

Of Creative, Constructive and Destructive

Vision Quest for Libra by Eric Francis Coppelino. Published by Planet Waves, Inc.

Patric Walker, a Libra, once famously said to his fellow Libra John Lennon that, “Life is what happens while you’re busy making other plans.” Lennon got credit for the line, but it took an astrologer to notice. Yet it took a songwriter to make sure we all remember the idea — one that’s profoundly articulated in your charts this year.

It’s as if you’re living on two levels — one is a place where you’re working out all your concepts about life; the other is the one where you actually live and express yourself.

Each has its value. Each is meaningful in its own way. Due to the power of the aspects involved, it seems inevitable that you be thinking like this, on two distinct planes of reality.

They are likely to have you toggling between them — for example, where you explore a concept or idea and experience that as your primary existence, with everything else being secondary. Then you will focus on your physical existence and all those ideas you were thinking will seem to become secondary.

The most important thing you can do is observe the phenomenon and know the difference between the two — that is, know when you’re in the realm of theory and when you’re in the realm of experience. Then, following up on that, integrate the two and in the process harness all the energy that is lost in the process of compartmentalizing the two.

Initially, one of your most necessary roles — from a growth perspective — is to mediate between the two dimensions; that is, to make sure your day-to-day reality is informed by some actual ideas, and to make sure your ideas are informed by what you learn from experience.

If you live in a world where you think these modes are mutually exclusive, a gap will form and you will lose a lot of energy to a nonexistent division.

Remembering there is a relationship between what we can loosely call theory and practice, will help prevent the one thing you most want to avoid: being overly conclusive and overconfident. It’s essential that you remain in fact-finding mode, that you train yourself to look for patterns (without trying to nail down what they ‘mean’), and that you keep your mind going at all times, interpreting what those facts add up to.

In other words, it’s necessary to keep asking yourself questions, and listening to the answers you get back.

I am not suggesting you be a skeptic. Far to the contrary. In English, the earliest known usage of this word is attested to the 1580s: “member of an ancient Greek school that doubted the possibility of real knowledge.”

There are many skeptics that think this way — that nothing is ever worth deciding whether it bears any truth; everything is always subject to doubt. You know this is a false position; you know wisdom is attainable. Skepticism is a way to make stupidity seem intelligent, and also a way to cop out of commitment to a position, or to bothering to understand something.

This is a time in your life when you will benefit from seeking real understanding. I would remind you though that understanding is not a form of fixed, static knowledge, but rather something that changes and evolves as you learn more — and learn to think more deeply. This doesn't seem too popular most places, though it's a hunger we will cultivate or our civilization risks extinction.

The real challenge with understanding is that it requires personal inquiry, which means investigating one's own ethics. Again, not popular. Failure to engage ethics is extremely convenient.

In the simplest terms possible, I am suggesting you remain open-minded and introspective. Many things you never imagined possible are indeed in the realm of your immediate potential, a condition that will gain momentum as the next six or so seasons progress. Being open-minded means noticing facts that affirm, confirm or deny what you are thinking.

And the only way you're going to verify anything is through direct experience, preferably repeated. In the end, your actual experience must trump theorizing and speculation. For reasons I'll get into when I begin discussing Virgo, the internet does not count as experience. It gets half credit, and more if you're actively creating something. Yet you must go beyond 'virtual' reality and into physical reality; beyond social media and directly, increasingly, into social.

Pluto in Capricorn: The Security Crisis

It would be good to review some of the more salient points of your astrology for the past few years, so let's check that out: The dominant transit, in my view, has been Pluto in Capricorn. If you're Libra Sun, Capricorn is your 4th solar house; if Libra rising, your 4th house by whole-sign houses. The 4th is the house of what makes you feel safe, what you've taken with you from the past, your family of origin, your sense of belonging and your physical, actual home.

For you, Capricorn represents the solid ground on which you seek to build your life. Normally this would work pretty well. Capricorn in any of its expressions is usually *terra firma*, whether we're talking about a mountain or a multinational corporation.

Yet with Pluto now in Capricorn, there is no promise of anything solid. This transit, which runs from approximately 2007 through 2024, is the one that's reminding us that everything is always changing. The world is in a profoundly insecure state right now, with many formerly solid things becoming fragile, many stable things unexpectedly crumbling, and the sensation of there being no safe place. I think it's critical to make contact with this rather than to avoid it.

One of my colleagues, Arlene Kramer, had said many times early in the Pluto and Capricorn process that "heads will roll." By this she meant there would be accountability. We are all seeking that in the public figures whose decisions and balance sheets are so influential in our

lives. Sadly, Pluto in Capricorn has been anything but a period of accountability for people in power. There are many reasons for this, including so many people giving up their power, and that being used as an excuse for more people to do so.

Heads might roll; if they do, it will be — in large measure — because you and people you know and love claim your power and decide to care.

For you, Capricorn is profoundly personal: the 4th is one of the most inwardly-focused houses. While Pluto in Capricorn represents living in a kind of earthquake zone, for you it also represents a profound drive to be rooted deeply in your emotional independence and self-confidence. This is a slow process, and it takes many layers of awakening and figuring out where your innate confidence and independence were somehow stolen from you.

Then there is your relationship to tradition. With Capricorn on this house, you prefer to be the beneficiary of tradition, of that which has endured, of that which has the respect of being time-honored. However, any tradition that does not change is in effect dead. Pluto is saying your role is to establish living personal traditions — including some you have inherited — and use them as a way of consolidating your family and community interests, drawing power up from the ground.

Capricorn for you is the house associated with ancestral lineage, and Capricorn just emphasizes this point; if Cancer represents the immediate family, Capricorn describes the same story going back into the past. This describes your need to feel like you're part of that something, and that you have a role in extending it into the future.

Now, however, that has all been changing rapidly. What was formerly the most stable and steady thing has been subject to constant change, and at times it seems to be crumbling. You cannot continue to live with the same expectations.

In the past, I've described this as discovering you live in an earthquake zone. Cultures that live where the ground shakes tend to dwell in lightweight buildings, the kind that won't collapse and kill people when the ground starts vibrating. You prefer to live in an old Victorian, or something made of solid, durable stuff. Longterm living in a tent is not your style, but there is some aspect of your existence that in recent times has insisted you live this way, metaphorically speaking.

So your real roots must be emotional rather than based on some external factor. I can tell you this from years of working with clients — people tend to grossly overestimate their level of independence, and underestimate (to the point of being blind) the ways relatives, especially parents (even deceased ones) run their lives. So if you are experiencing some tension or consternation about this, you might want to reassess things. You might seek the assistance of someone who really, truly understands family dynamics and specializes in helping people free themselves from them.

I know it can be embarrassing at age 45 to admit your mother is still pushing you around. But it's easier than being pushed around, and living with the consequences of giving up your power. Pluto — whatever processes it represents in you — will keep penetrating, burrowing or jackhammering through your sense of false security till you tap into something real.

Uranus in Aries: Beyond Codependency

A similar process has been happening with Uranus through your 7th house cusp. Libra has a well-known affinity for the whole concept of ‘relating’; therefore relationships are important to you. Uranus is the original planet assigned to the mission of upsetting the apple cart.

To have Uranus moving through your 7th house would seem to be as un-Libran as you can get, though it fits the Pluto-related theme of learning not to be overly-dependent on others; of learning not to be codependent, whether in the formal or informal meanings of that word; and supports your goal of learning how to be a self-sustaining individual, who develops *healthy interdependencies*.

This includes with individuals and with groups. It is likely that, coincidentally with these transits, you are learning to integrate your life more into that of a group reality. If the family-of-origin thing is revealing its weaknesses and its outmoded ways, the family-of-choice thing is going strong for you — or it can be. Those people to whom you’re not related but ‘who seem like family’ actually are your family.

What is shifting, energetically, is relating to people both as individuals and as part of the social network they’re connected to. This is different from the way we’re conditioned to relate to people — as someone whose friends and social network are some kind of inconvenience rather than as inherently part of who they are.

You might say you’re being conditioned by experience to take an integrated view of who and what a person is. By integrated I mean thinking of a person as a whole entity, rather than as choosing one facet of them and presuming that’s the only thing real about them.

You may have experienced this as a total disruption of your mode of relating. This may have included longterm relationships, particularly ones that have experienced changes dating back to 2010 or early 2011. You might find certain of your relationships, especially primary ones, have taken on a quality of instability. You may also find you’re now attracting people who are a little too weird for your refined tastes.

All of this, while inconvenient and not necessarily emotionally satisfying on its own, is ensuring you not only find out who you are, and understand who you are, but also that you gain confidence in being that person. You can no longer use relationships as a means of gaining false reassurance or a sense of acceptance; that is something you must provide entirely for yourself. And this will be something you take with you the rest of your life.

This also raises the stakes on ensuring you select as partners people who are appropriate for you. You may be noticing how few people are. This, in turn, may be revealing how much compensating you had to do, in order to make relationships with inappropriate partners ‘work’.

What you may be seeing is there is only so accommodating and conciliatory you can be — and that, I would say, is good news. Save it for people who have earned it, or for situations where it’s truly appropriate.

Much like Pluto in Capricorn might be seen as a destructive force — but one you can put to work for you — so too is Uranus in Aries.

Parallel Worlds: An Inner Dilemma

I mentioned earlier that you're likely to be experiencing a split-level phenomenon — though this may not be obvious until you consider that potential and tune in. One of those two levels is veiled, but it's not an especially thick barrier; it's largely mental. It's easy to deny or miss observing, yet it's no less influential.

It's possible for concepts we supposedly don't think we have, or don't register consciously, to have plenty of influence. Once you tune into this one you may notice it's actually chattering along all day, waiting to be parsed out.

This is not so much an upper versus lower thing but rather the contrast between inner reality and how you present that or express that outwardly. This could be purely mental; it may have a metaphor in the world.

Such facets of consciousness are sometimes easier to connect to than others. There is a word that's not used frequently anymore, which for some people is related to this, and that word is neurosis. There are a number of definitions of this going around, though I've developed my own. It's when we try to run the mind on competing sets of instructions, intentions or desires.

For example, consider a person who likes to stay up late — or does so organically — but they also want to get up early, but they need their sleep. Staying up late feels natural, needing sleep is definitely natural, and wanting to get up early seems to make sense — but all three cannot coexist. It would take approximately one half of a therapy session to sort this out, and then some alert decision-making to resolve the situation.

The key to working through these scenarios is knowing what those competing factors are. Sometimes they are merely ideas or concepts rather than actual obligations or commitments. One goal of 'consciousness raising' is to bring them into awareness, so they can be observed, and possibly named.

Seen one way, what your chart pattern looks like is a quest for mind-body integration. There are many experiences in life where the mind is potentially ahead of the body — for example, one might have a cherished idea (go to Spain, take flying lessons, try three-way sex), but keeps coming up with reasons not to try them. Or there may be an actual split between what the mind intends and what the body's innate knowledge seems to support.

This can suggest many possible scenarios, any of which may involve how you feel in theory versus what you do in practice. If you can start to make contact between the two, to integrate them and release the power trapped between the layers, you can make some mighty progress creatively, which is to say in every facet of your life.

This seeming division — which is not really a division because you are one unified entity — is described first by a pattern among the mutable signs (Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius and Pisces). Your Sun or rising sign is cardinal — it is Libra — so the mutable signs are like a subtle dimension-shift away.

You might think of what they represent as lurking in a blind spot. It's significant that the signs involved are mutable in that they are lodged on the mental and psychic levels, rather than something more tangible.

Yet the configuration has considerable momentum and emphasis, because the all-important lunar nodes are there. Think of the nodes as the primary conduit of spiritual material in anyone's chart. They are now in Virgo and Pisces (having just passed through Aries and Libra the past couple of years). Both sides of this equation (the Virgo-Pisces lunar nodes, the accompanying planets and the eclipses that will accompany them into those signs) help describe your inner mental state, but it's one that is somewhat elusive.

Know What You Believe

Mercury in Virgo is on the North Node, in your solar 12th house — as if veiled from view, and in a world apart. Or you could say Mercury in Virgo is like your mind having a mind of its own.

Really, it looks to me like you're entertaining ideas you 'don't know' you're thinking. There is an ocean of creativity available, though you may be wondering whether you're deceiving yourself. In fact I would say if you have some nagging doubt, it's about whether what you believe is true. Indeed you would seem to be involved in a balancing act between what you know intellectually and what you feel intuitively. And you may find yourself bouncing back and forth between them.

If you find yourself lacking direction, this is the place to apply emphasis. Saturn in Sagittarius is square both ends of the lunar nodes. When something is square the nodes, working with that thing is the way to work with the nodes.

The single most important thing you can do, to make contact with this 'layer' of thought is to *be conscious what you believe*. One might think this is the very most obvious thing anyone would know — what they believe. But when you start to examine this in yourself or in anyone, you can get some strange results. This would include beliefs with no basis in reality; beliefs adopted from the past, which were never evaluated or reevaluated to see whether they stand up today; beliefs that conflict; beliefs that serve only to support self-defeating thoughts and expectations.

In this case we have Saturn in Sagittarius, in the 3rd house. There is no clearer way to say, "You must know what you believe." We could count the 3rd as conscious awareness, but it's usually earned through a process like writing. I don't mean publishing fan fiction; I mean something more like the morning pages routine from *The Artist's Way*. This involves keeping a notebook wherein you write three pages every morning before you do anything else. It's not even necessary to read them, or not at first anyway.

The more tangible you make your beliefs, the more you will see what they are. Writing them down is a good way to do that. You might be tempted to talk about them but that does not help, unless you're working with a therapist whose job it is to spot your contradictions and mention them to you. This may be necessary because the beliefs involved are probably rather old (as in multigenerational or past life), and they are slippery.

You might make great efforts at figuring out what they are, only to find yourself caught in a loop, or questioning your conclusion. What you must do is come out of the loop and use the factor of *tangibility* as your main tool. Writing is thought made tangible. As you do this you will notice your thoughts becoming more pliable.

In other words, you would be using the process of making your thoughts firmer and more tangible as a kind of homeopathic treatment designed to encourage flexibility. You would also be thinking in manual mode as a remedy for thinking in an automatic way.

Endnote here: If you find yourself thinking anything that even vaguely resembles a religious idea (anything negative about sex, pleasure, the physical world, compromises where death plays a part, metaphysical assumptions that religion sells such as 'heaven', among others), pay attention to that.

Religious concepts are like a thought trap. They are always designed to monopolize basic facts of life like birth, death, sex and meaning. But like most traps they are usually camouflaged as something normal or wholesome — or more convenient than actually thinking for yourself.

The Outer Parallel

The parallel reality is a growing viewpoint of doing what you want no matter what you may have thought in the past, or no matter what anyone may think. Said another way, you seem to be working through a breakthrough that can take people a long time: action is more important than planning, or thinking. Ultimately action is the test of whether a plan or thought form is viable, as well as the thing that gets a result.

You seem poised for a major breakthrough along the lines of, "I must live my life my way." You even seem like you might just walk through all the layers of rationalization like a thin curtain and make some real choices about what you want.

People around you are certainly setting that example. Partners have been bold about their own drive to live the way they want, or — perhaps better to say — unapologetically be the person they are. I would propose that the alleged beliefs and feelings of partners are the most typical reasons people have not to do things.

It may be you find it easy to get into a mode of thought where you're thinking about what your partner, or a potential partner, might be thinking; yet this is speculative. You can take a different approach by observing what your partner (or any person you care about) does, and asking them directly what their opinion is. I know this may sound radical but it's one way to get out of several forms of denial at the same time.

Anyway, when the moment comes that you make a choice of how to be, who to be or what to do, you might look back and wonder why it took so long. Being clear and making decisions saves time.

The action point is demonstrated by Jupiter ingressing your sign right before your 2016 birthday. Then the Sun makes a conjunction to Jupiter. This tells me you're building toward something big, and that you will not care much about your inner controversies once that happens — or you will want to have them resolved, see them for what they are, or not be caught up in them.

An asteroid called Sappho is in the scenario. The primary delineation of this point is a gathering of people around you. It may mostly be women; it could be anyone however. Sappho is like a human magnet. Jupiter emanates purpose. You get to consider and define the purpose of your life as a gathering. Because we know Sappho as a writer (the earliest woman we ever heard from in the Western world), there is a possibility this will involve writing, ideas or knowledge of some kind.

It's unlikely to be starting up the Junior League in your town, or a weekly bridge game. It's more likely to be an astrology group, a reading group or an informal organization devoted to ideas. Remember — informal. Such as a dinner party every week or month, with a purpose.

It may well be that your process of getting clear and figuring out what you're thinking, explained above, will lead you to just that — for example, to an idea you want to experiment with. This is something that would best be done in person. There must be a human factor. The world is suffocating in virtuality. It is not satisfying. Indeed it is lowering the bar on actual emotional engagement. The internet is a tool to be used by the living; life is a physical experience. There is the image of you creating a kind of network or web, in the real world, devoted to a specific purpose.

Personally, what you seem to be seeking are ideas that take you out to the edge of yourself: beyond your known dimensions and your comfortable boundaries. Indeed one of your challenges is that of allowing yourself to go out of bounds — and to stay there for a while.

The Chiron Factor

Speaking of going beyond the edge, Chiron is an interesting configuration in your chart. You may be aware that Chiron is moving through your 6th solar house, Pisces. This offers the image of some profound spiritual healing, which may be rippling out to the physical level. You are highly sensitive energetically, to the point where you can become sick, or make yourself sick, over so little as one comment someone makes. Some consider Chiron a destructive influence though what it's actually seeking is awareness and choice, centered in healing.

You have a kind of energetic porousness that Chiron's passage through Pisces is in part focused on helping you be conscious of and resolve. This permeability is showing up other ways as well, including with Neptune in Pisces transiting this area of your chart.

Let's focus on a pattern involving Chiron and then another slow-mover based on healing called Pholus; as well as Mars and the Moon. At the heart of this pattern are two separate aspects that overlay: Mars square Chiron and Pholus square Chiron. Once again the connection is through the mutable signs. Unless you focus on making this conscious, it may pretend to lurk below awareness.

Mars square Chiron tends to manifest as a mental block. It's the kind of block that can masquerade as the intention to have integrity. As a natal factor or even as a transit, this can indeed be a tool to develop or discover integrity, which tends to come out later in life.

However, most of the time I've seen it manifest as a kind of drive for purity. You might think of it as the thought form, "I want to have sex but I'm going to wait for the perfect person." That might last a while, but then actual feelings take over, and an inappropriate choice is made. That can rebound as fear: I made a wrong choice, so I'm going to stop choosing. That leads to more stagnation, which is then experienced as integrity. But really the underlying impulse is purity.

Now Pholus is in the picture. Pholus has a distinctive mode: it deals with pressurized releases that go out of control. Conjoint Mars, this is desire infused with pressure. The two points are conjoint the Galactic Core, which can indicate either 1) how necessary your desire is and/or 2) how your desire might diffuse and not really seem to have a tangible form.

You might say you start to feel the mystical longing. What is, on the deepest level, a specific desire — probably biological — shows up as some seemingly boundless, seemingly spiritual thing. Of course that gets society's 'blessing'. It's just that you might really want something other than to read all the works of Carl Jung untranslated, which means learning Austrian first.

You might just want to visit Austria. You might want to move on from a relationship. You might want to take a painting class. So, I suggest being mindful of the wispy desire for spiritual fulfillment, which might be a distorted version of being through with life as a vegan. The question is, how do you know?

Well, I would say you know, and it's really a matter of admitting what you want. That really is the solution to any dilemma you've ever faced about making decisions. What you want is the thing that needs to drive you. Your only other options are being driven by what you don't want, or by what someone else wants.

And here is the rub: Most people do yield to what others want, often because it saves them the trouble of thought, or of a discussion. Or you might want to maintain your reputation as conciliatory. This is part of what you're grappling with, and it's a pretty significant potential diversion.

In order to have any cohesiveness to your relationship life, and to have those relationships be healthy, you must center them around your own reality. This may seem selfish, but really it's about having a self. It may seem absurd to think one can create a relationship where one's 'self' is not involved, but that's the whole problem with relationships in our society. All relationships

involve compromise. They should not inherently be a compromise. Yet getting out of that compromise can, for a while, make you unpopular or someone who threatens others.

In this as in the many other ways I've described, it's up to you to turn every potentially destructive force into a creative and constructive one. This is the creative process at its essence, claiming your power at its essence.