

The Evolution of Consciousness: *the Mutable and Fixed Crosses*

by Donna Mitchell-Moniak

Consciousness evolves. Various macro-influences ensure that. The mutable and fixed crosses are such. To think that the “modes,” or crosses, are merely astrological factors would be a mistake. They are what move nascent humanity through the development of identity and finally to at-one-ment and full participation as consciousness itself in the creative manifestations of life.

These influences are not really astrological, though it is through astrology that we name them; instead, they are modes of experience that span great lengths of time, slowly evolving a human being. Therefore, the thoughts that follow do not pertain to one’s personal astrology per se. We need never know anything about our horoscope in order to see the evolution of consciousness presented in this essay. These thoughts reveal the Path we all live and give us deeper understanding of the psycho-spiritual journey of becoming illumined.

The Mutable Cross

The mutable cross is the wheel of dharma rolling ceaselessly along, teaching right relation to life, one another, and one’s self. The fundamentals or spokes of the wheel have no religious underpinnings but are based upon the principles that will one day make each individual an integrated personality ready for relation with the soul.

The wheel rolls along a flat plane of existence; the incarnations are countless and mediocre. The personality is forming, being molded by experience. Though the livingness is along a flat plane of awareness, the wheel of mutability is not flat. Its girth is the fullness of the 18 subplanes [1] of personal experience, which are the three worlds.

The wheel probably starts out small, encompassing or opening into the lower subplanes of matter, until experience and minimal growth of intellect and response affords the inclusion and expansion of the next subplane. Then the wheel is more like a rolling snowball, slowly increasing as it moves along. This is how the personality is created, slowly organized, and begins to be integrated. This is how it is moved from minimal intellect, to intelligence, conscience, and the sense of single self. Little by little intelligence becomes the beginning of skills, character, and tendencies.

The Fixed Cross

The fixed cross starts out from the flat plane of the developing personality. And the image that best conveys this is a block St. Andrew’s cross (X) within the 18 subplanes. Thus, for the beginning or longest part of fixed cross evolution the person is still experiencing life as flat plane. Furthermore, it’s as if the fixity compounds the flat plane-

ness because for a long time no matter where the person is within the cross of fixity, all he or she knows is that subplane. This is limitation.

The intention behind limitation is growth through discontent and lack of satiety. Thus fixity eventually births the desire for more through the desire to feel satisfied and to relate. This is monumental. Sought-for-happiness begins a reaching; reaching out keeps one within the horizontal flat plane block of fixity. Reaching up gives one more. This becomes the beginning of aspiration; aspiration becomes ascent. Now the flat line of countless incarnations birthing and creating a personal self can become the beginnings of a bell curve. The Path truly begins.

Our experience thus far upon the fixed cross has compartmentalized us. We are like so many Tupperware containers stacked on top of one another, each of them closed. This was born of the block-ness of the fixed cross and its purposefulness to develop the many different aspects of our intellect, lower desires, possessions, comforts, inertia, and repeated applications of lower personal will. Many factors have been developed but each has then solidified a wall of distinction and definition, therefore of limitation and limitedness. These become patterns and needs and also eventually become criticism and judgment.

But with the first inklings of aspiration comes verticality and eventual ascent. The fixed cross which has been flat now slowly begins to be erected. This image is given to us by Christed Jesus on the ground being nailed to the cross and then the cross being erected.

Incremental verticality brings many results of evolution in consciousness:

perspective little by little gained. This brings the sense of gain and loss, empowerment/disempowerment, have/have not, chaos/beauty, pain/pleasure, space/time, time/schedule, and many more.

We can see how this ricocheting up and down moves us along. Each of the pairs of opposites are created factually in our experience and thus locked in our sentient mind as real and lasting; as fixed and permanent. These become how we now define reality, our existence, and the existence of everyone and everything else.

limitation. The ricocheting creates tension; friction as well. We experience density, limitation, sensed ease/freedom/happiness, then limitation again (loss, frustration, anger, disappointment).

An interesting component of this dynamic is that at first we just experience the up, which is our first expression of infant self. Then the vertical aspirations and searching begin to create the equal reverberations in the matters of the self “below” the point of our “take off.” True integration begins. Probably before this we have only lived coordination.

The cross arights itself little by little, more and more. As it does, we grow tremendously in character, skill, and acumen. Our patterns get even more developed, some becoming

skills of use to the on-looking soul, others becoming glammers and deeply rooted illusions of self. The Path bell curve shows a slow moderate rise.

Catalysts can now be introduced. These are the work of the on-looking soul. Teachers, teachings, education overall, and experiences that stretch us--relationally, intellectually--causing us to think and make choices and take on a sense of responsibility. Now the bell curve starts to steepen. Loss hurts more. Happiness feels more satisfying, but satisfaction doesn't last. One's skills bring recognition and so we "do" in order to feed acknowledgement and a sense of self worth. More glammers are created and the illusion of a separated self gets more established. Life and everything in it is known only through the reinforcing of this and that. Duality is good and bad, plus and minus, me and you, us and them.

Now we really start to feel pressure: time pressure, relationship pressure, financial pressure, etc. And a period of vague longing and divine discontent commences.

spirituality. We start to ask big questions; now we search for something more than the material and dense worlds can provide. We begin to aspire spiritually. "Am I more than these flesh and bones?" we ask with the Bard.

Conscience (right and wrong, good and bad) is slowly becoming awareness and consciousness. Slowly. We start to notice, usually outside of our self, the patterns of others and what that gets them, positive and negative. Little by little we begin to see the same in our self. The Tupperware containers are still there but now become mirrors reflecting back to us what we were unaware of, similar to when we first began to see.

The function of the fixed cross becomes the experience of the burning ground. The bell curve steepens again. The person calls out in prayer, pain, and meditation. He or she ponders, reflects, contemplates, thinks more. This is invocative and the soul begins to earnestly and repeatedly respond. The response is filtered through the Tupperware boxes of this and that, through paradigms and belief systems creating what is real and therefore what is possible to the person's imagination and what is not. Thus some people hear God responding to their prayer, others get insight or guidance by many names. All are the soul in its majesty and majestic power.

Coordination led to integration. Integration leads to infusion: soul infusion. The fixed cross now becomes a tool for the "fixed design" of the soul to be infused into the growing and changing personality. Insight, understanding, revelation, and knowing continue to happen and grow the personal sense of self. These also become soul's opportunity to expose the finite sense of self to tastes of the scope and scale of soul's vastness, wonder, and glory.

These are the lifetimes of squeeze. Soul's fullness increasingly seeks to enter into the personal self. But the personal ego is limited, circumscribed by its thoughts of itself and of reality. Soul pushes into the old wine skin of the persona and the personality rebels, feels that its very survival is threatened, that it must sacrifice and surrender its power

(lived only in relation to doing and the feed-back-loop of personal self worth). This is the most difficult part of the Path, and though it will last lifetimes, it is the shortest in the overall development of consciousness. The ascent gets harder and steeper. We are the mountain we are ascending. We are beginning to surmount our self. The fixed cross stands vertical.

Soul pours down the vertical line of aspiration, devotion, and dedication and horizontally we pour out soul's goodness and the growth in us to others. We are being changed and so seek to change our worlds, inner and outer.

the center. Now the fixed cross is standing and is the familiar symbol we know. The bottom line is longer because our personality and density are still the fuller factor of us. The soul and its influence is less but growing. Both the vertical access and the horizontal distribution are established. These create a further and equally powerful dynamic: the magnetic powerful center. The center of the cross is both symbolic and factual in our life. The symbol is that the cross is the meeting point of the two lines but is also their origin. The lines pass through each other and the intersection creates the center. But equally the center point is the source of our attempts at verticality, aspiration, and devotion, and of our reaching out, which becomes goodness, creative expression and service, thus the horizontal.

The center of the cross, related as it is to the heart, pulses its magnetism into our life. The heart is the soul within us. And so the soul using the vertical channel of downflow pours its higher qualities and larger perspectives into the personality. Soul infusion is progressing at a rapid pace. The heart as an instrument of the soul pours forth relation, understanding, creativity, and the empowerment of others. And, most importantly, the magnetic center of the cross begins to centralize the life expression of the person. Simplification begins slowly to replace complexity. Singleness of purpose begins to replace widespread and well-intended activity. Little by little, overwhelm, over-extension, not well defined boundaries or a well understood sense of personal responsibility, all start to be refined by the centralization of the magnetic center of the fixed cross. The rhythm of the heart and lungs symbolize this.

These two organs are more than meet the medical eye. Metaphysically, they represent the highest gifts and possible developments of the fixed cross. The heart is the beating center of livingness. It circulates our blood and thus we flow. The lungs countlessly and automatically open and receive all that life has to offer and then just as easily release all that is unnecessary or unused. This receiving and releasing makes it possible for the heart to be fed and pump pure livingness not only through our veins, but through us into the world. Breath is life. Breath is rhythm. Heart is the pulse of life and that which gives repose, composure, peace, and understanding.

asana. The magnetic center of the fixed cross brings another powerful dynamic into our lives and makes possible the next growth and expressions of consciousness: asana. Asana, explained more fully below, is born of the fixity of

the fixed cross. Fixity at first meant limitation. This became stabilization as we, through the processes of ascent, began to create and experience the pairs of opposites. These experiences created our self-made reality. Stabilization grew into steadfastness and endurance as pain and pleasure, happiness and disappointment, love and love lost, became the experience of living with opposites.

Asana, from a higher or fuller point of view is many things:

- one's position within one self and in life;
- one's attitude and the ability to maintain altitude, perspective, relativity, openness, and an open or wide point of view;
- one's ability to remain centered, to get centered, or composed through decentralization and having learned that no person is the end all and be all of anything. Decentralization, depersonalization, detachment, and therefore increased calm, poise overall, and the decrease of self importance all increase as we live asana.

Asana is what naturally happens as the fixed cross has done the majority of its work of evolving our consciousness. Asana is becoming established (fixed) in spiritual beingness. We become points of light to our self ("Be a lamp unto your self"), and points of clarity and goodness to others and in the world ("You are the light of the world"). The fixed cross has developed the constancy of the downflow of the soul in us, such that that which began as reaching toward transcendence becomes the realized expression of immanence. We begin to realize that we are the soul, conscious beings, bringing love, goodness, light, and empowering creative expression into the world. We have become the cross instead of just being grown by it.

Through all of this, that which started out as the unequal armed cross with a longer base and shorter top has changed. As we have reached up through prayer and meditation, through searching and guidance, the upper vertical line has extended ever more into the higher realities, into greater perspectives, and into the soul and soul-ness.

Equally, and as a result, the bottom line so long rooted in material existence and sought-after gratification has become the way by which the goodness contacted above is rooted evermore in the life. This rooting stabilizes us, like roots of a tree. A great tree is only great in stature because of its root system. Similarly, soul's depth, fullness of compassion and understanding flow down the vertical line of alignment through the heart, and soul's presence roots within us and thus establishes us in consciousness.

The horizontal lines have also grown, extending out more and more in service. And so what started out as a flat and closed block of density, almost impermeable to reality, transforms over lifetimes and becomes a cross rising through the density of matter and insatiable material existence. Eventually it becomes the cross of perspective and an established wide/wise point of view. The fixed cross has become the cross of soul presence and expression.

The mountain of strictly personal expression has been climbed and we have risen to new heights of self and thus truer understanding of what and who the self is. The Self is more than these flesh and bones, more than passions and desires, disappointments and loss. We are consciousness itself. We are the Soul.

The fixed cross has become the mount of ascension and the myths, legends, and scriptures of the world speak of the climb and the eventual result of ascending through aspiration. We ascend through perseverance, steadfastness, and dedication eventually surmounting the very cross we have become and are met with glory and its visions. The myths and scriptures of the world portray this as well. And they do so because it is the eventual and universal experience of every human being.

The Path is one of contrast, transformation, and transfiguration. The crosses have been the primary tool and process of the same. We are changed little by little, and sometimes categorically. When its work is complete, the fixed cross has made a person into a fixed point of light--conscious, aware, and unmoved from a state of perpetual, consistent illumination. They are awake, enlightened, illumined.

This is what we are all living and the crosses are just one way that we are guaranteed the success of consciousness. We will find our selves anywhere along the bell curve of the Path of the evolution of consciousness, yet the goal or end result is assured. We just strive and pray, and open ourselves to the fact of all possibilities. This invites the transformation offered by the soul.

Donna Mitchell-Moniak is the founder of Spirit Fire Meditative Retreat Center and its School of Meditation and School of Conscious Living. www.SpiritFire.com She is the author of two books: *Astrology Illumined*, *Revealing Soul Through Astrology*, and *Magic in the World, the Seven Laws of the Soul*, as well as many articles in various publications. These articles and more are posted in the Reading Room of the Spirit Fire website.

Spirit Fire brings the teachings of consciousness into practical application. Its School of Meditation with its practice of Awareness meditation and the School of Conscious Living invite all who seek to deeply understand and effectively apply.

[1] The eighteen subplanes are comprised of the seven related to the physical plane, the seven related to the emotional or sentient planes, and the lower four of the seven related to mental plane. In the Bailey schema, the three higher subplanes are related to the soul and the higher mind.