

## When the Transpersonal Transects the Personal

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Astrologically the planets can be grouped in various ways – one way is: the fast-moving planets ☾, ☉, ☿, ♀, ♂ are **personal**, as they identify our private feelings, thoughts, values and desires, revealing intimate characteristics and individuality. ♃, ♄ are known as the **social** planets, as they symbolize the socialization processes, shaping the way we experience and respond to educational, political and other social aspects of our lives. The slower-moving outer planets ♅, ♆, ♇ are referred to as **transpersonal** as they are ambassadors of consciousness beyond the bounds of our personal and social identity. Their energies influence development beyond personal, individual, social and conventional factors.

When transpersonal planets aspect or transit a personal planet, impersonal, intergenerational and collective energies pierce the personal life. What this suggests is that something beyond our individual control, understanding or nature is experienced. This can be concerning, confusing and disturbing. Astrological images help us to differentiate the personal from the transpersonal, as well as what is inherited from what is temporary.

To prepare for the class, and so we can also use your examples, fill in the following aspect grid. What are your natal aspects between the five inner planets and the three outer planets? List all the 4<sup>th</sup> harmonic aspects (conjunction, opposition and squares) between Uranus, Neptune, Pluto and the five inner planets. Make sure you note whether these are applying (A) or separating (S) as well as the orb in degrees and minutes. In the **Comments**, note the closest aspects; also note the aspects in priority of conjunction, opposition and square. At the end of the notes is an example of how to use this worksheet.

Natal Aspects	♅	♆	♇	Comments
☾				
☉				
☿				
♀				
♂				

One of the most profound transits is when both the personal and the generic cycles occur simultaneously. When an outer planet is natally in a key aspect to an inner planet, at some point in the outer planet's cycle, it will reconfigure the planetary combination by transit in both a personal and generic sense. In our second class we will look at the times in the outer planets' generic cycles when the planetary combination is reconstructed in time. Let's continue with some notes to review the images of the outer planets and their generic cycles in temporal time.

## Uranus

### *The Archetype*

One of the radical features of the Uranus archetype is its urge for freedom, individuality and reform. This is generally embodied through the desire to separate and follow a unique and innovative course. Its archetypal nature is not inclined to follow in the footsteps of others, nor be conventional. From this perspective its planetary initiation throughout the life cycle is self-determination, promoting independence and autonomy. While the spirit of Uranus seeks equality and democracy, at times it can be contrary and rebellious. Temperamentally, Uranus seeks objectivity and non-attachment, yet the archetype is often unpredictable, locating itself on the fringes of the establishment. As in myth, Saturn's character is often hostile to Uranus, yet in essence they create a dynamic psychic tension between conformity and divergence. Uranus's unpredictability and risk-taking challenges Saturn's proclivity for predictability and control. Therefore, at critical times in the Uranus cycle, the urge arises to break free from the past, disconnect from what is established or separate from what is familiar. Uranus's transitions challenge our prevailing attitudes, question our routines and confront our ways of being in the world, inviting us to be experimental and risk-takers.

The generic cycle of Uranus separates the life cycle into four quarters, metaphoric of the four seasons of life. At these critical ages, we are jolted out of the structures and systems that confine our vision in order for us to experience a freer and progressive life. We might suggest a fourfold division of life defined by the Uranus cycle.

### **Four Stages of the Uranus Cycle**

<i>Season of Life</i>	<i>Stages of the Uranus Cycle</i>	<i>Age at the Critical Phase</i>
The Spring of our Awakening	From birth to the Waxing Square: Ages 0 to 20-21	20-21
The Summer of our Experimentation	From the Waxing Square to the Opposition: Ages 20-21 to 38-42	38-42
The Autumn of our Inspiration	From the Opposition to the Waning Square: Ages 38-42 to 61-63	61-63
The Winter of our Freedom	From the Waning Square to the Return: Ages 61-63 to 84	84

### *The Cycle of Uranus*

Uranus's cycle is 84 years. Since all 12 signs are transited in 84 years, the 12th harmonic generic aspects of transiting Uranus to natal Uranus occur approximately every 7 years throughout the life cycle, as the following table illustrates.

<b>The Waxing Half of the Cycle</b>		<b>The Waning Half of the Cycle</b>	
♁ Semi-sextile	At age 7	♁ Quincunx	At age 49
♁ Sextile	14	♁ Trine	56
♁ Square	21	♁ Square	63
♁ Trine	28	♁ Sextile	70
♁ Quincunx	35	♁ Semi-sextile	77
♁ Opposition	42	♁ Return	84

In the previous cycle Uranus spent approximately 7 years in each sign of the zodiac, but as evident in the following table it can stay between 6½ and 7½ years in a sign. This timing echoes the Saturn squares that occur every 7 to 8 years.

Uranus Sign	Number of Years in Sign	Uranus Sign	Number of Years in Sign	Uranus Sign	Number of Years in Sign
♈	7 years, 6 months	♌	6 years, 5 months	♍	6 years, 10 months
♉	7 years, 3 months	♍	6 years, 4 months	♎	7 years, 1 month
♊	7 years	♎	6 years, 5 months	♏	7 years, 7 months
♋	6 years, 10 months	♏	6 years, 6 months	♐	7 years, 6 months

Because of the difference in time, the critical phases of the squares and opposition may vary by a few years for each generation. For instance, the Uranus in Cancer generation will experience their waxing square between the ages of 19 and 20, their opposition between 39 and 40, and their waning square between 61 and 62 years. The Uranus in Capricorn generation will experience their waxing square between the ages 22 and 23, their opposition between 43 and 44, with their waning square occurring between 63 and 64 years of age.

Planetary Cycle	Age at the Waxing Square	Age at the 1st Opposition	Age at the Waning Square	Age at the 1st Return
Uranus	20-21	38-42	61-63	84

While the exact times of the cycle vary slightly with each generation, the Uranus cycle follows the maturation course of the individuation process. The first critical period of the square is synchronous with the first nodal return and the waning Saturn square, initiating us into the post-adolescent decade of the twenties and into a world beyond the familiar. The opposition is an integral part of the midlife passage, while the waning square follows the Saturn and Jupiter returns, which initiate us into the decade of our sixties and an induction into later life. The Uranus cycle is a cosmic metaphor for the modern human life cycle. In the waxing half of the cycle, which is the first 42 years, life is mostly directed into career, family, home and worldly identity, whereas, in the waning half of the cycle, psychic energy is more focused on self-knowledge.

This cycle symbolizes opportunity: a door opens, an unexpected encounter occurs or a new pathway is revealed. In my experience Uranus transits synchronize with the emergence of numerous opportunities. Timing is of the essence, because while all opportunities are possibilities, they may not all be the right ones. Uranus opens many doors but not all may be entered; therefore, its nature includes accepting that which cannot be lived out, the road not taken. Periods coloured by Uranus are exciting and liberating, often uncharacteristic and out of the ordinary. Each one is a step towards individuality and autonomy.

The first square occurs as the decade of the twenties opens. New relational, educational and vocational experiences are possible. The canvas of the Self is ready to be painted and it is time to take a chance. Like the Fool in the Tarot journey, often equated with Uranus, we are ready to take a leap into the unknown to see where it takes us. The spirit of adventure is strong. At the opposition two decades later, we stand on the landscape of midlife, reflecting on what has not happened and what is still possible. It is a period of setting ourselves adrift from what no longer nurtures, supports or sustains us, so we can find the harbours that can shelter our passion and creativity. The opposition presents the opportunities to take a chance on ourselves and create the lifestyle we have been striving towards. At the final

square we have just entered our seventh decade (the 60s) and the adventurous task of creating our final chapters of life in our own way is on the horizon. The opportunity and possibility of freedom and exploration presents itself in a new way.

Uranian transitions will always challenge our self-image. 'I am never going to marry,' said a client. But when Uranus transited her Descendant, she did. Another client once said she would never travel overseas as she was afraid of planes. At her Uranus opposition she won a trip to London and took the 32-hour flight from Melbourne to Heathrow! When transiting Uranus opposed a client's Moon in the 12th house, her relinquished son contacted her. Uranus transitions are filled with the unexpected and we are called to be adventurous, to challenge the assumptions we have made about our self and take a chance on life and all its possibilities.

## Neptune

### *The Archetype*

Of all the planetary archetypes, Neptune seems to be the most difficult to incarnate, contain or embody. Temperamentally, Neptune is fluid and porous, evading limits and restraints, preferring to be boundless, without borders or boundaries. Illusive, it favours invisibility and imagination rather than literality. Its nature is other-worldly and ethereal, and its effect is to disarm, dissolve and disorientate. Therefore, it initiates us into a world beyond literal form or real definition.

Neptune was shaped from the Greek Poseidon, god of the seas. Poseidon was not always connected to the seas, being known originally as the 'Earth-Shaker' and the god of horses. He became regent of the vast oceans, their stormy and turbulent waters and their shape-shifting inhabitants, when he was paired with Amphitrite, a goddess of the seas. His astrological temperament inherits this aspect of watery or emotional disquiet and unease. Neptune is also associated with Dionysus, the god of wine and the intoxication of the grape, who also was the embodiment of theatre, poetry, dance, spirituality, wandering, abandon and loosening, all aspects of this astrological archetype.

Astrological Neptune's domains are the vast seas and tides of human affairs, bittersweet feeling, fantasy, the longing to be complete, surrender, lack of inhibition and restraint, heartache and the yearning for the divine. Its other-worldly essence leaves a feeling of something missing or not yet completed that often leads an individual into a spiritual search, a sense of surrender or a period of feeling let down. It accompanies a deeper connection to and reverence for the sacred.

### *The Neptune Cycle*

Based on its last cycle, Neptune spends just under 13.5 to 14 years in each sign, steadily progressing through the zodiac. Because of its circular orbit its journey through the zodiac is more proportioned than the other planets, as the following table demonstrates.

Sign	Number of Years in Sign	Sign	Number of Years in Sign	Sign	Number of Years in Sign
♈	13 years, 5 months	♏	13 years, 8 months	♌	13 years, 11 months
♉	13 years, 7 months	♐	14 years	♍	13 years, 10 months
♊	13 years, 5 months	♑	13 years, 7 months	♎	13 years, 8 months
♋	13 years, 6 months	♒	13 years, 10 months	♏	13 years, 10 months

Neptune's cycle of 165 years does not return in one lifetime; therefore, its passage connects us to ancestral time, times unbound by physical laws. Neptune's critical phases reintroduce us to the divine. That is, its cyclical turning points are often experienced as an emptiness or meaninglessness, inviting us into another dimension of connection. At these turning points, we are initiated into a soulful dimension, even if that is sad, bereft, or problematic. Soul is found in the depth of feeling. Due to the slower-moving nature of Neptune, we can define the critical phases by the 8th-harmonic aspects. These phases synchronize with the Uranus cycle.

Stages of the Neptune Cycle	Age at the Critical Phase	At similar ages to the Uranus cycle, the Neptune cycle confronts us with the widening gulf between the abstract and the real, fiction and fact, literality and imagination. As it travels through each sign approximately every 14 years, it also synchronizes with the timing of 7 years in the Saturn and Uranus cycles. Our creative and spiritual longing seeks a place to belong in the material world.
From Birth to the Waxing Semi-square (ages 0-21)	21	
From the Waxing Semi-square to the Waxing Square (ages 21-41)	41	
From the Waxing Square to the Waxing Sesquiquadrate (ages 41-62)	62	
From the Waxing Sesquiquadrate to the Opposition (ages 62-82)	82	

The first half of its cycle marks particular critical ages. The following table lists the aspects in its cycle including the semi-square and the sesqui-square at 21 and 62 respectively, which resonate with the two Uranus squares at 21 and 63. Other cycles harmonize with the Neptune cycle, as in the following table.

The Waxing Half of the Cycle		Synchronous Times in Other Cycles
♁ Semi-sextile	Age 14	Approximately the 1st progressed Moon and 1st Saturn oppositions
♌ Semi-square	21	Approximately the 1st Saturn waning and 1st Uranus waxing squares
♊ Sextile	28	Between the 1st progressed New Moon and the 1st Saturn return
♋ Square	41	Approximately the 2nd progressed Moon opposition
♎ Trine	55	Approximately the 2nd progressed Moon and 3rd nodal returns
♏ Sesquisquare	62	Near the 1st waning Uranus square
♍ Quincunx	69	
♈ Opposition	82	The 3rd progressed Moon return

Its passage of 14 years per sign symbolizes a generation's dreams and ideals. For the Neptune in Libra generation, their expectations and ideals, yet also their disappointments, are focused on relationships while the Neptune in Scorpio generation idealizes intimate, darker, even taboo aspects of life. Neptune in Sagittarius encompassed a time of spiritual and religious ideals, while political and governmental ideologies rose to the forefront during the Neptune in Capricorn era. If born during these times, the prevailing atmosphere



and ethos is internalized. In their twenties, these generations' values and principles are challenged by the transit of Pluto conjoining their Neptune.

Like the transits of the other outer planets, Neptune impacts the deepest layers of psyche. Neptune evades literal forms and initiates us into the transcendent, mystical and imaginative aspects of life. Therefore its transits can be disorientating when we continue to use logical and rational constructs to understand what is taking place. It is a time when misdiagnosis, misunderstanding and confusion are liable to continue if we remain focused on logical outcomes. During Neptune transitions it often feels as if we are in a fog, drifting or lost. Those intent on controlling and structuring the process may find themselves forgetting what it is they were meant to do, feeling lethargic and without ambition. To make the transition to the next phase of life, an immersion into uncertainty and vagueness is demanded. It is a time of faith and trust in the soul and the spiritual aspects of our self that are demanding attention. Neptune initiates us into the other-world where material values are no longer dominant and worldly status is not that important. It is a world where identity is not separate or singular, but merged and collective.

Neptune transits reconnect us once again to soul and its values that may have been lost or covered over on the pedestrian walkways of our lives. Therefore it is often a time of heightened interest in spirituality and personal growth or a phase of creativity and self-exploration. The archetypal urge of Neptune is to transcend. When in its grip there is a loss of connection to the habitual rituals that ground and secure us. Therefore one of the important aspects of this transit is to be mindful of proper nourishment and food, maintaining regular sleeping habits, self-care and the continuity of physical routines. Clients undergoing this transition have often told me of losing their appetite, an inability to sleep or wake up, of feeling lethargic, unable to be active, as well as craving more alcohol, drugs and rest. It takes a conscious attempt to remain embodied and pursue activities that support the process.

My experience has been that it is hard to imagine where one is headed or what is in store during Neptune transits. With the insight of time we can look back and recognize how the process unfolded, but we can also appreciate how we could never have imagined planning this or even conceiving of it. Something incredible has occurred and we appreciate the unseen hand of the divine in helping to shape the outcome.

The first critical aspect in the cycle is the waxing square near age 41, one of the potent aspects of the midlife passage. While each generation experiences this in the context of the times, one of the main elements at this time of life is the profound awareness of what is missing, what has not happened and the sense of something still unfulfilled. It may be a disappointment where life has led or the bittersweet longing for something or someone else. We feel lost, at sea; aware of the life we have constructed due to the life choices we have made. Neptune symbolizes the dreams we have harboured, the promises we have made and the hopes we have held. At this square they are challenged and measured against what has really happened. It may feel disheartening, yet the reality is quite the opposite. It is a soulful time and what might feel despairing is actually reconnecting us to soul. We feel lost, so we can find our way again; disappointed, so we might rework the agenda we have set; and confused because something creative and mystical is trying to present itself. There comes a point in every passage and on every voyage when we need to take stock. This is the time to explore what we still creatively and soulfully would like to accomplish in our life. It is a time of assessing where we have gone off-course.

While the first square may be experienced despondently, the irony is that it awakens the soul to un-lived aspects of the creative and spiritual life, calling us to provide more meaning, more creativity and more imagination in our lives. At this time it is important to question and reflect; our declarations that everything is wonderful may in part be denial. Therefore, I always try to illustrate this time to clients as a reconnection to soul and creativity, to the authentic essences of self.

In our mid-fifties, Neptune trines Neptune and, in a way, rewards the work done in the last fourteen years towards steering the ship on a path aligned with soul. It is an age for recognizing that our spiritual life is what will sustain us in the future. It is a gathering time, a time of remembering and a time when many decisions are beginning to be shaped unconsciously. While we may not be aware of it, we are instinctively planning the next phase of life with the help of inner images and invisible forces.

In its transits to the planets and angles, Neptune draws down what often seems like a haze, a time when it is misty and unclear. Yet what is happening is a profound state of change, one that we cannot fathom with our intellect or mind. During a Neptune transition we are asked to trust in the process, relinquish control and follow the prompts. The signs are all around; we only have to be still, quiet and sensitive to what is taking place in order to make the transition into the next phase. In the ancient world, disorientation through a labyrinthine initiatory process prepared pilgrims to enter a more receptive and spiritual state. In a similar process, the confusion and uncertainty of a Neptune transit are often the clues that the personality is in flux and entering a new plane of spiritual growth.

## Pluto

### *The Archetype*

As the lord of death and rebirth, Pluto is the silent and invisible brother who removes himself from the affairs of the Olympian family, yet governs much of the family fate. As the guardian of shades, Pluto is given the caretaking role for what remains repressed in both the individual and the family: secrets, shame, buried passions, unexpressed grief and loss, severed attachments, unresolved endings, negative and toxic feelings. Pluto rarely ventures above ground, choosing to remain in the underworld. His mythic realms are also internal, interior and introverted as few images or altars survive to remind us of his worship or importance in cult. Virtually no temples were erected to Pluto. Pluto conjures images that lie underneath, hidden from view – that which is unconscious or overlooked.

Rarely is the god represented in art, sculpture or vase painting. Pluto has been re-placed and dis-placed, potent clues to what we have culturally and psychologically done with this archetype. Having no specific temples or altars and being underground, his worshippers summoned Pluto by striking the earth with their hands. Pluto symbolizes the darker aspects of psychic life, once accessible and underhand: negative and dark feelings, loss, rage, jealousy, grief and death are his aspects of psyche.

Pluto is from *Plutus*, meaning 'wealth'. This title of the 'rich man' or the 'wealthy one' suggests the treasures beneath the earth, a reminder of the rich internal psychic world. Pluto symbolizes the immense resources hidden in the interior of the earth or metaphorically in the underworld of the psyche. Subjectivity is Pluto's realm and, when honoured, the richness of the interior world is tapped through dreams, images and symbols. Dreams appear in the stillness of sleep when the extroverted world becomes invisible and

consciousness yields to unconsciousness. This world of shades and shadow is a resourceful place, the transformational aspect of the astrological Pluto.

Pluto does not move steadily through the zodiac due to its elliptical orbit, spending the greatest amount of time in Taurus and the least in Scorpio. Both being orbit-crossers, Chiron and Pluto have been classified as belonging to the Kuiper Belt; therefore they share a marginal quality by not fully fitting into the solar system like other planets. This was the same situation mythologically. While Chiron and Pluto were both sons of Saturn, they were not classified as Olympians. Astrologers still classify Pluto as part of the planetary pantheon but in 2006 the International Astronomical Union demoted Pluto to the status of a 'dwarf' planet as it did not conform to features set down for planetary status. Symbolically, however, Pluto is just as powerful and commanding as before.

### *Pluto Generations*

The following table, from the current cycle of Pluto through the zodiac, shows the difference in timing per sign. Pluto crossed inside the orbit of Neptune in February 1979 in the sign of Libra and crossed back over Neptune's orbit in February 1999 in the sign of Sagittarius; therefore, the full transit of Scorpio is spent while inside Neptune's realm. During this twenty-year period Pluto is closer to the Sun than Neptune.

Pluto Sign	Number of Years in Sign	Pluto Sign	Number of Years in Sign	Pluto Sign	Number of Years in Sign	Number of Years in Element
♈	29.3 years	♏	18.8 years	♁	13 years	Fire - 61.1 years
♉	31.5 years	♐	14.7 years	♂	15.6 years	Earth - 61.8 years
♊	30.1 years	♑	12.2 years	♆	19.6 years	Air - 61.9 years
♋	25 years	♒	11.5 years	♃	24.1 years	Water - 60.6 years

Pluto's 248-year elliptical orbit creates an uneven passage through the zodiac signs, spending the most time in Aries and Taurus and the least time in Libra and Scorpio. With Pluto's slow speed, the waxing square is different for each generation. For instance, the square for the Pluto in Aries generation occurred as late as their early 90s; individuals born with Pluto in Taurus during the 19th century received their waxing square in their 70s and 80s. We cannot pinpoint the square at a common age, but we can surmise that the archetypal mystery initiation will be similar and that all Pluto generations will experience a journey – a descent into the Underworld. For the Pluto in Virgo generation, the waxing square came as early as 35, heralding a succession of cycles synchronous with the midlife passage. Some of the Pluto in Cancer, Leo and Virgo generations may experience their Pluto oppositions, as these take place during their 80s, along with the Uranus return and Neptune opposition. Here are the approximate ages of the waxing square for each Pluto generation.

Natal Pluto Sign	% of Time in Sign	Waxing Square Occurs Between	Natal Pluto Sign	% of Time in Sign	Waxing Square Occurs Between
♈	11.9 %	Ages 86–91	♑	5.0 %	Ages 35–40
♉	12.8 %	Ages 73–86	♒	4.7 %	Ages 40–49
♊	12.2 %	Ages 58–73	♁	5.3 %	Ages 48–59
♋	10.2 %	Ages 45–61	♂	6.4 %	Ages 58–73
♌	7.7 %	Ages 38–45	♆	8.0 %	Ages 73–85
♍	6.0 %	Ages 35–39	♃	9.8 %	Ages 85–91



For the current generations the following table summarizes the dates of their waxing square and opposition if that occurs before the age of 100.

Pluto Generation	Approx. Dates	Experiences Pluto Square	Approx. Ages	Experiences Pluto Opposition	Approx. Ages
Cancer	1912–39	Libra	45 to 61	Capricorn	85 - 96
Leo	1937–58	Scorpio	38 to 45	Aquarius	85 - 87
Virgo	1956–72	Sagittarius	35 to 39	Pisces	87 - 97
Libra	1971–84	Capricorn	35 to 40	Aries	97 +
Scorpio	1983–95	Aquarius	40 to 49	Taurus	<i>These generations would be well past 100 for this to occur</i>
Sagittarius	1995–2008	Pisces	48 to 59	Gemini	
Capricorn	2008–24	Aries	58 to 73	Cancer	

While Pluto may symbolise the generation’s emotional intention and integrity, it also points to what lies unacknowledged and underrated by its citizens. Although the Pluto square is a generic transit, it is also personal as it confronts an unknown aspect of our generation’s ethos that has been taken for granted by us. The waxing square to its natal position is a time when we may find ourselves on the threshold of the underworld, seeking guidance on how to journey through this transition. Unexpressed grief, loss, shame or repressed memories may rise to the surface. This first Pluto square is a calling to descend, to be suspended, and to honour the deeper feelings stirring beneath the threshold of consciousness. This heralds an in-depth confrontation with our self, demanding honesty and integrity of our beliefs and lifestyle.

Pluto’s passage through each sign impresses each generation with a different experience of the underworld. For the Pluto in Cancer generation, the fear of the underworld is the dread of loss of attachment; for Pluto in Leo it is the anxiety of loss of youth and creativity; for the Virgo generation the fear of dis-order and chaos is high; for Pluto in Libra, it is the terror of the demise of relating; and for the Pluto in Scorpio generation their nightmares confront being out of control. I have seen four generations experience their Pluto squares.

My Pluto in Cancer parents had their square during their 50s as Pluto was transiting Libra (1971–84). The integrity of the traditional family unit was being challenged by rising divorce rates, social liberation, and broken-down households. The Pluto in Libra generation – born during the massive social changes in sexual and relational attitudes – is experiencing its square while Pluto transits Capricorn, and the reality of the relationship contract is hitting home. Being free in relationship has its price! My own Pluto in Leo hedonistic yet idealistic crowd faced its square at midlife as the AIDS epidemic, abuse trauma, and rape revelations challenged the ethics of self-interest and the cult of celebrity. I watched my older Pluto in Virgo kids reach their square in their mid-30s as Pluto entered Sagittarius and the Internet revealed an endless and chaotic stream of information that could not be controlled. This analytical, evidence-based generation encountered a world that was opening up on so many levels, and its members had to grapple with the shadow of widespread, universal, and cross-cultural data. This saw a huge change in the way information became micro-managed and compartmentalized – each detail was diagnosed, every symptom analyzed. And now the

Pluto in Scorpio generation are on the cusp of their first squares, as Pluto enters Aquarius for the first time in 2023, and those who are 40–41 are handed the sceptre to collectively empower what still needs to be released from the Underworld.

Because of the long sextile of Pluto and Neptune, these generations will receive the transit of Pluto to natal Neptune during their 20s. For every person from each generation, it is a critical quarter-life initiation into the Underworld of their dreams and ideals, a time of self-disclosure and discovery.

### *Passages of Pluto*

When studying the effects of planetary cycles and transits I find it helpful to amplify the myths associated with the relevant planetary deity. In the mythic narrative are archetypal images and patterns that help us to understand qualities and feelings constellated during the transition. In Greek myth, Hades is not only the personification of the underworld god Pluto but also refers to his extensive underworld kingdom. Mythological tradition and epic differentiate the underworld locale from the god Hades, who is regent of this place. The topography and atmosphere of this mythological netherworld is metaphoric of the subterranean feelings encountered during a Pluto transit.

Journeys to the underworld are a common motif mythologically. The journey to the underworld is a vivid metaphor for the therapeutic descent into the repressed, taboo and unknown aspects of self. Carl Jung suggested that the journey into the self was akin to this mythic descent to Hades, a journey he personally described in his autobiography. At the age of 38, Jung experienced his own descent. He said that ‘the ground literally gave way beneath my feet and I plunged down into the dark depths.’ In surveying 2,500 years of attitudes towards melancholia and depression, an historian recently concluded that two images consistently recurred in these states: ‘being in a state of darkness and being weighed down’ like the descent into Hades. During Jung’s descent he encountered the shades and guides of his own underworld. At the time Pluto, still undiscovered, had just ingressed into Cancer, the midpoint of his natal Moon–Uranus square. Hence transiting Pluto had semi-squared both the Moon and Uranus. Familiarizing ourselves with the terrain of Pluto helps us to psychologically appreciate the realm we are drawn into during depression, disillusionment and periods of existential doubt or major transitions in the life cycle. As astrologers it amplifies our understanding of Pluto and the process taking place during its transits.

The outcome of a Pluto transit is dependent on our motives and intent. Pluto demands that something is relinquished so new life may be conceived, and the success of this process depends on our attitudes to honouring the darker realms of life. Pluto transits to the angles or in a harsh aspect to one of the personal planets are times when we are most likely to experience the mythic themes of the underworld. An ending is inevitable. The call to relinquish outworn attachments and suspend activity in the outer world occurs. Suspension in the chrysalid period, between what is past and what may be, turns our familiar world upside down. Our orientation is now the underworld and the journey through its labyrinthine passages.

It seems unavoidable that an encounter with the personal and familial unconscious takes place at this time. Familial secrets emerging, the haunting feeling of what has been lost and may never be regained, depression and despair, a confrontation with mortality, sexual impropriety and regret, emotional outrage, an angst of aloneness and dislocation – all are experiences that clients have shared with me during this passage. Facing loss, mainly the

loss of innocence, is the hallmark of Pluto's passage. Yet, alongside this pain, a process of healing is taking place.

To honour Pluto, prepare for the descent, be willing to be laid bare, be undefended and vulnerable. This attitude respects the underworld. A guide is necessary, but like Jung it may emerge out of one's own crisis like an internal priestess or *sibyl*. By letting go and no longer resisting the change we find the courage and inner strength to surrender to the process. Pluto's realm is the transformative place we could not see before we began the journey. Pluto's transforming power dissipates the dread of the transit as we willingly engage and participate with its calling.

## Generic Transits

Transits can be categorized in many ways. However, I find it worthwhile to differentiate between the transit being unique to an individual, a *personal transit*, and the transit being part of a generational cycle, a *generic transit*.

The *personal transit* suggests that a planet is transiting a key feature of the horoscope. Generally, a personal transit takes into account the movement of an outer planet (♄, ♀, ♃, ♁) or social one (♃, ♁) that forms a major aspect to an inner planet (♂, ☉, ♋, ♌, ♍) or one of the four angles. I first note any outer planets in transit to natal angles or inner planets. Then I consider the transits of the social planets in the same way.

Nodal transits, along with eclipses, are also noteworthy, as the transiting lunar nodes focus on certain house polarities and aspects to natal planets. In the footsteps of the transiting nodes are eclipses, which impact the similar houses and planets.

Personal transits also include the transit of planets through the houses of the horoscope. The social planets are highly significant, as their timetable through one house of the horoscope is approximately one year (♃) or two and a half years (♁). Jupiter transits the horoscope in 12 years or about 7 times in an average lifetime. Saturn takes 29–30 years to cycle the horoscope, completing almost 3 series in an average lifespan. Jupiter and Saturn focus their attention on the area of the horoscope they are transiting. The outer planets spend considerable time in each house; therefore, their influence is felt more acutely in the early stages of transition into the new house. If you remain consistent with your house system, the transiting planet's ingress into a house is an evocative image of environmental change. Since the outer planets spend a large amount of time in one quadrant and each house, these areas of the chart become strongly influenced by this transiting energy.

*Generic transits* are the social and outer planets transiting in aspect to their natal placements. These transits can be identified in two ways:

- Aspects that occur within the planet's unique cycle; for instance, transiting Saturn opposite natal Saturn, at ages 14–15 or 44–45, or the Jupiter return nearly every 12 years, etc. These aspects define the passages of the life cycle and stress the importance of certain times of life that we have come to know as: *adolescence* (Jupiter return, Saturn opposition), *Midlife* (Uranus opposition, Neptune waxing square) and *The Fifties* (Chiron return), and so on.

Transiting planets make critical aspects to their natal placements, such as transiting Neptune square natal Neptune at age 41. Critical times are defined by the waxing square, the opposition, the waning square and the return to the conjunction to begin the next

cycle. All outer and social planets form these aspects at similar ages in the life cycle. Pluto and Chiron are the exceptions, due to their elliptical orbits. However, each generation will experience their cycle at more or less the same ages. These transits differentiate the ethos, intention and concern of different generations.

- The dance of the outer planets between themselves occurs near the same age for everyone of that generation; for instance, for the Neptune in Capricorn generation, Pluto is conjunct Neptune in their mid-twenties. For the Pluto in Virgo and subsequent generations, transiting Neptune opposes Pluto in the decade of the fifties.

These two levels of transits differentiate personal changes from intrinsic rites of passage in the life cycle. One of the most profound transits is when both the personal and the generic cycles occur simultaneously. When an outer planet is natally in a key aspect to an inner planet, at some point in the outer planet's cycle, it will reconfigure the planetary combination by transit in both a personal and generic sense

Transits are continually occurring, because change and movement are inevitable. Since so many cycles occur simultaneously, it is important to prioritize them. Which transits are the most important and which ones should be given precedence?

### *Prioritizing Transits*

To help classify which transits will be the most potent, let's differentiate major themes from minor ones. Note that this system is only a guide in considering the multiplicity of transits that can be concurrent at any given time. To begin, let's establish which transiting planets have higher priority.

#### **1 The Transiting Planet**

The slower the transiting planet, the greater its impact, since its influence persists over a longer period. Outer planets evoke complexes that are often in conflict with the personality. By transit, outer planets awaken a depth of feeling that illuminates what may previously have been unidentified or unfelt and is often of great concern or uncertainty. I would prioritize the planets as follows:

Pluto	248 years through the zodiac
Neptune	165 years through the zodiac
Uranus	84 years through the zodiac
Chiron	50 years through the zodiac
Saturn	29-30 years through the zodiac
Jupiter	12 years through the zodiac

#### **2 The Planet Being Transited**

Aspects made to the inner planets and angles are of great personal importance. Consider the speed of the planet being transited as the main prerequisite. Transits to the Moon and Sun are of first importance. Transits to the inner planets signify changes that are taking place on a personal and intimate level; therefore, transits from the slower-moving planets to the faster-moving planets are crucial, as they suggest profound shifts in personal understanding and self-realization.

When combining these priorities, the outer planets' transits to inner planets have highest precedence.

The Moon	27.3 days through the zodiac
The Sun	12 months

Mercury	11-13 months
Venus	10-14 months
Mars	17-23.5 months

Aspects made between transiting outer planets and natal outer planets are generic transits, occurring within the context of the life cycle, indicating rites of passage and age-appropriate life cycle shifts. Changes and modifications needed are age-related and appropriate with the stage of the life process. Although these transits may be experienced as deeply personal, they are inherent to our developmental process.

### 3 The Aspect Formed

The conjunction marks both the beginning of the new cycle and the end of the previous one, while the opposition occurs at the cycle's midpoint. Although there is only one conjunction and one opposition, all other aspects occur twice in the cycle: one in the waxing and the other in the waning phase of the cycle.









Evaluate the stress-type aspects in contrast to the supportive ones. These different aspects have a particular feeling tone. For instance, the 8th harmonic aspects are multiples of 45°: squares, semi-squares and sesqui-squares. These are considered to be more stressful or demanding than some of the 12th harmonic aspects (multiples of 30°) such as the sextile and the trine. However, the 12th harmonic aspects of the semi-sextile (30°) and quincunx (150°) could be considered stressful, as they combine incompatible elements. In this class we will concentrate on the 4<sup>th</sup> harmonic aspects, although we will mention others.

Priority	4th Harmonic aspects	In the Context of a Cycle
1	Conjunction	The beginning of a new cycle
2	Opposition	The midpoint or culmination of the cycle
3	Square	The crisis points in the cycle



Worksheet: *Natal aspects between the five inner planets and the 3 outer planets using the 4<sup>th</sup> harmonic aspects of conjunction, squares and opposition.*









NAME \_\_\_\_\_




Natal Aspects				Comments
				
				
				
				
				




List all the 4<sup>th</sup> harmonic aspects that occur between Uranus, Neptune, Pluto and the 5 inner planets. Make sure you note whether applying or separating and the degree and minute of the orb of influence. In the second grid you can list all your aspects - In the **Comments**, note the closest aspects; also note the aspects in priority of conjunction, opposition and square. Use your ephemeris to ascertain the ages in the generic cycle of each of these aspects.

Worksheet II: *on this worksheet you can also list the natal aspects between the five inner planets and the 3 outer planets using the 12<sup>th</sup> harmonic aspects (multiples of 30°)*

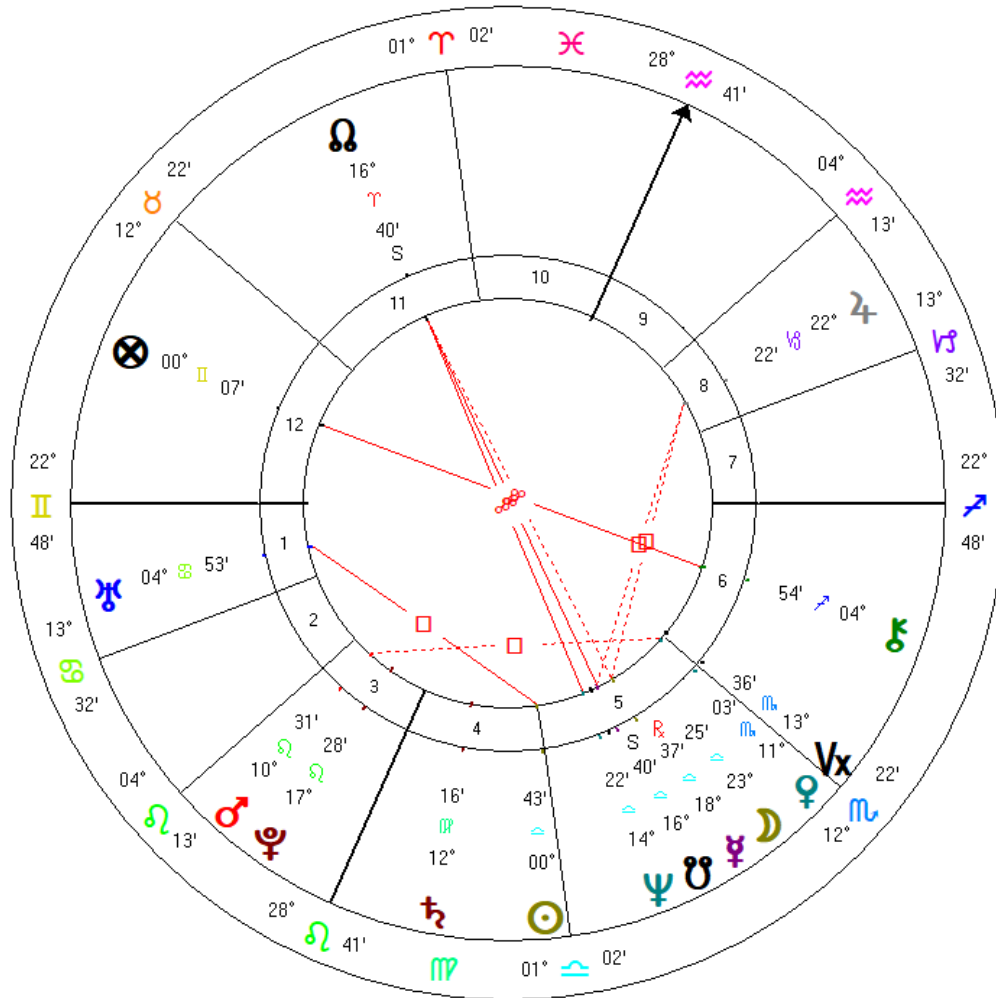
NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Natal Aspects				Comments
				
				
				
				
				

Generic Transit	<i>approximate ages in the generic cycle (4<sup>th</sup> Harmonic)</i>		
			
□	age 21	age 42	The generic cycle of Pluto is dependent upon its sign – see Pluto Generation table below
♄	age 42	age 84	
□	age 63		
♂	age 84		

Generic Transit	<i>approximate age in the generic cycle (full cycle)</i>		
			
∠	age 10 - 11	age 21	The generic cycle of Pluto is dependent upon its sign – see table below
✳	age 14	age 28	
□	age 21	age 42	
△	age 28	age 56	
♁	age 31 - 32	age 63	
♂	age 35	age 70	
♄	age 42	age 84	
♂	age 49		
♁	age 52 - 53		
△	age 56		
□	age 63		
✳	age 70		
∠	age 73 - 74		
♂	age 84		

Pluto Generation	Approx. Dates	Experiences Pluto □	Approx. Ages	Experiences Pluto ♂	Approx. Ages
Cancer	1912-39	Libra	45 to 61	Capricorn	85 - 96
Leo	1937-58	Scorpio	38 to 45	Aquarius	85 - 87
Virgo	1956-72	Sagittarius	35 to 39	Pisces	87 - 97
Libra	1971-84	Capricorn	35 to 40	Aries	97 +
Scorpio	1983-95	Aquarius	40 to 49	Taurus	<i>These generations would be past 100 for this to occur</i>
Sagittarius	1995-2008	Pisces	48 to 59	Gemini	
Capricorn	2008-24	Aries	58 to 73	Cancer	



Natal Aspects	♃	♄	♅	Comments
☾		♂ S 9°02'		The closest aspect of Sun square Uranus would have reformed between 1968 – 1970 (ages 19 – 21) with T Uranus conjunct the Sun and square Uranus
☿	☐ A 4°09'			Mercury conjunct Neptune; T Neptune semi-squares itself and Mercury between 1969 – 1972 (ages 20 – 22). T Neptune squares itself and Mercury between 1990 – 1993 (ages 40 – 44).
♀ ♃		♂ A 4°14'		
♁			☐ A 6°25'	Moon conjunct Neptune is wide and separating; T Neptune semi-squares itself and Moon between 1969 – 1974 (ages 20 – 25). T Neptune squares itself and Moon between 1990 – 1995 (ages 40 – 46).
♂			♂ A 6°57'	Pluto conjunct Mars; T Pluto semi-squares itself and Mars between 1969 – 1973 (ages 19 – 24). T Pluto squares itself and Mars between 1987 – 1991 (ages 38 – 42). T Pluto will semi-square itself and Venus at the same time – T Pluto is at the Venus-Mars midpoint.
The closest aspects in order of orb: Sun <i>square</i> Uranus. Neptune <b>conjunct</b> Mercury Pluto <i>square</i> Venus Pluto <b>conjunct</b> Mars Neptune <b>conjunct</b> the Moon				T = Transiting