

## ***ELEMENTAL VOIDS: Missing earth, air, water or fire in the natal chart***

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Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump had something in common besides being the 2016 candidates for the US presidency. They both have charts without the Sun, Moon, or eight planets in any earth signs (Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn). This is known as an elemental void, and it is an interesting consideration in natal astrology. (In evaluating elemental voids, I do not count the Ascendant, Midheaven and Nodal axis, though some astrologers do.)

I tend to think elemental voids have not been well understood. When I first started studying astrology, I was told that people without air signs (Gemini, Libra, Aquarius) weren't especially smart; that a fire sign void (no planets in Aries, Leo or Sagittarius) meant you weren't especially inspiring; and a water sign void (nothing in Cancer, Scorpio or Pisces) meant you didn't have any feelings.

Some astrologers thought that you have no concerns in the area of life associated with the void. (E.g., a lack of air signs means you don't have concern about education.)

The common wisdom about elemental voids did not hold up with what I was seeing in the charts I studied. For example, both of my paternal grandparents had TWO elemental voids each. Both lacked water. My grandmother also lacked fire, yet she was one of the feistiest people I ever knew, with a mezzo-soprano voice that held its own in the inspiration department. My grandfather lacked air, yet he was one of the smartest men I ever knew, brilliant and well-read.

It wasn't until I read something Richard Ideman wrote that elemental voids made sense. He said that one can over-do in the area of the void. I interpret his meaning as follows: that an absence of air can make one super interested in studying and learning; an absence of fire meant that you worked twice as hard at enjoying life's experiences and inspiring others; an absence of earth can make you overly practical and possessive; and an absence of water means your feelings can be extremely deep, sometimes to your own detriment. Of course, it stands to reason that you can also under-do matters connected to the element.

So the real manifestation of elemental voids can be one of two extremes. Astrologer Alan Oken summed up the elemental void rather well. He said: "The lack of an element could produce two general results. Either the person will be clueless as to how that element works in life, or be obsessed and overly concerned with the situations and circumstances connected with that element." (Dell Horoscope, January 2003, p. 18) Alan goes on to say that "a person without earth, for example, can walk through life totally unconcerned by material factors, or be totally obsessed about money."

That brings me back to an absence of earth signs, which has to do with practicality and possessions. It can produce people who can be obsessed with wealth. Some of the wealthiest people on the planet

have charts that are void of earth signs. Bill Gates is one. J. Paul Getty is another, as is Donald Trump, who has said that money is simply his way of keeping score. Hillary Clinton is not in the same financial league with those three, but she has shown a remarkable ability to raise money. I have known some earth voids who were highly practical, to the exclusion of everything else.

A few other notes about elemental voids:

1. People who have an elemental void in fire have been erroneously called uninspiring and uninspired. Yet two of America's most inspiring presidents—Franklin D. Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan—were born without fire signs. (Perhaps that was the reason Roosevelt called his radio communications to America his “fireside chats.” )
2. People born without water signs are supposed to be lacking in emotional depth, and many can be emotionally evasive or unavailable. Some try to intellectualize feelings, so it's no surprise to find artists and poets born without water signs. Yet one can't read the poetry of William Butler Yeats—who had a water elemental void—and not be impressed with the depth of its feeling. The same is true of Ludwig Von Beethoven's music: He also lacked any planets in water signs.
3. People can be drawn to activities that cultivate the missing element, like my grandfather with the air void in his chart, and his books and his appreciation of the 10% of genius that wasn't through effort. Thomas Jefferson, considered one of the most brilliant of US presidents, had no air signs in his chart. Ram Dass, who diligently explored the heights and the depths of human consciousness, was also born without air signs.
4. It is said that elemental “houses” can make up for an elemental void if they contain planets. For example, someone may lack water in their chart, but have three planets in the 4<sup>th</sup> house, which is naturally ruled by Cancer, a water sign: This supposedly can make up for a lack of water. For those not familiar with the “elements” of the houses: Fire houses are 1, 5, and 9; Water houses are 4, 8, and 12; Earth houses are 2, 6, and 10; and Air houses are 3, 7, and 11.
5. Through progressions, it is highly probable that everyone will have planets that progress into signs in the elements they lack in the natal chart. This brings up an interesting question: When a planet progresses into an element you lack in the natal chart, can the natal void make you better or worse at handling the planet? I haven't studied this in any depth, but I suspect that the first decanate of such a progression might be the trickiest to navigate; e.g., if you have a Leo sun sign (with no earth signs) which progresses into Virgo, the years when the progressed Sun is between 00 and 10 degrees of Virgo might be the hardest to define.
6. If you lack an element in your chart, you may find yourself drawn to having that element tied to possessions or visible within your home. Bill Gates and Donald Trump are well known for owning considerable amounts of property, true to the earth void in their charts. But on the

other hand, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart—also born without earth signs—constantly worried about money throughout his life.

Elemental voids can thus go either way in the areas of life connected to the elements. They also can be a useful backdrop to the rest of the chart.

Others with missing element:

Liberace – air

Norman Mailer – earth

Marconi – water

Willie mays – air

Mozart – no earth

Jack Nicholson – no air

O Henry – no water, but had heavy earth. Indicted for embezzlement of bank funds, put in penitentiary where he spent three years writing to earn money to support his daughter

Ryan O’Neal – no water

Louis Pasteur - no fire

Robert Redford - no air

Roy Rogers – no fire

Jean Paul Sartre – no fire

David Selznick – no water

Brooke Shields – no fire

Tennyson – no earth

Toulouse Lautrec – no water

Yeats – no water

Horatio Alger – no water

Beethoven – no water

Irving Berlin – no water

John Brown, abolitionist - no air

Edgar Rice Burroughs - no air

Roy Campanella – no earth