

Much of this will be implied when you review some of the typical service offerings. But maybe here we can start with what astrology is not:

### **Astrology is not connected with psychics nor magicians.**

There is an uninformed minority who believe that an astrologer is actually a psychic or a magician. He is neither. An astrologer is an analyst who describes time cycles. In the course of doing this, and particularly for some charts more than others, he may seem psychic when he can very closely "hit on" personal attributes, and/or accurately describe what is likely to have happened in the past, or will happen in the future, on certain dates. But truly this is just a logical deduction. (Although a few astrologers are coincidentally somewhat psychic, this doesn't imply that their astrological work is necessarily better - sometimes it's worse since they let technique deteriorate.)

### **Focus your questions and issues.**

Don't go to an astrologer with the open-ended question: tell me my future (which is actually a variation on: entertain me). This is typically quite unproductive. It's better to get the astrologer "tuned into" your current reality so he will know how the symbols are currently "acting out" in your chart. This focuses the issues and allows trends in motion to be projected out to their likely conclusion.

Despite this comment, an astrologer will very typically be able to spot if your chart is exhibiting qualities typically associated with an upcoming divorce or job loss, and so on, depending on the quality, volume and intensity of the patterns that are present. We do this quite commonly. But more value is typically derived from a discussion that is *focused* by you - particularly if, in fact, no major cycle events are coming up.

### **Offer choices.**

An example of another fairly poor question is: what should I do for a career? This is a common question of an astrologer. Yet please note that there are, in fact, over 65,000 unique job titles that have been officially defined in the US alone. For example, a person was a glassblower for the Federal Government. He built complex glass systems (sometimes to a tolerance of 1/10,000th of an inch) for chemists and physicists that went into CIA weapons that went into satellites, etc. But who would ever spontaneously think of such an occupation (or thousands of others)?

You are much better off presenting a few career choices to an astrologer since you are probably already having impulses in certain directions. This will allow him to consider the distinguishing symbolic attributes (of each choice) that exist most strongly in your chart, and also to be able to link it into the various cycles you are currently in (and heading into). An attraction to "fire" and "precision" would certainly have to be in that person's chart (and note that these would not be good attributes for a child day care worker).

### **Readjust your expectation of astrological "magic".**

I mentioned that astrologers are not magicians. By this I mean that we do not carry a magic wand that can change your life. Our work is primarily descriptive and only secondarily prescriptive. One of our primary jobs is to give you a context to synchronize your consciousness with your cycles. This is so that you can get into your own "zone" and stop battling upstream against your own reality.

Now this can sometimes extend to suggesting various options for dealing with the fixed nature of certain cycles, but very often it is just your soul's karma to have certain experiences that your ego may think it doesn't want or need (loss, fame, confusion, etc.). But remember that what goes "down" typically goes back "up," and an astrologer should be extremely helpful in identifying both of these for you.

[Having asserted that we are not magicians, I will say that some of us actually do have a few special tricks up our sleeves that can often help to blunt or soften an extreme difficulty, or to maximize an opportunity. Strictly speaking, this is not astrology, so I won't go into it here.]

### **Use an astrologer on a regular basis.**

One of the tragedies that an astrologer often faces is that certain clients only present themselves at the bottom of cycles. Here necessity often becomes the mother of invention. But astrologers, being human too, get tired of an excess of clients who have just been cast down emotionally, financially, politically, and so on. We love to have the opportunity to tell you when otherwise unexpected good cycles are coming up so you can plan for this and perhaps push harder for some growth opportunity during this period (especially as versus just laying down and just enjoying life during the stronger periods until they pass over).

Here I should make a comment on upcoming "down" periods. It is an astrologer's fundamental duty to mention these, but it would be very unwise for you to be overly discouraged by this. There is much value in knowing the parameters of such periods (and we all get them). Sometimes you may just have to "stand aside," but other times you may just have to redouble your efforts with no apparent reward.

The good news, however, is that when you finally do cycle back up, the conscientious labors of the frustration period can often return to benefit you. So "down cycles" should not induce a fatalistic swoon; they are more typically a time for taking the best and right action, but with no expectation of immediate reward (particularly at the material level).

### **Have realistic standards of performance.**

You should expect high standards of performance from an astrologer relative to what is possible, but you should not expect perfection, just as you cannot expect perfection from any other professional. Some people will go to several astrologers, typically based upon their books or upon referral, before they find someone they prefer. If you can afford it, this is a good idea. It also allows you to compare all the elements that contribute to your personal sense of value and service. But keep in mind that a lawyer is paid even if his client goes to jail, and a doctor is paid even if his patient dies.

The point is that, since so many unmanageable factors can intervene, all professional work is necessarily performed on a "best efforts" basis. In the context of astrology, the biggest problem is that an astrologer never sees the same pattern twice. We will see *elements* of patterns over and over, but never the same overall pattern. Thus, in the end, each chart is entirely unique, and that is why absolute certitude is never possible (although some of the probabilities can be very high).

Still, it is your burden to make the best choice of what professional you would like to use. You might also note that astrologers are constrained by the technical resources available to them (books, classes, software, etc.), and also by the resources you have made available to them.

By this I mean that if their fees are set too low for a self-employed professional, it means they are an inexperienced beginner, or a hobbyist, or a part-timer, or lack confidence in their own work, or their work doesn't attract clients, or else they have to be cutting corners somewhere. Astrologers have mortgages too, so if the fees of such a very specialized professional do not at least match the charges of an average plumber or electrician, you should certainly wonder why, no?

This prior paragraph mentioned the issue of "experience." For some occupations this is not so important; for others it is, and astrology is one of these. Would you rather go to a surgeon who has performed 500 operations like the one you plan ... or 50? The same rule applies to how many charts an astrologer has professionally processed. By the way, believe it or not, there are many astrological enthusiasts who have been studying astrology for decades, but they have not, cannot, or will not interpret a chart.

### **Do you have an okay chart for an astrology consultation?**

There are three issues here. Just as some clients have good or bad charts for children, or money, or career, or spouses, etc. they also vary in their ability to find, and use, a good astrologer! Some people get chronically excellent results, and others will cycle with frustration through astrologer after astrologer without much value or success.

Like all other things in life, this particular strength or weakness is another element of your own chart. Second, cycles also enter into this. Are your cycles "up" or "down" when you have the consultation? How about the astrologer's? Finally, there is the issue of the relationship linkage between the astrologer and the client. Just as in any other relationship, some blend better than others, and few things in life are more obvious than this. This is the mathematics of good and bad "chemistry."

### **Sometimes astrology is the only relevant resource.**

Sometimes astrology is the only functional mechanism to address certain kinds of problems. For example, one of my astrologer friends worked on one kidnapping case where a wealthy family paid a huge ransom for the release of their young adult son. Their son was subsequently not released, and the kidnapers, in fact, demanded more ransom, promising to really release their son this time!

So of course the parents are left to wonder if they will pay five ransoms, end up broke, and still have no child. The authorities were not much help because the authorities were part of the problem (tapping their phones, etc.). What would you do, i.e., how would you structure leverage or gain traction on this problem?

In this case I submit that only astrology could address this family's key issue, and it was amazing that they found him, my astrologer friend, by referral, after the parents were already several months into this dilemma. After a lot of complex analysis (involving the charts of the mother, father, sister, victim and his spouse, and this was after he had corrected birth time errors for all of them), he could then give absolutely authoritative advice to the family about how to respond to this.

In fact, this ended up saving them a huge financial and tactical error - and also successfully brought about the eventual return of their son (seven months into the future within three days of the day he said it would happen - and release was categorically *not* possible before that).

### Three more concluding "useful" thoughts.

So these are some clues about how to think about, and optimize an astrological consultation, and I add these final thoughts: First, your astrologer should collect background about you before the consultation. In fact, the majority of a good astrologer's time is spent on your behalf in analytical work before the consultation even begins.

Second, I personally believe every astrologer should also validate a client's time of birth even if it is seemingly known. This means you need to get together some date-related information about certain events in your past. A wrong time of birth will wreck your consultation, and even though it's your bad input, you will still blame the astrologer or astrology.

Finally, since 95% of our clients are at a distance, if possible we also like to have a (returnable) photo to make the consultation more personal, and less isolated, theoretical and abstract.

I hope all this gives you a more useful context within which to engage an astrological consultation. If you have any further questions on related matters, please feel free to inquire.