

FOLLOW THE SUN: YOUR ANNUAL SOLAR JOURNEY

By Beverlee Brown

Astrology is really nothing more exotic than the study of cycles. The word Cycle implies a relationship between two entities. The relationship I'm going to describe is that of the transiting Sun to the position of the Sun in your Astrological Birthchart.

What I want to help you understand is this: As the Sun moves through the Heavenly Constellations every year, affecting everyone on the planet, it's also forming relationships with the Sun in your Birthchart, thus affecting you personally. You are affected just as significantly on an individual level by the Sun's annual cycle as society is affected by it in the collective.

The more familiar you are with this cyclical relationship between the transiting Sun and your Natal Sun, the more aware you become of the opportunities available to you at certain times every year. Best of all, the phases of your personal Solar Cycle happen on the same date every year, so you'll be able to use this information in a very personal way for the rest of your life.

You can probably look back over your life and recognize that the Sun's annual cycle very faithfully precipitated certain events, feelings, or conditions in your life more or less on schedule every year. Is there a certain month that you just "love"? A time when for no obvious reason, you feel happier? On the other hand, is there another month you could just as well do without? For instance, do you get a cold every year at about the same time? Okay, now let's take a look at your personal Cycle of Becoming from a whole new perspective.

Your personal Solar Cycle begins every year at the moment when the transiting Sun conjuncts your Natal Sun—on or about your birthday. This is when you set out to accomplish something. Do you recognize that on some level you embark on a new journey on your birthday every year? It could be a new job, a new relationship, a class you've decided to take, a new house, a trip...anything, really. You're looking ahead at this time of year to see what lies on the horizon; you're making plans, inwardly. After all, you're beginning another year and you want to make the most of it.

The Sun, however, has another 364 days to complete its journey through your Birthchart, and, as the Sun moves through these phases at the same time each year you experience opportunities to make revisions and adjustments to your course of action—your plan. Understanding your Solar Cycle is a tool that helps you know when to make these adjustments to your best advantage. As we follow the Sun's cycle and analyze each of its phases, let's liken this yearly excursion of the Sun to a ship's journey.

PHASE ONE

As the Sun conjuncts your Natal Sun, your ship—your life—slides out of port towards a new destination: your process of becoming begins to unfold anew for another year.

Often you undertake this annual journey unconsciously. You know you're going some-where, but sometimes you aren't sure where you're going until much later. That's like being adrift at sea. If you don't know where you're headed you have to be satisfied with wherever you end up! So your birthday—Phase One, is the time for you to take charge as you launch a whole new journey every year.

PHASE TWO

Two months after your birthday you may have a clearer sense of where your craft is headed. During Phase Two you need to take the time to carefully consider whether you're on the right course, going in the direction you mean to go in, because if you're not, this is the ideal time to make a mid-course correction. Most of us are so busy enjoying the cruise at this time of year that we seldom remember to check our instruments!

PHASE THREE

Three months after your birthday, it's a different story. At Phase Three of your annual Solar Cycle the Sun is squaring your Natal Sun at a 90-degree angle. You may actually feel like you're "squaring off" against something or someone at this time every year. Phase Three is often experienced as a time of crisis because the worthiness of the journey you began back at Phase One—on your birthday—is being challenged on an inner level. Something's wrong and only you can provide the solution to the problem. We can compare Phase Three to stormy seas, when you have to work very hard just to stay on course. You may discover now that you don't even like the direction your ship is heading! But whether you like it or not, you'll probably be required to make an inner adjustment to outer circumstances during Phase Three.

PHASE FOUR

Four months after your birthday the Sun trines your Natal Sun from 120 degrees away. You should experience this time of year as one of relative ease—like the calm after the storm of Phase Three, which may have triggered a crisis. Ideally, what you should do at Phase Four is gear up for the opposition of the Sun to your Natal Sun in the next phase. If you don't make the necessary corrections to your life's direction during Phase Four when you're experiencing relative ease in most situations, you may discover at Phase Five—the Sun's annual opposition to your Natal Sun, two months ahead—that you're hopelessly off-course.

Unfortunately, we all tend to slack off a bit at the sextiles and trines of the Sun to our Natal Sun. The calm seas, so non-threatening, lull us into a false sense of security. As you'll see, however, a good skipper always scans the horizon for possible danger ahead.

PHASE FIVE

Six months after your birthday at Phase Five, when the Sun is 180 degrees away from your Natal Sun—in opposition to it, things come to a head. This is the culmination of your annual Solar journey. If you've been on course all along, you'll experience the payoff as you pull into port and perhaps deliver your cargo to a waiting recipient. In

Astrology, any opposition between two heavenly bodies symbolizes having to work things out with others, either cooperatively, or competitively.

On the other hand, you may discover to your shock and dismay at Phase Five that you aren't anywhere near where you thought you were headed! Maybe you didn't make the easy adjustments during Phases Two and Four, or maybe you didn't recognize the nature of the collision course you were on at Phase Three. If that's so, your whole journey, in terms of what you wanted to accomplish may have to be aborted at Phase Five.

This time of year, at the opposition of the transiting Sun to your natal Sun is when you get your just desserts for what you set out to do on your birthday and what you've accomplished along the way. Sometimes you have to start over and head for new ports at this time—six months after your birthday. It's all up to you. You've been at the helm of your life, after all. No one else is responsible for where you've arrived!

I should also point out that Phase Five in your annual Solar Cycle can just as easily be experienced as a time of great accomplishment, if you've been paying attention to where you were going all along and making the necessary adjustments to outer circumstances and the demands of other people.

Most of us experience each alternative at some point in our lives—either the triumphs or the failures at the halfway point of our annual journey, which is part of a much bigger process called life! In life we seem to learn the most from our failures, don't we? Those we remember! It's the successes we tend to forget. We need to develop the habit of congratulating ourselves when we succeed in arriving at the port we set out for!

PHASE SIX

Eight months after your birthday you arrive at Phase Six of your annual Solar Cycle. This is another trine as the Sun is only 120 degrees away from returning to your Natal Sun. Symbolically, you're headed back to home port now. This is another chance for you to reap the rewards you've earned along the way. Think of this time as the first calm seas after Phase Five.

If you experienced success at Phase Five's opposition things will appear shipshape now. You really should be scanning the distant horizon again, considering what direction your next journey will take. There's never a moment to be complacent, although if there were one, this would be it. You should experience Phase Six as a relatively calm period, satisfying and fulfilling, in most years.

PHASE SEVEN

Oh, boy! Here's that rainy day again! The last square to your Natal Sun, nine months after your birthday. At Phase Seven, the transiting Sun is again 90 degrees away from the Sun in your Birthchart on its way back to home port. Challenge, once more, is all around you in the form of sudden, unexpected squalls.

The first square to your Sun back at Phase Three offered an inner challenge to your journey's direction; the challenge of Phase Seven's square is more outward as it reminds you to complete what you started; see it through to the end. Often someone in a position of authority draws your attention to this challenge. You're already beginning to realize that your annual journey will soon end and that other voyages await. You're beginning to detach yourself from this excursion, already longing for the uncharted waters of the daring escapade you want to embark on with your next birthday.

PHASE EIGHT

In any case, the stormy seas accompanying Phase Seven's last square to your natal Sun will eventually end and it'll seem smooth sailing once more as you reach Phase Eight of your solar cycle. The Sun again forms a sextile to your Natal Sun ten months after your birthday. This is another period of relative stability in your annual journey.

You're within sight of shore now, and can easily begin making preparations for the next adventure that begins with your Solar Return on your birthday. You've learned so much on this outing that you're eager to begin a new voyage. I wish you smooth sailing!

YOUR ANNUAL SOLAR JOURNEY

PHASE	DATE	ASPECT	EFFECT
Phase I	Your birthday	Conjunction	Beginnings
Phase II	Two months later	Sextile	Stability
Phase III	Three months later	Square	Challenge
Phase IV	Four months later	Trine	Ease
Phase V	Six months later	Opposition	Culmination
Phase VI	Eight months later	Trine	Ease
Phase VII	Nine months later	Square	Challenge
Phase VIII	Ten months later	Sextile	Stability