



All About The Ascendant (or Rising Sign)

The Ascendant is not an actual physical body, just like the nodes that I discussed in last month's issue. A chart is a circle, with the 12 signs and houses dividing that circle into a pie. The sign that is on the cusp of your first house is known as your Ascendant. It is the sign that was 'rising' on the Eastern horizon when you were born, so it is also commonly referred to as your rising sign. As my mentor always says, your ascendant is the sign that was dawning as you were born, and therefore it represents how you 'dawn' on people.

Our Ascendant, or Rising sign, is like the front door to the 'house' that is us. When you see the front of a house, it gives you a certain idea of what the inside may be like. A house, and a person, can look very different when you see beyond the front door — we all know the saying "don't judge a book by its cover," yet we often do. We tend to call it a 'first impression' that we get of someone. Your Ascendant, as it looks to others, can tell you the nature of the first impression others are likely to get of you. What is the 'vibe' you send out? What is your style, from your clothing to your manner?

It's been said that the rising sign is like a mask. This is a somewhat accurate description of the ascendant but it sometimes gives the wrong impression — that your rising sign is actually just for show, that it is not really a part of you. In truth, your ascendant, while it is obviously not indicative of who you are in entirety, it is authentic. We are complex creatures; there is not just one planet, nor one idea or one mood that will describe all of who we are. Our rising sign is kind of a streamlined version of ourselves, how we feel comfortable initially introducing ourselves to the world, to new people, to new situations. It's like an interface — the best way we can think of to 'plug in.' Though others approach us through our front door, we also exit through it. We greet the world through our front door, and to us, the world looks a certain shape and color, figuratively speaking, depending on what the view is like from our front porch. Life is what we see through that front door, so our ascendant can tell us a lot about how we see the world, how we approach and 'do' life. Not our philosophies or morals specifically, but just how we tend to act on the world.

When we are presenting ourselves to the world in a manner befitting our Rising sign, we feel more or less comfortable in our skin. When we are not, we feel out of place, awkward, and conspicuous. We may try extra hard to not be seen at all in response to our discomfort, or we may jump to the other extreme and try to force ourselves on the world, demanding to be noticed, to overcompensate for our own personal insecurity at not feeling like we have our own act together.