests carrying across or beyond. A metaphor helps carry us beyond the observed into an imaginal world that guides us to what could remain unnoticed or unacknowledged. Using metaphors and myths encourage us to see through literal expressions to catch sight of a new way of perceiving our feelings, actions or ideas. They are keys that open doors to other ways of witnessing the world and often allow something that is difficult or unthinkable to be communicated.

It is this way of seeing that is essential in working with astrology so that the depth of meaning underlying the symbol can be transferred to others. Without metaphor astrology is information rather than revelation, words without images. It remains a dead language, an unused prescription.

However with metaphors, myths, movement, images, stories and allegories, the ancientness of astrology can be restored to a living language of life. Being creative astrologically involves the art of transposing meaning in order to bring astrological language to life.

Since astrology's reconfiguration in Hellenistic Greece it has been largely shaped by literacy and rationality, setting aside its images and symbols for delineations and predictions. An astrological chart became read like the interpretation of a puzzle rather than an involvement with life, even though nature inspired the astrological metaphors. Involvement with the planetary cycles of the natural world gradually gave way to observing them. As the planets' rhythms became compartmentalised, the capacity to feel at one with the cosmic environment became impaired. The planets became pointers and signs that were interpreted and read rather than felt through participating with them.

Astrologers constantly use metaphors; in fact we might argue that astrology is itself a metaphoric language. For instance we use the planets as similes of archetypal human forces; the houses are metaphoric of life's ecosystem while the zodiacal signs are emblematic of tones of human experience and development. When one is versed in its symbolism, astrological images are metaphors. For instance, an example of an astrological metaphor is Mercury in Pisces. As the messenger god, one of Mercury's astrological expressions is the style of communication or the thinking function. Pisces is the sign whose images are water, the sea, fish swimming in different directions. Two astrological symbols are merged and the metaphor of Mercury is in Pisces animates the thinking function as if it were under water. We imagine either a very confused, perhaps emotive communication style, or perhaps being of two minds, perplexed and bewildered. The fusion of two separate symbolic images encourages us to imagine this way of being and communicating, but it also permits reflection upon the self and participation with a greater intelligence.

Variations of this theme have filled astrological texts now for millennia. But these are metaphoric, not literal explanations. While by the law of correspondences this image may be literal, it is also mythical and metaphoric, an archaic stream continually flowing beneath astrological doctrine. Astrology is an archetypal language, not a literal dialect; therefore it expresses itself through revelatory means like metaphors and symbols.

Rather than astrology remaining metaphoric, it easily becomes prescriptive, literal and a delineation of behaviour rather than an allegory of soul. Astrological doctrines have systematised its symbols to help analyse and evaluate them; for instance Mercury is deemed to be in its detriment and fall in Pisces, only suggesting that the archetypal essence of Mercury is not in its element nor suited to this quality of nature. But from a linear and rational perspective it can be easily judged, categorised and explained as deficient. Astrological tales lose their enchantment when rationalised. Even though astrological delineations and predictions may be uncannily accurate, they are nevertheless also metaphors. To the initiated the complexity of astrological symbols can stimulate perception and intuition about an individual and the world they inhabit, but to the uninitiated astrological language sounds like a strange and confusing dialect; therefore metaphor is indispensable in transporting others into the insightful realms that astrology reveals. To do this we search for images.

Astrology is a language of metaphors. A metaphor uses a likeness of something else, such as another object, action or way of being to convey an image that animates a particular way of understanding. It is *as if* one expresses the other; as if Mars in Pisces were a dancing warrior or a shoulder to cry on. The astrological image is given a likeness. Therefore it is helpful to think metaphorically when using astrological images rather than trying to find a literal explanation or a factual meaning. Ironically sometimes the metaphor may be literal in real time, but it still

is metaphoric. Think creatively about metaphor and how you might begin to have a metaphoric dictionary for astrological images.

Planet	Metaphors
♃	Feeling blue; for instance, a Uranus-Moon might be a roller coaster ride of emotions or Neptune-Moon could be a tidal wave of feelings, perhaps Pluto-Moon, a sea of grief...
♁	A broken heart, brave heart, perhaps Jupiter - Sun, a big heart...
♃	A walking dictionary; bright as a button, maybe Uranus-Mercury is switched on
♀	Heart on your sleeve; the light of my life...
♂	Boiling mad; a struggle...
♃	The fruits of knowledge; the school of life...
♄	A grandfather clause; a dinosaur; time is a thief...
♄	Battle between instinctual & civilised; a healing crisis; a place in between two worlds; a near death experience. Perhaps Chiron-Sun might be a stranger in a strange land...
♃	A road less travelled; Grassroots movement; Cracks in the pavement or foundation; Trapped behind a plate of glass; Perhaps Uranus-Mars might lightning fast...
♃	The fog slowly is descending or lifting; Music of the soul; Lost in the crowd Hanging upside down; Swimming with the current. Perhaps Neptune-Mercury might be lost in translation...
♀	Like renovating a house; A dark cloud hangs overhead; Going down a darkened hallway. Perhaps Pluto Venus might be my relationship is like a therapy session

Session 3 *Myths of the Horoscope: The Horoscope as Myth*

*A classical myth is a story that, through its classical form, has attained a kind of immortality because its inherent archetypal beauty, profundity, and power has inspired rewarding renewal and transformation by successive generations*²

While this description captures the timelessness of classical myths, the very nature of myth defies explanation as it shape shifts in the company of the storyteller and the listener. We may be listening to the same narrative, but each one hears the story from their experience and understanding. With each reading something new might be revealed. Relieved from having to believe in it or accept it as the truth, myth invites us to actively and imaginatively participate in its tales of wonder.

Even though myths continue to be academically analysed they are too fluid and porous to be explained. Analysis and clarification cannot be applied to myth in the same way that it can to history. It is not an objective portrayal of time past; but more akin to a soul history, a commentary on the archetypal experience of being human. Myth is alive in every culture and in everybody. Yet in a post-modern culture whose residents mostly respond to facts and proof, the idea that myth has its own reality alarms most people. Dictionaries define myth as falsehood; therefore in a contemporary world where truth represents what is measurable and observable myth, along with its deities has been dismissed.

The prevailing paradigm of scientism is itself a myth yet one whose dominance marginalises any other forms of mythmaking. Theories have replaced stories. Modern myths of technology and

economics are spellbinding since they are 'real' and 'true'. Under this mythic regime all other myths become unreal and untruthful and even the word comes to suggest a lack of truth. The word *myth* being associated with a fictitious narrative, generally regarding the supernatural, has been used in the German language since 1815, the French since 1818 and English since 1830; since the advent of scientism myth has come to mean an irrational, illusory, non-scientific tale, something which is fabricated, perhaps an elaborate story; certainly one that is not to be trusted as the truth.

But truth is multi-dimensional, and like metaphor myth legitimises the unseen world of subjective feelings and responses. As an Indian mythologist suggests, 'Myth is truth which is subjective, intuitive, cultural and grounded in faith.'³ Hence myths do not conform to rational analysis, measurements or theories, as myths are not literal accounts of outer events. There are no standard versions, sequels, nor happy endings. Myth is not concerned with facts or literal causes but invites us to deepen our thinking and free ourselves from a two-dimensional reality of certitude and structure.

The creative power that modern man pours into science, technology, housing developments and the stock market was channelled towards mythmaking in antiquity. Myth was both the product and the inspiration for the ancients' creativity and way of life. As Carl Jung said: 'the activity of the early classical mind was in the highest degree artistic: the goal of its interest does not seem to have been how to understand the real world as objectively and accurately as possible, but how to adapt it aesthetically to subjective fantasies and expectations.'⁴ To the ancients mythmaking was an aspect of soul making and we might argue that myths are primary psychic phenomena that bring to light the nature of the soul.

As stories of inner events, myth unfastens a psychic portal through the language of the imagination. One way to think about myth is that it is a dialect of the soul; a storyline strung together with fabulous images of monstrous intent and heroic deeds, antagonistic gods and fierce goddesses set in fertile valleys or on mountain peaks. Soul is nurtured through myth as it is imagistic and ageless, reminding us of an other world beyond literal space and time. Beyond the limits imposed by rational thought, myth offers an original view of our natural world. When we engage with its stories or speak in mythic tongues we suspend our beliefs and certainties about who we and where we come from and cross over to a dimension where these realities are less personalised. They are everyone's realities, 'the collective dream', only I perceive and participate with them from my perspective. Myths engage the imaginative self and inspire me to play a part in the creative process. Carl Jung called imagination 'the mother of human consciousness'⁵, as it nurtures our earliest attempts to find meaning and worth before the development of literacy. One of our imagination's strongest dialects is myth.

Myth helps us to see though things: it de-literalises the world we live in rendering it accessible to our inner world and resonant with our soul. Mythological narratives inspire us to participate with an other world that lies beyond the shores of waking reality. It is an extra-ordinary place not bound by linear time nor hinged to facts. Through engagement with myth, we cross the threshold into its original world where paradoxes are not contradictory nor death an end; a paralleling cosmos where everyone shares the same concerns, trials and initiations. Myth invites us to see through into a subjective truth.

Each planet resonates with an archetypal orientation and way of being; therefore planetary images and symbols are mythic narratives. Since the planets are named after Titans, Gods and Goddesses we can also reflect on these mythic motifs, their genealogy, sphere of influence and storyline. A mythic sensitivity and sensibility are very helpful in amplifying planetary images

and patterns. Sometimes it is a motif, a symbol or image from the myth that amplifies the planetary signature most effectively.

As you begin to practice the art of astrological counselling you will hear many mythic fragments and associations in the clients' stories. Compile a list of these; this is only a beginning – add your own mythic motifs and analogies

Planet	Mythic Analogies
♃	Demeter as the mother and agricultural goddess; Artemis, Hecate, Lunar goddesses, Mnemosyne as the mother of the Muses and feeling memory.....
♄	Helios and the Chariot of the Sun, Apollo and the oracle, Know Thyself; Heroic myths like Heracles and the Hydra, Jason and Ladon, Perseus and the Gorgon....
♅	Hermes stealing the cattle of Apollo; Hermes as guide to underworld...
♆	Beauty and the Beast: Aphrodite and Hephaestus; Venus and Psyche...
♇	The Greek Ares, the Roman Mars; Warrior myths such as Achilles; the Amazons
♈	Zeus and Hera; Zeus, the champion of order; Zeus and Metis, Zeus and the feminine...
♉	Cronus as time; Cronus devours his children and his own creativity...
♊	Chiron's wound; Pholus; Chiron as mentor to the heroes...
♋	Ouranus' castration; Sky Gods; Uranus and Gaia; Prometheus' theft of fire...
♌	Dionysus and the Maenads; Poseidon & Athena; Amphitrite, the Nereids and all the sea goddesses; Proteus...
♍	Persephone; Inanna and Eriskigal; Descent Myths; Dis...

Mythic narratives will permeate all aspects of the horoscope; therefore reacquaint yourself with the zodiacal myths, deities that you feel are associated with the houses or reflect on aspects as dialogues between the gods

Session 4 *Apollo and Hecate: Methods and Madness, Light and Lunacy, Day and Night, Signs and Symbols*

*daughters of the Sun,
accelerated the race, after leaving the houses of the Night,
towards the light, removing with the hand the veils from their heads.
There is the gate that divides the paths of Night and Day⁶*

- Parmenides *The Proem*

Each day we pass through the gates that divide the paths of Night and Day. Those of you in your mid 50's have passed through these gates over 20,000 times; 20,000 times you have passed the stream of Oceanus and opened the gate onto Night and 20,000 more you have crossed the river Lethe to find the gate that opens onto Day. These gates are at the crossroads to another world with a different atmosphere. Each world has its own mode of being and knowing: the day world is where Apollo's reason and moderation reigns, but the night world is where Hecate's instinct and abandon rule.

The experience of day and night is not the same as it once was in the ancient world. The division between day and night is no longer as distinctive or as well-defined as it once was. The 24/7 news cycle invades our night world with day images; city lights brighten up the night sky obscuring the

starlight; TV, computer, mobile phone and tablet screens brighten our night world with information. The day world invades the night fuelling the left brain with judgments on the right. Restorative sleep, the boon of the night world, is inhibited. It is acceptable to bring the day world of technology into our bedrooms, but bringing the night world of intuitions, visions and feelings into the boardroom is unwelcomed.

Mythologically Night exists before Day. In a way this is not only metaphoric but indicative of collective and personal development, as the primal gives way to cultural, the right brain to the left, magical thinking to rationality, and *gnosis* or intuitive participatory knowing concedes to *episteme* or epistemological knowing. But human beings have a capacity to belong to two worlds and these two ways of being were known to the ancient Greeks; however since the Age of Enlightenment the rational, descriptive, factual and purposeful way has dominated the imaginative, subjective and participatory way. Day has overrun Night.

But even in the ancient world Night was a threat to heroic consciousness. Yet to the mystic consciousness of the Orphics, Night was a depth of love and light. Today we favour heroes over mystics. Night intelligence is not politically correct today; therefore entering through the night gate is never easy.⁷ When reflecting on astrological practice, has the technical, interpretive and delineative ways of knowing the horoscope overrun the imaginative, intuitive and participatory way? Has literality and information become the dominant astrological paradigm? Has our astrological night been yoked to the day-world ways of knowing?

Reflect on each of the planets from the point of view of day and night. Which ones are more comfortable in the day? Which one at night? Are you a day person or a night person? How do you differentiate the day world from the night world?



Endnotes

¹ Dane Rudhyar, *The Astrology of Transformation*, Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, IL: 1980, 193.

² Mark Morford and Robert Lenardon, *Classical Mythology, Fifth Edition*, Longman Publishers, White Plains, NY: 1995, 18.

³ Dr. Devdutt Pattanaik, *A Handbook of Hindu Mythology*, Penguin Books, India: 2006, xiii.

⁴ C. G. Jung, *The Collected Works*, Volume 5: 24

⁵ Carl Jung, from an interview in *Neues Wiener Journal* on November 9, 1932 translated by Ruth Horine. See *C. G. Jung Speaking*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ: 1977, 58.

⁶ Parmenides *Proem*, Fragment 1, lines 8 – 11. Internet resource accessed 1.09.2015:
http://www.parmenides-of-elea.net/Parmenides_poem.pdf

⁷ James Hillman, *The Dream and the Underworld*, Harper & Row, New York, NY: 1979, 34.