

Astrological Insights From Donna Cunningham, MSW

**A Sampler of Excerpts from Donna's
E-Books and Hard Copy Books**



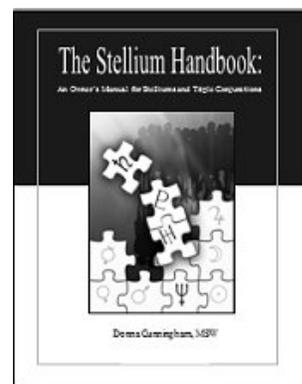
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EBOOKS BY DONNA CUNNINGHAM, MSW

About Donna Cunningham: For 45 years, Donna's background in astrology, social work, and healing has made her an internationally respected author of many books, articles, and advice columns.

Order ebooks here: [My Books](#).

NEW: The Stellium Handbook: an Owner's Manual for People with Stelliums or Triple Conjunctions. \$20. See a sample here: [Stellium Handbook Sampler](#).



3-Book special: All \$15 ebooks are 3 for \$35.

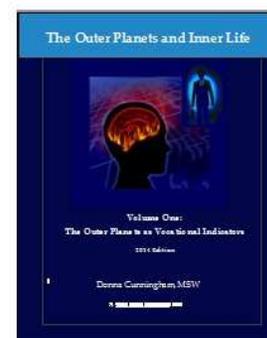
An Astrological Guide to Self-Awareness: This revised and updated 2014 edition of Donna's classic text for beginning and intermediate students contains chapters on each of the planets, the houses, aspects, transits and more. It blends astrology and psychology in everyday language. \$15

Astrological Analysis—Select Topics in Chart Interpretation: In-depth essays on chart factors include planets, houses, aspects, transits, relocation, and more. \$15

Astrological Aspects—The Building Blocks of Chart Interpretation: This ebooklet teaches you to analyze a variety of major and minor aspects, including the conjunction, square, trine, opposition, sextile, semisextile, and quincunx. It's the equivalent of an 8-lesson course on aspects for just \$8.

The Outer Planet Trilogy of Ebooks—Three Volumes

This popular trio condenses Donna's 45 years of observing how clients use and misuse the outer planets into wisdom we all can apply. **Each in the newly-released 2014 Editions. \$15 each/ 3 for \$35.**

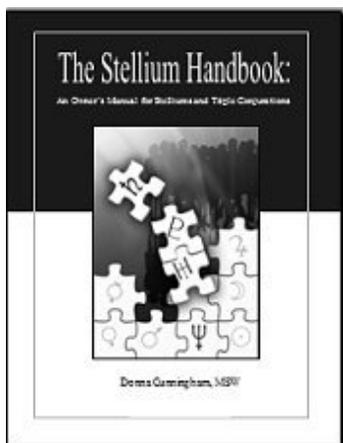


The Outer Planets and Inner Life, v.1: The Outer Planets as Vocational Indicators
The Outer Planets and Inner Life, v. 2: Outer Planet Aspects to Venus and Mars
The Outer Planets and Inner Life, v.3: Aspects between the Outer Planets.

Ebooks for Professionals:

The Consulting Astrologer's Guidebook: How to Become an Effective Change Agent. A mentor in ebook form, this manual draws on Donna's social work background to help you resolve common consulting room dilemmas. \$15

Flower Remedies: How Plants' Energies Can Heal Us: A great tool to add to your practice. These gentle catalysts can help clients move through blockages in the natal chart and make the most of transits. Includes a chapter on combining them with astrology. \$15



The Stellium Handbook

2013, \$20. See a 12-page sample here: [Stellium Handbook Sampler](#) or order here: [My Books](#).

About this ebook: No one has ever written a book about stelliums, and, as a result, they've remained something of a mystery. It's crucial to understand them now because we're in an era when an uncommon number of people have stelliums or triple conjunctions. Donna's intention was to write an astrology/self-help book on this subject that would be equally readable for newcomers, astrology students, and professional astrologers.

Excerpts from Chapter One—Stelliums Are Not for Sissies

Welcome to the world of *stelliums* and *triple conjunctions*—a world of vast potentials and yet of complicated and seldom easy life paths. If you have either of these patterns in your astrological chart, then anywhere from three to seven of the solar system's ten bodies fall within about 30° of the zodiac's 360° circle. As one of my students exclaimed when we had a lesson about them, "That's a lotta watts in one small corner of the sky!"

Your birth chart is the owner's manual for your stellium. A stellium may virtually eclipse your Sun, Moon, or Ascendant in terms of its importance. Therefore, possibly the most important piece of astrological study you could do is analyzing your stellium, as we'll do, step by step in this book. It's a key to the greatest gifts you have to offer the world.

The chart is a 360° circle divided into 12 sections called *houses*, each describing what we're like in important areas of life. For stellium holders, this group of planets is generally concentrated in a single zodiac sign and one or two of the 12 houses.

With so much energy centered in one place, there's a laser-like focus on the personality traits or areas of life it represents. It identifies something special about you — a complicated combination of issues, interests, and gifts that may be a major part of your life purpose. It's often a career indicator. It's certainly your passion!

Life can be exciting but hectic for people who have these chart features. It's like being the head of a household of lively teenagers, with all the tumultuous hormones of that stage. There's always someone demanding attention; somebody's feeling abused or put upon; at least one wants you to lay out money; and one is mad at you for not being parent of the year. Getting them all to work in tandem isn't just a tough job; it's practically a miracle!

The saving grace of a houseful of adolescents is that, if they're handled well, they eventually grow up and have a shot at reaching their potential. So can the diverse planetary energies in a stellium or triple conjunction. As you mature and work persistently on perfecting your gifts, you tend to grow into the good qualities and abilities more and more fully.

What Does a Stellium or Triple Conjunction Consist of?

There are **two kinds of stelliums**. One is a *stellium by sign*, made up of four or more planets in the same zodiac sign, but not necessarily in the same *house* of your astrology chart. The other is a *stellium by house*, in which there are four or more planets in the same house, but not necessarily the same sign. If the planets are in both the same sign and house, their impact is strengthened.

The Power of Triple Conjunctions: A *conjunction* is a potent connection (called an *aspect*) between two planets in which planets stand close together and blend their energies. A *triple conjunction* consists of three planets standing together, regardless of the zodiac sign or house, and therefore is even more powerful.

In surveying the charts of notables like movie stars, musicians, and politicians, they were more likely to have triple conjunctions than stelliums. Perhaps it's because extra planets beyond three introduce many more complications to manage and difficulties to overcome. A trio of conjoined planets may even confer a bit of star quality.

Here are examples of actors born in the 1960s with slow-moving Pluto and Uranus in Virgo conjunct one of the faster-moving inner planets. (Find their birth data and charts online at [Astro-Databank](#).)

- **Pluto-Uranus-Mars:** Johnny Depp, Robert Downey Jr., and Brooke Shields
- **Pluto-Uranus-Mercury:** Whitney Houston
- **Pluto-Uranus-Venus:** Julia Roberts, J.K. Rowling
- **Pluto-Uranus-Sun:** Charlie Sheen

There's one special type of triple conjunction I call a superconjunction. It happens in rare intervals lasting several years when three of the four slower-moving planets—Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto—are within about an 8-10 range° of one another.

The only one in our lifetime occurred in 1988-89, a superconjunction of Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune in Capricorn. Every single child born on the planet for half of 1988 and all of 1989 had this superconjunction. Chapter 13 explores the exceptional generation born with it. The previous superconjunction, in the 1850s, was of Pluto, Uranus, and Saturn in Taurus.

The most potent stelliums occur under conjunctions of the slower-moving planets—Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto—because they correspond to major social, economic, and political changes that leave an impact on those born under them.

The slow-moving planets stand conjunct in the sky infrequently because of their long orbits around the Sun, but for the past 50 years, there have been an unusual series of them.

Because of this series, there are possibly more people alive today with stelliums than ever before. The world population has continually increased over the past few centuries and is estimated to have reached 8 billion by the end of 2012.

What Reviewers are Saying about *The Stellium Handbook*

From Anne Whitaker: “Master astrologer and writer Donna Cunningham draws on her long and deep experience in astrology and related fields to produce this first ever thorough, in-depth work on stelliums – a very much needed aid for readers of varying levels of astrological knowledge. Her commitment is to make the book available to **everyone** with stelliums, not just astrologers or astrology students.

“It is written with Donna’s signature depth, clarity, humour, and compassion. One of her gifts is to be able to be briskly honest and *realistic* about the most difficult topics, but in such a compassionate, often witty way that the reader feels encouraged rather than squashed by the information provided.

“This fine book, the latest addition to her abundant astrological output, is an essential reference work for all astrologers’ libraries. It’s one to which they can return time and time again as they encounter clients who are trying to come to grips with one of the most challenging, and potentially rewarding, of all astrological patterns: the stellium.”

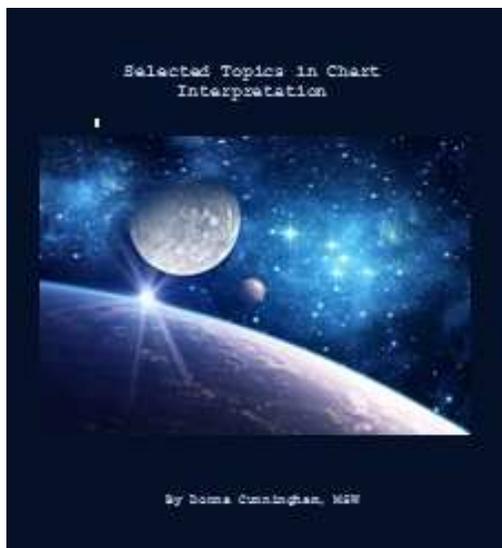
From the Astrological Association of Great Britain Journal: “There hasn’t previously been much written in depth about stelliums – those multiple conjunctions within a sign – so Donna Cunningham’s book is a very welcome addition to astrological literature homing in on a special characteristic within a chart. The book will naturally be of interest to readers with natal stelliums or triple conjunctions as well as to consulting astrologers whose clients may have these. Donna’s easygoing writing style and side notes ensure the book is equally accessible for newcomers, students and astrology professionals.”

Review by Mary Plumb in The Mountain Astrologer: “Donna Cunningham, well known and well loved in astrology circles, has a new book on stelliums. She has a warm and encouraging voice, with a realistic view of life’s difficulties. I don’t know of anyone else who has examined and written about these bundles of three or four planets in the horoscope. This is a much-needed addition in the astrology library.”

Review of Donna Cunningham’s Stellium Handbook by Anthony Louis: “Before reading this book, I never realized that so much information could be gleaned from analyzing stelliums in a natal chart. Donna’s approach was an eye-opener. This book is refreshing for both its new insights and its transparency of presentation.

“Donna’s knowledge and experience in dealing with clients shines through on every page. It’s written with beginners in mind but contains much valuable information that will appeal to experienced astrologers. All in all, I thoroughly enjoyed this text and learned a lot by reading through it. I will never look at stelliums the same way again.”

See a sample here: [Stellium Handbook Sampler](#) or order here: [My Books](#). \$20



Astrological Analysis: Selected Topics in Chart Interpretation

About This Book: This is a collection of essays on various facets of chart interpretation, based partly on Donna's much-acclaimed series for intermediate students in *The Mountain Astrologer*. In this richly-illustrated volume, she shares insights and observations gathered from 35 years of astrological practice.

Topics include aspect patterns, elemental balance, identifying chart themes, finding the strongest planets in a chart, singletons, stelliums, transits, the second Saturn return, relocation, and more. This ebook is regularly used as a text in online astrology classes at Kepler [College](#).

Order the book here: [My Books](#). \$15 if ordered separately, but there's a special price of \$35 if 3 of the \$15 ebooks are ordered at the same time. (Only available in PDF format, this ebook works well with a laptop or 10" tablet, but is not yet available for Kindle.)

Here are some Excerpts:

In the house where Uranus is located, people show their unconventional side by frequently doing things that fly in the face of convention in matters related to that house.

With Uranus in the 3rd house, for instance, such people often embrace — and speak or write about — unconventional, modern, or even radical points of view, though their viewpoint would tend to shift dramatically from time to time.

With Uranus in the 11th, they would have friendships with unusual, eccentric, or even rebellious types, with new people coming and going frequently.

Have you ever sworn that someone was a Capricorn, yet the chart didn't have the Sun, Moon, Ascendant — or any planets at all — in that sign? Chances are that Saturn was in high focus or the 10th house was strongly emphasized. Saturnians are often strongly motivated by security and the drive to succeed; they are cautious and capable, though hard on themselves and others in their quest for perfection.



People with the 6th house strong in the natal chart often contribute to the world at large in meaningful and rewarding ways — contributions that far outweigh the importance of socializing.

Certainly, that may be their major karmic focus in this lifetime, rather than a committed partnership. However, if they want to maintain *both* their work *and* their intimate connections with others, the key is to keep these two sets of needs in balance consciously.

Not all Mercury retrograde spans are alike. Some are smooth, passing with hardly a ripple if one uses sensible precautions. Others are real bears, with nothing running smoothly, an epidemic of computer crashes, and great difficulty in getting paperwork finished or ironing out agreements. In my observation, Mercury's retrograde motion is not the deciding factor, but rather the aspects Mercury forms to other planets around the time it is stationary turning retrograde. From around the time it turns retrograde to the time it turns direct, it moves fairly slowly, so any difficult aspects Mercury forms will be in effect continuously for about three weeks.

INSIGHTS ABOUT ASPECTS:

People with Venus–Uranus aspects usually have a unique sense of style, to put it mildly. They are in no sense part of the mainstream, though the mainstream often winds up following their trend-setting creations. Examples include Richard Simmons, Carrot Top, Elton John, Princess Diana, Queen Latifah, and Michael Jackson.

Some people with oppositions between any two planets might almost be wearing a T-shirt that says, “Look what you made me do.” They tend to project their own inner conflict onto people or circumstances outside themselves, rather than taking responsibility for their part in the situation.

Those with Uranus oppositions, for example, react strongly to what they perceive as society's desire to restrict their freedom and individuality. So, they become even more outrageous and rebellious — more of a “character.” When an opposition that involves two planets is being used in a healthy way, the person is effectively juggling two sets of needs, concerns, or desires, and neither one is neglected.



From years of observing the quincunx (150-degree aspect) in action, I have a sense that the keyword for it is "stretching." When two planets are quincunx by sign, their basic natures are so completely different that the only way they can connect is a stretch, maybe a creative leap. This produces an expansion of perspectives, and so quincunxes wind up helping us grow in a way that a square or opposition does not—it's not a conflict as much as it is an evolution.

The quality of relationships with people you care about can be strongly affected by planets that form aspects to the degree of your actual Ascendant. Conjunctions are the most powerful modifiers—they are like doormen that people have to check in with for admittance into your inner life. Trines show social assets that draw people to you, as do sextiles. Squares and semi-squares are like security checkpoints along the way, because they can show how you actively run into conflict with your environment.

ABOUT THE FOUR ELEMENTS:



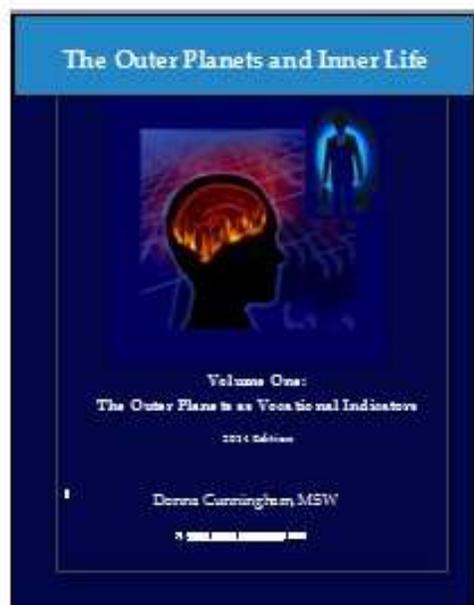
fly a kite, or go sky diving.

To enrich your understanding of the astrological signs, spend time with the four elements and experience how you respond to them. For the element **fire**, light a candle, sit by a campfire, and watch the flames flicker, or bask in the warmth of the Sun. To love the **earth**, plant or visit a garden and enjoy fresh, home-grown tomatoes, inhale the rich, fertile smell of the soil or the flowers that grow in it, or be awed by the majesty of a mountain. For **water**, gulp down a cool drink when you are parched, go swimming, or allow yourself to get drenched in a sudden downpour. For **air**, feel the wind on your face,

Astrology students often worry about a particular facet of a chart, but they need not become alarmed unless this factor is confirmed in other ways. For instance, many people born without planets in the water signs (Cancer, Scorpio, or Pisces) have sworn that they are not especially emotional. Yet, some of them have Neptune—the ruler of Pisces—on the Ascendant or Pluto—the ruler of Scorpio—conjunct the Moon; these people are, on the contrary, *extremely* emotional. Their challenge, instead, is to manage those emotions.

When our charts are missing an element or are weak in that element, we can overcompensate. Life circumstances can force us to develop the qualities and abilities more naturally conveyed by that element, so over time we learn to make up for our lack by conscious attention and diligent efforts. People who are lacking in earth may stumble their way into practicality through trial and error — and too many bounced checks. The gifts of a missing element are seldom natural and instinctive, but they become easier as we work at them.

Order *Astrological Analysis* here: [My Books](#). \$15



The Outer Planets and Inner Life Volume one: The Outer Planets as Vocational Indicators

Moon Maven Publications, 2014 edition

About this ebook: The first of a trilogy of e-books on the outer planets, *The Outer Planets as Vocational Indicators*, draws on Donna Cunningham's 35 years of experience in counseling clients. It explores the effects of Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto on career choices, patterns, and dilemmas. There is an otherworldly element when the outer planets are career markers, a sense of serving a greater purpose in human history. Each chapter explores one of these planets in depth, applying them to the vocational sectors of the horoscope.

Note: each volume of the popular Outer Planet Trilogy is \$15 if ordered separately, but there's a special price of \$35 if all three are ordered at the same time. Order them here: [My Books](#).

Here are a few excerpts:

If one of the career houses is strongly emphasized while the other two are not, then the house with the strongest emphasis dominates the career picture. The motivation for the person with a strong 10th house tends to be different from that of the person with a strong 2nd house or a strong 6th house. The type of career may be similar, but the motivation is different and, consequently, so may be the career outcome.

The 10th house represents the career, long-term goals, lifetime achievements, and one's ultimate status in the world. People with a strong 10th house emphasis are very career-oriented, rather than necessarily focused on money (2nd) or on work for its own sake (6th).

The career track would seldom be traditional when the tenth house features Uranus, Neptune, or Pluto or the signs those planets rule—Aquarius, Pisces, or Scorpio. Typically, it takes people with these chart placements longer to find their true vocation, since they are challenged to integrate the energy of that outer planet into the workplace, merging the transpersonal with the vocational.

For instance, people with Uranus near the Midheaven might gain recognition by shocking us and shaking up the status quo. People with Neptune near the Midheaven—say within ten degrees of it, might yearn for a career that is artistic and creative.

People with the outer planets strong in the 10th have a genius for signing on with bosses who are near-clones of their parents. For instance, some with Neptune on the Midheaven seem to gravitate to job after job where the boss, however service-minded and creative, is an alcoholic or addict, just like Mom or Dad was. The boss may even hire the Neptune-Midheaven person—though not consciously—to fill the role of rescuer and enabler.

Many people with strong outer planet placements in the 10th are repeatedly, though not usually consciously, drawn to work situations that recreate the family dynamics. When an individual's 10th house is strong and the 2nd and 6th are weak, reenactment of family dynamics may even be part of what makes the career so compelling.



Precocious children have been known to tell their parents, “you’re not the boss of me,” but individuals with Uranus in the career houses of the astrology chart may adopt this as a life-long motto. Some wear it on greasy tee shirts along with other rude sayings, while others deign to wear suits but carry the attitude around in their pockets, ready to whip it out at any challenge... Typical Uranians can be the kings and queens of, “take this job and stuff it.”

They tend to master technology or skills that put them well ahead of their field, but they find it difficult to accept being told what to do or commit to a deadening routine. Many function best in business for themselves. Others find a niche in chaotic enterprises or on the midnight shift where no one supervises them, so they fly by the seat of their pants.

It's not very Western to have Neptune, Pisces, or 12th house pursuits as a vocation since those born into Western civilization tend to be more result-oriented and material-minded, even Me-centered.

Neptune asks something different of us, something more Eastern. It asks us to be selfless, to sacrifice, and to serve the greater good—and then not to get conceited about it.

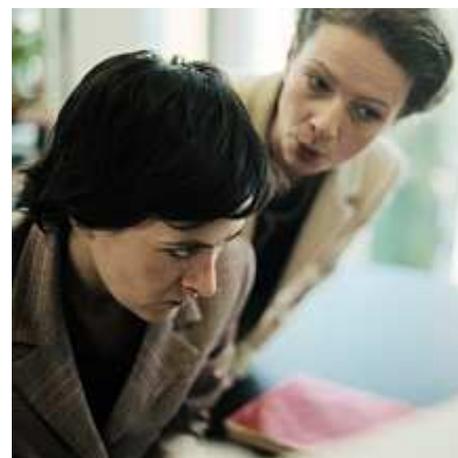


Of all the planets, Neptune has the least to do with success in the material world, for its concerns are intangible and nebulous. Where Neptune is in the birth chart, we are usually at our most impractical, ungrounded, and idealistic—but also at our most inspired. Its sign, house, and aspects show visions we hope to realize in this lifetime. The positive expressions are service, compassion, spiritual seeking, creativity, and imagination—all worthwhile goals and badly needed in our world.

Service—one of our most generous impulses—originates in the heart. Yet, the path to service is full of twists and turns, for if consistently pursued in unwise ways, it is seldom good for either party. It can sap the giver’s energy and resources while also subtly undermining the receiver’s self-sufficiency, until it turns into a relationship based on rescuing and codependency.

People who serve in order to feel needed and to gain a sense of worth may covertly sabotage those they help. When ego or desire for personal gain enter the picture, our highest intentions can become corrupted. Neptune shows where we are most prone to denial, so ego can masquerade as its reverse, spiritual pride. (“I’m the best servant and the humblest person in the whole wide world.”)

The house Pluto occupies in the birth chart can represent areas of life where we **fail for spite**. That is, we may chronically set ourselves up to fail in those areas in ways that are painful, frustrating, and mystifying to us on a conscious level. On the unconscious level, the motive is often to get back at potent childhood figures who considered that area crucial. The behavior is self-destructive, like the scorpion’s sting. For some Plutonians, however, extracting vengeance is more important than doing well.



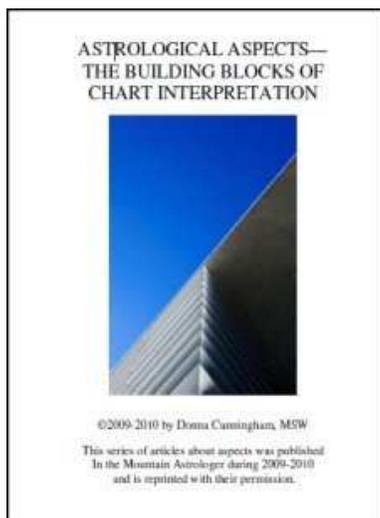
With Pluto in the vocational houses, failing in the career can embarrass the parent or other authority figure, a form of revenge. (“You said I’d never make anything of myself. Well, I’ll show you....”) Parents can’t control whether their offspring succeed or not, and the more parents demand success, the greater the sting when their offspring fail.

People with Pluto or Scorpio planets in the vocational houses or aspecting the Midheaven are prone to dramatic career turns, for better or for worse, especially under transits to the Midheaven, natal vocational-house planets, or natal Pluto.

Many of them glory in intensity, exist at a life or death pitch, and view work situations in terms of extremes—black and white, good vs. evil, shadow vs. light. If they engage in spiteful, self-destructive rounds of hardball, they may crash and burn publicly, even repeatedly, under transits or progressions to planets in vocational houses or to the

Midheaven. If they are evolving past those negative patterns, they are capable of amazing turnarounds—the Phoenix rising from its own ashes.

Excerpts from Donna’s Ebooklet, *Astrological Aspects: The Building Blocks of Chart Interpretation*.



About the booklet: This 40 page introduction to aspects functions as an 8-lesson introductory course on a topic that is the foundation of all major applications of astrology, from natal charts to transits and progressions, relationship charts, electional charts, and horary. Each major and minor aspect has a chapter of its own, using copious examples. Rather than being dependent on cookbook descriptions, you will learn how to interpret the aspects in a chart independently.

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Here are a Few Excerpts:

Affinity of the Planets: Before getting into your analysis of a pair of planets in aspect to one another, think about how well the two planets partner one another. Are they compatible in nature? Are they arms-around-the-shoulders buddies? Respectful colleagues with similar aims? Worthy adversaries? Or are they better off not even in the same room together?

For example, Mercury and Jupiter or Mercury and Uranus, all being mental in focus, are compatible and work toward common ends, even in hard aspect. The qualities of Mercury and Saturn or Mercury and Neptune are less at ease with one another and have more conflict, even in easy aspects.

I can’t really think of a bad aspect between Mercury and Jupiter. Though prone to garrulousness and excessive optimism, nonetheless such folks are capable of learning from their mistakes. On the other hand, it’s hard to think of a good connection between Pluto and Saturn. It can be a leaden and morose combination, even when trine. Though they show admirable perseverance in hardship, individuals with this combination typically pride themselves on being a “survivor,” even when leaving a toxic situation is the wiser choice.

First, let’s consider the conjunction. It’s the purest and most potent aspect, as the energies of the two planets are fused and difficult to separate—they must act as one. The orb I allow for

a conjunction is loose, because I've seen up to 10° acting as strongly as a tighter one, even when one of them is a slow moving outer planet. With wide orbs, describe the aspect and let the person decide whether it's operating or not.

Effect of the sign placement: Let's contrast Mercury and Mars in Libra with Mercury and Mars in Scorpio. Major areas of interest for individuals with a strong Libra emphasis in their charts tend to be marriage, partnerships of all sorts, equality in relationships, give and take, justice, beauty, fashion, diplomacy, fair play, peace, and harmony. Libra is a cardinal air sign ruled by Venus, which should tone down Mars's rougher edges and add Libra's charm and diplomacy to Mercury's fluent communication.

Those with a strong Scorpio emphasis tend to take a keen interest in healing, transformation, sexuality, wealth, uses and abuses of power, secrets, the occult, psychology, death and the afterlife, and debt financing. Because Scorpio is a fixed water sign ruled by Pluto, they often hold onto emotions and past betrayals. Scorpio's depth adds penetrating insight to Mercury's analytic powers. Scorpions are steadfast in their preoccupations and relationships, with a deep emotional investment in preserving what is theirs. They find it hard to forgive or forget, and thus Mars' bouts of anger tend to become long-lasting, becoming grievances.

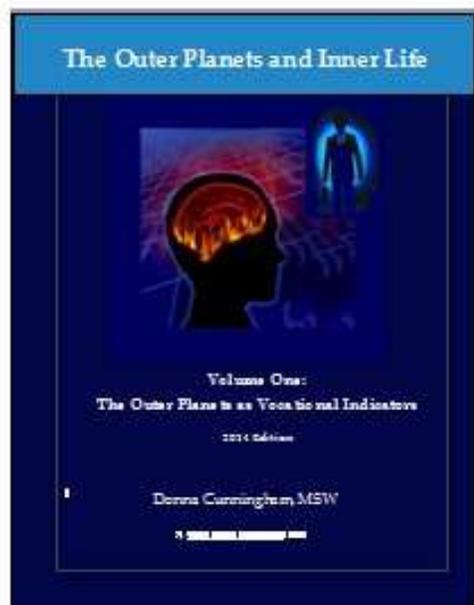
Have you read or been taught much about the semi-sextile? In most astrology writings, it's shrugged off as a minor aspect after a half-hearted sentence or two of description. It's a 30° aspect, plus or minus 2-3°, involving planets in neighboring signs. A planet at 23° of Libra could be semi-sextile to planets between 20-26° of Virgo or Scorpio.

Are they good neighbors or bad? Are they harmonious or at odds, do they support each other or bicker, and do they bolster each other's efforts or sabotage them? My answer is: all of the above...depending on the signs and planets. There really aren't any good or bad aspects—just evolved and unevolved ways of using the planets in the combination. The ultimate effect depends on your choice about how to use them at any given moment.

I've been watching semi-sextiles at work for 40 years, and for the most part, I like them. Good traits of one sign can offset the less than wonderful traits of the other, especially if we learn to use them consciously. I have several, and they tend to pull me back off the ledge when I'm about to bungee dive into the worst qualities of the signs involved.

For instance, Aries' powerful urge to take action can offset Taurus' inertia, but Taurus' patience in bringing things to fruition can counteract Aries' impulsive tendency to abandon projects when they don't get immediate results. The steadfastness of Taurus can help stabilize Gemini's grasshopper mind and ground those bright ideas in practical applications. Gemini's curiosity and love of what's new and trendy can modernize Taurus' thinking, which tends toward the old-fashioned.

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Typically, it takes people with these chart placements longer to find their true vocation, since they are challenged to integrate the energy of that outer planet into the workplace, merging the transpersonal with the vocational.

For instance, people with Uranus near the Midheaven might gain recognition by shocking us and shaking up the status quo. People with Neptune near the Midheaven—say within ten degrees of it, might yearn for a career that is artistic and creative.

People with the outer planets strong in the 10th have a genius for signing on with bosses who are near-clones of their parents. For instance, some with Neptune on the Midheaven seem to gravitate to job after job where the boss, however service-minded and creative, is an alcoholic or addict, just like Mom or Dad was. The boss may even hire the Neptune-Midheaven person—though not consciously—to fill the role of rescuer and enabler.

Many people with strong outer planet placements in the 10th are repeatedly, though not usually consciously, drawn to work situations that recreate the family dynamics. When an individual's 10th house is strong and the 2nd and 6th are weak, reenactment of family dynamics may even be part of what makes the career so compelling.



Precocious children have been known to tell their parents, “you’re not the boss of me,” but individuals with Uranus in the career houses of the astrology chart may adopt this as a life-long motto. Some wear it on greasy tee shirts along with other rude sayings, while others deign to wear suits but carry the attitude around in their pockets, ready to whip it out at any challenge... Typical Uranians can be the kings and queens of, “take this job, and stuff it.”

They tend to master technology or skills that put them well ahead of their field, but they find it difficult to accept being told what to do or commit to a deadening routine. Many function best in business for themselves. Others find a niche in chaotic enterprises or on the midnight shift where no one supervises them, so they fly by the seat of their pants.

It’s not very Western to have Neptune, Pisces, or 12th house pursuits as a vocation since those born into Western civilization tend to be more result-oriented and material-minded, even Me-centered.

Neptune asks something different of us, something more Eastern. It asks us to be selfless, to sacrifice, and to serve the greater good—and then not to get conceited about it.



Of all the planets, Neptune has the least to do with success in the material world, for its concerns are intangible and nebulous. Where Neptune is in the birth chart, we are usually at

our most impractical, ungrounded, and idealistic—but also at our most inspired. Its sign, house, and aspects show visions we hope to realize in this lifetime. The positive expressions are service, compassion, spiritual seeking, creativity, and imagination—all worthwhile goals and badly needed in our world.

Service—one of our most generous impulses—originates in the heart. Yet, the path to service is full of twists and turns, for if consistently pursued in unwise ways, it is seldom good for either party. It can sap the giver's energy and resources while also subtly undermining the receiver's self-sufficiency, until it turns into a relationship based on rescuing and codependency.

People who serve in order to feel needed and to gain a sense of worth may covertly sabotage those they help. When ego or desire for personal gain enter the picture, our highest intentions can become corrupted. Neptune shows where we are most prone to denial, so ego can masquerade as its reverse, spiritual pride. ("I'm the best servant and the humblest person in the whole wide world.")

The house Pluto occupies in the birth chart can represent areas of life where we **fail for spite**. That is, we may chronically set ourselves up to fail in those areas in ways that are painful, frustrating, and mystifying to us on a conscious level. On the unconscious level, the motive is often to get back at potent childhood figures who considered that area crucial. The behavior is self-destructive, like the scorpion's sting. For some Plutonians, however, extracting vengeance is more important than doing well.

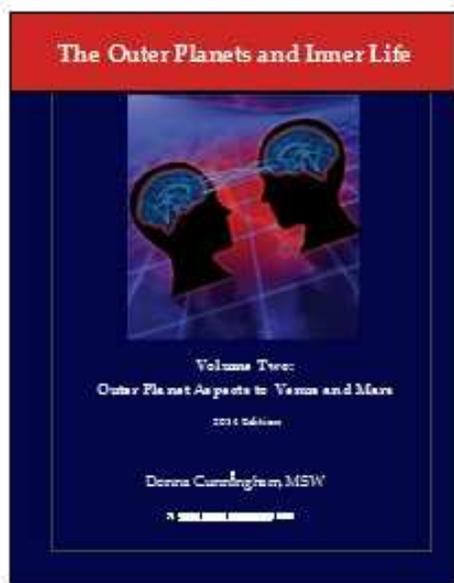
With Pluto in the vocational houses, failing in the career can embarrass the parent or other authority figure, a form of revenge. ("You said I'd never make anything of myself. Well, I'll show you....") Parents can't control whether their offspring succeed or not, and the more parents demand success, the greater the sting when their offspring fail.



People with Pluto or Scorpio planets in the vocational houses or aspecting the Midheaven are prone to dramatic career turns, for better or for worse, especially under transits to the Midheaven, natal vocational-house planets, or natal Pluto.

Many of them glory in intensity, exist at a life or death pitch, and view work situations in terms of extremes—black and white, good vs. evil, shadow vs. light. If they engage in spiteful, self-destructive rounds of hardball, they may crash and burn publicly, even repeatedly, under transits or progressions to planets in vocational houses or to the Midheaven. If they are evolving past those negative patterns, they are capable of amazing turnarounds—the Phoenix rising from its own ashes.

Note: each volume of the Outer Planet Trilogy is \$15 if ordered separately, but there's a special price \$35 if all three are ordered at the same time. Order the trilogy here: [My Books](#).



The Outer Planets and Inner Life, Volume 2: Outer Planet Aspects to Venus and Mars. 2014 edition

About this Book: Here, we learn about the love lives of people who have the outer planets strongly woven in with the primary relationship planets, Venus and Mars, or with the relationship houses—the 7th, 8th, and 5th. We'll identify persistent relationship patterns for each of these outer planet influences.

We'll explore the ways people with these chart factors try to satisfy their need for intimacy while still satisfying an equally strong urge to participate in the evolution of our world. Integrating these transpersonal concerns into personal relationships is difficult, so finding and maintaining a true

partnership tends to occupy the person's attention for much of their lives.

Here are some Excerpts:

In my astrological practice over the past 38 years, I've seen thousands of people with each major Venus and Mars aspect, but let's use Venus square Neptune as an example. The details may vary considerably, but the over-all dynamics tend to be the same, as are the results. Maybe the bohemian earth mother in New York's Soho district with Venus in Cancer square Neptune in Libra tries to nurture the sensitive artist. He smokes pot daily and can't seem to paint any more but won't marry her because he's married to his art.

Perhaps the gal in the trailer park with Venus in Sagittarius square Neptune in Virgo loves a biker who does speed. He's always on the road with his motorcycle gang and only visits her in the middle of the night when the rest of the gang has passed out and he's wanting a little loving.

Then, for contrast, there's the socialite with Venus in Capricorn square Neptune in Libra whose 40-year-old lover works 70 hours a week and drinks himself insensible to unwind. He's out of town on a business trip and forgets her birthday, and he won't commit until he makes his first million. Then he finally makes the million, but devastates Ms. Venus-Neptune square when he ups and marries a 23-year-old trophy wife instead.

As you can see, the details are very, very different. The sign and house of Venus have everything do with who plucks at our heartstrings—why the one with Venus in Capricorn goes for up-and-coming executives, while the one with Venus in Sag can't resist biker after biker.

Yet, how different is the bottom line? All three of these individuals with Venus-Neptune squares wind up repeatedly getting involved with men who can't commit, who have an addiction or two, and who aren't there in vital ways that leave the woman feeling drained, used, and unloved. As crucial as the details admittedly are to the individual, the **pattern** is what is instructive.

Outer-planet types can be seen in terms of the *roles* they play out for the collective. Those with Venus aspecting the outer planets are often attracted to people who fill those roles and may form partnerships with them. Roles associated with Uranus, for instance, include rebel, eccentric, maverick, gadfly, tekkie, theorist, agent for social change, and member of the counterculture.

People with Mars strong tend to be leaders, competitors, warriors, and advocates. The areas of life where Martian types express leadership qualities or become advocates depend on the particular outer planet involved and its issues.

Those with Mars in major aspect to Uranus (or Mars in Aquarius) would be apt to exercise leadership and take action in Uranian groups or situations, often becoming political activists or being on the leading edge in politics, the arts, academia, or technical developments.

Roles for Neptunian types include the creative or performing artist, spiritual leader or follower, psychic, dreamer, or service professional. When Mars is in major aspect to Neptune (or in Pisces), the individual may feel called to advocate for the disadvantaged or embrace a particular spiritual teaching or vision. (The song from *Man of La Mancha*, "The Impossible Dream," comes to mind.)

Plutonian types tend to focus on healing, reforming, and restoring those parts of individuals (or society as a whole) that are seriously damaged or dysfunctional. When Mars is in major aspect to Pluto (or in Scorpio), warrior instincts can be strongly aroused by abuses of power or of trust, by actual or perceived threats to survival, or by the need to root out and heal what is creating dysfunction — whether this is in an individual or in the collective.

Glitterati is a good term for people with Venus-Uranus aspects, as they so often have a **dazzling style all their own**. Unconventional, mildly to moderately shocking, they attract notice and stir up controversy, but may wind up being trend setters, once the buzz they've created dies down. They shake up the status quo but get away with it, because they do so with a unique brand of charm other Uranians may lack.

As their hormones calm down, some of them go out of style, having enjoyed their 15 minutes of fame. Others with this aspect have the genius to keep reinventing themselves and remain on top—Sean Connery, Robin Williams, and Robert Redford are still big names because their talents keep evolving in ways that capture the public imagination. Then there are the few—Elvis Presley, Liz Taylor, and Princess Diana—who are such unforgettable, one-of-a-kind luminaries that they'll remain legendary long after their time.

In lists of famous people with Venus-Pluto aspects, you find many who married well in order to do some dynasty building. In researching the charts of the wives of presidents and politicians, I was fascinated to see how many of them had Venus in combination with Pluto—so many that I dubbed it the First Lady Aspect.

Those who have it include Pat Nixon and Betty Ford with the trine and Eleanor Roosevelt, Hillary Clinton, and Maria Shriver—first lady of California—with the square. Many British Royals share the aspect—Elizabeth II, Charles, Philip, Sarah, Duchess of York, and Prince Edward's wife, Sophie Rhys-Jones. British Prime Minister Tony Blair has the trine, and by all accounts his wife has been an excellent support in his career.

One superb use of a Venus-Pluto aspect is as a heart healer on a professional level. Self-help guru John Bradshaw, who taught so eloquently of the shame that comes from growing up in an alcoholic household, had Venus and Pluto conjunct in Cancer in the 3rd house.

Psychologist Arthur Janov, who also had the conjunction in Cancer in the 3rd, the house of communication, developed a technique called The Primal Scream—a quite literal expression of the aspect. Betty Ford's dedication to helping people recover from addiction can be seen in her close trine between Pluto in Cancer and an exalted Venus in Pisces.

For all of us, love can be a healing vital force in transforming ourselves, so there are those with Venus-Pluto aspects whose loving hearts help heal those who are fortunate enough to encounter them—Dr. Phil McGraw, for instance. That possibility is realized when love heals rather than rescues—empowers rather than enslaves. People who are able to do that are the Venus-Pluto folks who love you and then let you go—it is those who love and then take hostage that represent the more troubled side of these aspects.

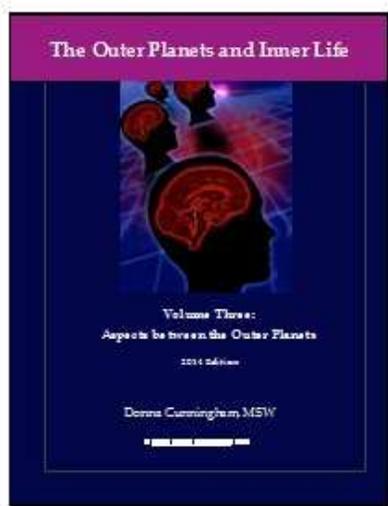
Women whose charts have Mars-Pluto combinations are in an unenviable position. They yearn for a certain kind of power—usually, the capacity to transform what they discern to be inequitable in their surroundings, especially abuses of power and betrayal of trust. When it arises from painful personal experiences, as it often does with this aspect, their anger over corruption can be strong. Yet, should they be too vocal, they're labeled, not just as angry but as mad, perceived as dangerously, contemptibly unfeminine, and they even risk retribution

by the powers that be. One reason many people respond negatively to Hillary Clinton's political ambitions is her Mars-Pluto-Saturn conjunction in Leo.

The magical power of attraction that is typical of a Mars-Pluto aspect can draw in either positive outcomes or negative ones, depending on the focus of attention. If the mind continually dwells on grievances and projects negative thoughts, then that considerable power will magnetize exactly the negative outcome that is being projected. As this loop recurs over and over, the negative outlook is reinforced— "There, you see, I knew it would turn bad on me."

However, if the individual with this aspect focuses attention on a desired goal and is convinced that the desire will manifest, then there can be an almost instantaneous and seemingly magical manifestation of the goal—**PROVIDED THERE'S NO UNDERLYING AMBIVALENCE TO COUNTERACT THAT DESIRE**. That second clause is the trick, and considerable soul searching may be required to dialogue with parts of the self that oppose or subvert the goal.

Note: each volume of the popular Outer Planet Trilogy is \$15 if ordered separately, but there's a special price of \$35 if all three are ordered at the same time. Order them here: [My Books](#).



**Excerpts from Donna Cunningham's ebook,
*The Outer Planets and Inner Life, v.3:
Aspects between the Outer Planets***

(Moon Maven Publications, December, 2014 edition)

About the book: Some of the most eventful and memorable historical eras happen when two or more of the slow-moving outermost planets—Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, or Pluto—form angles called aspects to one another.

We'll look at several distinct 20th Century eras like the 1960s, the astrological patterns that occurred at that time, and the life-long impact of these outer planet combinations on the lives of people born with them strongly featured in their charts.

Here are some Excerpts:

When Saturn aspects Uranus, Neptune, or Pluto, our collective experience is altered in a way that doesn't happen when Venus, Jupiter, or the Moon aspect the outer three. The social, cultural, and historical changes and challenges that come about during a Saturn aspect to Uranus, Neptune, or Pluto have a distinctively Saturnian flavor. Integrating Saturn into the

picture is as major a challenge as other outer planet aspects.

Most importantly, people born with strong Neptune-Saturn, Uranus-Saturn, or Pluto-Saturn aspects have a distinctively outer planet flavor—except that the combination integrates the outer planet’s qualities with many of Saturn’s areas of life. Worldly matters associated with Saturn and Capricorn include professions, career, big business, corporate sector, executives, bosses and our attitudes toward them, status, expectations and attitudes about success, conservative political eras, depressions and eras of contraction, crackdowns, cutbacks, and reality checks.

The relationship struggles of those born with Pluto and Saturn conjunct in late Libra during 1981-2 are painful to watch. Members of that group don’t expect to find love unless they are richly endowed with looks, money and status. For the women, breast implants, liposuction, and other cosmetic alterations are almost a coming of age ritual; for many of the men, weightlifting and steroids are an entry into the beds of desirable women. For both sexes, potential mates are often chosen—or discarded—according to how hot they look and how successful they appear to be.

Conjunctions are the most striking aspect between any two planets, in part because both planets generally fall into one sign and house—creating a powerful impact on the matters of that house. In doing charts of youngsters born 1988-98 with Uranus and Neptune conjunct, the conjunction’s house position is crucial in understanding where the young person most experiences the challenges of that combination.

For instance, when it’s in the 11th, fitting in with their age group is a major issue; in the 3rd, relationships with siblings are a concern; and in the 10th, they have difficulty relating to parents and other authority figures. A conjunction straddling the cusp of two houses tends to blend the house matters.

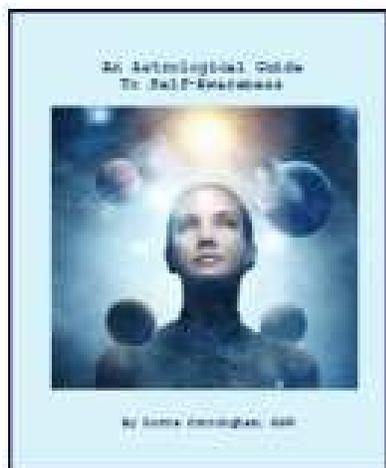
In trying to understand the charts of children born between 1988-98 with Uranus and Neptune conjunct, it helps to take a longer view of their potential. The same aspects that are problematic in the life of a child often wind up being exactly what they’ll need as adults—Uranian traits like independence and thinking outside the box, or Neptunian traits like empathy and imagination. In particular, the Capricorn phase of the conjunction seems to give them an adult awareness of our severe global problems, coupled with feeling overwhelmed and powerless to take action. As adults, they’ll have the skills to make a difference.

Many clients with prominent Saturn-Neptune aspects report that they came up the hard way. Hardships endured during their childhood and/or difficult circumstances in adulthood have forced them to grapple with limitations and with barriers to success and happiness. I cannot help but be impressed by many with this aspect who have honed their capacity to TRANSCEND LIMITATION, whether based in hardships in the family of origin or encountered later in life. Saturn would represent limitations, while Neptune would represent finding spiritual strength to help us transcend our realities.

I'm often struck by events in people's lives during transiting aspects that echo natal combinations—that is, when the same pair of planets forming an aspect by transit matches a pair of planets in aspect in the natal chart. Particularly, people who have natal aspects between outer planets seem enter new and important phases of their lives when those same outer planets form new aspects in the sky. For instance, when transiting Neptune and Saturn aspect one another, many folks with prominent natal Saturn-Neptune aspects respond powerfully to the transit and use those windows to work through the dynamics of the natal aspect.

An Outer Planet Person—one whose chart strongly features several of the outer planets—is often born with a strong soul purpose or Calling, but may forget or suppress it in the throes of growing up and trying to fit into a society so much at odds with their intrinsic nature. Their true Calling is seldom mainstream, and the path to finding it may be so meandering that many regard themselves as failures by conventional standards.

One reason for this long journey to the Calling is that vocations related to the outer planets are complex ones that require maturity and the seasoning born of a varied life experience. It's only in our forties that many of us feel we have earned the right to be different from the mainstream. During the midlife cycle, the true sense of soul purpose tends to reawaken.



An Astrological Guide to Self-Awareness

(Moon Maven Publications, December, 2014 edition)

About this ebook: Originally published in 1978, this was a popular classic for astrology students at the beginning and intermediate levels—one of the first to integrate astrology and psychology in an accessible way. When the rights were returned to her, Donna decided a complete update and revision were overdue, and she hired a private editor to make certain the book was beginner-friendly while still retaining its psychological foundation. Highly recommended for the student of astrology.

Order the book here: [My Books](#). \$15 if ordered separately, but there's a special price \$35 if 3 \$15 ebooks are ordered at the same time. (Only available in PDF format, this ebook works well with a laptop or 10" tablet, but is not yet available for Kindle.)

Here are some Excerpts:

If you've gone no further than Sun signs so far, you may be surprised to find out that you are carrying around in your birth chart the signs you love to hate. Following the natural connections between signs, planets, and houses, you may find them in unsuspected places. If you have your Sun conjunct Jupiter but can't bear Sagittarians, you are practically a Sag yourself!

If you hate Aries with a passion but have Mars on the Ascendant, perhaps you hate an aggressive, competitive facet of yourself. Can't stand Gemini? Could that be where you have your South Node? Do Virgos set your teeth on edge? Strange...if you have several planets in the sixth house, you have such a lot in common! Look for the signs you hate in your own chart—you may find out you are projecting an important, disowned piece of yourself onto other people.

The Moon in your chart shows the conditions under which you would feel most emotionally secure—different for each of us. The house position of the Moon reveals more detail about conditions that lend a sense of security. A person with the Moon in the eleventh house would feel most secure when surrounded by friends or in some meaningful group. Someone with the Moon in the seventh usually only feels secure when involved in a long-term, intimate relationship.

The sign and house position can conflict—to have it in Aquarius means there is security in freedom and change. The Moon in Aquarius in the fourth had better invest in a mobile home, because Aquarius can feel stifled by putting down roots. Many people judge themselves harshly about the things that make them feel secure. For example, the Moon in Aquarius in the fourth person may say, "It's bad for me to be so restless." Astrology can help you recognize those needs as valid and important and can help you set out to meet them.



Many people place negative judgements on competitiveness, one of Mars' urges. And yet, we ignore how much of human progress is rooted in this hard-wired facet of the human psyche.



Without healthy economic competition, many of the advances and comforts we take so much for granted would never have been invented or become commonplace.

I see the sheer beauty of Mars so often while watching the Olympics or other athletic championships. Athletes challenge themselves in part because of a wish for self-mastery, but also because of the stimulus toward excellence supplied by rivalry with other gifted athletes.

These contests push the windows of human physical potential further and further all the time, showing us how much more is possible than we once dreamed. For instance, in figure skating, where it was once considered amazing to achieve a double jump, a quadruple jump is now practically a requirement for winning.

Certainly it is possible to overdo competition, like the parents who make their children's success in the Little League or soccer a requisite for love and approval. However, children whose natural competitive urges are entirely squelched may wind up with little motivation for achievement and self-mastery in adult life.

People going through major Saturn transits can chafe at seemingly endless delays in realizing their goals, can suffer crashes of structures in their lives that are not solidly built, and can be haunted by depression or the feeling that they are growing old.

Saturn represents the Reality Principle—that is, the piercing of denial and the ensuing confrontation with truth. Though most of us prefer to cherish our illusions, we have to face reality during Saturn transits—another reason it is called a malefic. But reality was always there, and it is our fault, not Saturn's, if we've avoided facing it. Myself, I consider Saturn one of the most benefic astrological influences, for we gain so much when we use its transits as windows for growth.

The positive side of a Venus-Saturn aspect is that you don't get older--you get better. A late bloomer, you may have been a plain, awkward teenager but suddenly become a beauty in your thirties or forties. Nor do you age as harshly as other folks—you may look years younger than your peers. Your popularity improves with age, too—seriousness is problematic for an adolescent but is expected of the middle-aged and older. You build a support group of significant others over time, and these connections tend to be long lasting.

Through your serious approach to life, you can also achieve a great many accomplishments that earn you respect. As you accomplish some of your important goals, you would tend to relax and feel worthy of pleasure—you've paid your dues. A search of AstroDataBank reveals that those with the conjunction include Donald Trump, Denzel Washington, Ashley Judd, Vanessa Williams, and John F. Kennedy, Jr.

Many astrology books and magazines define the houses according to external circumstances. For instance, they might say that the second house shows how you will fare in money matters, the fifth your children, the seventh your marriage partner, and so on. These descriptions sound as though

everything in your life is determined by something outside your control—Fate, people in authority, the economy, or heredity. If you have Jupiter in the second, they might assure you that luck will just keep coming your way in money matters, leaving the impression that you need only sit back and wait for it.

The modern astrological position based on psychology, and metaphysics is that definitions like these are over-simplified. The prevailing viewpoint is that external conditions alone do not determine your experiences; instead, your inner attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and needs act as magnets to determine the outer, tangible circumstances of your life. People with Jupiter in the second house, for example, aren't lucky due to Fate, but rather due to attitudes of openness, enthusiasm, and optimism that lead them to act on opportunities others might let pass by. For the most part, we make our own luck, good or bad. No doubt, the truth lies somewhere between these two positions—the fluctuations of the economy cannot be ignored, and yet our relative position within the economic circumstances of our times is greatly affected by our attitudes and beliefs.



Folks who follow astrology are fond of moaning, "I went through a terrible time when Pluto crossed my Sun, but I'VE REALLY LEARNED MY LESSON!" These avowals of spiritual progress used to impress me, until I began to notice that many of the people who made such claims hadn't changed at all. They might avoid the original situation that caused them so much misery, but then they would plunge into a similar one that was just as self-destructive. I finally concluded that "I've really learned my lesson," was all too often just a bit of karmic chic or a New Age way of saying, "How I've suffered!"

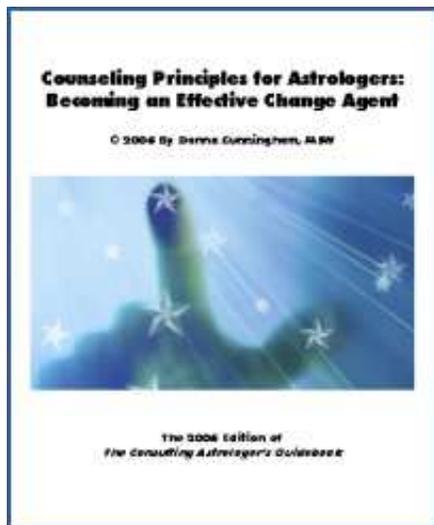
We make real progress in a long-standing and recurring pattern only when we carefully evaluate our part in the situation—why we got into it, what needs it met, where we made mistakes, and how such difficulties can be avoided in the future. Our potential for the future only truly changes when we learn from past mistakes. Blaming others rather than seeing our own role is a sign that we haven't really learned anything.

Blaming the planets for our problems is another way of not taking responsibility for ourselves and the ways we contribute to our difficulties. We will transcend the past when we learn from it. Start examining your thoughts, actions, and emotions in the more difficult areas of your life to see how you provoke the "mistreatment" you get from the planets.

Counseling Principles for Astrologers: Becoming an Effective Change Agent. 2008, \$15

About the Book: This indispensable text for astrologers or astrologers in training reflects Donna's social work background and 40 years as a counselor and professional astrologer. It shows how to

focus on clients' concerns, explain the chart in plain English, boost clients' problem-solving skills, and develop a resource network so clients can move forward after the session. Chapters include effective interviewing, vocational astrology, crisis counseling, relationship issues, and doing children's charts. **It is a text for [Kepler College](#) online astrology classes at the professional level.**



(Only available in PDF format, this ebook works well with a laptop or 10" tablet, but is not yet available for Kindle.) **Order it here: [My Books](#).**

The Merits of Setting a Contract: In various therapeutic disciplines, it is common to set a contract with the client before beginning the work. A contract is an agreement between the client and the helping person about the nature of the work they will do together. It identifies the purpose of the meeting and the problems or issues to be addressed. It sets goals, agrees on an operating plan, and spells out what the helper is to do and what the client's role will be. In some settings, the contract is formal, with a written agreement and stated goals. These goals are given measurable outcomes--specific enough that you can determine whether they were met or not.

While we need not be so formal in the one-time astrology consultation, some of these principles can still be helpful. A contract is a negotiation about what the session will cover and what the relationship will be like. You are less likely to meet clients' needs and expectations if you don't know what they are! Sloppy contracts may result in inconclusive sessions, and clients afterwards can feel they didn't get what they needed. Or, they might call you back a few times for information because you didn't clearly establish the purposes of the meeting.

Taking Stock of Your Skills: Just as it is important to know and be able to articulate the limitations of astrology as a predictive tool, it is also important to know and respect your own limitations. We all have areas where we shine, and we all have areas we don't know much about. There's a relief in not having to pretend that you are good at everything—it cuts down on the newly professional astrologer's anxiety.

It is useful to take stock periodically of what techniques you are and are not ready to deal with. You may want to focus your work on areas of comfort in the beginning, but do intensive study in other basic areas where you aren't knowledgeable. You can always add new areas of expertise to your practice later, when you are more proficient. In my first year or two of doing charts, I only did natal interpretations, but took every class I could find on transits.

One good resource for home study about subjects you haven't mastered yet are the collections of conference tapes by excellent speakers that most astrology organizations

provide. There are also astrology schools that provide distance learning or chat room classes in an array of subjects.

And Buddy Makes Three: Occasionally clients want to bring someone else along. Sometimes they will ask permission in the initial phone call. More often, they simply show up with their best buddy in tow, expecting that person will sit in on the session. You need to find out why the other individual is coming. If it is simply a matter of transportation, the friend can wait in another room, if you have one that is suitable. Otherwise, he or she can come back for the client when you are done.

If, however, the intention is for the friend or relative to sit in on the session, you are better off not allowing it. It is inappropriate and unprofessional. You wouldn't take a friend along to a therapy session--or invite a pal to a pap smear.

Whenever a third party sits in, except when the focus of the session is on that particular relationship, it detracts from the work. You usually get lots of giggles, game playing, and arch in-jokes. The client is generally more focused on the friendship than on the work. Defenses and facades are high, and the client is unlikely to reach any depth of honesty.



I have occasionally made exceptions for very bashful young Latina ladies who arrived chaperoned by their mothers. It may have been inadvisable to do even that, but we have to allow for cultural differences.



Doing Charts for Clams: One hitch that may come up at the beginning of the session is the client who refuses to say much of anything. You know the sort--the folded arms, the jutting chin. These folks want to be sure that you are genuinely gifted, so they test you. Or, maybe they are very secretive and don't intend to reveal any more of themselves than is necessary. This most often seems to happen with Scorpio or Capricorn Ascendants.

It helps to dazzle them a bit. It's not even that hard to do. Remember that these are usually the ones who've never had a chart interpretation before, so they don't have any idea how revealing astrology can be. You might recap some of the important trends of the past year or pinpoint the most difficult areas of their life through the placements of the outer planets.

Then tell them that they're going to get more out of the session if it is a dialogue. You might tell them that you're not a fortuneteller--I sometimes joke that my crystal ball is out of order. Or, ask them if they'd expect a doctor to guess what was wrong with them without asking

questions. Explain that the chart only suggests the general types of situations that will confront them. The two of you can pinpoint the effects much more specifically if they give some details. They're never going to let you see their hole card, but they generally loosen up a little at that point.

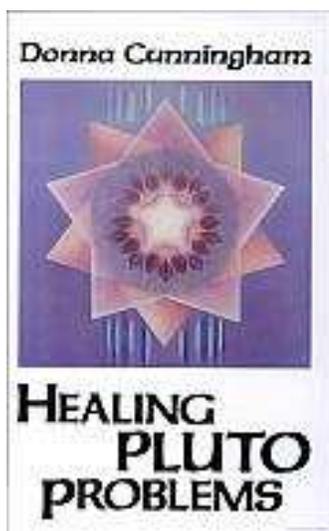
Order *Counseling Principle for Astrologers* here: [My Books](#). \$15, but take advantage of the special price of \$35 for three of Donna's \$15 ebooks if all ordered at the same time.

(Only available in PDF format, this ebook works well with a laptop or 10" tablet, but is not yet available for Kindle.)

Donna's Hardcopy and Kindle Books

Note: Most of Donna Cunningham's early books were in hardcopy, and the most popular and enduring texts were those published by Samuel Weiser Inc. now known as RedWheel/Weiser. Two of these popular classics are still in print. You would order them through [Red Wheel/Weiser](#) rather than through Donna.

Excerpts from Donna Cunningham's Book, *Healing Pluto Problems*



About the Book: This is an astrological/self-help book for people who have Pluto or Scorpio as a major factor in their astrological chart. It draws on Donna's long years of client work and her degree in social work for further insights. The book not only provides valuable insights into the difficulties and patterns of a Plutonian person, but also describes healing tools that take people beyond insight into action that can help them let go of past problems. It's written in accessible language that novices to astrology can understand. To this day, many astrologers recommend this book to their Plutonian clients to further their understanding of Plutonian patterns. Like several of Donna's hardcopy books, it was translated into more than a dozen foreign languages.

To order, go to [Healing Pluto Problems](#). Published by RedWheel/ Weiser, it's available in hard copy and Kindle format. **\$19.95. See *Healing Pluto***

***Problems* in the [Kindle Edition](#) on Amazon.com. \$11.49**

Excerpts from *Healing Pluto Problems*

What Constitutes a Plutonian person? When Pluto has very difficult aspects, like conjunctions, squares, or oppositions to the Sun, Moon, Ascendant, or Midheaven, these people may have suffered agonizing losses and betrayals of trust in their early years. This

experience can make them wary and mistrustful. When wounded in this manner, they may long to fuse with those they're close to. To combat a deep sense of isolation and to ensure that they won't be abandoned, they may become controlling and manipulative. They may enter into codependent relationships in which the other needs them so badly, they can't leave.

Because of unfortunate childhood experiences, many Plutonians are deeply private—even secretive—and hide their true selves. Thus, they can become targets for others to project negative traits of their own onto them. Only a deeper level healing of the Plutonian's wounds is likely to change these painful patterns.

Depending on the sign, house, and aspects to other planets, Plutonians' perceptions may be deep and insightful, yet the conclusions they draw from them can be distorted by prior traumas. Shown a path to healing, they work obsessively to overcome their own ills, those of others, or those of society as a whole. Many become therapists, shamans, healers, or reformers.

The Plutonian in Relationships

Pluto is most likely to affect relationships strongly when it's in one of the primarily relationship oriented houses such as the 5th (romance and children), 7th (committed relationships and other partnerships), or 11th (friendships and connection to the peer group). This quality might also describe those with Venus in Scorpio, Pluto aspecting Venus, or when it is aspecting a planet in one of the houses listed above.

Here are some patterns you might see. Many Plutonians are so intense about love that they genuinely believe it's a life-and-death matter. They may not be above a one night stand, because they can be quite passionate. The morning after, however, they evaluate you as a lifelong partner and make an irrevocable decision. If they are drawn to you, you're it. No easing in and exploring each other, then making up your mind. Possibly with their keen insight into people, they see beneath the surface and that's all the time it takes to make a valid psychological assessment. Nonetheless, it can scare off folks who need longer to make a commitment.

Once in the relationship, for many of them, it's such a relief after the painful loneliness they have experienced, that they can become an obsessive and possessive. Fearing abandonment, they may attempt to bind the lover through manipulation and controlling behaviors. These suffocating patterns may ultimately drive away the very people they love so dearly. This is why healing early losses and traumatic family patterns is so urgent, so that it need not permeate permeate close relationships in their adult life.

Understanding Pluto Transits

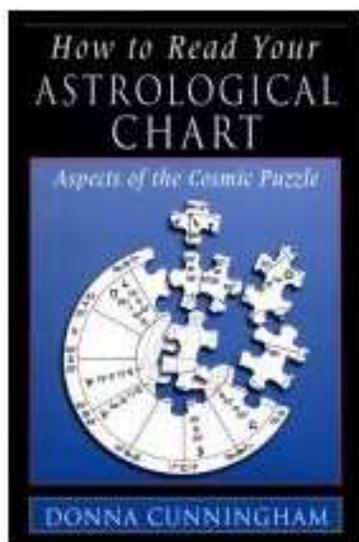
An issue that often comes up during Pluto transits is power and how we use it. Most of us are afraid of power, and, justly so, as few of us know how to use it constructively. If someone has been misusing power—either giving it away in a symbiotic relationship or taking too much of it from someone else— then a Pluto transit is often the time the balance of power has to be turned around.

Power struggles can result, with Plutonian manipulations and striking back. Sometimes we want revenge for the way the person we've given our power to has been treating us. Perhaps we aren't taking responsibility for the fact that they couldn't have done those things if we'd owned our own power.

Nonetheless, the end result of a Pluto transit is often an increase in our own power, so part of the difficulty is in learning how to handle it. When Pluto is transiting the Midheaven, for instance, increasing power is involved with the career.

Sometimes the Pluto transit ushers in a personal transformation, and by doing a therapy or healing work, people experience their own power in a new and wonderful way. You may find yourself releasing your self or others from barriers to self-expression to become as powerful as you possibly can. How can you do that? There are a great variety of workshops and healing practices that can support that kind of growth, but a Pluto transit is the most potent time to invest your energy in a transformation.

See *Healing Pluto Problems* in the [Kindle Edition](#) on Amazon.com \$11.49 _See *Healing Pluto Problems* in the [Kindle Edition](#) on Amazon.com \$11.49



Excerpts from Donna Cunningham's book, *How to Read Your Astrological Chart*

About the Book: This book is especially recommended for those who have been studying astrology for a few years and who still don't feel comfortable interpreting the chart and how the various pieces fit together. Cunningham's style is that of going back to the absolute basics of sign, house, planet, and aspects in order to put the pieces together in an understandable way, before adding in the more advanced techniques.

If you follow the process she demonstrates, step-by-step, you will lay the foundation for analyzing the basic natal chart and transits with a new degree of comfort and independence.

To order, go to [How To Read Your Astrological Chart](#). Published by RedWheel/Weiser, it's available in hard copy and Kindle format. Hardcover \$18.95. See *How to Read Your Astrological Chart: Aspects of the Cosmic Puzzle* in the [Kindle Edition](#) on Amazon.com \$9.99.

Here are Some Excerpts:

What Planet Are You From? How Planets Become Keynotes

Planets are particularly emphasized when they fall into one of the four Gauquelin sectors of a chart. These are areas 10° either side of one of the four angles, sectors that French psychologists, Francois and Michel Gauquelin, identified as statistically significant in their research into 60,000 birth charts. The areas include the Ascendant (cusp of the 1st house), IC (cusp of the 4th house), Descendent (7th house cusp), And the Midheaven (10th house cusp). Their research showed that an individual's most notable or obvious character traits match qualities attributed to the planets in those sectors.

A planet is also emphasized when it is one of the most aspected, especially if it aspects more than one of the Sun, Moon, Ascendant, or Midheaven. If aspect lines are drawn in for the chart, this provides visual clues as to which planets are strongly aspected and thus might be considered keynotes. If the planet is part of a major configuration like a Grand Trine, T-square, or Grand Cross, that also contributes to making it a major influence on the chart.

When a planet is strongly emphasized, you might be said to fit that planetary type. **For instance, with Venus strong, you might be a Venusian type.** For them, relationships are paramount, and they feel unfulfilled without a partner. Romantic, charming, often attractive, if overly concerned with appearance, they hunger for a steady dose of affection and warmth from those around them.

The martial type is one with a very strong Mars. These people are action oriented, often rashly leaping to act without careful thought or planning. They are often seen as leaders, because they have abundant energy, drive, feel, and conviction about their aims. They can be aggressive, hotheaded, or competitive, and lack patience with slower, less certain folks. They are easily irritated, but the sign and aspects of Mars determine how readily they show anger and how it is expressed.

The High Road or the Low Road?

Each piece of the chart can have both constructive and destructive uses. Like the Hindu goddess Kali, the sign Scorpio and the planet Pluto can represent either a rebirth or a death in some part of our lives. Strong placements of Neptune and Pisces can be the hallmark of saints or sinners, or anywhere in between. Looking at the chart, we may guess how the energy of the sign or planet is currently being used, based on placements and aspects.

Yet, no one can know for sure by looking at a chart, only by observing and talking to the person. One gift of astrology is the ability to recognize when we ourselves are taking the low road and need to find higher uses of the same energy.

As an example, Pisces is a mutable water sign, so it is emotional in a diffuse way. It can also adapt to a large variety of conditions, the way water in a stream flows around a rock. It's ruled by Neptune, a planet with a spectacular spread of meanings including spirituality, service, imagination, and creative inspiration on the positive side. On the less desirable side its expressions can include deception, martyrdom, addiction, and self-delusion. With astrology to guide us, we can choose to let go of the negative expressions of any planet or sign, and to focus on developing the positive expressions more consciously.

Soft Aspects – When the Living Is Easy

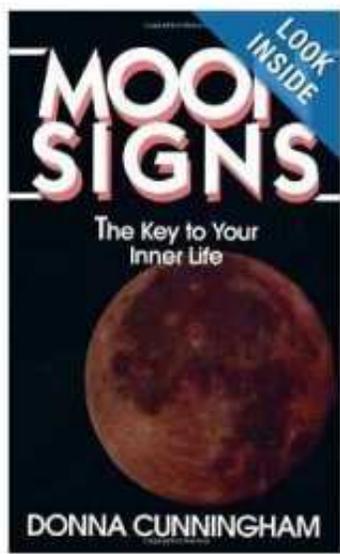
Trines consists of two planets that are four signs or 120° apart. The signs of the two planets are in a single element—fire to fire, earth to earth, water to water, or air to air. Understanding qualities common to the signs in an element helps you analyze a trine.

For instance, people whose charts are strong in the air element are good communicators, with a hunger for knowledge and information. Fire signs are akin in their vitality and unquenchable spirit. Earth signs have the traits of practicality, groundedness, and productivity in common. Those with the water element strong share emotional responsiveness, sensitivity, and the capacity to move themselves to their environment.

One keyword for the trine is “*flow*.” The energies of the two planets in a trine flow back and forth readily. Another good term for the trine would be “*momentum*.” With little friction or resistance, the movement between one planet to another tends to continue until there's a conscious effort to stop. That can be either good or bad, depending on how constructive the activity and how crucial it is to know when to stop.

The house placements of the two planets may contribute another, more subtle, layer of elemental harmony, since trine's generally involve houses that are within the same element. For instance, both planets may fall into one of the earth houses—the 2nd, 6th, or 10th. In such a case, the easy flow of energy between the two planets bodes well for vocational success. If the trine is between two energetic fire signs and additionally, falls into two of the earth houses, we get the picture of a go-getter who will go far in some career where “fire in the belly” is required.

To order, go to [How To Read Your Astrological Chart](#). Published by RedWheel/ Weiser, it's available in hard copy and Kindle format. Hardcopy, \$18.95. See *How to Read Your Astrological Chart: Aspects of the Cosmic Puzzle* in the [Kindle Edition](#) on Amazon.com at \$9.99.



Excerpts from Donna Cunningham's Book, *Moon Signs: The Key to your Inner Life*

About this Book: Donna's only mass market astrology book, *Moon Signs* not only is readable for the novice, but it also provides insights and practical information that can benefit the astrology student. Like many of Donna's hardcopy books, it was translated into several foreign languages.

It includes descriptions of the ways all 12 Moon signs are expressed in the horoscope. You'll also find copious information about how to follow the Moon through its monthly cycle and its travel through all 12 houses of the birth chart in order to get things done smoothly and maximize your potential.

See *Moon Signs: The Key to Your Inner Life* on Amazon.com in the [Kindle Edition](#) \$5.99. Published by Random House.

Excerpts from this book:

"What is it about the Moon that invokes curiosity, awe, and even a twinge of dread? Why are there so many legends about witches, vampires, and werewolves coming out at the full moon? And what happens to the minds of unstable people at the full moon to have made the word *lunatic* associated with insanity?

On the other hand, why do we look at the moon and yearn for romance? Why do so many love songs, poems, and stories feature the light of the moon? And why did primitive people the world over worship the moon, carrying on ceremonies, rituals, and revels at the time of the full moon? Few people can fail to be moved by the beauty and intrigued by the cycle of changes the moon undergoes in a month.

We're all greatly affected by the weather—by sunny and stormy days, by humidity, and by temperature. Less obviously, we are affected by the emotional weather. That is, there are days when people at large are irritable, with quarrelsome strangers exploding if you look at them the wrong way on the street.

Other days, the prevailing emotional mode is depressed, and, just as inexplicably, there are days when people seem to be upbeat, friendly, and talkative. There are nights so perfect for a party that you can't fail, and others when a party clunks along despite the right people, the right ambience, and the right food. On the job, there are times when work bogs down in

confusion and nothing is accomplished but wheel-spinning, and other times when everything clicks into place perfectly and the work flows.

Where do these day-to-day fluctuations in the emotional atmosphere come from? They're connected with the Moon. It's nonstop emotional changes correlate with this ever-changing pattern of moods will be calling *emotional weather*. The major determinant of these fluctuations is the Moon as it travels through the 12 signs of the zodiac in the course of its one-month orbit around the earth. Thus, the mood of the public at large is different when the Moon is in Aries than from when the Moon is in Taurus, Gemini, or each of the remaining signs of the zodiac.

Not everyone is affected the same, of course, yet the Moon sign influences enough of us, consciously or unconsciously, so that even those who aren't affected strongly personally still have to cope with the moods of those around them.

A Contrast between two Moon Signs

To show the difference a Moon Sign can make, let's look at the qualities of the Moon in Gemini versus the Moon in Capricorn.

Gemini is a bright, quick, witty Moon Sign, perhaps even more so than a Gemini Sun, because the Moon represents responses you don't have to think about. The Moon shows our changes of mood, and Gemini is restless, always on the move as a hedge against boredom. The sign is full of mental energy, and the precociousness this of children with the sign is typical of their early and lifelong gift for thinking on their feet and picking up new ideas and skills quickly. Gemini Moons have a gift for molding communication, often uncannily using their audiences own words for language. They seem to know almost instinctively how to reach people on their own terms.

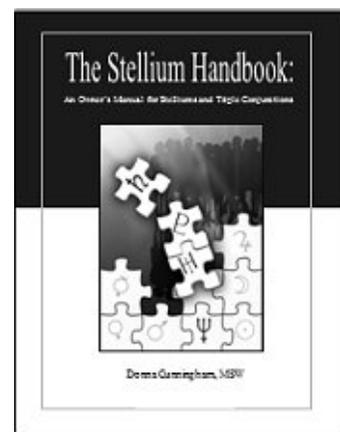
Capricorn Moon people, on the other hand, want accomplishment and a steady climb in status most of all, so they may sacrifice home life and closeness for long-term aims. They may postpone marriage or starting a family until they are well-established, but they come to both commitment and parenthood very seriously and with a strong sense of responsibility. Their ultimate choice of a mate is likely to be a practical, conservative one, the type of person who will support their goals and be an asset. Capricorn Moons aren't perceived as terribly warm and nurturing, but the help they so willingly give is extraordinarily practical, and they are thoroughly reliable.

See *Moon Signs: The Key to Your Inner Life* on Amazon.com in the [Kindle Edition](#) \$5.99.

EBOOKS BY DONNA CUNNINGHAM, MSW

About Donna Cunningham: For 45 years, Donna's background in astrology, social work, and healing has made her an internationally respected author of many books, articles, and advice columns. Order her ebooks here: [My Books](#).

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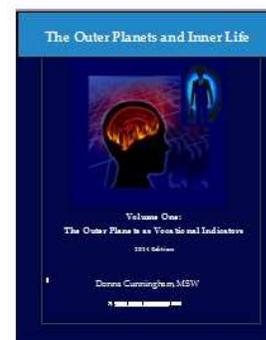
An Astrological Guide to Self-Awareness: This revised and updated 2014 edition of Donna's classic text for beginning and intermediate students contains chapters on each of the planets, the houses, aspects, transits and more. It blends astrology and psychology in everyday language. \$15

Astrological Analysis—Select Topics in Chart Interpretation: In-depth essays on chart factors include planets, houses, aspects, transits, relocation, and more. \$15

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The Outer Planet Trilogy of Ebooks—Three Volumes

This popular trio condenses Donna's 45 years of observing how clients use and misuse the outer planets into wisdom we all can apply. **Each in the newly-released 2014 Editions. \$15 each/ 3 for \$35.**



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