The Body & The Cosmos
Exploring The Astrological, Philosophical, and Physical Connection

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By Nadiya Shah
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Introduction

There is beauty, power, magic, acceptance and love that can be found in experiencing your spirit infused in the matter that is the physical body. It is perhaps the greatest blessing of being human. We are both consciousness and physical beings, experienced in unison.

I might hear remarks like, “I am not my body.” To claim so is to deny us the amazing opportunity that exists in knowing one’s self more deeply through the experience of being embodied. We do not simply understand the world through our mind, but we are always actively engaged in perceiving information and gaining knowledge through a variety of physical senses. Our bodies perceive and process knowledge and experiences. Our mind is a part of this process.

Over-identification with the body creates distortion as well. This creates a situation where we begin to identify with a part of us that is ultimately false. To place undue importance on the appearance is unsatisfying because the appearance is temporal, subject in some ways to the winds of influences like genetics, external events, and age. Once undue importance is placed on appearances above the spiritual experience of being in the body, we have moved away from being embodied and understanding the body as a site and source of wisdom.

To see yourself only from the outside is to disregard the experience that comes from within. There is something to be said for focusing your attention on the information coming in through
the senses; how you witness the world from the place of being in a physical body. To care more about how you are being perceived by others and placing prominence on how you look takes away the power of the spiritual experience of being alive. The power of being a human being is gone.

In this situation there is no embodiment, only insecurity and uncertainty. There is also no authentic self-love in this situation. If you think that in order to be loved we need to look a certain way or be physically appealing to others, you have moved out of the body and out of love, for the love you seek from the world is not within. You are denying yourself of the acceptance you crave.

**Acceptance is one of the greatest experiences of embodiment.**

Self-image is one thing, but the experience of being active and being alive is another completely different spiritual reality. Being alive is a powerful spiritual experience, free from the emotionally fluctuating perception of self-image. Being alive is breath, wonder, centeredness, balance, beauty, strength, renewal, constant change, inner transformation and feeling the power of spirit. It returns one to one’s self. It becomes a grand microcosm within your own body for how the entirety of the Universe, and all of the beautiful spiritual lessons contained within and through it, exists within your individual being. It is transcendence to feel the spirit through the body and know that it is in every part of you and yet you are bigger. It is life. And life is a great gift.

I have also heard people say that God isn’t somewhere outside; God is within us. There is nothing like experiencing your body as alive through being physically active that the God-force itself comes to the foremost. It is God itself that is experienced through physical activity, not by divorcing one’s self from the body. It is by recognizing and experiencing wisdom and knowledge through the perspective of having a body, not just a mind, that we claim to be embodied. It is to experience spirit and body as one.

There have been some benefits stemming from divorcing the mind and body. People are recognized as inherently spiritual. Most people have had the experience, whether through disease or injury, when an interesting dichotomy presents itself. Those are times when we feel that our spirit wants one thing, but the demands of our body require something else. Changes in the body, or an unhealthy state, can sometimes indicate when we are living a life out of balance or in some way inauthentic to ourselves. However, this isn’t usually the case. We think that our body needs changing based on how it appears. There are times when we feel
powerless over our body, and therefore ourselves. Times when our body does not behave as we would like it to, or isn’t expressing what we view ourselves to be, or when we feel a deadweight weighing us down, a weight that feels burdensome and impeding. In these cases, we can be caught in a strange duality, feeling a separation, while still seeking to gain some knowledge, some power, which will allow resolution and unity. These are the times when the spiritual lesson of acceptance makes itself most known.

There is certainly a part of us that is experienced independent of the body, an awareness that lets us know that there is consciousness within us. But we are in bodies right now and experience this consciousness through the body. It is because we have bodies that certain phrases or images can give us chills, raise our heartbeat, or leave us breathless. It is because we are essentially embodied that we can know our experience to be a spiritual one, because it is by knowing the spirit infused in the body that we come to gain knowledge and have moments of absolute wonder.

The tree does not inspire us only because it is a physical presence. Nor does it inspire simply because there is something that is not the tree that is denoted by its presence. The tree, the flower, and other aspects of the natural environment have the power to move us because they speak to the merging of spirit and matter. They are infused with spirit. They indicate something sacred because they exist in the physical form, not in spite of it.

The famous quote “I am a spiritual being having an earthly experience” holds two parts to an equation. It is acknowledging the sacred expression that we are, and also that this sacredness is experienced in the present moment, in and through our earthly, embodied experience. We are not purely spiritual beings in the same sense that a spirit or angel might be. We have physical bodies that are a part of our spirituality, a part of our spiritual existence. It is because of the body that we know we have emotions, desires, and spiritual lessons. It is because of the body that we can know ourselves as sacred. It is because of the body that we can even have a mystical experience, for it is the senses that become altered and heightened during such events in the spiritual life of the human being.

The Mind-Body-Soul connection speaks to this, though not overtly. Because the Mind is placed first, there is the recognition that we do have an aspect of us that is experienced as autonomous and individualistic. The Mind makes conscious decisions and can guide the Body in the direction it desires to go. The Body is recognized as intelligent, as a part of this connection. It does not operate independently of the Mind and the Soul. In fact, the Body is infused with Soul, and guided and informed by the Mind. This infusion, for me, is the most
important and also most disconnected to how we understand this connection. The Body has a
wisdom and knowledge that is all its own. It stands witness in love and non-judgment, to all the
things we feel and all that we think. The Soul permeates us all, yet we have an individual Soul
that speaks to the depths of our desires and yearning.

The Sufis say that the Universe is in a place of continuous unfolding, gradually revealing itself
to us. In the same way, the intricacy of our Mind-Body-Soul connection is also a place of
constant revelation. The more deeply we understand just what the Mind-Body-Soul connection
means to each of us in our own lives, the more we will come to know ourselves better.

To know ourselves better, as an integrated whole, yet connected to everyone and everything.
This is perhaps one of the greatest freedoms.

Defining Spirituality

To define spirituality is a daunting task, because it is so highly relative. What I consider spiritual
is closely aligned with what I consider truth. Defining truth is deeply personal. I am certainly
influenced by New Age philosophy, with its emphasis on inner authority. In fact, I do believe
that it is in the voice of inner authority that we find the divine.

Deciphering between fears and the divine guidance from within can be difficult sometimes until
I ask myself two key questions: does knowing this or believing this make me a kinder person?
Does this move me closer to love? These two key questions, centered on kindness and love,
are my barometer as to whether something I feel is rooted in fear or God. If I am not moving
closer to kindness or love, then it is most likely fear that is motivating my actions, or the lens
with which I am justifying them.

Another distinction that is valuable for me is separating religion from spirituality. In its most
positive understanding, religion is a place of community, cultural identity, and altruism. What I
am discussing in this book is separate from these things. Spirituality is the personal cultivation
of an enhanced union with one’s own creator, interchangeably called God, Universe, Source,
Higher Power or Higher Self.

Throughout history it was understood that what was in our external world was also a part of us
within. The Sufi Ibn’Arabi considered the human body a microcosm to the macrocosm that is
the Universe. The human body is, in its entirety, not only a complete reflection of the Universe,
but also connected to and contains the Universe, right down to each of its intricate parts.
Through this exploration we can begin to consider our physical self symbolically, revealing our emotional lessons and spiritual truths, especially in times of discomfort or pain.

As our human understanding about ourselves and our world has evolved, so too has our understanding of the cosmos and our connection to it. The sky is now seen as exemplified archetypes, denoting our collective and individual experience. Every one of these 12 archetypes is an aspect of all of us, although as we explore, we will find ourselves resonating with some more strongly than others, given our personal tendencies and history. Through the Neo-Platonic rationale called “sympathy,” every single aspect of the lived world, human reality, right down to the different parts of our body, was divided into the separate domain of each of the 12 archetypes. The varying nature of each part of the body reflects and symbolizes aspects of the soul and our shared human experiences.

**What This Book Is and What It Isn’t**

This work was inspired by researching Plato’s “Timaeus,” in which he describes his theory of sympathy, and our mystical understanding of our connection to the cosmos, held together by “vital chains.” The personal and astrological correspondences I made from there are detailed in this book. Because of the focused nature of this book, exploring the zodiac from the perspective of its connections to the different parts of the human body, students of medical astrology may find it useful. Others who are interested in deepening their personal connection to the cosmos may also find inspiration in connecting their embodiment with the sky. However, for a more encompassing introduction, have a look at my book “Astrology Realized,” which provides an introduction to Natal Chart Astrology.

This book in no way provides medical advice, or suggests explicitly or implicitly, that there is any medical advice herein. Personally, I have found tremendous benefit from consulting medical doctors and using established medical treatment, including medications. If you have any symptoms that could use the advice, insight, or opinion of a doctor, please do consult with your doctor as soon as possible. Medical professionals are here for a reason, as part of practical measures we can take to bring balance to spirit and matter. Doctors are doing sacred work, as part of continuing a sacred tradition of healing, in a modern context. For this, and the ways in which doctors and other medical professionals have helped me, members of my family, and other people I love, I am personally forever grateful.

Another point of clarity; I do not believe that we necessarily manifest our physical ailments. There are times when we are genuinely powerless in the face of physical pain and challenge.
However, I do believe that any feeling, ailment, emotion, or experience, no matter how challenging, can be learned from and learned through. I do believe that there is a higher wisdom playing out in all things, even if we can’t recognize it or appreciate it in the moment. I do believe that we can take any challenge, physical or otherwise, and use it as an opportunity to become more loving and wiser than we were before.

However, sometimes the wisdom is to connect with medical professionals. As part of the intricate tapestry of our lives, in connecting with others, in being in certain spaces, we can’t always know on the surface how many infinite possibilities are opened to us. Even if our physical distress is not ideal, and something we hope for is fleeting, in seeking help, we may open ourselves to experiences, connections with people, and inner wisdom that might not have been possible any other way.

I consider this book to be partly contemplative, and partly proactive. The contemplative part allows you to consider the sky and its connection to you more personally than you have before. The proactive part includes specific actions you can take, from physical activities to meditative focus, that can help you cultivate your unique relationship with the cosmos.

Each chapter is divided into 2 main sections. The Body and The Cosmos is part exploration, part meditation. The section where we focus on the body includes a contemplation on our physical connection to the sky. Here you will see specific traditional exercises and yoga poses you can incorporate as part of your workout or other health routines, to affirm your connection to the cosmos through that part of your body, linked to another part of the zodiac.

The second section features an outline of meditations you can practice. First, you’ll learn some basics of breath, and then learn a few techniques per sign, to help in your meditative explorations on your connection to the cosmos.

**How To Use This Book**

You’ll notice that each sign of the first section begins with correspondences. Specific colors, semi-precious stones, flowers or herbs are included in this list. As part of your explorations on your connection to the sky, you may wish to incorporate some of these external correspondences to your routines, meditations, or rituals as a means to strengthen the physical and spiritual qualities that sign represents. Just like Plato’s theory of Sympathy correlates the body to the sky, so does all of our physical world around us. These correspondences
encourage you to align your immediate environment with the actions you take, whether those actions are physical steps or intentional spiritual alignment.

You may choose to time your practices, whether meditative or otherwise, in accordance to moon cycles, new moons or full moons, or perhaps the solar cycles, delving into a sign of an astrological month. Others might want to focus only on the suggestions for the moon sign, rising sign, or sun sign as part of utilizing these suggestions. Regardless of how you first incorporate the information in this book, my hope is that you know that this wisdom is always here, available to you. Just as the entirety of the cosmos is a part of you as well, so will the potential benefit of each of the signs and sections be here for you to develop and grow too.

I do believe that the singular thing any astrologer can do to help themselves be as good an astrologer as possible, is to cultivate a personal relationship with the astrological sky. All its symbols, planets, asteroids, stars, and constellations represent an intimate connection that connects deep within you. We are made of the same stuff as the stars, after all. The more you cultivate this relationship between all of yourself and more of the sky, the more they will be able to speak to you personally. The more it is also that they will be able to speak through you personally, as you interpret their symbols. Interpretation is the defining act of being an astrologer. You will be able to speak to the sky with greater richness and conviction the more you cultivate this relationship through your time in contemplation, education, and experiential meditation.

What I do hope is to encourage your contemplation on the sacredness of the body and its integration with the cosmos. I hope to remind us that our bodies and our lives are part of a magnificent and divine expression, as glimpsed in the mystery of the sky which we are intimately connected to.
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And You’ll Get Free Gifts!

– You will get an advance copy of the book, signed by me, shipped out by Halloween, 2019

– You will get the NEW Astrology Meditations by Nadiya Shah that will be for sale for $19.95 by Halloween. These audios are recorded especially to facilitate a profound connection with each archetype of the zodiac. Nadiya will lead you on a guided meditation, usually around 5-10 minutes each, as we explore the spiritual and personal connection you hold with the cosmos in you. You will get guided meditations as an audio download for each and every sign!

– You will get “The Universe is Wise & Loving” pendant with 925 silver plate designed by me (regular price $9.95). Get your own necklace to wear and enjoy, and to affirm in your life and in the world that “The Universe is Wise and Loving”.

– You will get a personal Thank You card, addressed to you personally and written by me.

Advance Copies On Sale Until October 1, 2019

Advance Copies Ship Before Halloween, October 31, 2019

Pre-Order The e-book on Amazon Before Dec 8, 2019, forward us the receipt and get the meditations as audio downloads as a free gift on launch date!

Official Launch on Amazon on December 9, 2019
The Body & The Cosmos

The entirety of the cosmos is within us. Plato details as such in his noted dialogue Timaeus, which presents a mystical exploration of the origins of the Universe, and our intimate, individual connection to it. The Body and The Cosmos uses Plato’s work as a jumping off point, drawing astrological associations to Plato’s historic philosophical articulation. By drawing these connections, Nadiya Shah presents a work that is truly unique. At once a theoretical exploration, and simultaneously a practical guide, filled with movement suggestions and guided meditations. In this book you’ll learn how each of the 12 signs of the zodiac speak through us, body and soul, for their esoteric relevance. It is meant to be a starting point, to facilitate a deep connection to a cosmos you can feel within.

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French Vanity Fair named Nadiya Shah one of the top 12 astrologers on the planet, crowning her a pioneer in video astrology. She is an Internationally Syndicated Astrologer, Author, Media Personality, and is one of the few people in the world to hold an M.A. in the Cultural Study of Cosmology and Divination, from the University of Kent, United Kingdom.

Nadiya’s School “Synchronicity University” teaches astrology online and worldwide. Nadiya’s wildly popular Youtube channel, nadiyashahdotcom, is one of the most watched Astrology channels in the world.

Visit Nadiya’s website at nadiyashah.com