

The EON - The 36 Cyclic Aspects Symbolically Depicted

by Michael R. Meyer

INTRODUCTION - Planetary Phases and Aspects

The Cycle of Planetary Relationship



Aspects in astrology are particular arcs between the zodiacal positions of two planets. A cycle of planetary relationship begins when a pair of planets occupy the same degree of the zodiac. This originating aspect is known as the conjunction. Its arc value is zero. The New Moon is the archetypal conjunction. In time, the faster moving planet rushes ahead of the other in the sky. The arc measuring the cyclic distance between the two grows. Eventually the opposition aspect of 180 degrees is met. The Full Moon is the archetype of this aspect and its symbolism is known to anyone who has watched the sun set while the moon rose. After the opposition, instead of moving away from the other body, the faster planet begins to move toward the other. Finally the two once again meet in conjunction, further along the geocentric zodiac than their last

conjunction. Aspects are important arc encountered along the cycle of unfoldment from 0 to 360 degrees.

The primary set of astrological aspects is based upon dividing the cycle by 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 8. Additionally, divisions by 5, 7, 9, 10, and 12 are significant, but they carry a more abstract meaning which is difficult to get a tight fix on, so traditional astrologers seldom use them, but they are depicted in this series.

The study of astrological aspects, and the configurations formed by networks of aspects, is one of the most fascinating areas of astrology. Those who wish to explore the subject further are referred to my [Handbook for the Humanistic Astrologer](#).

The eternal flow of astrological aspects can be thought of the cyclically unfolding relationship between two planets. All cycles may be divided into a series of phases. Each phase, comprising the span between exact aspects, characterizes particular modes of activity and relating. The nature of activity appropriate during any phase is determined by its place or sequence within the entire cycle extending from conjunction to conjunction.

Waxing And Waning Aspects

The cyclic relationship existing between any two planets is constantly changing, never static. All cycles of planetary relationship begin and end with the conjunction aspect of 0 degrees. A cycle is not a circuit of empty and meaningless "eternal return", but a spiralic process of evolutionary growth.

The spiralic nature of the planetary cycles is shown by the fact that each successive cycle begins (conjunction) further along the zodiac than its predecessor. The character of the first or waxing hemicycle of planetary relationship, from conjunction to opposition, is of decidedly different character than the waning hemicycle extending from opposition to conjunction. The character and meaning of the waxing and waning hemicycles of planetary relationship follows closely that of the Luration Cycle — the archetypal cycle of relationship.

In brief, the waxing hemicycle and waxing phases are related to involutionary, subjective and self-building activities. Here plans are best formulated. Materials should be gathered and organization developed. Subjective, instinctual, and spontaneous activities are featured. The waning hemicycle and waning phases signify multi-functional relationships directed toward some kind of objective realization and purpose. Outside factors come into play and the meaning and ultimate social goals of activity receives attention. The keynotes are inclusiveness, expansion of understanding, and participation.

A quick look at the cyclic process

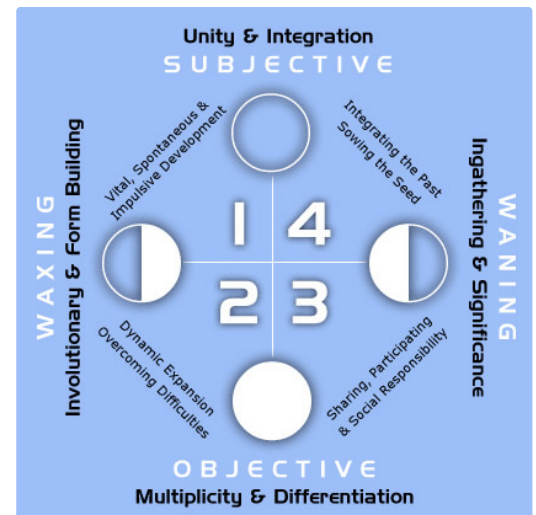
The cyclic process begins with the release of an archetypal pattern or Quality of potentiality, which first involves and differentiates, then, after the opposition, evolves, integrates, and eventually dissolves.

The waxing hemicycle of the cyclic process involves the archetypal Quality with organic forms and structures, which become increasingly complex as the Quality differentiates and a sense of individuality develops.

A turning-point occurs at the 90 degree arc. It symbolizes a crisis in action performed against a background of clashing individual and societal interests, combined with a struggle between the inert pull of the past and a futureward, creative directive to actualize the cycle's seed potential as fully as possible.

The opposition shows both the fulfillment of the cycle's potential at a vital, organic level and evidence of failure (or partial failure) in actualizing the potential carried by the conjunction.

The degree to which waning aspects differ from waxing aspects depends largely on how well the cycle's potential has been actualized. If a pastward direction has been taken, repetition, devolution and disintegration prevail. If mostly futureward, the waning hemicycle features growth of significance and conscious, creative participation at a collective level — a movement which reaches a turning-point at the 270 degree arc. In the closing arc an attempt is made to integrate the cycle's many experiences and to envision a new cycle operating at a higher level.



The Phases and Aspects Essentialized

The depictions of the 36 cyclic aspects recorded in this series concern not merely the moment of the exact aspect, but the character and meaning of a phase of unfoldment which begins at one exact aspect and ends at the next. That is, exact aspects signal the beginning of a phase of unfoldment. The character of a particular phase carries the meaning of the aspect which marks its beginning. This means the times of transit aspects listed in astrological calendars should not be viewed as unrelated fragments of time that simply come and go. Rather they signal the beginning of a new phase of unfoldment.

The depictions of the 36 phases or aspects of the cyclic process which follow are purely archetypal and highly symbolic, they are not meant to characterize individual persons or particular situations, they are merely symbolic word-images attempting to capture the essence of the cyclic processes active within a particular phase. They are something quite different from the "cookbook" formulas typical of much astrological literature, and they are liable to confound and bewilder the casual reader seeking "fortune-cookie" interpretations of astrological aspects.

To "sense" the dynamic of cyclic process, the depictions need to be read in sequence, from beginning to end. They are meant to help you "tune into" the essence of the **Eon** and its phases of unfoldment. As you read the depictions, try to get a feel for the cyclic movement as a whole, as well as its particular moments. Meditate on each, resonant to the vibratory quality of the **Eon**.

PHASE 1 - The Conjunction

KEYNOTE: *The genius of the eon infuses a seed-Quality with a quantum of creative potentiality, setting a new cycle of actualization into motion.*

SCENARIO: Born of the seed of the closing cycle, the newly emergent cycle carries a new quality of being, and a new set of possibilities and challenges. But the cycle of unfoldment is just beginning, its contents are as yet unrealized. Although the new quality of being ensouling the cycle has yet to reveal

itself, has to yet assume a concrete presence, it is nevertheless present as an archetype, **a seed-pattern**, infused with the creative energy of the eon which eternally embraces cycle after cycle.

A new cycle is always to some degree the child of its predecessor, and not just anything is possible through its unfoldment. It inherits and is conditioned by the fruits of the past cycle, and its flaws, failures, and shadows. Yet we live in a creative, open universe in which spirit answers need. Wholeness provides creative solutions to unprecedented problems and ceaselessly offers failure new opportunities to realize fullness.



Because the cyclic process is essentially evolutionary and creative, at the level of individual and collective humanity two paths open as the cycle unfolds. One path is futureward, aspirants to it are in some manner attuned to the call of a creative tomorrow, while still grounded in the realities and necessities of the present and guided by an understanding of the past. The other is past-oriented, conditioned and controlled by the powerful inertia of the

past and its crystallized patterns. And an inability to take a decisive step forward, or a desire to perpetuate the status quo, ultimately defaults to a repetition of past patterns and attitudes. Indeed, the experiential content of the entire cyclic process could be characterized as a struggle between the pull of the past and a movement toward a creative future, the intensity of which depends upon the relative magnitudes of the two forces during any particular phase. But here, at the conjunction, for a seed moment past meets future.

Any particular cycle produces a harvest of both success and failure. The purpose of a newly emergent cycle is to realize and bring into existential reality a higher, more inclusive quality of being and, while doing so, to provide creative solutions for past shortcomings. During the closing phases of the previous cycle, the creative spirit of the eon that moves the cyclic process through an eternal series of cycles condenses a futureward pattern of being into an archetypal "seed answer" in tune with the needs of the whole situation into which the new cycle will emerge. Now, in the moment which closes one cycle while opening another, the spirit of the eon infuses that seed with a power to be.

While the activities and functions symbolized by the planetary pair forming the aspect is the focus of considerable attention, what is unfolding is still only sensed vaguely or subjectively as an outline, and there may be a good deal of confusion and projection during this nascent phase. Responses are spontaneous and youthful, emphasizing and intensifying the essential nature of the planetary pair rather than exteriorizing an as yet almost entirely enfolded and unactualized new quality. Yet to some degree the individual (or transit moment) may exemplify the new possibilities symbolized by the conjunction.

DYNAMIC: The dynamic interplay between the principles of unity and multiplicity, potentiality and actuality, and subjectivity and objectivity structures any cyclic process. Here a seed-impulse of differentiation and objectivity is empowered to rise out of an oceanic condition of almost pure potentiality and subjectivity. As new set of potentialities is about to unfold within the sphere of activities and functions symbolized by the planetary pair. While unfolding, a vast range of experiences and encounters will be met. In a seed, the conjunction carries into the present a new quality, and with it new possibilities. But for now what has emerged is a **power to be**.

PHASE 2 - The Waxing SemiSextile

KEYNOTE: *Emerging from a condition of almost pure potentiality, the seed stirs.*

SCENARIO: Stirred by a need to be, the seed must germinate and begin the long process of growth into its own. Images of how the new cycle may unfolded rise, but possibilities must be first brought into clear focus as attainable goals. Subjectivity is still high and the situation fluid, yet this phase brings the first intimation of the shape things could take, and it may provide an enticement to go on. There may be strong pulls from the past in the areas symbolized by the planetary pair, but it is important to turn vision futureward while resolving and coming to terms with feelings of frustration or resentment regarding past

experiences. The emergent cycle isn't merely a bigger and better version of the past. It carries a transformative potential to operate at a higher, more inclusive level than its predecessor. A creative future awaits those with an open mind and a heart courageous enough to make it so.

DYNAMIC: The semisextile phase signals the mobilization and gradual expansion of the principles of multiplicity and differentiation. Awareness develops in the activities and functions symbolized by the planetary pair as the faster moving planet begins to develop instrumentalities required for future growth. While the conjunction saw the birth of an almost purely subjective power to be, this early and uncomplicated phase witnesses an *urge to be*.



PHASE 3 - The Waxing Decile

KEYNOTE: *The eon reveals a new Quality of being to be actualized through the cyclic process.*

SCENARIO: It is not enough to merely repeat or glorify cycles past. Here the creative spirit of the eon reveals what could be, and offers an opportunity to gradually embody and give unique form to the new Quality of being answering new needs and possibilities. In a less transcendent sense, the new Quality revealed here could be analogous with a higher level of operation, or even a project or endeavor, to be realized step by step through the course of the cyclic process. Either way, in this step the creative spirit moving the cycle into the future first encounters the reticence of the past, and the inertia of its conventions, traditions and formal pattern.

This early and subjective phase carries an easily disregarded opportunity to participate in creative tomorrows; to envision and embody a new Quality of being in substance. Yet during this phase the pull of the past and its memories of sorrow, happiness, success and failure may provoke inner turmoil and may even impair the capacity to recognize and face a creative future.

DYNAMIC: The pull of failed patterns acquired in the past may be strong, and it is easy to perpetuate past shortcomings and flaws involving the functional activities symbolized by the planetary pair. But now a new quality of being is revealed which, if we accept it, allows us to work creatively. The conjunction and semisextile brought the power and the need to be, but here we have the option of *what to be*.

PHASE 4 - The Waxing Novile

KEYNOTE: *Cultivation of nascent qualities and possibilities.*

SCENARIO: Wholeness answers any authentic need. The eon seems to allow the survival of any truly needed and appropriate new quality of being, and allows it to eventually operate at a higher, more inclusive level of the cyclic process. Here the creative future revealed in the decile phase receives the nourishment it needs to begin growth into its own. Such growth is realized by the instinctual activities symbolized by the faster of the planetary pair as it works to develop new faculties, structures, and instrumentalities capable of giving form to the new Quality carried by the cyclic process.

If the creative spirit is not accepted, consciously or unconsciously, conventional or habitual attitudes, patterns, and modus operandi may instead find nourishment. Yet here, as everywhere, spirit answers any sincere effort to respond to a futureward call.

DYNAMIC: During this the last of the early, subjective, phases the surface of the cyclic process may seem calm, yet strong undercurrents are building. The encounter in the decile phase with the option of "what to be" might have precipitated an active futureward or past-oriented attitude toward the functional activities represented by the planetary pair. In either instance, this is a phase of accelerated, yet still largely instinctual and spontaneous, growth and expansion leading to the first real encounter with the

objective and social world and its restrictions. For now, nourishment and cultivation supports the rapidly expanding movement of differentiation while the growing process **achieves substance and momentum**.

PHASE 5 - The Waxing Octile

KEYNOTE: *Pushing forward and meeting restriction.*

SCENARIO: Momentum and encounter. Emerging from the early phases of the cyclic process with the enthusiasm and subjectivity of youth, irrepressible expansion encounters the objective world and its constraints. The waxing octile carries the symbol of society confining individual action and expression while inculcating its traditional values, attitudes, and paradigms. Like impulsive youth frustrated by the strictures and prohibitions established and enforced by older generations, here the new Quality unfolding through the cyclic process faces the oppression of antiquated values and inadequate knowledge carried over from the previous cycle.



Challenges to incorporate the essence of the past cycle while shedding outgrown ideals and modes of behavior may be met constructively in this phase, giving rise to effective action and dynamic interaction. Yet the shock of realizing that one's subjective ideals often do not match reality, and the sheer power of convention and tradition holds over members of a culture, may promote uncertainty and self-doubt (symbolized by a shadow element associated with the slower planet) or hesitancy (symbolized by the faster moving planet's inability to rise to the occasion).

DYNAMIC: This dynamic phase witnesses the rise of emotional power in the areas symbolized by the planetary pair. With it comes a poignant need to earnestly decide what to be, whether or not to accept the option first presented with the revelation of a new Quality of being during the decile phase — and to act upon that decision. But if decision is delayed — or avoided altogether — a vicious circuit of fear, frustration, confusion and nagging inner conflict may take hold. Dramatically expanding activity acquires structure and focus as one experiences the complex of encounter, interaction, decision and its **emotional impact**.

PHASE 6 - The Waxing Septile

KEYNOTE: *A transcendent sense of affirmation realized in the endurance of a crisis of growth and its tests of allegiance.*

SCENARIO: Unexpected and seemingly inexplicable happenings and realizations may visit those committed to actualizing the new Quality of being the eon offers. Coming out of an intense and perhaps stormy octile phase, the universe seems to intervene, affirming a creative future and illuminating the way to it with serendipity and seemingly chance encounters.

When a creative future is welcomed, the waxing septile brings a sense of being in tune with one's destiny and the cosmos, of being at the right place at the right time. When a past-oriented stance is assumed, the phase may seem to act as fate administering unpleasant experiences in an attempt to realign the process futureward, or as divine intervention (or an unconscious effort) aborting dangerous lines of activity before they prove disastrous. Either way, shadows and residua of the past cycle may show themselves unexpectedly here, demanding to be dealt with.

DYNAMIC: Coming out of the octile, the momentum is high while differentiation, objectivity and substantiation increases. Creative tension and mysterious, seemingly fateful, elements may be seen in the dynamized activities and functions represented by the planetary pair. Confirmation of larger forces

working behind the scenes may suddenly appear, as well as ***unexpected opportunities, possibilities, and realizations.***