

In this way, Vedic astrology helps us towards self-awareness and self-realisation. It also helps us to understand our relationships with others as it is possible to compare two charts - particularly moon *Nakshatras* - for compatibility between a couple.

And then the fun really starts as the *Nakshatras* can also be used for prediction and selecting auspicious and inauspicious dates for making major life decisions such as buying a house, starting a new business or finding a partner - which is how we know that January's full moon on January 9 will be a good day for getting married or signing up for a new course. They are often described as something of a daily cosmic weather report.

However, the final, and perhaps most important aspect of Vedic astrology as a whole, is that it is a tool for growth. A good astrologer will be able to offer advice and guidance on how to strengthen different aspects of life to deal with predicted challenges using tried and tested yoga techniques.

In his book, *Ayurvedic Astrology*, renowned expert and director of the American Institute of Vedic Studies, Dr David Frawley, explains exactly how this works by combining the three disciplines of yoga, Vedic astrology and Ayurveda.

He says: "Both Vedic astrology and Ayurvedic medicine are part of the greater system of yoga, a system which aims at self-realisation, our union with the Divine Being within us as the ultimate goal of life. For this reason we can call Ayurveda 'yogic medicine' and Vedic astrology 'yogic astrology'.

Vedic Astrology uses the 12 constellations of the Zodiac and the seven major planets utilised by our standard Western astrology. But that is where the similarity ends.

"Through using all three disciplines together - Ayurveda, Vedic astrology and yoga - we gain access to all the main tools and techniques for working with the physical, astral and causal bodies, thereby addressing all aspects of our being."

Frawley adds: "Ayurveda provides the foundation of right living through the proper care of the physical body. Vedic astrology shows how to optimise our karmic potentials, which are the main concerns of the subtle body, through a proper understanding of our birth chart and its planetary influences. Yoga shows us how to awaken to our soul or causal potential and develop it scientifically through the use of various yoga techniques."

This joined-up approach of understanding the strengths and weaknesses of your personality in your birth chart combined with the knowledge to optimise physical, spiritual and mental health through Ayurveda and yoga is paramount to living a holistic healthy lifestyle, which perhaps goes some way to explaining why this phenomenal wisdom and knowledge from the East is gradually starting to blossom too in the West.