

Foreword

by James Redfield,
author of *The Celestine Prophecy*

I first heard of Albert Gauden from a friend who went to see him on one of his many work trips to Alabama. “He is unbelievably accurate in bringing personality issues to the surface,” she told me over coffee one day. “He really nailed the way I was getting in my own way, blocking my potential. You can’t hide anything from Albert.”

After several other people synchronistically mentioned this astro-intuitive and therapist, I found myself thoroughly intrigued, so I called his booking agent and got in line, finally meeting Albert several days later in the Pickwick Hotel in Birmingham. It took only a few minutes for Albert’s transparent personality to shine through. He is witty, mildly sarcastic, and an absolutely hilarious storyteller. And he is totally serious about what he does with his clients.

Quickly disposing of the initial banter, he beckoned me to a corner couch and placed a completed astrological chart on the table between us.

“Well,” he remarked, “you’re quite a secretive fellow, aren’t you ... and in a lot of conflict?” He went on to tell me that at this time in my life, the planet Pluto was exactly 90 degrees from where it was the day I was born. This is an occurrence that signals a period in which everything in a person’s life that is not conducive to his higher learning and psychological growth tends to blow up and be taken away, sometimes traumatically.

I smiled at him, remaining aloof, but he was, in fact, right on target. My life was undergoing a vast reorganization. I had ended a marriage and left a job I had held for eight years.

“Ah, yes,” he continued, “there’s more. You’re also writing something. What is it?”

“Wait a minute,” I interrupted. “How did you know that?”

He pushed the chart around where I could see it. “It’s right here. You’ve got Venus and Jupiter in Aquarius in the fifth house being activated by transit and progression.”

Now I was impressed. I had started writing *The Celestine Prophecy* about six months earlier. “I want to understand how you do this,” I said.

Albert laughed, and the ensuing conversation led to a trip to Sedona to go through his famous Sedona Intensive, where Albert performed his amazing gift: helping to pull into consciousness those unconscious habits and addictions that keep us from a greater life. In my case, of course, we focused on my aloofness and reluctance to commit to a single project. With the help of Sedona herself (those magic red hills alone seem to increase the synchronicity and provide the experiences that illustrate whatever we are learning), I became aware of exactly when my indifference kicks in, why it gets in the way, and what my real self feels like when I break free of this control drama.

In this environment, I was able to spend the dedicated free time to survey my life as one story—from that first placement with my early family all the way through the twists and turns of my subsequent experience. I found hidden meaning in old relationships, misdeeds that needed rectifying, and full acknowledgment of the preparation my past seemed to have provided me. Most of all I was to connect with a sense of freedom and inspiration that comes from living one’s life honestly, with as few secrets as possible.

In retrospect, I think that Albert's emphasis on addictions and unconscious habits brought home for me the wisdom of such thinkers as Norman O. Brown and Ernest Becker, who years ago explained that we humans can evolve no further until we learn to deal with our everyday compulsions—those parts of our individual lifestyles we pursue with singular intensity, and at which we resist looking because they seem to feel so good. We know now that such activities, which can be of varying degrees of destructiveness—overworking, eating, playing, TVing, shopping, judging, distancing, complaining, drinking, drugging—are all unconsciously designed to keep us distracted, and to fend off the ego's fear of facing the great mystery that is this life. The ego fights this recognition because it senses that it must lose total control, and because it has no idea that such recognition would merely mean expanding into a higher self full of intuition and creativity and grand adventure.

In his book, Albert seeks to convey the full scope of such a clearing and opening process. In his humorous and—yes—confrontational way, he has clearly laid out the challenge facing all of us. We can talk about a coming spiritual renaissance to any degree we want, but it cannot happen until enough of us grasp that spiritual growth has a mental health component. We all have to step back and really look at the parts of our personalities that hold us back, because only then can we become who we really are—and truly move forward into a consciousness and mission that changes the world.