



The Astrology of Family Dynamics

Erin Sullivan

(York Beach, ME; Weiser Books, 2001)

In 2001, this book was considered ground-breaking within the field of Astrology. Today, it continues to offer deep and comprehensive insight into 'The Astrology of Family Dynamics'.

Back in the day, Erin Sullivan's book was one of the first Astrology books I acquired. 'Family' is what originally drew me towards astrology, and the title was tempting. However, it would be a few years of astrological study combined with ongoing family research before I fully appreciated all this text has to offer. Recently, and for the first time, I have read the book cover-to-cover and am even more intrigued and deeply entrenched in the subject.

Fascinating as a foundational reference to one's understanding and perspective of their own family, there is much to consider here! Sullivan has gone to great lengths in providing background, psychological perspective, and suggested methods of enquiry for astrological analysis. She clearly states that this is not a *cookbook*, but the focus "is on themes, nuances, hints, suggestions, lineage, nets and webs – all the subtle connections between family charts."¹

The book begins by providing us with a picture of family in relationship to the overall collective, and what that means for the individual, their thinking, and their vision. Supported by historical facts and astrological references, the discussion on generational influences is fundamentally important. This is essential in considering the evolutionary development of the family unit. One begins to understand the impact of environmental events and issues that influence the lives of the individuals and family groups.

The case studies included are fascinating and well-written. The title of this section is "Real Lives, Real People", and the stories allow us to clearly see the significant role of astrology in understanding family dynamics within the context of varied situations and structures. One of the elements of this book that I appreciated most was the care and professionalism Sullivan used in her approach to this work, and her clients.

Based on my own experience, I was able to fully appreciate the depth and importance of Sullivan's work. And I can attest to the benefits of the techniques she suggests, having successfully used them, or variations of them, in my work. However, it is important to underscore the complexity of this subject. If you have already begun to research your own family's charts and dynamics through the lens of astrology, you will know there is a great deal of work involved on so many levels. Personally, it is the most rewarding and satisfying work I have ever done...within the scope of Astrology or otherwise. If you have an interest in Astrology of the Family, this book is essential reading. [LL]

¹ Erin Sullivan, *The Astrology of Family Dynamics* (p. xii)