

Some people say that when Mercury is retrograde, as it is now until October 9, it's a bad time to begin anything new. During one such period two years ago, an acquaintance of mine decided to delay accepting a dream job offer as editor of a magazine. By the time Mercury returned to normal, the magazine had hired another applicant. I wish I'd have known, because I would have told her what I'll tell you: Some of America's biggest, most enduring Fortune 500 companies began when Mercury was retrograde, including Disney, Goodyear, and Boeing.

My deep skepticism about big corporations notwithstanding, the fact that their founders had great success in launching them during Mercury retrograde is a telling statement about Mercury retrograde.

In my understanding of astrology, there's no such thing as a bad astrological aspect. It's true that some may be more challenging than others, but every one of them presents an opportunity.

Having said that, I don't regard Mercury retrograde as being dauntingly challenging. If you fear and expect it to be, you may tend to be slightly more attractive to disruptive events. But then that's true about how every superstition works.

P.S. My general approach is to consider anomalous, one-of-a-kind cosmic events as more likely to be fraught with uncertainty and requiring special vigilance. But the Mercury Retrograde is reliable and predictable, always coming three times a year.

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The poet Muriel Rukeyser said the universe is composed of stories, not of atoms. The physicist Werner Heisenberg declared that the universe is made of music, not of matter.

And we believe that if you habitually expose yourself to toxic stories and music, you could wind up living in the wrong universe, where it's impossible to become the gorgeous genius you were born to be.

That's why we implore you to nourish yourself with delicious, nutritious tales and tunes that inspire you to exercise your willpower for your highest good.

<http://bit.ly/1OUgPUT>

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UNCONDITIONAL, by Jennifer Welwood

Willing to experience aloneness,
I discover connection everywhere;
Turning to face my fear,
I meet the warrior who lives within;
Opening to my loss,
I gain the embrace of the universe;
Surrendering into emptiness,
I find fullness without end.

Each condition I flee from pursues me.
Each condition I welcome transforms me
And becomes itself transformed
Into its radiant jewel-like essence.
I bow to the one who has made it so,
Who has crafted this Master Game;
To play it is pure delight,
To honor its form -- true devotion.

- by psychotherapist Jennifer Welwood, <http://jenniferwelwood.com/>

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MORE PRONOIA RESOURCES:

Whales will get long-sought protection' from the navy's harmful use of sonar
<http://tinyurl.com/olg6bbo>

A secretive hedge fund legend is paying 800 New York teachers an extra \$15,000 per year each.
<http://tinyurl.com/q6lpqub>

Norway will pay Brazil the final installment of a \$1bn payment for slowing

the rate at which the Amazon rainforest is cut down, and is in talks about a further scheme. "Brazil's achievements in reducing deforestation in the Amazon are truly impressive," said Norway's environmental minister. "The benefits for the global climate, for biodiversity and vital ecosystem services, as well as for the people living in and off the Amazon, are immeasurable."

<http://tinyurl.com/q2h3dg4>

(Note: I endorse these because I like them. They are not advertisements, and I get no kickbacks.)

Please tell me your own personal nominations for PRONOIA RESOURCES.

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

Week beginning September 24

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Grammar key: Asterisks equal *italics**

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): "I feel like a wet seed wild in the hot blind earth," wrote author William Faulkner. Some astrologers would say that it's unlikely a Libra would ever say such a thing -- that it's too primal a feeling for your refined, dignified tribe; too lush and unruly. But I disagree with that view. Faulkner himself was a Libra! And I am quite sure that you are now or will soon be like a wet seed in the hot blind earth -- fierce to sprout and grow with almost feral abandon.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You and I both know that you can heal the sick and raise the dead and turn water into wine -- or at least perform the metaphorical equivalent of those magical acts. Especially when the pressure is on, you have the power to attract the help of mysterious forces and unexpected interventions. I love that about you! When people around you are rendered fuzzy and inert by life's puzzling riddles, you are often the best hope for activating constructive responses. According to my analysis of upcoming cosmic trends, these skills will be in high demand during the coming weeks.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Some astrologers regard the planet Saturn as a sour tyrant that cramps our style and squelches our freedom. But here's my hypothesis: Behind Saturn's austere mask is a benevolent teacher and guide. She pressures us to focus and concentrate. She pushes us to harness and discipline our unique gifts. It's true that some people resist these cosmic nudges. They prefer to meander all over the place, trying out roles they're not suited for and indulging in the perverse luxury of neglecting their deepest desires. For them Saturn seems like a dour taskmaster, spoiling their lazy fun. I trust that you Sagittarians will develop a dynamic relationship with Saturn as she cruises through your sign for the next 26 months. With her help, you can deepen your devotion to your life's most crucial goals.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): The coming weeks will be a favorable time to break a spell you've been under, or shatter an illusion you have been caught up in, or burst free from a trance you have felt powerless to escape. If you are moved to seek help from a shaman, witch, or therapist, please do so. But I bet you could accomplish the feat all by yourself. Trust your hunches! Here's one approach you could try: Tap into both your primal anger and your primal joy. In your mind's eye, envision situations that tempt you to hate life and envision situations that inspire you love life. With this volatile blend as your fuel, you can explode the hold of the spell, illusion, or trance.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): "Go to the edge of the cliff and jump off. Build your wings on the way down." So advised author Ray Bradbury. That strategy is too nerve-wracking for a cautious person like me. I prefer to meticulously build and thoroughly test my wings before trying a quantum leap. But I have observed that Aquarius is one of the three signs of the zodiac most likely to succeed with this approach. And according to my astrological calculations, the coming weeks will be a time when your talent for building robust wings in mid-air will be even more effective than usual.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You are being tempted to make deeper commitments and to give more of yourself. Should you? Is it in your interests to mingle your destiny more thoroughly with the destinies of others? Will you benefit from trying to cultivate more engaged forms of intimacy? As is true for most big questions, there are no neat, simple answers. Exploring stronger connections would ultimately be both messy and rewarding. Here's an inquiry that might bring clarity as you ponder

the possibility of merging your fortunes more closely with allies or potential allies: Will deeper commitments with them inspire you to love yourself dearly, treat yourself with impeccable kindness, and be a superb ally to yourself?

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-Deva P., Indianapolis

"I'm really grateful for the way you pick up my telepathic requests and answer them in your expanded audio 'scopes."
-Marion H., Birmingham, AL

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ARIES (March 21-April 19): You are destined to become a master of fire. It's your birthright to become skilled in the arts of kindling and warming and illuminating and energizing. Eventually you will develop a fine knack for knowing when it's appropriate to turn the heat up high, and when it's right to simmer with a slow, steady glow. You will wield your flames with discernment and compassion, rarely or never with prideful rage. You will have a special power to accomplish creative destruction and avoid harmful destruction. I'm pleased at the progress you are making toward these noble goals, but there's room for improvement. During the next eight weeks, you can speed up your evolution.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Taurus-born physicist Wolfgang Pauli won a Nobel Prize for his research. His accomplishment? The Nobel Committee said he discovered "a new law of nature," and named it after him: the Pauli Principle. And yet when he was a younger man, he testified, "Physics is much too difficult for me and I wish I were a film comedian or something like that and that I had never heard anything about physics!" I imagine you might now be feeling a comparable frustration about something for which you have substantial potential, Taurus. In the spirit of Pauli's perseverance, I urge you to keep at it.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): In 1921, the French city of Biarritz hosted an international kissing contest. After evaluating the participants' efforts, the panel of judges declared that Spanish kisses were "vampiric," while those of Italians were "burning," English were "tepid," Russians were "eruptive," French were "chaste," and Americans were "flaccid." Whatever nationality you are, Gemini, I hope you will eschew those paradigms -- and all other paradigms, as well. Now is an excellent time to experiment with and hone your own unique style of kissing. I'm tempted to suggest that you raise your levels of tenderness and wildness, but I'd rather you ignore all advice and trust your intuition.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): The astrological omens suggest you could get

caught up in dreaming about what might have been. I'm afraid you might cling to outworn traditions and resuscitate wistful wishes that have little relevance for the future. You may even be tempted to wander through the labyrinth of your memories, hoping to steep yourself in old feelings that weren't even good medicine for you when you first experienced them. But I hope you will override these inclinations, and instead act on the aphorism, "If you don't study the past, you will probably repeat it." Right now, the best reason to remember the old days is to rebel against them and prevent them from draining your energy.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You may laugh more in the next fourteen days than you have during any comparable fourteen-day period since you were five years old. At least I hope you will. It will be the best possible tonic for your physical and mental health. Even more than usual, laughter has the power to heal your wounds, alert you to secrets hiding in plain sight, and awaken your dormant potentials. Luckily, I suspect that life will conspire to bring about this happy development. A steady stream of antics and whimsies and amusing paradoxes is headed your way. Be alert for the opportunities.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): It's a favorable time to fantasize about how to suck more cash into your life. You have entered a phase when economic mojo is easier to conjure than usual. Are you ready to engage in some practical measures to take advantage of the cosmic trend? And by that I don't mean playing the lottery or stealing strangers' wallets or scanning the sidewalk for fallen money as you stroll. Get intensely real and serious about enhancing your financial fortunes. What are three specific ways you're ignorant about getting and handling money? Educate yourself.

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Homework: Formulate your game plan for hunting down happiness during the last three months of 2015. FreeWillAstrology.com.

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