

The following **exceptional essay** was written by **Narelle Duncan** of Queensland for the 2009 FAA Interpretation Exam. It must be remembered that there are many different styles of academic writing and Astrological analysis. The style of essay and essay construction are not purported by the Exam Board to be perfect in all respects (eg. word length, grammar, syntax and astrological synthesis). It can however be used as a guide by potential candidates to gain a basic understanding of what FAA Examiners are looking for in essays.

Please print the charts that accompany this essay.

Tess Cullen, Exam Board Director

Question 1.

Annette: born 12:40pm, 13th September 1949, Kiama, New South Wales
Her Ascendant is close to 18 degrees Capricorn

Annette arrives for her consultation looking as if she is carrying the weight of the world on her shoulders. She feels 'stuck' and life no longer seems to hold any purpose for her. Having no children, Annette and her husband of 20 years worked and travelled extensively overseas until they separated in 2000. Since then she has been the primary carer of her elderly parents, with her father dying in 2005, the same year as her divorce. All her life she has looked out for and after others, often it seems to her own detriment and now feels she is going round in circles and can see no way ahead.

Using the natal chart only, how do you think the 'grand trine' has helped or hindered Annette's present state of being? How can you assist her in utilizing her complete chart potential to gain more life satisfaction and to find a sense of meaning and purpose for life again?

ANSWER:

Annette's chart presents with a variety of factors which may have predisposed and led her to her current state of being. Firstly, the inclination to present the world with a face of dependable responsibility could have readily subjected Annette to act older than her years¹ (Asc ♊; ☉♌♎-wide orb). This tendency adopts the shouldering of duty at a very young age with the probable loss of innocence and childhood frivolity. Embracing a hard-work ethic can underlie inner struggles and anxieties concerning security for self, dependants and loved ones (Asc ♊; chart ruler ♎♏). Years of taking life seriously and a preference for taking the cautious route would unsurprisingly leave Annette feeling unsettled and dishevelled in the face of uncontrollable change.

Secondly, her ♃ exalted in ♀ would compound her preference to avoid emotionally charged, messy and unpredictable situations or crises. At the same time the fixed quality of Annette's ♃, encompassed in the circuit of an earth grand trine, overcompensates an enduring tenacious quality. This could readily predispose her to 'hang on' to situations long after they have passed their 'used-by-date'. She can become a slave to dysfunctional routine which can somewhat explain her current feeling of "stuck-ness". Annette's natal

¹ p311: The Rising Sign; Jeanne Avery - 2001 Broadway Books

chart implies an enormous capacity to ‘hold on’ but perhaps not such a prominent ability to ‘let go’.

Thirdly, a North Node in ♃ depicts the soul urge to identify one’s needs and act independently. At almost 60 years of age, Annette reflects on a life dedicated to the needs of others, suggesting a preponderance for harbouring in the elusive safety of the ♃. This choice ultimately attracts incidences to propel the native towards their ♃. The unfamiliar territory Annette now faces challenges her to consider and fulfil her own desires as filling her time with the distraction of gratifying other people’s requirements is diminished.

Fourthly a ♂ in the 7th house places the ‘will’ in shadow. This signifies a propensity towards a passive-aggressive nature in relationships. There can be an eagerly sought ‘default of desires’ to the ‘significant other’ enabling the partner to make life decisions for the partnership.² This may mean Annette does not ‘own’ her will and allows her partner to carry the aggressive archetype for her. The trine ♂ makes to ♃ adds to the wounding of the will whilst the ♃ to ♀ engages increased passivity. Eventually resentment builds as the ‘partner’, who initially relieved Annette from the burden of making decisions, becomes a bossy bully who denies her choice. In an attempt to regain power conflict arises and strife and contention replaces the once passive relationship harmony. Herein lies possible precursors to Annette’s relationship breakdown and current dilemma.

I suspect the ‘good samaritan’ parable more than resonates with Annette’s heart strings. The compulsion to support the under-dog in bringing societal justice is strong (*grand trine*). It is easy to understand Annette’s predisposition towards over concern for others when she possesses a statistically rare earth grand trine involving both the sun and moon.³ The ♃ ♃ ♃ leg of Annette’s grand trine suggests a strong sense and prioritisation for keeping harmony in relationships. In support of this Annette, in avoidance of conflict, may regularly acquiesce with people and situations so as not to ‘rock the boat’. The fact that Annette’s ♃ ♃ is ruled by ♀ dignified in ♃ consolidates the reliance on tact and diplomacy. She may well have earned the title “keeper of the peace” as her easygoing tolerant disposition puts others at ease and infuses her with purpose (*grand trine*). Whilst this virtuous characteristic may have served Annette well many times throughout her life, it seems it could also provide the platform for being ‘walked over’ when Annette too readily neglects her own needs. One can easily empathise with Annette’s current despair when understanding the confusion and loss of faith (♃, *grand trine*) she must feel when this life-long held belief unravels before her leaving a sense of purposeless.

The issue here seems to lie in Annette’s ‘over concern for others’. The point is - do Annette’s efforts to create external harmony result in her sacrificing personal needs? If so, by shifting focus, Annette could use her natural talent for harmonising others to harmonise self. In turn she may find life takes on new meaning and contentment.

In fact, Annette’s earth grand trine, as venerated by Noel Tyl in *Synthesis and Counseling in Astrology*, “describes a closed circuit of practical self-sufficiency, i.e. I don’t need your help.” If this is the case for Annette, we can see why she supports others whilst repelling any offer of aid for herself. The pressure to establish a sense of self-worth (♃ ♃, *earth grand trine*) through individuation encourages over-doing things (♃) to prove the self-

² p220: *The Twelve Houses*; Howard Sasportas - 1998 Thorsons

³ p285: *Synthesis and Counseling in Astrology*; Professional Manual; Noel Tyl - 1994 Llewellyn Publications

sufficiency aim (*earth grand trine*).⁴ Indeed could this trait begin to uncover unconscious drivers that champion self-containment and thereby set up relationship separation?

From a depth psychology perspective, the $\odot \Delta \downarrow$ component of the grand trine indicates messaging from birth, most likely instilled by father (\odot). These messages serve to nourish and sustain either under or over-compensatory belief systems (\downarrow). In under-compensation, Annette may have learnt not to be important, to be less than her potential and to struggle finding life meaning. In over-compensatory matters she could find life overwhelming - promising more than she can deliver in a grandiose attempt to be and do everything.⁵ The $\odot \text{III}$ backs up this tendency as a fear of under-performing propels a perfectionist approach. The endeavour is employed to quell the anxiety and discontent felt from incomplete projects.

The $\text{D} \Delta \downarrow$ grand trine component adds further weight to setting up unconscious behavioural patterns - this time, most likely fortified by mother (D). These messages include the under or over compensation of feelings (D). Annette may have found she could not faithfully rely on feelings. She may have witnessed, or she herself may have been at the helm of blowing feelings out of proportion.⁶ This trait is compounded by the $\Psi \square$ to Annette's D . This Ψ aspect acts to both fuel and discharge the grand triangular circuitry of synchronised reinforced activity. Ψ adds much intensity to the emotional persona as it desires inner-power gained through emotional transformation and reorientation.⁷ Life thereby attracts experiences of loss, betrayal and abandonment to precede the regenerative process of unearthing inner strength, power and self-control.⁸

The question here is: "Has an over or under dependence on emotional nurturing (D) to provide life meaning (\downarrow) been a causative factor in Annette's current situation?" Has Annette's inclination towards generous and abundant giving added to her unhappiness and discontent? Like a parasitic dependency has Annette's talent for offering friendly sound advice landed her the burden of solving other's difficulties? Ultimately, Annette might like to consider whether the gift of giving to others has come at the expense of not having time to nurture and give to self. Add to the equation unconscious drivers which resist depth of feeling and displays of vulnerability and Annette may suffer intimacy issues ($\text{D} \square \Psi$). If this is the case Annette may respond positively to therapeutic exercises which encourage self-love, recognition and kindness.

Appealing to Annette's practical side and inclination for routine and structure (*earth*) - a new regime is encouraged. This needs to be implemented with the understanding that Annette may initially resist change (*earth*) and self-sabotage with lackadaisical complacency ($\text{D} \Delta \downarrow$). A starting exercise may be to spend 15 minutes a day contemplating and writing down a minimum of 5 things likeable about self and discovering personal needs. The next step would be to consciously fulfil a personal need and allow support from others on a daily basis. The end goal is to feel deserved of receiving and regain balance in the equal giving to self and others. Annette can draw on her dependable nature (*earth*) and ability to see the broad picture (\downarrow) to consistently (*earth*) assert realistic steps towards these goals. It may also be helpful to elicit Annette's optimistic temperament and forte-turn for looking on the bright side of life ($\odot \Delta \downarrow$). As a seeker of truth, I suspect Annette would gravitate towards a quest to uncover the lesson from her experience ($\odot \Delta \downarrow$). Finding the 'good' from her current situation may provide Annette with the impetus to pursue a new life chapter and re-ignite her faith in people. The

⁴ p285: Synthesis and Counseling in Astrology; Professional Manual; Noel Tyl - 1994 Llewellyn Publications

⁵ Class 24-p32: Universal Astrology - Workbook 3; Maggie Kerr - 1999

⁶ Class 24-p52: Universal Astrology - Workbook 3; Maggie Kerr - 1999

⁷ p63: Astrology Karma & Transformation; Stephen Arroyo - 1992 CRCS Publication

⁸ Class 24-p71: Universal Astrology - Workbook 3; Maggie Kerr - 1999

beauty of this earth grand trine is, when Annette initiates and acts with tranquillity and moderation, the potential to accomplish her goals comes easily providing security and stability.

The gift of this grand trine is a life of good fortune activated by the full use of Annette's qualities and talents. Whilst the attraction to coast along in a comfortable lifestyle beckons, true growth and self-development comes through the conscious search and deliberate effort to stimulate the blessings this grand trine promises. By working and travelling overseas, Annette created an ideal platform to broaden and expand herself. The question is was this opportunity squandered by the laissez-faire persona of the grand trine? Or was 'nirvana' attained by the conscious seeking of cultivating one's horizons? In any case, the quest to broaden the way one looks at life and expand existing belief systems is a major component of Annette's life purpose. The soul urge is to transmute the dysfunctional expression of dogmatism, self-righteousness and judgement to the functional demonstration of love and tolerance for the melting-pot of beliefs in the world.⁹ The cognitive awareness of this could help support Annette's ability to consciously work on this aspect in her life.

The revival of Annette's love of work and travel may instil a new sense of meaning and purpose to her life (*grand trine*). In seeking fulfilment, Annette might like to start by reviewing her value systems. These can act as a navigational compass in choosing her next goal and future direction (♀♁10). The way forward requires Annette to be selfish for a moment, connect with her needs (♁♃) and find the courage to put them into affect (*own her* ♂). With a clearer picture of her own requirements in any given situation and whilst holding this in focus, Annette is better equipped to successfully negotiate, mediate and relate with others, without losing or sacrificing self (♀♃♂♁10). Annette may be reminded that her strengths lie in the power of co-operation and having 'other awareness' (♀♃♂♁).¹⁰ She can put these assets to good use inspiring others (♂♁) with her progressive social ideals (♁2) and ability to encourage change and reform while going about daily tasks and interactions (♁6th; ♃6th). In fact interacting and relating with others is a vital component to Annette's purpose in her life. The thing to remember - is not to lose or sacrifice oneself whilst coming to the aid of others. The key lies in harmonising self to secure long term contentment and continued inspirational vision to be then shared so all can benefit.

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⁹ p361: Soul-Centred Astrology; Alan Oken - 1999 The Crossing Press

¹⁰ p125: In Search of a Fulfilling Career; Joanne Wickenburg - 2003 American Federation of Astrologers

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