

THE SUN

The composite Sun, like the Sun in a natal chart, is the heart of the relationship and its primary drive and focus. The sign in which it falls will color the entire relationship, as many of the important events in the relationship will occur when transiting bodies are in this sign. If it is strong in its house position and supported by good aspects from other bodies, the relationship will have a solid center and will tend to sustain itself despite the buffets of adversity. If it is poorly aspected or in a difficult house position, the relationship will be easily damaged and difficult to repair as the natural cyclical transits will tend to reinforce negative qualities of the relationship rather than positive. The Sun's primary quality is restorative drive, the general impetus toward life and its sustenance, rather than any specific traits or areas of endeavor such as are represented by the planets. Therefore its placement will tell the overall thrust and style of the relationship and how well it bears up under fire, rather than give the details of just how it will do so. A badly placed Sun can mean a relationship that is almost certain to fail, because wounds to the partnership won't heal themselves. A very well-placed Sun can mean a relationship that sustains and resuscitates itself so well that it may even be difficult to get out of should either

partner choose to do so (as might be the case if the planetary aspects were very difficult or if the two natal charts themselves were in great conflict). It is the driving engine of the relationship and everything else orbits around it and derives life from its energy.

SUN in VIRGO

☉ in ♍

This is a very complex relationship to which a good deal of attention will have to be paid. It is down-to-earth in the particulars but not that good at seeing the big picture. When an overview is needed, flip a coin and take one opinion or the other, as the joint one may be limited in its scope. Of all sun-sign types of composite, this is the best one in which to work with contracts, be they marriage or business. It can also be one of the busiest kinds of relationships, as you will probably never lack for something to do. It will also tend to sharpen the acuity of both partners when you work together, as the relationship may be more demanding than either of you are on yourselves. If there is any problem here, it may be in developing the ability to turn off your mind, relax, and float down stream, as there will tend to be storms of busywork - mental, emotional and physical - which can get in the way of pure relaxation. Nevertheless, this can be one of the most fruitful of relationships and can bear you a rich harvest if you tend its crops with care. But you

really do need to pick up each stitch as it comes along, or else the resulting tangle is the one thing most likely to seriously damage the relationship.

The Composite Moon

The symbolism of the composite Moon in a relationship is that of reflection — not in the sense of intellectual deliberation or thoughtful rumination but much more literally, reflective like a mirror. Whereas the Sun represents the primal, outgoing energy in the relationship, the Moon shows how the relationship reacts to situations once they have been presented to it. When someone approaches you with an idea, do you react to it, criticize it, laugh at it or with it? Steal it? Ignore it? Expand upon it? Extending this logic, it, of course means how you feel about a situation, the process and style in which your emotions are stirred. The things to which you react include each other, so the position of the composite Moon will be critical to the emotional well-being and functionality of the relationship, independent of your individual natures. Thus, a well-placed and well-supported composite Moon can lend clarity and cooperation to the most confused and befuddled people who might never expect to get along; whereas an afflicted composite Moon can throw dissension and conflict into the lives of the most well-adjusted and easy-going persons

who normally get along with everybody. This is, of course, because this reflective, emotional effect is largely subconscious, and because it does not emanate from either of you in the usual way, you are unfamiliar with its style and rhythms. This accounts for a lot of the “magic” - both good and bad - that is associated with relationships. On the positive side, it can mean a relationship that seems to heal one or both of you and just makes everything go right that didn't before. This is a marvelous feeling but one that can lead to a mistaken dependency on your partner as the source of the improvement when it is actually the relationship itself that should get the credit. On the opposite side it can lead to mutual blame for making things worse when the fault lies with neither of you but in the structure of the situation itself. The great advantage of having the details of the composite chart available to you is that you can better differentiate the strengths and weaknesses of the situation from those which may lie within yourselves. The former you will have to work around on the exterior, the latter you will have to work from within. In tandem with the Sun, the Moon and its position will make or break most relationships. If the Sun and Moon are well-placed and well- aspected, the relationship is anything from a good bet to a sure thing, regardless of the other positions and problems that need to be worked out. If the Sun and Moon

are badly positioned or afflicted, it will be an uphill fight all the way, and one that either or both of you may choose to set aside unless you feel compelled to spend a great deal of time, energy, and emotion rising to the challenge. Life is about choices, and here especially the composite chart can help supply the data you need to aid you in your selection.

MOON in PISCES

☽ in ✕

This relationship will very likely increase your mutual ability to understand each other at a very deep, spiritual-emotional level, sometimes to the extent of making you think you can read each other's minds. Intuition, and with it empathy and sympathy, runs very high and your innate understanding of the problems of others, particularly when they don't understand themselves, may even at times be painful. It may be a good idea to be careful not to bear others' crosses unnecessarily, despite the ease with which you might think you can do it. Not only can that weigh you down and distract from your own needs, it also can impinge on others who must bear the necessity, even if they don't want it, of solving their own problems. Shed a tear, and pass on; sometimes that's the only way. On a rather exterior level, however, you can experience insights that go to the heart of a challenge, which can set you well ahead of the game if

you can figure out how to take advantage of it (alas, knowing tomorrow's headlines doesn't always guarantee you'll have power over them). At an inner level, the relationship will have those qualities of soul mates who can communicate without words, love without touching; it will have that something special that transcends the ordinary physical world and penetrates the ineffable. It is, however, just another form of communication not so available to the rest of the world; make the most of it.

THE COMPOSITE MERCURY

Mercury in the composite chart represents the mutual meeting of minds, or lack of it, between you. It also represents your ability to communicate to others as a couple or as individuals. In the first instance, in which the position symbolizes the shore between two intellects, it will be important to know what kind of communication goes on: by style, substance, and action (sign, house, and aspect). A well-placed Mercury will mean that you can put clearly into words what you mean to say to each other, and such a position can be of great help in alleviating emotional problems that may not easily come to the surface. If you can both say how you feel, you've gone a long way towards being able to change. On the other hand, a badly placed Mercury can have the opposite effect, stirring up emotional problems where

there were none *by simply getting communications wires crossed. In a professional relationship this can mean all sorts of pointless starts and stops because of faulty information, particularly in an increasingly information-oriented society. The position of Mercury therefore becomes increasingly critical in relationships in general. Its placement also describes how you communicate as a duo with the public at large, so herein lies further opportunities for good or ill. Well-placed, it will mean that you may be able to get yourself across to the world at large through the relationship rather than on your own. Where there are difficulties here, it may be better to speak your own piece and not let the relationship represent you. Nevertheless, knowing the situation in advance can help enormously, as you won't have to learn the communications value of the relationship by trial and error or blame each other for problems that arise from what is essentially a third party with its own horoscope, the relationship itself. Rather, you can take advantage of the best that it offers and avoid what looks like trouble by one or both of you pulling back on your own to handle problems the relationship does not cope with well.*

MERCURY in VIRGO

♀ in ♍

When together, you will likely find your powers of perception and fine-tuning capabilities heightened,

making you much more able to pick up every stitch. Virgo is a good position for Mercury, as its natural communications ability is enhanced here by an added talent for picking up all the details, thus avoiding missing crucial bits of information. Conversely, you may find yourself getting tied into knots by trying to follow too many threads at the same time. Try to limit your input to one project at a time so you have the time and space to do the job the way you truly can. Similarly, you should be forgiving of the small mistakes of others (and each other), which can upset you more than it might others. Do not expect the perfection in others that you are likely to demand in yourselves when working as a unit. It may be impossible and can make for needless disappointment. The same goes for mutual expectations. Compliment achievement and correct errors without blame. Do one thing at a time, and everything will fall into place. Once around these possible pitfalls, you will find that the precision and keenness you lend to each other will be a benefit for you in implementing factors in business and in providing an endless pageant of diversions should this turn into a romantic relationship.

THE COMPOSITE VENUS

The planet Venus represents desire, attraction, what you physically and emotionally desire and as a composite

position describes where your desires meet and either blend or conflict, or a bit of both. This is too often applied to love interests alone, although it covers them as well. It means everything you desire - money, position, beautiful things, property, friends, lovers, anything that you want and believe if you get it, will make you happy. It also has another side which is your ability to appear to provide just such fulfillment for others, thus symbolizing personal charm, beauty, attractiveness, wealth, and so on. It's the two-way wish fulfillment point where dreams are born. When this is viewed between two people as a composite point, it means how and whether you make each other's dreams, on a very basic level, come true. If badly placed, it can mean continual desire and constant disappointment. If strong by position, it will be a buttress to the relationship, as you know you will always get what you want when you come back to it. It is, of course, critical in telling how a sexual relationship will unfold and can spell repeated ecstasy or constant frustration, especially taken in tandem with composite Mars. It also represents how well the relationship as a whole will be able to realize its goals and desires, which will of course be directly connected with its ability to make itself desirable, both of which are described by this composite point. Thus, an afflicted composite Venus is a double indemnity, because it usually prevents either of you from

getting what you want out of each other, and it means the relationship will not get what it wants, either. Conversely, a well-aspected composite Venus is like a gift from above, as it means mutual success and satisfaction all around. In judging the overall success of a relationship, this is indeed a very important position.

VENUS in LEO

♀ in ♌

A large appetite for love, fine things, and life in general characterizes this relationship, and the more you can get for yourselves and the bigger the experience the happier you will be. You are likely to be quite open about what you want and more than happy to include others in on your action, which will only go to increase your overall gain in the end, since part of what you want is their inclusion to begin with. Your generosity will increase your benefits, and what you sow will come back to you tenfold. If there is any problem here, it may be that this style may not entirely fit those of the two of you individually and may stretch your capacities. The relationship will serve to open both of you up, however, and teach the benefits of open-handedness and emotional generosity. It will also raise your overall energy level when you see that you can pursue your goals and have fun at the same time. Both increase the level and effectiveness of the other and make the relationship a

continual pleasure as it opens up your pleasure potential without limiting your possibility for gain.

THE COMPOSITE MARS

Mars represents physical and emotional energy, and as such the ability and inclination to get things done, to fulfill desire by taking action. By itself it is really just raw energy, and its placement, particularly in relation to the other bodies in the chart, describes where and how well this energy will be directed. As a composite point, it describes how your two energy directions mesh and whether they will reinforce each other or simply get in each other's way. It will tell whether sparks will fly, igniting random and destructive brush fires, or whether a controlled fire will blossom that will become the engine to power and fulfill your desires under your own direction. Its relationship to Venus, particularly in sexual relationships, is critical, as it will describe whether it will fulfill or deny your sexual needs. In both male and female it describes sexual drive as well as assertiveness and ultimately, aggression. Thus, a well positioned composite Mars allows the two of you to unite your energies naturally toward whatever goal you choose, while a difficult placing will put your efforts constantly at odds, wasting your efforts in mutual conflict or confusion when you should be utilizing them otherwise. As with Venus,

this can be the greatest natural blessing or a terrible stumbling block. A strong composite Mars can energize and focus two people who are otherwise at sixes and sevens with themselves, and a troublesome one can throw the most balanced performers into disarray as they wonder what hit them to throw them so off balance. Thus, it will be wise to understand this position well so as to know whether to ride it or back off. It will also portray the power potential of the relationship as it exists in the outside world. A strong Mars has the energy to carry others along with it, whereas a disabled one will tend to break down already functioning operations in the relationships' social surroundings. None of this suggests that a difficult Mars means you should forget about the relationship, however, as if one of you is simply put in charge in certain areas, mutually compartmentalizing the energy flow; the ill effect can be largely disabled, albeit at the price of local inequality. It is something to be considered with care and attention, however, as herein lies much of your self-empowerment and control over your lives.

MARS in LIBRA

♂ in ♎

You share a great talent to insert your energies into a variety of situations and therefore become an agent of change. You will likely find yourselves eager to get

involved in the projects of others in hopes of improving them, which in many cases you can achieve with success. It may be difficult to resist the urge to shift things around just to see how it will all turn out, so keep in mind that some situations are better left alone. The same applies for your attempts at self-improvement within the relationship, which itself will be subject to a lot of self-induced change that may be appropriate or turn out to be superfluous and counter-productive. It's a judgment call, but take a second look before you rock the boat. Outside the relationship, your ability to recognize the need for and implement change can equally make you be viewed as welcoming healers or snooping meddlers, so walk with care, but don't hesitate to exercise your talents when it's obvious they are needed, and especially when requested. When you can not only tell when things are right, but can cause them to become so, it is your duty to yourselves and others to follow through with your best effort. The same goes for individual problems, which your joint action can go a long way towards bringing to light and providing solutions.

THE COMPOSITE JUPITER

Jupiter in any chart represents the capacity for growth and expansion in relation to whatever it is connected. It means bigger, better, newer, faster, higher, and more

developed. It is usually looked at only in the positive aspect, but it also has the potential to get out of hand if not checked and directed. The composite chart is the area that your mutual aspiration and inventiveness meet, a point where creativity is strong but which may or may not bring its potentials to fruition, depending upon its placement and how you handle it. Well-aspected it allows you to view realistically and act effectively upon what you determine together to make the relationship a spawning ground of limitless opportunity, more than either of you could manage separately. Debilitated, it can mean overblown expectations that come to nothing, biting off more than you can chew, situations that spiral out of control, and projects that perish under their own weight. But these ills aside, Jupiter usually does more good than harm and under most conditions it is the place to look for blessings. A solid composite Jupiter will mean that you can always look to the relationship to pull each of you up another step when you are stagnating and it will mean that others can look to the two of you for inspiration and new ideas. Where it is difficult, you will have to take the opportunity to restrain yourself now and again and develop only that which you think you can use at the time to avoid wasting your energies on unrealizable goals. It will show you where the big picture is and provide the kind of life overview which the

relationship teaches that you might not have discovered on your own. It can be the force that carries you both away with each other and raises you to heights you didn't know you had. Its only danger is allowing the relationship to take over you as individuals. Use it as a resource for each of you to draw on, not the other way round, and it will always pay off for you.

JUPITER in CAPRICORN

4 in 13

Because Jupiter is not well-placed in Capricorn, you will want to do all you can in this relationship to stimulate growth and welcome change where you can find it or you may find it can become stagnant and an emotional straight-jacket. In order to keep pace with your contemporaries and the changing mores of society, your relationship must break new ground from time to time. This may take some prodding, perhaps by one or the other of you taking the lead and letting the relationship follow along after you. Otherwise you may find yourself lagging behind, with less and less inclination to catch up, until you find yourself with a relationship that no longer has relevance to either of you. No position is without its advantages, however, and this one will favor a conservative approach to finance and business, which in, say, banking could take you far. Once you do get yourself moving, by whatever means, this also has the advantage

of preventing you from overextending yourself and giving your new projects and commitments tight focus and narrow delineation; by limiting your parameters you insure yourselves of success. How easy it will be to manifest this position will be highly dependent on its house position and planetary aspects. Well-supported, it will be easy to live with and supportive in itself, ill-starred, it can be a bear.

THE COMPOSITE SATURN

Saturn is usually considered the bugbear among planets and has an evil reputation that it only partially deserves. It is associated with restriction, contraction, dearth, debilitation, and a host of other adjectives that add up to not getting what you want. That is, however, only partly true. It might be better to say that it describes extreme delineation, concreteness, and finality — reality in the most concrete sense. Much of our lives are comprised of hopes, plans, desires, dreams, wishes, and expectation, and Saturn describes what actually becomes of them. So in such a goal-oriented, future-driven society as ours, what actually happens is all too often a disappointment, the result of failed unrealistic expectations. Thus, Saturn in the composite chart is where you both get down to brass tacks and determine (or have determined for you) what actually is to be. If this point is well-situated, it

means that you can rely on each other and the relationship as something that delivers every time. It will lend solidity to the relationship and make it something you can lean on when either of you need to be backed up. It will also make the two of you a haven for others in distress. In a difficult position, it will mean that you tend to fail each other, to bring each other down, and to sap each other's energies physically or emotionally. In this situation it can highlight the insecurities of the relationship and mark for failure what might otherwise have succeeded. But in either situation, like any other planet, it will not touch every aspect of the relationship and so you are free to be selective if you know what areas it is either supporting or restricting. You want to know what the bottom line is everywhere, however; and that is what Saturn will tell you. But you don't have to invest in stocks you think are going to depreciate, either. If you recognize early what the downsides and the support pillars of the relationship are, you can use one to stand on while you either avoid or make repairs upon the other at your leisure. If you do not, ignorance is the ally of the dark side and it will have much greater power to pull you in and cripple you. Find your foundation stones early, so your house will not be built upon sand; and, in time, your temple will rise to the skies.

SATURN in SCORPIO

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There is quite an abiding determination and a long memory in this relationship which gives it both a lot of potential power and stamina and at the same time can lead to its undoing if you are not free to forgive and forget. It will be very easy to let real or imagined wrongs sink below the surface without resolving them, where they will gnaw at the underbelly of the relationship and undermine its stability and functionality. Part of the reason for this kind of hidden peril is that there is a certain imagined power in holding back injuries to get revenge later, when in fact such behavior undermines any real power to achieve a healthy and functioning relationship. Endurance is beneficial only when it is in the interests of love and friendship — in a battle to the last man, no one really wins, particularly in a relationship which must have at least two healthy partners. Use your individual generous and forgiving instincts to prevail above any negative tendencies the combination of the two of you may bring out and thus transform this Saturn energy into its positive aspect: stamina, unflagging loyalty and devotion. Use this to face outward to the world rather than inward where you can get lost in your own cross-currents unless you have a safety line that reminds you where the surface is.

THE COMPOSITE URANUS

Uranus is one of the three relatively recently-discovered outer planets, and all three are marked with a reality common to new experience and endeavor. They are not fully explored and thus not very much under our control. Uranus has been known the longest, (since 1786), and is a bit more familiar. It is associated with sudden events, shocks, realizations, discoveries, and other highly delineated events that sheer off quickly and completely from their previous states or surroundings. For creatures of habit, such as most of us are, this is usually upsetting and generally bad news. But it does not have to be. Your ability to use Uranus instead of letting it abuse you, is directly related to how flexible and quick on your feet you are. It also is linked to how willing you are to accept and welcome change as part of the nature of things. If you accept it grudgingly, then Uranus will always be a symbol of malice; if you welcome it with open arms, it will be a deliverance and an inspiration. In the composite chart, Uranus is where the two of you are repeatedly forced to rise to this occasion, and its contacts will tell in what areas of life it usually manifests. Well situated, it is a mutual window onto the future, flooding you both with light and clueing you into what is coming next. In such a position, it will make the relationship an eye-opener, which you come back to time and again for more. It will

also tend to put you both ahead of the game emotionally and socially placing you in a leadership position among others where future thinking is concerned. In a difficult place, it will mean that you bring to each other incidents and accidents in areas where you are the most entrenched and you force each other to come to grips with ideas with which you refuse to deal. This can be a source of great mutual blame: "You made me get into this. If it weren't for you, this never would have happened. . . ." and so on. This is particularly the case in sexual affairs in a society that is at heart so sexually conservative (even backward) and yet ruthlessly courts danger by flaunting it everywhere as if it were an everyday affair. Perhaps the only way to deal with this planet is to expect the unexpected, thus robbing it of harm and providing it with a welcome. If you are ready to harness it - like a wild horse - you can ride it far. If you turn your back, it will surely trample you. Where this occurs in the composite chart, keep your eyes wide open, your stance wide, and your tolerance level on maximum.

URANUS in CANCER

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Self-discovery can be a particularly private affair in this relationship and may cause difficulty in communicating those special parts that either need attention or require a change of attitude, from one or the other, to meet your

needs. This has an inner and outer manifestation. Within, you will likely build up pressure by resistance to change until it forces itself on you rather harshly, perhaps incurring emotional injury in the process. Thus it will be important to respect each other's ideas and personal needs, however odd or even offensive they might appear at first. They are there because they are part of you, and if you intend to respect each other you must respect each part, even the troublesome ones. Trouble is just truth looking for a way to find you. Outside, you may find yourself hiding what you have uncovered from others and thus deny yourselves the opportunity for self-review from an informative third point of view. It can be easy to believe you have come upon something universal that may really be only specific to yourselves and should not be applied to dealings with others, leaving you to become victims of uniformed presupposition and its concomitant perils. Embrace the new with a disinterested (not uninterested) eye, and when you can't do that, find someone who can broaden your horizons on the subject.

THE COMPOSITE NEPTUNE

The effects of Neptune, another outer planet and a recent discovery, are often largely out of our control both by our unfamiliarity with its effects and the apparent nature of the planet which represents the uncertain,

dreams, illusions, ideals, mystery, and the higher unexplored (and perhaps unexplorable entirely) plane of the spiritual world. Its nature is so uncertain, it's not even known exactly when it was discovered; various claims exist from 1810 all the way up to 1846, and we may never know for sure. It may be viewed from afar with a certain amount of analysis, however. When we find an area of mystery, it is our natural instinct to provide something to fill that void. Nature abhors a vacuum and our minds rush in to fill it with every kind of speculation and fantasy, if only to have something to act on in the area. Whatever is actually there will turn up eventually. In the meantime we provide ourselves with an image which may be close enough to the truth to better help us function or may be off in fantasyland and fail us utterly if we are unwise enough to lean on it. We know only in hindsight. Thus, in a composite chart, this point becomes the place where dreams, fantasies, hopes and ideals meet or clash, and inspire us or drag us down in confusion and conflict. Too many wars and personal battles have been fought over it needlessly, because none of these things actually existed until later. That's the crux of it: don't fight over what isn't there, at least not yet. Well placed, this planet will help you aspire to higher, more selfless goals but even they can make you take them more seriously than they are. Badly positioned, it can lead to

lies, deceit, and mistrust based on mutual misreading of the unknown and the foolish action taken upon it. In the end, it is a gentle, diaphanous planet that can never be forced. Dreams and fantasies belong to each of you individually; and when they are similar enough to share, whether emotionally, sexually, spiritually, or even financially, they can be the greatest of joys. If one of you tries to enforce any of it on the other, however, everything will turn distasteful and there will be no dreams left; the mist will be blown away and only a charred landscape will remain. Where this point occurs, go gently, expect nothing, and everything will be returned to you.

NEPTUNE in LIBRA

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If there is any main, driving force in your hopes and dreams, it is that everything should be just right and everyone be happy with the way things turn out. It is a very unselfish drive and one which makes you strive very hard for the good of all and make every effort to make it come true. You are, in the nicest sense, idealists. The greatest challenge you face lifelong, therefore, is not formulating the best but coping with less than the best when it so often turns out that way. Life's like that, and some rejuvenate themselves to try some more, while others can become embittered and cynical by the

experience and cease to believe in the power of hope and the ultimate impact of their ideals. Your inclination to keep moving will likely be indefatigable, and it is the direction that it takes that will determine your happiness. When all does not turn out right, reshape your expectations based on your original vision and proceed further. Avoid the temptation to lower your standards, as to do so will simply lower the ultimate quality of your life. In the end, you're only as good as what you can envision and strive for, and the individual results are less important than the lifelong effect you have on each other and those around you. Don't let adversity, when it comes, get the best of you: just regroup and find another way to manifest what you believe to be right. When you keep your eye on the horizon, the bumps in the road become just a rhythmic accompaniment to travel on life's highway.

THE COMPOSITE PLUTO

Of the three outer planets, Pluto is the most recently discovered (1930) and least subject to our control. As such, it is even considered the planet of power and control, ultimately because it so controls us in our attempt to overcome it. It is, of course, appropriately named after the ancient god of death, the thing which in the last analysis we cannot control; and at the most basic

instinctual level, all the control we try to exercise in life is simply a ploy to cheat death a little longer. It is called the survival instinct. The point at which Pluto occurs in the composite chart is thus, at a deep level, where we meet in our ability to face death. But it doesn't manifest itself that way on the surface. Instead, it shows up as the methods we use to keep control in order to avoid the certainty of personal annihilation. Well placed, it will mean a partnership that simply doesn't worry about keeping in control of the situation, secure in the faith that things will take care of themselves and when it's time to go, you're in God's hands. In a bad place or aspect, it will mean continuous attempts to gain power over each other and the environment (according to aspect, sign, and house) and a penchant for compulsive behavior that easily gets out of control. Or, rather, it was never in control to begin with. In some instances, particularly sexual, this can be heightened to mystic proportions, and though it can be playing with fire it can also be very revelatory. Where prominently placed, for well or ill, it will give the relationship an aura of inescapability and predestination, something that sweeps over you both (like sex or death) and takes you out of yourselves. Similarly, you may find the relationship itself has something of this effect on others, giving you a greater power (a power which you must be careful not to abuse) over those

around you. In the end, however, it is the willingness to relinquish control as well as take it that resolves problematic issues. In the meantime, the ability to step away from the relationship and out of its sway, at least in Pluto-affected areas, can be an important safety measure.

PLUTO in LEO

Pin ♀

There is a fundamental message that you share: you must make the world a better place to live in and get your message of how to do it across in a way that it will be heard. At its purest, this is a highly idealistic and laudable goal, but the methods of formulating and implementing it can be helpful and creative or negative and destructive, depending on how you handle it. Because the “must do” feeling is pervasive, it can be easy at times to believe it is your duty to enforce your opinion on others even when they don’t want it, because you believe it is ultimately for their benefit. That, however, is not your decision or prerogative, and to do so is a fundamental violation not only of others but of your own contract with the Ultimate. The life and death issues you have to face (which are really just life and death, themselves) are individual to you and only you can meet them. If you can do that, it will be an achievement, so keep your own house in order and let others keep theirs. Where you can share these feelings, you will have great

power and faith in each other and your personal destiny together. When you cannot, try to understand your differences, but above all, leave them be. Real change, such as it can happen to most of us (and that is less than we suppose), comes only from within and cannot be forced. The bottom-line issues and beliefs in life grow out of our own individual experiences, which by definition we can share only to a limited extent. Be content with that. There's more than a lifetime there for each of us to work on and where another welcomes it, share.

LIBRA ASCENDANT

ASin 

It is likely that simply being in this relationship causes a quality and rapidity of change in your personal environment that may be difficult to keep up with at times. At least, that is certainly how it will be viewed from outside. To the extent that this promotes growth and clears out the deadwood this is a great asset, one which will see you far and empower your relationship and its dealings with others. It would be wise to look out that you don't get swept up in your own whirlwind and start making changes just for their own sake. If it ain't broke, don't fix it, despite what may be an overwhelming urge to tinker with a stable situation. This is particularly to be taken to heart, as you will likely be able to dominate those around you and get your way, so you have to be doubly

sure that what you propose is the right thing to do. You have an innate sense of what is fair and balanced and the relationship heightens that. If you are in doubt, refrain from a joint decision and let one or the other of you decide, thus avoiding where necessary the possibility of overdoing a good thing. Or, defer to a third party who may be less intensely involved than either of you and may prevail with a cooler head.

MARS in FIRST HOUSE

♂ in 1st

This is a highly energetic relationship and will likely sweep both of you along with it at a rate that may be difficult to keep up with. There will be a considerable drive to be doing something all the time, and it is a good idea to have something always at hand to do to take up all that energy. Keep busy and you will keep happy, because the devil really will find use for restless, idle hands. This relationship allows both of you to be assertive (indeed, aggressive) in ways you might not have gotten into individually, and it will be a bit like driving a powerful car — heady, exhilarating, but safer on the open road than in traffic, at least until you're thoroughly used to driving it. As long as you have an agreed-upon direction, you will be a dynamic duo indeed, but if you get at odds with each other you can create world-class disputes as well. You've got a lot of effective firepower, so

don't point it at each other. The only thing you'll have trouble doing as a partnership is keeping still and just letting things happen. Thus, when you find yourself with down time, don't bother trying to simply lay back and enjoy it (you won't) but keep something extra on the burner to take up the slack and keep you from spinning your wheels pointlessly. When you've got such an energy resource in each other, why waste it?

MARS square JUPITER

♂ □ ♃

You are likely to spend more energy on your efforts than you need to and also get yourselves into more commitments than you may be prepared to deal with. There is such an abundance of energy that you think you will never run out, so you will always be champing at the bit. It is not that you won't have the energy to do practically anything — in fact, you can easily overdo it and beat a situation into the ground that only needed a little push to get going. The problem will be that with so much to spare you can get yourselves into more than you can manage, and things start to get out of control because you've got the power but not the sufficient knowledge to keep all your balls up in the air. Does this mean you should dampen your natural enthusiasm? No, only restrict the number of ways you choose to express it at one time. The problem here is that you compulsively

expand without having nailed down the last move, so that eventually everything flies off the handle and you lose it all. The remedy is difficult, though simple. Just say no to new involvements when old ones aren't yet complete. It's difficult because you see opportunity knocking and immediately want to let it in, but in your case it will knock more for you than for others, and your lesson will be in selecting who and what you let in the door.

MARS square URANUS



There is a quality of intermittence to your energy flow which can make this a stop-and-start kind of relationship. Just when you think you've got nothing left in you, a surge comes along and catapults you over the edge. And the opposite — when you're going strong, suddenly the bottom drops out and you're out of gas. This kind of choppy rhythm to your lives can be annoying and debilitating, and it will be a good idea to leave extra time and space when you really need to get something done to accommodate the breakdowns and power surges you are heir to. Part of the problem may be that you don't work well within established boundaries, but once outside of them you're not certain what to do so you flail about. The long-term answer is to set up your own rules, however different from the norm they may be, and then stick to

them. It is a matter of fine-tuning your lives to a high precision over time. In the individual horoscope, this aspect is often found in watchmakers, with whom high precision and steady hands are a must; but they are not developed overnight, but from a lot of broken watches early on. So it will be with you, and you will have to learn from your mistakes, and have the patience with each other to do so. Modify your inherently intermittent style into a steady, predictable flow.

MARS conjunct NEPTUNE

♂ ♂ ♀

This is a slippery aspect indeed, and it will mean you have to take great care about knowing and deciding what you are going to do and defining the motives which lead you to do it. It will be easy on the one hand to take actions based on what you believe to be your highest ideals and aspirations, and you will be extremely likely to do so, sometimes not taking into account the practical consequences. On the other hand, it may equally easy to deceive yourselves into thinking that you are doing the right thing when in fact what is going on is the most rudimentary self-serving deception. A big stretch, but you will be capable of both and should take pause for thought about which you will follow and when, and mainly how you will know your true course. This can lead you to the heights or the depths, or both, and in natal

astrology was the dominating conjunction of both Napoleon Bonaparte and U. S. President Bill Clinton. You can feel the drive to subjugate your energies to a higher goal, or you can fool anyone by your actions with considerable ease. The import and effect of how you handle it is everything, and so you need to be particularly demanding with yourselves to see that you are, indeed, living up to the ideals you create when you come together. To allow them to become a sham will undermine the relationship in the long run. To follow them to their idealistic conclusions, however difficult, can turn your relationship into gold.

MARS sextile PLUTO

♂ ✕ ♃

Mars and Pluto together are a very powerful combination, one of raw energy and implacable force, which in some cases can be dangerous or destructive. Here you achieve a fairly even balance between the two which will give you the feeling that when you put out, you will achieve what you intend, a kind of faith that your shot will hit the mark. As any shooter or martial artist knows, that kind of feeling is half the technique. When you consider the deed already done before you start, the hesitation that can cripple the stroke never occurs. After that, it is a question of not seriously overestimating your powers of accomplishment, and here

that, too, is nicely balanced, so you're not going after any Goliaths unless you at least have some nice, smooth stones. Your inclination and ability to wield power and unrelenting force is tempered by a respect for your surroundings and those who will be impacted by your actions. From an internal point of view, in a love relationship sexuality will have an important transforming role and can open up inner doors you didn't know were there. From a purely external view, together you are quite bound and determined to have your way, and because you are careful enough to be realistic about your abilities, you will likely get it.

NEPTUNE in FIRST HOUSE

♆ in 1st

You may find that this relationship has a large element of fantasy in it, in that being together fulfills wishes that you both have and have not yet satisfied. At least you feel that way, and to the extent it is true this will be an especially fulfilling partnership. There may be a large element of projection here, and the facts may not live up to your beliefs about each other, which could lead to disappointment if you insist on each of you living up to the other's expectations. However, if you are willing to let each other do what comes naturally, you can enjoy it when you're getting what you want and not let an occasional disappointment weigh you down. It will often

be difficult to separate fantasy from reality, and the best you can do is realize that and enjoy what you've got, whatever it turns out to be. From the outside, you'll also find that other people will have the same difficulty sorting out what's going on with you, so you've got a built-in smoke screen going for you whenever you need to use it and you'll find that you can sell any story you want about yourselves as long as you deliver it with a straight face. Fundamentally, great reward can be achieved here if you are willing to use the relationship to elevate you to your ideals without leaning on it to deliver figments of your imagination. If you insist on results exactly the way you envision them, you will be ultimately disappointed.

NEPTUNE sextile PLUTO

♆ ✕ ♇

This is a rare aspect, happening only twice in five hundred years. It's most recent occurrence is happening as this is being written, beginning in the 1940's and ending in the 1990's, and applies to those born then or on opposite sides of it. Perhaps it is too soon to tell, but some educated speculation is worth while. Neptune is associated with aspirations and ideals, currently in conjunction with Uranus (shock, sudden change) which will also be making the sextile with Pluto (force, transformation) or close to it. It is, in short, a watershed period when a radical new arrangement of world order is

being inexorably forced into being. Thus, this is a generational aspect, something you share in common with billions of others of your generation. Although in the sky it will have passed on, you will have it for life, which means it will be your inescapable task to be implementors of the new planetary culture born at this time. Therefore, where this is tied in to the rest of your chart by aspect and house, these will be the areas where you have to take your place in this order, to make your own personal contribution to what is perhaps the greatest transformation the human world has ever known. Heavy? Yes, but no different from everyone else your age. Do it well, knowing that you are the founding ancestors of an age undreamed of in human history. Your great-grandchildren will be looking back on you, hopefully with pride.

SATURN in SECOND HOUSE

♄ in 2nd

This is a difficult position for Saturn if you want to make a lot of money together, because it suggests that you will have to make the most out of the least. That actually means that if you persevere and act accordingly you can turn pennies into millions, but only after you get the technique, which might take some time in fine tuning. It can have a two-fold effect, in actual practice. It can make you very conservative about financial affairs and very

penny-pinching, or you can go the opposite way and give up on the physical world and have little care for what you have or what you make. Probably a course somewhere in the middle is preferable but you're more likely to swing one way or the other in actual practice. In general, expect to develop strategies against not having as much financial resources as you would like. Is there a lesson here? Very much so — boom or bust is very much a state of mind and not nearly so dependent on reality as you might think, something this position teaches. Often you will find that no matter how much you have, it is not enough, and it is your expectations that require trimming. Your interior resources are the ones you must eventually fall back on and be content with, whatever the state of your bank balance.

JUPITER in THIRD HOUSE

4 in 3rd

You will find that very often the words and ideas you create together fly faster than you or anyone else can keep up with. There's something about being together that sets communication in gear and once you get started it may be hard to stop. This will make you great facilitators in business and do well in media, advertising, public relations and anywhere else where creativity gives you the edge. It will also allow you a very high degree of personal rapport and a desire to get to the heart of what

the other has to say, and vice versa, rather than hiding from each other which is so often the case. In fact you may find that you have run out of personal secrets to tell each other before you know it, and you can find that self-revelation when done too expeditiously can trivialize its subject matter, so when you have something really meaningful to say to each other, linger on it and don't rush past until you've really felt it out. However, the nature of your relationship is always having something good and creative to say about any situation, so even the darkest moments will show their bright sides, not only for you yourselves but for those around you who will appreciate the cheer and positive thinking they could use a lot more of. When there is a good word to be said, you're likely the ones to say it.

JUPITER sextile SATURN

♃ ✕ ♄

There is a fine sense of moderation in your relationship, both personal and social, and you will be able to strike an even balance between your impulsive and creative sides; and your more careful, conservative common sense. Your goals will be set realistically and you will tend to work your way toward them in a regular manner, alternating between innovation and growth on the one side, and stabilization and exploitation of your gains on the other. On the personal side, you will prefer to cooperate and

compromise rather than argue about where you are going, the result being satisfying and regular progress together toward whatever it is you decide you want to go after. As a general rule this gives you the flexibility to go after opportunity without losing your shirts and to achieve personal growth without emotional scars. Professionally, this ideally suits most middle-of-the-road kinds of endeavors, where prudence mixed with imagination keeps the money rolling in. It will not suit high-risk, all-or-nothing situations where you have to put all your eggs in one basket and face either bonanza or bust. Thus, in a way you insulate yourselves from the high and low extremes of life, which can cut you off from a sizable portion of the population who are not so wise in their conduct. Why these people do what they do may indeed be a mystery, one which you should explore for your own growth and understanding, even if you choose not to actively participate.

JUPITER square NEPTUNE

♃ □ ♆

Overblown fantasies can really lead you astray, and your insistence on creating ever-spiraling illusions can be your undoing, so stop and take a sober look at yourselves. That may sound offensive, but once you get into a fantasy, it is inclined to take over and you won't know reality until it hits you on the head. It is not that you

can't tell real from unreal. Most of the time you do rather well. The problem is that once you get into a situation where you are kidding yourselves, it tends not only to perpetuate itself but to grow exponentially and block out whatever glimpse of the real world you originally had. Thus, you will have to take extra care to see if you're really in touch when you make concrete plans for the future. If there is any doubt, put whichever of you is the most hard-nosed in charge and opt out of the joint responsibility which can lead you down the tubes faster than you might imagine. There is probably nothing more difficult to fight than an enemy you cannot see. It is runaway enthusiasm about situations and ideas that not only take you nowhere but may in fact leave you nowhere. As time goes by, and you fight the urge to just leap ahead uninformed, you will find you develop a very pragmatic view of things.

JUPITER square ASCENDANT

24 □ AS

There is a certain amount of excess in this relationship that you may want to restrain from time to time, although this generates a great deal of enthusiasm about what you are and what you do. You are likely to be gung-ho about each other and whatever it is that your relationship becomes identified with, which can give you a lot of pleasure and will make you noticed wherever you

go together. You will perhaps make your points a bit too strong and a bit too long, which not only wastes your personal resources in repeating yourselves when you should have gone on to something else, it also can have the reverse of the effect intended and turn people off. Essentially, once you've sold someone your bill of goods, drop the sales pitch and move on. It can be deceptively difficult to do this, as once you get caught up in your spiel, it's difficult to turn off the spigot, because you really care about what you are putting across and enjoy doing so. Nevertheless, temper your passion with moderation, and you'll find the energy you save mounts up and allows you the potential to move on to yet newer and more exciting territory which you might not have had the energy to explore otherwise. Economy of motion is highly to be desired.

MOON in SIXTH HOUSE

☽ in 6th

This is a difficult place for the Moon and represents what can be an extreme challenge or a great burden, depending upon how you approach it. The immediate reaction to emotional situations here will be to answer the question, "Who is boss?" That is a bad place to start, and might be well substituted with, "How can we serve each other?" Since service tends to be such a one-way affair in our current society, it may be difficult to create satisfying

equality out of a serve and be served kind of situation. It will require that you both examine the roles you play in respect to each other and be very specific of what is acceptable and what is not for both of you. The emotions of each must have free play from time to time, however you decide upon mutually accepted restrictions, and you may find that because of this it will be well to have another option to give yourselves individual growth separate from the relationship. This is a situation in which what will be asked of each of you may be the very thing you would least like to give up. It is your option to take this on or not. If you do, make plenty of space for it, because it will take up much more time and emotional effort than you may have estimated at the onset.

MOON trine VENUS



This is a friendly and loving aspect in the highest degree with Moon (emotional response) and Venus (love and desire) engaged in a perfect handshake. For a love affair of any type or length it will be the focus of the relationship, a constant emotional flow of warmth, love, and friendship, because you both can naturally feel what you want and are very inclined to give it to each other. This aspect can be the saving grace of relationships that have a lot of afflictions elsewhere, as you will be willing to forgive and forget a lot, and even suffer considerably, as

long as this flow of love and friendship is there. That is, most believe, the main reason we have relationships to begin with. However, this may not necessarily be the case in a professional partnership. Although you will feel real affection for each other, other priorities may have more weight than feelings alone. However, this aspect also has the quality of emotionally knowing where the money is and you may find you have a nose for rooting out where the financial action is. But whether it is love or money, you have a natural talent for making good feelings happen that will not only be a blessing to yourselves, but to those around you, as good feelings have a way of becoming contagious. Make sure you encourage that to happen, as it is mutually reinforcing and will come back to you later.

MOON trine URANUS



A streak of well-aimed originality is innate in this relationship and you will always be ready to go for the new approach with an open heart. You can go just far enough in exploring the new to keep each other continually in a new light without having to blind each other in the process. For you, exploration of new personal options is a challenge, not a fight; an opportunity rather than a potential conflict. Thus, experimenting with new or unusual lifestyles, for instance, can come as a welcome

change and opportunity to refresh yourselves and grow together, whereas for others it might seem a challenge to authority, either an inner authority or that of society. When you face the issue, it can work with ease and you will evolve into the next step of your relationship. It is as if you know just how far to push for change so it can happen in a creative and efficient manner, and not so far that it becomes counterproductive to its own ends. What underlies is a fundamental respect for the truth and the many ways of seeing it. You are willing to respect each other's views and those of others and are willing to give all the space to operate under their own set of inspirations until they prove right or wrong. Preset dispositions will be gently but firmly set aside until the final argument is in.

NORTH NODE in NINTH HOUSE

♁ in 9th

Where the north and south nodes of the Moon fall, there you will find the areas where you have to take up personal responsibilities and commitments (in the case of the north node) and where rewards and surprises you have little control over appear (in the case of the south). To a certain extent they represent the lessons you have come together to learn, particularly falling as they do in the ninth and third houses. Thus it will be important for you to grasp the large, important concepts and

philosophies that deal with life and death and how the universe is arranged. In fact, it is likely you will naturally gravitate in this direction and make important decisions based not so much on practical considerations but on principle and what you believe to be right. This may cause you extra burdens in the short run and perhaps a bit of strain on the relationship, but the self-satisfaction you will both feel when all is said and done will be worth it. The added result will be that much of the confusion of the details around you gets cleared up, and you may find you see order where you previously thought there was none. Nevertheless, beware of the illusion of control, especially where communications are concerned, because surprises will be the order of the day which will rearrange your data base from time to time, though often as not for the better.

VENUS in TENTH HOUSE

♀ in 10th

You are likely to love being in the limelight, and as a result find yourselves there. We are not talking Hollywood here, but simply being noticed and talked about by the folks in your professional or social community. You will do well here, partially because you shape your desires around what you believe people will want and partially because you will find yourself a leader in developing those expectations. One feeds and

shapes the other. This is usually a good success indicator, unless one of you is a particularly private person, as your needs and desires are likely to be made public whether you want them to or not. It really depends on your definition of success. There is nothing wrong with being well-spoken of, and most people spend a lot of time trying to achieve it. You will only have to cope with the responsibility of dealing with it. This will not be inconsiderable, as your goals will be held up as an ideal to others who may or may not live up to it. Nevertheless, you have an advantage here that you can use especially in the public arena, though it may cramp the private parts of the relationship a bit in the process of fulfilling your unasked-for public duties.

URANUS in TENTH HOUSE

♁ in 10th

This is not the best place for Uranus if this is a professional relationship, as it will make your career efforts and results rather unstable and difficult to depend on. This is not to say without success, but without regularity, which make successes difficult to bank on. The same is to be said about publicity, which is often an important part of any business effort. When you most want it, nobody cares, and when you least expect it, everyone's got their nose in your business. The same may go for your private life as individuals, where you will

need to look out for rumors that come up overnight and get easily blown out of proportion (albeit, usually with a basis in fact). If you are quick on your feet, you can pounce on unexpected opportunity and get a lot of mileage out of it, but like riding in a plane without a fuel gauge, you never know when the tank will run dry and down you go, so it's better to land earlier than later. You will need nerves of steel and a lot of luck to go far under such circumstances. So take what comes but don't rely on when and where opportunity will knock. Just be sure that it will, and loudly when it does.

URANUS square NEPTUNE

♃ □ ♆

This aspect happens in the sky only once every eighty-six years and last occurred in the early 1950's, which likely means you were both born then or on equal sides before and after that time. Its effect is principally that together you share the qualities of that generation, even though you may be younger and older than it. It describes the end of a generational transition that marked the youngest of those that founded the 1960's drug culture. Uranus (discovery) and Neptune (mysticism, higher consciousness) was in trine for those who originally and successfully experimented with drugs, the Leary/Alpert crowd. With a careful and scholastic demeanor, they in general benefited from the experience which was an

avowed search for self-knowledge. Those that followed them, with the square of Uranus and Neptune, took drugs to party and get high, handled the whole experience badly, and created the drug “problem” that followed for decades around the world. The real problem, of course is not drugs themselves, but the out-of-control conflict between the physical and spiritual worlds of those that abuse them. However marginal this may be in your case, there is still a restless quality about you that makes it difficult to reconcile your observations with your beliefs and ideals, and you will tend to swing from the hard-nosed to the gullible and back again in an attempt to get a handle on it. The cure for this, like most outer planetary pictures, is age and experience that allows you to have made enough mistakes to even out your future track.

SUN in ELEVENTH HOUSE

☉ in 11th

You have the greatest potential here for true and lasting friendship with each other and for developing close ties with others as well. It is a good marriage position, both physically and emotionally, that makes for an excellent and durable attachment and tends to make you to grow closer. You will find you can rise in the world faster together than apart, as you will fill in each other's connections and social resources in a mutually beneficial way and appear as the sort of twosome that people ought

to get to know. Thus, for business or pleasure, you will find you have great potential, primarily because the qualities of true friendship and trust are strongly emphasized and therefore make you more desirable to each other and to those in the world outside who may be of benefit to you. Although you are given a most positive start with each other and in social affairs, once under way it will be important to follow up on each other and not take it for granted that favorable circumstances will last forever. Good fortune will continue to follow you if you feed and water it as you go along. Looking out for others' interests will be the best way of looking out for your own. Reciprocation and mutual support will be the pivot point of your success.

SUN trine JUPITER



Big plans, optimistic commitments well made and successfully carried out will be a hallmark of this relationship. There is a real physical enthusiasm here which continually opens up your horizons to new ideas and experiences, but without pushing yourselves too far or getting in over your head. You will have a similarity of beliefs and philosophy that don't require preaching about, but just rest under the surface as a substrate to your non-verbal communication. Exploring the new, particularly getting up and going to new places which

have fresh possibilities to offer, will be a mainstay of the relationship. There is a sense of invincibility here, not in any way egotistical, just an easy feeling that whatever comes up, you will have it under control and take it one step further. With an aspect this supportive, make sure to bring some others along for the ride who might not have had the opportunity. By so doing you expand your own personal resources and get a better idea of how you accomplish what you take for granted, because you will have to teach it and explain it to others. There is nothing like teaching to understand yourselves better. This will be important, as trines tend to make things easy at the beginning, but if you don't keep them well-trimmed and updated, you can find they fail you down the line as a result of neglect.

SUN sextile SATURN



You have a special stabilizing factor here which keeps you on course when seas are rough and you have to push extra hard to get ahead. Some may call you reticent or even conservative because you hesitate to leap into the breach when the opportunity arises, but it is not out of fear but of disinclination. You are content to wait until the right time, then move ahead with deliberation. This is something that comes naturally, however, and is not a matter of decision, so it is equally as difficult to control as

if it were a more troublesome aspect, except that you are unaware of the fact since it serves your convenience and therefore doesn't draw attention to itself. It works like a speed governor and will slow you down in situations where daring is the order of the day, and you may not be aware of it until you come in behind the leader in a competitive situation. That's OK, just stay out of places that require high speed and quick turns to make yourselves a success. At the other end, don't take your stability for granted either, though it will initially serve you well. If you assume you have nothing to worry about, eventually you will, and fence mending and house repairing is of critical importance not in the short run but over the long haul. The essence of a good defense is flexibility, and the two together allow you to use your natural inclinations to their maximum effect.

MERCURY in ELEVENTH HOUSE

♀ in 11th

This position will pull you towards personal friendship and surroundings which include friends and intimate companions. It comes from a general inclination to ferret out and communicate the best in each other and in others as well, which puts a favorable light on what you do, whatever that may be. Because of this, it will also be a strong motivator for you to rise in the world, as you will gravitate toward the company of those able to help you

succeed. All you have to do is let them help you. Positive thinking is really the bottom line of all this, and as long as you imagine the future as being bright and full of new friends and possibilities, things will tend to turn out that way. It's not just luck, but in the way you approach things. It's important to realize this, as you could make the error that you are either innately lucky or innately superior, neither of which is necessarily the case. As long as you make the focus of your life full and rewarding, love and friendship will tend to take care of itself. It's a case of good producing more good, and winners attracting winners. Too often in life it's the other way. In your case, not a bad prognosis, actually. . .

PLUTO in ELEVENTH HOUSE

P in 11th

This position can bring a deep and powerful loyalty to your relationship which you will be willing to fight for to the last. In fact, you may be at times all too willing to circle the wagons to defend you and yours, as you can often view each other and your close friends as being the last bastions of what is right and important in the world. This may not be as necessary as you surmise, as circumstances can take care of themselves much more easily than you sometimes believe and you may not have to defend your own unless they so request. Yet, there is such a close identification of yourselves with each other

and those you hold dear that you would consider their death yours, and therefore worth going to all extremes to prevent. Your attachment is only valid when it is mutual, so don't move on the other's behalf unless you know it's asked for. The feeling can often be mutual, however, and you may find that your friends find you worth dying for as much as vice-versa. In general, the whole feeling puts a very strong emphasis on loyalty and its sustenance at any price from all directions that may give a bit of a Mafia-esque tint to those with whom you are very close, giving the "family" a power over you which it might not have otherwise and the vow of protective silence control over freedoms you might otherwise have exercised but do not feel free to do so. The conundrum, of course, is that it feels right to do so. Judge each instance as it occurs, don't generalize.