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Check out Ro's website at www.roloughran.com

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LIFE IS BOTH WRETCHED AND GLORIOUS
BY Pema Chödrön

“Life is glorious, but life is also wretched. It is both. Appreciating the gloriousness inspires us, encourages us, cheers us up, gives us a bigger perspective, energizes us. We feel connected.

“But if that’s all that’s happening, we get arrogant and start to look down on others, and there is a sense of making ourselves a big deal and being really serious about it, wanting it to be like that forever. The gloriousness becomes tinged by craving and addiction.

“On the other hand, wretchedness–life’s painful aspect–softens us up considerably. Knowing pain is a very important ingredient of being there for another person. When you are feeling a lot of grief, you can look right into somebody’s eyes because you feel you haven’t got anything to lose–you’re just there.

“The wretchedness humbles us and softens us, but if we were only wretched, we would all just go down the tubes. We’d be so depressed, discouraged, and hopeless that we wouldn’t have enough energy to eat an apple.

“Gloriousness and wretchedness need each other. One inspires us, the other softens us. They go together.”

- Pema Chödrön, *Start Where You Are: A Guide to Compassionate Living*

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CAN THE IMAGINATION SAVE US?
by Susan Griffin

I heard the following story from a survivor of the holocaust: Along with many others who are crowded into the bed of a large truck, the surrealist poet Robert Desnos is being taken away from the barracks of the concentration camp where he has been held prisoner. The mood is somber; everyone knows the truck is headed for the gas chambers.

When the truck arrives at its destination, no one can speak at all; even the guards fall silent. But this silence is soon interrupted by an energetic man, Robert Desnos, who begins reading the palm of one of his fellow prisoners.

Oh, he says, I see you have a very long lifeline. And you are going to have three children. He is exuberant. And his excitement is contagious. First one man, then another, offers up his hand, and Desnos predicts longevity, more children, abundant joy.

As Desnos reads more palms, not only does the mood of the prisoners change, but also the moods of the guards. How can one explain it? Perhaps the element of surprise has planted a shadow of doubt in their minds. They are in any case so disoriented by this sudden change of mood among those they are about to kill that they are unable to go through with the executions.

So all the men, along with Desnos, are packed back onto the truck and taken back to the barracks. Desnos has saved his own life and the lives of others by using his imagination.

This story poses a question in my mind. Can the imagination save us?

Robert Desnos was famous for his belief in the imagination. He believed it could transform society. And what a wild leap this was, at the mouth of the gas chambers, to imagine a long life! In his mind he simply stepped outside the world as it was created by the SS.

Full story by Susan Griffin: tinyurl.com/yder25lt

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MORE PRONOIA RESOURCES:

All those below are from www.celebratesmallvictories.com/archives/

1. Every day, the list of powerful men being called out and held accountable for sexual harassment and assault grows.
2. In a win for animal rights, New York banned elephant performances in entertainment, including circuses and parades.
3. With help from Tesla and their solar powered panels and batteries, electricity has returned to a children’s hospital in Puerto Rico.
4. Bloomberg Philanthropies is donating \$64 million dollars help the Sierra Club’s campaign to close two-thirds of U.S coal-fired plants by 2020.
5. With pressure from the CFA and Earthjustice, the Consumer Product Safety Commission voted to outlaw toxic chemicals often found in baby products.
6. New York City’s Board of Elections is facing consequences for illegally purging more than 100,000 voters, and has agreed to restore these voting rights and prevent similar actions in the future.
7. The League of Women Voters and the Texas State Conference of the NAACP won a lawsuit protecting voter data from Trump’s bogus voter fraud commission.
8. A Dallas school district unanimously voted to change the names of four schools previously named after Confederate generals. (Thanks, Jami!)

9. After a racist attack on a local high school student, hundreds of people in a small town in Nevada took part in a Love Walk to support his family.

More like this at www.celebratesmallvictories.com/archives

(Note: I endorse these because I like them. They aren't advertisements, and I get no kickbacks.)

Please tell me your own nominations for PRONOIA RESOURCES: Truthrooster@gmail.com.

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY **Week beginning November 9**

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FreeWillAstrology.com

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):

Remember the time, all those years ago, when the angels appeared to you on the playground and showed you how and why to kiss the sky? I predict that a comparable visitation will arrive soon. And do you recall the dreamy sequence in adolescence when you first plumbed the sublime mysteries of sex? You're as ripe as you were then, primed to unlock more of nature's wild secrets. Maybe at no other time in many years, in fact, have you been in quite so favorable a position to explore paradise right here on earth.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):

As a courtesy to your mental health, I minimize your exposure to meaningless trivia. In fact, I generally try to keep you focused instead on enlightening explorations. But in this horoscope, in accordance with astrological omens, I'm giving you a temporary, short-term license to go slumming. What shenanigans is your ex up to lately, anyway? Would your old friend the bankrupt coke addict like to party with you? Just for laughs, should you revisit the dead-end fantasy that always makes you crazy? There is a good possibility that exposing yourself to bad influences like those I just named could have a tonic effect on you, Sagittarius. You might get so thoroughly disgusted by them that you'll never again allow them to corrupt your devotion to the righteous groove, to the path with heart.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):

In the coming months it will be crucial to carefully monitor the effects you're having on the world. Your personal actions will rarely be merely personal; they may have consequences for people you don't know as well as those you're close to. The ripples you send out in all directions won't always look dramatic, but you shouldn't let that delude you about the influence you're having. If I had to give 2018 a title with you in mind, it might be "The Year of Maximum Social Impact." And it all starts soon.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):

The punk ethic is rebellious. It transgresses conventional wisdom through "a cynical absurdity that's redeemed by being hilarious." So says author Brian Doherty. In the hippie approach, on the other hand, the prevailing belief is "love is all you need." It seeks a "manic togetherness and all-encompassing acceptance that are all sweet and no sour -- inspiring but also soft and gelatinous." Ah, but what happens when punk and hippie merge? Doherty says that each moderates the extreme of the other, yielding a tough-minded lust for life that's both skeptical and celebratory. I bring this to your attention, Aquarius, because the punk-plus-hippie blend is a perfect attitude for you to cultivate in the coming weeks.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):

I'm falling in love with the way you have been falling in love with exciting possibilities that you once thought were impossible. Oh, baby. Please go further. Thrilling chills surge through me whenever you get that ravenous glint in your mind's eye. I can almost hear you thinking, "Maybe those dreams aren't so impossible, after all. Maybe I can heal myself and change myself enough to pursue them in earnest. Maybe I can learn success strategies that were previously beyond my power to imagine."

ARIES (March 21-April 19):

Adriana Martinez and Octavio Guillen got engaged to be married when they were both 15 years old. But they kept delaying a more complete unification for 67 years. At last, when they were 82, they celebrated their wedding and pledged their vows to each other. Are there comparable situations in your life, Aries? The coming months will be a favorable time to make deeper commitments. At least some of your reasons for harboring ambivalence will become irrelevant. You'll grow in your ability to thrive on the creative challenges that come from intriguing collaborations and highly focused togetherness.

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YOU NEED MAGIC EVERY DAY

Every day, you have to wade through a relentless surge of soul-less facts. The experience tends to shut down your sense of wonder.

Every day, you're over-exposed to cynical narratives that have been sucked free of delight and mystery. That's why you have to make such strenuous efforts to keep your world enchanted.

I like to think I can contribute to the sacred cause of feeding your sense of wonder and enchantment. In fact, that's one of my prime motivations for offering you the free weekly horoscopes you read in this newsletter.

If you ever want more of that good stuff, and think it's worth paying for, please consider trying out my EXPANDED AUDIO HOROSCOPES. They're four-to-five-minute meditations on the current state of your destiny.

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

Register and/or log in through the main page.

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The cost is \$6 per sign on the Web (discounts available for bulk purchases), or \$1.99 per minute by phone.

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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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TAURUS (April 20-May 20):

I had pimples when I was a teenager. They're gone now, although I still have a few pockmarks on my face as souvenirs. In retrospect, I feel gratitude for them. They ensured that in my early years of dating and seeking romance, I would never be able to attract women solely on the basis of my physical appearance. I was compelled to cultivate a wide variety of masculine wiles. I swear that at least half of my motivation to get smarter and become a good listener came from my desire for love. Do you have comparable stories to tell, Taurus? Now is an excellent time to give thanks for what once may have seemed to be a liability or problem.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20):

The next two weeks will be one of the best times ever to ask provocative, probing questions. In fact, I invite you to be as curious and receptive as you've been since you were four years old. When you talk with people, express curiosity more often than you make assertions. Be focused on finding out what you've been missing, what you've been numb to. When you wake up each morning, use a felt-tip marker to draw a question mark on your forearm. To get you in the mood for this fun project, here are sample queries from poet Pablo Neruda's *Book of Questions*: "Who ordered me to tear down the doors of my own pride? Did I finally find myself in the place where they lost me? Whom can I ask what I came to make happen in this world? Is it true our desires must be watered with dew? What did the rubies say standing before the juice of the pomegranates?"

CANCER (June 21-July 22):

"Things to say when in love," according to Zimbabwe poet Tapiwa Mugabe: "I will put the galaxy in your hair. Your kisses are a mouthful of firewater. I have never seen a more beautiful horizon than when you close your eyes. I have never seen a more beautiful dawn than when you open your eyes." I hope these words inspire you to improvise further outpourings of adoration. You're in a phase when expressing your sweet reverence and tender respect for the people you care about will boost your physical health, your emotional wealth, and your spiritual resilience.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):

Are you working on solving the right problem? Or are you being distracted by a lesser dilemma, perhaps consumed in dealing with an issue that's mostly irrelevant to your long-term goals? I honestly don't know the answers to those questions, but I am quite sure it's important that you meditate on them. Everything good that can unfold for you in 2018 will require you to focus on what matters most -- and not get sidetracked by peripheral issues or vague wishes. Now is an excellent time to set your unshakable intentions.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):

Every one of us experiences loneliness. We all go through periods when we feel isolated and misunderstood and unappreciated. That's the bad news, Virgo. The good news is that the coming weeks will be a favorable time for you to make loneliness less of a problem. I urge you to brainstorm and meditate about how to do that. Here are some crazy ideas to get you started. 1. Nurture ongoing connections with the spirits of beloved people who have died. 2. Imagine having conversations with your guardian angel or spirit guide. 3. Make a deal with a "partner in loneliness": a person you pray or sing with whenever either of you feels bereft. 4. Write messages to your Future Self or Past Self. 5. Communicate with animals.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):

The drive for absolute perfection could undermine your ability to create what's very good and just right. Please don't make that mistake in the coming weeks. Likewise, refrain from demanding utter purity, pristine precision, or immaculate virtue. To learn the lessons you need to know and launch the trends you can capitalize on in 2018, all that's necessary is to give your best. You don't have to hit the bull's eye with every arrow you shoot -- or even *any* arrow you shoot. Simply hitting the target will be fine in the early going.

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HOMEWORK:

If you could change your astrological sign, what would you change it to and why? Write: FreeWillAstrology.com.

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Submissions sent to Rob Brezsny's Astrology 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 submissions for length, style, and content. Requests for anonymity will be honored. We are not responsible for unsolicited submission of any creative material.

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