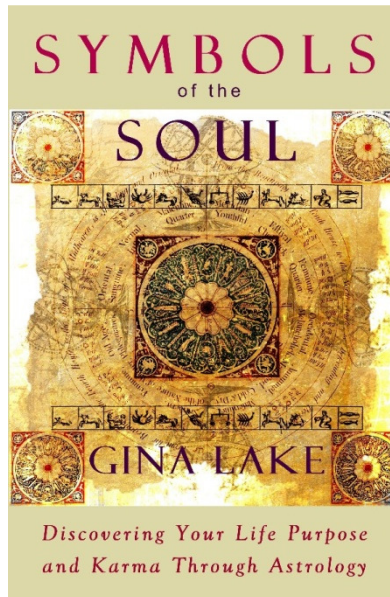


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# Symbols of the Soul

## Discovering Your Life Purpose and Karma Through Astrology

GINA LAKE

Endless Satsang Foundation  
[www.radicalhappiness.com](http://www.radicalhappiness.com)

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## P R E F A C E

Some of the information in this book was obtained by non-ordinary means. By that, I mean that the approach presented in this book was received intuitively. But more than that, much of the information about the chart's relationship to past lives was obtained from channeling. Today this method of acquiring information is not nearly as mysterious or as suspect as even a few years ago, although it is still not routinely accepted. In fact, I would not be surprised if much of what we know about astrology came from supernatural sources when humanity was in its infancy. This cannot be proven, of course, but information from intuitives has often contributed to our knowledge and understanding.

Today astrology is being rapidly transformed. It is being elevated from its former fortunetelling status to the psycho-spiritual tool it was meant to be. This is occurring through the infusion of new information, particularly through the intuition of astrologers and the diligent attention of many psychologists. Much of what is presented in these pages is new. It is up to you to evaluate these ideas, which have proven to me the profundity of astrology. I welcome hearing about your discoveries, for that is how the body of astrological knowledge will evolve with the times.

Note: I apologize for not always finding a way to avoid the pronoun "he" when I meant "he or she." I am not comfortable using this pronoun alone, but sometimes it was too cumbersome to refer to both genders.

## INTRODUCTION

Astrology has reemerged after long being misused, misunderstood, and maligned. It is returning full force in this New Age, to be applied at last as it was meant to be—as a tool for understanding the soul's path and the personality, the soul's vehicle. Using astrology as a fortunetelling device is no longer acceptable if we are to face our lives responsibly. It is unacceptable to sit back assured that something will go our way because astrology says so. Nor is it acceptable to shrink back in fear, feeling hopeless in the face of fate. Both stances distance us from living in the moment. We must be willing to live fully in the present with confidence in the unfolding of our lives and free from the ego's need to be in control of the future.

Modern astrology, the astrology of the New Age, provides a perspective that helps us do that. It is both informative and philosophical. It informs us of our psychological needs and issues, our spiritual lessons, and our gifts, while supplying a framework within which to understand life. It demonstrates that we are connected to a Greater Whole—that we do not function separately but that we do function uniquely. And it demonstrates that life is meaningful, while explaining the meaning of each life. Astrology's symbols are the soul's language of life. They reveal not only the mysteries of the universe but also the mysteries of each of our lives. In studying these symbols, we glimpse the marvel of the universe and our role in it. They are deep and fathomless resources for psycho-spiritual insight, revealing our soul's agenda for this lifetime and the personality chosen to carry it out. The psyche (which means "soul") cannot be understood separate from the soul because they are related: The personality is the vehicle through which the soul accomplishes its goals. Consequently, any complete approach to astrology must therefore be a psycho-spiritual one.

What is presented here is just that—an approach that acknowledges that the life we live today is influenced and shaped by other lifetimes and other charts. We are more than our chart! We are spiritual beings and the sum total of all our earthly experiences and all our previous charts. The chart helps us understand who we are today, but it also gives us a glimpse of who we have been and where we are going. It is part of a larger journey—an evolutionary journey. Bon Voyage!

# CHAPTER 1

## The Soul's Plan

Astrology has long been used by humankind to understand himself and the universe. Early Man gazed up at the star-studded heavens and asked *Why?* Is it so surprising that he also looked to the heavens for the answer? It seems that this is what he did, and astrology supplied the answers to both deep and practical questions.

Early Man felt a connection between himself and the life all around him. He saw himself as part of a Greater Whole in which he played a part, although insignificant. As Man's intellect grew, so did his sense of importance and separateness. He fell into competition with the life forms around him and sought to control them to suit his needs. Man lost his sense of interdependence with life, and astrology became just another tool for trying to control life. But astrology, which had once represented holism, can represent it again.

We need to return to the sense of wholeness that we once had. To do this, we will have to reintegrate the lost part of ourselves that provided this sense of wholeness and harmony: our spiritual Self. In fact, if we don't do this, the human race may not survive. Our current direction is destroying our most basic resources and the earth itself. If we continue, there will be little left. Maybe this is what it will take before we realize that we can only survive by working together.

What role can astrology play in this? First, it can provide the philosophical and spiritual underpinnings that are missing. Second, it can provide guidance about how to fulfill our soul's Plan, our chosen path for this lifetime. Fulfilling our Plan is important to the Whole. First, let's examine these philosophical and spiritual underpinnings. In later chapters we will examine the chart as a means of providing individual guidance.

Astrology reveals the cyclical nature of life. It demonstrates that we are part of an orderly universe: the moon circles around the earth, the earth circles around the sun, one season follows another. Our lives imitate these cycles, being a microcosm of the great macrocosm. We can hardly notice these patterns and cycles without also conceding to the existence of a Higher Order, an organizing if not creative force—a Logos.

Astrology also suggests that life continues beyond death. What meaning would the chart have if it were not part of a larger process of evolution? And what meaning would our lives have if they were not part of a larger process of evolution? Reincarnation explains many of the mysteries of life: why people are different, why suffering exists, and why some people suffer more than others do. Reincarnation also

explains many things about the chart that cannot be explained otherwise: some signs in our charts are more developed than other signs and some patterns run deeper than just one lifetime could explain.

Astrology also offers us a glimpse of the perfection and wonder of the universe. For anyone who has used astrology for many years, it is its own proof of the existence of something higher. It verifies the unseen like nothing else, providing a bridge designed of symbols between the spiritual realm and the earthly one. Astrology is the esoteric translated into symbols.

Astrology also teaches us of holism, that all of life is interrelated and interdependent. In a holistic universe, the parts synergistically combine to form a whole. The whole is more than the sum of the parts, and each part is indispensable to the whole. So it is with our charts. At the same time, the whole is reflected in each of the parts: "As above, so below." The individual entering life reflects the energies present in the universe at the moment of birth. The energies of that moment can be read in the sky and are represented in the chart. Thus, the chart is a picture of the energies of that moment, which the individual born at that moment personifies.

These energies are like a costume donned for one lifetime to experience the lessons and develop the talents of those energies. Still, we are more than these energies; we are more than our charts. We are the sum total of all our previous lifetimes of experiences and their energy patterns (charts). In many ways, we are like actors on a stage: we know that we are more than the character that we are playing, but for the time being we dress up in our costume and play our part. The difference is that the actor has no freedom to choose his lines and actions, and we do. This is an important difference. While the actor lives the script written for him, we create the play as we go along. We have no script. Our future, our story, is created by our choices. But is that all? Is it all choice? Let's explore this further.

Just how much of our lives is predetermined and how much is created by our choices? Many of us believe that some events in life are predestined, such as certain meetings. Nevertheless, although some events may well be prearranged, how and when they take place can't be. This is determined by the circumstances and events that we create by our choices. Free will and predestination interweave in our lives. The few events in our lives that are predestined are woven into the fabric of life created by our choices and by the choices of those close to us. If you stop a moment to think about the many possible choices you and others could make, you can only conclude that the specifics of the future are not predetermined. The lessons that our soul sets out to teach us must therefore be worked into the framework already created by our choices. The soul has to "play it by ear" and wait for suitable opportunities to deliver its lessons. As a result, predicting the future is precarious, to say the least. Therefore, the Plan described in the chart can only be very general. More will be said about reading the Plan in the chapters that follow.

## **CHOOSING THE CHART**

The soul is the vehicle of the Higher Self, that part of us that we know as God. Under the Higher Self's direction, the soul arranges and delivers our lessons. It does this by choosing a chart (choosing a moment of birth) and by arranging events. The soul will reenter life when the energies will provide the necessary

lessons. A soul may have to wait decades before the energies it needs to attain its goals are available. However, sometimes, the soul might have to be born at a particular time and place when the energies (signs) aren't quite right in order to take advantage of certain opportunities (e.g., to reunite with someone who is important to the life task or the balancing of a karmic debt, or to become part of a particular family). When that is the case, reentry can be planned so that the chart reflects the energies that are needed in other ways.

One way is to reenter life with an Ascendant that would put the Sun or several other planets in the house ruled by the sign desired. For example, if Piscean lessons are needed and no planets are in Pisces at the time needed to reenter life, the soul could arrange to reenter with an Ascendant that would put the Sun or several other planets in the twelfth house (ruled by Pisces). Reentering with a Pisces Ascendant or with the Sun conjunct Neptune (the ruler of Pisces) would also add Piscean energy. Another possibility would be to reenter when the ruler of the sign that is needed is conjunct one of the angles, which would magnify its importance in the chart.

Once we are reborn, the soul must present its lessons within the context that we have created by our choices. It cannot follow an exact plan because the context is always changing with every choice we and others make. Consequently, the soul's Plan must unfold as our life unfolds, and the specifics of how our lessons are delivered are left up to the moment of delivery. Nevertheless, some things are predictable, at least at certain points in the Plan's unfolding, because once a set of circumstances is set in motion, it often plays itself out predictably. Let's look at some examples, which show how the soul works in our lives.

Let's suppose someone needs to learn patience. Besides choosing Aries or Taurus as a theme in the chart (either sign teaches patience), the soul might arrange for that person to meet someone whose Mars falls on his Uranus. This person is likely to stimulate the Uranus individual's need for change and excitement and provoke impulsive and dangerous acts. This could teach the Uranus individual to be more patient by causing him to confront the negative consequences of his impatience. Patience can be taught many ways. The point is that the soul's involvement reaches beyond choosing a chart to ongoing participation in creating whatever lessons are needed.

Here is another example, this time about a mother and her son. In a previous lifetime, the mother was the son, and the son was the mother, an exact reversal of current roles. In the past, the mother had harmed her son by neglecting him. Currently, the mother, who was the son previously, will have the choice of either caring or not caring for her son. If she doesn't care for him, the karma would not be balanced and her own growth would be marred because two wrongs truly do not make a right. She is likely to care for her child rather than neglect him, however, because of the compassion she gained from her own experience of being neglected. How, then, is the child to learn his lesson? Through love. Although it may seem that most learning comes from pain, this is not always true. In this instance, the son, who had neglected his son in the past will learn to care for others by being cared for. We learn to love by experiencing love.

The astrological chart's role in this is simple: the chart represents the personality (or energy pattern) chosen to bring about the lessons. More specifically, the personality is chosen to help balance a karmic debt, to learn basic life lessons, and to complete a life task. More will be said about the last two objectives

in later chapters. For now, let's concentrate on understanding how the chart in our example was chosen to help balance the karmic debt.

The son's soul selected a chart that would help him learn compassion and repay the debt owed the mother from harm inflicted on her in the past. To develop his compassion and desire to serve, his chart had a strong Pisces theme. And to create feelings of loyalty and responsibility toward her, he reentered life when the Moon was conjunct her Saturn.

Out of nearly infinite possibilities, the soul must find a chart to fit the karmic lessons, the basic lessons, and the life task. However, the lessons, particularly the karmic lessons, are the first priority in choosing a chart. In our earlier lifetimes this job is simplified because our lessons and our life task are usually one and the same. In these lifetimes, we are busy learning the basic lessons of life. In our later lifetimes, when the lessons and the life task are different, the life task is usually chosen to fit with the lessons. This is helpful to keep in mind when trying to identify the lessons and the life task in the chart. One way a more specific lesson or life task can be facilitated is through a chart with a strong theme, since it will not lend itself as easily to divergent paths. Those with charts with strong themes find themselves following a narrower course, allowing for greater opportunity to encounter certain people or experiences needed for their growth.

The Higher Self guides us through intuition. It speaks to us intuitively about our Plan and what we need to learn. We may or may not listen, but we all can intuit these messages to some extent. Our Higher Selves also can communicate with each other and often do when enlisting each other's help in our Plans. But because people do not always listen to their Higher Selves and because people's choices are unpredictable, each Plan is both general and flexible.

## **KARMA**

Karma is often thought of as "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." This is simplistic and doesn't take into account the complex processes involved in human growth and evolution. "As you sow, so shall you reap" encompasses the meaning of karma better, but this also doesn't do justice to the complexity of this law.

There are two misunderstandings that contribute to the confusion about karma: that we are born bad and that we must be punished for our sins. Both beliefs are related to the Garden of Eden myth, which forms the basis of Judeo-Christian thought. The concept that God punishes us is a childish conception of God. Karma is a natural law of the universe and a tool for the evolution of humankind. It is governed by love, as is all of life, and it cannot be born of retribution and punishment. To equate karma with punishment is to underestimate the Creator's wisdom and love.

A distinction should be made between lessons and karmic debts. We all have lessons that are part of our evolution. Karmic debts, on the other hand, originate from choices that caused serious injury or death. Because karmic debts often cannot be balanced in one lifetime, they must be arranged for in the soul's Plan and not just introduced when an opportunity arises, as with many other lessons. A karmic debt may well be the overriding consideration in determining when the soul will reenter life and what

astrological energies will be taken on. If a karmic debt is to be balanced in a particular lifetime, that will shape the chart, and the other lessons and the life task will be secondary to it. If a debt is significant enough, it may even be the life task. Whenever a significant debt is to be balanced, it will be apparent in the chart, although lesser ones may not.

Any act resulting in serious injury or death must be balanced. This is not necessarily done by experiencing the same but by learning whatever is necessary to prevent it from happening again and by making amends to the victim. The term "karmic debt" is at the root of some of our misconceptions about karma and how it works, since "debt" implies punishment or retribution. "Lesson" would be more fitting, since balancing a karmic debt involves learning as well as making amends to the victim. It is true that often a lesson is taught by putting the offender in the victim's shoes to instill the empathy and understanding needed to prevent a similar tragedy from recurring. Although role-reversal is a common way that karmic debts are balanced, this doesn't mean that the perpetrator becomes the victim at the hands of his or her former victim or that the function of a role-reversal is punitive. What follows are some stories that illustrate how karma works.

In a former lifetime, Celeste was abused by her father, who is now her husband. People often choose to reincarnate together to continue their relationship—even an abusive one. It would not be surprising under these circumstances if the pattern of abuse established earlier was to continue. This often happens until the one who is abused recognizes that it is detrimental. The abuse did continue until Celeste realized that she deserved more. She had to come to this realization before the balancing could take place. The soul often allows us to learn as much from our choices as possible, intervening to establish karmic repayment only after we realize a debt is owed. Once the realization has dawned, the balancing can begin immediately if circumstances allow it.

Celeste pressed charges against her husband who, as a result, was incarcerated for assault and received counseling. He was also required to pay monetary damages to her, which helped her start a new life. However, just because the husband served time and paid damages does not ensure the debt's release. This depends on the changes in the perpetrator's understanding. For one person a certain sentence might be more than enough, while for another five times that might not be enough. Needless to say, the criminal justice system often does a poor job of teaching and sometimes does more harm than good. Nevertheless, it is society's way of trying to carry out the soul's work, and often it does do this. In this case, the punishment did not teach the lesson. So, the soul will have to find other ways to further the perpetrator's understanding, which may or may not involve the victim. The karmic debt is not always balanced under circumstances that include the victim, but frequently the victim also has something to gain from further interaction with the perpetrator. In that case, the two may meet again.

Another woman, Denise, left her husband. That marriage had been necessary to complete a debt lingering from a previous lifetime. Once the debt was balanced, Denise was free to move on. Many other lifetimes had been spent with her former husband to balance the karma incurred from him killing her. He was required to take care of her during these lifetimes to gain the understanding he needed. By caring for her as an invalid, as his dying mother, as a sick child, and as a wounded soldier, he gained respect for the preciousness of life, which was the lesson. Releasing karma is not as simple as many might think. It is

never known if the prearranged circumstances will serve the intended purpose. Circumstances are arranged by the soul before life, but what is done with those circumstances is up to those involved. Sometimes a situation intended to balance karma fails. When that happens, the individuals usually disengage and try again another time.

Some think having karma with someone means staying with him or her no matter what. However, karma does not require us to stay in unhappy or unhealthy relationships. Unhappiness is often a sign that one's soul's needs are not being met, and sometimes the relationship must dissolve before those needs can be met. This is not to deny the value of commitment, but some people use their belief in karma as an excuse for not risking change. In a karmic relationship, when no further release of karma can take place under the circumstances created by the couple, it may be best for them to separate and continue on alone. Their Plans may need to be adjusted if the karmic balancing was an important element of their Plans, but that can usually be arranged.

Sometimes couples whose initial purpose for being together was karmic decide to remain together to develop their love more fully even after the karma is balanced. Many of our most meaningful and long-lasting relationships begin this way. Having shared lessons with someone creates a bond that often lasts beyond the dissolution of karma.

Tana experienced a painful death in a former lifetime at the hands of someone who broke into her home and robbed and killed her. This experience was reflected in fearful behavior, especially in her fear of being alone. She didn't have to meet her killer again in this lifetime, but her fear needed to be balanced and her killer needed to balance this incident for his own soul's growth. Whenever someone is seriously harmed, not only will the perpetrator need to learn something and make amends to the victim, but the victim will invariably need to heal and readjust his or her outlook as well. The souls of those involved must find ways to accomplish this, whether through meeting again sometime or through separate experiences.

Tana's soul sought to balance her fear and build her confidence by arranging circumstances in which she could be a heroine. When an earthquake shook her small village, she experienced an inner strength and calm that she didn't know she had. She used this to lead others and herself to safety before another quake completely destroyed the area. By arranging for her safety during the earthquake and by projecting her True Self to her then, her soul helped her experience the courage of her Being, which left a positive imprint on her psyche.

For the man who had harmed her in a former lifetime, the story was different. He needed to learn what it means to have to earn a living. In his next life, he was placed in circumstances in which he would have to work hard to provide for himself. To make it less likely that he would choose robbery again when faced with hard work, religious parents who would set an example of honest labor and accomplishment were selected.

The last story is about a man who is trying to overcome a phobia of horses. A rampaging wild horse killed him in a lifetime during the taming of the West. He died in this manner to balance his young daughter's death, which happened when he allowed her to go unsupervised into a pen of horses. On the surface, this looks like "an eye for an eye," but it proved to be just the experience that he needed to teach him about the fragility of human life. If he had appreciated this then, he would not have let his young

child wander unsupervised. Her death impressed her with the fragility of life. One would expect the father to have learned this too. But because he saw his daughter's death as her fault rather than his, he needed to learn this some other way. His soul chose the trampling to teach this. Although this may seem harsh, death is a natural part of life and has many teachings for us. We all die traumatically many, many times during our evolution. Traumatic death is a way of teaching something dramatically. From the soul's perspective, death is merely a stage in the eternity of life and another means of teaching life's lessons.

## READING THE KARMIC DEBT IN THE CHART

A karmic debt or repayment for one will be indicated in a chart if balancing the debt will shape that lifetime. But because being owed a debt is indicated in the chart by the same factors as owing one, we cannot tell from the chart alone which situation is being described. Furthermore, since many lifetimes may be needed to balance a karmic debt, the same debt may show up over many lifetimes in the charts of those involved. And, since each lifetime is likely to pay off a little more of the debt, any debt indicated in a chart will be somewhere in this process of release. Unfortunately, from the chart alone, we cannot tell the extent of the debt remaining. Nevertheless, if a debt is reflected in the chart, it will shape that life somehow. For example, if a small portion of a debt between two individuals remains, the souls may arrange for them to meet and marry to release it once and for all. Even though the debt is small, the marriage would structure and define both their lives until the debt is balanced.

What form the repayment will take depends on several things. The one who has incurred a debt is given opportunities to repay it according to his or her abilities and the needs of the one owed. The debt may be repaid through aid of some sort, monetary or material compensation, or some other means depending on the needs of the one who is owed for that particular lifetime. Obviously, if the one who is owed is already wealthy, monetary compensation may not be of sufficient value to balance the debt unless the debt is slight.

If a karmic debt or repayment is indicated, it is likely to be symbolized by challenging Saturn aspects or by several planets in the twelfth house. The aspects most likely to indicate this are Saturn squares and oppositions to the Sun or the Moon. Saturn squares or oppositions to Venus or Mars also may indicate a debt but one that will have a lesser impact on shaping that lifetime. Although these aspects are not the only indicators of a debt, this is the only generalization that can be made. The absence of these aspects does not necessarily mean that no karmic debt exists, however. Their presence just makes it likely that a karmic debt will shape that particular lifetime.

A karmic debt or repayment is likely if one or more planets are found in the twelfth house, especially if they are the Sun, Moon, Venus, Mars, Saturn, Neptune, or Pluto. If several planets are in this house, the karmic debt or repayment is likely to play a significant role in that lifetime. The planets in the twelfth house and aspects to them, the sign on the twelfth house cusp and its ruler, any other sign in the twelfth house and its ruler, the ruler's house, and aspects to the ruler provide information about the karma. Taken together, these chart factors describe the circumstances in a past life or lifetimes under which the karma was created. Saturn's house, sign, and aspects describe how this karma might be met. Although there is no

guarantee that the debt will be paid, the opportunity to repay it will be through the sign and house placement of Saturn, and signs and houses related to Saturn by aspect. The following example illustrates how a karmic debt can be read in a chart:

In the first chart, the chart of a woman, Saturn is in Virgo in the ninth house opposite the Sun in Pisces in the third house and square the Moon in Gemini in the seventh house. The twelfth house is empty with Scorpio on its cusp and its ruler in Leo in the eighth house. If there were planets in the twelfth house, the ruler's placement would be less significant. Given this, the karmic debt may have involved an intimate relationship in which control was an issue (Scorpio ruling the twelfth house and its ruler in Leo in Scorpio's house). It cannot be known who dominated whom until this hypothesis is checked out with the person to whom the chart belongs, who may be able to identify this relationship. In this case, the chart belongs to the one owed the debt. Next, by looking at Saturn's placement in the ninth house in Virgo, we can form some hypotheses about how this karma might be balanced. The ninth house rules long distance travel, higher education, philosophy, and religious thought. The debtor might repay her by taking her on a trip, putting her through college, or expanding her outlook or ideas. In fact, the debtor, currently a man, either gave to her or had the opportunity to give to her in all the above ways. Saturn's sign indicates other opportunities through which the karma can be balanced. In this case, the debtor worked at menial tasks (Saturn in Virgo) to provide for her. Saturn's aspects also describe the circumstances in which the karma is likely to be balanced. In the woman's chart, Saturn is opposite her Pisces Sun and Mercury in the third house and square her Gemini Moon in the seventh house. As it happened, the man and the woman met in high school through a brother (third house) and were married (seventh house).

The man's chart provides additional information about balancing the debt. Although he does not have Saturn square or opposite his Sun or Moon, he does have Pluto conjunct his Moon and opposite his Venus, the ruler of his Descendant. Venus is in his third house, indicating the high school relationship; and the Pluto/Moon conjunction is in his ninth house, portraying the method of repayment mentioned earlier. Saturn is in Libra, which also rules his twelfth house, indicating possible karma pertaining to a relationship. Venus, the ruler of his twelfth house and his Descendant is in Aquarius, indicating her abrupt departure in this lifetime (Uranus, the ruler of Aquarius, is known for sudden disruptions and upheavals), which caused him considerable pain (Pluto/Moon opposite Venus). So, his chart is more descriptive of the situation that delivered the lesson than hers because he was more affected by it than she was.

The next example involves a man, now deceased, who was married to a woman to whom he owed a debt. The husband needed to learn something, which was only possible within the context of a relationship with the individual whom he had injured in the past, who was now his wife. At the same time, it was important that his wife receive financial remuneration from him to bolster her confidence and pride, which had been damaged by their previous encounter. The relationship was difficult for both, yet they stayed together for over thirty years. When a karmic debt exists between two people, it creates a strong bond until the debt is balanced. If a relationship is karmic and requires two people to remain together, either they will stay together without question or circumstances will be such that separation is

inconceivable. If the situation no longer allows for the debt to be balanced, either their sense of commitment will change or circumstances will change or both.

Aries rules the man's twelfth house and its ruler is in Capricorn in the tenth house. Saturn is widely opposite his Sun and square his Moon, which is conjunct Pluto. This configuration supports the possibility of a karmic debt. As we saw in the previous example and as we will see in the chapter on aspects, Pluto as well as Saturn often points to a karmic debt. With Pluto aspecting the Moon, the debt is likely to involve the wife (if the individual is a man) or the mother. With Aries ruling the twelfth house, its ruler (Mars) in Capricorn (ruled by Saturn), and Pluto involved with Saturn and the two luminaries, the event in the former lifetime probably involved violence and death. This chart describes a debt in many of its factors, making its significance in that lifetime all the more likely.

The Moon/Pluto conjunction and the Sun (both in aspect to Saturn) fall in the man's second and sixth houses respectively, indicating that the debt is likely to be paid by working hard and providing material comforts to the one to whom he owes the debt. Since this debt is apparently significant, it is not surprising that the remainder of his chart provides the energy and drive necessary to make a good livelihood. Mars in Capricorn in the tenth house provides a drive for achievement, security, and status. Taurus rising and the Moon in the second house provide a drive for material comforts and the persistence to obtain them. The Sun and Venus in the sixth house provide devotion to a medical profession. Finally, Jupiter in the fourth house ensures commitment to family.

If these examples alone are not convincing, study people in your own life. Karma cannot be interpreted easily from the chart without knowing specifics about the individual and without excellent intuition. If it can't be done skillfully, it shouldn't be attempted. This information is not presented with the expectation that you will be able to delineate the karma of every chart but to show you how karma works and is represented in the chart. If you talk with others about the karma that you see in their charts, be careful not to sound negative or preachy. The only purpose for giving karmic information to others is to increase their understanding of their lessons and their life purpose. If it doesn't serve this end, then don't reveal it. This subject must be handled very sensitively.

## **DELINEATING THE TWELFTH HOUSE**

The following descriptions are offered to help delineate the twelfth house and any karma that may be represented there. The goal is not to uncover the specifics behind the karma but to get a sense of what needs to be learned. Please keep in mind that these descriptions will not apply to every chart. Not everyone has a karmic debt or one that can be seen in the chart. The following interpretations assume that a karmic debt is indicated, specifically by challenging Saturn or Pluto aspects. Also, keep in mind that the twelfth-house factors may describe something that happened to the person rather than something for which he or she is karmically responsible. The rest of the chart will provide clues about whether the person owes a debt or is due one.

The description following each sign applies if the sign rules the twelfth house, if the sign's ruling planet is in the twelfth house, or if the ruler of the sign on the twelfth house cusp is in that sign or in that

sign's natural house. (E.g., the first house is Aries' natural house, the second house is Taurus's, and so on.) If several planets are in the twelfth house, the sign descriptions will have to be intuitively synthesized. These descriptions are only guidelines. You will also have to use your intuition, analyze the rest of the chart, and talk to the person to whom the chart belongs to arrive at an interpretation of the twelfth house.

## **Aries**

When Aries is related to the twelfth house, the karmic debt may stem from injury or death from a violent act, often the result of unleashed anger or rage. The cause of the rage may be described by other planets or signs involved with the twelfth house. If Saturn or Capricorn is also involved, a death is likely. Because Aries usually does not represent accidental but intentional violence, this sign can indicate some of the most difficult karma. But because karma this serious takes many lifetimes to balance and because it may be at any stage in this process, the debt indicated may be large or small.

Violent acts require a variety of lessons depending on the cause of the act, and a chart will be chosen accordingly. When controlling anger is the lesson, a Taurus, Virgo, or Capricorn Moon may be present; Saturn may be square or conjunct Mars; fire may be absent; the Sun or Mars may be in hard aspect to one or more of the outer planets; or earth and air will be emphasized to add distance to the feelings. The possibilities are in no way exhausted by this list.

When we are enraged, we often lose sight of the value of life and our potential for destruction. Therefore, gaining an appreciation for life's preciousness and fragility may be another lesson when Aries is related to the twelfth house. When it is, the Moon's nodes are often found in the twelfth and sixth houses, and the lesson is learned through a life task of service in the healing professions.

The proper use of one's energy and will may be another lesson with Aries related to the twelfth house. In this case, the goal would not only be controlling one's anger but also gaining awareness of one's needs so that anger would not accumulate in the first place. A chart with an emphasis in Scorpio to increase introspection would help with this lesson. An emphasis in the air signs to add objectivity would also make a healthy use of emotion more likely, as would family members who could serve as positive role models.

For someone who has acted violently in a past life, respect for life in general may be lacking and an appreciation for the value of being alive may be needed. If this is the case, the soul's approach may be to teach the beauty and pleasure of life by providing circumstances in the next life that are pleasant, happy, and abundant. An environment that is peaceful, loving, and respectful of life is often what is needed to balance a violent act in a former lifetime. To help with this, Jupiter may be conjunct the Sun, Ascendant, or Moon, adding protectiveness and good fortune. Or the chart may be favorably aspected in other ways.

## **Taurus**

When this sign is related to the twelfth house, stealing, giving too little, or giving too much may be responsible for a karmic debt. Greed leading to criminal acts that caused injury or death is the most serious possibility. Other possibilities are waste or frivolousness that caused suffering through deprivation,

or selfishness that harmed someone like in the story "Cinderella." Injury caused by encouraging gluttony, spoiling someone, or failing to instill proper values are still other possibilities. These last offenses may not take as long to balance as something more severe but some sort of balancing is still likely.

When Taurus is related to the twelfth house, the lesson also may be about values. Those whose greed causes them to steal may need to learn that material things do not bring happiness, love, or fulfillment. One way the soul teaches this is by arranging for the individual to have more money than he or she can ever enjoy—coupled with loneliness. This demonstrates the emptiness of material things, especially if love is not present amidst the wealth.

Sharing is another lesson that might be in order. Although a degree of spiritual development is necessary before we are capable of selfless giving, generosity can be taught. One way this is done is through a watery chart, which increases empathy and sensitivity. Loving family members also help by modeling generosity and providing the experience of being given to. Paradoxically, we do not learn to share by being forced to as much as by being given to. When our own needs are met, we willingly give to others. Therefore, the soul will not usually use a neglectful or unloving environment to teach unselfishness but a loving one in which all the primary needs are met.

Those who suffered from gluttony or inflicted it on others in a former lifetime may need to learn the benefits of moderation. A chart that is conservative, frugal, self-disciplined, and self-sacrificing can be used to teach this. Any combination of Capricorn, Virgo, and Pisces are likely to be helpful. However, Pisces' lack of discipline may not be helpful to some. The soul also may choose a family with these characteristics or one that is not prosperous.

## **Gemini**

When Gemini is related to the twelfth house, misuse of the power of communication or the careless use of a vehicle may have caused someone harm in a former lifetime. Intent is important in determining the extent of the karma. Unintentional or inadvertent harm is likely to require only minimal karmic balancing. One possibility is that the individual spread injurious rumors, either true or false. If he or she was in a position of power with access to many people, the karma could be extensive. A prime example would be using the media to damage someone's reputation. If abuse of power is involved, Pluto or Scorpio is likely to be related to the twelfth house in addition to Mercury (Gemini).

Correct use of the power of communication is taught several ways. One is by inhibiting the individual's ability to communicate, which demonstrates the power of the word. For this, Saturn may be in Gemini, in the third house, or aspecting Mercury. Another is by putting someone who abused power in an influential position. Then, if he or she abuses power again, the consequences would be great. Or perhaps he or she might be on the receiving end of someone else's abuse of power.

If an injury or death resulted from the careless use of a vehicle because of a lack of responsibility, poor judgment, negligence, carelessness, or indecision, balancing will probably be necessary. However, not everyone operating a vehicle that injures someone incurs karma. If karma is incurred, what is needed to balance it depends on the cause of the accident. If greater responsibility, caution, or judgment is needed,

Capricorn may be present in the chart. If greater decisiveness is needed, fixed signs may be present. The soul has ways of developing these traits, although they usually come as a matter of course with age and spiritual development.

## **Cancer**

When Cancer is related to the twelfth house, the karma probably involved a family member. Since the family is one of the main arenas in which life's lessons are taught, karma is often incurred with family members. The family is also the most common arena for releasing a karmic debt because of the mutual dependency and closeness demanded by these relationships. When Mars or Pluto are involved with the twelfth house, the incident is likely to have involved violence and physical harm, perhaps even sexual abuse. Otherwise, emotional abuse or neglect is likely.

If the chart is the perpetrator's, compassion and empathy are needed, and the chart will support this. To teach this, the perpetrator may experience dependency or powerlessness in some form. Retardation, disabilities, and mental illness are just a few of the more extreme conditions that lend themselves to teaching this. There also are milder ways of teaching compassion and empathy, of course. The soul will choose circumstances that fit the individual. If the chart belongs to the victim, it will support his or her healing.

## **Leo**

When Leo is related to the twelfth house, the incident responsible for the karmic debt probably involved an abuse of the individual's influence or power, possibly for his or her own advancement. If the incident involved self-advancement at someone else's expense, a greater appreciation for the needs of others is in order. To help balance a tendency toward self-service, the chart might be oriented toward service.

Another possibility is that the individual used his or her power to control others. In this case, a respect for autonomy and freedom may be taught by an experience of being controlled. The inhumanity and immorality of controlling others becomes obvious when the tables are turned. Regardless of how it seems, this is not retribution but an efficient way of readjusting someone's attitude.

The victim who has Leo related to the twelfth house may suffer from feelings of inadequacy and a tendency to give his or her power away. This is frequently the result of having been oppressed or controlled by others. In that case, the rest of the chart will support the development of ego-strength and confidence.

## **Virgo**

When Virgo is related to the twelfth house, enslavement or mistreatment of someone under one's service may be behind the karmic debt. Enslavement must have caused physical or psychological damage for it to require balancing, however. Not all slave owners, for instance, are karmically indebted to their slaves. The

purpose of karma is to balance a wrong attitude or action. If a slave owner's intentions and treatment of his slaves were good, then little or no karmic balancing would be necessary. If not, the karmic requirement could be great.

A common way to balance this is to make the offender a slave or servant, which affords him or her the experience of this perspective. Sometimes, however, this only reinforces the individual's disdain for servants. If that happens, several more lifetimes of servitude may be needed before the lesson is learned. Some people are susceptible to seeing themselves as superior to others no matter what their role. They are both the ones most likely to mistreat others when in a position of power and those hardest to teach this lesson to. We all have certain lessons that come harder than others.

The victim with Virgo ruling this house may suffer from low self-esteem and difficulty being the master of his or her destiny. When this is the case, the chart will be chosen to counteract this.

## **Libra**

When Libra is related to the twelfth house, the karmic debt is likely to have involved a marriage or other partnership. If it was a business partnership, one person's dishonesty, abusive treatment, or irresponsibility may have harmed the other. If it was a marriage, one of the partners may have been harmed because of the other's behavior. What the balancing will entail depends on the offense and why it happened.

If selfishness or greed was responsible for the injury, the rest of the chart will reflect the need to be more generous and cooperative (if the chart is the debtor's), with Libra and Pisces likely themes. Chart factors that might be chosen to teach this are: little or no fire; many oppositions; Neptune, Venus, or the Moon conjunct an angle; a Libra Sun or Libra rising; or the Sun in the seventh house. Other circumstances also may be arranged to teach this, such as being born into a large family where sharing and cooperation is a necessity.

## **Scorpio**

When Scorpio is related to the twelfth house, a karmic debt resulting from emotional or sexual abuse is possible. If the chart belongs to the perpetrator, he or she will need to learn empathy, compassion, and love. If it is the victim's, he or she will need to heal. Another possibility when Scorpio is related to the twelfth house is past business dealings that pursued power and wealth with little or no regard for others. Large corporations who take advantage of people in impoverished countries would be an example of this, or the small businessperson who may regularly participate in graft, tax evasion, or petty theft.

One way the soul teaches empathy and compassion is through certain signs, most notably Pisces and Cancer. The soul also may arrange for the perpetrator to experience powerlessness and dependency to discourage him or her from taking advantage of others again. Although this sounds punitive, it is often the only way to teach empathy and compassion.

## **Sagittarius**

When this sign is related to the twelfth house, it may indicate a karmic debt resulting from an irresponsible or careless act. In particular, it may indicate a mistake made while traveling or exploring that resulted in injury or death. Or, Sagittarian self-centeredness may have led to neglecting the needs of others and inadvertently harming them. Since the harm caused in these instances is rarely intentional, usually the balancing simply entails learning to be more careful and responsible.

Life has a way of teaching us what we need to learn through remorse, other people, the criminal justice system, or a repetition of the incident. If greater care, common sense, and responsibility are not learned through these ways, they are taught easily enough through the earth signs, aspects to Saturn, and a respite from Sagittarian lifetimes. Therefore, if a chart with Sagittarius related to the twelfth house shows signs of a karmic debt as well as strength in earth or a strong Saturn, it is likely to have been chosen to balance irresponsibility or carelessness. On the other hand, if the chart does not support caution and responsibility, it may mean that the individual experienced the results of someone else's irresponsibility in a former lifetime. In that case, repayment may be received in that lifetime.

## **Capricorn**

When this sign is related to the twelfth house, it may indicate a karmic debt involving a death. Being responsible for someone's death is as serious as any offense. However, whether or not it was intentional is important in determining the extent of the debt and the lesson needed to balance it. The planets in the house, the twelfth house ruler's house and sign, and aspects to these planets may describe the circumstances surrounding the death.

The subject of killing brings up the question of whether executioners, soldiers, and abortionists incur karma. Some karma is incurred in each of these instances, but these forms of killing are not on the same level as murder. Nevertheless, we incur societal karma by belonging to a society that allows these things. Of these three types of killing, abortion is the least serious because in almost every case the soul has not entered the body yet.

When someone is killed, the person responsible may need to gain an appreciation for the preciousness of human life. One way of teaching this is for the person to experience his or her own life cut short or to lose a loved one. If the death was unintentional, what is needed depends on the individual and what caused the death.

Those who were killed may benefit from fire in their charts to give them more courage and confidence. Violent or sudden deaths invariably leave the victim with a sense of vulnerability and distrust. As a result, victims' charts are not likely to have a strong Capricorn theme, which would only increase their fear. By studying the rest of the chart and using our imaginations and intuition, we can often determine whether the chart belongs to the perpetrator or the victim.

## **Aquarius**

When this sign is related to the twelfth house, it may indicate a karmic debt resulting from sudden, accidental injury or death caused by impatience or a lack of judgment. Many of these kinds of mistakes never need balancing because the negative consequences teach what needs to be learned. However some people, especially those who blame others for their mistakes, may need further lessons and a chart that encourages caution and self-restraint. In that case, the rest of the chart will bear that out. On the other hand, if the chart belongs to the victim of someone else's careless action, the rest of the chart will encourage confidence and courage rather than caution and patience.

## **Pisces**

When this sign is related to the twelfth house, emotional damage or neglect may be responsible for a karmic debt. With Pisces, the emotional damage is not likely to have been inflicted intentionally or violently. More likely, it resulted from not being able to provide care because of mental illness, physical disability, mental retardation, or drug or alcohol addiction.

The balancing depends on what was underlying the neglect. If it was due to drug or alcohol addiction, being born to alcoholic parents is a common remedy. This provides an opportunity for developing empathy and for facing this problem again in order to overcome it once and for all. If more ego-strength or practical abilities are needed, an earthy chart will help. However, because ego-strength is a function of soulage, the individual may need more experience with life before being able to cope with the world. If a physical or mental handicap was responsible for the neglect, the situation is more complex. The soul analyzes each situation to determine what is needed.

Victims of neglect will have to learn to see themselves as other than victims. To accomplish this, the chart and childhood circumstances must be chosen carefully to balance feelings of unworthiness. A loving and attentive family coupled with a fiery chart and a favorably placed Jupiter for ease can do much to offset such damage.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gina Lake is a spiritual teacher who is devoted to helping others awaken and live in the moment through her books, online courses, and intensives. She is the author of numerous books, including *Embracing the Now*, *Radical Happiness*, *Trusting Life*, *Living in the Now*, *Return to Essence*, *What About Now? Anatomy of Desire*, *Loving in the Moment*, and *Getting Free*. The focus of her writing and teaching is on helping people be in the present moment and live the happy and fulfilled life that is possible and on shedding light on the programming that interferes with awakening to one's true nature. She is also a gifted intuitive with a master's degree in counseling psychology and over twenty years experience supporting people in their spiritual growth. Her website offers information about her books, free e-books, book excerpts, a monthly newsletter, a blog, and audio and video recordings.

<http://www.radicalhappiness.com>

### *Books by Gina Lake*

(Available in paperback, Kindle, and other e-book formats.)

***Trusting Life: Overcoming the Fear and Beliefs That Block Peace and Happiness.*** Fear and distrust keep us from living the life we were meant to live, and they are the greatest hurdles to seeing the truth about life—that it is good, abundant, supportive, and potentially joyous. *Trusting Life* is a deep exploration into the mystery of who we are, why we suffer, why we don't trust life, and how to become more trusting. It offers evidence that life is trustworthy and tools for overcoming the fear and beliefs that keep us from falling in love with life.

***Loving in the Moment: Moving from Ego to Essence in Relationships.*** Having a truly meaningful relationship requires choosing love over your conditioning, that is, your ideas, fantasies, desires, images, and beliefs. *Loving in the Moment* describes how to move beyond conditioning, judgment, anger, romantic illusions, and differences to the experience of love and Oneness with another. It explains how to drop into the core of your Being, where Oneness and love exist, and be with others from there.

***Embracing the Now: Finding Peace and Happiness in What Is.*** The Now—this moment—is the true source of happiness and peace and the key to living a fulfilled and meaningful life. *Embracing the Now* is a collection of essays that can serve as daily reminders of the deepest truths. Full of clear insight and wisdom, it explains how the mind keeps us from being in the moment, how to move into the Now and stay there, and what living from the Now is like. It also explains how to overcome stumbling blocks to being in the Now, such as fears, doubts, misunderstandings, judgments, distrust of life, desires, and other conditioned ideas that are behind human suffering.

***Radical Happiness: A Guide to Awakening*** provides the keys to experiencing the happiness that is ever-present and not dependent on circumstances. This happiness doesn't come from getting what you want, but from wanting what is here now. It comes from realizing that who you think you are is not who you really are. This is a radical perspective! *Radical Happiness* describes the nature of the egoic state of consciousness and how it interferes with happiness, what awakening and enlightenment are, and how to live in the world after awakening.

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***Anatomy of Desire: How to Be Happy Even When You Don't Get What You Want*** will help you discriminate between your Heart's desires and the ego's and to relate to the ego's desires in a way that reduces suffering and increases joy. By pointing out the myths about desire that keep us tied to our ego's desires and the suffering they cause, *Anatomy of Desire* will help you be happy regardless of your desires and whether you are attaining them. So it is also about spiritual freedom, or liberation, which comes from following the Heart, our deepest desires, instead of the ego's desires. It is about becoming a lover of life rather than a desirer.

***Return to Essence: How to Be in the Flow and Fulfill Your Life's Purpose*** describes how to get into the flow and stay there and how to live life from there. Being in the flow and not being in the flow are two very different states. One is dominated by the ego-driven mind, which is the cause of suffering, while the other is the domain of Essence, the Divine within each of us. You are meant to live in the flow. The flow is the experience of Essence—your true self—as it lives life through you and fulfills its purpose for this life.

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