



Rob Brezsnys's Astrology Newsletter
July 22, 2015
FreeWillAstrology.com

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My book *PRONOIA IS THE ANTIDOTE FOR PARANOIA* is available at Amazon: bit.ly/Pronoia or Powells: bit.ly/PronoiaPowells

Below are excerpts.

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Attention, please. This is your ancestors speaking. We've been trying to reach you through your dreams and fantasies, but you haven't responded. That's why we've commandeered this space. So listen up. We'll make it brief. You're at a crossroads analogous to a dilemma that has baffled your biological line for six generations. We ask you now to master the turning point that none of us have ever figured out how to negotiate. Heal yourself and you heal all of us. We mean that literally. Start brainstorming, please.

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How can we outwit and escape the numbing trance that everyday routine seems to foster? What can we do to stay alert to the subtle miracles and intriguing mysteries and numinous beauty that surround us on all sides?

Some possibilities:

1. Make it a daily practice to refresh the ways we perceive the world.
2. Scan regularly for opportunities to play and for creatures that like to play.
3. Assume that the entire world is a constantly changing source of oracular revelation that has meaning for us.
4. Experiment with what happens when we use empathy and intuition to imagine how animals and other people experience life.
5. Don't take things too seriously or too personally or too literally.
6. Expose ourselves regularly to provocative myths and intriguing symbols. Seek out stories that bend and twist our beliefs. Be open to exploring events and phenomena that elude rational explanation.
7. Regularly give our unconscious minds the message that we want to feel deeply.
8. Cultivate a willingness, eagerness, and receptivity to being surprised.
9. Others?

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I invite you to experiment with the theme "Healthy Obsessions." Not "Melodramatic Compulsions" or "Exhausting Crazes" or "Manias That Make You Seem Interesting to Casual Bystanders," but "Healthy Obsessions."

To do it well, you will have to take really good care of yourself as you concentrate extravagantly on tasks that fill you with zeal. This may require you to rebel against the influences of role models, both in your actual life and in the movies you've seen, who act as if getting sick and imbalanced is an integral part of being true to one's genius.

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Alice finds her way to Wonderland by falling down a rabbit hole. Dorothy rides to Oz on a tornado. In C. S. Lewis's "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," Lucy stumbles into the magical land of Narnia via a portal in the back of a large clothes cabinet.

In the sequels to all these adventures, however, the heroines must find different ways to access their exotic dreamlands. Alice slips through a mirror next time. Dorothy uses a Magic Belt. Lucy leaps into a painting of a schooner that becomes real.

Moral of the story: The next time you seek passage into a magic interlude or alternate reality, the doorway may be unlike anything you've experienced before.

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"Creativity is conceived as a reproductive act with a tangible result -- a child, a book, a monument -- that has a physical life going beyond the life of its producer. Creativity, however, can be intangible in the form of a good life, or a beautiful act, or in other virtues of the soul such as freedom and openness, style and tact, humor, kindness."
- James Hillman

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MORE PRONOIA RESOURCES:

Reading the news makes us feel like the world is falling apart: that we're on the verge of a total collapse. But in fact, we're living through what is, by objective metrics, the best time in human history. People have never lived longer, better, safer, or richer lives than they do now. Read more: tinyurl.com/o58aqcc

Here's a summary of the findings:

1. We're living longer than ever
2. Global GDP has surged.
3. Extreme poverty is in free fall.
4. Death from war are at historical lows.
5. Deaths from HIV/AIDS are declining.
6. Many other diseases are declining.
7. The spread of democracy has made the world safer and freer.
8. More people than ever before have enough to eat.
9. Fewer mothers are dying in childbirth.
10. MThe child mortality rate is collapsing.
11. More kids than ever are going to school.

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More good news:

About That Overpopulation Problem: Research suggests we may actually face a declining world population in the coming years.
tinyurl.com/a7c5gq7

Overcrowding? Nah -- the World's Population May Actually Be Declining. The world's population isn't growing nearly as fast as it once did. In fact, experts say the number of humans could fall within our lifetimes.
tinyurl.com/b32u4hg

The Rapid Slowdown of Population Growth
tinyurl.com/o5rv9ej

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In calling attention here to some of the surprisingly good news about the world, I of course don't mean to imply that paradise is at hand. My recognition of the underreported progress and miracles is not equivalent to an endorsement of evil-doers. And I trust that after reading these words you won't go numb to the suffering of others and stop agitating on their behalf.

Just the opposite: I hope that you will be energized by the signs of creeping benevolence and waxing intelligence. As you absorb the evidence that an aggressive strain of compassion is loose in the world, maybe you will conclude that activism actually works, and you'll be motivated to give yourself with confidence to the specific role you can play in manifesting the ultimate goal: to create a heaven on earth in which everyone alive is a healthy, free, self-actualized, spiritually enlightened millionaire dedicated to living sustainably.

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(Note: I endorse these pronoia resources because I like them. They are not advertisements, and I get no kickbacks.)

Please tell me your own personal nominations for PRONOIA RESOURCES.

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY
Week beginning July 23

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LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):

A researcher at the University of Amsterdam developed software to read the emotions on faces. He used it to analyze the expression of the woman in Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting, the *Mona Lisa*. The results suggest that she is 83 percent happy, 9 percent disgusted, 6 percent fearful, and 2 percent angry. Whether or not this assessment is accurate, I appreciate its implication that we humans are rarely filled with a single pure emotion. We often feel a variety of states simultaneously. In this spirit, I have calculated your probably mix for the coming days: 16 percent relieved, 18 percent innocent, 12 percent confused, 22 percent liberated, 23 percent ambitious, and 9 percent impatient.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):

"What makes you heroic?" asked philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Here's how he answered himself: "simultaneously going out to meet your highest suffering and your highest hope." This is an excellent way to sum up the test that would inspire you most in the coming weeks, Virgo. Are you up for the challenge? If so, grapple with your deepest pain. Make a fierce effort to both heal it and be motivated by it. At the same time, identify your brightest hope and take a decisive step toward fulfilling it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):

Actress and musician Carrie Brownstein was born with five planets in Libra. Those who aren't conversant with astrology's mysteries may conclude that she is a connoisseur of elegance and harmony. Even professional stargazers who know how tricky it is to make generalizations might speculate that she is skilled at cultivating balance, attuned to the needs of others, excited by beauty, and adaptive to life's ceaseless change. So what are we to make of the fact that Brownstein has said, "I really don't know what to do when my life is not chaotic"? Here's what I suspect: In her ongoing exertions to thrive on chaos, she is learning how to be a connoisseur of elegance and harmony as she masters the intricacies of being balanced, sensitive to others, thrilled by beauty, and adaptive to change. This is important for you to hear about right now.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):

You're entering a volatile phase of your cycle. In the coming weeks, you could become a beguiling monster who leaves a confusing mess in your wake. On the other hand, you could activate the full potential of your animal intelligence as you make everything you touch more interesting and soulful. I am, of course, rooting for the latter outcome. Here's a secret about how to ensure it: Be as ambitious to gain power over your own darkness as you are to gain power over what happens on your turf.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):

I'm a big fan of the attitude summed up by the command "Be here now!" The world would be more like a sanctuary and less like a battleground if people focused more on the present moment rather than on memories of the past and fantasies of the future. But in accordance with the astrological omens, you are hereby granted a temporary exemption from the "Be here now!" approach. You have a poetic license to dream and scheme profusely about what you want your life to be like in the future. Your word of power is *tomorrow*.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):

A philanthropist offered \$100,000 to the Girls Scouts chapter of Western Washington. But there were strings attached. The donor specified that the money couldn't be used to support transgender girls. The Girl Scouts rejected the gift, declaring their intention to empower every girl "regardless of her gender identity, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation." Do you have that much spunk, Capricorn? Would you turn down aid that would infringe on your integrity? You may be tested soon. Here's what I suspect: If you are faithful to your deepest values, even if that has a cost, you will ultimately attract an equal blessing that doesn't require you to sell out. (P.S. The Girls Scouts subsequently launched an Indiegogo campaign that raised more than \$300,000.)

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LOVE YOUR LIFE!

How's your fight for freedom going? Are you making progress in liberating yourself from your unconscious obsessions, bad habits, and conditioned responses? Are you turning out to be the hero of your own life?

For assistance and inspiration, tune in to my EXPANDED AUDIO HOROSCOPES.

These forecasts are different in tone and format from the written horoscopes you read here in the newsletter. They're longer and more leisurely in tone. They tend to bring out more of the patient counselor in me, and have a bit less of the poet.

To listen to your Expanded Audio Horoscope online, go to RealAstrology.com.

Register and/or log in through the main page.

You can also listen over the phone by calling 1-877-873-4888.

The cost is \$6 per sign on the Web (discounts available for bulk purchases), or \$1.99 per minute by phone. Each forecast is 4-5 minutes long.

The Expanded Audio Horoscopes work on most smart phones and tablets.

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"Your Expanded Audio Horoscopes seem to have the effect of activating my inner teacher. Thanks!" - Eleanor A., Toronto

"Your expanded audio horoscopes are the next best thing to actually having you here next to me to remind me who I really am." - Alyssa R., Des Moines, Iowa

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AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):

Consider the possibility of opening your mind, at least briefly, to provocative influences you have closed yourself off from. You may need to refamiliarize yourself with potential resources you have been resisting or ignoring, even if they are problematic. I'm not saying you should blithely welcome them in. There still may be good reasons to keep your distance. But I think it would be wise and healthy for you to update your relationship with them.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):

Over 10,000 species of mushrooms grow in North America. About 125 of those, or 1.25 percent, are tasty and safe to eat. All the others are unappetizing or poisonous, or else their edibility is in question. By my reckoning, a similar statistical breakdown should apply to the influences that are floating your way. I advise you to focus intently on those very few that you know for a fact are pleasurable and vitalizing. Make yourself unavailable for the rest.

ARIES (March 21-April 19):

The Latin motto "Carpe diem" shouldn't be translated as "Seize the day!", says author Nicholson Baker. It's not a battle cry exhorting you to "freaking grab the day in your fist like a burger at a fairground and take a big chomping bite out of it." The proper translation, according to Baker, is "Pluck the day." In other words, "you should gently pull on the day's stem, as if it were a wildflower, holding it with all the practiced care of your thumb and the side of your finger, which knows how to not crush easily crushed things -- so that the day's stem undergoes increasing tension and draws to a tightness, and then snaps softly away at its weakest point, and the flower is released in your hand." Keep that in mind, Aries. I understand you are often tempted to seize rather than pluck, but these days plucking is the preferable approach.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20):

When I talk about "The Greatest Story Never Told," I'm not referring to the documentary film about singer Lana Del Rey or the debut album of the rap artist Saigon or any other cultural artifact. I am, instead, referring to a part of your past that you have never owned and understood . . . a phase from the old days that you have partially suppressed . . . an intense set of memories you have not fully integrated. I say it's time for you to deal with this shadow. You're finally ready to acknowledge it and treasure it as a crucial thread in the drama of your hero's journey.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20):

The ancient Greek philosopher Thales is credited as being one of the earliest mathematicians and scientists. He was a deep thinker whose thirst for knowledge was hard to quench. Funny story: Once he went out at night for a walk. Gazing intently up at the sky, he contemplated the mysteries of the stars. Oops! He didn't watch where he was going, and fell down into a well. He was OK, but embarrassed. Let's make him your anti-role model, Gemini. I would love to encourage you to unleash your lust to be informed, educated, and inspired -- but only if you watch where you're going.

CANCER (June 21-July 22):

Charles Darwin is best known for his book *The Origin of Species*, which contains his seminal ideas about evolutionary biology. But while he was still alive, his best-seller was *The Formation of Vegetable Mould Through the Action of Worms*. The painstaking result of over forty years' worth of research, it is a tribute to the noble earthworm and that creature's crucial role in the health of soil and plants. It provides a different angle on one of Darwin's central concerns: how small, incremental transformations that take place over extended periods of time can have monumental effects. This also happens to be one of your key themes in the coming months.

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HOMEWORK:

Write a fairy tale or parable that captures what your life has been like so far in 2015. Share with me at FreeWillAstrology.com.

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Submissions sent to the Free Will Astrology Weekly Newsletter or in response to "homework assignments" may be published in a variety of formats at Rob Brezsny's discretion, including but not limited to newsletters, books, the Free Will Astrology column, and Free Will Astrology website. We reserve the right to edit such submissions for length, style, and content. Requests for anonymity will be honored with submissions; otherwise, reader names, screen names, or initials will be used. Please be sure to note your preference when sending to us. We are not responsible for unsolicited submission of any creative material.

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