

Hudson Valley

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Do you want to see into the future? Perhaps you'd rather know about the past. Or do you need some guidance for the present? One of these psychic practitioners might be able to help you get into the appropriate spirit. By Laura Toffler-Corrie

Mediums at large

As the new millennium approaches, there's a resurgence of interest in the spirit world. But today's spiritualists bear little resemblance to their forebears. They aren't somber, forbidding figures partial to black eyeliner and prone to dramatic trances; they don't levitate tables or spew ectoplasm (once thought to be a kind of ghost juice); they don't use crystal balls.

Today's spiritualists, in fact, are a lot like you and me. They're grandmothers, former business executives, artists. They tend to be thoroughly up-to-date in their dress and in their approach to life. They may use computers—though they claim that such modern techniques are merely used to jump-start intuition. Some have updated ancient methods such as tarot cards

and palmistry, giving them a hipper slant. Modern psychology has seeped into the repertoire—s well, and many spiritualists consider themselves to be more like therapists. Where these folks *do* differ from many of us, however, is in the area of communication: they claim to speak to, and for, their disembodied associates with astonishing regularity and ease.

Spiritualism has always attracted its share of eccentrics, but it has also appealed to some of the brightest and most creative minds in history: Frank Lloyd Wright, Oscar Wilde, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and James Fenimore Cooper, to name a few. If you're one of those who have flirted with the idea of consulting a psychic, or if you're merely curious, here's a sampling of six Hudson Valley spiritualists.

Judi Thomases, Astrologer

When Judi Thomases, 57, wants to discover the purpose of someone's life on earth -- soul agenda -- she looks to the sky. A professional astrologer since 1975, Thomases believes that a person's destiny is determined by the relationship between the position of planets and the exact moment of birth. "The planets' energy intersects with that person's consciousness," she says. "Everything is a system of energy."

Thomases believes that our soul chooses the particular pattern of energy we will be born into, so our lives will provide us with the lessons we need in order to evolve spiritually, advancing us for our next life. Our souls also choose all the important dynamics of our life,

including our family, our talents and the obstacles we'll encounter. "We pick the scripts," explains Thomases, "and then come as the actors." Souls choosing what we would consider a bad life are looking for a challenge, she says

After graduating college in 1962, Thomases worked as a secretary, an interior designer and a writer. In her early 30s, she received a very accurate astrological reading and decided to embark on a career as an astrologer. Today, she's a member of the American Federation of Astrologers and the National Council of Geocosmic Research and is a writer for astrological publications.

Thomases believes that astrology is a legitimate divinatory tool utilizing a pattern called a matrix of energy, which represents a person's past, present and future. She

has developed her own style of presenting an astrological reading by combining computer technology, tarot cards and the horoscope wheel.

Thomases begins a reading by obtaining the date, time and place of a client's birth and then runs the information through a computer program called "BlueStar." She also uses tarot cards and AstroDice to create a psychical profile. Predictions about a person's future are generated by more calculations, including an analysis of "lunations," which are phases of the moon, and planet transits.

According to Thomases, the procedure is not unlike the approach of a doctor who first makes a clinical diagnosis uses intuition to make an overall diagnosis. A good astrologer uses the numbers of the graphs only as a jumping off point. I use logic, analysis and computations to make my intuitive leap."

The real purpose of an astrological reading, she explains, is to give people a perspective on their lives, help them temper their undesirable qualities and remind them of their spiritual purpose. Also, she stresses, it's important to know that no matter how insurmountable one's problems may seem, there's always hope.

Why does Thomases feel that astrology is important? "Astrology," she asserts, "is a way to help bring a soul through dark periods and come into the light."

Thomases resides in Garnerville, Rockland County. The cost of a one-hour session is \$100. 845-354 0812.

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