

By Lia Simone.

The Art of Becoming for Leo

"The more I want to get something done, the less I call it work."

— Richard Bach

Last summer, one of the most famous astronomical/astrological events took place, in your sign: the Great American Eclipse. This was a total eclipse of the Sun, which cast a shadow across the continental United States, from sea to shining sea. Nobody could have predicted the response, in terms of collective events that followed. No eclipse that I know of has even come close to the speed and intensity of the reaction, how many people were affected, and the persistence of the developments.

No doubt this had some unusual effects in your life. You probably don't need to do much personal research to find out. Just consider your life on Jan. 1, 2017, and again on Dec. 31, 2017, and contrast the difference; that's an estimate of the impact of the eclipse. While events in the news were just crazy, individual people often rise to the occasion of eclipses in ways that large groups cannot or do not.

Eclipses are what I call threshold events. They are gateways in time. As we approach the gateway, several things tend to happen. One is a concentration of events; another is the sensation of karma being acted out; and there's an acceleration, whether a big catch-up or a push forward. Eclipses are important events for humanity, so stuck in its own mire as it tends to be.

Yet they can be unpleasant in that they tend to enforce growth and change.

Sometimes eclipses feel like natural events that cleanse the land. Yet today's natural events are enhanced by factors such as global warming, and a world in which much of the population is situated next to oceans and rivers. Because of the especially tight arrangement of society — everything is wrapped around everything else, which is wrapped around everything else, like a fragile Rube Goldberg machine that engulfs the world — what might ordinarily be a small breakdown or reorganization can have cascading effects.

Of Natural Forces and Integrity

Eclipses are not done — I'll come back to them. But on a similar level, the planet Uranus, force of nature unto itself, is about to enter your cross of the zodiac, the fixed cross. Uranus has spent seven years in Aries (which I discuss in detail below). In May, it begins its transition into Taurus, which is your solar 10th house of work and reputation.

In a sense, every other transit you've got going on feeds or in some way reflects this one. The natural result of the many changes moving through your life is liberation from the familiar, progress, reinvention and actual, creative change. Uranus, like an eclipse, is a disruptive force, and yet its energy must be harnessed and turned into some creative purpose. You will be driven to push limits, and at the same time, you must remain accountable first to yourself, then to others.

Uranus in Taurus, the midheaven angle of your solar chart, is also about having impact, through your work and your leadership.

Uranus, though inventive, has a tendency to run off the rails, and you're the one who must do your part to stay grounded. You need your own relationship with authority; though you must cultivate, develop and maintain that relationship, based on trust, understanding, and the positive results that you get.

One thing to remember is that you have integrity. Your sign, located at the core of the solar year (the peak of Northern Hemisphere summer), is considered by many to be the most powerful of the 12. It's the only sign ruled by an actual star, and not the satellite of one (a planet), or a satellite of the Earth (the Moon). The Sun stands at the center of the solar system, holding the entire thing together with its gravity, and providing most of the available energy through heat, light and other forms of radiation. Leo is strong. You are strong. Yet you must also be flexible (Leo is a fixed sign and can be notoriously stubborn and rigid); and more than anything, you must learn how to ask for and accept help.

The combined influence of an additional solar eclipse in your sign, and many other transits, are describing a scenario where it's important that you maintain your focus and do what you can to cultivate integrity. This is a time calling for *dharma* in the original

sense of the word: acting as if to hold the world together. Yet at the same time, you must do more than act *as if*: it's necessary to have certain points of focus, so that you can gather your strength. The winds of change are going to be blowing hard and strong for the next few years, and you will want to harness those winds rather than have them beat on you or blow you over.

Moreover, with Chiron changing signs, it's essential that you guard certain interpersonal boundaries. Chiron has served as an influence that guards your perimeter in your relationships. It will soon move on to more important work, while you take up its prior role.

Many planetary changes that are taking place will serve as remedies for previous chaotic transits. Two in particular stand out: Chiron entering Aries and your 9th solar house answers the Uranus-Eris conjunction there; and Saturn, which entered Capricorn and your 6th solar house (of work and wellbeing) in late December, responds to Pluto, which has been doing a number there for about 10 years. So, two of the biggest transits, lasting years, to me specify a calming down of chaotic influences, while others will continue to stir the pot — in some new and interesting ways.

Capricorn: Work and Wellbeing

You should know that a distinction of your solar chart is that you have Capricorn as your house of work and wellbeing, the 6th house.

This is one reason why you're such an effective worker; you want to get it all done. You will work with the energy and persistence of an Australian shepherd, tirelessly, at the approximate ratio of one dog per 200 head of cattle. It's true that yours is the sign of the feline, though in many respects, the service-oriented canine suits you a lot better.

Capricorn depends on, and helps create, structure. Its integrity is the structure of time, of organization, and of compartmentalization. You are driven by duty and service to others. This will only start to fall apart when other important influences begin to take over your life, things of equal value (such as a commitment to your spouse or family). Even when your health is compromised, you will continue to work at your usual intensity, or you will try to.

The primary influence on your 6th house has been Pluto, since 2008, which has had two main effects: it's driven you to the point of obsession with certain projects, and it's caused a measure of chaos in your life. Now, Pluto in Capricorn is one of those essential elemental forces that comes along for about 15 years out of every 250 years. The last time it was present in Capricorn, the American Revolution happened (at the end of the transit). In one's personal life, it's also a revolutionary influence, though you must take the role of both Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. You must run the revolution as best you can.

[On a note of personal history, Chiron passed through Capricorn between late 2001 and 2005. A careful study of that era will be fruitful for understanding what is happening now.]

Of all the signs, Capricorn is coming under the most interesting, most numerous and most influential transits. That means your 6th house of work and wellbeing is where most of your emphasis will be for the foreseeable future, though there are several other houses and planetary influences that will be working in concert. But think of Capricorn as the base camp of your life right now. From there, you get to scale the mountain.

Here are the transits that are developing:

Saturn in Capricorn lasts until late 2020 and is now well underway. This is the return of Saturn to the first of two signs that it rules; the earthy, feminine, cool, nocturnal one. Cap is perhaps the very antithesis of Leo, which is a masculine, hot, bright and diurnal sign. (Signs with opposite energy are not the ones exactly opposite on the zodiac circle. Rather, they tend to rest at a 30-degree angle, the neighboring sign; or at a 150-degree angle, the sign that's inconjunct or at a quincunx angle. Leo-Capricorn is the latter.)

One of Saturn's current roles is to reconstruct whatever it is that Pluto has up-ended, in a new fashion, more suited to your current life. However, when rebuilding after some kind of event has knocked out the infrastructure, it's best to build using the

technology of the future, not of the past. You must rebuild your life in the image of what you want to be doing, not what you did in the past.

When Saturn is a prominent factor in your life, the thing you must do is take accountability. The 6th is the house of work and wellbeing, though it's also the house of everyday life: you might say, the one associated with running the farm. Farms are best run on a schedule, and the first thing to do here is to get yours under control. You must have some boundaries around your work, and around your self-care, even if they are minimal. (For example, scheduling some self-care at regular intervals is a good start.)

You begin by establishing some rules, and you try to follow them. Then gradually you learn what's practical, and you bring yourself into alignment. Saturn favors the long-term approach to any situation. Set a goal that spans one year from this reading, for example, and check your progress every season.

One issue I've noticed in some Leos is difficulty delegating; and in extreme cases, difficulty collaborating. This is usually based on the idea that "if you want a job done right, do it yourself," or the concept "a committee of one gets things done" (contrast this with the Aquarian notion, "a committee gets things done"). The reason these are not opposites is because they require integration into one another; both are true. Typically the only group-type committee to

get things done is one with a strong leader and a few good workers. Leo could benefit from the committee approach, if only applying it incrementally, in small doses.

Pholus in Capricorn goes on darned nearly two decades. Count it as a permanent influence, similar to a natal position (note, most people reading this have Nessus in Taurus, Gemini or Cancer; it's easy to look up). Discovered only in 1992, Pholus is a relatively new influence — in astrology. Planets describe things already extant in human affairs. Pholus has two primary modes of influence: the uncontrolled reaction, and the small cause with a big effect. These can work for you or against you. With Pholus, you're dealing with powerful medicine in any event.

Here's how this might shake out: Pholus could represent some influence surrounding your wellbeing that goes out of control.

This is something to be mindful of. Consider every influence you encounter, and consider how it might potentially go out of control — and watch it closely. Then consider what the possible antidote might be, knowing that prevention is the best cure.

Next, consider some small influence that, if cultured, could have a positive effect as it gains influence and momentum. This is also a way of saying: look for seemingly small solutions to seemingly large problems. Look for the minor issue on which the whole worm might

turn. For example, if you know a talented chiropractor, adjusting your spine can turn out to have a holistic effect on your life. This is a minimally invasive kind of procedure that helps you heal from the inside out, or that treats the “whole system” — a holistic approach.

Another Pholus kind of approach to healing would be homeopathy. This is a mode of medicine that’s based as much in learning about the patient, directly from the patient, as it is anything else. Then the medical response to that information is with a nontoxic substance, potent only on the energetic level.

Many different medical and wellbeing approaches exist, including yoga, meditation and any incremental approach. That includes any form of gradual consciousness-raising, shifting patterns, grooming energy, or replacing toxic sources of input with more wholesome ones. I have not systematically studied the instances in which Pholus works as the “small cause with the big effect” versus the “uncontrolled release,” though it would seem from observation that the more positive manifestations are the former and the more negative ones are the latter. In other words, if you take over the process of a planet, you tend to minimize its destructive effects and tap into its resources. This is how any tool works.

Pholus presents a special challenge in that perhaps more than any planet, it seems to be on the verge of going out of control — though that admittedly is a factor of our whole environment.

Pholus also serves as a pressure release, though we usually see its action after the pressure has become unbearable. So one approach is to let off pressure at regular intervals, again as a form of taking over the process — the pressure valve itself.

One other commentary regarding Pholus: the influence of alcohol on health, and on work-related productivity. This is an area better suited for deep personal investigation than an astrological discussion, though I can at least point you in that direction; Pholus often relates to scenarios where alcohol is some kind of catalyst. If you use alcohol, whether casually or like a pro, I would propose — under the influence of Pholus in the 6th — an ongoing check-in on this topic. This could be continual, or it could be on some rotation such as seasonal (for example: four times a year, you bring it up in your therapy process, or some other regular review).

Be especially vigilant around drinking under any form of social pressure, such as from a boss. Handling the matrix of subjects involving charisma, authority figures and social pressure, where alcohol is concerned, are important issues to track under the influence of Pholus.

Quaoar in Capricorn is another transit that will go on for nearly two decades, though it just began this year. I would sum this up as a study in how your family constellation relates to your workplace

environment. This is something to track over the course of your life, to the present day. You would first need to do an assessment of your family pattern, so that you have some dependable reference point. From there, you might compare and contrast how your work-related life has been similar to, or has differed from, your family of origin.

Bringing this into the present, one idea of Quaoar in your 6th house is that your family is composed of the people you work with; or you could say, they are one of your families. While this is true whether one knows it or not, this will be a different experience if you're aware of it: you can make better use of your work-related life as a growth tool, and also get some of the benefits of an extended family.

There's a message implicit here that family is what you might term a network of collaborators in healing, and in the forms of community that are specifically designed to be productive (of which work is one).

Saturn's presence here supports the idea that you may be an innovator or leader in this as a development in your life, in your work environment. Among the things that need to change the very most in society is the environs of our places of employment. For middle-class jobs, most offices have become more casual but no more enjoyable than in years past. Most people still report

dissatisfaction with work. That is not an option for you, and Saturn in Capricorn is among the influences urging you to resolve that sooner rather than later.

The Crow's Nest of Self: Aries in the 9th House

The 9th house is one of the highest perspectives in the chart, meaning that it's up top; and topically, it addresses the whole business of connecting to the universe. For example, the 9th includes connecting to one's higher self, one's notion of God or Goddess, and one's cosmic scheme. This includes, of course, religion as it locates itself all around the lake of spirit, from the most enlightened to the most absurd.

Additionally, the 9th covers the higher courts, higher education, aviation, publishing, long-distance travel and anything foreign or exotic. It's a fantastic house, actually. Note that houses are defined by a confluence of themes.

You, as Leo Sun or rising, have Aries here. Aries is the sign that starts it all, or so they say. It's the first sign of spring in our north-centric astrology; as well as the location of midnight sidereal time, and what we call the Aries Point, the place the zodiac begins. This is what we reckon against the backdrop of the stars to know what age we're in, currently transitioning from Pisces to Aquarius. The Aries Point, in interpretation, is the intersection between the individual

and the collective. One way to think of this is that, in theory, Leo's tendency is to seek oneself as higher self and to connect this to ideas of Goddess and God. The order of operations is to *seek self as a way of seeking the divine*.

So, there's been a heck of a lot going on for you in this house — your whole life (due to Eris's presence there since around 1927) and particularly the past seven years of Uranus in Aries. The Uranus in Aries era has included items like the seven-contact Uranus-Pluto square, and the more recent Uranus-Eris conjunction of 2016 and 2017 (which we're still in the thrall of — deep digital, an extension of the "global village" of radio in the early days).

Let's just say it would help if one of your philosophies of life is chaos theory. That's the clever one about there really being no chaos but, in truth, many overlapping patterns that can be identified. On one level it's amazing you even know who you are, but the wild winds of the soul have pushed you far and deep into figuring it out.

Most humans you meet, particularly Americans, have a limited concept of the 9th house. Spirituality gets dammed up in church or presumed atheism. Going to a meditation group is a big deal — super exotic. Long-distance travel is typically a trip to Disney World. And their vision of the future extends for about six months (unless someone is in college, they don't usually consider serious plans for

the future). The idea of an “inner life” or of contacting Goddess/God within is not an orientation for too many people.

Given your interests, you’re likely to have a more cultivated inner life; though the chaos of Uranus moving through this house has served to scramble things up for you a bit, as well as pushed you to rise above the occasion of your own confusion or restless search for meaning. That is, perhaps, the best way to describe Uranus in Aries in the 9th house. Yet another thing Uranus can bring is the need to be around others who share your perspective; this presents a challenge because yours is so distinct and unique. There are not many other people you can share actual beliefs with.

Chiron and Salacia in Aries

This is all about to change. Instead of the ruckus stirred up by Uranus — and, in particular, the combination of Uranus and Eris — Chiron will be calling your spiritual life into focus. Chiron is closer in influence to Saturn, though it has the ability to ground the uniquely creative (if erratic) expressions of Uranus. Chiron evokes a serious feeling wherever it goes. It has the power of a searchlight, binoculars and a microscope: it’s a tool for awareness, though it will tend to work even if one does not choose to use it.

Chiron’s ingress into Aries, which begins in April (the transition lasts though February 2019), is likely to spark a kind of spiritual

awakening for you. A typical manifestation of Chiron in the 9th (such as in a natal chart) is to provoke a quest to visit the great power spots of the world, such as the Great Pyramid or Delphic Oracle. Given the involvement of Aries, this transit is likely to express itself in a more self-seeking manner, such as the desire to experience things associated with self-development.

Reading, for a diversity of reasons, is a truly important part of this process, because it tends to cultivate inner space and keep a person focused on a thread of thought as it develops.

Please be cautious if you find yourself roaming the “marketplace of ideas” looking for something you can latch on to. Very little that’s presented as such is actually new, and much that’s presented as new is likely to be old wine in new bottles, only watered down considerably. I find it best to avoid trendy, contemporary bestsellers, for a variety of reasons, and to avoid anything in the “self-help” genre.

Stick to classic authors and works that have stood the test of time, and branch out from there. Just to name a few, these might include *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach, *Be Here Now* by Ram Dass, *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir, *The Spiral Dance* by Starhawk, *The Doors of Perception* by Aldous Huxley, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* by Robert M. Pirsig, or *Shamballa: The Sacred Path of the Warrior* by Chögyam Trungpa. I recognize

that most of these books were written by men, though the type of spiritual process indicated by Chiron in Aries is a kind of warrior's journey. This is specifically about encountering the male side of your spirituality.

For those embarking on a deep spiritual path and seeking tools for healing, forgiveness and self-awareness, *A Course in Miracles* is a challenging but concentrated approach. It's the equivalent of a master's degree in spiritual psychology in a year, though it's a lot more than that. Its purpose is to connect a person with *Shekhinah*, the indwelling aspect of God (which is a feminine manifestation, even though the Christian equivalent, the Holy Spirit, is usually referenced as a "he").

You will no doubt have the urge to travel to distant places as a means of opening up your mind. You might skip the popular destinations or the ones that assure enlightenment, and start with the locations you wanted to visit the very most as a child. Are there really any "power places"? All travel (even tourism to some extent, but less so) will help keep a person young. The most important thing you can do is to honor your own curiosity, because that's the thing you're trying to feed, and learn how to rely on.

One problem with most spirituality, from traditional religion to Zen to the New Age, is that it's denuded of sexual feelings and content. This is a little like taking the yeast out of bread, or the alcohol out

of wine. It removes an essential ingredient that makes the thing what it is.

Starting in 2016, a relatively new point called Salacia (270-year orbit, slightly longer than Pluto), entered Aries. (Salacia was discovered on Sept. 22, 2004, in mid-Pisces.)

On first reading, Salacia seems to have a kind of sizzle effect on sexuality. Once Salacia had settled into Aries last spring, where it will be until around 2042, the sexual harassment issue burst out of the gate. While this was happening, Salacia was dancing around on the “personal is political” Aries Point, amplifying the issue.

However, Salacia is about more than this. The discovery chart has many planets in Virgo, which is about gaining an integrated understanding of whatever subject is in question.

There’s also something about confronting the sexual values contained within marriage and the expectation of what marriage will be like. This point is about getting past the concept of sexuality, and sexual politics, and into the actual experience and expression of sex — and thinking about it, and talking about it.

And: the central feature here is about sex as a facet of spiritual consciousness, or the core issue in awakening. Note that most spirituality dances around the issue of sexuality, often handling it with gloves and tongs when it comes up, and dispensing with it as

fast as possible.

You will have Salacia moving through your 9th house for the next 24 years or so. Your sexuality and your spirituality are one thing.

Chiron is going to be making a series of conjunctions to Salacia over the next few years, pushing this issue. Chiron wants to bring anything it touches to full awareness. Considered a sexually enlightening influence in itself, Chiron's contact with Salacia will make it seem obvious that sexuality is a perfectly sane, necessary line of approach to the spiritual question. That opens up a vast realm of study, since some excellent work has been done in this particular realm, though it never quite makes the bestseller list.

Here's a resource list focused specifically on this area of thought.

Remember that Chiron is a holistic influence, so the discussion is about sex as a facet of existence and existence as a facet of sex.

Advanced Astrology: A Compound Aspect Pattern

A little while ago, I was describing the presence of Pholus and Quaoar in Capricorn (your 6th house) — planets with a family theme, in your house of work and healing, and in a sign related to family. These planets in early Cap will be in a long dialog with those in early Aries. Some of these patterns will go on for many years, as several of these points are moving at about the same speed.

Bringing in the 6th house includes specific themes of healing as well as spiritual advancement. Capricorn grounds the whole matter on a practical level. Notably, the Salacia discovery chart has many prominent points in Capricorn, your solar 6th house — Juno (marriage, jealousy), the Moon, Chiron and Pholus. In addition, the North Node of Salacia is in Capricorn, conjunct Juno — hence, the confrontation with matters of sexual attitudes and values in marriage. There's something here about the tradition of sex and marriage that is coming up for question.

When the 6th house is brought in, this is contact with everyday life. The 9th house has that feeling of "something special" or an expanded state of consciousness. The 6th vibrates with "this is normal, everyday stuff," which is exactly where we need sex to be if we're going to get an understanding of it.

Notably, as the house of the workplace, the 6th is both the scene of workplace harassment and its healing, and its alternatives in a healthy social approach to coexisting.

When there's a compound aspect involving many slow-movers (they are rare — especially to have four working at once), when faster planets come along, there will be prominences; that is, the themes will come up in new ways. Keep an eye on any planet entering one of the cardinal signs, and be especially alert around the time the

seasons change, as the Sun will be passing through the aspect pattern.

Note that all of the points involved are aspecting the Aries Point, whether by conjunction or square. This enhances their potential expression and brings in more people, more influence, more impact.

And, this will be magnified by Uranus crossing over what, for you, acts like a personal Aries Point: the first degrees of Taurus. As a Leo, Taurus is one of the most influential signs in your life; or we could say that you gain your influence by working with Taurus. And the presence of Uranus is going to ramp that up considerably.

Mars Retrograde in Aquarius and Capricorn

Every two years, Mars goes retrograde for a little while, for about 12 weeks. This one is noteworthy because it takes place in Aquarius, your opposite sign, associated with your relationships. This parallels eclipses in Leo/Aquarius — the processes are related. What is interesting is that Mars rules your 9th house (which is Aries) and is exalted in your 6th house (which is Capricorn), so all that subject matter finds a new place of expression in this Mars retrograde, which lasts from June 26 to Aug. 27.

Given all the connections — which include the relationship of Mars to Scorpio, your 4th house of family — this will be interesting, and

worth handling consciously.

Mars is essentially the embodiment of desire, intention and anger. To have the desire and the intention available, the anger must be worked with. Similarly, anger can get in the way of desire and intention, distracting you with negative thoughts.

This may be a more sensitive transit for those who have Leo rising, as the Sun is durable enough to take any transit in stride. Still, it's worth considering carefully.

With the retrograde beginning in Aquarius, there's something here about breaking free from conformist patterns. Aquarius on the 7th has a flavor of 'do relationships the socially acceptable way'. It's too easy to get caught in these patterns of acceptability, and to have your own desire subverted in the process. Mars is going to review this pattern, and push you out of it, if at all possible.

Mars represents so many things in your chart, it might seem confusing; though really what you have is a study in your desire nature.

Desire is one of the most controversial subjects, because while nearly every facet of our culture is based on wanting, that usually applies only to what can be attained through spending money or incurring debt. Biological desire is considered taboo by nearly all forms of religion and spirituality, and it's considered base or

disgusting by much of society.

Mars retrograde is not just about making peace with what you want, it's about coming into alignment with your power of desire. This is likely to stir up your own inner material, and at the same time, you'll need to challenge some of the prevailing values of our culture — for example, when you're honest with yourself, you may find that you violate the social norms of your friends in significant ways. You may, at least, set out to question them in ways that are not considered acceptable, so that you can make your own determination.

August 11: Eclipses of 1999 and 2018

You are not quite done with eclipses, the topic we began on. There's one more solar eclipse in Leo, which takes place on Aug. 11 of this year. This is on the anniversary of an eclipse from 19 years ago that had described many changes the world was about to go through, which was in 1999. When we look at the changes of the early 21st century, those are accounted to a planetary aspect pattern, and keen eyes were watching the June 21, 2001, total solar eclipse on the summer solstice.

Yet the Aug. 11, 1999, eclipse was a mighty event; what you might call the Great European Eclipse as it cast its shadow clear across the continent, from Great Britain to Eastern Europe. The 2018 eclipse is

not nearly as powerful (it's partial rather than total, part of a different Saros cycle; it's a whole different event, not a repeat of the prior one on the same date). Yet the fact that it happens in the same solar degree is significant. The degree of the Aug. 11, 1999, eclipse has remained active all these years, showing up from time to time in the charts of important news developments (to give one example, the chart for the 9/11 incident). Eclipse degrees remain active not for six months as you will often read, but usually for years and sometimes for decades.

You can think of the eclipse on Aug. 11, 2018, as closing the book on a long cycle of your life. You are the one who must guide that timeframe to some coherent closure, and consider all that you've learned. While it's rarely true that life resolves in tidy ways (it's more like a David Lynch film, with all kinds of fleeting matters and plot elements), there is likely to be something coherent about the way this summer relates to what began the summer of 1999.

There is one other interesting fact. Eclipses usually come in pairs, a solar and a lunar. This summer, there will be three eclipses: a partial eclipse of the Sun in Cancer on July 13, a total lunar eclipse in Aquarius, and then the partial solar eclipse on Aug. 11. This places the emphasis on your relationships (through Aquarius, helping the work of Mars retrograde), though it does something else. Eclipses are now moving into your 12th house, which is your inner world. This will open your inner vision, and focus the process of change on the psychic and emotional core of your life rather than

in anything that can be easily seen or felt externally. Said another way, your inner life is opening up — a positive thing, with so much happening in the busy world of work, activity and involvement with the world.

Lammas 2018

Event Chart

7 Aug 2018, Tue
09:30:36 EDT +4:00
Kingston, New York
41°N55'37" 073°W59'52"
Geocentric
Tropical
Solar Sign
True Node

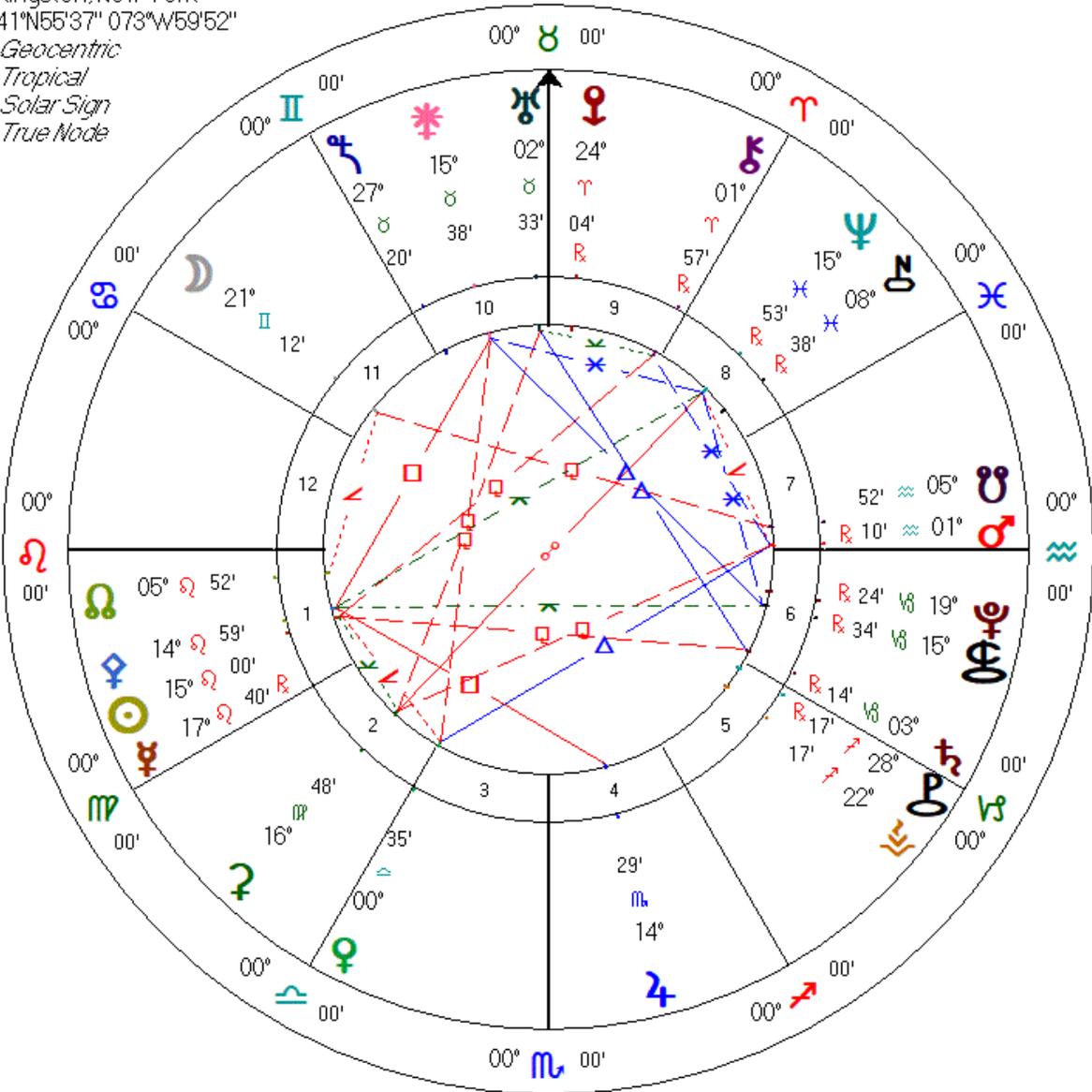


Chart 1 for Leo. Click image for full-size version. [View glyph key here.](#)