



Astrological perspective on health and life

An interview with Brendan Feeley, M.A.

Brendan Feeley practices Jyotish and Ayurveda in the Washington, D.C., area.

Conscious Health Institute (CHI): Tell us a little about what you do professionally.

Feeley: My practice and interests are an extension of my spiritual path which I began in 1975 while I was living in London, England. I followed the path of Bhakti yoga. For the past 32 years I've been steeped in the spirituality and philosophy of Vedic India and later that extended itself into Jyotish and Ayurveda and these are the primary skills that I use in my work with my clients.

In the 1990s I completed a graduate degree in archetypal psychology, a subject that takes psychology out of the personal and brings it into relationship with the soul and archetypal forces. The implication here is that our life issues (problems and pathologies) are not entirely personal but arise because of our incapacity to relate to that which is non-personal. This perspective is very much in line with my Vedic astrology and even adds a great deal of color to these subjects.

I practice Jyotish and Ayurveda, two different modalities but in truth they are related. 'Jyoti' means light and 'Isha' means God and Jyotisha means the light of God. According to the tradition, Jyotish reveals God's light or God's intention for us through the influence of the grahas (planets.) Jyotish or Vedic Indian astrology has its origins in the scriptures of ancient Vedic India as does Ayurveda. Ayurveda is a comprehensive system of healing that includes lifestyle, meditation, yoga, diet,

herbal therapies and massage and it has become popular in the west over the past ten years.

CHI: You practice a couple of different approaches (or what some call modalities.) How do you see their relationship and/or usefulness?

Feeley: Jyotish and Ayurveda are ancient subjects and as I said they have their origin in the eternal Vedas. The Vedas are the ancient teachings of Vedic

India and they were brought into the world by the Rishis of old. We are told that these Rishis or Seers were highly evolved personalities that descended from the Divine world to impart this knowledge to the human beings and that is why they are said to be eternal. In other words, they were not invented by

the human mind.

Now, this cannot be fully appreciated unless one has studied these subjects in depth. Immediately it becomes clear that the ordinary human mind, as we know it today, is incapable of inventing this kind of knowledge. For the past 2000 years philosophers have struggled with the nature of reality and even though the writings of these great thinkers are truly brilliant, they do not touch the elegance and simplicity of these ancient teachings. These teachings bring into relationship the individual, the soul and the Cosmos, and this brings elegance and beauty into our lives.

According to Jyotish, we are in the grip of the planets

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or grahas as they are called, and in our Western world, we might describe these influences as archetypal forces that shape our lives. Our task is to “ungrip” or differentiate ourselves from these forces and if we refuse to do this we remain unconscious. It’s as if the planets have an intention for each of us and this manifests as destiny in the various areas of our lives. Jyotish is well known for its ability to predict relationships, marriage, childbirth, financial well-being, career talents, career changes and opportunities, as well as the vicissitudes in the various areas of life, but here I’m going to focus on its integration with Ayurveda.

Both Jyotish and Ayurveda describe how the cosmic forces, symbolized by the nine planets, bring into relationship the individual and his destiny and it takes off from this point. Ayurvedic anatomy, physiology and pathology, is described in terms of the five elements and three cosmic forces referred to as doshas – vata, pitta and kapha. The planets, the signs, the elements and the doshas all bear a direct relationship and thus we have a fully integrated personal cosmology that informs us about our personal life/destiny and our susceptibility to angst and disease. Ayurveda tells us about the lifestyle we should follow and gives us the dietary and herbal regiment so that we remain happy and balanced. Through Jyotish we can select gems or mantras, or just sound psychological insight that can take the problem out of the personal and into the universal.

CHI: Do you have experience where these practices have really worked?

Feeley: Jyotish can give us excellent guidance in practically all areas of life. In my practice, parents consult me for guidance in the area of child development, couples consult me for compatibility studies, birth of children and guidance on marital difficulties, individu-

als consult me for guidance on health matters, career talents and opportunities, problems in the work place, or in matters of litigation. Jyotish can be uncanny in its accuracy if the birth time is known to be correct and in many instances, even a “known” birth time has to be rectified for predictive accuracy. Clients return again and again and this is testimony to the validity of the science.

In my experience, people find consolation and relief when the astrologer is able to see the complexity and its timing in the chart. Understanding is at least 50 percent of the work towards healing.

I regard Jyotish and Ayurveda to be brother/sister

subjects and Vedic astrology is indispensable in health matters. It can give us insight that is truly unique in terms of severity and timing.

CHI: What is your experience of the client population that you work with using your system of medicine and astrology? For example, do you find that easy for them to apply with positive results, since it seems to involve self will and changes in lifestyle?

Feeley: Overcoming a health problem always requires commitment on the part of the individual. I said earlier that Ayurveda offers nutritional advice, herbal therapies, massage, yoga and meditation. Advice has to be given according to the capacities and inclinations of the individual and those who commit themselves to their health goals can often experience excellent results as well as a dramatic change in lifestyle.

CHI: I am particularly interested in your practice of astrology. Can you tell us about that and how you see its usefulness in helping people with life and life problems—particularly with their health?

Feeley: We are talking here about the influence of

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cosmic energies and not the diagnosis of disease and Vedic astrology is excellent in revealing the health patterns and the timing of their manifestation. As you know, the first task in Ayurveda is to understand the physical and mental constitution in terms of vata, pitta and kapha and the three gunas. The planets and signs have their nature in terms of the doshas and the gunas and the predominant influences are seen accordingly.

In Ayurveda, the digestive fire or Agni is the first aspect of the individual's health to be examined. Here again, the tools available to us in Jyotish give us insight into the condition of the digestive fire that is very useful. Some people are born with a very weak Agni and the strength of our Agni has a great deal to do with immunity.

CHI: Can you please give us an practical example of how a reading (chart) has (or can) help a person?

Feeley: Additionally, the planets and signs represent the organs, dhatus/tissues, and srotas/channels in the body and much can be learned about the underlying energetic influencing the body and this has a direct link to diet and herbal therapeutics.

A chart reading can give a very accurate assessment of the constitution or prakriti of the individual as well as the timing of health problems.

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CHI: Many people have stereotypical ideas about astrology in most western contemporary societies. How do you feel about that and how to you respond to a person who feels that is not a science and not useful to his or her life?

Feeley: I'm not sure that it really matters what we think about astrology or the cosmos. Our understanding is very limited and the ego wants to maintain its

position of authority and is very threatened by any power center whether it be God, cosmos or even mother nature. This of course is the source of our disease.

CHI: If someone does know the exact time of birth, does that stop the astrologer's ability to read a chart in order to understand a person's health problem?

Feeley: An experienced astrologer has no difficulty in rectifying the birth time and this should be the first task in any consultation if the birth time accuracy is unclear.

About the Conscious Health Institute

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