

to put himself through misery and despair in order to escape misery and despair. But I also think it's important to note that there are other viable approaches to the quest for liberation. For example, having lavish fun and enjoying oneself profoundly can be tremendously effective in that holy work. I suspect that in the coming weeks, Leo, the latter approach will accomplish far more for you than the former.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):

Virgo novelist Agatha Christie sold hundreds of millions of books, and is history's most-translated author. While growing up, she had few other kids to associate with, so she created a host of imaginary friends to fill the void. They eventually became key players in her work as an author, helping her dream up stories. More than that: She simply loved having those invisible characters around to keep her company. Even in her old age, she still consorted with them. I bring this to your attention, Virgo, because now is a great time to acquire new imaginary friends or resurrect old ones. Guardian angels and ancestral spirits would be good to call on, as well. How might they be of assistance and inspiration to you?

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):

"To hurry pain is to leave a classroom still in session," notes Libran aphorist Yahia Lababidi. On the other hand, he observes, "To prolong pain is to miss the next lesson." If he's correct, the goal is to dwell with your pain for just the right amount of time—until you've learned its lessons and figured out how not to experience it again in the future—but no longer than that. I suspect that such a turning point will soon be arriving for you.

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MAYBE JOY AND BLISS ARE CATALYTIC SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES

Assume that pleasure and happiness doesn't interfere with your spiritual growth, but may in fact stimulate it.

Proceed on the hypothesis that cultivating delight and wonder might make you a more ethical and compassionate person.

Imagine that feeling good has something important to teach you every day.

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—A. Arrosto, Indianapolis

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—T. Preneris, Toronto

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SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):

In her poem "Every Day," Scorpio poet Denise Levertov wrote, "Every day, every day I hear enough to fill a year of nights with wondering." I think that captures the expansive truth of your life in the coming weeks. You've entered a phase when the sheer abundance of interesting input may at times be overwhelming, though enriching. You'll hear—and hopefully be receptive to—lots of provocative stories, dynamic revelations, and unexpected truths. Be grateful for this bounty! Use it to transform whatever might be stuck, whatever needs a catalytic nudge.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):

I hope you're not too stressed these days. There has been pressure on you to adjust more than maybe you'd like to adjust, and I hope you've managed to find some relaxing slack amidst the heaviness. But even if the inconvenience levels are deeper than you like, I have good news: It's all in a good cause. Read the wise words of author Dan Millman, who describes the process you're midway through: "Every positive change, every jump to a higher level of energy and awareness, involves a rite of passage. Each time we ascend to a higher rung on the ladder of personal evolution, we must go through a period of discomfort, of initiation. I have never found an exception."

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):

We can safely say that Anais Nin was a connoisseur of eros and sensuality. The evidence includes her three collections of erotic writing, *Delta of Venus*, *Little Birds*, and *Auletris*. Here's one of her definitive statements on the subject: "Sex must be mixed with tears, laughter, words, promises, jealousy, envy, all the spices of fear, foreign travel, new faces, stories, dreams, fantasies, music." In response to Nin's litany, I'm inclined to say, "Damn, that's a lot of ambiance and scaffolding to have in place. Must it always be so complicated?" According to my reading of upcoming cosmic rhythms, you won't need such a big array of stuff in your quest for soulful orgasms—at least not in the coming weeks. Your instinct for rapture will be finely tuned.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):

"One is always at home in one's past," wrote author Vladimir Nabokov. I agree. Sometimes that's not a good thing, though. It may lead us to flee from the challenges of the present moment and go hide and cower and wallow in nostalgia. But on other occasions, the fact that we are always at home in the past might generate brilliant healing strategies. It might rouse in us a wise determination to refresh our spirit by basking in the deep solace of feeling utterly at home. I think the latter case is likely to be true for you in the coming weeks, Aquarius.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):

"Not everything is supposed to become something beautiful and long-lasting," writes author Emery Allen. "Not everyone is going to stay forever." Her message is a good one for you to keep in mind right now. You're in a phase when transitory boosts and temporary help may be exactly what you need most. I suspect your main task in the coming weeks is to get maximum benefit from influences that are just passing through your life. The catalysts that work best could be those that work only once and then disappear.

ARIES (March 21-April 19):

Poet Allen Ginsberg despairingly noted that many people want MORE MORE MORE LIFE, but they go awry because they allow their desire for MORE MORE MORE LIFE to fixate on material things—machines, possessions, gizmos, and status symbols. Ginsberg revered different kinds of longings: for good feelings, meaningful experiences, soulful breakthroughs, deep awareness, and all kinds of love. In accordance with astrological potentials, Aries, I'm giving you the go-ahead in the coming weeks to be extra greedy for the stuff in the second category.

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HOMEWORK:

Write an essay on "What I Swear I'll Never Do Again As Long As I Live--Unless I Can Get Away with It Next Time." FreeWillAstrology.com

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