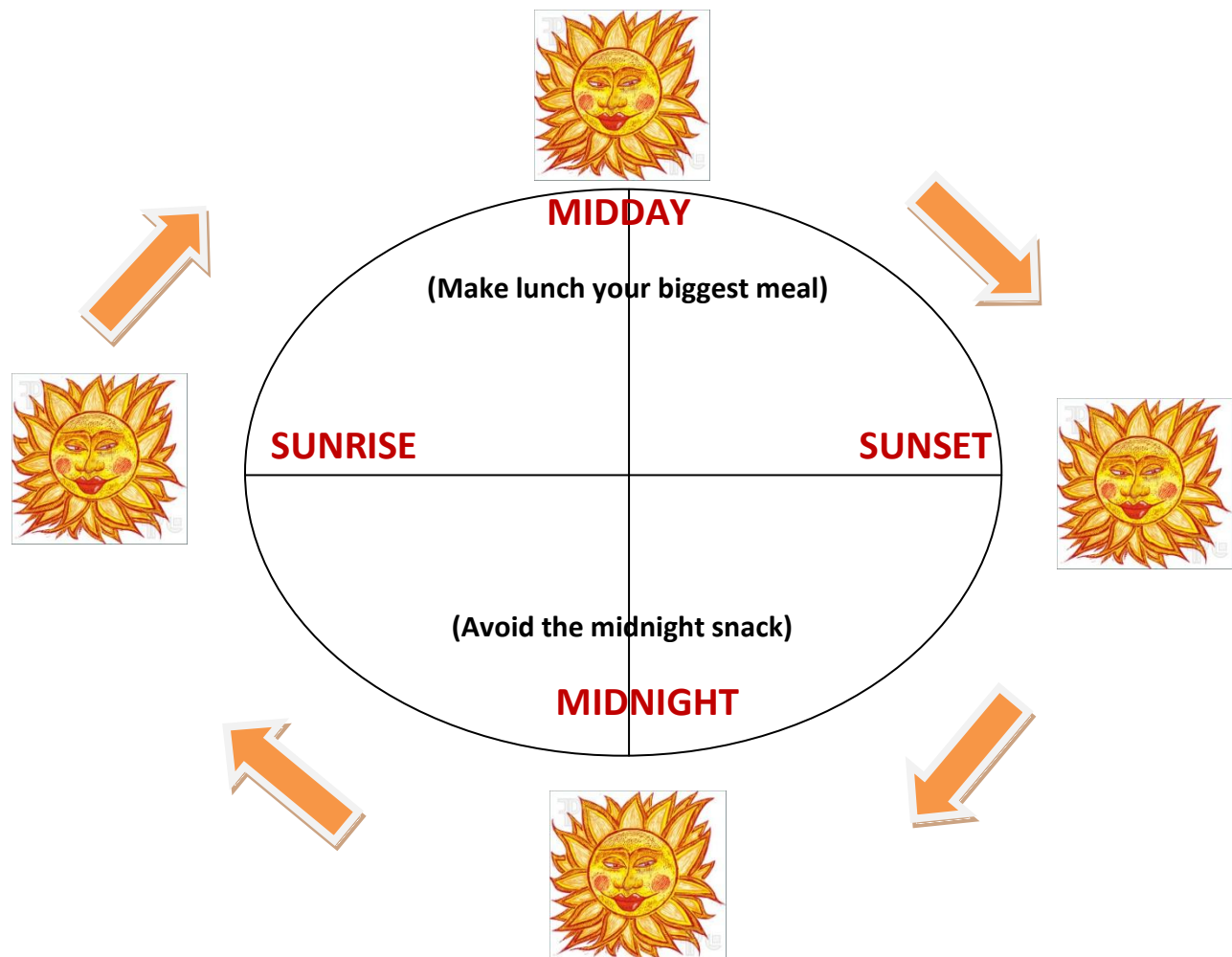


The Daily Rhythm- As Above, So Below

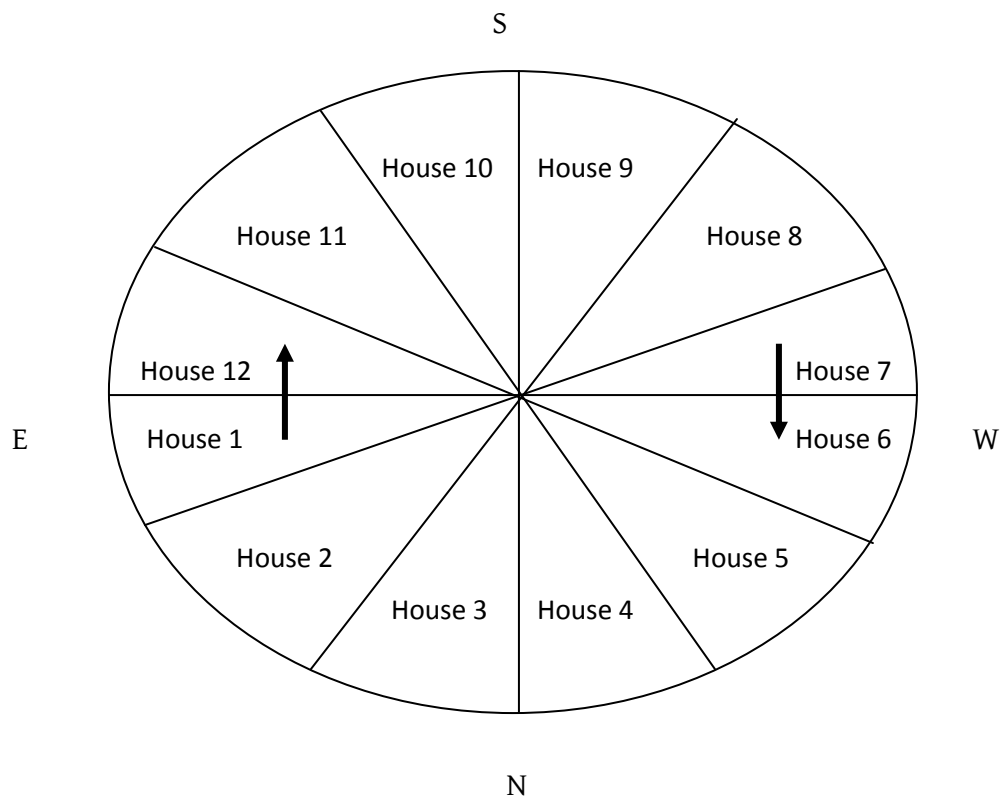
Our bodies have diurnal cycles that relate to the apparent movement of the sun in the sky, and our ancient ancestors learned how to harness these biorhythms for optimal success. Did you know that there are moments in the day when it is better to ask for a raise than others? Did you know that sex and romance are juicier during certain hours, and that there is a best time to eat your biggest meal? Let's take a look at how these work below.



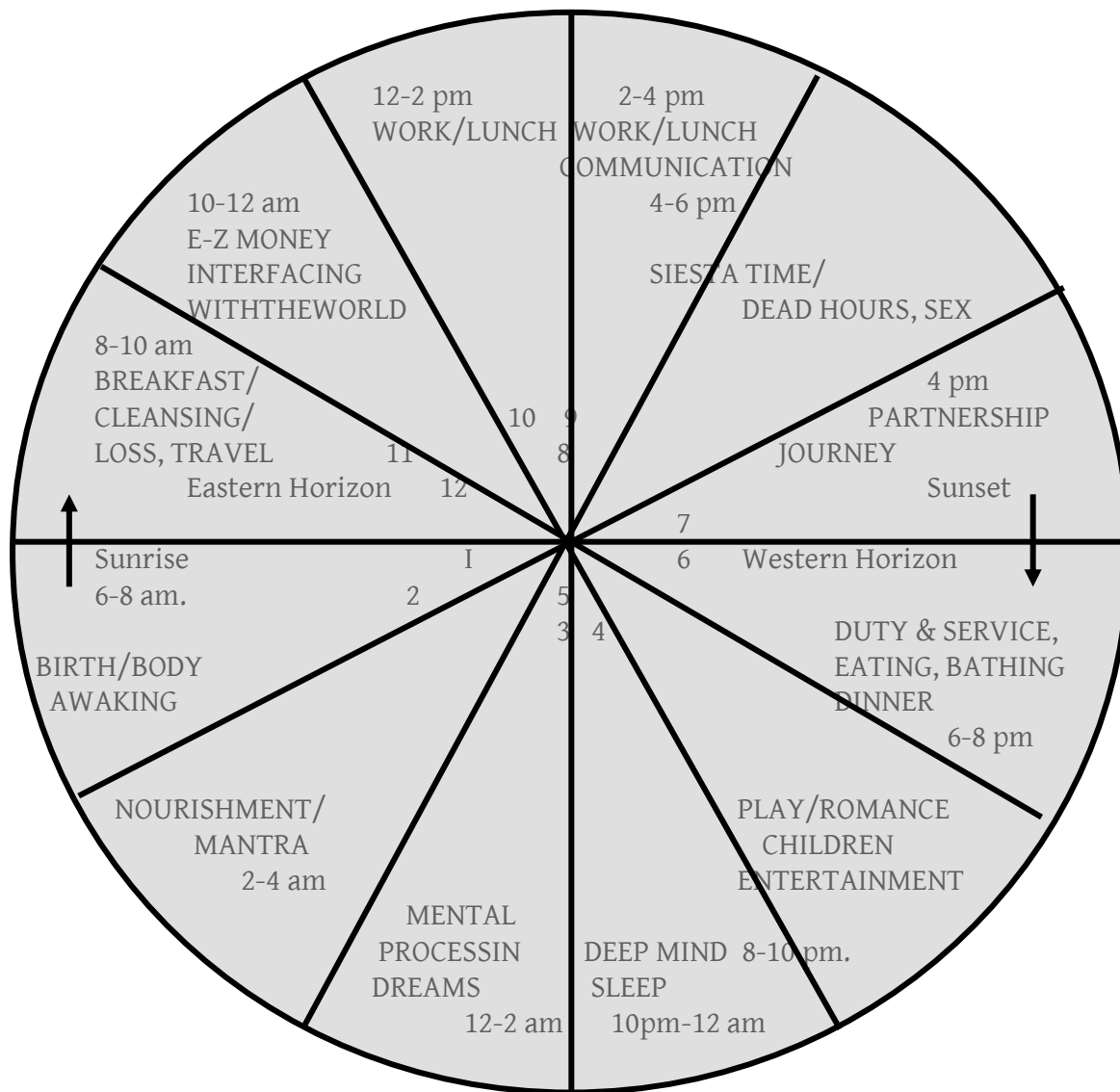
In striving to understand the movement of the heavens, the seers of antiquity noticed correlations between the macrocosm up there with the microcosm in our bodies. For example, when the sun is at its zenith, they found that hunger and digestive juices were also at their peak. They correlated the inner agni (digestive fire) with outer agni (the sun) and postulated that high noon is the best time to have your biggest meal since the fires outside and within our

bodies were at their peak. They also noticed that when the sun is at the opposite point in the sky exactly below the earth, there is a second kindling of digestive fire- something known to us in the West as ‘the midnight snack’ phenomenon. This is the time for agni to do its inner cleaning, and they advised against eating so as not to overburden our liver and metabolism. Instead, going to bed before agni’s second wind is preferred- optimally before 10 pm.

These seers also pictured the movement of the sun through different parts of the sky they termed “houses”.



They then assigned meanings to each house based on their observations of reality:



At first these meanings might not make sense. But a closer inspection reveals how they mirror both our internal and external reality.

The 1st House (5-7am)

What is the first thing you notice when you wake up? It is probably your body and its location in time and space. Just prior you may have been sailing the high seas or soaring through the heavens as a bird in the world of dreams, but as soon as we wake up we become aware of our mundane reality and the body that anchors us to it. Accordingly, the first house is the time to attend to its needs with things like brushing your teeth, getting dressed, eating, exercising and excreting. It is also the best time to study. Getting to bed early and studying in the *sattvic* morning hours is the optimal way to train the brain to hold and *retain* information. Sattva

begets knowledge and wisdom, and is present in the early morning and early evening hours. (see page .. for more on the sattvic, rājasic, and tāmasic portions of the day). Cramming late at night may help you pass a test, but it does not promote long-term wisdom.

The first house also relates to sunrise, the ‘birth’ of the sun over the horizon and the transition from night to day. The dawn heralds the beginning of our day and beginnings are important in any tradition- how you start a relationship, a business, or even a lifetime has great bearing on how that life works out. That is why how we spend the morning is vital to the success of the rest of our day. In Part I we discussed the daily routine for lovers, most of it focusing on the first hour or two of the day. We also related the early morning hours to the early years of our life, as proposed by Dr. Claudia Welch and suggested that healing practices like prāṇāyāma and meditation done in the morning can help to heal traumas from those years. This concept has even permeated the English language. Consider the word ‘orientation.’ *Orient* means *east*, and to ‘orient’ oneself is to literally face east.

It is not surprising then that so many cultures historically worshipped the morning sun, and that millions of people today greet the sunrise in temples and in homes with prayer and devotion. A good practice first thing in the morning after your bathroom duties is to face the sun- to *orient* yourself correctly for the day. Saying a few words of appreciation and intent, making an offering or otherwise acknowledging your personal connection to Nature helps to ground you to your inner and outer reality. The Sun Salutation is a yoga practice done for just this purpose- to connect your body (first house microcosm) with the rising sun (first house macrocosm). Sacred movements like yoga, T’ai Chi, and Chi Gung that combine physical exercise, mental focus and energy alignment give good results when done in the morning.

When Is It?

Different systems allocate different times to the beginning, duration and end of each house. This is further complicated by the fact that days are longer or shorter depending upon your season and latitude north or south of the equator. Nonetheless, here’s an easy practical reference: the first house begins with the first appearance of light in the sky. Note that this happens well *before* sunrise during the early twilight hours. It ends after the sun has fully risen above the horizon and begun to make its way upwards, usually thirty to sixty minutes after official “sunrise.” Another rough way to measure the duration of the first house is to count an hour before and after sunrise. Ultimately it is best to feel the changing of the houses in your body and mind, and with a little practice this will become second nature.

The 12th House (7-9 am)

The first house ends about thirty to sixty minutes after the sun has completely crossed the Eastern horizon. The best way to know is to feel what is happening in your body. Do you feel a bit of a slump, a slight tiredness come over you, or an urge to get away from your house? If you're still in bed it will be hard to get up, since the 12th House represents bed pleasures, something experienced by those who luxuriate in sleep past the sunrise hours. Sleep is sweetest during this time, as anyone who has hit the snooze button in the morning can attest. However, the 12th House also represents loss and dissipation, and one who lingers in bed loses out on precious daylight to make productive use of the day. Dissipation also relates to the use of sexual energies, and though sex is allowed during the sun's tenure in the 12th House, it may sap the vitality we need to fire us through the day. This is why Ayurveda typically frowns on daytime sex.

The 12th is also a house of extended foreign contacts and travel. If you think about your morning commute this makes perfect sense. From ancient times, when a man or woman left the home to go to the market or pursue their trade, to the modern day commute, the 12th house hours represent when most of us get in our cars and leave for work. This is both travel *and* extended foreign contact, since one typically doesn't return home until after an eight hour workday, which takes up most of our diurnal routine. How the ancients devised this remains a mystery. Why it is still applicable today, thousands of years after it was observed and systemized is not- human beings are the same now as they were then, and are subject to the same forces and drives as their prehistoric ancestors.

The 11th House (9-11 am)

During the next portion of the day, a typical person moves into their work routine, visiting with friends, catching up, or having meetings. The 11th house rules all these things, and is the time to socialize and enjoy the company of one's peers. Chatting up co-workers at the water cooler, social and professional liaisons and other group interactions work well here. This is the best time to ask for a raise as the 11th and 9th houses are considered "lucky" and good for wish fulfillment. Waiting to ask that special guy or gal on a date? Wondering what is the best time to call the debt collector? Do it now, when spirits are their highest. Text or call and that special someone should respond well to you- even if they let you down, they will let you down easy! Hold your meetings, pep rallies and strategy sessions during the 11th house if you want to succeed- and absolutely avoid the 8th House for these things.

The 10th House (11am – 1 pm)

After the meetings are done, it is time to put your nose to the grindstone: the tenth house is the time to get to work. It represents the sun's peak in the sky when the fire principle is most prominent. Fire in the body means enzymatic activity, which makes us hungry. Throw anything at the sun, from comets to planets and what happens? They're gobbled up. In the same way, anything you put in your mouth is more likely to be digested at this time. Fire in the mind also means more mental activity and ambition, driving us to work hard and leave our mark in the world. The 10th House is the time to eat the biggest meal of the day, and to fully externalize our personalities through our professions. If there are executive decisions to be made, make them now- no matter your position, you delegate with more authority at this time.

Even if you are unemployed or work from home, this is the time to finish chores: vacuuming the house, paying bills, shopping and attending to all the duties that await you. The tenth house is an active time and one should not be idle while the sun is here. However be careful with exercise. Because it is an inherently 'hot' time of day, whether you're indoors or out overheating and overtraining are more likely. Therefore reserve your workouts for later, during the 6th or 5th house hours when the sun is below the horizon. In Ayurveda this is considered pitta time- when the fire principle is most active in the body. Regardless of the external temperature, If you do train during this time pay special attention to keeping cool.

The 9th House (1-3 pm)

The ninth is a house of education, travel and communication. If there is research to be done, phone calls or emails to send, the ninth house is a good time to send them. The ninth is another favorable period to hold meetings and communicate strategy. It's energy is also optimal for learning and high-minded ideas. The mood turns philosophical, and this is one of the best times to plan your future, motivate yourself and communicate your intentions. Still an externalized House, during this time lunch is being digested and there is a feeling of relaxation and satisfaction. The effects of too much food or bad food combinations do not become apparent until the next House, when indigestion and sluggishness are likely to overtake the body.

If you don't leave the house by the time the 9th house rolls around you may find yourself feeling a bit stir crazy, imprisoned by the four walls of your home. That is because houses 12-9 are optimal for externalizing yourself- dealing with things *outside* of your skin, your home, and your immediate environment. These resplendent daylight hours encourage external activity, which is why 9-5 is a common work schedule all over the world. Even if you just go out to get

the mail, go shopping, or go for a walk, make it a point to get outside while the sun is transiting these houses.

The 8th House (3-5 pm)

The eighth is perhaps the most important house of the horoscope because it is also the most pernicious. It represents the infamous ‘afternoon blah’ - the slump everyone feels whether they live in New Zealand or Nova Scotia.

The eighth rules endings and death because it is here that the sun begins its steady slide down to the horizon. It is a ‘dead time’ during which the human biorhythm is at its lowest and *tamas* pervades the atmosphere. You don’t have to be a yogi to feel the eighth house slump. It happens every day to everyone, and is a great way to tune in to the inner and outer rhythms of Nature.

During the eighth house people are more likely to be irritable and negative, so this is *not* the time to ask for a raise, hold meetings or rallies, or to call your special someone. It is the time to retreat within yourself by putting on your headphones and pouring yourself into work, cultivating silence, or best of all... taking a nap. Some cultures wisely dub this ‘Siesta Time,’ closing down shops and retiring home to rest and reset. Sleep harnesses the heaviness of *tamas* and allows you to recharge. It also prevents accidents which the eighth house also rules, as home in bed is one of the safest places you can be. During this period the body is using its resources to digest food, and your mind can become sluggish and inattentive. Avoid operating heavy machinery, exercising, or undertaking dangerous work when the sun is in the 8th as it is the house of death and trauma for a reason.

Exercise at this time runs the risk of pushing the body too hard and pulling muscles or causing injury. The body is tighter and less responsive, and nurses report more severe cases in the ER during this period. However, one exception to the *no exercise* rule is sex. The eighth is a place of lust and carnal pleasure. Sex has a more intense, physical, even vulgar quality here, and is more about “getting off” than making love. But if you have built-up tension or trouble creating passion in your relationship, consider it an option, though the best time to create love and romance is during the fifth house.

The 7th House (5-7 p.m.)

The seventh is a place of transitions and journeys. For working folks, it represents the end of the workday, the drive home, and the shift to one’s home environment. It is not by accident that work tends to run around a 9-5 schedule, as this optimally harnesses sunrise and sunset times. Sunset is the termination of the day and the beginning of night. It signals a change in priorities during which we go from outwardly-expressing ourselves to inner reflection. For the average person this may simply mean going home, kicking up your feet, and watching TV. For others, sunset is a time for meditation or prayer, or a moment to share with your beloved. The

7th House is the place of *the other*, particularly the significant other. It is when we rejoin our beloveds after a day spent away from them. Sex is possible during this time, though the half hour or so before and after sunset should be actively avoided.

Ancient traditions speak a similar language. Vedic Astrology agrees with Ayurveda and Yoga that one should not have sex at sunrise or sunset because these mark the birth and death of the sun. It is not customary to observe birth and death with sex, but with contemplation. This is also a time of sattva, and should not be disturbed by rājasic activities like hard exercise, intense work, or sex. Instead, use the ‘togetherness’ energy of this house to take a walk with your partner or take in the sunset; it will help you work up an appetite for the period to come.

The 6th House (7-9 p.m.)

The sixth is a House of Duty, Work, and Diet. This is not the work of the outside world, however, for the sun has ceased to shine on external activity. During the sixth house it is time to finish household tasks, rest from a hard day’s work, bathe, and eat dinner. Obligations to your body and family take precedence. Cooking and cleaning, for example are types of family duty; working out, getting a massage or going to the chiropractor are examples of treating your body. Ancient cultures, especially those along the tropics, observed at least twice-daily bathing rituals- in the morning to wash off sleep, and in the evening to rid themselves of the burdens of the day. This corresponds nicely to the first and sixth houses in astrology.

If you work a nine to five schedule, the sixth house may be the only time you have to make a home-cooked meal. Make the most of it- the benefits of cooking at home like improved sensual awareness, family cohesiveness and even weight management were discussed in chapters three and six- use this time to create the seeds of health and romance that will sprout in the following house.

Because it is a place of ‘duty’ sex is not advised during this time- wait an hour or two until the fifth- it will feel much more satisfying. It makes sense to eat dinner and relax first before rushing into sex. Take your time and enjoy the transition. But be careful, if you don’t get to the dishes before the end of the sixth house, you may lose any inclination to do them!

The 5th House (9-11 p.m.)

A House of Play, Leisure, Creativity, Sport, and Lovemaking, the fifth represents recreation in all its aspects, including making babies. This is the best time to have sex, especially if a healthy, happy child is desired. But even if children are not the aim, the fifth is a time for creative love-play and sport.

It is no wonder that major sporting events are also held during these hours. In Russian studies during the cold war, athletes reported better performance and broke more records when meets were scheduled between 7-10 p.m. than during meets scheduled in the day.* Famous

musicians have also commented that their playing improves at night as the musical muse favors the fifth House, allowing a smoother flow of their creative *shakti*. This is true as well for non-artistic types. People who work during the day enjoy entertainment at night, whether by creating it in the form of parties or get-togethers, or simply observing it by watching movies and television.

*Note that depending on the season, the fifth house can take place as early as 6 pm. The best way to know is to feel yourself transition from the sense of duty in the sixth house (cooking, eating, washing dishes) to relaxation (entertainment, play, a night on the town).

Sex is best during the relaxed evening hours when the body and mind have settled in. This is when it becomes alright to let our guards down and relax into a creative expression of our physical and spiritual natures. The natural segue into sleep allows our bodies to recover from sexual play and feel rejuvenated the next morning.

The 4th House (11pm – 1 am)

The fourth house represents the unconscious/subconscious mind. It is the deep delta wave of sleep and rest and you should be in bed well before 11 pm in order to harness the energy of this period. Transitions are vitally important in Sacred Societies, and they are observed in everything from exercise to meditation to sex. The transition from the 5th House of sex and enjoyment into deep, pleasurable sleep is a natural one. Going to bed with a smile on your face, the result of a day spent in harmony with the rhythms of nature is the ideal way to enter into the nether world of sleep. Recall from Part I the importance of eating a relaxed, deeply-satisfying lunch in order to optimize hormone levels, rejuvenate your body, and release stress. The same is true of the mid-night period, the counterpoint in the sky to lunch time. Here again we should feel ourselves relaxing into the arms of sleep so we can come out of it fully recharged the next morning.

Every House is a transition from one state to another, an organic sequence that follows the macrocosm of the sun's course through the heavens. In Yoga āsana for example, transitions are called *vinyāsa*, and they are crucial for taking the body from a state of inactivity to intense movement and back again to alert relaxation. The transition to and from sleep is just as important, as it determines whether a person will benefit from their sleeping hours or wake up dull and tired.

This is also the time of the midnight snack. Note that during the fourth house the sun is directly underneath, which makes it lunch time for someone on the other side of the globe. Let them have their lunch- you should allow your body to run its internal cleansing cycle without burdening it with food. If you must eat, consider a light protein drink, a glass of milk, or some juice – but no steak dinners at midnight!

The 3rd House

If the fourth house is the deep unconscious, the third rules the active mind and REM sleep during which your brain discharges accumulated tensions from your day. It is marked by dreams and mental activity, though not on the conscious level. Interestingly, it is a House of 'learning,' and it is during sleep that the skills practiced during the day become 'hard-wired' into our body/mind. How the ancient sky watchers cognized this is unclear, but their correlations suggest that if you want to get good at a skill (Third house) REM sleep should not be interrupted. Here, the mind is busy sorting the stimulatory experiences of the day into well-organized information for future use. When sleep is disturbed during these hours, learning and judgment may be impaired.

The 2nd House

The second House rules nourishment. It is when the fully-digested food from dinner (the 6th House) begins to build our tissues and create an anabolic environment in the body. This is when we experience a testosterone spike, and old-time bodybuilders like Arnold Schwarzenegger used to train in the early pre-dawn hours to take advantage of their anabolic properties. But you don't have to be an athlete to notice the effects of extra testosterone- men across the planet are well-familiar with the 'morning wood' phenomenon- intense erections during this time. This is also because the second house 'reflects' the lusty sex energy of the eighth and sex is allowed during this time for householders.

The second house is also used by spiritual practitioners for meditation and prayer. Four to five in the morning is the *brahma muhurta*, the most sacred hour in the day according to Vedic tradition. It is also dubiously honored by the stoner's hallowed 4:20- the best time to smoke pot that in the afternoon is ruled by the 8th house (which presides over death, altered states of consciousness and leaving the body), and in the morning rules the *brahma muhūrta*- the hour of God's immanence on earth. Think of the *brahma munūrta* as a spiritual mist that hangs low during the early morning hours, and vaporizes with the first hint of day. It is the best time to come into contact with your deep, silent self, and God is more likely to take your call as the line is not too busy.

However, this is not a time for pleasant or casual meditations for spiritual practices performed here take a toll on the body, depriving it of sleep and succor. Since these hours are dedicated to nourishment, one is, in effect, trading physical nutrition for spiritual sustenance, and they are therefore reserved for the serious practitioner. But for those hardy enough to practice during *brahma muhūrta*, spiritual attainment comes rapidly indeed.

The second house rules all forms of nutrition, and just as babies cry for milk at this hour, if you're up you can have a light, nutritious snack as well. Any nutrients you take in at this time

get used up by the body and resist turning to fat. That is why having a nutritious, protein-rich drink is desirable, since protein is necessary for building muscle and taking advantage of the anabolic properties of this house. During extended fasts like Ramadan, people often eat in the pre-dawn to nourish the body while fasting during daylight hours, thereby ensuring that they have made the most of the nutrients they've eaten.

The second house also rules wealth- that which nourishes us as adults. This means that if you want to be rich, you must rise during the pre-dawn hours to outdo the competition. It is a simple fact corroborated by millionaires and billionaires that early to rise makes one wealthy and wise. Take a poll amongst your richest friends, and the wealthiest people in the world, and you will find rising early a common factor among them.

Summary

The 12th, 8th, 7th, 5th and 2nd Houses and their times are noted for sexual activity, with the 5th being optimal. Since Nature wants us to reproduce, you can have sex at practically any hour. But to create fulfillment, build intimacy and reap magnified enjoyment, be aware of the energies that surround your lovemaking and use them to shape your relationships.

The 1st, 11th, 6th, 5th, and 2nd Houses accommodate sport and physical activity, with the first being optimal for personal training and the fifth for team sports and activities.

The 11th, 9th and 5th houses are considered 'lucky'- with the 11th being the most opportune time to ask for favors, hold meetings or organize activities.

Finally, the 8th house is to be actively avoided for any auspicious undertaking except sex. It is a time for death, introspection and seriousness, not fun and games. Use it wisely.