

ASTROLOGY and SUB-PERSONALITIES by Richard Llewellyn

To explore the link between astrology and sub-personalities we need to start by asking a number of questions.

- 1) **What are sub-personalities?**
- 2) **Can we identify them in a horoscope?**
- 3) **If so can we make use of the horoscope to work with a sub-personality?**

What are sub-personalities? Every day we find ourselves in a multitude of different situations, all of which will bring up some kind of emotional reaction be it frustration (motorway traffic hold-up), resentment (she's late again); joy (ah, the beauty of nature); anxiety (how can I pay this bill?), and many, many more. Our feelings can change almost minute by minute and every time they do we are likely to be switching into a different sub-personality. We have a whole multiplicity of them and the important thing is not to believe that we are our sub-personalities! We need always to remember that, astrologically, we're the circle in the centre of our chart - a 'self', a centre of pure consciousness. In the psychosynthesis model we're the 'spot' in the centre of Assagioli's Egg model.

Psychiatrist Roberto Assagioli, who developed the concept of psycho-synthesis, suggested that we were like a lot of different people living in one skin and he called these parts of ourselves sub-personalities. These are aspects of ourselves which have their own self-image, their own body posture and gestures, their own feelings, their own ways of behaving, their own words and phrases which they use and their own habits and beliefs. And these sub-personalities can create many paradoxes for us because, for instance, we may have one part of ourselves which loves being with people and being the life and soul of the party, and yet another part of ourselves which seeks seclusion and privacy and prefers to get away from people.

And we may also find that not all our sub-personalities get on with one another with the result that there may be internal conflicts with one part of us wanting to do something and another part in a state of rebellion about the same thing! These inner squabbles cause stresses, which in some instances can manifest as a physical dis-ease. And as you read this maybe you will already be thinking about Oppositions in a chart, or maybe of a very 'You' sided chart but with the Moon tucked away in the 12th house, and so on. In the latter case we probably find somebody who is apparently outward going, likes to be with people but how many of their friends ever get to know how they really feel about anything? And the opposite might be even more stressful with their feelings always having to live up to other people's expectations and yet they're really a private person, preferring their own space and meeting their own needs.

In this short article it's not appropriate to delve too deeply into the origin of our sub-personalities other than to say that many of them came into being when we were in our childhood. For instance one of the first was probably instinctively formed for survival **needs**. On the surface this is expressed as **wanting** a breast and the milk that flows from it. Note that the external manifestation of a sub-personality is a **'want'** and that underlying this is a **'need'**. Astrologically we could associate this sub-personality with Saturn. And what happens if the baby doesn't get his want met, he screams! Another sub-personality comes into being - this time probably associated with both Mercury and Mars, as well as Saturn.

Our survival needs and the fears associated with the on-going possibilities of not getting them met can be associated with many of our sub-personalities. But 'wanting' more and more possessions, whether material, emotional or physical, can become a habit - even a driving force in our life so that we fail to understand what the 'need' is all about. In other words we can be driven by our 'wants' - which can never be satisfied. Understanding our basic 'need' and the best way to meet this frees us up to devote our energy to expanding our lives in other directions.

If we start to look at the various moods and attitudes that we take on in any normal day we can begin to get a sense of the many sub-personalities which we possess - or in some cases possess us. Because it is possible, perhaps through some traumatic circumstance, for one single sub-personality to take over at the expense of all others. So that we come to believe we are this sub-personality - maybe the '*the Angry man*', '*the Martyr*', '*the Critic*' or '*the Victim*' and so on. We may find our life is dominated by a sub-personality but if we're honest we're not going to be living a very happy life.

So, what can we do about it, and why do we need to do anything about it anyway? As already mentioned, sub-personalities can be living our life for us, rather than the other way around and this can limit our personal development. We truly need to be able to stand in our own centre and from there, come to recognise that we do have these sub-personalities. From recognition we can go on to understanding - in other words see clearly how that part of our personality functions in our everyday world, where has it come from, what is its need, its real need and how this need can be met.

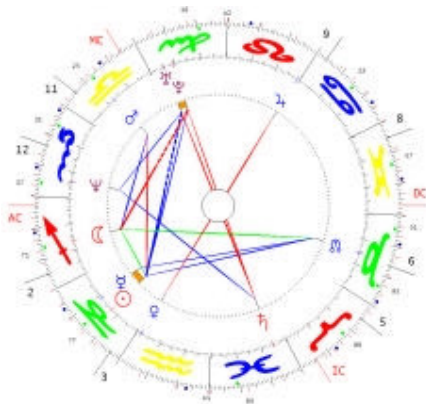
All our sub-personalities, given the chance, are motivated to transform into a higher form of themselves. Piero Ferrucci in '*What We may Be*' talks about sub-personalities wanting to *elevate* themselves so that, for instance, the '*compulsive seducer*' may be hiding the transpersonal quality of '*love*', or the '*obstinate*' sub-personality may be wanting to manifest the transpersonal quality of '*Will*'. All our sub-personalities have a transpersonal quality at their centre, which is wanting to manifest in the personality.

A brief analogy may help to illustrate this process. Imagine an orchestra, the members of which have just joined and they have no understanding of how to play together, let alone in tune. So initially they all do their own thing and the noise is discordant. The task of the conductor is to get to know each member, encourage them to become more skilful with their own particular instrument, and finally to play in tune and together. To briefly relate this to astrology, imagine the unaspected planet as the trombone player who has no sense of belonging to the orchestra so plays his own tune to the audience and ignores the conductor, until the conductor gets to know the player and encourages him to integrate with the remainder of the orchestra. When all the instrumentalists are finally reaching perfection something amazing can happen - a sort of peak experience occurs when a Divine quality manifests itself in the performance and the '*total becomes greater than the sum of the individual parts*'. And the same thing can happen with each of us when our sub-personalities are transformed and integrated into our personality at a higher level of consciousness.

Whilst there are some cases when it is possible to relate a sub-personality to a specific area in a chart, this in itself is unlikely to bring about any transformation. It might help in the first stage of working with a sub-personality, i.e 'Recognition', but the process of growth cannot be achieved through the chart itself. What follows are some examples of this. The first two involve Venus and relationships:

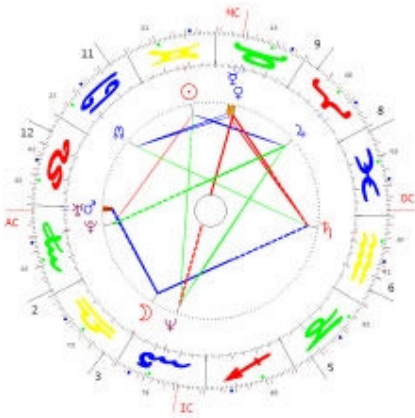
Example 1

Pat is divorced and has been on her own for a year but is now ready for a new relationship. She's met two men she likes but each one has dropped her after a short while. She says she's very open to a new relationship so, why the problem? For a start her chart is 'I' sided so she's unlikely to let anybody know who she really is on first acquaintance.



The chart shows a cuspal ♄♁♃ in a separate aspect figure. So it is possible that this opposition symbolises a sub-personality, which, in the desire for a relationship, goes overboard to make an impression. Pat doesn't engage the new partner with the remainder of her personality with the result that the power of this opposition may frighten the potential partner away? Pat found this

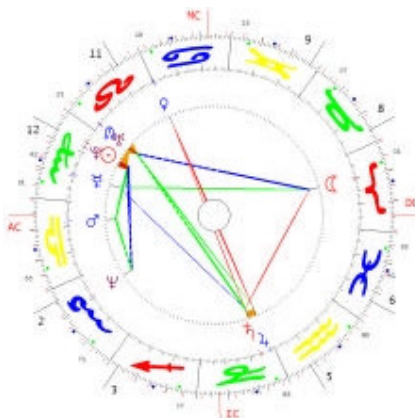
helpful and will become more aware of how she behaves..



Example 2

Colin worries because he says he always has problems with relationships and wants to know why. Although there seem to be a number of possible reasons perhaps the first one to explore relates to the planet ♀. The ☐ to ♃ suggests that there may be a barrier, which inhibits the formation of a relationship. It would be important to explore whether this relates back to parental childhood messages. It's also possible that the ♂ to ♀ exacerbates the situation by creating expectations, which cannot, at least initially, be met.

An element unrelated to ♀ may be the fact that Colin is only 5'3" high so it is possible that he compensates for any lack of self-confidence he feels through the ☐ of ♃ to his ☉. Masculine self-assertion may not always be the best way to win the heart of a potential partner!



Example 3

Mary is a 44 year old who has a major weight problem. She has joined Weight Watchers, made progress and then given up. She has ♃♂♂ which can sometimes signify a weight problem, ♃ the physical body and ♂ wanting to expand it. But there has to be a reason for this and it usually tends to be a security issue. She has a powerful ☉♏ on the cusp of the 12th house but with an emphasis on the 'I' side of the chart Mary is quite a private person.

But the ☾ is very much on show in the 7th house and as a child Mary felt emotionally vulnerable. She was pushed by both parents to live up to other people's expectations in social situations and she eventually found this more than she could cope with and began to retreat into herself and repress what is essentially a strong personality. Her ☾ got no emotional nurturing and eating became one way in which she felt able to compensate for this. Needless to say this does not address the underlying issue.

Conclusion

Although I decided to write this article on astrology and sub-personalities, I am still uncertain as to whether making a connection between the two serves any useful purpose. If we're going to work with our sub-personalities as a way of becoming more self-aware and thus more in control of our lives, then my personal feeling is that initially it's of more use to look for them in ourselves rather than trying to manufacture them out of what we see in our chart.

When we look at a behaviour pattern and identify a sub-personality perhaps it helps to bring it more fully into consciousness if we do find an astrological association. It's obviously somewhere in the chart but maybe not necessarily clearly identified through one planet or combination of planets linked by an aspect. Whatever our approach to sub-personalities it's worth remembering the steps that we need to go through, briefly outlined below, to help the process of integration and transformation. This doesn't happen without our active participation!

Five Stages of Growth

1) **Recognition.** When we don't really know who we are and why we behave in certain ways, our subpersonalities are more likely to be reacting to people and circumstances around us in habitual ways, many

of these learned in childhood when survival was the name of the game.. When we become aware of these many parts of ourselves and how *they live life for us* we also begin the process of being in control of our life.

2) **Acceptance.** When we look at ourselves in a conscious, open and honest manner we discover aspects about our personality that we don't really like! It is an essential part of our 'growth' process that we can accept, and love, all parts of ourselves. This gives them the opportunity to transform and become a creative force in our life.

3) **Understanding.** This stage develops our conscious awareness of who we are and whether the way in which we react to the environment is appropriate. Are there more positive ways of using our energy, and if we changed an habitual way of reacting to life, what would happen? Stepping out of familiar ways might mean taking a risk.

4) **Choices.** When we recognise that we can be '*in the driving seat*' and not a passenger, then we can also become aware that being in control means that we can make choices for ourselves. We can choose to do what feels right for us. This may sound easy, but making choices also means that we have to take responsibility for the consequences of our actions. In other words we become in control of our own life - there would be no one else to blame for any decisions we make! But we also give ourselves freedom to do what is right for us.

5) **Will.** In order implement the choices we make for ourselves we have to employ our Will. Otherwise we can just dream about what we might do. Will is the ability to make happen what we choose to do. There are three elements of Will - Strong Will; Skilful Will and Good Will. Strong Will alone suggests power, Skilful Will on its own suggests manipulation and Good Will on its own suggests hesitation. We need to ensure that we are using all three of these elements if we are to use Will successfully and become a truly autonomous human being.

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