

Noel Tyl, interview
UAC, Denver, CO. May 2008.

A conversation with Noel Tyl
by Tore Lomsdalen

Noel Tyl – by many considered one of the “Grand Old Men of Astrology” – has been practising astrology for 35 years. He has written 37 books on astrology of which *Vocations* and *Noel Tyl’s Guide to Astrological Consultation* [Llewellyn Publications] are the two latest. He has a Degree in Social Relations (Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology) from Harvard University, where he also studied Theology. As well, Noel Tyl was an internationally renowned opera singer for 25 years, specializing in the works of Wagner. He heads the Master’s Certification Course for Astrology with students throughout 26 countries. He is a very popular lecturer for seminars and conferences internationally. Noel Tyl lives in a suburb of Scottsdale Arizona. He can be reached through his website: NoelTyl.com and NoelTyl@cox.net.

We had an early morning breakfast at the UAC conference hotel in Denver CO. I asked him first what was behind his name.

“My being named Noel comes from the fact that I was expected to be born at Christmas time. Noel, of course, is ‘Christmas’ in French. Since I was so tall, I guess, it took me a longer time to arrive(!) and I wasn’t actually born until New Years Eve, December 31. Still my mother insisted I be called “Noel.”

[A light-hearted laugh eased the situation before I got on to my next question.]

Have you ever considered yourself a Maverick within the astrological society?

I think it may have appeared so 35 years ago. Many of my innovations back then to modernize astrology held on and entered the literature and practices of astrology. I am not a Maverick, but rather, a catalyst for development. I feel I have earned a senior position that is comfortable to me. I ‘m in the right profession, and I have done well.

But you don’t seem to follow the mainstream astrology, neither in the way you teach, lecture nor practise astrology?

Yes, I think that it is an extraordinarily fine opportunity whenever someone can creatively contribute substantially within one's field of work. Why keep saying the same things all the time? Let's grow and keep up with the times!

Noel, where is the state of the art of astrology today?

We must recognize how astrology has developed and is presented in order to receive the respect of the society in which it functions.

Fortunately, today, I can walk into a bank asking for a loan, saying my profession is an astrologer. Thirty to forty years ago it was an uncomfortable position to be in. Then you would get the question, "Astrology? What's that?". Now with so many fine presentations of astrology and many astrologers regularly on TV, the public has come to respect it.

Planets don't do anything — people do!

What's the reason for that?

The field now is so well presented: more books than ever before have been published, and astrological technique has been developed with great understanding of the human condition. The dimension of fatalism has been eased aside, and a more holistic view is put forth in the presentations of astrologers. It is no longer the perception of *planets doing things to us*; we are realising that "planets don't do anything – *people do*", which is one of my major teaching points. By this statement, I want to transmit a way of thinking that we as astrologers are really holding up a mirror, helping the client to reflect and understand personal development, bringing into consciousness his or her developmental considerations.

The development of astrology: do you think it is connected to the general interest of spiritual awareness among the population.?

I do not use the word *spiritual*. I think spirituality is a way of living rather than a goal in life. People need all the help they can get to understand who they really are, to reach the goal of their life.

How do we find our goals in life?

When you think about it, the most we do in our life is *work*. We work more than we sleep or do anything else, actually. –Now, how many people do you know who are in the wrong profession, and they just crank it out to get through their life? Work, our profession, our job affects everything. It influences how we see ourselves, how we portray ourselves to our children; it basically conditions everything in life.

Based on this reality, I have come up with an innovative way to profile vocational needs astrologically. --I can look at your horoscope and quickly tell you what you could do to feel fulfilled in your work, in your life.

You, Tore, are not an Accountant or a Chemist. If you had been diverted into one of those professions, you would feel frustrated because your real needs would not be fulfilled as they are in your present profession.

There is something enormously exciting about the Midheaven Extension Process regarding vocational profile, which I have developed. The thrilling thing is, when you work with a client to discover their true profession and they have an opportunity to pursue that, it is *revelatory*. --I have dealt with client cases when someone in their mid thirties who was working in marketing was sorely unhappy and frustrated. I suggested to this person that he would be far more fulfilled in the ministry. He gasps in understanding and recognition, answering, “I have always wanted to be a Priest!”

I can give you another example from just the other day. A 62-year old lady who has never held a job and was desperately trying to fulfil something rewarding in the last stage of her life: I was able to suggest to her through the Midheaven Extension Process that a career in Social Services would be a thrilling thing for her to do. She agreed immediately, and I added, “for the homeless;” and she just about fell off her chair! That was something she always had wanted to do, secretly within herself.

The consultation with the astrologer paid off. It took the blankets away from long time desires and hopes. It gave her confidence to take the next steps. The consultation then became a strategy discussion about how to do it and get a specialized education in that field at her age.

This is very exciting and brings me back to your question about the state of our art. Thirty-four years ago we could not do these things in astrology. Now we can! --There are many innovations in astrology. Many innovations have been put forth for detecting vulnerability to certain “diseases” within human psychological behaviour patterns, for another example.

Vocational profiling is an all- important domain within our field of work.

You, yourself have a long list of credits when it comes to innovations.

Isn't that nice? It is most fulfilling. To mention some: I developed and presented the whole body of knowledge of Saturn retrograde phenomenology, the Nodal Axis consideration with maternal influence, the psychodynamic interplay within the Grand Crosses of Houses, and more. There are many innovations that follow through with my humanistic style. --We are back to putting fate aside and seeing potentials, through planets that are guiding us to understand a pattern of development. Overall, I think I have contributed the ways to apply psychological Need Theory to modern understanding of astrological measurements.

Needs make things happen; it is fundamental for a modern astrologer to understand that. --Let's go back to the vocational theory: *I need* to be a dramatic communicator, a teacher and a writer and fortunately I am in the right professions, from singing opera to doing astrology. I am fulfilling my reigning need with everything I do.

Vocational guidance is of utmost importance in the work we astrologers do. The traditional ways we have been following up until now have been a process far too long and terribly unsure. I have worked for years trying to simplify it and increase confidence in the process of finding the right profession.

It used to be a process of “26 technical steps”, and that is an actual quote from one of the old books, and then it took a lot of fortitude to believe in what you came up with! In many cases, the clients would say, “No”, and all that work was wasted.

I have developed a process that can do it in 15 or 90 seconds, depending on the case and one's level of skill. This is of course not something only I can do, but anyone who has learned this technique can do it too.

I know astrologers and students of astrology who have used it successfully. I hear from astrologers often, "This Process just changed my client's life!"

Vocational profiling is an extremely important domain within our field of work. It does change a person's life, makes them more productive, fulfilled, affects their marital life, the way they treat their children and, of course, what they eventually take to the bank. --I don't say this process is easy to learn; it requires a lot of consistent and dedicated practice. If you practice and see this gift develop, you can see yourself as a most helpful astrologer.

Vocational profiling has always been a part of astrological analysis; however, astrology has never been able to focus on it, on doing it well. Now we can. Part of my responsibility as an astrologer, as a leader in the field, if you will, is to innovate, improve and make a better "Lamborghini". If not, I am just maintaining a status quo and not doing much at all.

I am what I do!

What about relationships and love life. These are also main concerns brought to an astrologer?

Very often, people have relationship problems because they are not happy with themselves. One way of becoming happy with yourself is feeling you are fulfilled in what you do for your work. There is much truth in the statement, "I am what I do!" --Relationships are essential to the fulfillment of many needs, and we can see their easily in the horoscope.

Astrology grows within its scope of innovation?

Yes, it does. I have positioned myself on issues in my personal life, with decisions, just by tempering the way I think and using what I have learned in a humanistic way, guided by my horoscope, rather than waiting for "things to happen." I like to talk about how to use astrology creatively. --There are people in our field who contribute vitally about how to manage the techniques and measurements of astrology and do research on that. But the researcher needs the artist analyst and the artist analyst needs the researcher.

*Astrology is not a record of what is,
it is a record of what can be!*

But aren't you as well a researcher within your own astrological techniques?

No, not really. They emerge empirically through some 20.000 charts I have read or studied throughout my life. I emphasize that astrology is not *to describe someone*; it is *to reflect potential development and the process of getting there!*. Astrology is not a record of what *is*; it is a record of *what can be!* I think a good astrology teacher must point that out, and a good counselling astrologer should work that way..

You see, the horoscope is a guide to thought and understanding, discussion, and strategy. –If you have Saturn in the 4th, it is inconsequential to observe that one “likes antiques!” Rather, it could suggest how you have managed growth around an authoritarian maternal situation and how this may have coloured your relationship with your wife. This is a much deeper reflection of personal development.

Where do you think astrology is going in the future?

My perspective is necessarily conditioned by my being a 71-year old astrologer who *can* remember when he *was* a whipper-snapper, a revolutionary young man of 35, perhaps a maverick as you called it earlier. However, around that age, I made a resolution with a precocious maturity, I think. I said: when I am older and senior in this field, I will step aside and be as supportive as possible to the new generation. This was a generation ago. The Old Guard at that time, if we can put it like that, did not want to hear any new voices even if there were many revolutionary organisational changes emerging within the field of astrology. They said restrictive things then that we still hear occasionally today. There is a great jealousy among astrologers, unfortunately.

We have to have new thought, and all thought has to be in pace with the times. --I am doing all I can to teach and help people bloom in this field in their best way. My Master's Degree Certification Course in astrology is most gratifyingly successful in some 26 countries around the world, now for twelve years.

What lies behind this successful Course?

It is challenging, not necessarily difficult. It deals with people and how they live their life. The astrology literally and figuratively comes TO life. --When a graduate of the Course walks into a room, *you know it!* You feel his or her skill. I am so proud of them.

The Course is not based upon "this means that". It is based upon portraying the process of becoming.

This is a job I love doing and I am thrilled that I have the opportunity to pass on what I know to very earnest astrologers.

If you look around at this convention, you notice right away how old people are. They are all apparently over 40 to 45 years of age. There are few who are emerging in their thirties. Where are the people in their twenties? Why can't we appeal to the younger populations better than we do?

I think one explanation is that it is very hard for a male to earn a living as an astrologer. A female has a husband, usually, who pays part of the bills. A young man can't necessarily make enough income to justify dedication to the career. This is a problem that has to be solved somehow.

The Association of Young Astrologers seems to be profoundly dedicated to establishing their presence; might that be one way?

Yes, of course. I have talked with this group and offered my support, on several occasions. I think one very practical way we "Older Guys" can help is to transmit our organizational and marketing experience gathered over the years.

Astrology has to serve a function.

Do you think astrology is in good hands for the future?

That's the question, isn't it.

My answer would be couched or framed more in the past than in the future. I would have to say that astrology has come a long way rapidly since WWII and that augers well for the future. If conventions like this continue and we get better astrology books with more and more innovative ideas, then I think the field itself

will certainly continue to grow in its integrity and effectiveness. *Astrology has to serve a function.* Its function is to help people to know themselves; and we are back to vocations again, believe me!

But Noel, isn't this somehow theoretical? In many cases people might not feel fulfilled in their work, nevertheless are obliged to continue for the sake of steady income. They have a family to feed and support.

Yes, you are absolutely right about that. That is the common sense of the process. All shifts are dangerous, especially if you have a certain senior income and may be hooked up to some corporate social security or pension programs.

That is why astrology has to come into your life earlier and earlier. I look forward to the day when part of a college entrance examination is going to refer to a potential vocational profile through astrology. The good thing is that I see in my practice younger and younger people all the time now.

Sometimes you can get people on their best track very early in life.

But the dramatic stories are the persons who have retired and have had a sort of empty and routined life as a vocational experience. Some take up a hobby and feel fulfilled. *That hobby could have been a profession!*

I have clients who have been clerks for the phone company, inventory managers of food stores, and I say something like: "But you're an artist" ... and I have seen them break down in tears of recognition and say: "That's what I always wanted to do"! My answer is: "Now you can afford to do it". The final part of life then gains more fulfilment, but it could have happened 40 years earlier.

What does it take to get astrology into the schools you are referring to?

I think it requires an astrologer who has a poised, skilled presence and says to the Dean of Students: "Let me talk to you about something vitally interesting."

Don't we talk about getting astrology as a concept into our school systems?

Not necessarily. I don't want to sell astrology, *I want to sell myself using astrology.* The rest will follow. There's a huge difference here: you are not asking the person *to adjust to a belief system*, but to appreciate an exponent of it. If I

say to the person, "Let me show you what can and has been done. Let me show you how you can better serve your students," I get an open door.

It is like using astrology in personnel selection in corporations, which I have done so often, usually at very high levels. The word "astrology" is never mentioned; we astrologers become "management consultants". The only difference is that I need to have the birth data, and they say: "I'll get it for you."

Then I am usually asked questions like, how long will this person be with the company, which is usually an easy thing for an astrologer to determine; how can this person work best here, for himself and for the company? Your report is often part of a very strategic decision for the company. I don't tell the president of the corporation that he or she has to believe in astrology, or to know anything astrological, but he or she has to believe in *me!*

Aren't we talking here about a basic problem for astrology, namely to be generally accepted, respected and acknowledged as a valid profession?

Yes, but I think it is has become less of a problem over the years, thanks to so many strong, sophisticated public presentations by ever-so-well informed astrologers. That is why we are growing. It is up to every one of us as astrologers to continue this. It is how we transmit things to the public that is key. It's not Astrology itself.

It is the input from individual astrologers that has changed the public's perceptions and attitude about astrology.

So, how do you recognize a good astrologer?

I have been asked that question hundreds of times on television, radio, and in newspaper interviews. My answer is always: "Look into her or his eyes"! By saying that, I *emphasize the individual*. You are not going to doubt or argue with me on astrology! I present myself in strong, careful, and confident fashion.

When it comes to general acceptance, I think that is for the next generation to come. I have done my share. As I offered in the beginning of this conversation, it is the input from single astrologers that has changed the public's perception and attitude towards astrology. We don't have to be embarrassed anymore for being astrologers. We make a good impression now!

When I walk into a room and people ask me what I do for a living. [That is a very powerful question, isn't it.] When I say "I'm an astrologer", there is a moment there! Their minds are whirring, "Should I believe in this man"?

If someone says, "Can you look into your crystal ball and tell me about my future?", I just walk away. I don't have time for that. I do not try to push people into getting interested. I used to sell Astrology years ago, but I do not need to do that anymore; it's automatic!

Oh, so you are *not* a missionary?

["No" says Noel with a huge laugh. "] I think it is a good word; however, I do not feel myself a missionary; more like an "example".

Do you think astrology coming into universities is a positive development?

Yes absolutely. Look at all the good work [Dr.] Nick Campion and others have done. Robert Hand is getting a PhD in a related field. I don't know all the details in these programs, but I believe bringing astrology up to an academic level can only help astrology.

What's your attitude towards astrology and science?

You are referring to this eternal issue, *if astrology is a science*. I can tell you how I have resolved it for myself over the years. I say astrology uses scientific measurements, but the interpretation is an art. I call myself an artist analyst.

What do you think is the most prominent issue we have to confront now as astrologers?

I have been trying to evaluate what theme is emerging out of our discussion.

It seems to be related to vocational fulfilment as essential to our identity development, in all professions, including astrology. We've been talking about personal fulfilment and how astrology supports growth to that goal.

Now we are able more than ever to approach that skilfully.

The best way I can put it is this: I am extremely grateful to have contributed substantially to the process. Besides that, it has helped me to see the fulfilment

of my own goals in life, and I am thrilled that it does so for many other people as well. This is a terribly important consideration. This comes through the lens of a senior astrologer who is eager to open the door for a new generation. It is a powerful thought and I take that very seriously.

I think this is the essence of teaching. It is not just sharing information, but it is about holding up a torch. Through my Master's Certification Course, I have fulfilled a major part of my life, by passing on illumination and enlightenment through *my* torch.

"When I think about this, I get very emotional" [Noel says with tears in his eyes.]

Right here at UAC, a man came up to me yesterday; the man is a retired army colonel. Eight years ago he felt a need to find out about astrology. It happened to be at a smaller convention I ran, maybe 2-300 people. He recalled, "Back then, you singled me out and told me at the end of the convention *that I could do something in this field, and here I am today.* I am an astrologer. Thank you Mr. Tyl".

My heart was thrilled and I was emotionally touched. --You see, a part of the light from my torch is this caring, this showing the younger astrologer what is at stake here, how important sharing life awareness actually is. This is a long way from measurements and planetary positions, but *is* the art of humanized thoughts made vivid through the fantastic mirror of astrology!

Thank you for sharing all this with us, Noel.

Thank you!

[It was poignant to see this sometimes so outspoken, self-assured, big and powerful man walk away, obviously highly sentimentally moved through reflections and something so "simple" as — human caring and recognition.

[I said to myself: "This must be a man with a great heart!"] ###