

**The Natal Moon–Saturn Connection:  
A Facebook Discussion**  
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*This article was originally published in The Mountain Astrologer magazine June/July 2011.*

I consider my Moon–Saturn conjunction to be a defining feature of my birth chart. My lonely Moon and Saturn lie nestled together within the same degree (7° Taurus) in my 12th house and unaspected by any other planets. As with any natal chart feature, the Moon–Saturn connection reflects both potential burdens and gifts.

**The Gifts and Burdens of the Moon–Saturn Connection**

<i>Gifts</i>	<i>Burdens</i>
Discipline	Inflexibility
Integrity	Depression
Endurance	Cynicism
Maturity	World-Weariness
Independence	Withdrawal
Loyalty	Fearfulness
Backbone	Coldness

I have experienced the range of those burdens and gifts myself. I found comfort in a recent TMA discussion thread on Facebook, which generated some thoughtful, heartfelt responses from those sharing this natal aspect or those who had other prominent Moon–Saturn connections in their natal chart. TMA’s publisher, Tem Tarriktar, kicked off the discussion with the following prompt:

*Do you have one of these in your natal chart?*

*(1) Moon–Saturn square, opposition, or conjunction (and how many degrees of orb)*

*(2) Moon in Capricorn*

*Other considerations:*

- Saturn in Cancer prominent in your chart*
- Moon/Saturn midpoint on or very near a personal planet or angle*
- Saturn in the 4th house*

*If you have one of these, or you have a partner or close friend who does, feel free to comment on what it is like and what positive qualities these aspects or placements bring to us.*

*I'll start: I have A Moon–Saturn square, 2° orb (separating), with Saturn in the 4th. One of the strongest associations I have with this aspect is that I don't deserve "it" ("it" being anything*

*good that others may feel I deserve). Anyone out there have a similar experience and struggle with self-esteem issues, especially at an earlier stage of life?*

I watched with interest and responded myself as the discussion thread grew. There were some prominent themes that repeated themselves throughout the comments. My intent in this article is to explore those themes by including excerpts from the comments, as well as my personal experience of the aspect. But first, let's explore each of the archetypes at a basic level. What is our Moon? And what is our Saturn?

The Moon has often been described as our emotional nature, its sign and house placement indicating how we display and process our emotions. Furthermore, the Moon represents the nature of early conditioning so deeply rooted that we are not aware of its effects upon us. The Moon within us is our instinctive response to our past experiences. It is deeply primal. Behavior that stems from our Moon is beyond our ability to understand or explain rationally. It is motivated by unseen forces: our personal unconscious, our memories, and our childhood. From a psychological astrology perspective, the Moon can also provide information about the childhood environment and the nature of the home and family.

Saturn is our Inner Adult. It is the part of our psyche that is also the taskmaster, the one who holds us (and others) accountable. It can represent the stern father figure, internally or externally. Our Saturn is the part of us that drives us to be a responsible and contributing member of society. Saturn is our sense of duty and obligation and can also relate to our worldly sense of duty. To whom, or to what, do we feel responsible? The natal placement of our Saturn by sign and house can indicate how we play out that sense of duty and how we take our place within the community. The shadow side of Saturn can be an overdeveloped sense of duty and responsibility, harshness, and an austere nature – overdoing the Parental/Taskmaster role. That harshness can be directed at others or at oneself.

When the Moon and Saturn are in major aspect in the chart<sup>1</sup> or when there are other significant chart factors connecting the Moon and Saturn, each of these two functions of the psyche influences the other, and their archetypal fields merge. The following themes are those that arose most prominently from the Facebook discussion about the Moon-Saturn connection. These comments<sup>2</sup> are not meant to be a scientific case study; a Facebook discussion does not provide enough consistency or controls. However, there are definitely predominant themes that emerged from the comments, which provide an overall impression of the aspect. With that caveat, one of the things that I found notable is that most of those who responded had hard natal aspects: the

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<sup>1</sup> The major aspects are the five Ptolemaic aspects, divided into "hard" and "soft." Hard aspects are the conjunction, square, and opposition. Soft aspects are the sextile and the trine.

<sup>2</sup> The names of all Facebook discussion participants have been printed per the request of each participant as either their full name, first name and last initial, initials only, a pseudonym, or anonymously. Permission for printing these comments was obtained from each participant.

conjunction, square, or opposition. Perhaps, with the hard aspect between the Moon and Saturn, the themes are more apparent in one's biography.

### **Childhood Themes: Austerity, Lack of Nurturing, and Adult Responsibilities**

Abandonment, neglect, and an austere environment during childhood are common themes for this aspect, expressed more frequently than any other theme in the discussion. Tem put forward the following prompt specifically regarding childhood issues: "It seems that a tight Moon-Saturn hard aspect and 'unusual childhood' go together. Were there fundamental needs not being met, perhaps to set up a huge life lesson that the soul needs to experience?"

I particularly resonated with this idea that my "unusual childhood" elements set into motion the lessons that my soul needed and has benefited from, however difficult it was at the time. I was the eldest child of very young parents. My father and mother divorced when I was six, and my mother raised the three of us without much help. She also had health problems and suffered bouts of depression; she was in and out of the hospital several times, and even committed herself to a mental hospital on two occasions. I understand now that she suffered from clinical depression, but the forms of treatment during those years were archaic. Due to her frequent absences from home, I stepped into the role of the responsible adult at an early age. I've often joked that my childhood was "Dickensian," and that is not too much of an exaggeration. Although I was not physically abused and most of my basic needs were met, there is still a lot of sadness and heaviness around my memories of those years. I see the mark of that in my Moon-Saturn conjunction. The nature of the mother is also indicated by its placement in the 12th house – the house of hospitals, institutions, and in its darkest shadow, mental illness.

Similar experiences were expressed through many of the comments from the discussion thread. The effects range from less to more pronounced:

"My 10th-house retrograde Saturn in Cancer squares the Moon and opposes my Sun. Pluto is also conjunct the Moon, making a cardinal, angular T-square that dominates the entire chart. I was forced to spend a lot of time alone as a kid by circumstance (dad gone, mom fully engaged in her out-of-town career). But I grew to need lots of solitude, and I suffer (and probably make others suffer) when I don't get it. Past family issues continue to wreak havoc on the present and will likely continue to be a source of grief as transiting Pluto and Saturn hit my T-square." (Jen C.)

"I have the Moon (conjunct Mars) in Gemini in the 8th house opposite Saturn in Sagittarius in the 2nd house, with a 6-degree orb. Both my parents grew up poor (they lived through the Great Depression) and had fairly tough lives early on, due to poverty. I think that has influenced me in a lot of ways, subtle and not-so-subtle. I also went to Catholic schools (heavy discipline, very by-the-book, severe, disciplinarian nuns). They liked to tell us stories about the torments of the martyrs (pretty graphic, too – lots of

blood and guts!) and how being stoic and tolerating great pressure without buckling was the ideal." (Valerie S.)

"I have Saturn (retrograde in Taurus in the 3rd house) exactly square Venus (in Leo in the 6th house), with the Moon in Gemini (in the 5th house) at the midpoint. All of the previous posts have expressed experiences similar to mine: low self-esteem, social anxiety, depression, etc. My mother was from the Depression era, so we lived as if it were still going on. Due to her Sagittarian need to be out in the world, I had to stay at home alone and take care of myself. With a Virgo Sun square a Gemini Moon, life has been all work and no play." (K. B.)

### **Lack of Self-Worth**

Because of the difficulties in childhood, these themes also seem connected to a lack of self-esteem, or feeling undeserving of good things, later in adulthood:

"I have a 1st-house Saturn opposed the Moon in the 7th, with a 4-degree orb. I think this was a very tough aspect as I was growing up, with self-esteem issues, etc. Also, I always felt better on my own than with people." (A.B.W.)

"I have Saturn (3-degree orb) square the Moon, with the Moon in the 4th house. My father has Saturn in the 4th house, my younger sister has the Moon conjunct Saturn in the 4th house, and my older sister has the Moon in Capricorn. We all endured a crazy mom who emotionally and physically battered us (and scared the living daylights out of us). Of course, my mom had Saturn square her Moon, with Saturn in the 6th house (died of cancer at 50). I would say lack of self-esteem is huge. This aspect can certainly make you old young, and brings heavy responsibilities. People thought I was in college when I was in the 6th grade." (Lori H.)

"My Moon conjunct Saturn is in Cancer (3-degree orb) at the IC. I'm an only child of alcoholic parents. Father died when I was 8, mother died when I was 18. I married at 15 and had two children by the time I was 17. I was divorced at 23 and raised children without support. Yes, I had responsibilities early in life. I also had issues of self-esteem and felt undeserving of good things for too many years." (Sandra M.)

"I have a Saturn-Moon square. The Moon is in Taurus in the 8th, Saturn is in Aquarius in the 5th. Material needs were met in childhood, but not emotional needs. Felt very happy, successful in childhood (Jupiter squares the Sun and rules the IC). Traditional family structure, successes, and daily proximity to family members filled the void. In adulthood, I have come to understand that my emotional needs were not met or allowed to develop, nor was my need to develop as an independently thinking and acting individual. Adulthood has been an ongoing cascade of disillusionment and struggle. As with others, self-esteem/worth has been a major issue. Aimlessness.

Loneliness. Depression, etc. Actually, most of these were there in childhood, but I was not aware of them.” (Anonymous)

### **The Mother-Daughter Relationship**

The Moon-Saturn connection may also point to difficulties in the mother-daughter relationship. The main issues seem to be around the controlling qualities of the mother, while the daughter with the Moon-Saturn aspect is, on some level, at her mercy:

“My Saturn and Moon are conjunct within 2 degrees. My mother was also raised during the Depression. She was unstable, controlling, and narcissistic. She had an unhappy, deprived childhood and could never please her mother. She passed in July, and my issues with her were sorrowfully never resolved. I spent a lifetime trying to please and appease her, but from a distance. My favorite Auntie said to me when I was about 35: ‘If you hadn’t left, you’d be crazy by now.’” (Reene)

Another commenter wrote in response: “Hi, Reene – I have a Moon-Saturn-Uranus conjunction in Gemini in the 11th. I’m sorry to hear that your mother passed on with issues unresolved. I feel certain it will be the same for me. This dysfunctional mother-daughter dynamic is such a major demon, I don’t think anyone ever really gets over it. The way you handled it sounds more like the way my sister handled it (until about the last year), trying to please and appease. I handled it by rebelling. Mom’s entire focus, when we were growing up, was on not only control but literally trying to prevent my sister and me from developing our own identities. She wanted little clones of herself, to live out her fantasies. With Pluto sitting exactly on my Leo Ascendant, there was no way I was going to let anyone take away my identity. However, I’ve done a lot of really self-destructive things in my life, just to prove that I am who I am, and not who she wanted me to be. This has been a very illuminating discussion, re: Moon-Saturn aspects and women with controlling mothers.” (Sherrie M.)

### **What Is “Fun,” Anyway?**

Beyond childhood and into adulthood, the Moon-Saturn connection reflects other shared difficulties and experiences. Saturn is focused upon achievement and one’s sense of duty. Its connection by aspect to the Moon can reflect a tendency to be overly focused upon work, which can obviously lead to difficulty in relaxing and just having fun. What does “fun” even mean for a Moon-Saturn type? My experience of this is that I don’t often know what to do with myself when I’m not working. I have also had it pointed out to me that I am chronically busy and overwhelmed with work – and I imagine that I must actually like this state of affairs, or else I would not continue to repeat the pattern. I have two close friends with the Moon in Capricorn who are always focused on their next project; both are entrepreneurial, hardworking, and seem happy and content mainly when pursuing the next goal. While the ability to **focus** upon work

and achievements can be an overwhelmingly positive trait, the downside can be an inability to relax and enjoy life.

This theme showed up within the discussion thread in response to a specific prompt by Tem: “I’m wondering if all you Moon-Saturn hard-aspect types have any difficulty figuring out what is fun for you or what would bring joy into your lives – then, once you know that, allowing yourself to go there. I have a hard time with both, probably because I feel responsible for things I should probably be ‘delegating’ to the rest of creation. For me, the Moon is in the 1st/Leo and Saturn in the 4th/Scorpio.”

“Finding joy is absolutely a theme in my life now that I am in midlife. I am great with responsibility, though. I am the first to figure out how to make more work and have been accused of this! I tend to hang with people that I think need me or I do things I think are needed instead of following my bliss. This rings bells ...” (Lori H.)

Sometimes other natal aspects can ameliorate the Moon-Saturn aspect:

“My Moon and Saturn are one-degree conjunct in the 6th house in Gemini; it was an ‘unusual’ childhood. Time heals ... What’s saved me is my Mars conjunct Uranus in the 5th, also in Gemini: good for creativity and play, plus an excitable nature that has gotten me in a bit of hot water at times. My motto, as I’m climbing *out* of that tub of hot water, is: ‘It was worth it.’ You all can imagine how much craziness has been manifested with this aspect! Talk about duality – the service-driven Moon-Saturn versus the crazy-for-fun Mars-Uranus.” (Reene)

In this last post, I am struck by the idea of calculated risk within Reene’s confession of the “crazy” behavior rooted in the Mars-Uranus conjunction. It’s as if those of us with Moon-Saturn aspects can never stray too far. Even when we are cutting loose, we need to assess the worthiness of it, and “getting crazy” has a container or a limit. Reene concludes the post by stating something that can ultimately seem fun and fulfilling to many a Moon-Saturn native: “Those of us with Moon-Saturn aspects can use the energy to help others, and it brightens the day.”

### **Easier with Age?**

Could it be that this often-difficult aspect becomes easier over time? On an archetypal level, it would make sense that our Saturn can be something we grow into and that, as we mature, we can come to better understand and embody the archetype. While we are younger, perhaps we are more likely to feel Saturn connected to our Moon as the burden, the stern parent squelching our inner child. The notion that the aspect becomes more gift than burden over time is supported by several comments throughout the discussion:

A.B.W., with a Moon-Saturn opposition, writes: “I believe this opposition has helped me a great deal over the years, as if it had trained me for life’s tougher moments.

It has taught me to be patient and let time do its thing. Also, I find that as I am aging (I'm now 47), Saturn is becoming easier for me to understand and love. And so this aspect now feels as though it is working for me. People seem to respect my opinions and ideas, and they look up to me in the workplace and elsewhere. My job (which I only recently moved into) demands a lot of emotional maturity, which I find I am now able to demonstrate ... I guess it is normal that Saturn should become easier to deal with, as I get old, since it is in my 1st house (9-degree orb to the cusp). And so even its 'tougher' aspects (square to Neptune, opposition to Moon) are now less troublesome."

Valerie S., also with the opposition, writes: "I can't say it's been easy getting to where I am now; I think this combo tends to repress the emotions and increase nonspecific fears and worries, while it also seems to reduce mobility and flow on many levels. But it also, I believe, has made me stronger and wiser. I've studied astrology and Tarot for many years and am also psychic. I'm much happier now that I'm in my 50s than I was when I was younger. I find that a lot of people come to me for advice or feel that I am very grounded, and so they feel comfortable and/or protected around me."

And M. J., who has a Moon-Saturn square, with her Moon in Capricorn and Saturn in Libra, writes: "At the tender age of 57, I realized that my life has been built on resisting. Resisting my mother, resisting my (now ex-) husband, etc. But they are gone. Mom died in 2003, and my marriage died in 2005. Who am I, and what do I do with my life, if I have nothing to resist? Maybe, maybe, as some of you have written, make those small, delicious discoveries about what pleases me and arrange to have some of that in my life, and slowly, in small steps, make connections with new people and renew connections with friends who have gone by the by, ameliorating to a certain extent the isolating tendencies of Moon-Saturn."

### **The Gifts of Moon and Saturn**

Beyond the gifts of this aspect that develop over time, there appear to be definite gifts of the Moon-Saturn aspect at any age. One idea that has emerged throughout the discussion is that, while Moon-Saturn people are often solitary, they also find satisfaction in helping others and putting their skills to work in service.

Sandra M., with a Moon-Saturn conjunction in Cancer, writes: "I appreciate and foster my alone time and have had to work at developing social skills. From the time I was quite young, I've had an affinity for older people and over the years have volunteered as a 'friendly visitor,' in addition to working occasionally as a caregiver for the elderly. I am also the 'understanding ear' that friends turn to for comfort and advice. Perhaps it's because I take their feelings seriously? At the same time, I seem to be able to offer a realistic or practical perspective."

Other various gifts of this aspect were expressed in words such as “depth,” “soul,” and “self-reliance.” (Also note that two of the following comments are from those with a soft aspect.)

“I do think it [the Moon-Saturn aspect] produces emotional depth, yet restriction, and it can certainly prompt much soul-searching.” (Lori H.)

“I have Saturn-Moon-Pluto conjunct in the 4th. I have lots of initiating energy, and am always excited and ready to go with the imperative that I know where I am going and what I mean to accomplish when I get there.” (Clymela B.)

Josef S., with a Moon-Saturn trine, writes: “I know that the trine has a very different energy than the square, but Saturn on the IC colors the nature of that trine. I have never really suffered from severe depression, but I do know that I have a tendency to look at things a bit deeper, and I allow myself to deal with Saturnal heaviness more than most people I know.”

“I have a Moon-Saturn sextile, which might not always be as easy as it sounds, but after reading all of these other posts, I am really grateful for it now! For me, the keywords are emotional stability stemming from self-reliance, something I have worked hard at achieving.” (Nikki Neal)

Overall, whether the aspects are hard or soft, whether it’s a Capricorn Moon or Saturn in the 4th, there are certainly common experiences shared by people with a Moon-Saturn connection. I felt kinship with those who shared their insights in this discussion. Since the Moon-Saturn connection can reflect loneliness and a feeling of isolation, it was soothing to my soul to feel a sense of connection with the Moon-Saturn tribe. My hope is that others who share this aspect may read these words and will also gain from the awareness that they are not alone, after all.