

Reflections on Career Development: The Path to Becoming a Professional Astrologer

Written by Alexandra Karacostas

Monday, September 21, 2009 - Last Updated Wednesday, February 23, 2011

It has been a month since the OPA Retreat in Asilomar. Still, each time I think back on it my heart fills with joy. It was such a pleasure to meet everyone. What a powerful and exceptional week that was! What a superb gathering of people from near and far away places!

We were represented by various types of professionals, non-professionals and many expert astrologers. What we all had in common was a genuine interest, curiosity and desire to learn more about astrology and some of its specialized fields.

Numerous times I reflected on how much I would have appreciated attending a retreat such as OPA offers early in my studies and practice as an astrologer. In 1975 when I began studying astrology there were not nearly as many places to go to further my education. To compound the situation, I often chose to live in beautiful, but remote places. In the late 1970's we were very fortunate several times to welcome Zip Dobyns to our tiny astrological community in Missoula, Montana. What a treat that always was!

Over the decades I have pursued and furthered my astrological knowledge through cycles of raising a family, employment in other fields, relationships and the likes of life. Today, looking back, I realize how much I yearned for and missed help along the path to becoming a professional astrologer. To have had a mentor, someone to show me what works, what doesn't, and to affirm that developing my own style would be the key to my success, would have been invaluable, perhaps the most useful support I could have used.

Of course I attended conferences and workshops all throughout the decades. But there is a huge difference between taking notes in lectures and having the opportunity to participate! Being in a setting where some of the finest teachers of our time show us how they read horoscopes would have been priceless. What a time saver that would have been... maybe even a decade saver, at least for me. Even more significant, I think, is the peer work. This has to be amongst the most effective learning tools, especially as it relates to the psychological and emotional components of building up one's professional confidence.

Recently I was reading a terrific article in the March 2006 issue of *The Career Astrologer* by Amanda Owens on "Receiving your Astrology Practice". In the article, Amanda writes about Neptune and the sacrificial themes connected to Neptune's placement in one's horoscope as it relates to one's ability to receive. That is, to receive anything, including money for our

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astrological services.

This brought to mind the issues concerning Saturn in ones' horoscope, fears and insecurities, especially as they relate to ones professional astrology practice. We all have Saturn someplace in our chart from where he closely observes and steadfastly encourages us to recognize our limits, function within them and succeed because of them, not in spite of them. Even with a "well aspected" Saturn, we all have an area or areas in our life that call for further improvement and increased confidence. Already as astrologers we often fight a battle just to be recognized and respected. Having a support system in place which can assist us in moving through the challenges specific to our career, with mentorship and peer interaction is critical!

I really look forward to the next retreat. Asilomar proved to be a fitting and lovely venue. The dates are set. Mark your calendars now for October 20-24, 2010. I look forward to visiting with our OPA community soon again. Until then, be well!