



Rob Brezsny's Astrology Newsletter
June 6, 2018
FreeWillAstrology.com

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GRATITUDE FEST

Would you like to make yourself smarter and more beautiful? Are you interested in increasing your capacity for ecstasy and improving your health? Consider the possibility of celebrating regular Gratitude Fests. During these orgies of appreciation, you could confer praise and respect on the creatures, both human and otherwise, that have played seminal roles in inspiring you to become yourself. You would devote yourself to invoking and expressing thanks.

Who teaches and helps you? Who sees you for who you really are? Who nudges you in the direction of your fuller destiny and awakens you to your signature truths? Who loves you brilliantly?

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TAKE TIME TO BE THE FLOWERS

"Take time to stop and smell the flowers," says an old homily. Albert Hoffman, the Swiss scientist who discovered LSD and lived to age 102, had a different approach. "Take the time to stop and be the flowers," he said.

That's my advice to you. Don't just set aside a few stolen moments to sniff the snapdragons, taste the rain, chase the wind, watch the hummingbirds, and listen to a friend. Use your imagination to actually be the snapdragons and rain and wind and hummingbirds and friend. Don't just behold the Other; become the Other.

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SHEDDING OUTWORN SELF-IMAGES

Jungian analyst Arnold Mindell explores the relationship between mind and body. He thinks you can achieve optimal physical health if you're devoted to shedding outworn self-images. In his book "The Shaman's Body," he says, "You have one central lesson to learn—to continuously drop all your rigid identities. Personal history may be your greatest danger."

Kate Bornstein, author of Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women and the Rest of Us, agrees. Raised as a boy, she later became a woman, but ultimately renounced gender altogether. "I love being without an identity," she says. "It gives me a lot of room to play around."

What identities would be healthy, even ecstatic, for you to lose? Describe the fun you'd have if you were free of them.

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THE REALLY IMPORTANT KIND OF FREEDOM

"The really important kind of freedom," said David Foster Wallace, "involves attention and awareness and discipline, and being able truly to care about other people and to sacrifice for them over and over in myriad petty, unsexy ways every day."

Is that an interesting kind of freedom to you? Can you imagine any scenario in which practicing it would crack you open and pour you into an ecstatic state?

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ECSTASY OF THE INVISIBLE

Many life processes unfold outside of your conscious awareness: your body digesting your food and

circulating your blood; trees using carbon dioxide, water, and sunlight to synthesize their nourishment; microorganisms in the soil beneath your feet endlessly toiling to create humus. You don't perceive any of these things directly; they're invisible to you.

Tune in to this vitalizing alchemy. Use your X-ray vision and sub-sonic hearing and psychic smelling. See if you can absorb by osmosis some of the euphoria of the trees as they soak in the sunlight from above and water from below.

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THE JOY OF INTEGRITY

"Picture the Grand Canyon," says Buddhist teacher Jack Kornfield. "Every hundred years, a child comes by and throws a mustard seed into it. In the time it takes to fill the hole in the earth with mustard seeds, one mahakalpa will have passed. To perfect the virtuous heart—the joy of integrity—takes a thousand mahakalpas."

If that's true, then you've still got a lot of work to do. The good news is that civilization is in the midst of a critical turning point that could tremendously expedite your ripening. So you could make unusually great progress toward the goal of perfecting the virtuous heart in the next 40 years.

For best results, meditate often on the phrase "the joy of integrity." Get familiar with the pleasurable emotion that comes from acting with impeccability. And try out this idea from Gandhi: Integrity is the royal road to your inner freedom.

P.S. Oddly enough, the work of perfecting the virtuous heart is very effective in helping you master the art of cultivating everyday ecstasy. Meditate on the connection.

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THE OPPOSITE OF WHO YOU ARE

"Keep exploring what it takes to be the opposite of who you are," suggests psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, author of the book *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*. This advice is one of his ideas about how to get into attunement with the Tao, also known as being in the zone.

How would you go about being the opposite of who you are? Try it and see if it drives you into a state of euphoria.

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SERPENT AND MESSIAH

In the Western Hermetic version of the Qabala, every Hebrew letter is paired with a number, and so every word is also a number derived from the addition of its letters. Gematria is the practice of finding hidden resonance between words that have similar numerical values. Of the many poetic truths revealed through this art, one of my favorites is this: The Hebrew words for both "serpent" and "messiah" add up to 358.

Let's suppose this can be interpreted to mean that the snaky potency of your reproductive drive is potentially the source of your salvation. What implications might that have for how you cultivate the art of ecstasy?

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COME DANCE WITH US IN THE LIGHT

Check out this excerpt from "Those Who Do Not Dance," by Chilean poet Gabriela Mistral: "God asked from on high, / 'How do I come down from this blueness?' / We told Him: / come dance with us in the light."

I love this passage because it reminds me that nothing is ever set in stone; everything is always up for grabs. Even God needs to be open to change and eager for fresh truths. Furthermore, even we puny humans may on occasion need to be God's teacher and helper.

Likewise, we can never be sure about what lowly or unexpected sources might bring us the influences we require.

What do Mistral's words mean to you? Imagine you're the "God" referenced in the poem. What blueness are you ready to come down from, and who might invite you to dance in their light?

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CAKCLING WHACKS OF JIBBER-JABBER

Confounding lessons and delightful shocks have been increasing in frequency during the recent past and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. In light of that fact, you may want to find some new ways to express your amazement. Clichés like "Jesus H. Christ!" or "WTF?!" may not be sufficient to capture the full impact of the aha! moments.

To get you launched in the right direction, I'll suggest a few fresh exclamations. They're not designed to become tried-and-true replacements for the lazy phrases you're using now, but are rather meant to jog your imagination and inspire you to conjure up a constantly changing variety of ever-fresh invocations. Now see how these roll off your tongue: "Great Odin's raven!" "Radical lymphocytes!" "Cackling whacks of jibber-jabber!" "Frosty heat waves!" "Panoramic serpentine!"

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The preceding blips are excerpts from my book
PRONOIA IS THE ANTIDOTE FOR PARANOIA

It's available at Amazon: bit.ly/Pronoia
or Powells: bit.ly/PronoiaPowells

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MORE PRONOIA RESOURCES:

Rejection of Gerrymandering in Ohio Suggests the U.S. Wants Fairer Elections. In both red states and blue states, steps are underway to limit how much districts can be drawn for partisan advantage.
tinyurl.com/ycqpha8y

What are some wholesome, uplifting historical events?
tinyurl.com/y7hgmocy

Hundreds of Canadian doctors, medical specialists and residents, as well as medical students, have signed a petition protesting their own pay raises, instead asking that the money be reallocated to help nurses and patients in need.
tinyurl.com/ybw9dhs

(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.

Read old but still useful archives of Pronoia Resources: pronoiaresources.com

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY
Week beginning June 7

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GEMINI (May 21-June 20):

Between 1967 and 1973, NASA used a series of Saturn V rockets to deliver six groups of American astronauts to the moon. Each massive vehicle weighed about 6.5-million pounds. The initial thrust required to launch it was tremendous. Gas mileage was seven inches per gallon. Only later, after the rocket flew farther from the grip of Earth's gravity, did the fuel economy improve. I'm guessing that in your own life, you may be experiencing something like that seven-inches-per-gallon feeling right now. But I guarantee you won't have to push this hard for long.

CANCER (June 21-July 22):

Mars, the planet that rules animal vitality and instinctual enthusiasm, will cruise through your astrological House of Synergy for much of the next five months. That's why I've concluded that between now and mid-November, your experience of togetherness can and should reach peak expression. Do you want intimacy to be robust and intense, sometimes bordering on rambunctious? It will be if you want it to be. Adventures in collaboration will invite you to wander out to the frontiers of your understanding about how relationships work best.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):

Which astrological sign laughs hardest and longest and most frequently? I'm inclined to speculate that Sagittarius deserves the crown, with Leo and Gemini fighting it out for second place. But having said that, I suspect that in the coming weeks you Leos could rocket to the top of the chart, vaulting past Sagittarians. Not only are you likely to find everything funnier than usual; I bet you will also encounter more than the usual number of authentically humorous and amusing experiences. (P.S.: I hope you won't cling too fiercely to your dignity, because that would interfere with your full enjoyment of the cathartic cosmic gift.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):

According to my analysis of the astrological omens, a little extra egotism might be healthy for you right now. A surge of super-confidence would boost your competence; it would also fine-tune your physical well-being and attract an opportunity that might not otherwise find its way to you. So, for example, consider the possibility of renting a billboard on which you put a giant photo of yourself with a tally of your accomplishments and a list of your demands. The cosmos and I won't have any problem with you bragging more than usual or asking for more goodies than you're usually content with.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):

The coming weeks will be a favorable time for happy endings to sad stories, and for the emergence of efficient solutions to convoluted riddles. I bet it will also be a phase when you can perform some seemingly clumsy magic that dispatches a batch of awkward karma. Hooray! Hallelujah! Praise Goo! But now listen to my admonition, Libra: The coming weeks won't be a good time to toss and turn in your bed all night long thinking about what you might have done differently in the month of May. Honor the past by letting it go.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):

"Dear Dr. Astrology: In the past four weeks, I have washed all 18 of my underpants four times. Without exception, every single time, each item has been inside-out at the end of the wash cycle. This is despite the fact that most of them were *not* inside-out when I threw them in the machine. Does this weird anomaly have some astrological explanation? - Upside-Down Scorpio." Dear Scorpio: Yes. Lately your planetary omens have been rife with reversals, inversions, flip-flops, and switchovers. Your underpants situation is a symptom of the bigger forces at work. Don't worry about those bigger forces, though. Ultimately, I think you'll be glad for the renewal that will emerge from the various turnabouts.

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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.

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"Your Expanded Audio Horoscopes provide me with the Rest of the Story. I'm not necessarily a believer in the scientific accuracy of astrology, but I do think you've got a lot of practical wisdom to impart."

- M. Tennenbaum, New York

"No one knows more about me than me. But you're right up there near the top of the list of people who do understand something about how I tick. How is that possible?"

- R. Goren, Albuquerque

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SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):

As I sat down to meditate on your horoscope, a hummingbird flew in my open window. Scrambling to herd it safely back outside, I knocked my iPad on the floor, which somehow caused it to open a link to a Youtube video of an episode of the TV game show *Wheel of Fortune*, where the hostess Vanna White, garbed in a long red gown, revealed that the word puzzle solution was USE IT OR LOSE IT. So what does this omen mean? Maybe this: You'll be surprised by a more-or-less delightful interruption that compels you to realize that you had better start taking greater advantage of a gift or blessing that you've been lazy or slow to capitalize on.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):

You're in a phase when you'll be smart to bring more light and liveliness into the work you do. To spur your efforts, I offer the following provocations. 1. "When I work, I relax. Doing nothing makes me tired." - Pablo Picasso. 2. "Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, so most people don't recognize them." - Ann Landers. 3. "Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work." - Aristotle. 4. "Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep." - Scott Adams. 5. "Working hard and working smart can sometimes be two different things." - Byron Dorgan. 6. "Don't stay in bed unless you can make money in bed." - George Burns. 7. "Thunder is good, thunder is impressive; but it is lightning that does the work." - Mark Twain.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):

"There isn't enough of anything as long as we live," said poet and short-story writer Raymond Carver. "But at intervals a sweetness appears and, given a chance, prevails." My reading of the astrological omens suggests that the current phase of your cycle is one of those intervals, Aquarius. In light of this grace period, I have some advice for you, courtesy of author Anne Lamott: "You weren't born a person of cringe and contraction. You were born as energy, as life, made of the same stuff as stars, blossoms, breezes. You learned contraction to survive, but that was then." Surrender to the sweetness, dear Aquarius.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):

Between you and your potential new power spot is an imaginary ten-foot-high, electrified fence. It's composed of your least charitable thoughts about yourself and your rigid beliefs about what's impossible for you to accomplish. Is there anything you can do to deal with this inconvenient illusion? I recommend that you call on Mickey Rat, the cartoon superhero in your dreams who knows the difference between destructive destruction and creative destruction. Maybe as he demonstrates how enjoyable it could be to tear down the fence, you'll be inspired to join in the fun.

ARIES (March 21-April 19):

According to my analysis of the astrological omens, you would be wise to ruffle and revise your relationship with time. It would be healthy for you to gain more freedom from its relentless demands; to declare at least some independence from its oppressive hold on you; to elude its push to impinge on every move you make. Here's a ritual you could do to spur your imagination: Smash a timepiece. I mean that literally. Go to the store and invest \$20 in a hammer and alarm clock. Take them home and vociferously apply the hammer to the clock in a holy gesture of pure, righteous chastisement. Who knows? This bold protest might trigger some novel ideas about how to slip free from the imperatives of time for a few stolen hours each week.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20):

Promise me that you won't disrespect, demean, or neglect your precious body in the coming weeks. Promise me that you will treat it with tender compassion and thoughtful nurturing. Give it deep breaths, pure water, healthy and delicious food, sweet sleep, enjoyable exercise, and reverential sex. Such veneration is always recommended, of course -- but it's especially crucial for you to attend to this noble work during the next four weeks. It's time to renew and revitalize your commitment to your soft warm animal self.

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HOMEWORK:

Confess your deepest secrets to yourself. Say them out loud when no one but you is listening. Testify at FreeWillAstrology.com.

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Submissions sent to Rob Breznsny's Astrology Newsletter or in response to "homework assignments" may be published in a variety of formats at Rob Breznsny'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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