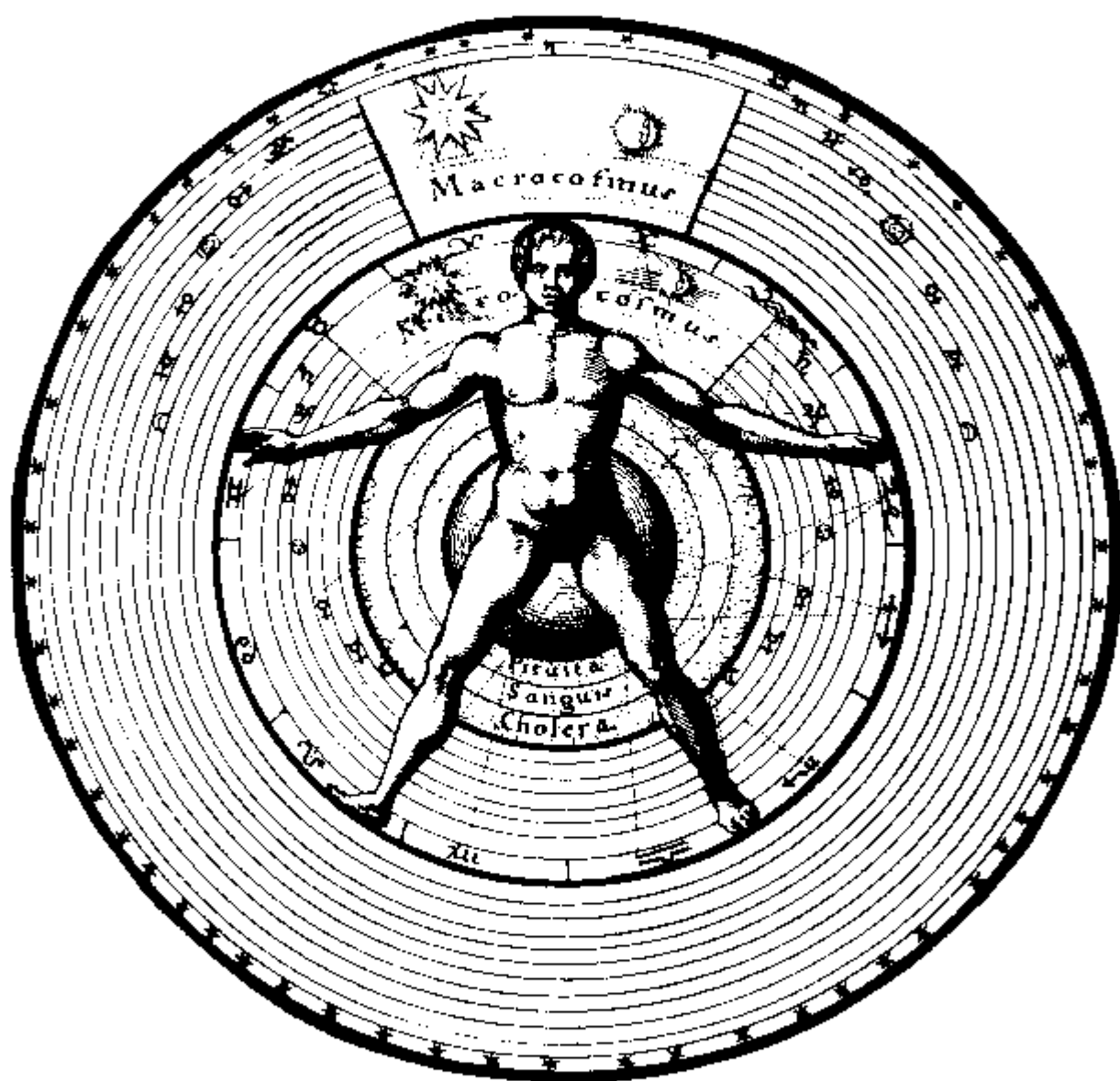


ESSAYS IN MEDICAL ASTROLOGY



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THE INCONJUNCT & SEMI-SEXTILE ASPECTS IN MEDICAL ASTROLOGY

The INCONJUNCT and the SEMI-SEXTILE aspects of 150 degrees and 30 degrees respectively continue to be planetary aspects that are only partially understood by far too many astrologers. The inconjunct is probably credited by now by most astrologers as being a so-called *major* aspect; the semi-sextile is still considered by the majority to be just one of these *minor* aspects that really don't require too much attention unless you intend to do a very detailed analysis of the chart. Let's be truthful. How much attention do you *really* pay to semi-sextiles when you do a delineation for someone? Certainly not as much as you pay to squares, oppositions, and conjunctions - right?! Well, if you're going to do a medical analysis of a natal chart you're going to have to modify your thinking about them somewhat, because they're not as minor as you might think.

Right from the start we've got a semantic problem with this 30-degree aspect that we call a "semi-sextile." Sextiles have a reputation of being one of the *good guys* in your chart; like in the movies, they wear a "white hat!" We use that sophisticated term for them - "benefic." So, when you call something a "semi-" sextile (semi meaning half or a part of) the term automatically implies that it must be "half a good guy." In other words, *half as benefic* as a sextile, and a *quarter as benefic* as a trine. Isn't that what "semi-sextile" implies? So, if it's only $\frac{1}{2}$ th as strong as a trine it must therefore *ipso facto* be "minor" in comparison to the beneficence of a trine!

However, there's also another way of looking at this 30-degree aspect. In geometry we speak of complimentary angles, and supplementary angles (two angles which when totaled together equal 180 degrees). The semi-sextile can also be considered therefore to be the supplementary angle of the inconjunct ($150 + 30 = 180$). Most authorities consider the inconjunct aspect to be rather "malefic", and if this is so, then perhaps we'd better consider the possibility that the "semi-sextile" is not half a sextile but rather the compliment of the inconjunct and therefore *malefic* - even, perhaps as malefic as the inconjunct!

Actually, I wish we astrologers could cast these terms "malefic" and "benefic" out of our astrological vocabularies. I prefer to use the terms "liability" and "asset" respectively for them. The so-called goodness or badness of anything in astrology is just a value judgement that we place upon a phenomenon that "just is", and we all recognize that assets for some people can be their greatest liabilities, and liabilities can be their greatest assets, in terms of the evolutionary process that we are all going through in this lifetime.

When it comes to medical astrology, if we can be truly as objective as possible and just observe how certain aspects incline us in certain directions, then it becomes apparent that semi-sextiles and inconjuncts carry as a part of their essence a *potential* for medical problems if they are not properly handled.

Let's look at the semi-sextile more closely for a moment and see if there is not some justification for considering the possibility that it might pose some problems for us. As we traverse the zodiac, from sign to sign, and consider the characteristics of each sign, we soon discover that in moving from one sign to

its next adjacent sign, that in every case there is a rejection by the forward sign of some characteristic(s) of the previous sign. Scorpio, for example tends by its inherent nature to be very private and secretive. The next sign, Sagittarius, rejects these qualities in favor of being totally open. Sag's "let it all hang out": Scorpio's "don't let anything hang out!" And, when we move from Sagittarius to Capricorn, we again run into Capricorn's "stone wall" attitude of keeping thoughts and private things really private. There's common area of agreement here between Scorpio and Capricorn, which is why these signs tend to get on rather well together.

In the vast majority of cases, where you have a semi-sextile, they are in adjacent signs, and what semi-sextiles signify and represent is this very problem that I have just been talking about. It is the problem of rejection of the quality of one sign for the qualities of the other. You're forced to make a choice between a set of characteristics you favor and a set of characteristics that you reject. And, if you hover in indecision for too long, this causes tension - and tension ultimately results in medical problems if it is not resolved in some amicable fashion. If you can accept my line of reasoning, then you can accept my premise that semi-sextiles carry with them the potential for medical problems if you cannot, or refuse, to deal with the choice that is required by this aspect. Semi-sextiles are definitely not half a sextile, in other words.

Now, what about the inconjunct? One of the primary principles of astrology, and certainly of medical astrology, is that there are not twelve individual signs, but instead six sign pairs composed of any sign plus its opposite sign; e.g., Aries-Libra. If we think of each pair as a single entity having its polar opposite extremes, then any planet located just one sign away from this pair is semi-sextile one end and inconjunct the other. Let's carry the example we just explained one step further. That is, each adjacent sign pair in its basic characteristics represents a rejection of certain characteristics of the sign pair just preceding it! If you look at things in this manner then there is very little difference between the semi-sextile and inconjunct. They both operate in about the same manner. They represent a potential conflict, with its resulting tension, between these conflicting characteristics, one that must be resolved for there is a potential for dis-ease here if it is not. Too much prolonged tension reduces the body's defenses and uses up its reservoir of energy.

Several astrologers over the years have pointed out, quite correctly, that at the time of death there are usually several inconjuncts present between transiting planets and natal planetary positions. On the other hand, I've never heard anyone say that there are a lot of semi-sextiles present too, which there usually also are. Based upon what I've just said, at the time of death wouldn't it be logical to expect these aspects to be present? Death does represent the ultimate depletion of the body's energies. It is often no longer able to defend itself from outside attack nor repair itself from within. This happens whether one eventually dies from a lingering disease (like cancer) or whether one dies suddenly (as from a heart attack). Certainly a certain amount of tension is desirable to keep us moving and doing those things we ought to be doing, just so long as this tension does not exceed the body's capability to restore its used energy and resist attack. The key, then, to maintaining a healthy body is to try to determine how much tension your body can handle before you exceed this "point

of no return", and then make sure that you stay on the safe side of this point. Usually, when you exceed this point for very long your body will be rather quick to tell you you have passed it!

Now, before we go on to our next point, let's briefly summarize what we've said thus far about the semi-sextile and inconjunct aspects. First, they are one and the same, they are both potential tension aspects and thus, they are indicators of potential disease and ill-health if the tension is not handled correctly and dispelled. Tension depletes the body's energy supply, lowers its defenses (its immune system) and slows down any repair processes going on (because the tension is burning up energy and resources needed for this repair). A certain amount of tension is necessary if we are to progress, learn and grow. Too much is unhealthy. Maintaining a healthy body therefore requires that you first recognize how much tension you can safely handle, and then make sure that you do not exceed this point.

Whenever we are faced with a decision or a problem to be solved - and we must face quite a number of them every day of our lives - tension is created. Let's take a very simple example: your body tells you you are hungry, so you must now make a decision - what to eat. If you're hungry, and circumstances prevent you from eating right at that moment, what happens? You get tense and irritable. You may not express it; you may lock it up inside; you may try to repress this hunger as we sometimes do when dieting; but the longer you wait to eat the more tense and irritable you become. There's only one way to release or dispell this tension; by solving this problem, by eating! Tension is relieved by solving the problem, whatever that problem might be.

Few of us are capable of solving each and every problem we face. Sometimes we say, this problem is so minor I guess I'll just have to live with it. This does not relieve the tension. We may forget completely about the problem. The tension remains, doing all of those negative things to our body that we don't need or want to happen to it. Or, how many times have you heard someone say, if you don't know how to solve a problem, do nothing; the problem may go away and get solved by itself, or by someone else. The problem may in fact disappear, but since you've had no hand in its solution the tension doesn't disappear. You've still got it. And then several days, or weeks later, you say to someone: "I feel so tense and nervous and I just can't understand why."

In astrology these three ways of handling or dealing with problems is symbolized in the sign quadruplicities:

- THE CARDINAL SIGNS - Identification of the problem, and dealing with it directly
- THE FIXED SIGNS - Identification of the problem, followed by procrastination, minimization of its importance, and trying to live with it instead of solving it
- THE MUTABLE SIGNS - Inability or unwillingness to admit there is a problem in the first place, followed by avoidance whenever possible

The last two are the greatest tension producers. Now, put this principle aside for a moment. We'll come back again to it shortly.

You all know from your training in basic astrology that the sixth house is called the health house. Really to be more accurate we should say that the sixth-twelfth house polarity is the "health polarity." Why do you think that this is so? Is there some good reason for it, or was this just something that the old time astrologers sort of dreamed up or got from an antediluvian spaceman?

Of course there is! There is a very logical reason for it, and implicit in this reasoning, locked into the very heart of it, is the "secret" of the semi-sextile and the inconjunct. The ascendant, and the first house, represents the physical body, its construction and its mode of functioning. The ascendant itself is its outward physical appearance; the first house is what's contained under the surface that you show to the world. What causes the physical appearance to change - aging. And what causes aging - the slow depletion of the body's resources and its ability to repair itself. And what causes this whole chain reaction - tension.

Now, please note that the sixth house in your chart is inconjunct your first house, and that your twelfth house is semi-sextile your first house. Now you know where all of that tension that is aging you comes from.

There are not very many things in astrology that you can be 100 percent sure of, but one of them of which you can be certain is that whatever client or friend comes to you to consult with you about a problem, you know that they are not using their sixth-twelfth house polarity correctly, else they wouldn't have the problem. As the consultant you can then point out to them the various ways in which they can solve the problem and release the tension. But, if you tell them what to do, and let them pass the buck to you - if you make the decision for them - you take their tension from them upon yourself, because now you're responsible for the outcome if anything goes wrong. You can call this "taking on their karma" if you wish, but it's still tension.

Now let's go back to those quadruplicities I mentioned awhile back. Which quadruplicity do you have on your sixth-twelfth house cusp? Whichever one it is, now you can identify your own typical style of dealing with your problems, and the cause of whatever tensions you might be feeling. I mentioned before what the tension producers were for the fixed and mutable signs. Don't think you've escaped if you have a cardinal sixth-twelfth house cusp, however. Your problem is that you thrive on high tension. You can get so involved in the process of problem solving that you deliberately create them just to keep busy solving them! You create them for yourself; you create them for others; and if you're not careful you've got so many problems in various stages of solution that you can't keep track of them all!

Now, what happens if you have a planet in your twelfth house semi-sextile one in your first house or your ascendant? Or, what happens if there is a natal inconjunct between your first and sixth houses? These aspects create a "block" in the natural problem-solving process - and we already know now what that produces! First, you've got to recognize the existence of this block, and then you've got to consciously work to overcome it. We medical astrologers pay considerable attention to aspects like this because they carry a very strong potential for physical dis-ease and illness. But, we're still far from done in discussing semi-sextiles and inconjuncts.

THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF SEMI-SEXTILES AND INCONJUNCTS

All of the problems that we have to deal with every day come from two basic sources: first, there are the problems that we create for ourself, and which produce self-generated tension; second, there are the problems that others create for us and the tension that they create, too. If this is so, then it is also logical to conclude that we ought to be able to differentiate in our horoscopes between self-generated tension and externally produced tension. And we can!

There are two kinds of semi-sextiles, and there are two kinds of inconjuncts. Once you discover how to differentiate between them, it is very easy to classify which type is which, and thus determine the source of the particular tension that they are generating.

The first step is to look at the planets that form the aspect and determine which of these two planets is the faster-moving planet. If, for example, the aspect is formed by Venus and the Sun, Venus is the faster-moving planet. Now, in your mind's eye, rotate the slower-moving planet of the pair and imagine it sitting right on your ascendant. If the aspect you are examining is a semi-sextile, the faster-moving planet will fall either in your twelfth house or in your second house. If the aspect you are examining is an inconjunct, the faster-moving planet will fall either in your sixth house or in your eighth house.

Thus, we can now classify and refer to these aspects as being "twelfth house" or "second house" semi-sextiles, and "sixth house" or "eighth house" inconjuncts. All of the houses below the horizon line in the chart (houses one thru six) represent our more private or internal side of our nature. Internally generated problems and tension come from this area. All of the houses above the horizon line represent the more external and public side of our nature. Externally generated problems come from this area. And now we have the picture.

Internally generated problems and tension are symbolized by:

1. Second-house semi-sextiles
2. Sixth-house inconjuncts

Externally generated problems and tension are symbolized by:

1. Twelfth-house semi-sextiles
2. Eighth-house inconjuncts

It is the faster-moving planet that signifies where the problem is coming from. It is the slower-moving planet that signifies how this problem impacts you. To get a clearer picture of the nature of the problem, consider the nature of the planets forming the aspect.

Time does not permit here to make a detailed analysis of all of the possible planetary combinations and potential problems that they might signify. However I can give you some clues that will help you with your diagnosis.

SUN and MOON - are your personal planets, representing the two sides of your nature

MERCURY and VENUS - are your social planets

MARS through PLUTO - represent the various energies we need to survive

MARS - physical energy needed to defend ourself from attack

- JUPITER - the drive to establish our place within the social group
- SATURN - the need to learn our limitations and our responsibility to our social group
- URANUS - our inventive nature, the need to see things as they might be and improve upon our environment
- NEPTUNE - the discovery process, the need to distinguish between reality and non-reality
- PLUTO - the evolutionary process

Now, let's take these ideas with a few examples to demonstrate how this process works.

Let's assume that you have a semi-sextile in your chart between your Sun and Jupiter. The problem here is clearly the struggle to establish and maintain your place in society. Since the Sun here is the faster-moving planet, it is you that is trying to do this; society isn't forcing you to do this. If, in your horoscope, the Sun and Jupiter were not aspected, you'd still continue to try to do this, but because they are aspected in this fashion you have more of a potential problem than the next person in accomplishing this goal.

If this semi-sextile is of the second-house variety, your problem is more internal. Since the second house deals with your system of values, the nature of your problem (and tension) may well be that there is a conflict between your own value system and the value system of the society in which you are trying to establish yourself. It's your problem, and it comes from within because society is not going to change; it's you that is going to have to adapt or compromise your personal value system if you want to fit in. Now, if you do not want to deal with this problem you're going to have to deal with a lot of extra tension, and thus this semi-sextile now becomes a prime significator of some physical ailment that will ultimately result from your failure to properly resolve this tension. The same would also be the nature of a sixth-house inconjunct, because the sixth house is also primarily concerned with your struggle to enter into society. The problem, however, would not be of conflicting values, but rather how hard you're willing to *work and serve* in order to establish and maintain your place in society. The difference comes from the house involved - not the aspect.

Now, by contrast, let us suppose that this semi-sextile is of the twelfth-house variety. The twelfth house deals with your attempt to establish for yourself some reason for going through all this struggle in life, to find your place in the cosmos, to discover the meaning of life. That's why one of the negatives of the twelfth house is suicide - a conscious determination that the struggle is no longer worthwhile and that life no longer has meaning. With the Sun coming from this position, it is still you that is going to have to make this determination; no one else is going to do it for you. Whereas before you were dealing with an internally generated something - your system of values - here you are dealing with an external something - the cosmos and life. But in both cases you have to come to terms with the problem. It's just that the source of the problem is different. Since this semi-sextile involves Jupiter, your reason for having to do this is that society is demanding this price for you to maintain your position. If Saturn were here, instead of Jupiter, you'd do it to discover your own limitations. With an eighth house inconjunct you're also dealing with this problem of life and death and the struggle to survive. Sure

the eighth house deals with sex and procreation, but doesn't this involve a natural desire to live on after your death in your children, or your decision not to have any? Society and nature itself imposes upon us a drive to procreate and maintain our species. To deny this natural force is to create problems and cause tension.

As you read through the various standard astrology textbooks you'll discover that, if they even mention semi-sextiles and inconjuncts at all, they use the key word "frustration" for the inconjunct. They say that sixth-house inconjuncts represent the frustrations that we face in trying to integrate ourself with our external environment and develop human relationships, while eighth-house inconjuncts represent "sexual frustration." Now you have I hope a greater understanding of how these ideas evolved. In either case, the problem is that you wish to achieve some goal, and the "frustration" is merely the tension you feel when you are prevented from achieving this goal.

This pretty much covers what I want to say about the basic nature of semi-sextiles and inconjuncts, but there's still one more step to consider yet in delineating these aspects in your own natal chart - that is, the effect of their actual house locations.

The first thing I want to say about this is that no matter where a semi-sextile or inconjunct is actually located in your chart - whether it has anything to do with your sixth-twelfth house polarity or not - it is still an important health aspect because it represents a site of potential tension and dis-ease. Of frustration.

I've just shown you how to identify from where the frustration is coming - the faster planet - and in what way it is affecting you - through the slower planet. I've also shown you how to tell whether the source of the frustration and tension is essentially internal or external. Now I want you to take cognizance of the actual houses involved in your chart. The house location of the faster-moving planet represents the area of life from which the tension and frustration is coming. The house location of the slower-moving planet represents the area of life in which this tension and frustration comes into your consciousness and is interpreted.

Let's consider a couple of examples. Let's assume you have a semisextile from the eighth to the seventh house, the faster-moving planet being in the eighth. This is a second-house type of semi-sextile, right? So we know the tension is internally generated. It originates in the eighth and manifests, or attains conscious expression, in the seventh house. One practical expression of this symbolic phenomenon, that we see everyday, could be that you feel frustrated sexually, but you blame this frustration on a partner. You've got the frustration and tension, and since its source is internal, you've got to solve it. Don't expect your partner to come up with some magic solution for you. Another typical expression of this phenomenon might be that you want more money than you've got, but instead of doing what's necessary to get it you blame your inability to get more on your partner or accuse him/her of spending it faster than you can make it!

Let's take another example; this time, an inconjunct from a faster-moving planet in the eleventh house to a slower-moving planet in the seventh house. Now, this time think about this for a minute and ask yourself what this might

mean to you if you had it in your chart. Consider the eleventh house as representing certain hopes and goals that you want to attain. If you are being frustrated in your attempt to attain them, whom are you likely to blame your failure on - your partner. If your social life seem frustrated and you are lacking in friends, or you don't get out socially as much as you used to - whom are you likely to blame - your partner. Or, if something unexpected occurs that upsets your usual daily routine, whom are you likely to blame - your partner. The problem lies with you, because this is a sixth-house type of inconjunct. And only you can solve it. This is, incidentally, also a motivating factor to get a partner because you've got no partner to blame until you get one to start out with!

Now, let's reverse this situation. This time the faster-moving planet is in your seventh house, and the slower-moving one is in your eleventh house. The origin of the frustration and tension now lies in the seventh house, but it manifests in the eleventh. How might this find expression? You've got certain hopes and ambitions that you wish to attain. You feel frustrated when you can't attain them, or attain them as fast as you may wish. The seventh house represents your ability to work with others cooperatively. It might just be that your inability to do this is hampering your eleventh house achievement. It may be that you're so critical of your co-partners, or so testy in a group situation that no one wants to work with you! This may also be the reason why you don't have any friends!?

While I'm sure that all of you may not now agree with this next statement, it is still my contention that astrology is best used as a diagnostic tool. To solve a problem, you must first consciously recognize that you have a problem. The horoscope helps us, through its symbolism, first to recognize that a potential problem exists, and then to analyze it in all of its dimensions and ramifications; i.e., to visualize it through the language of astrology. The next thing that astrology also does is to help us with our timing; it helps us to predict when is the best time to deal with certain problems, through transits, progressions, eclipses, etc., in order to give us the maximum potential for success and the minimum potential for failure.

What astrology does NOT do is solve the problem for us! Only we can do that ourselves. Far too many of us use our horoscope as a "scapegoat!" We blame our problems on our horoscope. How many times have you heard one of your astrology friends say, for example, "I've been very depressed these last few days; Saturn is transiting my Moon." You're blaming your depression on Saturn. Saturn's not making you depressed; YOU are because you are not dealing or coping with the Moon-Saturn problems in your horoscope. It's not that Mars transit that's making you feel tense and nervous. It's the fact that Mars is making you more aware of some existing, unresolved problem that's been hanging around for a long time seeking resolution. Mars is telling you that now is the time to work on solving the problem. The tension is coming from your failure to resolve the problem - not from Mars!

In the ultimate analysis, Medical Astrology is not something apart from all other branches of astrology; rather, it is an integral part of astrology. The medical astrologer is primarily concerned with what happens on the physical level to the body when the tension produced by unresolved problems is not relieved. If the focus of your problem, the slower-moving planet, is not dealt

with properly to relieve tension, then you are going to develop the physical symptoms of dis-ease that are associated with that planet. In the last example, where we had the slower-moving planet in the eleventh house, the eleventh house planet is going to be a potential focus of dis-ease problems if you are unable or unwilling to resolve the tension created by the problem. If this planet is Jupiter, the dis-ease may manifest through the liver. If it is Saturn, it may manifest as arthritis, some skin condition, or gall stones. If it is Neptune, it may manifest in reduced defense against the outside invasion of bacteria or viruses. If it is Uranus, it may manifest in an ulcer. But, tension is the cause of dis-ease, and ultimately the cause of death through aging. We might almost call medical astrology "tension astrology."

Modern medicine today pretty much subscribes to the theory that bacteria and viruses cause an awful lot of diseases. To very few medical practitioners has it occurred to them that these bacteria and viruses may not be the cause at all, but instead the result of a prior-existing condition. How did they get into your body in the first place? If you body was healthy they couldn't have gained a foothold. And, then, why wasn't you body healthy enough to resist their invasion? You've guessed it! Tension has reduced the body's ability to resist their invasion.

I get an awful lot of questions from my students and clients about which vitamins and minerals I think they ought to be taking. You'll remember that I said earlier that tension depletes the body's reserve of raw materials to repair damage. Vitamins and minerals may help, as dietary supplements, to replace this depleted inventory, but they are certainly no substitute for solving the cause of the depletion to start with! If you've got some Saturn-type problems, Vitamin C and Calcium may help to replenish the lost inventory of these substances in the body's storehouse, but they don't solve the problem. If you've got a robber who is constantly stealing from your storehouse, you don't keep replacing what he is stealing; rather, you catch the robber, right? Doesn't that make more sense to you? If rats are stealing grain from the farmer's silo, why should he try to grow more grain? Isn't it easier to just trap the rat?

In this lecture, I've tried to show you *where the rats are and how to "trap" them*. If you're going to get anything profitable from this lecture, you're going to have to set up your own program of finding them, understanding how they work and feed, getting rid of them - and what is MOST important, preventing the reoccurrence of a new infestation! I can tell you HOW, but I can't do it for you! You've got to set up your own program. I certainly encourage you to do so!