

Maybe we even find redemptive value in our apparent lapses; we come to see that they saved us from some painful experience or helped us avoid getting a supposed treasure that would have turned out to be a booby prize.

We could call it the Love Your Imperfections Celebration.

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STAYING HEART OPEN IN THIS MAD WORLD

Jeff Brown writes: "It may be a misuse of the term, but i imagine anyone who can stay heartfelt and relatively heart open in this world a true warrior.

"This is not the traditional use of the term, which has been associated with armoring our heart and going to war, but what is more challenging than staying heart open in this mad world?

"The next step warrior is a tenderling warrior, a benevolent warrior, a sturdy yet vulnerable human who can stand in life's fire with their heart open and alight.

"This is why the divine feminine will show us the way. They have a long history of staying heartfelt in the midst of the madness."

—Jeff Brown

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WHAT YOU HAVE RIGHT NOW MAY BE EXACTLY WHAT YOU NEED

"This body that we have, this very body that's sitting here right now in this room, this very body that perhaps aches, and this mind that we have at this very moment, are exactly what we need to be fully human, fully awake, and fully alive.

"Furthermore, the emotions that we have right now, the negativity and the positivity, are what we actually need. It is just as if we looked around to find out what would be the greatest wealth that we could possibly possess in order to lead to a decent, good, completely fulfilling, energetic, inspired life, and found it right here."

- Jack Kornfield, tinyurl.com/crt35ah

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RADICAL AUTHENTICITY

"I've been practicing radical authenticity lately," my friend Brandon told me. "I'm revealing the blunt truth about unmentionable subjects to everyone I know. It's been pretty hellish -- no one likes having the social masks stripped away -- but it's been ultimately rewarding."

"I admire your boldness in naming the currents flowing beneath the surface," I replied, "but I'm curious as to why you imply they're all negative. To practice radical authenticity, shouldn't you also express the raw truth about what's right, good, and beautiful? Shouldn't you unleash the praise and gratitude that normally go unspoken?"

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I WANT EVERYBODY

Here are the lyrics to my short and simple song, "I Want Everybody."

I want to be free
in the mystery of love
I want to be wild
when the world begins again
I want to wake up and listen
Be in love with my life and death
and I want you to be there with me

I want all the children
to have enough to eat
I want all the angry men
to destroy their own pain
I want us all to be happy
and crazy and safe and real
I want everybody to be loved

To hear me sing the song "I Want Everybody," go here: tinyurl.com/yb3hef4x

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ADVICE TO MYSELF #2, Resistance by Louise Erdrich

Resist the thought that you may need a savior,
or another special being to walk beside you.
Resist the thought that you are alone.

Resist turning your back on the knife
of the world's sorrow,
resist turning that knife upon yourself.

Resist your disappearance

into sentimental monikers,
into the violent pattern of corporate logos,
into the mouth of the unholy flower of consumerism.

Resist being consumed.
Resist your disappearance
into anything except
the face you had before you walked up to the podium.

Resist all funding sources but accept all money.
Cut the strings and dismantle the web
that needing money throws over you.

Resist the distractions of excess.
Wear old clothes and avoid chain restaurants.
Resist your genius and your own significance
as declared by others.

Resist all hint of glory but accept the accolade
as tributes to your double.
Walk away in your unpurchased skin.
Resist the millionth purchase and go backward.

Get rid of everything.
If you exist, then you are loved
by existence. What do you need?
A spoon, a blanket, a bowl, a book—
maybe the book you give away.

Resist the need to worry, robbing everything
of immediacy and peace.
Resist traveling except where you want to go.

Resist seeing yourself in others or them in you.
Nothing, everything, is personal.
Resist all pressure to have children
unless you crave the torment of joy.

If you give in to irrationality, then
resist cleaning up the messes your children make.
You are robbing them of small despairs they can fix.

Resist cleaning up after your husband.
It will soon replace having sex with him.

Resist outrageous charts spelling doom.
However you can, rely on sun and wind.
Resist loss of the miraculous
by lowering your standards
for what constitutes a miracle.
It is all a fucking miracle.

Resist your own gift's power
to tear you away from the simplicity of tears.
Your gift will begin to watch you having your emotions,
so that it can use them in an interesting paragraph,
or to get a laugh.

Resist the blue chair of dreams, the red chair of science, the black chair of the humanities, and
just be human.
Resist all chairs.
Be the one sitting on the ground
or perching on the beam overhead
or sleeping beneath the podium.

Resist disappearing from the stage,
unless you can walk straight into the bathroom and resume the face,
the desolate face, the radiant face, the weary face, the face
that has become your own, though all your life
you have resisted it.

By Louise Erdrich

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PLEASURE ACTIVISM

Black feminist and social justice activist Adrienne Maree Brown is offering a workshop on
"Pleasure Activism." She wrote all the words below.

"Prevailing ideas around social justice activism tend to focus on 'doing the work,' putting in long
hours, and facing challenges head-on. Activism is rarely associated with personal joy and
pleasure.

"But can there be a deep connection between activism and pleasure? How do we make social
justice the most pleasurable human experience? How can we awaken within ourselves desires
that make it impossible to settle for anything less than a fulfilling life?

"Pleasure activism is a politics of healing and happiness that explodes the dour myth that
changing the world is just another form of work. Drawing on the Black feminist tradition, I
challenge us to rethink the ground rules of activism. Through connecting with our inner desires
and needs—physical, mental, emotional—we can become better organizers, activists, and social
justice workers. "

See details about Adrienne Maree Brown's workshop: tinyurl.com/y5e6f5ay

loving communion, with the Divine Friend, the personal face of the Cosmic Intelligence. Given your astrological omens, Pisces, I'd say you're in a prime position to experience the raw truth of both Marcia's and Roanne's ideals. The coming days could bring you amazing spiritual breakthroughs!

ARIES (March 21-April 19):

Temporary gods are deities who come alive and become available for particular functions, and are not otherwise necessary or called upon. For instance, in ancient Greece, the god Myiagros showed up when humans made sacrifices to the goddess Athena. His task was to shoo away flies. I encourage you to invent or invoke such a spirit for the work you have ahead of you. And what's that work? 1. To translate your recent discoveries into practical plans. 2. To channel your new-found freedom into strategies that will ensure freedom will last. 3. To infuse the details of daily life with the big visions you've harvested recently. What will you name your temporary god?

TAURUS (April 20-May 20):

Author Virginia Woolf said that we don't wholly experience the unique feelings that arise in any particular moment. They take a while to completely settle in, unfold, and expand. From her perspective, then, we rarely "have complete emotions about the present, only about the past." With that as your starting point, Taurus, I invite you to take a journey through the last 11 months and thoroughly evolve all the emotions that weren't entirely ripe when they originally appeared. Now is an excellent time to deepen your experience of what has already happened; to fully bloom the seeds that have been planted.

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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 online. (Discounts are available for bulk purchases.)

You can also listen over the phone by calling 1-877-873-4888. The cost is \$1.99 per minute. Each forecast is 4-5 minutes long.

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"I always feel like I know myself better after listening to your audio 'scopes."
—June Roseville, Austin, TX

"Your audio horoscopes calm me down when I'm too manic and pep me up when I'm down."
—Arthur Trachten, Cleveland, OH

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GEMINI (May 21-June 20):

"Wonder is a bulky emotion," writes author Diane Ackerman. "When you let it fill your heart and mind, there isn't room for anxiety, distress, or anything else." I'd love for you to use her observation as a prescription in 2021, Gemini. According to my understanding of the coming year's astrological portents, you will have more natural access to wonder and amazement and awe than you've had in a long time. And it would make me happy to see you rouse those primal emotions with vigor—so much so that you drive away at least some of the flabby emotions like anxiety, which are often more neurotic than real.

CANCER (June 21-July 22):

I'll use the words of author Estefanía Mitre to tell you the kind of intimate ally you deserve. If for some inexplicable reason you have not enjoyed a relationship like this before now, I urge you to make 2021 the year that you finally do. And if you HAVE indeed been lucky in this regard, I bet you'll be even luckier in 2021. Here's Mitre: "You deserve a lover who wants you disheveled . . . who makes you feel safe . . . who wants to dance with you . . . who never gets tired of studying your expressions . . . who listens when you sing, who supports you when you feel shame and respects your freedom . . . who takes away the lies and brings you hope."

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):

In 2019, singer Ariana Grande got Japanese characters tattooed on her palm. She believed them to be a translation of the English phrase "7 Rings," which was the title of a song she had released. But knowledgeable observers later informed her that the tattoo's real meaning was "small charcoal grill." She arranged to have alterations made, but the new version was worse: "Japanese barbecue grill finger." I offer you this story for two reasons, Leo. First, I applaud the creativity and innovative spirit that have been flowing through you. Second, I want to make sure that you keep them on the right track—that they continue to express what you want them to express. With proper planning and discernment, they will.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):

While sleeping, most of us have over a thousand dreams every year. Many are hard to remember and not worth remembering. But a beloved few can be life-changers. They have the potential to trigger epiphanies that transform our destinies for the better. In my astrological opinion, you are now in a phase when such dreams are more likely than usual. That's why I invite you to keep a recorder or a pen and notebook by your bed so as to capture them. For inspiration, read this testimony from Jasper Johns, whom some call America's "foremost living artist": "One night I dreamed that I painted a large American flag, and the next morning I got up and I went out and bought the materials to begin it." Painting flags ultimately became one of Johns' specialties.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):

I composed a prayer that's in alignment with your current astrological omens. If it feels right, say it daily for the next ten days. Here it is: "Dear Higher Self, Guardian Angel, and Future Me: Please show me how to find or create the key to the part of my own heart that's locked up. Reveal the secret to dissolving any inhibitions that interfere with my ability to feel all I need to feel. Make it possible for me to get brilliant insights into truths that will enable me to lift my intimate alliances to the next level."

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):

Author Herman Hesse observed, "Whoever wants music instead of noise, joy instead of pleasure, soul instead of gold, creative work instead of business, passion instead of foolery, finds no home in this trivial world." I hope you will prove him wrong in 2021, Scorpio. According to my reading of astrological omens, the rhythms of life will be in alignment with yours if you do indeed make bold attempts to favor music over noise, joy over pleasure, soul over gold, creative work over business, passion over foolery. Moreover, I think this will be your perfect formula for success—a strategy that will guarantee you'll feel at home in the world more than ever before.

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HOMEWORK:

Proposed experiment: Carry out an act of love that's unique in your history. Testify at 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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