

CANCER: FOUNDATION AND CRADLE OF LIFE

Both physicist and metaphysician agree that the beginning of our manifested universe came from One Source and that all subsequent forms of life are composed of this primordial matter. Where the two camps differ is that the metaphysician and student of The Ancient Wisdom would go on to state that the matter of the universe is alive and intelligent. We would say that this Life and this Great Intelligence can be experienced by those men and women sensitive enough to recognize Its Presence. We would also say that this Life inhabits all matter thus transcending it, and that we are also that Life, incarnating in human form. —A.O.

The word “foundation” accurately describes the function of Cancer in the zodiac of the signs. Exoterically and in practical terms, this sense of anchoring externalizes through the commonly known definition of Cancer as the sign of the home, ruled by the Moon symbolizing one’s mother. This is quite true but if we add the soul-centered meanings of this sign and planet combination, we come to a much deeper and broader definition of the purpose of the Crab and its planetary ruler in our lives. In soul-centered astrology, we understand Cancer, foundation and the home to indicate the primary urge to integrate the personality so that it might reflect the intent of the soul, also symbolized by the Moon.

The personality is composed of three units: the physical body, the desire nature (the astral body as it is also called), and the lower mind or reason. If our desires and thoughts are opposed—the feelings moving in one direction while the mind moves in another, the physical body is confused as to what to do and where to go. Thus the individual is divided against himself and the soul has no earthly home in which to enter, for the Higher Self cannot inhabit a conflicted lower self. This is one reason why in Alice Bailey’s book “Esoteric Astrology,” the goal for Cancer is: “I build a lighted house and therein dwell.” This means that our house—the personality or the ego—has to be enlightened so that our true “Self” may inhabit it.

Since Cancer and its watery magnetism is to function to bring about a cohesion of our three-fold personality nature, the Crab is very attached to the search for the proper cradle in which she may undertake this nurturing, evolutionary task. Although it is indeed a water sign, the Crab inhabits both land and sea. It is a creature coming forth out of the matrix of the ocean in order to search for nourishment. In human life this is symbolized by the embryo coming out of its material, watery protective sack at birth. At first all nourishment is supplied by the mother’s milk but then as the baby develops, food must be added coming from one’s immediate environment. This food is not only physical it is also psychological. This is the reason why Cancers are so attached to the primary relationship they had with their mothers and also why the conditions of early childhood are so very important to them. Thus Cancer moves in and out of its psychic see according to the rhythm of its psychological tides, interacting with the surrounding shore as she seeks her port of earthly anchorage. This interaction starts in the womb as in order to survive, the embryo needs the oxygen coming to it via the umbilical cord, which its mother is breathing in the surrounding air. This breath anchors the Soul force into the physical body so that one is said to be born when the infant takes its first independent

breath and thus the need for the umbilical cord ceases. It is then that the prana—the living vitality of consciousness coming from the Sun— enters the newborn, bringing with it all the energies of the natal horoscope.

Many Cancers no matter how old they become are still attached to their primordial watery roots and never quite break away from the psychological and physical bonds they have with their mother, family and early conditioning circumstances. This would also tend to be the case when the Moon is conjunct the Ascendant in any sign or the Moon is in Cancer in the natal chart. Until the force of the personality fully individualizes in Leo (see next month's article), Cancer will find that the urge to retreat back into the watery protectiveness of the mother's womb will be as strong, if not stronger than, the urge to be separated from this primordial matrix into the fire of a self-actualizing individual.

Esoteric astrology teaches us that the Moon represents mass consciousness. This is the energy that people experience when they go to a huge rock concert or sporting event, when the focus of individuality is given over to intensified emotional energies existing in such public circumstances. In essence, this is a "vacation" from carrying the burden of a separated self in society. It is when one is at a concert or football game that the individual can yell, scream, die his hair blue, take off his shirt in public, all without censure and even with crowd approval. In a more subtle way, the energy of the Moon is the force of one's family or "tribe", protective on the one hand but very limiting on the other. Many people find once they start studying astrology or any other metaphysical teaching, that they are no longer a part of this veiling of the Moon and for a time they feel threatened. Many are even ostracized from their family who may hold on to more traditional religious or philosophical beliefs. Thus the individualizing test often comes through Cancer: to stay within the shield of my original womb (or the womb I have created for myself), or break the confining protection of the "sack" and emerge as my Self.

In soul-centered astrology, we say that the Moon is a Fourth Ray planet. This is the field of energy known as "Harmony through Conflict" as we all have to be "born again" in order to be more consciousness and leave the lunar surface. Thus we ascribe the influence of Neptune to the higher expression of Cancer. Indeed in both exoteric and esoteric astrology, Neptune is said to be "exalted" in the sign of the Crab. This exaltation means that the individual moves out of the material waters of embryonic and early life into the Waters of the Father (Neptune). Neptune is the ruler of Pisces, which is the sign of universal compassion, symbolized in the Christian world by the Christ and in the Hindu world by Lord Vishnu. Thus the Cancerian evolves from its primordial identification with "mommy and my family" to union with The Mother and the Human Family. Emotional reactions are then not based on fear of abandonment or the apprehension that comes with not having enough nourishment. The emotions of a more highly evolved Cancerian are much less personal and much more impersonal and global. One is then not primarily concerned with not having enough for oneself or one's family to eat. One is confident in the abundance of Mother Nature and seeks instead to assure those comforts and basic necessities for all the children of all the world's mothers.

Let us now examine the effects of the sign Cancer on the cusps of the twelve houses of the horoscope.

Cancer on the cusp of the First House (Ascendant): This placement gives a very strong sense of self-preservation. The sensitivity of the sign often expresses as an extremely sympathetic and understanding nature. However many Cancer rising people tend to take all initial impressions too personally, thus giving a marked subjectivity to the personality. The initial drive in life is to secure a “home base” from which all outer activities may safely proceed. Once Cancer rising feels whole and secure, she then becomes a most nurturing and generous person, always available to bring comfort and nourishment to everyone. If the Moon is afflicted (especially by Saturn), constant emotional insecurity will be this person’s nemesis.

Cancer on the cusp of the Second House: The Crab on this cusp seeks to fill its own pantry and ensure the material well-being and economic security of self and family first. This is accomplished through the use of personal resources and should the Moon be afflicted, one can feel that these resources will never suffice no matter how wealthy that person may be. A well aspected Moon in the natal chart (especially by Venus or Jupiter), will go a long way to insure that the pantry is always full. In the horoscope of a spiritually developed and psychologically mature individual, Cancer on this cusp is indicative a one who uses personal resources to feed one and all. Money may come or financial challenges accrue through houses and real estate or financial dealings in commodities.

Cancer on the cusp of the Third House: The early environment especially as it relates to siblings will be a very important influence on a person who has this position in the natal chart. Quite often we find that the individual acted the role of a parent to his brothers and sisters and may maintain a parental attitude towards them for her whole life. Emotions can either sensitize one’s way of thinking or if the Moon is afflicted (especially with Mercury), feelings and thoughts are divided or opposed, debilitating logic and clear communication. If the Moon was in a mutable sign at birth (especially if connected in the chart to Mercury or the planetary ruler of the Fourth House), the person has the tendency to have frequently changed residences but usually remaining in the same city or town.

Cancer on the cusp of the Fourth House (Nadir, IC): Here the urge for a stable home foundation is at its highest as this is Cancer’s natural domicile. The relationship to one’s mother and the psychological conditions found in childhood are of paramount importance. The IC represents the roots of one’s life; the point opposite in the chart (the MC) speaks about the “fruits” of one’s efforts and the outer expression in the world of the “inner child.” Stunted roots yield stunted fruits. This would be the case especially if the Moon were in difficult aspect with Saturn. On the other hand, a strong lunar position (Moon in Taurus well aspected, or the Moon trine Saturn, for example), would tend to strengthen the character and add confidence, security as well as economic stability and psychological strength to one’s life.

Cancer on the cusp of the Fifth House: This is the house of pleasures and with Cancer on this cusp, it is natural to assume that the individual would tend to enjoy herself most at home. This is the dwelling with a great home entertainment unit in the living room or den! Family life and children are extremely important. Therefore, if the Moon is afflicted conditions surrounding one’s offspring may be quite challenging. Even if one

does not have children or a family, cooking (Moon in Cancer or Taurus) and interior decorating (Moon in aspect with Venus) may be great hobbies. There is usually an avoidance of gaming or speculation as the individual with Cancer on this cusp tends to be cautious about the use of his or her resources without some sort of safety net.

Cancer on the cusp of the Sixth House: In terms of work, this is an excellent sign/house combination for a person whose job requires sensitivity to other people's emotional or material needs. A psychological counselor, medical technician, food service worker or real estate consultant all fit rather nicely into a life in which Cancer and consequently the Moon rule the Sixth. We can also assume that this is a person who tends to work around the house and may easily have an office in the home. Health is focused on the digestive area which is easily affected by one's emotional state. Pets will tend to play an important part in one's life as there is usually a tendency to nurture animals. This would be especially the case if the Moon were in Virgo or in aspect to a planet in that sign. When exaggerated, there is the danger to treat one's cat or dog as if it were one's child. Fear of animals could result if the Moon were in difficult aspect with Saturn and/or Neptune.

Cancer on the cusp of the Seventh House (Descendant): As Capricorn has to be on the Ascendant of this chart, marriage and solid interpersonal relationships are essential for security and a sense of social approval. Partnership is therefore sought with an individual who will provide a firm foundation upon which one can go out into life and fulfill one's ambitions. Cancer on the Seventh tells us that we are looking for a person who can give us the psychological and physical nourishment and support we require from others. If the Moon is afflicted we may find ourselves being either too possessive about our partner or in a relationship that is smothering and emotionally immature. Cancer on this cusp reveals an "I don't let go" type of a person who is in a relationship for life. When afflicted this position gives rise to a life attitude that prefers familiarity and predictability in relationships over spontaneity and surprise. Yet, when positive, this position reveals a person who stays by his or her partner through all the challenges in life.

Cancer on the cusp of the Eighth House: Whichever sign appears on the Eighth, it characterizes that area in life that may most need to be transformed. As Cancer is linked to a person's family and psychological foundations, one's "biological karma" in effect, certain particular crises may appear in the life. These present us with opportunities to transcend those subconscious and instinctive patterns rooted in our early family life. If the Moon is afflicted, especially by Mars, Saturn, or Pluto, such patterns may have a distinctly negative effect on one's sexual life. Such difficult lunar aspects will also adversely affect our attitudes in dealing with other people's material and emotional resources. When the Moon is well aspected with Cancer ruling the Eighth, the tendency is for a person to display a great deal of nourishing kindness and support in these areas. A strong and positive Moon can indicate inheritance as well as financial profits coming through homes and real estate. Although a difficult lunar position may not inhibit such material benefits to come our way, the circumstances surrounding such events as well as our inner attitude may be troublesome.

Cancer on the cusp of the Ninth House: This sign/cusp combination is not noted for its sense of adventure. Cancer is a sign that indicates the tendency for the security of familiar surroundings. This is the kind of person who would travel with family members, on a conducted tour, or with people with whom one is very close and who can be counted

on for emotional support when the surroundings are different from the way they are at home. Visiting the country of origin of one's ancestors would be a likely choice if one where to leave one's homeland behind. This is an individual who does not travel lightly, packing everything that may be needed on a journey "just in case." In terms of higher learning, this person is inclined towards the religion and beliefs of his background. An exception to this would occur if the Moon were in Aquarius or in aspect to Uranus, when rebellion against the past is likely.

Cancer on the cusp of the Tenth House (Midheaven, MC): When the Moon rules the Tenth or is in the Tenth, there is the tendency to acquire a career that deals with nurturing others or is involved in some way with cultivating popular appeal and playing to the crowd. It is very common therefore to find the Moon and Cancer strongly related to the Tenth House in the horoscope of politicians. The choice of one's life work may be highly influenced by the family, especially one's mother. The Moon (especially in a fixed sign or in Cancer) in aspect to Saturn with Cancer on the MC, symbolically states: "I am following in my family's footsteps," and much guilt can result from opposing one's parents' views in the choice of a career. When positive, this is an influence that contributes to a person who feels that the whole world is his or her family. The professional goals of such people are often involved in the administration of social resources and "feeding the masses." Careers in food related fields, real estate and counseling are also popular choices with this sign/cusp combination.

Cancer on the cusp of the Eleventh House: When Cancer is on this cusp, the individual tends to be quite protective in terms of his or her friends. This is also a person who is often a member of groups and organizations of a charitable nature whose intent is to feed and shelter the hungry. Habitat for Humanity is one such organization that can be symbolized by the sign/cusp interchange. If the individual is emotionally immature, then look for a certain selfishness where other people are concerned and a very possessive attitude towards one's acquaintances and associates. This is the kind of person who will always expect his or her friends to be on his side, no matter if he is right or wrong. His hopes and wishes will be entirely of a personal nature and his attitude is likely to include a feeling that "society owes me a living." On the other hand, the soul-centered individual with this position feels that all of society is his family and act in a very unselfish and humanitarian way.

Cancer on the cusp of the Twelfth House: There are few other zodiacal positions that contain so much potential for nurturance and compassion as this one. This sign/house combination gives the tendency to mother everyone regardless of family or ethnic origins. This would be especially the case if the Moon were in Cancer or Pisces and/or in aspect with Neptune. When immature (and especially if the Moon is in aspect with Saturn), this attitude is coupled with a sense of personal responsibility and guilt if one cannot respond to everyone's needs. The individual has to depersonalize the emotional nature so that one learns how to unlock the universal storehouse that is the Twelfth House. The individual will be far more helpful and far less distressed by learning how to take the personal ego out of the way and using the personality instead as a vehicle for the distribution of hidden and collective resources.