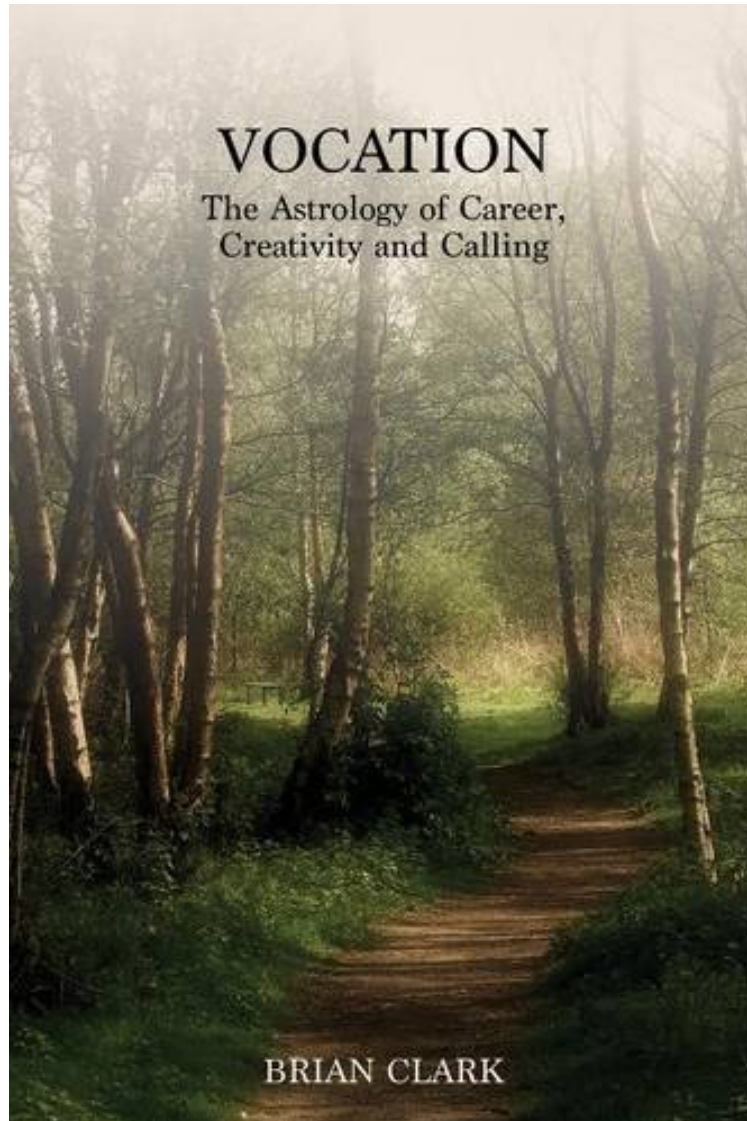


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# Vocation: The Astrology of Career, Creativity and Calling

*Brian Clark*

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**Brian Clark : Vocation: The Astrology of Career, Creativity and Calling** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Vocation: The Astrology of Career, Creativity and Calling:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Vocation is right up there with love and relating in terms of importance to clientsBy CustomerVocation: The Astrology of Career, Creativity and CallingReviewed by Roderick KidstonVocation is one of the bread and butter topics for any consulting astrologer, or at least it is in its everyday guise of my job or even my money. Vocation is right up there with love and relating in terms of importance to clients.

This new text by Brian Clark is a very welcome addition to the astrologers repertoire of references on the subject which considering its centrality is still somewhat neglected. Vocation is welcome both for its content, which is comprehensive, clear and cohesive, and for its insight, depth and nuances. These latter attributes elevate it out of the ordinary and make it a text of real worth and rich use. In discussing vocation, Brian is interested in all the many faces and factors involved in this complex character: for in this book the idea and ideal of vocation emerges as a Platonic Idea, or seems to evolve into a character in a play, with many hats to wear, many masks, many costumes and styles. We can understand this emergent figure, Vocation, in many contexts; it manifests many modes of impetus and behaviour. This is the astrological way of working with Vocation of course, as we conjure with all the planets, the signs of the zodiac, the houses, the modulations of the Lot of Fortune, Lunar Nodes, progressions and transits, and so many other astrological inputs and outputs. In this study, Vocation is more than a concept: it becomes more and more alive, a character of great depth and complexity, and infinite possibility. Yet as early as the Preface, Brian frames vocation (astrologically as well as intrinsically) in the symbols and terms of alchemy when he puts it in the context of opus, what alchemists called The Work, a lifelong process of self discovery and self expression. Vocation in its Latin origins, as Brian notes, is about calling, but this has many meanings. Not everyone feels called to anything early, if at all, or ever. There may be more than one call, or none. For many work is work is work, but unless it answers some need of the soul it may struggle to rise above a sense of duty or drudgery or both. But in this book, Brian takes the symbols and tools of astrology and shows how these can be used to help us all understand vocation that much better, so we have more and better opportunities to answer those deep questions about life purpose and meaning which arise for all but the most complacently materialistic sooner or later, somehow or other. So what does this character, Vocation, look like and act like? The second chapter is devoted to the planetary characters themselves and how they influence the formation of Vocation. Nobody familiar with Brians work will be surprised he writes about planetary archetypes. (At the risk of being reductive in this description, his approach to astrology is broadly humanistic-psychological, with a deep spiritual underpinning.) He takes the familiar planetary archetypes, plus Chiron the Nodes of the Moon are reserved for a later chapter and explores the vocational potentials of all. In the third chapter, Brian explores how the planetary archetypes express themselves through the fundamental elements of astrology, the signs of the zodiac. One of the most valuable features of this chapter is the way he drills down into the needs of each sign and the possible consequences if these needs are not fulfilled. The fourth chapter is particularly rich and interesting. Called Identity, Fulfilment, Individuality and Fortune it is a meditation on the workings of the Sun, Moon and Ascendant, as discrete factors and in relationships with each other via the Lot of Fortune. He quotes the famous aphorism of Heraclitus character is fate, and this is nowhere more explicit than in the expression of the two fundamental Life forces, the Sun and the Moon, the core symbols of every horoscope. As well as offering pithy explanations of the meanings of the Sun and the Moon in each zodiac sign, he surveys the workings of the Lot of Fortune. (Many astrologers might still call this the Part of Fortune; Lot is a nod to the ancient Hellenistic tradition.) This is one of the most valuable parts of this book. Brian takes the ancient idea of the symbolic point which concentrates the interrelationship of Sun, Moon and Ascendant and explains it in a way which is modern and meaningful. This is the best description of the Lot of Fortune I have read in over forty years of astrology work. Chapter five is called Destiny and devoted to the Lunar Nodes. We can feel Brian having fun here. He enjoys the metaphors associated with the Dragons Head and Tail and plays with the symbolism here, even while respecting the geometry involved in the Nodal cycle and the deep Vedic tradition which offers us the oldest and most potent readings of the Moons Nodes, each thoroughly individualised with the names Rahu (North Node) and Ketu (South Node) in the Hindu system. Brians overall approach to the Nodes as factors influencing Vocation is grounded in the idea proposed by Dane Rudhyar, that the Nodal axis represents destiny and individuation. There is a detailed yet succinct exploration of the Nodes by signs and houses and major planetary alignments. The sixth chapter, Direction, explores the angles of the horoscope here the Ascendant-Descendant axis and the MC-IC axis. There are good examples of how these play out depending on the colours they receive from major planetary alignments. I was particularly delighted to find a thoughtful discussion of the way planets linked to the IC impact on the horoscope. This is a major factor yet almost always overlooked by astrologers who are dazzled by the solar Midheaven and apparently unable to notice the silvery lunar IC. Brian is not so blind, and here helps us all to see a little better. The seventh chapter examines the two sets of houses most relevant to Vocation: the Houses of Life (1, 5, and 9) and the Houses of Substance (2, 6, and 10). This is elaborated in further chapters. Chapter eight is all about the second house and its rewards, both material and spiritual. The ninth chapter explores the potential for the sixth house to reveal options for materially making a living, and the tenth chapter rather aptly focuses on the tenth house as a marker for career and profession, though ideas around career and profession are a broad tent, if not church. This tenth chapter is the most obviously relevant of all to work and vocation, and for the Idea (and character) Vocation, both from a traditional and a modern humanistic viewpoint. One of Brians inspired touches here is to liken the MC to the spire on a cathedral, temple or stupa, lifting attention towards the heavens. The eleventh chapter is called Vocational Transitions and looks briefly yet deftly at the impacts of progressions and the transits of the social and outer planets on the unfolding of our vocational opportunities and possible changes of direction. There is good material here about Jupiter and Saturn, and also on the quirky movements of Chiron. Brian writes more

succinctly about Uranus, Neptune and Pluto (perhaps because there is so much else available about these three as transiting influences) but gives a very helpful table summarising core ideas to consider during the transits of the Nodes through the houses of the horoscope. The final chapter pulls together all this accumulating information about Vocation and gives us a sense of the Idea or character as a rounded whole, fully alive and active. Brian offers a handful of interesting chart examples, drawn from his own files and also discussing in some depth two more familiar public figures. These are depth psychologist Thomas Moore, of Care of the Soul fame, and maverick poet-singer-songwriter-satirist- Buddhist and everything else he is, Leonard Cohen. In this review I have played with Vocation as an Idea or character because of the life and integrity we find in this book, Vocation. I don't think Brian really intended to write a book with quite this slant, it is rather my way of presenting to you the richness, variety and complexity of the ideas, offerings and suggestions to be found in this text, which make Vocation come alive. Astrological symbols help that is one of the most essential points of them but without a master astrologer writing at the height of his powers, there will be little life and less truth in what is being presented. When writers make their writing live, they have done all they possibly can. This book Vocation, on Vocation, is fully alive; I can offer no higher praise or recommendation.

The term 'vocation' epitomises the quest to find your authentic voice in the world: the work you are meant to do, the work you love. It is greater than emotional security, financial remuneration or worldly success. Your vocation is soulful; a deeply felt longing to be of service, to follow your passion and to live a meaningful life. Vocation is more than a job, a career or a pastime; it is the X-factor that fulfils the urge to be creative and employed in purposeful ways. Astrology is an ideal career counsellor, as it maps out the paths and patterns of your vocation. Using astrological symbols and images, Vocation: the Astrology of Career, Creativity and Calling is your guide to participating in a more fulfilling career and lifestyle.