

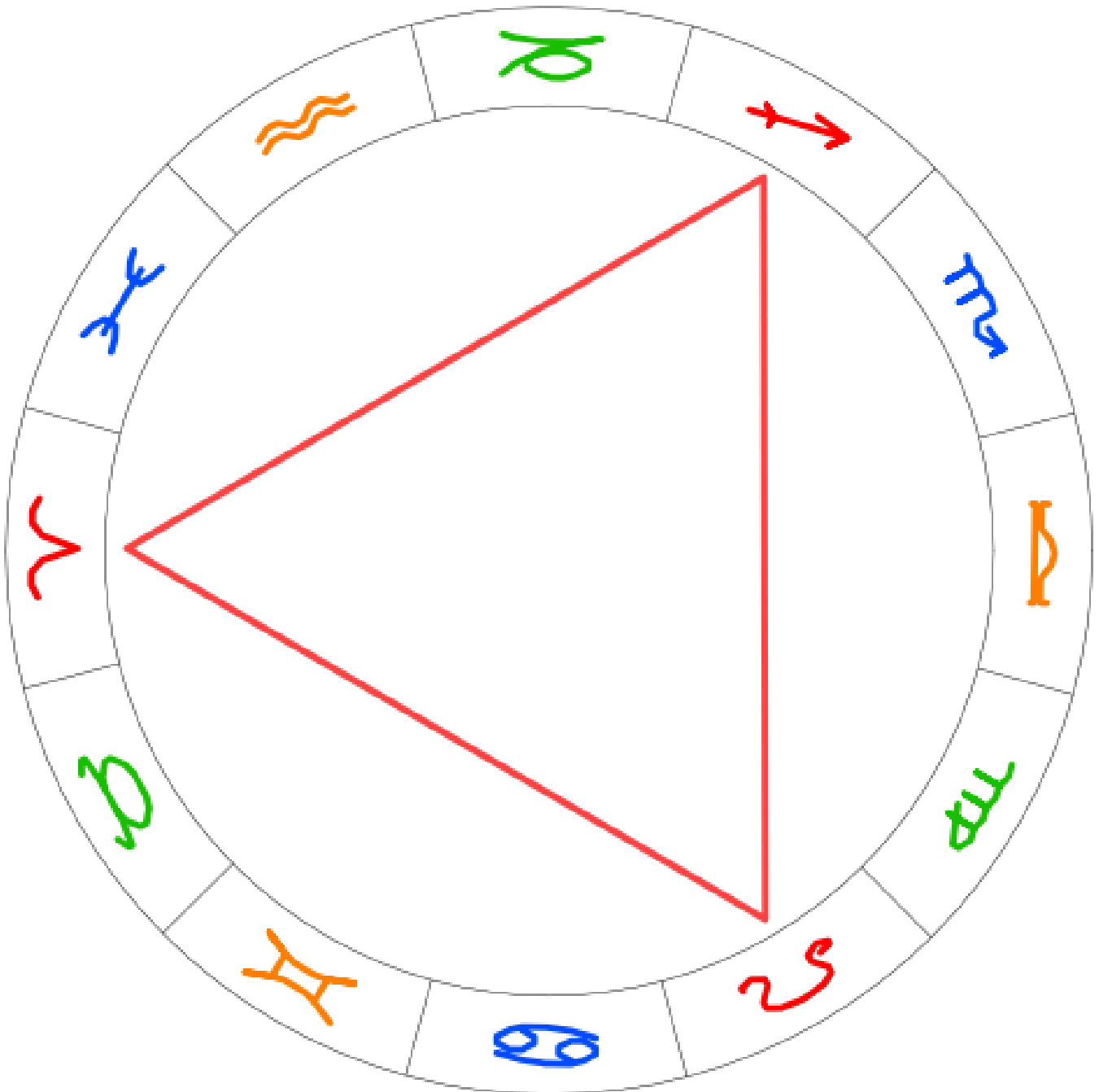
Introduction to Astrology:

The four Elements and the Signs

The fact that the astrological signs are associated with certain astronomical constellations has led to much confusion amongst astrologers and non-astrologers. Basically, our zodiac and the signs are no more than a circular measure, a 360-degree scale. Each of the twelve sections of this circular measure has certain characteristics, based on qualities associated with the elements.

Tradition sees the entire universe as consisting of the elements fire, air, water and earth. When we apply this system to personalities, the elements represent certain basic traits and give a certain "temperament". This varies according to the emphasis of the elements in the horoscope. Any placement of planets or personal points in a sign constitutes an emphasis. (see also "[The House System](#)")

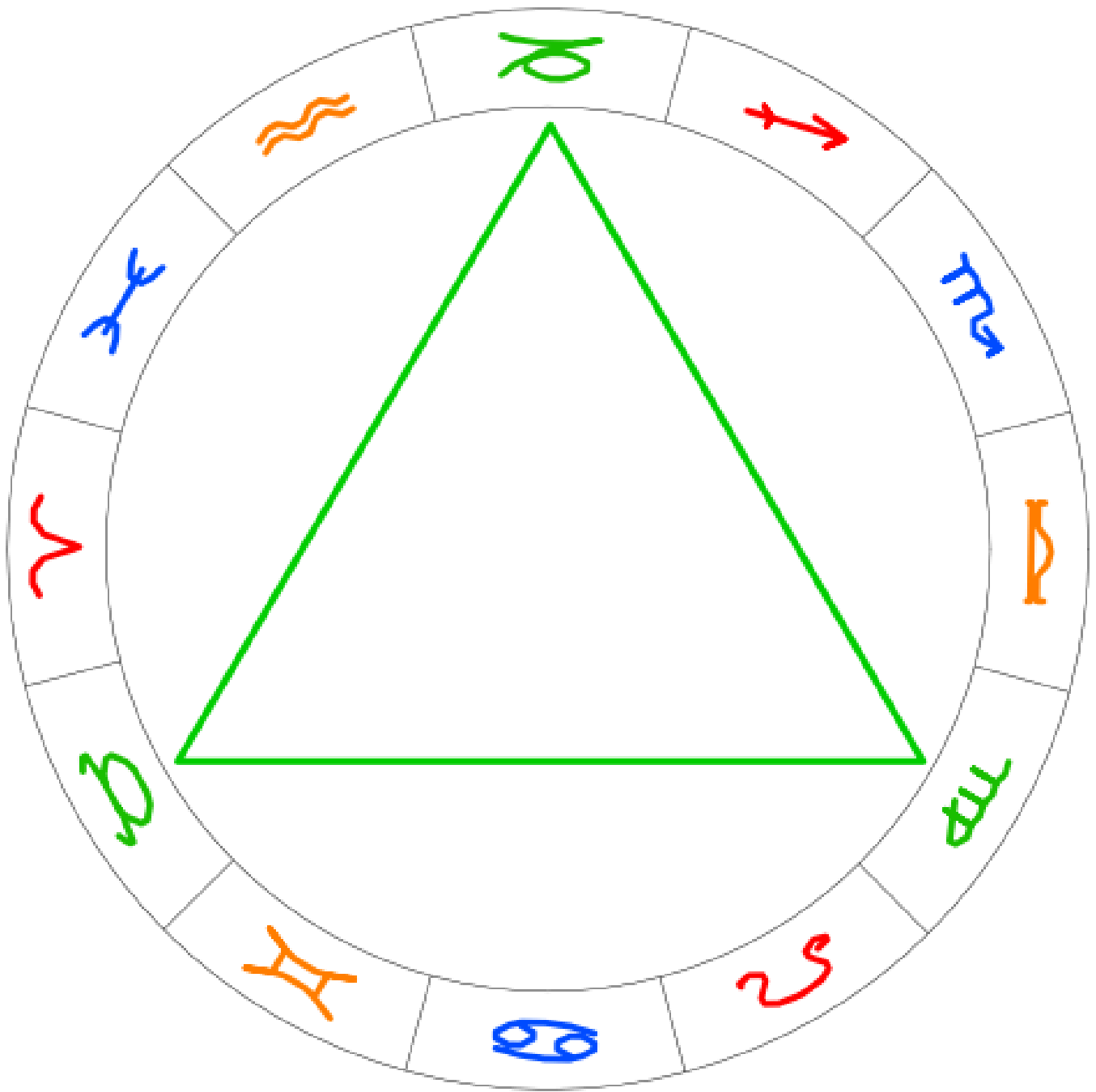
The four elements can be regarded as four basic principles of life. These can be applied to all sorts of things through the principles of similarity and analogy. C.G. Jung has opened the door to a modern understanding of these categories by developing a system of types, in which the elements correspond to four basic functions of the psyche. The emphasis or non-emphasis of the elements in the individual horoscope reveals fundamental aspects of the personality.



Fire

People with a strong emphasis of the fire element are spontaneous and impulsive, they apply their energies wholeheartedly. Their emotional response is quick and they have a lively imagination.

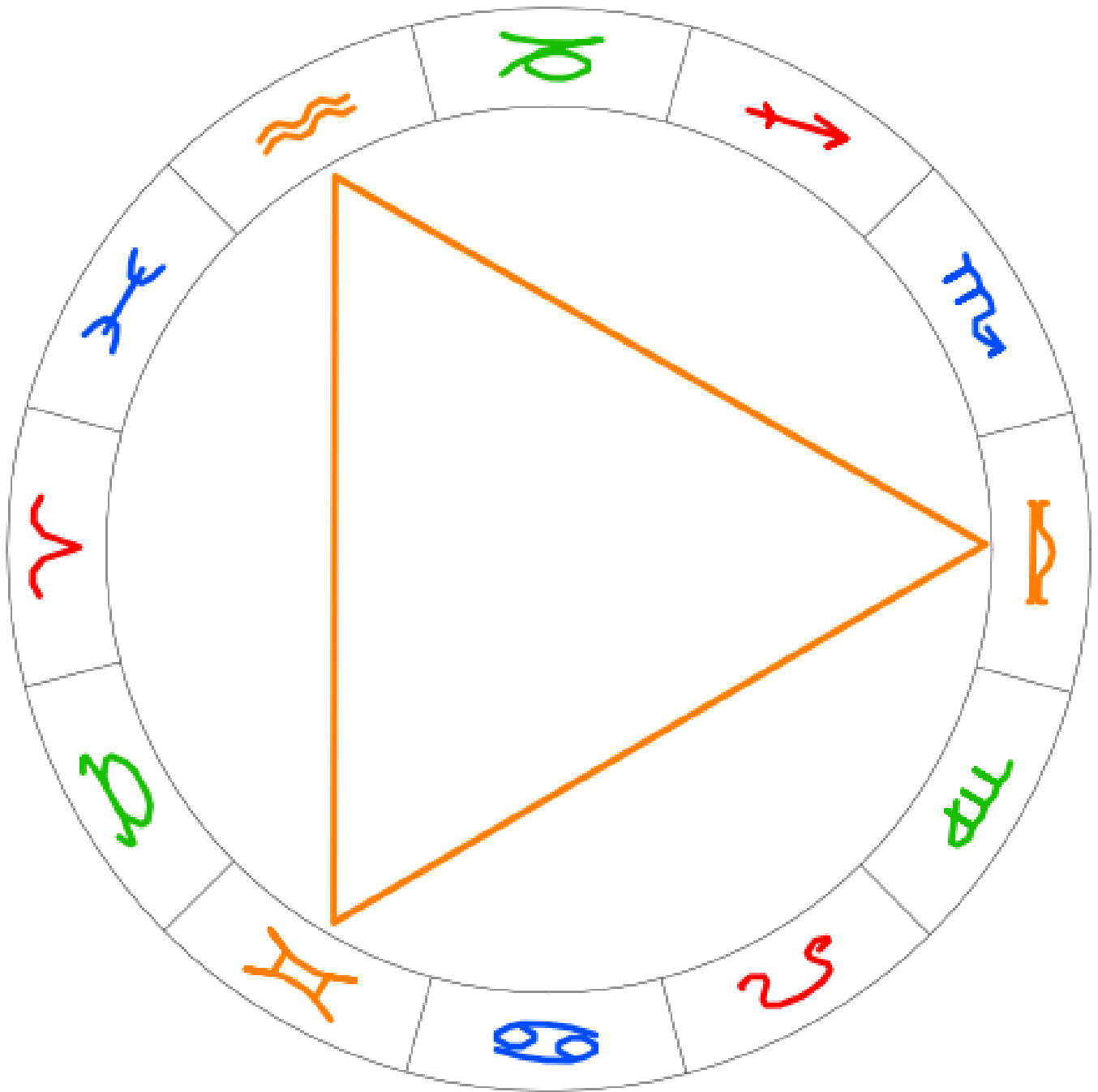
Fire signs: Aries, Leo and Sagittarius



Earth

Earthy people react quietly and slowly. They apply themselves with endurance. Emotionally they are deeply rooted and slow to change.

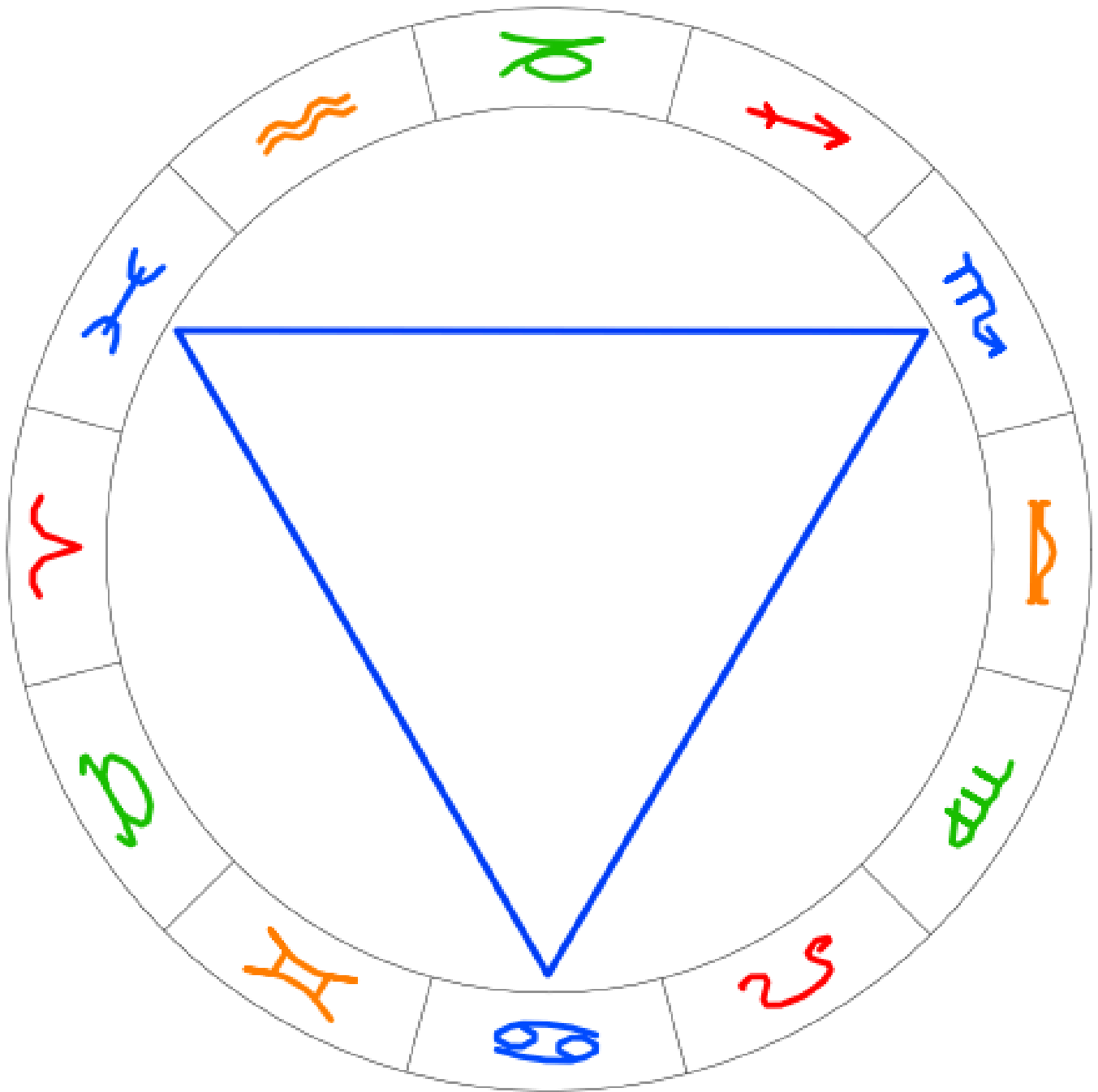
Earth signs: Capricorn, Taurus, Virgo



Air

Airy people are quick and animated. They apply their energies in very diverse ways. They tend to intellectualize their feelings and expectations.

Air signs: Libra, Aquarius, Gemini



Water

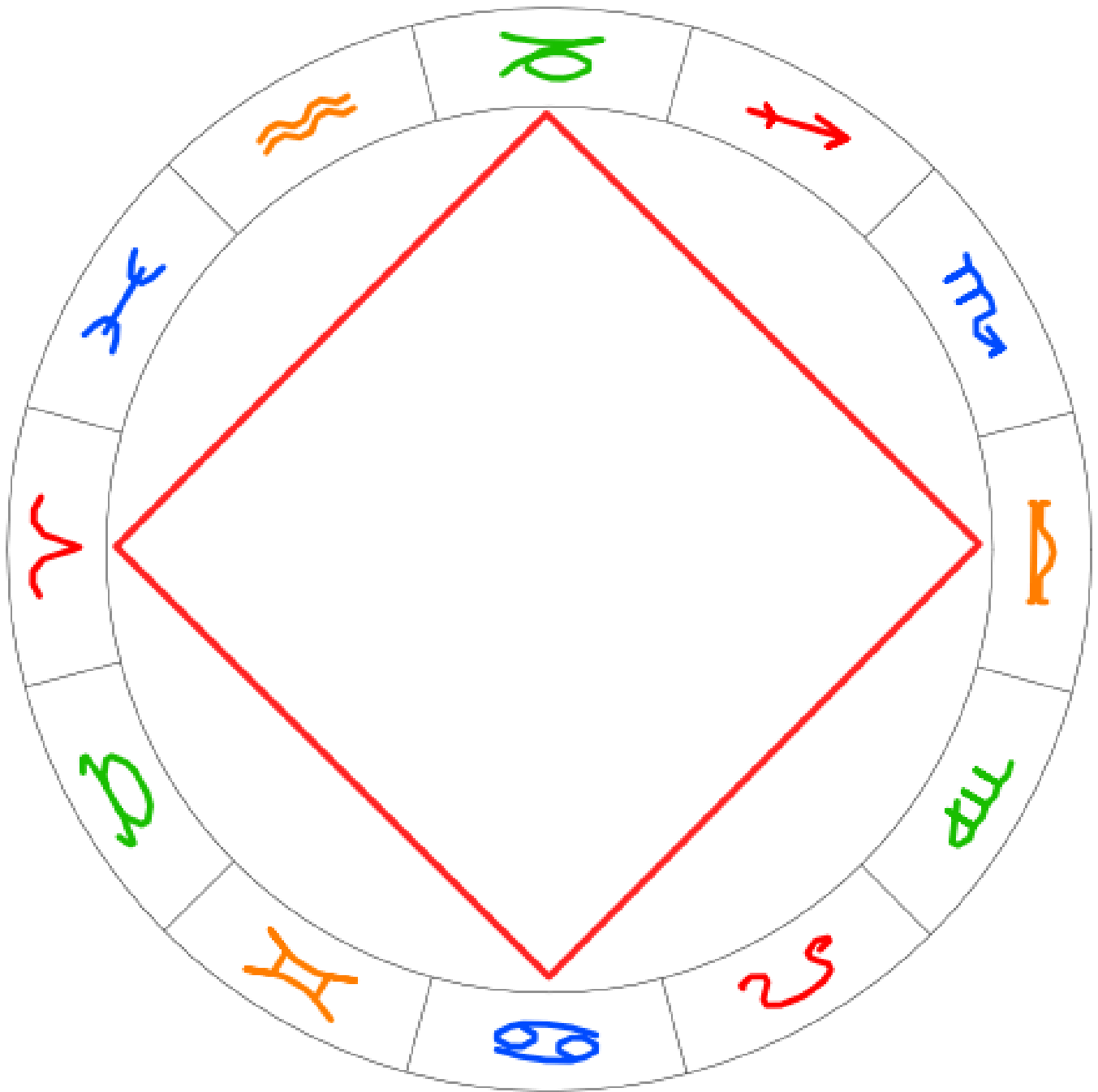
People with a strongly emphasized water element are feeling types and are very sensitive. Their imaginative and emotional lives are deep and rich.

Water signs: Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces

Western traditional sources also take into account a fifth element, the 'quinta essentia'. This very simply describes the soul or the spiritual being of a person. It stands apart from the other four elements and is not depicted in the horoscope. This is why it is frequently overlooked. It takes us beyond the doctrine of the four elements and their application in the field of astrology. It hints at the freedom of man and reminds us of the great mystery of the eternal.

Elementary states or Qualities

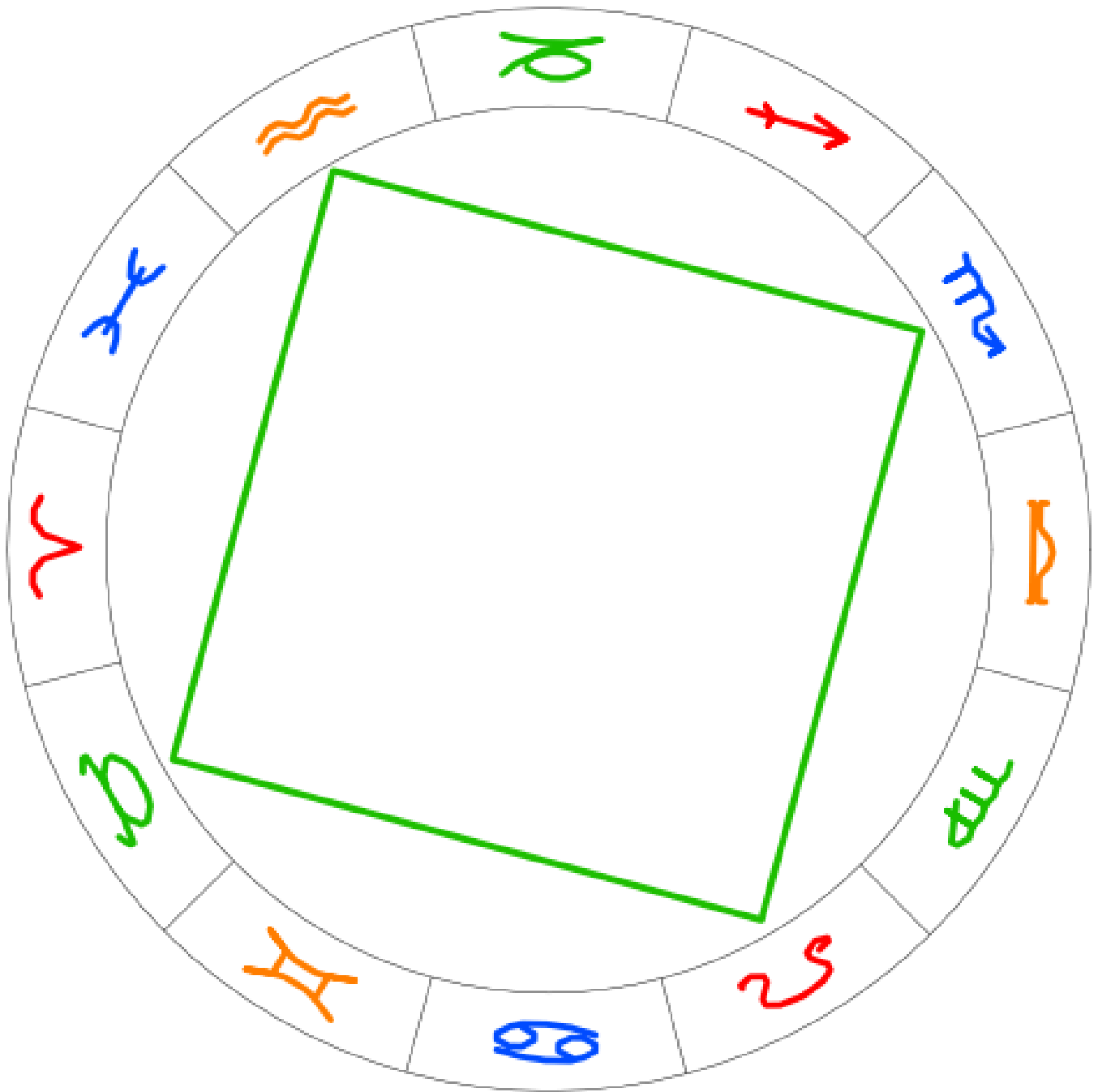
Each of the four elements occurs in three states or qualities, respectively named the cardinal, fixed and mutable or common states. We can consider the physical properties of water as an analogy: Here too, chemical elements can occur in various states. Water, for example, is liquid in its usual, real state. Seen astrologically this would be the cardinal state. When frozen it takes on a solid form, astrologically this would correspond with the fixed state. When heated, it becomes vaporous steam - comparable to the mutable state in astrology. In the individual horoscope, the placement of planets in cardinal, fixed or mutable signs also reveals basic traits of the personality.



Cardinal

People with an emphasis on cardinal signs have an urge to take the lead and to shape things. They are initiators and act according to their aims and goals.

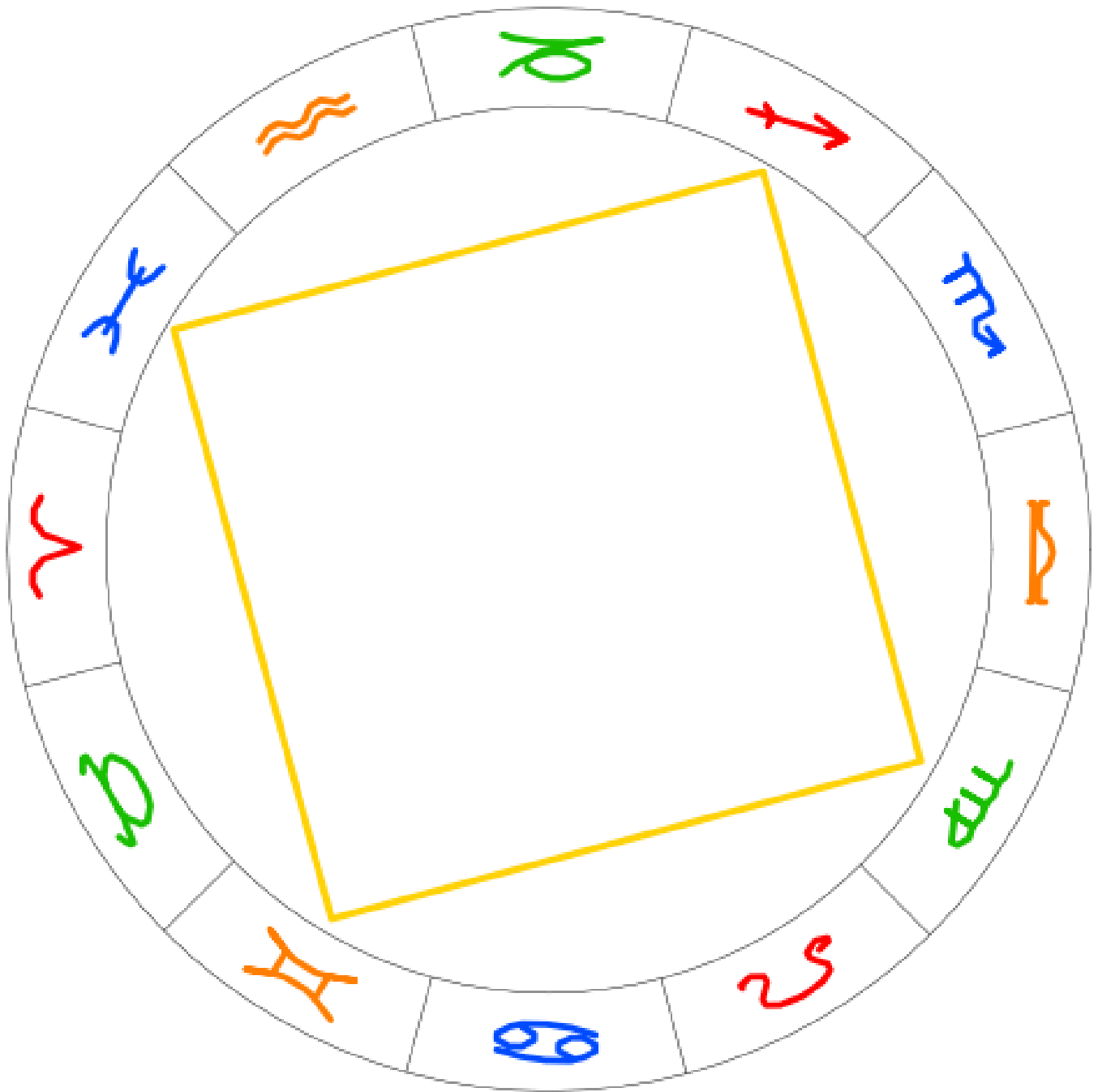
Cardinal signs: Aries, Libra, Cancer, Capricorn



Fixed

People with an emphasis on the fixed signs have a desire to build on what is already there and to organize it more efficiently. They tend to preserve a "status quo" and act in response to given circumstances.

Fixed signs: Leo, Aquarius, Scorpio, Taurus



Mutable

People with an emphasis on the mutable or common signs tend to seek change and renewal. They can easily replace one thing with another and align their actions with unfolding processes.

Mutable signs: Sagittarius, Gemini, Pisces, Virgo