

Hey y'all -

Sorry for the delay since the last newsletter. I have gearing up for some brand new classes on the upcoming Mercury Retrograde. As is frequently the case with me, it took longer than I had thought to really do it right. My thanks to you for your patience. As always, a very special thanks to those of you who contacted me or Eric to inquire what the \$#@% is going on, to share their experiences. And I am especially grateful to those of you who reminded me it was really time.

Long story short, I think we got ourselves a ball game. For the first time in a very long time there is a real opportunity to create change, especially in our relationships. Though I have to say, I am using the word relationships here in a very broad sense. While I primarily mean the relationships we have with the people in our lives, this moment will also provide more than a few opportunities to transform the more abstract and often uncharted realm of our relationships with **things**: money, our jobs and businesses, god, our community, and government.

I like it.

The analogy that keeps presenting itself to me is that of a woman in childbirth. It's messy, yes. And painful. And while you can influence a birth, you cannot control it. Each birth has it's own divine way, and divine reasons why it is the way it is. If you can surrender to yours – whatever yours is – if you can rise to the occasion and trust it, your relationships will be forever changed. And the gifts you receive this holiday season could be the richest ones ever.

In order of occurrence, here is what is happening astrologically that is causing such big changes. **First** we had the planet Mars go retrograde on Saturday, October 2nd. For those of you who may not remember, each of the planets revolves around the Sun at a different rate, so as a group the planets are pretty much always configured differently from one moment to the next. Astrologically, each configuration means something different. Thus it becomes a very fluid medium, and very much like a huge algebra equation. The thing to remember here is that, like with algebra, in astrology you have to be very accurate with your math or you get the wrong answer. Given that, there are probably not as many bad astrologers as there are simply many of us who really *suck at math*. For you fire signs, that is precisely why this newsletter is generally so long – sorry to bore you, I am just trying to be as accurate as possible. If you can't cope, I have a *just-the-facts-ma'am* 'Do's and Don'ts' section near the end.

Part of your astrological equation is that each planet in the heavens is said to rule an aspect of your personality. Because of their differing rates of speed, several times a year, a slower planet will catch up to a faster planet, making one appear to be going backwards, or retrogradus, as the Romans called it. The ancients noticed that when a planet went retrograde, or appeared to be moving backwards, it was considered to be a time when whatever issues and objects that planet ruled would become more problematic. Their conclusion was that during that time, it was better to back off from whatever your agenda was around those particular issues and objects until the planets straightened out.

I practice a version of western astrology commonly known as Jungian Astrology. One of the many things I love about this type of work is that it will always give you parameters – a higher octave and a lower octave. These psychological endposts are particularly helpful in strategic planning, as they give you a range roughly equivalent to the Cone of Uncertainty in meteorology (the thing that tells you roughly – within several hundred miles or so – where the hurricane is going to land). Given that, let's look at what is going on and where you'll need to go to be safe.

Now Mars rules anger, aggression, violence, accidents and war. Mars in something fiery and impulsive like Aries will give you world class athletic achievements and performances. Mars in something watery and protective like Cancer will give you a tendency to stuff things and then blow like a volcano. In a nutshell, Mars in the strong but simpler sign of Taurus will make you louder than you are normally, more focused and decidedly more graceful and gracious in your ambitions. Taurus, whose constellation is the bull, is one of my favorite energies because it is so damn relational. It is the most relationally oriented of all the signs. You can count on it to really care about things working out alright for everyone involved. As an earth sign, it is also reliable, dependable, practical and pragmatic. Taurus rules all things on the material plane, especially assets, things that have value: real estate, jewelry, art, stock, etc.

Mars in Taurus will give you the strength to stick to a plan and achieve your goals, or to work to improve the relationships that are most important to you and that you need to be a success. Mars *Retrograde* in Taurus, will slow things down and you may not feel you are getting there as fast as you would like. Don't freak out. This is intended to be a bit of a reality check – to give you plenty of opportunities to become absolutely clear on exactly what your goals are, and what you want out of your relationships, and why. Just on the off chance you were heading down a road that wasn't exactly what you wanted or what you thought it was when you started out. This Mars Retrograde is a real clarifying exercise, to be sure.

It is so very important to proceed slowly and with caution, Be thorough and read all the road signs as you go. Mars in Taurus is particularly stubborn and fixated, even when direct, but retrograde it will be especially so. It can be quite reticent to let go of a particular goal or ideal during this time, even when wrong or when all indicators are pointing in another direction. It can also be more prone to outbursts when angered or otherwise inflamed.

Given the right stimulation, motivation or inspiration, this can give you the strength you need to do a much needed course-correction. Or if mishandled it will set your bull off on a Pamplona-style stampede. The trick here is to get clear on what you want – it will become more obvious to you during this retrograde than it ever has – and go for it in a way that is clear and strong and undeterrable but that doesn't leave any bodies in your wake. Easier said than done, I know, but nonetheless if you can hold that vision and vibration it will increase your chances of success.

For the record, Mars goes retrograde about every two years. This one begins at 23 degrees Taurus, and continues through December 10th when it goes Direct at 8 degrees Taurus. This may go without saying, but the individuals who will be the most affected by this are folks who have a lot of the sign of Taurus in their natal astrology charts. To give you a sense of what you've signed on for, the last time Mars was Retrograde in Taurus was in December of 1990 and January of 1991. At that time, America and its allies were

gearing up for the Gulf War. The time before that was in September and October of 1973, when we got the infamous Battle of the Sexes, the Yom Kippur War, a worldwide oil shortage and resultant energy crisis, the real beginning of the end for the Nixon administration with the scandal-driven resignation of then Vice President Spiro Agnew *and* the Saturday Night Massacre. Interestingly, about the same time, Mercury was Retrograde in Scorpio.

With that said, let's look at the second part of your astrological equation, which is Mercury. On Monday, November 14th, Mercury went Retrograde. *Guess where.*

Mercury in Scorpio is intense. Interestingly, when Mercury is in Scorpio the energy it creates is very, very similar to that of Mars in Taurus. With either one of these astrological transits, the upside is a much greater ability to work deep, to find answers, and to be present with what you find. You will have a frighteningly unshakeable focus. Like my terrier-mix mutt in pursuit of a rodent, focus. Like Phil Mickelson's inexplicable optimism in the face of tragic defeat, focus. Like the 101st Airborne Easy Company's determination in digging in and holding Bastogne, focus.

The downside of these transits is that on a bad day, you will have the misguided zeal of an obsessive, paranoid psychotic. I think more than any other sign, Mercury Retrograde in Scorpio means you really, really, really have to watch your head. If you let yourself succumb to thoughts of doubt, depression and despair, you will be able to create the evidence to justify that paradigm with unprecedented ease and effectiveness. **No es bueno.** This means that on a good day, you will really, really, really, want to let yourself focus on and acknowledge all that positive, good, right, and working with your world and your life. Over and over and over again.

On a bad day, and you will really need to know where your personal line is. When you hit it, you will need to find a way to do some sort of emotional and/or mental intervention on yourself. You're going to have to find a way to stop thinking. It will be very helpful to have some sort of pre-determined delineator here, roughly equivalent of the sell orders at a brokerage house.

Certain topics will definitely be more of a focus than others. Metaphysics and the occult, sex, the power held by and relationships between big business government, and death could be real popular places for you to find our head dwelling in during this time. A word here on death. Mercury retrogrades can be a real window between the worlds, and in general a lot of souls choose to leave during them. Given Scorpio's propensity with death, I am afraid that numbers may be much greater this time. Factor in the tendency towards accidents that both Mars and Mercury Retrogrades bring, and the numbers get even larger. If a person or animal that you love is hovering on the edge of that transition, prepare yourself, make your peace with them now, and help them get their affairs in order. If you are feeling particularly strong, help them make things right with others before their time comes.

Another word here, this one on sex. Both the sign of Scorpio and the planet Mars rule different aspects of sex. So with both of these retrograde, your libido may be working overtime in a variety of strange-but-true, fact-is-weirder-than-fiction, just bizarre-o sorts of ways. The most notable of these being that you may find yourself oddly attracted to someone during this time who normally would hold no appeal. No appeal. Mercury retrogrades are generally no time to get involved with someone new, but this one will be

particularly so. For right now, let's just let discretion be the better part of valour. Now is not the time to either start or end anything.

For the records, Mercury went retrograde at 10 degrees Sagittarius and will go direct on December 4th at 24 degrees. To have two retrogrades – both Mars and Mercury - happening concurrently is always a big deal. But when they are creating similar energies it is sort of like putting blinders on a horse. It really limits your focus. I cannot begin to say how unusual our current transits are right now. Usually when these two planets are retrograde at the same time, the energies of the signs they are in are so disparate that it only serves to scatter your thoughts and emotions even further. Instead, these only serve to sharpen the point.

So what does all this mean in real life right now, you ask? What I am seeing a lot of right now in my practice is people trying to understand their relationships with their most beloved friends and family members. This is the Taurean influence – Taurus wants those it loves to be not only happy but complete. Taurus wants you to be so satisfied and fulfilled that you are overflowing. Mars retrograde in Taurus is compelling you to figure out what you need to be so filled you can give with no expectation of getting anything in return.

But Scorpio wants you to be bigger than that. Scorpio rules depth and meaning, and it absolutely abhors superficiality. As Mercury goes retrograde in Scorpio it begs bigger questions about bigger relationships. Scorpio is compelling you to want more than just harmony in your inner circles. Scorpio wants you to find a way to be happier and more satisfied with your world at large: your neighborhood, your city, your state, your nation and your world. And it wants to you do take some responsibility and do what is necessary to make that happen. Given that, here are some things to keep in mind in the coming weeks:

Do:

Get your head out of whatever sand you had it buried in.

Think bigger.

Be bigger.

Find your moment and sit your butt down.

Invoke your own personal Rule 21.

Pay the price for your convictions.

Stay positive.

Take responsibility for all your realities.

Pray for those in leadership positions and who are in harm's way.

Write or email your city, county and state representatives. Regularly.

Send a care package to a soldier.

Don't:

Explode, combust, self-destruct, burst into flames or become an emotional suicide bomber.

Retaliate.

Shirk the work.

Defend a mistake.

Dwell on anything negative.

Be a victim.

Lose faith.

Forget your divinity.

Long story short, these are messianic times. Much like the inhabitants of Judea just before Christ was born, we are waiting for deliverance. But I have mixed feelings about it. On the one hand, we in the heart of blue-state America are long overdue for a savior. And on the other hand, I get it. Ever since we started killing them in the 1960's (all of those were democrats, ironically), our prophets have been a little reticent to stick their necks out. I get it. I sympathize. But it doesn't make it right, or excuseable. And at some point as a culture we are just going to have to get over it. On the other, other hand, I think that rather than one messiah, right now we need a few. At Rosa Park's memorial service, Hillary Clinton invited mourners to "have a Rosa Parks moment." If a lot of us did, the next few weeks could change the world. On many levels, for many reasons, I think now is the time.

And I am seeing it happen. One of the things I love about my job is that I am a witness. I witness what is going on the skies and what is going on with people on the planet, and I draw conclusions. For those of you who are just another child grown old, or who were so politically disenfranchised during the Reagan years that you retaliated by smoking too much pot and watching too much T.V, cue Pee-Wee Herman's "*Connect The Dots, La-La-La*" song here. I sit with people and I not only get to witness what is going on for them in the process of their soul's journey, but then I also get to see the part their picture plays in greater images of local and national communities. I love that. It gives me an idea of what the normal parameters of a situation are, and it gives me a sense of trends. It gives me hope and it gives me a clue. Thanks for trusting me and by your trust giving me that – it is a dream come true for me. Now it the time for yours to come true, as well –

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