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In the stars

Astrology: Insight into human behavior or a study in the need for some addicts to get back down to earth?

BY RACHEL LEE
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

Astrology has long been a fascination for people because it involves a world beyond what many can imagine.

Those who don't understand it or its draw often confuse it with astronomy. So what exactly is the difference?

"Astrology is really based in looking for ways to understand seasons and cycles on earth by understanding seasons and cycles within our solar system," said Kevin Leinbach, a retired astrologer who established the company Esther and Son with his mother, in Eugene. "Astrology relies on thousands of years of observations of how planetary motion in our solar system corresponds to human activities."

The study of human behavior could be the reason some people find astrology so interesting.

"I loved how people have similar

tendencies and you can tell so much about how someone will interact with you simply based on where they were born," junior Megan Russell-Erich said.

While some may use astrology to understand more about their personalities, others use it to predict outcomes and possibly avoid events.

"The general belief, I think, is that astrology is a way to 'predict the future,'" Leinbach said. "I don't use astrology as a 'predictive' tool but more as way of understanding what is actually happening."

Leinbach said astrology can help people understand patterns of human behavior, but that free will will always help shape the future.

"While I believe that we can use astrology to understand 'trends' that are likely to be factors in events, human behavior will constantly surprise us and lead to unforeseen outcomes," he said.

Working as an astrologist from

1992-2002, Leinbach has helped clients to understand their difficult situations.

"Using astrology, it is possible to very quickly identify the likely archetypal energies that are in play," he said. "If a client can begin to understand what specific actions or belief patterns are underlying a particular situation, they can begin to find ways to make different choices and change the course of their lives."

There are many ways to learn about astrology. Leinbach advises that people begin by working with their own horoscope and chart before working with others.

Russell-Erich shared similar sentiments.

"Check out 'The Weekly' horoscopes ... You may find something interesting about yourself out in the process," she said. "Cut out the horoscopes you find personally relevant and write a little bit about why. Keep them in a journal and look back over your year like that. It is really a useful way to journal."

Astrology basics

Astrology is the study of how events on Earth are influenced by stars and planets. Astrology means "star study" and comes from the Greek word *astrologia*. The Mesopotamians were the first to use astrology more than 5,000 years ago. Today, one of the guiding components of astrology is the zodiac, or an imaginary 12-part band of sky that follows the Sun's path as seen from Earth. In astrology, the band is divided into 12 parts, each containing a different astrological constellation. These horoscope charts show the positions of the stars and planets at a specific time, and a horoscope, or

"hour watcher," is the forecast astrologers make based on that chart. Signs can be segmented according to character trait and element.

Here is a breakdown:

Fire signs: aries, leo and sagittarius: energetic

Earth signs: taurus, virgo and capricorn: practical

Air signs: gemini, libra, aquarius: intellectual

Water signs: cancer, scorpio, pisces: emotional

Signs can also be categorized by two energies, yin and yang, which are linked with a different character trait.

Yin: aries, gemini, leo, libra,

sagittarius, aquarius: direct
Yang: taurus, cancer, virgo, scorpio, capricorn, pisces: indirect

Each planet is associated with a sign and energy.

Sun: leo: self

Moon: cancer: intuition

Mercury: gemini, virgo: communication

Venus: taurus, libra: love

Mars: aries: energy

Jupiter: sagittarius: opportunity

Saturn: capricorn: limits

Uranus: aquarius: change

Neptune: pisces: imagination

Pluto: scorpio: transformation

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