

Reading Into the Planetary Influences of Your Doshas

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Who am I? Indeed, it is that search that leads us to read our horoscopes, sit on therapist couches, and attend yoga classes. And it is that timeless search that led me to an Ayurvedic Astrology session with Sarah Tomlinson.

Before the session, Sarah had asked me for my birth-date—place and time—because she wanted to find out who I was and where I was going. Unlike a more traditional Western reading, Ayurvedic Astrology is not as much about your destiny as your journey. It's about your planetary and psycho-spiritual makeup; what characteristics influence and drive your decision-making and lifestyle choices. When I sent her my information, before the reading, she seemed excited to discuss what she had unearthed about my nature.

The Oxford, England-born Sarah and I sat down in her sunny Flatiron office. We've known each other for several years, ever since I took one of her Yantra drawing workshops. She's been investigating Yantras for over two decades; Ayurvedic Astrology is a relatively new passion. Yantras are diagrams that help focus the mind and are used as aids in contemplation and meditation. Ayurvedic Counseling and Yantras share a close association with planetary power and position. It is that influence that yields both your reading and the Yantras you gravitate towards to create.

To begin the discussion, I pick a color card from a deck of five. It's golden and Sarah starts to draw a circle. She reveals that I am a "Tantric or that my spiritual path is Tantra." I'm ruled by both Mars and Venus—kind of a sensual, independent warrior who marches to the beat of her own drum. This means that my endless searching for a "Guru," and a belief system to go with it, is perhaps going to result in my realizing that the answers to the questions I am looking for lie in my own heart.

I am both relieved and eager to hear more.

We move on to my dharma, or my calling. What am I meant to do? Like many ex-executive Baby Boomers, that is a big and relevant question. Seems my dharma is influenced by the Sun. I am an adventurous ambassador for empowerment on a large scale. This calling resonates with me as I have been in the publishing business, in one form or another, for over 30 years. My dharma is quite different from a young friend of mine who had a recent reading and shared her findings with me. Her main province is to be compassionate and to nourish others on a more intimate scale.

Sarah says my physical nature is ruled by lightness. I have a Pitta/Vata tendency. This surprises me because most Ayurvedic tests I take indicate that I have a Kapha/Pitta constitution. While Sarah recognizes the Pitta in me, she suggests that perhaps that is slightly out of balance and I need to eat more grounding and nourishing foods like root vegetables. She suggests I cut out processed carbs, spicy foods, and coffee.

Her knowledge of Ayurveda has been influenced greatly by Edward F. Tarabilda who wrote *Ayurveda Revolutionized: Integrating Ancient and Modern Ayurveda*. In his teachings, Tarabilda suggests that it is not primarily physical constitution that dictates your Dosha (or Ayurvedic tendency) but rather a combination of the physical and planetary influences.

During my initial hour and 45 minute session, Sarah covers a lot of bases. We discuss my career, marriage, and enjoyment of learning. We also talk at length about how I can recoup and recharge my batteries through meditation, chanting, time with my children, and being near water. She also suggests specific asana and pranayama tools to enhance my daily practice. I should practice Surya Namaskar regularly and continue my Nadi Shodhana practice.

In a shorter follow-up session, Sarah asks about recent life changes. I report back about decisions I've made regarding my teaching. We also discuss how YogaCity NYC has adapted to competitive challenges and how those adaptations have created opportunities for growth. She and I confer on what herbs to take prior to an upcoming trip abroad. She suggests I buy a Vital Tea online and take grapefruit seed extract.

After two sessions, I reflect that all this "knowing myself" is putting me in a very good place. My most recent actions suggest a process of living more fully and celebrating every moment. I'm interested in continuing the YogaCity NYC website, studying with a wide range of teachers, and traveling over the next several months. I've also been given suggestions on how to nourish and calm myself and heal myself from the stress that builds up from too much "sun," and perhaps that's the most important guidance of all.

For more information about Sarah Tomlinson and her offerings, check out her new site at www.yantrabliss.com. Ayurvedic Readings are available by appointment. The initial reading is \$200. Shorter follow-up sessions are \$120. You can also take a Yantra workshop with Sarah at several studios like Yoga Union (this weekend), Three Jewels, Jaya, and Laughing Lotus during the year across the City. And, in January 2016, she'll be leading a very special retreat to Southern India.